How We Are with Animals:

Understanding Connection with Nature in Urban Settings Through

Multispecies Ethnography

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Declaration of Authorship

I HARRIET SMITH hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

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Abstract

This thesis examines how human-animal relations are formative to feelings of connection with nature in urban contexts. The research is undertaken at three field sites in London: the London Zoo, Camley Street Natural Park and Kentish Town City Farm. My investigation attends to the situatedness of multispecies encounters. I provide a relational understanding of urban nature-places and their public engagement practices. I investigate how each organisation's ontology and epistemology mediates and constructs human and animal encounters at the field sites. I examine this dynamic by critiquing conservation public engagement, and by comparing the zoo and the nature park as conservation based organisations, with the grassroots, multispecies community at the city farm. I utilise a range of methods including multispecies participant observation and participatory experiments and interventions. I pay specific attention to the role of affect and creative activities, such as drawing, as potential tools to engender attunement and embodied communication. I utilise and rework naturalist methods for understanding animals, on the basis that such fieldwork often produces feelings of empathy and attunement between field researchers and research subjects. I investigate how these methods could be repurposed, through participatory interventions, in order to engender more caring and attuned understandings of other animals in urban contexts. I argue that through shifting the value registers towards a non-anthropocentric approach, people feel more included in the more-than-human world.

Table of Contents

Table of Figures

Figure 1: Colobus monkey interested in my sketchbook.

Chapter 1. Introduction

Currently there are crises both in how humans care for the world and in how humans care for themselves. Environmental destruction, as manifest through climate change, contaminants in soil, water and air, and the devastating loss of plant and animal life, brings with it problems that require increased public attention and action (Ceballos et al., 2017). There is also growing concern surrounding human health and wellbeing, for example, in reports of an increase in sedentary lifestyles (Dickinson, 2013), increased obesity (Moss, 2012) and increased incidence of mental illness across both adult and child segments of the UK population (Bragg et al., 2015; Moss, 2012). These two sets of problems are situated within distinct disciplinary areas of environment and health, yet connection with nature is deemed to be both a prerequisite for pro-environmental behaviour (Bragg et al., 2015; Ives et al., 2017; Zylstra et al., 2014) and a cause of increased wellbeing (Moss, 2012; Bragg et al., 2013b). Therefore, it is important to investigate how people develop connection with nature.

Current research on Connection with nature (CWN[1]) is often situated within either conservation and environmental academic discourses and policy areas or health and wellbeing related research and policy. However, this thesis investigates CWN through sociological research within the field of animal studies and thus outside of either conservation and environment sciences or fields related to health and wellbeing. By examining CWN from within the interdisciplinary field of animal studies, the thesis highlights new opportunities for a fresh consideration of CWN. I embark upon this research from a perspective that is interested in developing less anthropocentric

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[1] Connection with nature is termed CWN throughout the remainder of this thesis.

means of interpreting and engaging with the nonhuman world. I conduct the project in ways that can reorientate research on CWN towards a multispecies modality. I aim to demonstrate that shaking off human exceptionalism enacts CWN as a set of practices that may take place in the most mundane of contexts.

1.1 Thesis Summary

This thesis examines the ways in which people experience animals in urban settings, and considers how such encounters affect feelings of connection with nature. I argue that conservation discourses that are concerned with CWN are for the most part based upon ontologies that sustain fixed and reductive categories of both animals and place. Furthermore, within CWN discourses, nature, and the rural more generally, is posited in binary opposition to the urban; thus, city dwellers are deemed to lack CWN in comparison with their rural counterparts (Louv, 2008; RSPB, 2013). Experiencing and connecting with nature are widely understood as having positive impacts that include both increased individual wellbeing and engagement in positive environmental action (Bragg et al., 2015; Mayer and Frantz, 2004; Zylstra et al., 2014).

There is a lack of relational research into CWN that is capable of addressing the current use of reductive terms such as *nature* (Ives et al., 2017) and *urban* (Krause, 2013; Francis et al., 2013). Furthermore, current research in this area does not consider the mediated ways in which people engage with animals within urban nature spaces such as zoos, city farms and wildlife areas. Given the importance of CWN for positive environmental action, this area requires further investigation.

In order to address the lack of knowledge about these aspects of CWN, I explore how human encounters with animals affect CWN by firstly examining interpretations and

portrayals of animals through an investigation of definitions of anthropomorphism. I argue that feeling connected to animals and nature is obscured by anthropocentric perspectives which conflate empathy with anthropomorphism. My field research investigates multispecies encounters and connective experiences in relation to affective experiences and embodied communication (Haraway, 2008). I utilise the theoretical concepts of becoming (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) and becoming-with (Haraway, 2008) in order to think more productively about human-animal encounters and the formation of feelings of connectedness.

In order to address how people connect with nature through how they are with animals, I conducted field research at three sites in London: the London Zoo, Camley Street Natural Park and Kentish Town City Farm. The research design was tailored to each setting, and thus responded to the opportunities and restrictions that each field site presented. The three sites were chosen for their specific categories and accounts of animals and their visitor engagement practices. The London Zoo and Camley Street Natural Park are both conservation organisations. The former provides visitors with the opportunity to engage with enclosed, exotic, zoo animals, whilst the latter seeks to engage people with local British wildlife embedded within human-made nature habitats. The third site, Kentish Town City Farm, is positioned outside of conservation, and identifies as a community project[2]. Unlike the zoo, the farm situates visitor engagement with animals within an interactive setting, where people are invited to care for the resident animals. These three urban nature-places therefore presented opportunities for comparative analysis to better understand organised urban animal encounters.

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[2] Staff identify their project as a community project (Interviews with Kentish Town City Farm staff, 2015).

The research was articulated as a research assemblage (Ringose and Renold, 2014) developed through two distinct fieldwork stages. First, I undertook participant observation in order to investigate how the three sites produced and engaged with CWN. Second, I carried out participatory drawing experiments and interventions in order to investigate novel methods for facilitating CWN. The methods involved drawing, mapping and co-breathing with animals. The co-breathing exercise involved inviting participants to breathe with chosen farm and zoo animals to encourage and explore coming to know the other animal through a body-to-body relation. I worked with human participants, mainly ages 8-15, because conservation research demonstrates that early experiences are formative to later life experiences of positive CWN (Bragg et al., 2013a; Chawla, 1998). I demonstrate that the interventions produced a shift in attention over time, as human interactions with animals became foregrounded with care.

This introductory chapter situates the overall research. It begins by providing an explanation of the field of animal studies in which this thesis is placed. I explain why investigating human-animal encounters provides valuable insight into how people experience CWN. I then provide an understanding of the term *CWN*. I do this through firstly examining what is meant by the term *nature*, and then discuss what is understood by the term *urban* in relation to nature. Next, I discuss what is meant by the term *connection*; here I also consider what is meant by disconnection. Lastly, I provide a situating overview of CWN research. I explain why CWN is important and how it is researched. Finally, I present the main research questions.

In Chapter 2 I discuss how I developed the conceptual framework to conduct this research. I articulate the key concepts and terms used and explain how they are drawn together to create the logic of the thesis. I then clarify how this thesis takes a relational materialist approach to CWN. I introduce the concept of assemblages (Deleuze and

Guattari, 1988; Ringrose and Renold, 2014; Fox and Alldred, 2015) as it relates to the research, and incorporate the notion of affective atmospheres (Lorimer et al., 2017; McCormack, 2013) and versions of *becoming*, *becoming animal* (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988), and *becoming-with* (Haraway, 2008) to develop a methodological framework for the research. I then describe the research design. Here I give an explanation of how the field sites were selected, explaining how the site criteria respond to wider CWN research, as well as to the previously outlined conceptual framework. I provide information about the informants and participants who engaged in the research, and conclude with a reflexive statement about myself as the researcher along with a statement on the ethical position of animals in this work.

In Chapter 3, I argue that a relational approach to CWN provides the potential to work outside of binaries and hierarchies, in order to understand the world as co-produced. I explain that from a relational perspective, humans are always engaged in a process of attachment and detachment (Latimer and Miele, 2013) and that, therefore, investigating multispecies connection involves exploring experiences as co-constituent on-goings. I argue that multispecies methods need to address the nonrepresentational sensory and corporeal practices through which communication takes place (Buller, 2015). I explain that the methods were undertaken as an assemblage, in two stages. In stage one, I conducted participant observation and visual ethnography at the three field sites, which each aim to connect people with animals in urban settings. Through this methodological work, it became possible to develop an understanding of how specific places and organisations performatively engage visitors with animals and, thus, affect visitors' feelings of CWN. I discuss the visual ethnography and participant observation, followed by a discussion of the ways in which I worked with participants at Kentish Town City Farm. I then explain why I later developed a range of experiments and interventions as inventive methods for actualising the concepts of 'becoming' and

'becoming animal' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) and 'becoming-with' (Haraway, 2008) as research tools. This methodological process involved repurposing naturalist methods mainly as drawing experiments initially, but later developed into interventions involving a range of novel methods. I expand upon this work through providing an introduction to the experimental drawing, co-breathing and wander-line methods.

In Chapter 4 I firstly explore the difficulties in interpreting animals through a discussion of the meanings implied in versions of anthropomorphism and empathy. Here I draw on the work of Robert Mitchell (1997), Kenneth Shapiro (1997), Kay Milton (2005), Carolyn Pedwell (2014), and Lori Gruen (2015). I further develop the discussion by drawing upon the work of Vinciane Despret (2010), Eileen Crist (1996) and Donna Haraway (2008), demonstrating how the terms' definitions and meanings are contingent upon specific disciplinary fields. I examine naturalist approaches to animals that are widely seen as producing interspecies empathy and connective feelings towards animals and that, at the same time, are often also labelled as anthropomorphic. I consider how animals are interpreted in research conducted in everyday human-animal contexts by drawing on Arnold Arluke and Clinton Sanders (2007) and Haraway (2008). Lastly, I discuss knowing through forms of direct embodied encounters.

Chapter 5 situates the three London based field sites through a relational description of each site: the London Zoo, Camley Street Natural Park, and Kentish Town City Farm[3]. I firstly lay out my socio-spatial approach (Soja, 2009) and present an understanding of

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[3] Throughout the thesis, at times I shorten the field site names as follows: Kentish Town City Farm is referred to as the city farm; Camley Street Natural Park is referred to as Camley St. or Camley Street; and the London Zoo is referred to as the zoo, except where I need to distinguish it from other zoos. I also refer to The Zoological Society of London as ZSL. I use this term when referring to the society rather than the place.

space articulated through relational terms whereby neither landscapes nor cityscapes are separate entities. I discuss the reductive binary notion of the urban/rural divide and argue for the importance of conducting research in urban nature-places in order to address this blind spot in conservation regarding the urban (Light, 2010). I explore how researching formal organisations provides insights into conservation with respect to public engagement, and the ways that theoretical and practical organisational categories manifest within each place. I explain how these sites host different human–animal relations and produce different methods for engaging with groups and publics. I consider the social constructions of animals and human-animal encounters mediated through the spatialities of the field sites. Each site has its own formative history, mission and organisational aims. The sites deliver education from particular pedagogical perspectives, and to differently construed groups of people. I explore how the histories of each site have played a role in the ways that the site's structural frameworks and pedagogies have evolved and manifested.

Together, the field sites provide a comparative range of formal[4] urban nature settings. The zoo is the most formal, science-based and corporate of the sites. Camley Street Natural Park, like the zoo, is a conservation-focused organisation. It was formally managed by the London Wildlife Trust. Camley St. is a small site with informal roots, and retains an open access space that welcomes people from all backgrounds. The city farm is the most grassroots, activist led, and informal of the three sites, with a focus on community engagement and human wellbeing. In contrast to the other two sites, Kentish Town City Farm is not a conservation orientated project and, therefore,

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[4] Informal sites do not form a part of this research. However, there are currently many grassroots urban movements finding their own nature relations outside of conservation and prescribed green spaces that are often dominated by science and education discourses, for example, guerrilla gardening or community run gardens and nature spaces.

provides an opportunity to comparatively examine multispecies relations situated outside of conservation ontologies.

In Chapter 6, I present my thematic research findings and develop the thesis argument through drilling into the notions of connection, anthropomorphism and caring relations. I draw mainly on the ethnographic fieldwork conducted at the two conservation-based field sites: the London Zoo and Camley Street Natural Park. I argue that the conservation sites advance an anthropocentric separation from, rather than connective visitor interactions with, the more-than-human world. The analysis is divided into four sets of empirical vignettes, corresponding to verbal accounts of animals, spatial presentations of animals, animal proximity and agency and care enactments with animals.

In the first set of vignettes, I suggest that organisation-based explanations and therefore, productions of animals, are relational, depending on not only the account giver, but also the person to whom the account is given. I compare different anthropomorphic explanations of animals given by a zoo staff member and farm workers. In the second set of vignettes, I utilise Annabelle Sabloff's notion of 'totemic imagination' (Sabloff, 2015, p.9), which describes how people feel a sense of affinity with other beings, to explore the spatial environments in terms of connective experiences of place. Throughout the vignettes, I distinguish between affective distraction and connective encounters as experiential potentials at the field sites. In the third section, I explore proximity with animals. This set of cases attends directly to the lack of attention in CWN research to animals as agentile subjects. Here, I investigate the agency of both zoo animals and zoo visitors in the making of encounters. These accounts consider the affective potential of multispecies communication in the zoo setting. The final section of the chapter concentrates on the notion of care. Here I draw

upon a vignette to analyse how children at Camley St. engage in meaning-making and caring for insects. I argue that this form of caring needs to be valued by adults so that urban nature encounters do not become solely distancing encounters with specimens performed through pedagogic interfaces. I argue that both affective distraction and connective encounters are shaped by the organisations, as well as potentially ruptured through the agencies of individual animals.

In Chapter 7, I develop this argument further through a discussion of the drawing experiments that took place at all three field sites. I argue that whilst many of the animals I encountered during the ethnography exhibited agency, many of the multispecies visitor interactions I took part in or observed did not have the capacity to involve the animals as subjects. My auto-ethnographic practice developed into participatory drawing experiments with small groups of participants across the three sites. The aim was to repurpose immersive methods through which field researchers, such as naturalists and some ethologists, develop empathetic feelings with their research subjects (Crist, 1996; Despret, 2013a). I aimed to repurpose the methods as becoming animal (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) practices for developing and exploring connective feelings. The drawing experiments were affected by the field site settings, the participants and the animals. I aimed to destabilise the normative notions of discrete beings and to invoke feelings of attunement and connection. I did so, in part, to bring the animals further into the research, and to foreground the corporeal experiences of encounters as encounters that involve sensory attention. I argue that through developing attentive and immersive practices, feeling states, such as those experienced through multispecies attunement and embodied communication, can invoke more practical and caring responses with the animals. I demonstrate how the *approach* to the drawing experiments was performative in the opening up or closing down of feelings of attunement with the animal as subject. I discuss how the

experiments invited empathic attunement and becoming-with between the human participants and the partner animals.

Chapter 8 developed in direct response to the drawing experiments in Chapter 7. Here, I extend the research and develop interventions that were carried out at Kentish Town City Farm. A key aim was to respond to a problem with the drawing experiments, wherein the relation of the human, as expert observer, and the animal, as observed, had not been challenged or disrupted. I developed an intervention called 'A Day In The Life Of…', which was designed to extend the concept of repurposing the naturalist and field researcher methods. The intervention was constructed through developing a range of observational and mapping tasks: photographing, mapping, drawing and making notes. I sought to draw the participants into a closer engagement with their chosen animal as a practice of becoming-with (Haraway, 2008). I introduced body orientated approaches, firstly through inviting participants to directly follow animals and secondly through inviting participants to co-breathe alongside their partner animals. I was able to shift the value register and, thus, invite immersive and attuned states between humans and animals. The final section of the chapter explores a field trip to the zoo with the city farm children which provided the opportunity to experiment with similar methods in the zoo context. Through imaginative and body-focused approaches, it was possible to loosen the practices away from cognitive understandings of the representative value of animal-images towards more affective and playful embodied multispecies becoming-withs.

Chapter 9 concludes the thesis. I firstly provide a summary of the research findings. I discuss what becoming-with as a method offered the participants and in what ways becoming-with enacted a broadening of care through connectedness. I explain the

value of working with inventive methods, and suggest how shifting the register of attention towards more caring forms of engagements could be taken up by others.

Figure 2: Chickens at Kentish Town City Farm, photo by Aido.

1.3 Animal Studies

1.3.1 Overview of Animal Studies

Until recently, research on animals largely left out the human, and produced specific methods for understanding animals as if they are completely separate from their environments and their relations with other beings (van Dooren and Rose, 2012). Likewise, sociological and anthropological research on humans has largely left out the animals, as if humans are completely separate from their environments and their relations with other beings (Sabloff, 2015; Holmberg, 2017). However, over the last two decades interested scholars have begun to establish an interdisciplinary research area

often referred to as *animal studies*. The growing interest in animals across the humanities is termed *the animal turn* (Ritvo, 2007), or *the multispecies turn* (Locke and Muenster, 2015)[5].

Animal studies scholars engage in thinking about the work animals do for, and with, humans. This engagement often involves understanding humans and animals in co-evolutionary, ongoing relationships (Haraway, 2003). The various roles of animals, and forms of oppression imposed upon them, present a myriad of questions that are being re-visited and re-examined (Kalof and Fitzgerald, 2007). Feminist scholar Lynda Birke offers three grounds for attending to animals which are pertinent to this thesis. Firstly, she argues that understanding animals is important in order to grapple with wider environmental problems (Birke, 2007, p.306). Her argument aims to draw attention to the interconnections between humans and animals, for example, the impact of mass meat consumption based on industrial approaches to livestock farming, which in turn impacts upon climate change through the production of methane gases[6]. Secondly, Birke argues that animals matter in and of themselves and that humans have an obligation to address them on animals' own terms (ibid). Attending to animals on their own terms involves learning how to develop less anthropocentric and less instrumental attitudes to animals (van Dooren and Rose, 2012). Birke argues that there are intersectional ties between the domination of animals and the oppression of *othered* groups of humans such as women, people of colour, and the poor (Birke, 2007, p.307).

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[5] Throughout the thesis, any italics in quoted text are my emphasis unless stated otherwise.
[6] There are increasing public awareness drives to encourage people to eat less meat. For example, *The Guardian* has reported on the relation of meat consumption to climate change (https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2014/dec/03/eating-less-meat-curb-climate-change [last accessed 1.8.2018]) and the World Wildlife Fund has discouraged meat consumption in arguing that beef is often grown in sensitive areas such as the Amazon (https://www.worldwildlife.org/industries/beef [last accessed 1.8.2018]).

Animals and humans are part of the same hierarchical frameworks and patriarchal structures (ibid). Investigating the interconnections between humans and animals in all manner of directions is part of the feminist move to reorientate ontological perspectives in order to dissolve hierarchies and human exceptionalism (Noske, 1997).

The final introductory point important to make about animal studies is that there are a number of terms widely in use that often have similar meanings, but different nuances and implications. This fact reflects in part the discipline's interdisciplinarity, as well as the very recent explosion of interest in this area (Kalof and Fitzgerald, 2007). Animal studies is sometimes referred to as *human–animal studies* or *animal geographies* (Buller, 2014). Although attention to animal ethics is usually a component of contemporary human–animal research, the term *critical animal studies* is also utilised in order to foreground animal rights issues (Buller, 2014, p.2). Furthermore, *beings* formerly termed *animals* are now becoming referred to as *nonhuman animals, nonhumans* or *other animals*. This shift speaks in part to the linkage between animal studies and posthumanism, another interdisciplinary area interested in relational perspectives that address the interconnectedness and collapsing categories of the 'organic, the technical, the human and the nonhuman, the many sorts of things that just don't resolve into binaries' (Haraway, 2016, p.262). Animal studies is posthuman insofar as it addresses animals from this ontological perspective (Haraway, 2003).

1.3.2 Why Research Human–Animal Encounters?

The concerns outlined in the previous explanation of animal studies help allude to what is at stake in understanding humans' complex, often contradictory experiences and engagements with animals (Arluke and Sanders, 2007). Within urban contexts in particular, animals present a challenge to human-made categories of beings and spaces 'by hybridizing, for example the dichotomy of nature/culture, wild/domestic,

public/private' (Holmberg, 2017, p.8). Animal encounters compel us to attend to human agency as it threads through animal presence and affective contact in complex entanglements with imposed categorisations that are placed upon animals, such as *food*, *wild* or *companion*.

Multispecies relations are a fruitful place to start exploring CWN because '[t]he animal is really nature glancing back at us' (Noske, 1997, p.62). It is only animals that can *glance back at us.* This statement not only applies to the animals who literally glance back, but also, I think, alludes to the understanding that animals move, breathe, eat, live and die, and as such, the fact that they simultaneously provoke feelings of familiarity and difference. This understanding involves a seeing of both the external other and the internal aspect of ourselves, and introduces the notion of connectedness as an experience. As well as teaching humans about the cultural contexts in which they are embedded, animal encounters offer the opportunity to connect with nature in the sense of nature being the external nonhuman world (Castree, 2013). In the following sections I examine these concepts further through a discussion of the constructs of *nature* and *connection*.

1.4 Defining Nature

In this section I provide an explanation of how the term *nature* may be meaningfully thought through in the context of CWN research. I do not attempt to sum up the whole of nature, nor indeed all of the many *natures* (Castree, 2013). I begin with an overview of why the term *nature* is problematic. I then explain more fully how understandings of nature relate to the concepts embedded within the notion of CWN.

Nature is often conceptualised as one half of a binary. Cronon explains that '[t]he place where we are is the place where nature is not' (Cronon, 1995, p.11), meaning that nature is normatively considered to be a *wilderness* area, separate from, and untouched by, humanity (Cronon, 1995, p.11). This conceptualisation is problematic in two senses. Firstly, it is not logically accurate: there no longer exist parts of this planet that are *wild* in the sense of being untouched by humanity (Castree, 2013; Lorimer, 2015). Secondly, in maintaining this belief, humans construct and enforce a separation between an ideation of a *human environment* that does not count as nature and a *nature* that is deemed to be *wild*, a home for animals and plant life. Cronon argues that 'we live in an urban-industrial civilization but at the same time pretend to ourselves that our real home is in the wilderness' (Cronon, 1995, p.11). Through this pretence, humans are deemed separate: they are positioned in one place that does not count as nature and therefore does not require attending to responsibly; and all that we imagine is of natural nonhuman value is positioned somewhere else (where we are not) and therefore is out of our range and also does not require attending to responsibly (Cronon, 1995). Furthermore, as our *real home* is in the latter *wild* category, this understanding implies that humans have a real self that belongs outside of human culture. Animals who exist within the human side of the binary, such as companion animals, food animals, and to some degree free animals who happen to live in and around human settlements, are also not categorised as *wild* (Urbanik, 2012); instead they fall into the human category. *Wild* is a somewhat fluid category in that for the most part it is utilised in everyday contexts to mean 'to be wild is to be (relatively) uninfluenced by people' (van Dooren, 2016, p.41). The key word here is 'relatively', which incorporates a subjective judgement. In some cases, any animal living outside of direct human control, even if they are tame, such as a garden squirrel, for example, will be termed *wild*, whereas in comparison to a squirrel living in the middle of the Black Mountains in Wales, the garden squirrel is not wild.

The practice of identifying nature through a binary definition was established during the enlightenment period of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Cronon, 1995). An image of the external environment as wild, nonhuman nature became established within Western enlightenment thinking (ibid). During this time, animals were variously collected and placed into taxonomies by naturalists and colonialists (Armstrong, 2002).

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries sublime Nature became domesticated through tourism, colonisation, industrialisation and urbanisation (Cronon, 1995). *Wild* nature became integrated to varying degrees into economic and capitalist processes (Büscher et al., 2012). Over the course of the twentieth century the narrative shifted from the desire to master sublime nature towards nature as something to be *saved* from human encroachment and capitalist expansion (Cronon, 1995, p.3). Aldo Leopold's (1887–1948) classic book '*A Sand County Almanac'* (1949) is a founding text in the emergence of conservation, and a foundation for the belief that nature needed to be saved. Bram Büscher et al. (2012) argue that the development of conservation programmes is entwined with the marketization of nature.

Büscher et al. express this view in relation to capitalism, arguing that '[c]onserving nature, paradoxically, seems also to have become the friend of capitalism' (Büscher et al., 2012, p.7). The entwining of conservation with capitalism is a tautology (ibid, p.13) resulting from neoliberal ideology which Büscher et al. define as the 'political ideology that aims to subject political, social, and ecological affairs to capitalist market dynamics' (ibid, p. 5). Thus everything acquires value as an economic unit, and only units that can be absorbed into economic processes of capitalism are valued. The marketization of nature manifests through processes such as the development of

ecotourism (Fletcher, 2010). Philip Armstrong draws a direct corollary between colonialism and conservation as a global market:

> Today, colonialism's offspring; globalization and diaspora, produce numberless innovations in animal-human relations, from the repackaging of the wild for eco-tourists (whaling becomes whale-watching).

(Armstrong, 2002)

Conservation can be understood as controlled through what the philosopher Michel Foucault (1926-1984) termed *governmentalities*, which are discursive structures for holding power and steering governance (Rutherford, 2007). Central to Foucault's arguments is the view that governance operates as a de-centred and mobile force running through all kinds of political as well as corporate, civil and private areas of life (ibid). As Stephanie Rutherford explains, 'Power is exercised in multiple sites, through different discourses, and often outside the traditional boundaries of the state' (ibid, p.294). As such, conservation needs to be understood as an assemblage of political forces that compete to impose different ideologies and economic values upon the more-than-human world (Rutherford, 2007). Foucault devised the term *biopolitics* in order to define the processes whereby bodies and populations are controlled through cultural norms embodied in social practices and institutions such as health and advertising (ibid). Biopolitical technologies are designed to manage people, animals, and the world more generally (Büscher et al., 2012, p.5). For example, affective film and media productions that portray animals and nature as wilderness in need of interventions from conservationists, can be understood as strategies that validate actions such as the ring fencing of land in ways that reiterate the notion of a nature as exotic and separate from (Western) people (Büscher et al., 2012; Davies, 2000). Many

of these interventions can be considered biopolitical in that they act upon corporeal bodies. For example, the practice of ring fencing areas to manage specific groups of animals often involves the forced removal of both human and animal bodies (Brockington and Igoe, 2006). Furthermore, *wildlife* media productions draw upon affective technologies, acting directly upon viewers' bodies in ways that seek to produce emotional responses that reinforce feelings which bolster the positive portrayals of conservation organisations' actions (Urbanik, 2012; Davies, 2000).

Commodified nature is biopolitically enacted through what Nigel Thrift calls the 'experience economy' (Thrift, 2008, p.71). Thrift argues that nature is commodified through an economy in which it is 'a new genre of economic output' (ibid). The experience economy produces capitalist products in four ranges: education, sport, tourism and performance, all of which act upon spaces and bodies of nature (ibid). My research addresses examples of these manifestations of nature through the exotic animals exhibited at the London Zoo; local wildlife animals who are curated at Camley Street Natural Park; and domesticated farm animals at Kentish Town City Farm. Through investigating these three different organisations and the versions of nature they construct, I elucidate how constructions of natures produce or discourage CWN experiences.

To this end there is another version of nature identified by Thrift, which is practised as a form of new vitalism (Thrift, 2008, p.67). This nature incorporates experiences enacted through affective, kinaesthetic, and body practices in tension with commodified natures. These, Thrift argues, are 'alternative biopolitics' enacting as connective structures such as avant-garde practices and art and fringe activities which open a space for those who are trying to 'sense something different' (ibid, p.74).

1.4.2 Urban Nature-Places

I close this section with an overview of the discourses surrounding the urban posited as a binary to both nature and the rural. In order to do this, I introduce two terms born out of the recent move in geography towards relational theories: firstly, the term 'more-than-human' (Whatmore, 2006), which is meant to dissolve the binary anthropocentric notion of material nature as distinct from human culture that was discussed earlier. 'More-than-human' offers a materialist relational understanding of ecosystems, environments, beings, objects, humans and nonhumans as formed through hybridity and as coevolving in ongoing interconnected relations with one another (ibid). Secondly, the term *natureculture* (Haraway, 2003) is also useful here, as it aims to express the inseparable relational interpretation of places and beings, including humans and natures (Haraway, 2003; Gandy, 2002).

> The term natureculture thus signals how humans – and everything that humans are and do – are always in connection with the other nonhumans that make up the world at any one time. For example, the shift to the natureculture perspective introduces the awareness that there is no 'nature' that is untouched by what humans do, or think. Further, that there is no part of being human that is unaffected by its material interaction with other materialities.

> (Latimer and Miele, 2013, p.16)

Taken together, these two terms demonstrate the importance and value of considering CWN from a relational perspective. Animals are also now becoming understood as entangled versions of their former discrete selves. Their lives are now comprehended as entwined with environments, other beings and human cultures, and animals therefore are full of the 'interplay' between beings (Tsing, 2015, vii).

Similarly to the nature/human binary, the dichotomy of urban and nature or urban and rural has long been troubled in spatial theory (Soja, 1989; Bridge and Watson, 2003, pp.1-7). Geographically, the growth and sprawl of cities beyond suburbs, exurbs and the peri urban, means that modern cities can no longer be understood as being neatly bordered contained spaces (Amin and Thrift, 2002). However, it is not only concrete boundaries that have become difficult to identify, as '[c]ities are not simply material or lived spaces' (Bridge and Watson, 2003, p.7), but are understood to be representations of ideas, dreams and all that is social. Understanding space through relational terms implies that neither landscapes nor cityscapes are separate entities. Spaces are separate from neither the beings within them nor those who pass through, upon, or over their surfaces (Massey, 2005). Tim Ingold's notion of the 'dwelling perspective' alludes to just this understanding: landscape is, in his view, 'the world as it is known to those who dwell therein, who inhabit its places and journey along the paths connecting them' (Ingold, 2000, p.193). Space understood in these terms is situated: how spaces are conceptualised depends upon the viewpoint of the perspective holder (Soja, 1996). Nature does not exclude humans, and cities do not exclude nature (Gandy, 2002). Cities may involve greater densities of human fabrications, but they are equally spaces that are full of air, water, stone, plants and animals (ibid). Conceiving of nature as a distinct type of non-urban space, reduces the urban to an embodiment of non-nature (ibid).

Yet, urban spaces incorporate greater densities of human-made fabric. Therefore, researching CWN within urban nature-places provides an opportunity to investigate how social and scientific categories of animals respond to and manifest within such contexts. Animal bio-geographer Huw Griffiths explains the human experience of nature and cities posited as an antithetical relation:

> The desire to eliminate nature, nature as abject and inimical to domesticity, is still there in the (post)modern city. At the same time, though, wild nature is desired. Its absence in the city figures as a loss, and there is a need to reconnect, if only vicariously or in the imagination.

> (Griffiths et al., 2005, p.71)

Griffiths et al. emphasize the ambiguous relation humans feel towards nature: nature is desired but also feared, and consequently requires domestication. This way of relating to nature alludes to the notion of the sublime presented in relation to enlightenment perspectives of nature (Cronon, 1995). However, Griffiths et al. introduce the idea of the city as a space of *loss*, of disconnection; thus, Griffiths et al. argue, urban nature experience is an experience of conflict. On the one hand, the wild is desirable and therefore experienced as loss, but on the other hand, it is also feared and needs controlling. Since modernity, nature has been designed and curated in cities in order to manage and domesticate it (Cronon, 1995; Holmberg, 2017) but these practices do not resolve the conflict because the experience of loss remains (Griffiths et al., 2005, p.71). The suggestion that in urban contexts, the solution to loss is 'to reconnect, if only vicariously or in the imagination' (ibid), requires further attention. My aim in this research is to investigate how connectedness can be experienced through imaginative processes within urban spaces.

Despite the theoretical logic of naturecultures (Haraway, 2008; Gandy, 2002), people often articulate the spaces they live in, in binary terms that posit nature outside of the city (Sabloff, 2015). The everyday meaning of nature was researched by Sabloff (2015) who, during her ethnographic fieldwork, asked respondents in the streets of Toronto to define what nature means. Sabloff reported that '….nature, [was] almost universally

defined by my respondents as nonhuman living beings' (ibid, p.5). Sabloff demonstrated that nature remained articulated in a binary opposition to urban space, understood as distinctly human made. She cited one of her respondents, who said that 'nature is where I go when I want to get away from the city' (ibid). This statement identifies nature as a distinct place that is *not-city*. This definition illustrates how important it is to attend to the concept of places as naturecultures, wherein it is possible to explore ways to experience CWN in all its spatial forms. Through using imagination in this way, it is possible to attend to and invent spaces that open and invite material nature experiences in urban nature-places.

I consider that urbanity is a tangible feeling, if not a tangibly delineated set of places. I, therefore, approached the urban as an affective experiential space, rather than as a binary urban object (van Dooren and Rose, 2012). Reading the spaces affectively produced an experience orientated account of how it feels to connect with *place*. For example, through my analysis, it was easy to identify the experiences embedded in the past dreams of modernity in the zoo spatial layouts and architecture, and the dominant contemporary rationality of neoliberal urban development affecting the nature park.

I refer to the research field sites as *urban nature-places*, and I introduce these in Chapter 2 when presenting the research design. The term *urban nature-places* provides a means of explicating that these places are specifically constructed as spaces where people in urban contexts are invited to engage with a predetermined version of external nature. Each place is presented and constructed through each field site's ontological and epistemological beliefs and aims. The term *nature-place* is used, following the geographer Doreen Massey, whose theoretical approach was formative to relational understandings of place. Nature-places as such are hybrids, materially

existing as ongoing makings and re-makings of all sorts of interrelational flows, social forces and structures (Massey, 2005).

In this section I have explained how there are many versions of nature (Castree, 2013). I have situated the particular natures that this thesis attends to within wider nature discourses. I have provided an overview of the establishment of the divide between Western humans and a constructed romantic grand nature conceived of as wilderness (Cronon,1995). I then summarised how the development of conservation has come to be viewed by many as the marketization of nature (Büscher et al., 2012; Fletcher, 2010). I introduced the concept of new vitalism as a form of nature encountered through 'sensing something different' (Thrift, 2008). I then described recent conceptual tools to describe the world relationally as more-than-human (Whatmore, 2006), incorporating many forms of naturecultures (Haraway, 2003), and expanded upon this relational lens in order to explain the importance of attending to CWN in urban settings.

1.5 Connection and Disconnectedness

1.4.1 Connection

I now consider what is meant by connection in relation to CWN. Thus far, I have drawn on Nigel Thrift's notion of a *sense of something different*. In order to explore this notion further, I now turn to the work of Derek McCormack, who identifies connection as a form of experiencing:

> Experience is, instead, connective: it is the ongoing product of a multiplicity of 'dynamic connections'.

(McCormack, 2013, p.24)

To experience CWN is therefore *being* nature (McCormack, 2013, p.23), a way of *being* nature that involves becoming somatically aware of the relations between material nature: stones, trees, nonhumans and the human self (ibid). McCormack writes: ''pure experience' is relational, and relations themselves are as real as anything else' (ibid, p.24). Thus, connection is a doing, an involvement. For McCormack, like Thrift, experience involves sensing, and as McCormack further illuminates, experience enacts through cognition: 'Cognitive knowing, as one mode of experiencing, emerges from a background of nonrepresentational sense-making' (ibid). Thus, prior to cognition are relations which are experienced or sensed, and which then may form into cognitive representations. Therefore, to think of the concept of connectedness involves addressing experience and affect. CWN is a matter of experiencing nature which may or may not then form into cognitive ideas and experiences of, or with, nature:

> [E]xperience is of this world: it is not a secondary reflection of the world apprehended from a distance. Experience, in other words, is part of the sensible materiality of nature.
>
> (McCormack, 2013, p.23)

For McCormack, experience is not separate from materiality but is rather *of* materiality—the agentile force of things interconnectedly producing a sense of experience. CWN, then, involves becoming nature: the human self and the sensing relations are not separate from material external nonhuman nature.

Understanding connection as an awareness of interconnected experience, can also be thought of in relation to the notion of *becoming* (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988). Becoming involves the loosening of identities and social constructions in order to affectively become other (ibid). Becoming is not a representation; it is affect in itself, a

35

force and flow (ibid, p.303). In this sense, being connected involves experiencing the affective force that flows between beings and the more-than-human world. Experiencing the self in relation to ongoing becomings involves a shift from conceiving of being a fixed discrete self, towards experiencing through contagion a sense of being multiplicities and a form of becoming animal that Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari refer to as *pack animals* (ibid, p.281). Thus the idea of connection becomes a doing, and specifically a doing of being interconnected.

There is not a specific place we need to go in order to experience being, or to be affected; and there is not a specific means of *doing* connection. As Pauliina Rautio argues, from a materialist perspective, 'It is also about conceiving as a basic premise of our existence that we always already are nature – even while driving to work and back' (Rautio, 2013a, p.446). It is not a question of identifying CWN through understandings of specific natures, but rather through attending to experiences of connection. As this thesis progresses I interrogate connective states, questioning how connectedness manifests and is interpreted. Later in this chapter I introduce the notion of how connection and care are entwined as a further theme running through this research. In order to further situate the understanding of what CWN refers to within scholarly discourses, it is helpful to consider what disconnectedness is conceived as, which I explore next.

1.4.2 Disconnectedness

There is no such thing as *disconnection* as such, only an experience of disconnectedness. Rather than aiming to connect with something distinct and separate, from a materialist perspective the problem shifts to a matter of 'realizing that the relation is always already there, and as much influenced by behaviour and existence of other co-existing species, as it is by our intentional or unintentional

actions' (Rautio, 2013a, p.448). As Rautio states, we are already connected, and it is the experiences that influence behaviour, or in McCormack's terms, cognitive understandings emerge from sensate experience (McCormack, 2013, p.24).

However, the problem remains that many do not experience connectedness (Dickinson, 2013). Disconnection is frequently referred to as the 'extinction of experience' (Pyle, 1993) with symptoms that are said to present as ' . . . a decline in specific qualities of attention, ways of learning and thinking about the natural world' (Thomashow, 2002, p.81, cited in Beery et al., 2015, p.8839) or as a 'reduced emotional affinity with nature' (Soga and Gaston, 2016, p.96). Much (though not all) of the reviewed research into CWN argues that disconnection is caused by urbanisation, for example, Louv (2008), Bragg et al. (2013a), and Beery et al. (2015), who write:

> In less than two generations, people in most countries in the industrialized world have become more disconnected from an everyday experience of nonhuman nature as a result of urbanization, habitat loss and efficiency improvements leading to a drastically reduced workforce in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and other natural resource–based vocations.

(Beery et al., 2015, p.8839)

Urbanisation is frequently presented as above, as a cause of disconnectedness from nature, which tacitly reinforces a binary conception of nature and urban as distinct places and experiences. However, urbanisation is unpacked in more exploratory terms, by, for example, Dickinson (2013), Zylstra et al. (2014), and Keniger et al. (2013). Lucy E. Keniger et al. (2013) argue that urban spaces present greater distraction because 'attention must be directed towards avoiding potential hazards and coping with noise

37

and visual stimuli' (p.922). Shifting lifestyle practices, such as increased use of technology and increased sedentary behaviour, are also deemed to have caused people to become alienated and disconnected from nature (Zylstra et al., 2014; Bragg et al., 2013a).

Some scholars argue that the causes need to be interrogated through analysis of 'the intersections between nature, power and society' (Rutherford, 2007, p.292). From this perspective, the structural causes of society are to blame for increased disconnectedness (Beery et al., 2015; Büscher et al., 2012; Fletcher, 2017). For example, Stephanie Rutherford argues that organisations such as Greenpeace and the World Wildlife Fund, which encourage individuals to live in more environmentally friendly ways, distract from the destructive actions of corporations, such as fossil fuel producers, on the environment (Rutherford, 2007, p.299). From this perspective, it is argued that individuals' disconnection from nature is not the main cause of the current environmental crisis.

Connection and disconnection experiences can be explored through both the tracing of governance and power structures (Rutherford, 2007), and at an individual level through analysis of lifestyle practices and everyday experiences. Furthermore, scholars attend to the intersections and affective flows between these macro and micro frameworks (Fox and Alldred, 2015).

1.5 CWN: A Research Field

1.5.1 Overview of CWN Research

How people connect with nature emerged as a public concern during the middle of the twentieth century (Beery et al., 2015). Leopold is considered to be one of the first

people to articulate the problem of disconnectedness from nature in his 1949 book *A Sand County Almanac* (ibid). Interest in this field has been increasing across many different disciplinary areas since the latter decades of the twenty first century. In 1984, Edward O. Wilson published his theory of 'biophilia', which he described as 'the innately emotional affiliation of human beings to other living organisms' (Wilson, 1984, cited Beery et al., 2015). The theory of biophilia argues that there is an evolutionary connection between species and the world (Beery et al., 2015). In 2002 psychologist Wesley Shultz produced one of the first widely cited psychological nature connection measurement tools: '*Inclusion with nature: The psychology of human – nature relations*' (Shultz, 2001). This measurement scale aimed to consider both cognitive and affective traits in order to understand to what extent individuals include nature as part of their being. The CWN research field is dominated methodologically by psychology (e.g. Chawla, 1998; Zylstra et al., 2014). However, there is a growing interest across a range of disciplines such as environmental education (Fletcher, 2017; Kollmuss and Agyeman, 2002), ethics (Light, 2010) and sustainability (Ives et al., 2017; Beery et al., 2015). I reviewed a range of 40 individual papers including six overview studies, each of which provided further summaries of many additional papers relating to CWN. I present a discussion of the gaps in CWN research and practice which this thesis aims to address. I first provide a description of the shared concerns that relate to connection with nature. Then I examine criticisms within the field that this research attends to. I consider firstly how CWN is dominated by a narrow epistemological perspective. Secondly, I argue that science-based education is utilised as a primary solution to disconnectedness within conservation. Lastly, I argue that human–nonhuman animal interrelations are undervalued as encounters which produce connective and caring experiences.

Across CWN research, there are several different terms in circulation to denote CWN (Ives et al., 2017). These terms broadly denote how people relate to nature in positive ways; however, there is no overall consensus of meaning (Ives et al., 2017; Zylstra et al., 2014; Keniger et al., 2013; Bragg et al., 2013a). Nevertheless, there is agreement on the importance of CWN in order to encourage participation in environment friendly behaviour (Zylstra et al., 2014; Fletcher, 2017; Bragg et al., 2015; Bragg et al., 2013a; Mayer and Frantz, 2004; Lovell, 2016; Zelenski and Nisbet, 2012; Chawla, 1998). CWN is a cause of concern within several areas of policy and academia. This concern can be broadly divided between concern about environmental destruction and concern for human health and wellbeing. I firstly present a brief overview of some of the environmental concerns and then provide an overview of related concerns in health and wellbeing policy.

1.5.2 Environmental Concerns

CWN is said to be a prerequisite to developing pro-environmental actions (Ives et al., 2017; Beery et al., 2015). At this time of environmental crises, this role of CWN is becoming increasingly urgent. Barely a day goes by without a new report outlining climate change[7]. The destruction of air and water through pollutants is another source of concern[8]. Animal extinction rates are now so serious that this time is considered to be 'Earth's sixth mass extinction' for which humans are directly responsible, as one scientific report urges, 'humanity needs to address anthropogenic population extirpation and decimation immediately' (Ceballos et al., 2017). Whilst some governments and organisations are making efforts to stop further destruction, progress has not been made to the levels required (Beery et al., 2015, p.8838), as indicated by

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[7] https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/climate-change [last accessed 1.8.2018].
[8] https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/tag/air-pollution/ [last accessed 1.8.2018].

the following statements: 'Not a single one of the 2010 Biodiversity targets were achieved globally' (United Nations, 2010, cited in Beery et al., 2015); and 'sustainable development remains a generally agreed concept, rather than a day-to-day, on-the-ground, practical reality' (Secretary-General, 2012, p.4, cited in Beery et al., 2015). Kareiva (2008, pp. 2757–2758, cited in Fletcher, 2017, p.226) reframes the notion that connectedness engenders pro-environmental behaviour to argue that disconnectedness is directly responsible for environmental destruction.

At a policy level, Natural England regularly produces reports and briefing arguing for the value of CWN (e.g. Natural England, 2013; Natural England, 2016; Bragg and Atkins, 2016). Furthermore, large UK conservation charities such as the RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) (Bragg et al., 2013) and The Wildlife Trusts (Bragg et al., 2015) have also produced reports on the importance of connecting with nature. However, as Rachel Bragg and Carly Wood state, there is limited UK research, and most of the peer reviewed work is from the US and Scandinavia (Bragg et al., 2015, p.17). Concern about CWN has not yet reached moral panic status (Cohen, 1973), though Richard Louv's oft cited best seller *The Last Child In The Woods* (2008) encapsulates the perceived fear of sedentary living and urbanised lifestyles in the absence of contact with nonhuman nature (Ceballos et al., 2017).

1.5.3 Health and Wellbeing

Evidence from health and wellbeing policy, conservation NGOs, and related academic fields, supports the notion that experiencing CWN improves human health and wellbeing (Moss, 2012; Keniger et al., 2013; RSPB, 2013; Zylstra et al., 2014). Disconnectedness from nature is implicated in a range of increasing health and wellbeing problems. For example, there is growing concern about the increased levels of anxiety and depression. In 2011 there were 46.7 million anti-depressant

prescriptions dispensed in England, which cost £270.2 million. This figure represents an increase of 22.6% from 2010 (Bragg et al., 2015, p.10, citing NHS Information Centre Report, 2012). Furthermore, lifestyles are becoming increasingly sedentary, with less time spent outdoors, and it is predicted that by 2050 half of all the adults in the UK will be obese (Moss, 2012, p.5). More alarmingly, Bragg et al. argue, 'Physical inactivity poses a significant threat to wellbeing and is the fourth leading cause of death globally, accounting for 6% of all deaths' (Bragg et al., 2015, p.10, citing Department of Health, 2004, and Health and Social Care Information Centre, 2013). Whilst it is not suggested that health problems are caused solely by disconnection from nature, it is argued that connecting with nature is beneficial to both mental and physical health (Moss, 2012; Keniger et al., 2013; RSPB, 2013). Consequently, there has been an increase in research relating to both the health benefits of outdoor-based activities such as sports, recreational and eco-focused tourism as well as the health benefits of experiencing CWN (Zylstra et al., 2014, p.125; Bragg et al., 2015).

Whilst there is a growing body of academic and policy literature that addresses CWN through the concerns illustrated above, interventions in place across society are fragmented and forced to compete with a myriad of other social, cultural, political and bio-physical processes, including the marketization of nature described earlier. Within health, for example, there is 'The Five Ways to Wellbeing', developed by the New Economics Foundation (NEF, 2008). 'The Five Ways to Wellbeing' is a list of 5 key steps ('keep learning', 'connect', take notice', 'give', 'be active') to healthier lifestyles and is promoted across the health sector[9]. Conservation NGOs also list ways to become better environmental citizens (Rutherford, 2007), providing lists of actions

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[9] In 2015, I was commissioned to research wellbeing in Southwark, London. I worked directly with the NEF.

individuals can take to reduce plastic footprint[10]. Over the course of my literature review, I read policy documents and evaluations from the London Zoo (2010), '*Learning about animals, science and conservation: Large-scale survey-based evaluation of the educational impact of the ZSL London Zoo Formal Learning programme';* the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (2013), *'Connecting With Nature: Finding out how connected the UK's children are'*; and The Wildlife Trusts (2015), '*Wellbeing benefits from natural environments rich in wildlife'*. These reports were not produced by staff who actually work at any of the above-named organisations and as such do not reflect what staff think, nor exactly what goes on at projects in relation to concerns about CWN. However, taken together they do reflect the organisations' ontological perspectives. I draw on these studies in order to illustrate the current problems with the theoretical understanding of CWN. Because my field research took place at related field sites, I was able to use on the ground ethnographic experience to address this theoretical understanding of the causes of and solutions to CWN.

1.5.4 Epistemology

The CWN research reviews widely agree that there is reductive use of terms including the use of the term *nature* (Ives et al., 2017). This reductive usage is due in part to the dominance of quantitative methodological approaches employed to study CWN (Ives et al., 2017; Adams, 2007; Evely et al., 2008). As geographer Bill Adams writes,

> social scientists often wince at the clunking number-crunching, the dependence
>
> on quantitative questionnaires and the arbitrary definitions involved in

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[10] E.g. '9 ways to reduce your plastic use': https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/9-ways-reduce-plastic-use/ [last accessed 1.8.2018].

conservation scientists' attempts to understand people, and they express amazement at natural scientists' willingness to analyse society without reading relevant literature outside their discipline.

(Adams, 2007)

Adams argues that conservationists remain within their own discipline rather than taking a more outward approach. Much of the work in CWN is undertaken from within Conservation Psychology (Saunders, 2003) and, in the main, these studies relate back to the work of Thomas Tanner (1980) and Peterson and Hungerford (1981), who performed research with environmental professionals using questionnaires and caring scales for analysis (Ernst and Theimer, 2011, p.579). There have been calls for some time now in conservation related areas for more qualitative research (Drury et al., 2010; Moss and Essen, 2013; Chawla, 1998).

Research has consistently found that feelings of connection that develop in childhood are most likely to lead to pro-environmental behaviour in adult life (Zylstra et al., 2014, p.133; Iorio et al., 2017, p.126; Chawla, 2007). However, problematically, Matthew J. Zylstra et al. (2014) found that all of the survey instruments that they reviewed, with the exception of those utilised by Mayer and Frantz (2004), lacked child appropriate questions (Zylstra et al., 2014, p.129). Overall there is a bias towards cognitive interpretations of nature experiences interpellated through quantitative questionnaires (Zylstra et al., 2014; Ives et al., 2017; Drury et al., 2010; Moss and Essen, 2013; Chawla, 1998) which do not attend to the research subjects as children (Zylstra et al., 2014).

Research often reductively cites being in nature as important but does not define it further, for example, 'time outdoors' (Ramsey and Hungerford, 2002, p.154; Zylstra et al., 2014; Bragg et al., 2013a). The reviewed research frequently cites *place* as important, yet the understanding of place remains elusive in the reviews. For example, Julie Ernst and Stefan Theimer (2011, p.580) describe 'place attachment' as involving emotional attachment, an affective place-bond and also place-dependence (for example, in order to carry out a specific activity). They suggest that these combined attributes are conducive to the generation of feelings of CWN:

> The place attachment literature consistently finds that place attachment to be 'grounded in the intimate knowledge of a place one develops through direct presence and activity at a locale'.

> (Eisenhauer, Krannich, and Blahna, 2000, p.423, cited in Ernst and Theimer, 2011, p.582)

The suggestion here is that both place and activity are important in order to understand CWN. This idea relates to Ingold's (2000) explanation of knowledge and understanding acquired through relational interactions, through being in environments, and through using tools and learning through practice. Ingold summarises this process as 'relational-ecological-development synthesis' (Ingold, 2000, p.5). However, as Ives et al. argue below, it is unclear whether research needs to focus on developing local natures or other natures:

> [F]uture research (particularly in psychology) must specify the characteristics of nature that people are connected to. Without such information, it is difficult to know how policies and decisions for sustainability should be formulated. For example, there is scant evidence on whether interactions with forests, rivers,

grasslands or urban parks are more effective in promoting health and well-being, or pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours.

(Ives et al., 2017, p.110)

In the above quote, in addition to the argument that there is a lack of knowledge about types of natures that provide meaningful engagements, the differing positionality of focus is apparent. Whereas Ernst and Theimer and Ingold speak of the relation between doing and being in place, Ives et al. ponder which types of spaces enact CWN. However, overall I considered that the lack of attention to place, taken in combination with the frequent claim that urbanisation causes disconnectedness (Lovell, 2016; Louv, 2008; Jensen, 2010, p.94; Beery et al., 2017; Lorimer, 2017), implies that further research is required to better understand urban nature encounters.

The ecologist James Miller (2005) argued that there is a lack of nature in urban areas and further that connective experiences are more likely to occur in spaces that are freely designed, or even not designed at all. He writes: 'Given the chance, a child will forge his or her own connections with the natural world if they are afforded appropriate places to do so' (Miller, 2005, p.431). Un-curated spaces lend themselves to play, immersion and exploration in ways that encourage efficacy and sensory attention (ibid). Miller notes: 'Particularly in affluent societies, time spent out-of-doors by children tends to be structured in organized activities, which means that there is less time to explore on their own' (ibid). Miller argues that organised activities reduce the potential for young people to explore nature on their own. This situation can be understood as manifesting the tension between the economic genre of nature products and alternative means of *sensing the world* (Thrift, 2008).

1.5.5 Education

Despite the numerous theoretical frameworks and research papers that endeavour to explain the gap between the possession of environmental knowledge and pro-environmental behaviour, no definitive answers have been found (Kollmuss and Agyeman, 2002, p.240). Both Anja Kollmuss and Julian Agyeman (2002) and Louise Chawla (1998) argue that the conservation-based CWN engagement practices have instead focused upon an education deficit model. This model follows a linear view that knowledge will lead to caring, which will in turn produce pro-environmental actions. The connection between knowledge and caring and action 'have repeatedly been shown, by experience, and in research, to be flawed, and a growing body of opinion points instead towards the need for more deliberative and inclusionary procedures' (Owens, 2000, p. 1141, cited in Kollmuss and Agyeman, 2002, pp.240-241).

Over 15 years have passed since Susan Owens (2000) and Kollmuss and Agyeman (2002) published their comments. Around the same time, the free-play movement fell out of favour with the establishment during the 1980s and 1990s. During this era informal education in the UK became aligned with the national education strategy (Cree and McCree, 2012). Fletcher (2010, p.174) describes the policies in place that produced increased governance and structural control from top down ideological reasons during the 1990s as a direct response to the previous *roll-back* of interventionist approaches in the 1970s and 80s. Fletcher articulates this development as 'environmentality', a form of governmentality embedded within conservation public engagement:

> Environmental education would constitute a paradigmatic example of this environmentality in action, whereby, through diverse decentralised institutions (state schools, NGO trainings, community workshops, ecotourism excursions,

etc.), norms intended to encourage *in situ* natural resource preservation are advocated.

<div align="right">(Fletcher, 2010, p.176)</div>

Currently, some theorists, for example, Miller (2005) and Dickinson (2013), call for unstructured time outdoors in order for young people to develop connective nature experiences. For some, education can invite feelings of separation. For example, Fletcher concluded 'that a sense of separation from nature is in fact commonly reinforced by the very environmental education and related practices employed to overcome it' (Fletcher, 2010, p.227). Fletcher is arguing for a political and strategic understanding of the causes of disconnection and alienation which he considers to be the result of neoliberal frameworks that locate the problem at the level of the individual rather than addressing the economic and political causes of environmental devastation (ibid). Instead, Fletcher suggests it would be more productive to

> develop . . . forms of environmental education that problematize rather than reinforce both the constructed opposition between nature and human culture and the (neoliberal capitalist) political-economic structures exacerbating the environmental degradation that these perspectives seek to combat.

<div align="right">(ibid, p.232)</div>

Fletcher argues therefore for an emphasis that aims to teach young people about structural problems that cause environmental damage rather than consider that an individual's use of plastic, for example, is to blame. A further critical view of education comes from Dickinson (2013), who argues that science-based education and nature have become enmeshed (p.10) and that '[t]here are implications to promoting science,

notably in the absence of other framings' (p.11). It is not that science-based teaching per se is undesirable or wrong, but rather that when science-based approaches are the dominant form of engagement between people and the nonhuman world there is a risk of separation through analytical practices. Discussing science-based approaches, Dickinson (2013, p.12) writes:

> While these experiences can be sensory, as a predominant framing, they can create distance by emphasizing a cognitive and analytical approach, while minimalizing emotional expression, connectedness and co-presence.

Dickinson illustrates this phenomenon through a discussion of the negative impacts of naming strategies, which involve identifying other animals through taxonomic name groups that correspond to their biological characteristics. This practice of naming, she argues, 'emphasizes rationality and minimises co-presence and emotional connectedness' (ibid, p.14). Fact-based education has value but, rather than presenting science as the authoritative means of understanding (ibid, p.9), it needs to be balanced in value with other emotional and affective forms of engagement. Likewise, Zylstra et al. (2014) consider that conservation campaigns tend to focus too much on information instead of experience:

> Conservation efforts aimed at fostering ERB[11] have largely focused on information-rich campaigns which are often poorly conceived and targeted, given that knowledge about an issue alone is unlikely to change behaviour.
>
> (Zylstra et al., 2014, p.134)

[11] ERB stands for environmentally responsible behaviour.

This point brings me to the final problem with CWN research that I aim to address in this research, which is the treatment of animals.

1.5.6 Animal Encounters

Earlier I defined connection as interconnected experiencing. I now argue that corporeal immersive encounters with animals can encourage connectedness. Firstly I argue that there is a lack attention in CWN research and engagement to direct animal encounters. Jamie Lorimer's (2007) alternative taxonomy describes immersive feelings that some animals elicit in combination with their environments, as well as encounters that involve *epiphanies*, almost like falling in love (p.921). From a different perspective, Nickie Charles (2014), who conducted interviews with people in order to explore their relationships and understandings of companion animals, remarked how some respondents described feeling 'love at first sight' when they chose a companion animal at a sanctuary (p.723). Both Lorimer's and Charles's studies report similar feelings of epiphanies but towards different categories of animals: *wild* and *companion*. Lorimer's (2007) affective taxonomy supports the notion that thinking in terms of categories is misleading, so that it is rather the experiences that affect how people form connectedness.

The majority of papers I reviewed did not attend to animals beyond the notion of them as part of nature. For example, a keyword search of the literature[12] that I reviewed, yielded poor results for the terms 'animal' or 'wildlife'. For example: Keniger et al.

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[12] It should be noted that the reviews listed above covered several hundred papers, and I also looked at approximately 40 papers for animal content. Furthermore, almost all of the British based research I found is conducted by the same team in Essex under Rachel Bragg.

(2013) do mention animals, but speak of watching wildlife, mostly in relation to tourism. Ives et al. (2017) do not mention animals or wildlife, and Bragg et al. (2015), who conducted a literature review for The Wildlife Trusts, did not mention animals, only the generic use of the term *wildlife*. Only Zylstra et al. (2014) considered the value of human-animal engagements for CWN in relation to encouraging pro-environmental behaviours[13]. They did not give much room to the animals, but they did mention the value of inviting young people to engage in naturalist activities:

> Cultivating conventional naturalist skills such as bird-watching, plant drawing and identification, ecological mapping (including sounds), animal tracking and acute, silent observation can all be highly beneficial activities for finding CWN. These exercises can bring people into closer contact with wildlife, which has also been shown to help foster CWN.

(Zylstra et al., 2014, p.131)

It was refreshing to find an account that values human-animal encounters, and that furthermore suggests methods for engagement practices that do not entail enclosing animals. However, it should also be noted that the suggestion is to focus upon 'wildlife' rather than animals understood as individual subjects. Tracking and watching animals are included in the list of other practices, without articulation of the human-animal encounter as an interconnected experience involving an understanding of animals as subjects. Zylstra et al. (2014) cited *Coyote's Guide to Connecting with Nature*, a book by Jon Young, Ellen Haas, and Evan McGown (2010), in relation to the above quote.

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[13] Rebecca Lovell et al. (2016) and Richard Gorman (2017) provide literature reviews of work on animals in relation to wellbeing through care farms. Animals are regarded as positive for human wellbeing but are not widely considered in relation to their benefits for encouraging pro-environmental behaviour.

This text provides an account of engaging children with nature experiences through summer camps in a range of outdoor spaces including inner Seattle. It is based upon an indigenous people's cultural perspective, and the narration uses *Coyote* as a guide. This book presents an alternative account of CWN that can be understood as an invitation to 'sense something different' (Thrift, 2008). The CWN research papers generally leave out the poetic, affective and alternative ways in which experiences take place. In this case, it is what is left out that matters: what is left out is the *doing*—the experience as connection (McCormack, 2013).

Within behaviourism and ethology there is caution in relation to expressing feelings about animals, for fear of being anthropomorphic (Bekoff, 2002). I discuss this hesitation in Chapter 4, which provides a discussion of the effect of interpretive strategies in relation to forming less anthropocentric and more ethical and caring relations with nonhuman animals. Whilst anthropomorphic accounts of animals are understood as beneficial for engendering support for conservation goals (Smith et al., 2012; Root-Bernstein et al., 2013, p.6), they are not taken seriously as practices for engendering corporeal connective experiences. One of the studies I reviewed was commissioned by the London Zoo and conducted by Eric Jensen (2010), entitled '*Learning about animals, science and conservation: Large-scale survey-based evaluation of the educational impact of the ZSL London Zoo Formal Learning programme'*. As the title suggests, the study focused upon the zoo's education programme; however, it did contain some questions that related to CWN, though only minimally. Furthermore, it utilised quantitative survey methods and could not address the connective epiphanies involved in meaningful human-animal experiences.

From my review, animals that are deemed to be beneficial for human wellbeing are often those utilised in care farm settings, whereas the animals mentioned in CWN

research relating to CWN for pro-environmental behaviour tend to be categorised as wildlife, and are often posited within a reductively defined nature backdrop (Ives et al., 2017). Richard Gorman, who has conducted research in care farm contexts, argues that care farms seek to promote human wellbeing through engagement with farm work more generally. He also argues that there is a lack of attention to animals in therapeutic contexts:

> [T]here has been little research exploring the role of nonhumans in therapeutic landscapes; animals have instead been subsumed into the broader concept of 'nature' . . . . Often discussed is how 'wild' landscapes can evoke therapeutic experiences.

> (Gorman, 2017, p.319)

Therapeutic landscapes possess a distinct remit for encouraging wellness and healing, whereas this thesis is primarily concerned with the ways in which connectedness can engender pro-environmental behaviour. However, as Gorman states, it is unfortunate that animals have been subsumed into wider nature, as a backdrop for human experience, rather than positioned as subjects whom humans can encounter. As Gorman (2017, p.319) continues to explain, multispecies encounters and relations can offer powerful experiences in therapeutic settings.

To conclude this section, I argue that, from a material feminist perspective, encounters with nonhuman animals are valued for the intrinsic connective and caring experiences that they can afford. At the beginning of this section I described the epiphanies illustrated by Lorimer (2007) in relation to encounters with wildlife subjects and Charles (2014) in relation to companion animal relationships. Over the course of this chapter, I

have demonstrated that much of the CWN related research does not attend to the relations and encounters and affective experiences that produce connectedness. I finish with a quote from Mary Philips who argued that the knowing which manifests through direct corporeal experiences, is of a different kind to that of knowing abstracted animals:

> It is a corporeal and affective knowing in and through the body which goes beyond the propositional knowledge generated by gathering facts and information . . . . This embodied and situated knowledge can be gained from direct experience of 'concrete others' . . . . .
>
> (Philips, 2016, p.477)

In this passage, Philips stresses the value of understanding connective experiences as situated and involving material and affective encounters. This thesis does not directly research whether it is necessary to enter into corporeal relations with animal others in order to know them as corporeal beings, which would have required a different research design. The thesis attended rather to how corporeal animals such as zoo animals and pond animals and farm animals are conceived of through their various categories and instrumental emplacements investigated as forms of representations, as abstractions of their corporeal being-ness.

I have situated the term CWN through firstly a discussion of the composite terms *nature* and *connection*. I have discussed both the structural causes as well as the shifts in individual lifestyles that are deemed to lead to disconnectedness. I have argued that how people develop and experience CWN is an important concern, which is addressed in many disciplines but most often through quantitative research methods. I have critiqued the pedagogical reliance on science-based education as a cure-all for this

complex area, and have argued that CWN research and pedagogies ignore animals as corporeal individuals, especially in relation to concerns of pro-environmental behaviour. I have argued that urban-dwelling people are often *assumed* to have a nature deficit (Lorimer, 2017). This assumption has, in turn, produced urban or nature typologies of animals (and other nonhuman life forms) with related sets of norms and cultural practices attached.

Figure 3: Zoo visitor drawing with a kangaroo.

1.6 Research Questions

This investigation was developed on the basis of four research questions that aim to address gaps in epistemologies and understanding in current CWN research. Firstly, I ask:

- How do urban human–nonhuman animal relations affect people's CWN?

Subdivided into encounters with zoo animals, city farm animals, and nature park animals.

This question aims to address the lack of attention to corporeal interspecies encounters in CWN research. It also attends to the impact of categories imposed upon animals in relation to the potential for humans to form connective interspecies experiences. Attending to animals in an urban context presents the opportunity to rethink how immersive relations and direct encounters can be especially important in urban environments, where there is a density of distractions such as roads and buildings (Keniger et al., 2013). The three categories of animals selected, i.e. zoo, nature park, and city farm animals, represent the types of categories imposed upon animals within formally organised urban nature-places. Of course, there are also zoo and nature park animals in rural locations, and many city farm animals are comparable to petting zoo and care farm animals. I consider the value of researching these categories in terms of understanding how the specific categories construct and impact upon the encounters situated in the context of the urban nature-places.

This consideration leads into my second question:

- How do the anthropomorphic and ontological positions of the field site organisations affect visitors' CWN?

This query aims to attend to the ontological frameworks of each field site, i.e. the London Zoo, Camley Street Natural Park, and Kentish Town City Farm, in order to consider how the interpretive practices embedded in ontologies and epistemological frameworks construct versions of the animals, and how those interpretations and

versions affect visitor experiences with the animals. In turn, I investigate how constructed human-animal encounters invite or obscure CWN.

The third question asks:

- What can multispecies inventive methods bring to understanding and defining CWN in cities?

This question recognises the need to develop multispecies awareness and methodological strategies in order to research multispecies encounters, and CWN. The empirical chapters (Chapters 6, 7 and 8) explore this question in detail, providing a reflective account of how inventive methods were developed through ongoing practice at the field sites.

The final question calls for analysis of the value of the novel methodological approach taken:

- What are the implications of this visual sociological inventive methods approach for animal studies and for conservation research?

This question is particularly relevant given that current research in CWN tends to be situated outside of visual sociology, and furthermore because the most frequently employed methods retain the quantitative methodological approach, thus validating a cognitive bias as discussed in the previous section (Ives et al., 2017). This question also invites an exploration of how the dominance of science-based pedagogy could be rebalanced in order to include emotional experiences with animals.

Figure 4: Goats at Kentish Town City Farm.

Chapter 2. Assembling Animals: An Approach

2.1 Introduction

I have presented four research questions which were developed in response to an analysis of CWN discourses. Here, I provide an explanation of the conceptual approach that organised the research. I begin with an explanation of the relational materialist lens through which the conceptual tools are situated. Next, I introduce the research and field sites as being part of a research assemblage (Fox and Alldred, 2015; Ringrose and Renold, 2014) involving cultural processes, research protocols, me—the researcher, and all of the material spaces and individual humans and

nonhuman animals. I then argue that addressing the affective experiences flowing through the research assemblage, provides a means to draw out the connectedness within the corporeal human–nonhuman encounters. I argue that in attending to affect, a multispecies understanding of how CWN is experienced is generated. I then introduce and define some of the key terms I utilise throughout the thesis to explore how human-animal encounters can be analysed. Firstly I introduce the notion of *affective atmosphere* (Lorimer et al., 2017; McCormack, 2013) in order to attend to the spatial interrelations within the research contexts. I explain how beings enact relationally through *performativities*, drawing on Judith Butler (1993) and Karen Barad (2008)*.* I present further discussion on *governmentalities* and affect articulated as power. Here I draw on, among others, Alan Swingewood (2000), Lisa Blackman et al. (2008), and Irus Braverman (2015). Next I introduce inventive methods, along with the concepts of *becoming*, *becoming animal* (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) and *becoming-with* (Haraway, 2003; Haraway, 2008), which were developed as forms of methodological focus in the research.

2.2 A Relational Approach to CWN

A relational approach is what Joanna Latimer and Mara Miele (2013) call 'a movement toward an ontology of connection rather than division that stresses the relation between human and nonhuman others' (p.15). A relational understanding of connection therefore takes as a priori that we are connected always, although contingently, through all manner of attachments and detachments (ibid, p.16). Relational theories move away from rigid dichotomies and definitions such as 'urban and nature' and 'wild and domestic', taking into account that meanings shift depending upon relations, contexts and ontological positions. A relational account of nature does not position nature in a specific place, which includes some animals but not others

(Massey, 2005; Gandy, 2002), or regard it as excluding humans (Whatmore, 2002, p.2). Rather, it considers nature in relation to both material and cultural aspects of the world (Latour, 1993). Latimer and Miele take up Haraway's term *natureculture* (2003), which makes explicit the relational aspects of the material world.

Thinking in natureculture terms is an ontological and an epistemological practice (Latimer and Miele, 2013). Relational theories entail a shift from conceiving of ontology and epistemology as separate, to taking seriously the notion that ontology and epistemology are discursive and intra-acting, meaning that they materially and dialogically respond to and produce each other (Barad, 2007; Haraway, 1988). Relational theories draw heavily upon, among others, the actor-network theoretical approaches formulated by Michel Callon and Bruno Latour (1992), which portray the world as full of networks of human and nonhuman actors and actants, all of which have agency (Latour, 2005). From this perspective, subjects, both human and nonhuman, are no longer fixed but are rather always developing through ongoing relations (Latour, 2005).

A second important component in relational theories is materialism. Materialist ontologies were spawned through the need to comprehend and explain the liveliness of matter (Whatmore, 2006), which consequently has come to be understood as agentic. As Sarah Whatmore (2006) explains, 'This redistribution of energies puts the onus on 'livingness' as a modality of connection between bodies (including human bodies) and (geo-physical) worlds' (p.603). This understanding of agency is more than theoretical. It is material: it speaks directly of the entanglement of beings, and to the ongoing symbiosis, contagions and interferences of beings and things (Haraway, 2008, p.32). However, agency is not equally distributed between beings and objects (Barad, 2007, p.178); therefore, investigating how affect is mobile, and mobilises through relations,

encounters and spaces, requires critical engagement. Furthermore, as '[a]gency is not an attribute whatsoever—it is 'doing' / 'being' in its intra-activity' (Barad, 2008, p.144), the focus shifts from conceiving of defined objects, to conceiving of inter-corporeal ongoing relations that manifest through *doing* or *being as doing*. From a relational materialist perspective, seemingly firm statements become contingent (Barad, 2007) in as much as despite appearing to be stable, and to hold a position, things are always ongoing. Barad's formulation of *intra-action*, drawn from Haraway's original use of the term (Ringrose and Renold, 2014), foregrounds the materiality of interactions— because intra-actions encompass affects, and molecular disturbances (Barad, 2007). Intra-action has mobilised material ontologies in ways that provide a bridge between the material and the constructed, between nature and culture (Barad, 2008), terms which have been widely worked with in feminism (Coleman, 2014).

As Barad explains:

> Particular possibilities for (intra-)acting exist at every moment, and these changing possibilities entail an ethical obligation to intra-act responsibly in the world's becoming, to contest and rework what matters and what is excluded from mattering.

> (Barad, 2007, p.178)

This ethical obligation has been taken up by feminist theorists who consider that 'care, and the ability to empathise through care, is a moral emotion essential to ethical motivation, deliberation and practice' (Warren, 2000,p.100 cited in Philips, 2016, p.476). Furthermore, as Haraway explains, it is necessary to get involved, to take a stance, to become aligned with others even if it is a messy alignment (Haraway, 2016,

p.41). Intra-action therefore involves grasping intersectional obligations to knowing what and how things affect other things across different space-times (Haraway, 2008). Applying this understanding to the problem in hand, that is, to the growing concerns about the consequences of perceived disconnectedness from the environment, recalls William Cronon's comment cited earlier wherein he argued that it is through the act of separating ourselves, and thus regarding nature as '*the place where we are not'*, that we lose a sense of responsibility (Cronon, 1995, p.11). Addressing the world as intra-acting, and breaking away from binary dualisms, involve dissolving the ontological and epistemological divide (Ringrose and Renold, 2014, p.3). This shift in being and knowing calls to the understanding that

> affect and researcher 'subjectivity' permeate the research process at every stage, from our research questions through to our research design, conference papers, publications and wider forms of communication.

(ibid, p.1)

Therefore, not only is research always situated (Haraway, 1988), but the research processes, including design, field research, data collection and analysis, are not neatly delineated activities. This research responds to the review of literature on CWN; however, it also responds to all of the animals I encountered and to the material spaces. I designed this research assemblage to be experimental and prepared for new contingencies in the making of knowledge through ongoing analysis and insights as the work progressed.

2.3 Assemblages

Assemblage is a concept widely drawn upon in geography and the social sciences to theoretically explain how material, conceptual, subjective, nonlinear and non-narrative things come together (Fox and Alldred, 2015). It is part of a 'Deleuzo – Guattarian' framework (Ringrose and Renold, 2014) that is embraced as a set of conceptual resources for navigating and mapping contingent ongoing intra-actions. Assemblage was formulated as an ontological tool by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1988, p.24):

> An assemblage, in its multiplicity necessarily acts on semiotic flows, material flows, and social flows simultaneously . . . . There is no longer a tripartite division between a field of reality (the world) and a field of representation (the book) and a field of subjectivity (the author).

Assemblages are useful because they point to the connections between the material and constructed theoretical realms, including objects and ideas in any given form. It is the relations that hold objects, and things, together as an assemblage (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988). Assemblages present an opportunity to comprehend connections that exist in nonlinear topologies (ibid, p.24). Thinking with assemblages enables a shift from conceptualising within the binary notions of nature/culture, for example, towards non-hierarchical, rhizome interconnections enabling the exploration of the various material and conceptual structural forces as well as corporeal beings, human and nonhuman, within the material field research sites. Thus, the sites, as urban nature-places, can be understood as assemblages of governmentalities, human social processes, material spaces and corporeal bodies.

I now define key terms in order to describe how power moves within assemblages. Firstly, beings enact and act on and with other material objects and beings performatively. *Performativity* refers to the interconnected and ongoing making of identities (Butler, 1993). This term was originally introduced by Judith Butler in relation to gender (ibid); however, it is also understood in relation to all manner of interactions: 'Discursive performativity appears to produce that which it names, to enact its own referent, to name and to do, to name and to make' (ibid, p.107). Performativity correspondingly speaks to the interrelatedness of interactions as a process that is not delineated but rather is an ongoing making and articulating. Performativity, from Butler's linguistic perspective, relates specifically to how subjects are constructed through cultural processes rather than through socio-material intra-actions. Barad argues that a materialist performativity is a 'materialist, naturalist, and posthumanist elaboration that allows matter its due, as an active participant in the world's becoming' (Barad, 2003, p. 804, cited in Hekman, 2008, p.104). Performativity therefore includes matter as well as humans in enactments and intra-actions between and across and thus dissolving the culture/nature binary.

In the previous section I provided a brief explanation of governmentality and biopolitics, in order to explain how conceptions of natures are not innocent concepts. I now consider these terms in relation to affect. Foucault introduced the idea that power is not centralised or held within sovereign establishments, elite institutions and demographic groups (Swingewood, 2000). He reframed power as a force that runs through all kinds of spaces, creating structures that discipline and control social processes and populations (ibid, pp.192-200). He argued that power is mobile and actively flows through discourses (ibid), and introduced the idea of governmentalities as means of articulating how control flows in de-centred and differing manifestations, for example, as actual laws and policies or more softly through cultural coding, taboos, and even

media messaging (ibid). Affective control can operate at a biopolitical level and as such, operates performatively on and within corporeal bodies (Blackman et al., 2008). Biopolitics are bound up in the regimes imposed upon zoo animals (Braverman, 2015) and versions of natures (Büscher et al., 2012). Deleuze and Guattari (1988) address power through explaining how affect moves through *the molar*, which refers to state and civic macro entities and assemblages, and *the molecular*, which comprises the micropolitical areas of everyday life (pp.251-253). They conceptualise relational connections through the notions of deterritorializing, territorializing and reterritorializing to construct a framework (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.86) in order to describe how relations are determined in mobile assemblages. Things deterritorialize when they move away from an assemblage, through 'a line of flight', and may become territorialized in a different assemblage (ibid). Thus theorists are attending to affect, and to research as lively in the making of knowledge. This approach operates at the level of the molecular, and I applied this approach through developing methods to analyse how affective encounters were mediated by the field site practices.

2.4 Affect and Affective Atmospheres

Affect is the force of how things are experienced, how they are felt and how they become apparent and manifest in mutable and ongoing ways. As Whatmore explains below, methods are needed that can capture what things are *doing* rather than focusing upon what things *mean* from a static perspective:

> Affect refers to the force of intensive relationality - intensities that are felt but not personal; visceral but not confined to an individuated body. This shift of concern from what things mean to what they do has methodological consequences for how we train our apprehensions of 'what subjects us, what affects and effects us' or 'learn to be affected'.

Research is not, therefore, about forming knowledge as fixed objects, but rather developing methods capable of exploring the entangled practices of *doing*s addressing the socio-material ongoing relations. Relational theories call for responding to material and corporeal affects as forces that changes how we think and experience the world in ongoing becoming-with ways (Latimer and Miele, 2013, p.14). The term *atmosphere* is useful here for understanding how affect is spatialised through the sensory experiences of assemblages (Lorimer et al., 2017, p.2). Lorimer et al. (2017, p.7) consider that attending to the affective atmospheres of animals

> involves attuning to a range of unfamiliar media and means of communicating across time and space. The attention of atmospheric geographers shifts to the airborne passage of sounds and smells, to seismic rumbles or to fluctuations in pressure, temperate and humidity.

I aimed to attune to the urban nature-places as multispecies affective atmospheres, in order to become immersed in a methodological assemblage able to attend to the affective and sensory experiences of animals and humans living embedded lives (Lorimer et al., 2017). Through attending to the field site assemblages as affective atmospheres, the sensory and affective connective and distracting qualities of the places can become apparent. McCormack has been central in developing methods able to attune to affective spaces as atmospheres:

> The experimental quality of affective spacetimes is not so much that they provide opportunities to prove or demonstrate a prefigured idea, but that they have the potential to generate a feeling of something happening that disturbs,

agitates, or animates ideas already circulating in ways that might open up possibilities for thinking otherwise.

(McCormack, 2013, pp. 9-10)

Attuning to the atmospheres of the field sites presented the opportunity to *agitate* in ways that loosen the curated ontological structures that instrumentally hold the conceptions of nature and of animals in place. I firstly aimed to make visible the affective flows that organised and mediated connective experiences, and then through inventive practices, attended more significantly to the potential sensory multispecies experiences to a point where *possibilities for thinking otherwise* become apparent.

Attending to the field sites as affective assemblages provides the potential to research the interconnections between the structural and behavioural actions and activities as interrelational components which include both humans and animals. Thus, in approaching the concerns and the causes of connectedness with nature through the lens of assemblage, the question becomes a matter of what is connective and what causes disconnectedness, or what is distracting. This questioning offers a different orientation to the problem, one that requires inventive methods.

I now move on to discuss how I developed methods that needed to become lively in order to investigate the field sites as multispecies affective atmospheres. Quantitative methods resist the thickening of knowledge through the inclusion of corporeal experiences involved within human–nonhuman animal encounters. Furthermore, Henry Buller argues that it is methods that have underpinned the distinctions which hold binaries in place:

67

Methodologies have been the mechanism by which such ontological and epistemological divisions have, in the past, been maintained. Methods have ontological consequences; methods 'are political'.

(Buller, 2014, p.2)

In this quote, Buller underscores the divisions between humans and animals based upon human-directed methodologies. The dominance of cognitive questionnaires in the CWN research (Ives et al., 2017) reductively filters away much of the experiential and affective force involved within forming feelings of CWN, especially in relation to human-animal encounters. Dominique Guillo has argued that the paradigm of behaviourism which is criticised for reducing the animal to a machine model, actually does the same to humans (Guillo, 2015, p.124). It is not a species divide as such, but rather an epistemologically biased ontology that privileges the research of knowable phenomena over other, less certain forms of research (Latour, 2003).

This thesis aims to include uncertainty on the basis that how we are with animals and how we experience connectedness to natures remain uncertain. I aimed to develop methods that made both the connective and disconnected experiences at the research sites apparent, through attending to affective experiences. I developed a two-stage approach to the methods, underpinned by the concepts of research assemblage and affective assemblage discussed above. In order to think specifically with human-animal encounters, I utilised three versions of *becomings* as methodological strategies: becoming and becoming animal (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) and becoming-with (Haraway, 2008). The first stage of the field research utilised a combination of participant observation and visual sociology, and investigated the human-animal

interactions through becoming. The second stage of the research incorporated participatory drawing experiments that endeavoured to utilise becoming animal as a means to engage participants with the research. Lastly, I conducted interventions as a means to introduce becoming-with as a participatory method for experiencing connection with animals. In the following sections I firstly explain this inventive methodological approach, and I then introduce becoming, becoming animal, and becoming-with, in order to better define the shifting focus enabled through the methods.

2.5 Inventive Methods

2.5.1 Introducing Inventive Methods

Many authors agree that methods have not kept up with the new theoretical turns (Buller, 2015; Coleman, 2014; Lorimer, 2008). There is a growing body of inventive methods that aim to investigate the world through developing practices that attend to knowledge as *doing (*Marres et al., 2018*)*. Inventive methods aim to capture the moments of transmission, contagion, and intensities where beings and things become affected and affecting (Papoulias and Callard, 2010). Researching affect through inventive methods has been taken up within multispecies research, because there is no shared cognitive language between species (Buller, 2014). Within animal studies, the embodied nature of multispecies encounters foregrounds much of this methodological thinking:

> We may not share language with non-humans but we do share embodied life
> and movement and, in doing so, different – yet both biologically and socially
> related ways of inhabiting the world.

(Buller, 2014, p.5)

In this sense, multispecies methods pose specific demands: they need to address nonrepresentational communication and attend and attune to embodiment. Buller continues,

> human geography and other cognate disciplines have begun, inventively and experimentally, to explore what Barad (2003: 829) refers to as 'practices of knowing' that 'cannot be fully claimed as human practices'.
>
> (Buller, 2015, p.5)

Engaging in 'practices of knowing' implies finding methods from an ontological perspective that understands human experience as one of many ways of knowing (Despret, 2103b). This engagement further draws on the notion that methods, and the knowledge they produce, are situated (Haraway, 1988), intra-acting within each research context. Methods can never be completely known or reproduced and are always, therefore, inventions: they always respond to their situatedness in a performative sense (Rautio, 2013b, p.396). The orthodox methods favoured in much CWN research (Ives et al., 2017; Zylstra et al., 2015) are equally situated and performative (Guggenheim, 2015). Without the inclusion of methods as performative in the making of social science, knowledge remains incomplete (Marres et al. 2018, p.8), as Noortje Marres et al. explain:

> [O]ne needs to adopt a performative approach – and its favoured research methodology, ethnography – to appreciate that observational social methods, such as survey research, do not simply represent social life, but act on and in it.
>
> (ibid, p.6)

Furthermore, through adopting a performative approach, methods become *lively*, and active in the making of knowledge (Back and Puwar, 2012; Marres et al., 2018). Marres et al. (2018) suggest that we can transform the 'ongoing practices' into 'occasions for social inquiry' (p.11). Here, Marres et al. do not suggest that orthodox methods should be abandoned, but more so that they need to be accounted for as participating in the research. This understanding introduces a new ethic into research, because now, the authority of knowledge becomes a more democratic and participatory affair, full of intra-actions and agencies that previously were not apparent, or not accounted for (Marres et al., 2018; Savransky et al., 2018).

Rather than research empirical objects that are deemed to already exist, inventive methods embrace an experimental position that questions what may be made or found in the making of research (Savransky et al., 2018). This embrace alludes to the understanding already introduced, namely that methods are performative and are therefore active in the making of objects of research and knowledge. The desire to find novel methods to conduct research aims to address the social world in ways that matter, specifically through the use of meaningful apparatuses and research instruments. Marres et al. explain: 'Inventive approaches to social research explore different ways of combining doing, making and knowing social life, of connecting representation and intervention' (Marres et al., 2018, p.7). Research of this kind acknowledges what is a likelihood, or a probable pattern, but is also prepared to transform the very order of the possible in novel and unexpected ways (Savransky et al., 2018, p.7).

The experiments and interventions aimed to challenge existing organisational structures and to invent connective practices within the field sites, in response to the reductive methods normatively utilised to research how people experience CWN. I

endeavoured to re-shape the existing orthodox visitor engagement practices towards more attentive and connective encounters (Hickey-Moody, 2013, p.92). Rather than be interventionist, inventive methods aim to loosen ways of knowing and co-produce new fluid knowledges, as 'to conduct research on society always means to actively *engage with* social settings and actors – with techniques that are not indifferent to the researched' (Marres et al. 2018, p.10). It means to be attentive to the processes in which things may become apparent and matter, rather than sticking with a precast design or instrument in order to achieve the aims of the work (Stewart, 2007).

2.5.2 Research Through Becomings

The first stage of the research involved participant observation and visual ethnography. At this stage of the research, in order to understand the affectivity of the spaces and multispecies encounters, I aimed to attend to the research through a sense of becoming. Working with ethnographic methods by drawing upon visual strategies, whilst also developing a research attention to multispecies encounters, was informative. However, I also started to consider the need to find methods to investigate the embodied and affective transmissions, feelings and communication between species. Using photography and drawing provided an understanding of the value of body practice and body awareness in relation to working with animals. I developed practices of becoming animal and becoming-with in order to bring multispecies encounters more fully into the research.

The experiments and interventions were responses that were not prefixed or planned before I began the field research but rather arose through the ethnography. The aim was to conduct this second stage as an unfolding response to the ethnographic experiences and analysis of the field sites and the humans and animals. I had amassed ethnographic data and understanding of the factors I found to be distracting.

Many of the multispecies visitor interactions I participated in, or observed, were heavily structured and curated and thus closed to connective experiences. In this second stage of the research I intended to explore the potential of inventive connective practices in order to lay open this problem.

The overall framework for the stage two experiments and interventions drew upon both becoming animal (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) and becoming-with (Haraway, 2003) as tools to repurpose naturalist practices from being animal behaviour knowledge-making practices towards doing connective practices. That is, the practices were meant to loosen existing normative boundaries and structures in order to de-territorialise (Hickey-Moody, 2013, p.89) the self towards a relational becoming-with the animal (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.185). De-territorialising the self involves a re-contextualising, a dissolving of identity, an opening towards a re-territorialising as something other. This loosening invites a mode of connective attunement and embodied communication: boundaries are both loosened and affectively felt. Humans become animal, in the sense that they are no longer being or acting according to the constraints of the social or cultural mechanics of human society (Massumi, 2014, pp.56-57).

2.5.3 Becoming, Becoming Animal and Becoming-with

Within animal studies and multispecies aesthetics, the concepts of becoming, becoming animal (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) and becoming-with (Haraway, 2003; Haraway, 2008) are of central importance because they are understood as facilitating a process for experiencing the connected states of being more-than-human. Becoming is closely aligned to attunement, for it describes a state of connectivity with another being or with otherness, in an abstracted way. Becoming connected infers a move from dualistic separation to connections based on affinity and multiplicity (Deleuze and

Guattari, 1988). It can be understood as symbiosis rather than imitation, and in terms of experience as an affective force (ibid, p.290). Deleuze and Guattari critique psychoanalytic interpretations in response to the notion of becoming as a state rather than a representation of Oedipal drives. Guattari trained as a psychoanalyst, under Lacan, as well as being an activist and a philosopher (Massumi, 1988).

> They [psychoanalysts] see the animal as a representation of drives, or a representation of the parents. They do not see the reality of a becoming-animal, that it is affect itself, the drive in person, and represents nothing.

> (Deleuze and Guattari 1988, p.303)

Deleuze and Guattari are arguing here that becoming is not a symbol or representation of a (Freudian) psychoanalytic drive. Becoming is an affective and real experience, rather than a projection of internal processes. Though becoming is real it does not involve magically turning into something else; it implies a movement involving an othering through the course of the ongoing attaching and detaching (territorialising and deterritorializing) from assemblages through the forces of affect (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988). Becoming opposes symbolic theories that attend to everything as representations of the human mind, in which the external world is conceptualized through a series of mirror images.

Becoming does not always refer to becoming animal, and becoming animal can be understood in relation to connecting to another way of being. Becoming therefore is not about becoming an animal and is not a means of addressing an animal as such (ibid). However, it does invite the possibility of loosening human constructs and identities, to

engage affectively and become part of a multiplicity that involves nonhuman others. Deleuze and Guattari write:

> Who has not known the violence of these human sequences, which uproot one from humanity, if only for an instant, making one scrape at one's bread like a rodent or giving one the yellow eyes of a feline?

(Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.280)

This passage articulates how one becomes other, often momentarily, and affect is running through the experience as an energy that de/re/territorialises into becomings. Embracing these forms of experience invite participation in the more-than-human world, loosened from a position where governmentalities, identities and cultures are fixed.

In order to actually encounter an animal, I draw upon Haraway's (2008) concept of 'becoming-with' to bring the animal into the research as a corporeal being. Here it is not only about humans becoming animal, but humans and animals becoming-with. This shift in understanding involved addressing the research subjects as a relation between species rather than looking at either humans or animals as fixed beings. Becoming-with involves a closer understanding of the co-relations that enable ongoing connection, whilst at the same time foregrounding the otherness present in both beings. Haraway (2008) states that 'my premise is that touch ramifies and shapes accountability' (p.36). This point highlights the importance of corporeal animal relationships, whereby 'touch' leads to accounting for (an ethical obligation) through a process that acknowledges the histories, the politics and the evolutionary processes that brought the two beings together. For Haraway, touch leads to care through her

75

contention that 'caring for, being affected and entering into responsibly are not ethical abstractions; these mundane, prosaic things are the result of having truck with each other' (ibid). This argument is forceful in the context of my research as I intended to investigate how 'having truck with each another' flows into connective experiences and actions. I considered that an instructive place to start is with creative practices that can draw on imaginative processes. Philips argues for 'a caring imagination to create points of departure for developing responsive interconnections that inform action' (Philips, 2016, p.477). In the following chapter in which I outline my methodology, I lay out the visual and imaginative methods that I developed. However, I firstly introduce the research field sites, and explain how the project was organised.

2.6 Research Design

2.6.1 Introducing the Research Design

In the previous section I elucidated how the conceptual framework grounded my approach to the research. Here I provide a descriptive account firstly of the criteria I drew upon in order to select the three field research sites: the London Zoo, Camley Street Natural Park and Kentish Town City Farm. I describe ways in which the sites performatively informed the methodological choices that were made in the course of the field research. I then provide a description of who I engaged with during the fieldwork, who I worked with and spoke to, and which animals I came to know. This description therefore underpins the following methodology chapter.

I did not intend to arrive at a grand universal understanding of CWN. The current research demonstrates that there are several causes that are not well understood due to the use of reductive research methods (Ives et al., 2017). I addressed this problem with a practice-based approach that attended to the experiences of connectedness and

disconnectedness afforded by field site organisations. I conducted the research in two stages. Firstly, I carried out ethnographic research from an embedded visitor/volunteer perspective. Secondly, I developed participatory research experiments. These methodological stages address the quantitative methodological bias in CWN research. Working directly in contexts where I could observe human-animal encounters provided the opportunity to investigate how interpretative strategies and experiences with animals enact as connective and caring experiences. I found that animals are generally subsumed into wider nature within the CWN research (Gorman, 2017) and that where animals are addressed, it tends to be in care farm contexts which aim to address human wellbeing rather than environmental destruction. I aimed in contrast to investigate the role of animals in supporting CWN outside of human instrumentalism.

2.6.2 The Field Site Choices

I selected three sites in order to observe a range of animal encounters inside and outside of conservation epistemologies. Each organisation encompasses specific forms of human–nonhuman animal encounters presented through the different categories of animals. Furthermore, the sites connect to different versions of natures (Castree, 2013) that manifest through and with certain categories of animals: exotic nature as spectacle through the zoo animals, nature presented as local wildlife at the nature park, and nature presented as individual farm animals situated in an urban farm setting. The sites therefore provided the opportunity to investigate how different categories mediate experiences of connectedness with animal subjects.

Between the London Zoo and the city farm there were differences in approaches to the animals, although some of the same types of animals, for example, the pigs, goats and chickens, were enclosed in both spaces. Others, such as pond animals and bees, were present at both the farm and Camley St. The zoo and Camley St. were interested in

saving and protecting animals whereas at the city farm, the focus is upon human wellbeing. I investigated the performances and affordances of connectivities and care, as these manifested within the different spaces. For example, science-based education is the main pedagogical public engagement strategy at Camley Street Natural Park, whereas generating income from visitors is a more central focus at the London Zoo. Each field site claims to elicit connection to and caring about animals and in some cases nature more widely. Overlaps and differences among the field sites in this respect afforded the opportunity to research how individual encounters foster, or fail to foster, feelings of CWN in particular versions of nature-places, and with particular categories imposed upon the individual animals.

Researching formal organisations provided insights into the pedagogies of conservation and the ways that theoretical and practical organisational categories manifest within each place. This insight provided a critical perspective on conservation and environmental policy and organisational missions at a local level. These sites are not the only obvious places to turn to for nature in the city, but I considered that they are obvious sites to go for finding animals, especially for people who do not necessarily inhabit informal nature urban spaces (Miller, 2005). Formal spaces present the opportunity to study the micro interactions that occur through the prism of conservation public engagement and organisations whose aims are structured to include encouraging positive CWN experiences. In Chapter 5, I provide a detailed discussion which lays the groundwork for the subsequent empirical chapters. I illuminate the ways in which versions of nature were materialised in order to promote the organisational ideologies at play. Each field site can be understood as an *epistemic community* (Castree, 2013, p.78) which constructs a materialised ontology of nature, which in turn influences and controls how people connect with nature and animals.

2.6.3 Stages of Field Work

The field research was loosely divided between the three sites in two stages. Stage one involved ethnographic observations. These included participant observation, visual mapping and attunement to the socio-spatial dynamics that each site afforded. I discuss each method in the following chapter (Chapter 4). During this first stage I was able to understand restrictions and opportunities afforded by the organisations' governance and cultures, and I engaged with a range animals and people. I was refused formal access to the zoo; however, this lack of access was not a problem as I aimed to assume the position of a visitor at the London Zoo in order to collect experiential data on the visitor and animal encounters and engagement experiences. At Camley St. access was provided on a very limited basis, as I was only given permission to work as an education volunteer. I was originally told I could develop my role, but in the end this possibility was denied. I think this outcome may have resulted in part from staff changes that occurred during my field work. Working as an education volunteer enabled me to understand the pedagogical approach, as my role entailed participating in structured lessons and activities that loosely follow the national education strategy (Interview with Zoe, January 2015). However, after a few months I became frustrated that I could not open up the research there into previously agreed arts-based experiments. I wanted to work on a level relation with my informants and participants as far as possible, but at Camley St. I was introduced into an existing, hierarchical, expert led structure. As a volunteer I was treated as having a low status, as I was told what to do and not given a choice about what I did (Field notes, 2015). At the city farm I became an embedded member of the community and was able to carry out participant observation in a range of roles, and came to know all of the staff and animals and many of the volunteers.

The second stage involved a series of experiments that developed into an intervention. The aim of this stage was to develop novel connective practices for attending to the animals as subjects beyond their human-made categories. Most of this work took place at the city farm where I had access to the animals and a group of young people. At the London Zoo and Camley St. there were no regular children to work with, and furthermore I did not have formal permission to conduct drawing experiments in those spaces. I therefore worked informally and conducted guerrilla drawing sessions in order to research connective practices at the sites, without the formal pedagogical and public engagement structures in place. On these occasions, I entered the organisations with family and friends as a group of visitors, and began working. Although I turned to this strategy due to a lack of participants and permission at those sites, this strategy also provided an opportunity to develop drawing experimentally with people who provided feedback from the perspective of trusted relationships. I was able to judge their levels of immersion from a position of knowing them personally which further situated the making of knowledge at those sites.

In response to the evidence in CWN research that childhood experiences in connectedness are most likely to encourage pro-environmental behaviour in adulthood (Bragg et al., 2013a; Chawla, 1998), I focused most of my attention on young people during the second stage of my field research. I considered that young people are not a fixed category, as adult-young person relationships depend in part upon the roles that are adopted (Hill, 2013). In order to enable the participants to regard their own accounts as legitimate, I attempted to reduce my status as an adult who knows (Hill, 2013, p.138). Where possible, I played 'a least adult role', meaning that I did not attempt to tell the children how to behave or act towards them as if I were a caregiver (Mandell, 1991). Adult informants acted as gatekeepers, as well as key informants in the ethnography. Their perspectives were important in order to generate an

understanding of the organisations. Furthermore, seeing as these informants were gatekeepers, I went to them for feedback discussions during the participatory stages of the research. The staff at the city farm knew the individual children and animals well and were able to provide opinions about the experiments and intervention activities. I reviewed the young peoples' work with key staff.

At first my interactions with people and animals were unstructured as part of the participant observation. I worked with adults as ethnographic informants, and on some occasions adults were involved with the later drawing experiments. Furthermore, researching a range of adults and children provided an indication of the relationship between the understanding and values of the adults, and those of the young people around them. Therefore, I started the research by focusing on a range of humans, and over time developed a focused research interest in particular humans. This refining of my focus was also a response to the restrictions and opportunities that manifested throughout the fieldwork. I did not set out to research particular animals, other than broadly through their field site categories. Each category of animals presented specific difficulties. For example, the zoo animals are enclosed and often were not receptive to visitor engagement. The Camley St. animals were mostly felt but not visible due, I thought, to the volume of human traffic that flowed through the site. The farm animals were used to being in close proximity to humans, and in similar ways to the zoo animals, some of them were interested whilst others were not (Despret, 2013a). As the ethnography developed, I became attached to Shirley the farm cow, and at the zoo, with the monitor lizards and tigers.

2.6.4 Fieldwork Sites

2.6.4.1 Camley Street Natural Park

After approaching Camley St., I was invited to work as an Education Support Volunteer supporting teachers during indoor and outside classroom activities. I also supported a community volunteer pond digging team, and a one-off bush craft session organised by two Forest School trained teachers. I volunteered for a period of about six months in this capacity, once and sometimes twice a week. Volunteering involved supporting the education officer to deliver a classroom session, followed by an outdoor activity such as a pond dipping exercise. The classroom session always followed the national education strategy and provided information about local wild animals and their habitats. For example, children would be asked to match animals to types of habitats. One of the outdoor exercises involved making 'memory sticks'. Each child would be given a strip of cardboard with plastic peel off tape. Once the tape was peeled off, the surface underneath was tacky. The children were instructed to stick found pieces of moss, twig, plant, from the forest floor onto the cardboard strip. We also carried out mini-beast hunts which involved searching under logs for insects, such as woodlice and ants, and then trying to identify them through their morphological features, such as the number of legs and antennae.

The participant observation included informal interviews with the community volunteer coordinator, the education officers, visiting teachers, parents and children during the work. Towards the end of my field research at Camley St., I informally arranged 'guerrilla' drawing sessions, which I discuss in Chapter 6.

Camley Street Natural Park has many animals that are also found in gardens, such as birds, insects, pond animals and squirrels. I encountered these animals at Camley St.

During pond dipping with children I helped to identify pond animals as specimens and again during mini-beast insect hunts I helped children to identify insects.

2.6.4.2 Kentish Town City Farm

I became most embedded into the community of the farm through participant observation because here I could work with a group of young people and animals, which enabled me to develop the later stage two experiments and interventions. During stage one, I worked as a goat volunteer, as part of an adult team of animal care volunteers. This role enabled me to get to know the goats, as I cleaned out their barn, combed them and provided them with food and water. I work closely with the farm stockman who was a gatekeeper for the local community, the other farm staff and many of the regular child volunteers. I worked in the office and had regular meetings with the farm coordinator who is in charge of all of the young people, and with the director who was interested in developing an evaluation strategy during the time I was there. However, I mainly worked with young people on a range of projects, and I ran art and craft workshops during events and holidays. The group I worked mostly with were the regular children volunteers, who are known as 'our children' by the staff. At the end of the field work I took this group of young people to the London Zoo to see how, in the zoo context with zoo animals, the same practices might be transferred across the settings.

I conducted informal interviews with all staff members, some members of the public and the community-based management committee. I informally discussed the research with the young participants, but I was careful not to allow the research to formulate into interview styles with me asking lots of questions, as I wanted the research to remain spontaneous. I developed projects in a dialogic manner responding to what the young

people wanted to do, and what they thought was interesting, as well as in relation to formulating interventions that could push the research forwards.

2.6.4.3 The London Zoo

I approached several departments at the zoo about my research. However, I did not manage to elicit a response. I did not regard this lack of response as a problem, as my interest was from a visitor perspective. I engaged in participant observation built upon earlier field research from my MA research, which focused upon a tactile reading of the zoo enclosure spaces[14]. I became familiar with every type of animal enclosure, though not every single animal resident. I tended to visit some animals frequently and some enclosures less often. My visits took place at different times and I became attuned to the different seasonal changes and days when, for example, there might be several schools at the site, in comparison to other days when there were large numbers of tourists.

I conducted visits to the zoo each week between December 2014 and August 2016. I also conducted three visits with school groups through the help of teachers I knew. The class groups I attended with were made of young children aged 9-10 years and 14-15 years and a sixth form group aged 17-18 years. I visited the library and attended public and Fellows lectures. I also attended daily zoo shows and animal feeding sessions. In stage two of the field research I organised two field trips to the zoo. At the end of my field research I arranged a field-trip intervention to the zoo with the young people I had worked with at Kentish Town City Farm.

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[14] My MA dissertation (Smith, 2011) focused only upon zoo enclosures and did not consider the animals, whereas in this research the animals are involved and attended to directly.

2.6.5 Methods, Informants, Interviewees, and Participants

Stage One Site: Role:	Ethnography London Zoo Visitor	Autumn 2014- 2016 Camley St Education volunteer	Kentish Town City Farm Goat keeper / Art Facilitator
Stage One Participant Observation Drawing Visual Soc Interviews	**Methods** Yes Yes Yes Yes	 Yes Yes Yes Yes	 Yes Yes Yes Yes
Stage Two Experiments Intervention	**Methods** Yes/1 Yes/2	 Yes/4 No	 Yes/2,3 Yes/1,2

2.6.5.1 Experiments *and Interventions, with Materials (M) and Participants (P)*

Experiment 1, July 2015 – London Zoo: focus on tigers

M: Graphite pencils, fine tip ink pens, cartridge paper

P: Leana, ten and Vasuki, 12, Tigers, Jae Jae, Melati

Experiment 2, Spring, Half Term, 2016 – Kentish Town City Farm

M: Coloured pencils, felt tips, A4 paper

P: Group of 12 children aged 10-14

Champion, Murphy, Winston, Zorro, all of the farm animals

Experiment 3, May 2016 – Kentish Town City Farm

M: Ink, sketchbook

P: Me, Shirley

Experiment 4, Easter, 2016 – Camley Street Natural Park

M: 4 Inks, coloured pencils, A3 paper, drawing boards

P: Three adults and four children, aged 11-15, Camley St. space

Intervention 1, Easter, 2016 – City Farm: 'A Day In The Life Of….'

M: clipboards, binoculars, A4 sheets for notes and drawings, camera for stills and video. Book Making: cartridge paper, glue, scissors, photocopier, printer, felt tips, pencils, lungs, tracing paper, graphite, charcoal, A3 drawing boards

P: 17 farm children aged 9-14, all of the farm animals

Intervention 2, August 2016 – London Zoo: field trip

M: Cartridge paper A5 sketchbooks with designed questions, tasks, activities

P: 20 participants aged 8-15, Adult farm staff: Nina, Marty, Susan, additional adult: Rose, a biology teacher

2.6.5.2 Data collected

Field notes during and after every field site visit

Interview, meeting, notes

Visual documentation: photography and drawings over the course of the fieldwork

Participants' work was either collected or documented for later analysis.

2.6.5.3 Informants

Camley St: January 2015-August 2015

Education Officer   Zoe

Education Officer   Marie

Community Coordinator   Hector

Zoo: December 2014-August 2016

Zoo keepers: goats, penguins, tigers, owls

Zoo explainers: tigers, giraffes,

Zoo Fellows Coordinator: Ronda

City Farm: December 2014-August 2016

Director   Juliette

Coordinator   Nina

Education officer   Terry

Stockman   Wayne

Arts Volunteer   Louisa

Arts Volunteer   Marty

Horse Trainer   Susan

2.6.5.4 Description of Participants

I conducted participant observation with a range of people and animals, such as staff, adult volunteers, and children on school visits to Camley St. and the London Zoo. I considered most of the animals I encountered to be informants. People who engaged

in the experiments and interventions were participants. In terms of humans, these were mainly young people from the city farm; however, I also worked with family and friends in experimental sessions at Camley St and the London Zoo. I worked with these people in part because they were available and willing to engage in the research. However, working with people I knew also enabled a more relaxed flow of contemplation, as they were more likely to tell me what they were thinking and how the drawing experiments felt. These experiments operated as experiments in their own right but also provided important information that enabled me to design the next stages of the research.

2.6.6 Reflexive Statement

I endeavoured to present myself as an engaged researcher operating on an equal footing with the informants and participants. Doing so not always possible—as I illustrated in relation to working as an education support volunteer at Camley St., and likewise when I supported school visits to the London Zoo. When I facilitated workshops at the city farm there was an organisational structure in place that was already distributed in a more rhizome structure. In any case I refused to take responsibility for telling the children what to do; if they asked me for permission to do something I told them that I did not know the rules.

I live locally to all of the field sites, and grew up in the area. I was therefore in a good position to understand the field site contexts as a local person. I am a parent and have experience with children from different ages, and have previous experience facilitating groups. I have previously worked in the voluntary sector, supporting small NGOs in developing strategies and evaluation frameworks. I used this experience as leverage in order to exchange skills for access at the city farm. My background is in visual art.

2.6.7 The Position of the Animals in the Research

I have argued that in CWN research and policy, animals are largely ignored save for their value in care farm contexts (Gorman, 2017). Yet many forms of multispecies relations involve often intense attachments and experiences of connectedness (Bekoff, 2002; Birke, 2007).

There is an ethical obligation in attending to the animals. At two of the three of the field sites the animals are enclosed: both the zoo and the city farm 'keep' animals for human consumption—to be touched, to be viewed, to breed and produces babies, to be mused upon, to be objectified and sometimes to be eaten. Ethically I addressed this status of the animals through foregrounding their being-ness, their subjecthood and their situation. I acknowledged what Philo and Wilbert (2000) term *emplacement* to refer to the animals' status as captive beings who are seen in the human constructed place, utterly under human control (pp.22-23).

In 2012 Lori Gruen and Kari Weil co-wrote an editor's introduction for an issue in the journal *Hypatia* entitled 'Animal-Others', which reassessed the ecological feminist care ethic. Together they summarised shortcomings in animal ethical approaches. Firstly, they argued that individuals are treated as 'abstractions'; and that what is required is attending to the animal as a subject rather than as an abstract individual (Gruen and Weil, 2012, p.478). Secondly, they argued that what they term 'tyrannies' are not interrogated through tracing the structural and intersectional hierarchies that govern both humans and animals. Lastly, they argued that reason is disconnected from emotion and affect.

Attending to the animals as zoo subjects, farm subjects and wildlife subjects produced all manner of complications and presented numerous routes that I could have followed.

My conceptual and methodological approach was organised to attend to multispecies encounters and relations, through primarily investigating non-linguistic forms of engagement, such as embodied experiences and affect. Where possible, I aimed to adopt similar methods across species, and similar forms of attention observation. I could not interview the animals but I did spend time with individual animals in order to get some sense of their being-ness in their worlds. Furthermore, I developed a theoretical understanding of forms of anthropomorphism and empathy in order to better understand how humans explain animals.

I spent considerable time with the central animal informants of this research, and whilst I am not an ethologist I remained conscious of observing signs of when animals withdrew, or appeared stressed. I asked staff about animal behaviour and always withdrew contact where necessary. I do not consider that any of the animals suffered during this research, and furthermore I do consider that through gently but persistently drawing attention through my own attention to animals as animal others other people became more interested in their lives. Conducting this research changed me and made me more committed to becoming worldly and standing up for animals' rights, and in this regard I hope my research had an effect on other people, more generally, too.

For the most part, however, my focus was always upon attending to and inviting respondents and participants to attend to the animal (whoever she or he was) as a subject. I considered that introducing animals as subjects would begin to dissolve the inequalities that could be addressed. I did not inflict my beliefs on others, and whilst I do not eat animals I also did not comment when, for example, others around me did. Attending to the animals as subjects during the field work drew attention to some of the *tyrannies* imposed upon the animals. For example, whilst interviewing staff at the farm, I asked them to explain to me why some animals had more freedom than others.

However, the thesis is human-centred in that I was researching how humans experience CWN. I consider that if humans are connected they are less likely to act in destructive and tyrannous ways towards others.

In the introduction I cited Birke's point that the animal should not be forgotten within theory (Birke, 2009). In my experience, this remembering was something of a journey, wherein I have to admit at times the animal was forgotten in the sense that my attention went elsewhere—but I could say the same for any of the research subjects, animal or otherwise.

Figure 5: Brinsop and Winston at Kentish Town City Farm during 'A Day in the Life of…'

Chapter 3. Doing: Researching with Animals

3.1 Introduction

Throughout this research, my intention was to remain responsive to the places, people and animals as I encountered them. I utilised a range of methods that were enacted as an assemblage of things, objects, beings, processes and findings that manifested, revealed themselves, and spoke to one another as the research unfolded (Fox and Alldred, 2015, p.401). This approach responded to the criticisms levelled at current CWN conservation and environmental based research that it is dominated by quantitative methods which rely upon reductive explanations (Ives et al., 2017). My research also responds to the argument that more attention needs to be given to the affective and emotional aspects of connection orientated activities (Pyle, 2003).

The methodological approach was divided into two stages. To begin with I drew upon ethnographic methods which sought to investigate the field sites in relation to the first two research questions:

- How do urban human–nonhuman animal relations affect people's CWN? Subdivided into encounters with zoo animals, city farm animals and nature park animals.

- How do the anthropomorphic and ontological positions of the field site organisations affect visitors' CWN?

The ethnography was employed as a process of investigating the encounters and spaces as connective or distracting, within a research assemblage focused on potential becomings. This process involved mapping the affective potentials of human-animal encounters, through observation of felt experience, in combination with analysis that attended to the affective flows of the structural forces at play in the field sites. Ethnography was particularly well suited to investigating how people experience versions of natures (Castree, 2013) and animals within urban nature contexts. I was able to observe a range of encounters enacted through constructed engagement practices, governance structures, social forces and human-animal bonds.

During the second stage I designed experiments and interventions in order to loosen the normative engagement practices and responses to the animals. I aimed to introduce a less anthropocentric environment in order to foreground the animals as subjects. The aim of this stage was to explore how connective practices might be developed within formal organisations with curated natures and pedagogies in place.

This stage of the research drew upon my analysis from the ethnography, and addressed the last two research questions.

- What can multispecies inventive methods bring to understanding and defining CWN in cities?

- What are the implications of this visual sociological inventive methods approach for animal studies and for conservation research?

In practice, the methods were not completely separate, as I continued to work ethnographically through participant observation in order to thicken my understanding of the research as a whole and used it as a tool for conducting interpretive analysis of the experiments and interventions. In Chapter 1, I stated that *becoming* is a form of connectedness, and in the previous chapter, I explained that I organised the methodological focus through a framework of becomings. I utilised *becoming* as a focus for the ethnography, attending to what was connective and what was distracting at the field sites. I then considered how *becoming animal* and later *becoming-with* could be enacted and encouraged within the second stage of the research. This chapter is organised into two main sections that address the above outlined research stages. The first section discusses visual and multispecies ethnography. Here I also address participant observation, and I explain in what way this research both was and was not participatory. I discuss the approach to ethnographic data collection and analysis. In the second half of the chapter I introduce becoming animal and the drawing experiments, followed by becoming-with as a form of intervention. Here I introduce co-breathing and wander-line drawing.

3.2 Stage One: Visual Ethnography

3.2.1 Overview of Visual Ethnography

I conducted visual ethnography (Pink, 2009) at all three field sites, and this was the primary research method I used to study encounters at the London Zoo. My research interest at this site was observing visitors and exploring ethnographically how as a visitor I could engage with zoo-animal residents. For the most part, people visit zoos occasionally for special occasions and so there was no community of visitors of which I could have become a part in order to conduct participant observation. There is a healthy amount of academic literature on zoos which I draw upon in Chapter 5 (for example Davies, 2000; Bulbeck, 2010; Mullan and Marvin, 1999; Braverman, 2015; Pedersen, 2010). I directed my attention to how conservation and zoo governmentalities are enacted through the visitor experience with enclosed zoo animals (Rutherford, 2007). I explored how concepts manifested as affective flows through potential human zoo-animal connections (Fox and Alldred, 2015). Visual ethnography in particular provided a tool to turn my attention to sensory experiences in the zoo setting in order to understand how affects could be determined as either connective or distracting. Therefore, I hung around and became attuned to the spaces. I observed visitors with the animals, and I spoke informally to passers-by and to some zoo staff. The zoo is constructed for seeing animals, and as such is a visual space. It made sense, therefore, to draw on visual tools and analysis in order to conduct research here. This method of working was suited to multispecies research as it created a sense of attention flowing equally between humans and animals (Griffin, 2014, p.119).

I had previously engaged in visual sociology during my MA course in Photography and Urban Culture. I engaged with theory through photography and sketching, which

helped me to digest theoretical ideas in place. This engagement enabled 'material thinking' (Carter, 2010) through reading the spaces processually and conjoining place and theory. This ethnographic practice works in direct dialogue with theoretical discourse, with theory becoming concretised through ethnographic practice (Willis and Trondman, 2000). For example, in drawing and making photographs of zoo tigers, I became somatically aware of the different types of anthropomorphism I was theoretically working with. I *felt* myself making human trait marks and attuned to gestural marks. Later, I could look back at the drawing and see those marks and remember the feelings. Visual documentation therefore was a process of being sensitised to the encounters, which became embedded into the drawing marks. Both the drawings and the photographs became sensory documents that retrospectively drew me back to the space through embodied recall. These documents were personal in that they enacted my body memory, and as such I was intra-acting in the research process (Lury and Wakeford, 2014). My practice involved using drawing and photography, as well as body awareness and movement, to understand my field sites. The process of creatively documenting and responding to the environment produces an alternative connection and understanding of that environment. Barbara Bolt expresses this process of coming to know by saying:

> …this form of tacit knowledge provides a very specific way of understanding the world, one that is grounded in material practice or (to borrow Paul Carter's term) material thinking.

> (Bolt, 2010, p.29)

Observing visually sets up an embodied dialogue between walking, thinking, reading, photographing, drawing, talking, observing, and 'being' in the space (Pink, 2009, p.63).

Making an ethnographic photograph or a drawing involves using the body and senses in a process of visceral observation and maintaining a relationship with the environment: image making that manifests through attunement with space.

Working with visual ethnographic practices involves an understanding that the visual is always mediated and non-innocent (Rose, 2012, p.17). The resulting photographs and drawings were as constructed as the research subjects (Guggenheim, 2015). The aim therefore of this visual practice was to materialise something that was not there until the process of making it, rather than to produce documentary evidence (ibid). Whilst my research was not an attempt to represent an existing object, the affect drawn out through the process is real and does exist, and becomes apparent through the research (ibid). The process of reading the places visually creates a heightened analytic attention to deconstruct the representations that *make* the places: to feel social structures as a creative force embedded within the infrastructure designs, colours, textures and fabrics. I amassed photographs and sketches, and also made notes of the thoughts and experiences that occurred during these field trips. I later reflected on this data, and interpreted them through a combination of strategies and in relation to the data gleaned from the other methods. For example, I looked at visual images in terms of their affects, their evidence of anthropocentrism and forms of anthropomorphism. I also looked at the data as evidence of content that spoke to other issues such as group and multispecies dynamics, and the power forces at play.

Much of my understanding in this area is embodied from years of critique and discussion. Here I provide an explanation of my approach to the images. The majority of the drawings and photographs did not require complex deconstruction. I often put images up on walls and *lived* with them for a while. This process enables the unconscious meanings to surface. Barthes's concept of punctum from his book

Camera Lucida (2000) is helpful here. Punctum refers to the unconscious emergence of images: 'the additional vision which is in a sense the gift, the grace of the *punctum*' (ibid, p.45). The *gift* is what *makes* the photograph alive, in an unconscious register. This referent can be personal if the image triggers a past attachment. Barthes illustrates this with an example of a necklace detail in an image that affectively pulls him until the moment when he recognises that it was similar to one a past relative owned (ibid, pp.43-57). Barthes therefore does see the punctum as having a narrative referent; however, because it operates at a subconscious level it firstly manifests as a sense of affect. The punctum is the aspect of the image that is agentile, and holds a liveliness, speaking beyond the stasis of the image frame:

> …a blind field is created (is divined): on account of her necklace, the black woman in her Sunday best has had, for me, a whole life external to her portrait.

> (ibid, p.57)

In the quote above, the necklace is a detail that implies something else, another narrative, a *blind field* of a life going on in another frame. The picture becomes open as there is a referential interface present: it is connective to another realm. The referent can be personal like the necklace or generally referential, but the nature of this referent is that it operates through affect across space-time. Barthes makes a distinction between photographs that are static and pinned down, and those which invoke movement. Furthermore, he considers that once the punctum is understood it loses its affective energy (Barthes, 2000). I used the concept of punctum to de-code marketing and corporate images, for example, at the zoo. Through becoming sensitised to the images and visual data, the affective flow became felt.

3.2.2 Multispecies Aesthetics

Multispecies aesthetics has many of the same theoretical concerns as relational theories, affect theories and animal studies. Disentangling visual theories that pertain to artists' concerns and practice, as distinct from art practice as multispecies research, is, to a large extent, contingent upon the actors involved. Interest in multispecies visual practice extends discourses on representations and anthropocentric value systems (Boyd, 2015b) and thus speaks directly to the question of how people encounter animals in everyday visits to the field sites. Partly, this question relates to the ocularcentrism of Western culture (Rose, 2012, p.3). Ocularcentrism refers to the privileging of the visual within Western cultures. Using drawing became a means of *seeing* how we make the animals into visual objects through our normative ocularcentrism. This seeing, in turn, requires visual research literacy in order to deconstruct the structures of representation. Thus, later on in the research when I introduced visual practices as participatory research tools, participants were able to become more sensitised to the anthropocentric and occularising strategies they employ in their everyday lives with other animals.

Steve Baker (2000) describes the shift from modernist to post-modernist representations of animals as the moment when the question of the animal as a subject, rather than as a muse, became apparent. The politics of visual representation (the making of visual objects and forms of gaze) are discussed widely in visual culture in relation to images of humans identified as forms of *gaze* (Rose, 2012)*.* An example is the male gaze, wherein normative images are produced from and for the perspective of men as the viewers who gaze, and women who are gazed upon (Mulvey, 1975). The intersectional linkages between categories of gazes and humans with other species is argued for in feminist and ecofeminist discourses, as part of the lineage of patriarchal white western oppression (Twine, 2014; Adams, 2014; Coleman, 2014). However,

99

unlike oppressed groups of humans, animals do not, as viewers, respond intra-actively with representations in that they do not look at photographs or drawings or have the same way of seeing that humans do. Nevertheless, they are affected by visual representations of themselves through the assemblages of images, humans and settings. For example, zoo-animal bodies are enacted through being emplaced in settings designed for them to be seen by humans (Davies, 2000). Furthermore, they are involved in the process of making images. I discuss this involvement specifically in my analysis of drawing with animals in Chapter 7. I have also often felt animal involvement in moments of making photographs; however, this issue is not unpacked within this thesis.[15]

Multispecies research and arts practices are concerned with the animal as a subject and with finding paths away from anthropocentric portrayals of the more-than-human world. In terms of visual theory, Steve Baker (2000, pp.179-182) provides a description of David Hockney's dog paintings, situating them as modernist paintings in that they are portraits in which the dog is seen from above with the artist/narrator/consumer in a position of power over the animal. However, Baker points out that if one considers Hockney and his companion dog as being in a relationship and that dogs tend to lie on the floor, the assertion of the painting as a portrait that generically objectivises dogs becomes less concrete. So, on the one hand, there is the personal and processual relationship between Hockney, the dog, and the paint and, on the other hand, there is also the politics of the same hybrid relation plus the viewer (Rose, 2012).

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[15] Despret (2014) also mentions this participation of the animal in a discussion of show cows, knowing they are being shown and 'posing for the camera' (p.36).

These points gesture to how images are contextual, and their meaning shifts depending upon what we know of the process involved in their making, as well as of the authors and the subjects within the frame. The images I worked with were analysed through the context of the knowledge I acquired about the people and animals through the ongoing ethnography.

Multispecies artist and theorist Madeline Boyd (2015b, p.17) criticises representative art making of animals for remaining situated in the anthropocentric paradigm, regarding it as a reductive separating practice. I would argue that this—anthropocentrically—assumes the animal as passive in the image making. The image-making practice that I am discussing here relies upon viewing the portrait as a co-production. This viewing is a matter of feeling the portrait to be true, requiring the 'confidence' to believe what is evidenced (Shapiro, 1997, p.279). Street photographers are familiar with knowing when a subject 'gives permission' for a photograph—it is impossible to ask a stranger in the street before the fleeting moment when the shot is either made or not. There have been many times when at the last minute I have decided not to take a shot, for I felt the permission was not there. Further, many times I have observed someone feel the lens upon them and remain in place as a form of consent, but this change in the person's awareness sometimes ruptures the shot anyway. The allure of street photography is being in the moment, and also the feeling of being in the moment. Garry Winogrand summed up why he took street photographs, stating,

> The way I would put it is that I get totally out of myself. It's the closest I come to not existing, I think, which is best – which to me is attractive.

(Winogrand, 1969)

Despite the dark overtones in his description, what he says can be interpreted as *not existing* through a form of becoming attuned to the street, connecting with affect. I would argue that the same is true, at least sometimes, with animals and that these moments can sometimes be considered as co-productions, incorporating human–animal–camera connectedness. The animals who engage with the camera have perhaps learnt to take part in the photograph (Despret, 2010; Mitchell, 1997, p.417). The evidence of subjecthood relies upon the experience and confidence (Shapiro, 1997, p.279) of the photographer and the viewer.

3.2.3 Multispecies Ethnography

I now turn to explain how I drew upon multispecies ethnography as the main method for conducting research throughout stage one of the fieldwork. Multispecies research involves attending to the animals in ways that acknowledge their ways of knowing the world (Despret, 2013b; Birke, 2009). In the following sections, I firstly situate this research as multispecies ethnography. I then explain the specific methods I employed in order to develop my research in ways that could more precisely investigate embodied forms of multispecies communication.

Concern for attending to the animals from a non-anthropocentric perspective is a central premise of multispecies research. Kirksey and Helmreich (2010) regard Haraway's book *When Species Meet* (2008) as a starting point with which to think about multispecies ethnography, and what they consider to be a 'species turn' in cultural anthropology. This theoretical turn is based upon the realisation that the animal cannot be left out, or used as a mirror (Kirksey and Helmreich, 2010, p.8) for thinking anthropocentrically about human concerns. Haraway (2008) discusses 'becoming-with' (p.3) and 'facing the other' (p.97) as entailing a responsibility to learn and think about the animal. This mode of learning and thinking requires an intersectional approach that

102

includes tracing the governmentalities and biopolitics that construct animal categories, animal bodies, and animal representations (Twine, 2014).

For Haraway multispecies research entails attending to both the performativity of culture and the corporeal animal (Haraway, 2008). Thinking about attending to the research in this way in relation to ethnography has quite acute implications. It requires questioning what matters to the animals, rather than what humans think matters to the animals (Birke, 2009, p.1). Whilst that question does not have a precise answer, it provokes an attentiveness to and an awareness of the animal subject. On the one hand, we need to attend to the animals as distinctly not like humans, and on the other, we need to realise that they are not so different, as Madden puts it: '[On]e of the key lessons we can take from reflecting on modernist ethnography is that 'other' humans were not so 'other' after all' (Madden, 2014, pp. 281-282). Animals therefore come to be researched as different but not other.

One of the central concerns underpinning ethnography is how the researcher interprets behaviour. Sanders (1993, 1999) and Alger and Alger (1999) are a few of the first sociologists to demonstrate how animals can be ethnographically researched through symbolic interaction (Wilkie and McKinnon, 2014). These theorists challenged the normative ethnographic view that as animals do not have language, they thus do not have minds capable of self-reflection or intention (Wilkie and McKinnon, 2014). Early classical ethological understandings of animal behaviour roughly considered that animals do not think symbolically, but rather behave in accordance with instincts and therefore cannot be studied ethnographically (ibid). Symbolic interactionists aim to conduct research through analysis of observed behaviour through consideration of what the behaviour means for the (human) actor (Blumer, 1969, p.3). Thus, 'human beings act toward things on the basis of the meaning of such things' (ibid). Further, the

103

origin of meaning does not emanate from an essential quality within an object, but rather the meaning forms through 'the process of interaction between people' (ibid, p.4). However, Wilkie and McKinnon (2014) argue that symbolic interactionists have privileged language over gestural forms of interaction and expression. Sanders (2003) and Alger and Alger (1999) interpreted dog and cat interactions, respectively, through analysis of embodied communication and gestural behaviour in order to conduct ethnographic observation and interpretation of human-animal relationships (Wilkie and McKinnon, 2014). For example, Sanders explains that interspecies communication occurs outside of shared linguistic symbols[16]:

> What is unique about the culture shared by humans and animals, and of special significance in advancing an interactionist understanding of human–animal relationships, is that these conventions arise and are effectively communicated despite the fact that the parties in the relationship do not share the ability to employ a common system of linguistic symbols.

(Sanders, 2003, p.419)

The focus here is upon human-animal relationships including animal behaviour, but the latter is a particular behaviour performed in multispecies contexts. Some theorists argue for mixed methods that draw upon both social science and animal science expertise (Franklin et al., 2007; Bekoff, 2002). Whilst this argument offers the benefit of drawing on different observational expertise, focus and bias, practically it also suggests that the research will entail a large complex project with a few intensely researched case studies outside of the scope of my research project (Franklin et al., 2007, p.43).

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[16] There is also a lively multispecies discussion on shared words between humans and companion animals. See, for example, Vicki Hearne's (2007/1986) 'Adam's Task', and Mariam Mortamedi Fraser's 'Dog Words' (forthcoming).

Of central import in multispecies research is to evidence that animals have agency, and that the human animal communication does not take place through anthropocentric frameworks (ibid, p.48). One way to achieve this is through ethnography which is able to 'study the choreography of agency as it unfolds. This approach warrants an ethnographic approach with its stress on symmetrical attention to both humans and animals' (ibid).

However, in this research the focus is how to address a human-made problem. It is not animals who have created the current environmental crisis. In terms of this research, how the animals experience the encounters and the research is of consequence for two reasons. Firstly, their role as research informants and participants has ethical import, as I discussed in the previous chapter. The second consequence concerns assessing how connective experiences manifest through embodied communication. The process of conceptualising the animal is central to the research, which included exploring how the animals enacted agency. It was important to consider the underlying meaning held within interpretations made by myself and other humans (Sanders, 2003); however, it was not necessarily important to arrive at a sophisticated account of the animal behaviour—other than in order to deconstruct the human interpretation and experience of the animal encounter. In the following chapter, I consider possible forms of interpretations of animals in order to provide a framework for evaluating these interactions.

Furthermore, although I sought advice from professional animal carers at the field sites, in order to triangulate my analysis of the interpretations, for the most part I retained the position of lay person visitor in relation to the animals. Being connected is an experience that involves a form of knowing through touch (Haraway, 2008), which does not, in the moment, necessitate an *ethological* knowledge about the animal's

particular social world or behaviour. Rather, it rests upon what is available in the often fragile moments of interspecies embodied communication. However, Haraway (2008) and Bekoff (2002), among others, have argued that in order to make sense of interspecies encounters it is essential to test hunches and feelings with other forms of knowing. In some ways, it can be regarded as a weakness in this research that I did not seek advice from ethologists. However, in taking an amateur approach to the animals, relying for the most part on knowledge available within the sites, I demonstrated to what extent the encounters could meaningfully produce connective experiences. In a sense this approach foregrounded the gap between species, rather than attempting to fill it up with knowledge. This approach explored the form of knowing that comes through touch, contact and experience-based encounters. Whilst ethnography is a dance between embedded observation interpreted through theoretical analysis (Madden, 2014), had I interpreted the animal behaviour through attending to ethological expertise, the impact of researching how humans connect with animals would have become misdirected. It mattered what the animals experienced, and it mattered that they were not stressed through the research process, but the aim was to discern how humans may experience CWN through such encounters. Had I interpreted the behaviours of the animals with an ethologist, it would have been fascinating, but I was concerned that the attention to embodiment may have been overthrown through a normative privileging of what was going on for the animals through a different theoretical register. In short, the research focus on one hand foregrounded the human experience and questioned whether it was connective or not. But in tension with this focus was on the other hand the empirical and ethical obligation to attend to the animals.

The response to disconnectedness within conservation epistemology is to foreground science-based education (Dickinson, 2013) in the hope that despite evidence to the

contrary, this educational form will inspire feelings of connectedness (Kolumss and Agyeman, 2002). Conversely, I considered that the desire to know more about the animals might manifest through developing connectedness. This was certainly true for me during the research. Some of the young people I worked with also demonstrated an increased interest in animal behaviour and asked me many questions which I often could not answer. On such occasions, I directed them to relevant knowledge sources such as the project staff and occasionally the internet. In this sense the research process demonstrated the notion that through attending to care of and connectedness with animals, the ethical obligation to know and understand their intersectional becomings manifests itself (Haraway, 2008; Puig de la Bellacasa, 2012).

The field research involved developing a practice of attending to the animals as subjects. I became more aware of how they communicated through their movements, and it became apparent that I needed to continue to develop the methods in better ways that could attend to the animals as agentile beings. Through experimenting with visual methods, I was able to learn to attune to some of the animals and to invite participants to enter into a different form of engagement with the animals.

3.2.4 Participant Observation

Ethnography is a way of understanding the world through a range of methods. I utilised participant observation and informal interviews, conducted with an ethnographic sensibility. In order to do this, I draw upon Clifford Geertz, who explained that the essence of ethnographic enquiry is 'to figure out what the devil they [the research subjects] think they are up to' (Geertz, 1974, p.29). Geertz expands on this statement through articulating that the enquiry involves an ongoing dynamism between field observation and sense-making through theoretical praxis. Rather than take a position

that swallows what subjects say they are doing, or seem to be doing, or take a position that stands aloft surrounded by constructs, ethnography involves a dance: a constant interplay between 'experience-near' and 'experience distant' analysis (Geertz, 1974). This interplay involves getting close to how things are understood and feel, and stepping back to analyse the process based upon social theories (ibid, p.29).

My ethnographic dance involved conducting participant observation with staff, visitors, and animals. I kept notes, sketches and photographs throughout my research and considered my observations in relation to theoretical discourses in CWN, feminism and animal studies. I observed the everyday through 'face-to-face encounters with research participants' (Sanders, 2003). For Sanders, face-to face encounters provide the proximity required for situated and shared understandings that build with forms of body-centred, gestural communication (ibid). At the farm, I observed how the multispecies interactions reaffirmed human identity through their roles of animal carer, for example, but also how the role of the animal was affirmed through the same shared enactments.

Participant observation involves the researcher participating in the world of the subjects with whom they are researching. I conducted participant observation at Camley St. Nature Park, where I worked as an education support volunteer, and at Kentish Town City Farm, where I started out as a goat volunteer and also became an arts facilitator during farm events and play-scheme days. Being in these places required that I was both a participant and an observer, which entailed being attentive and present and also reflective about the contexts of what happened around me, including what was being said and done by people and animals. Through being an active participant, I could experience and analyse the interrelations between the goats and the people at the city farm, and the pond creatures and children at Camley St., from an emplaced

perspective. Both people and animals came to know me through my repeated presence and the ways I involved myself in project activities. I operated on a basis of informed consent and always told everyone I engaged with that I was conducting research (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995, p.264). Over time the goats allowed me to comb them, without running away, as familiarity developed through the shared presence of working around them. Both humans and goats responded to my attention and routine practices. These embedded observations were used to draw out wider understandings beyond the field sites. I was able to analyse interactions and structural processes in play that held wider significance for examining urban multispecies encounters (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995, p.251). I came to know the histories and routines of the goats, as well as those of some of the other human goat volunteers. This experience produced an enriched understanding of how the farm identified as a local community, and why, for example, the staff were resistant to their funder's suggestion that they increase their scope through developing the organisation to reach a wider group of humans[17]. As well as observing and participating I reviewed related grey literature and policy documents from the three field site organisations: The Wildlife Trusts, the London Zoo and The Federation of City Farms and Gardens.

Participant observation is almost always used in conjunction with informal interviews, with the ethnographer incorporating open questions that develop the conversation towards the research questions (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995, p.113). The essence of the informal interview is that the researcher does not have a written list of questions, but rather a repertoire of question-asking strategies to select from when the moment seems appropriate. The aim is to get as experience-near as possible (Geertz, 1974).

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[17] I regularly met for informal interviews with the farm director, who shared this information with me.

Geertz explains 'experience-near' as the experiences through which meaning is felt: via emotions, for example, rather than cognitively reflected upon (ibid). The aim of the informal interviews is to allow the informant to control the discussion (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). I considered being 'experience-near' to include attention to the corporeal relations between humans and animals, and I found myself behaving like a human and like a researcher whilst observing multispecies encounters. For example, people felt the need to talk to me, to ask questions and engage with my interest, whereas I was content much of the time to focus upon the multispecies goings-on at the sites through direct participation. However, I often had to modify my apparent interest in order to fit in with the role I was playing (Goffman, 1959). I engaged in what Michael Bull and Les Back (2015) call 'deep listening', i.e. a framework for listening to the layers of sounds around as well as what people say directly in order to construct a sensory meaning from both cognitive content and visceral affect. I attended to affective sounds in order to generative an understanding of who emitted and enforced any sounds, or whether the sounds were spontaneous eruptions, for example, thinking through the meaning of the number of times I heard the London Zoo logo 'ZSL' incorporated into keeper talks. These details helped build up my understanding of the practices and intentions underpinning the field sites.

At the city farm, the people seemed to understand my role as researcher very clearly and were able to distinguish when I was talking or listening 'on record' from when I was fully participating. Whereas at Camley St. Natural Park, despite the fact I often reminded the people that I was conducting research, oftentimes they seemed unaware or unconcerned that my informal talk was often led by my desire to elicit information. This lack of awareness was difficult as I did not want to talk at great length about my research but, at the same time, I did not feel comfortable extracting information from people under false pretences. As time went on, I came to the conclusion that this

behaviour was a reflection of how interested people were in the research. The adults and staff at the city farm were interested in my research but also valued me as a volunteer, whereas the managers at Camley St. did not demonstrate an interest in sociological research. Knowing how to interpret what I witnessed, required the use of a range of interpretive tools, including attending to my own position as both an individual conducting research and a generic human type. In other words, were people and animals responding to me as a sociologist (whatever that meant to them), an academic (whatever that meant to them), or as a human? Goffman (1959) argues that people have differing levels of commitment to the roles they play, articulating them as 'sincere' when they fully believe or embody their role and 'cynical' where they regard themselves as playing a role. I was not clear how sincerely or cynically I was behaving as a sociologist, or being judged as a sociologist.

Over time, I built up a body of visual and textual data which reflected my attention to organisational processes and pressures and also detailed how people related to the animals at the different sites. This body of data was mediated by my own subjective experiences and I retained an ethnographic sensibility (Jones, Jackson and Rhys Taylor, 2014), which involved an understanding of

> the daily moments of feeling, what engenders feeling and what action feelings
>
> inspire; and to consider where these feelings come from, what power relations
>
> they reflect reinforce or undermine.

(ibid, p.7)

Through participant observation, it was possible to observe how tactical responses to social power structures were enacted at the sites (Beck, 1986). Tactical responses

refer to how people manage power structures in order to be able to conduct themselves in the ways that suit them (ibid). Ulrich Beck (1986) has discussed the impact of risk and fear as both social governance and self-governance tools. There were examples at all of the sites of the ways in which risk mediated how people encountered animals and, furthermore, it was possible to witness how some staff embodied the governmentalities, whilst others resisted them or only followed them through fear of the consequences. This behaviour was apparent at the city farm, where the staff had been told to ensure visitors wash their hands after being near the animals. There was a real fear that if someone became sick the city farm would be closed down. However, some staff also believed that this concern was not a real health risk as no one has ever actually become sick from having contact with the animals. One staff member told me the rules were nonsense, yet I observed him becoming quite agitated when people did not wash their hands (Interview with Terry, 2015).

3.2.5 Participatory Research: Working with Humans

In order to develop a more in depth understanding of how people form connective feelings and knowledge about animals through nature-place encounters, in the second stage of the research I developed a range of experiments and interventions with participants. These took place primarily at Kentish Town City Farm, although I also did work experimentally with small groups across the three sites.

I considered that through conducting research with participants, I was setting up a relational sphere, conceived of as the interactions and relations between the process of making art and the social it is situated within (Bourriaud, 2002). In this way, the everyday interactions between participants and animals could be loosened through creative practices. In a sense, this relational sphere is what Bourriaud (2002, p.16) would call an 'interstice', a space which fits into the overall system, but at the same

time suggests other possibilities. Thus, anthropomorphism, for example, is not simply the ascription of human traits to animals, but carries within its meaning the politics of science, along with hidden emotional and affective relations between humans and animals. Rooke and Wissel (2015) describe the 'strategies of play' used to explore and develop new and collective knowledge. Imagination becomes a collective process for envisaging change. Engaging participants in imaginative practices, such as drawing, provided a way to creating immersion, focus, and proximity and to bring data back from the creative space in the form of made experiences, as traces of the moments of play. Imagination was a useful tool for loosening encounters from the organisational norms in place at the sites. From this playful position, it was possible to see the intersectional alliances between accepted human and animal categories and roles. This seeing opens up the question of whether practices are a creative process, a way of being in the world or, more simply, a matter of making objects seen to have an aesthetic value (Bishop, 2012, p.247).

Working with the participants was, in part, a response to the top heavy, expert led, knowledge-making practices in the field of conservation (discussed in Chapter 1). Participatory research is widely used in areas where science and specialisms need to integrate with people, such as in health, urban development and regeneration, as a way of challenging the dominance of science in producing fixed frameworks for relating to the world (Evans, 2007, p.9; Bammer, 2005). Participatory research methods originally evolved in development disciplines from a desire to flatten research hierarchies by steering away from experts in top down positions working with groups deemed to have no knowledge or agency in the research process (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2008, p.272). This step was important as it provided a means of adding depth to the discourses with CWN research.

The participants enriched the research by bringing their own understandings of CWN into the research space. Opening up the inventive practice with participants (where possible) provided triangulation with the ethnography, and added validity to that work. The research was not participatory in the sense that it did not aim to give voice to or to facilitate a community to resolve a problem. Rather, it aimed to develop collaborative understandings of human-animal relationships in relation to exploring CWN natureculture contexts. Therefore, the research was only participatory in that people were collaborators, and their concerns were evident in the data (Hill, 2013, p.146). The research aims and selected methods were not participatory in design, but the design was ongoing through the second stage of the research, and responded to what was possible, including information from participants about what they wanted to do. I took on a role when working with participants wherein I consciously invited them to engage in the process, but refused to be either an authority figure or a carer to the children (Hill, 2013, p.138). I considered that the children needed to feel able to come to their own multispecies understandings and I did not want to intrude upon their experiences. Furthermore, I did not engage in interviews that involved asking them questions. I only ever interviewed adults in informal and semi-structured ways, in order to allow the participants and informants to articulate their experiences with as little input from me as possible. With the children I observed the content of conversations, but left them to flow, asking only occasional questions.

The animals could only be conceived of as participants through the extent to which they engaged in the process. The animals did not give consent to be in the research in the same way as humans did; however, they could physically remove themselves either by walking away (which they sometimes did) or by closing off—shutting their eyes or not engaging (which they also sometimes did). Some animals were interested and actively engaged in the research. Mostly the animals were enclosed either in the

farm or zoo settings; there was not anything I could directly do about this confinement other than conduct research that aimed to facilitate attention to their subjecthood. I was constantly looking for ways to introduce consideration of their wellbeing into practices and conversations. Furthermore, I paid attention to their body expressions and frequently asked staff if they thought the animals were bored or stressed in any way.

The production of a 'safe space' for this kind of work is widely discussed and valued (Bergold and Thomas, 2012; Anderson and Bevan, 2010). My research needed to remain responsive to my participants and my field site observations. For example, I resisted when asked to work inside the city farm where there is an activities room. This room was away from the animals and, furthermore, provided a structure to the workshops that reduced the potential for playful exploration and the loosening of boundaries. Instead, I searched for ways of working that could become as playful and open as possible. Massumi explains how

> play as an independent activity in its own right presupposes the territory. The territory is among its necessary conditions. Wolf cubs can only afford to abandon themselves to play in the proximity of the den…

> (Massumi, 2014, p.21)

Thus, he demonstrates the point that territory is a factor that enables behaviours and relations to emerge. Of course, we are not wolf cubs and we play in a range of spaces and places. However, it holds that being responsive to the participants, and understanding 'territory' as a material, as well as a conceptual and emotional space, determined how I made and maintained the space. For example, I used titles for the intervention work, such as 'A Day In The Life Of…' and 'Drawing Like A…' in order to

distinguish our research work from other activities. Sometimes I asked participants to use tools such as clipboards and binoculars in order to encourage them to embody the role of being involved in observing the animals (Goffman, 1959). These strategies lifted the practices, such as drawing and photography, from being everyday art activities into being understood as research practices aimed at attending to the animal subjects. Working outside with the animals involved being directly in the shared multispecies spaces, where, as Sanders (2003) articulated, face-to-face understanding is produced through shared experiences.

3.2.6 Ethnographic Data and Analysis

I collected data in the form of notes taken during and after observations and during interviews and meetings. If I was collecting visual data I focused on that and generally made written notes later. This was not a hard rule; rather it was more a practice due to the different registers of attention required by differing data sources. I did not code data, as I wanted to keep it as lively and innocent as possible without enforcing an additional framework upon it (Ringrose and Renold, 2014).

I drew on a combination of phenomenological and interpretive strategies discussed above, analysing behaviour through deconstructing how governmentalities and social dynamics produced connective or distracting affects. I considered to what extent people believed what they were saying or if they were acting through their roles, maintaining the correct professional front (Goffman, 1959). As such I understood information in relation to whether I considered it to be a product of the organisational culture, part of the brand message, or if it was information from the informant's personal experience. I questioned where information was rooted and what its intended message was. I therefore situated the informants' information, through considering whether it was a strategy to enact, for instance, control, power, opening, sharing, and

informing. I considered whether informants intended to enact the messages under their surface meaning and what the underlying strategies at play were.

I noted whether informants appeared comfortable in relation to the content of their information. Sometimes I dug deeper, asking additional questions, and at other times I left their responses untouched. My decision in this respect partly depended upon my judgement of specific people; I considered whether they were vulnerable, or comfortable inside themselves, for example. It also hinged on the level of trust and contact I had with the informant. The questions I asked the staff at Camley St., for example, tended to be more formal than the discussions I had with the city farm staff in which I felt I could ask them anything.

I collected visual documentation through photography and drawings over the course of the fieldwork—sometimes as small sketches with pencils, sometimes using fine liners in field notebooks, and sometimes as drawings on different sheets of paper. I took photographs with an iPhone, a Rolleiflex and a DSLR still/video camera. The media I used partly reflected my intention; for example, when I was working alone I was more likely to take the Rolleiflex than when I was conducting P.O. The iPhone was good for capturing spontaneous moments, whereas the DSLR camera could adapt to most situations and could cope with taking stills as well as moving images. I do not discuss moving images in this research as video footage did not feature as a distinct method— it was only ever used as part of the everyday currency of interactions. In part I attempted to keep the research low–tech in order to focus on the body-to-body relations as closely as possible.

I am aware that especially in animal behaviour and multispecies research video is widely used as a means of studying animal body expressivity (Minero, 2016; Lorimer,

2013). However, this method was not built into the research design. I considered that including film would have detracted from my intentions to open up my own attention as far as possible; and in a sense, this decision was a way of rupturing my own observation habits. Using technologies such as video requires a concentration on the camera-eye perspective which misses the overall perspective—there is a reason why films are made by crews much of the time! I considered that the inclusion of this mode of observation would be more than this research could accommodate.
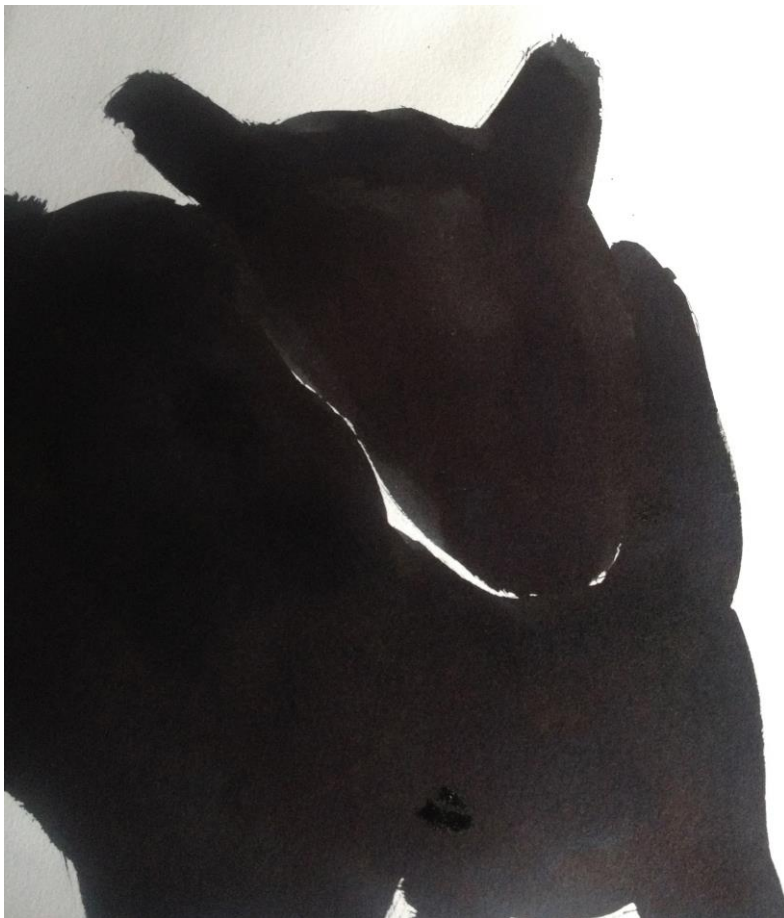
Figure 6: My ink drawing of Shirley.

3.3 Stage Two: Experiments and Interventions

Here I firstly explain how I understood becoming animal as a specific process for experiencing connectedness with animals through drawing experiments. The second stage experiments were practices in becoming animal which led into the later interventions that I articulate as practices in becoming-with. This topology of becomings is not concrete but served as a means to hold the methodological intentions. I firstly define becoming animal as distinct from becoming, and then I explain how the becomings related to the participatory research experiments. I did not consider that these forms of becomings would be enacted as distinct practices but rather treated them as mobile concepts which I aimed for the research to embody through the methodological practices.

3.3.1 Becoming Animal

Becoming animal is not mimetic; one does not attempt to become like another animal. It is rather a matter of experiencing the affective force of being animal, as opposed to experiencing through the vector of a person constructed through the various embodied codes and cultures through which I, for example, become woman, sociologist or another identity. Becoming animal is not only a matter of loosening those structures; it additionally invites an attention to being other. Giovanni Aloi's (2007) editorial for an edition of the magazine *Antennae* entitled 'Deleuzian' in which he focused upon artists who utilise Deleuzian methods, explains this very well. Aloi (2007, p.2) states there:

> To replace human identity with an interspecific performativity is to go some way towards destabilising the autonomous Cartesian subject and mobilising an ex-centric subject always in process.

The subject is involved in a very active becoming, which as Aloi states, is an 'interspecific performativity'—thus the *doing* is an active interspecies becoming and involvement. Aloi (2007, p.2) continues to explain how this doing relates to the lives of actual corporeal animals and animality:

> Becoming animal is a challenging concept in itself, one that opens a range [of] opportunities leading to a closer understanding of what it may be like to be an animal or that at least may take us far enough from ourselves so to envisage what being other than human may entail.

Whereas becoming can be a matter of producing a loosening through attunement, I interpreted becoming animal as an active process of becoming affected or sensitised to a form of animality. I considered that inviting participants to be involved in becoming animal practices would sensitise them to the animals in less mediated and more affective ways. In order to explore this possibility, I developed drawing experiments that generatively aimed to interrogate existing experiences of interpretation, attunement and embodied communication within the multispecies encounters. Chapter 7 presents a series of participatory drawing experiments. The experiments aimed to investigate how drawing could be connective. Over time I developed a deeper understanding of what is a connective drawing practice. The first drawing sessions involved drawing tigers at the zoo, followed by drawing animal portraits at the farm. I then carried out experiments utilising more gestural registers at both Camley St. and Kentish Town City Farm.

3.3.2 Drawing Experiments

I firstly carried out experiments with drawing to elicit an understanding of both how the participants felt about the animals and also how participants responded to the drawing

as a potentially connective practice with the animals. I selected drawing as an inventive method, firstly because it is non-linguistical, instead it depends upon a body practice. The naturalists that I was inspired by, such as George and Elizabeth Peckham, recorded their connective experiences through drawing that evidenced anthropomorphic immersion into the lifeworlds of their subjects (Crist, 1996). Furthermore, my own experience of drawing enabled me to enter into states where I forget myself, and feel open to becoming *other*. Furthermore drawing offers practical simplicity in that it can be carried out with limited instruments (subject, artist-eye, hand, pencil, paper) and yet also offered the potential to introduce both sensory and adventurous exploratory experiences. I was interested to investigate how drawing would evidence culturally mediated interpretations of the animals, and whether the drawing practices would enable participants to loosen towards a becoming animal or whether they would remain contained within the constraints of the social or cultural mechanics (Massumi, 2014).

I experimented with forms of representative drawing, gestural drawing and drawing animal subjects with the participants. I experimented with drawing in different field sites, within notebooks, on standard A4, on A3, with pencils, charcoal, ink and colour. I worked with a range of participants and in varying contexts in order to develop an understanding of how versatile a research tool drawing could be. I worked between quite tight notions of drawing as representation through to looser gestural practices in order to interrogate how drawing, taken as an assemblage between humans, animals, and materials, can manifest connective and interpretive states. In the quote below, Vera Dickman describes a watercolour drawing as part of an essay written on the work of Henri Michaux (1899-1984), whose drawings were explorations of consciousness and states of awareness. I present this quote here in order to illustrate how drawing can introduce becoming:

Instead of intending this or that creature, he simply watches it come into existence, watching the water digress from any intention, watching the paper devour the forms as they take shape, watching the perpetual movement, the dissolution of the line – the whole ''cinematics', in fact of coming into being. He loves the fluidity of the medium, surprised by its unexpected force and brilliance. He loves the uncertainty of it all, the freedom of the gesture.

(Dickman, 1999, p.2)

Michaux's work incorporated gestural mark making, patterns and recurring almost print like marks. The description by Vera Dickman illustrates the sense in which drawing is a fluid practice, full of motion, wherein the agencies of the materials are as apparent as the hand of the artist in the making of something unexpected and uncertain. Drawing is a process that connects together internal states and external experiences (Ingold, 2011). Although Dickman is describing watercolour, which is a particularly fluid medium, the experimental loss of control translates across to all drawing materials. The anthropologist Tim Ingold considers drawing to be akin to the practice of walking, in that both involve immersion into sensory journeying:

Through the close coupling of perception and action, the draughtsman – like the walker – is drawn into the world, along paths of observation, even as he draws it out in the gestures of description and the traces they yield.

(Ingold, 2011a, p.17)

Ingold's as well as Dickman's description provides an illustration of the connective potential of drawing as a method. In the context of the field sites drawing could not free

the animals from their material enclosures, but it might introduce an interconnected experience, which could perhaps affect both human and animal through the uncertain immersions that the materials and intentions offered. The analysis of the drawings is embedded into the empirical chapters, as each experiment was part of the overall process leading on to the next. However, in general I combined analysis through utilising the notion of the research as an assemblage (Fox and Alldred, 2015; Ringrose and Renold, 2014). This approach considers that analysis is also a performative part of the research and thus the research approach must aim to bring to light what manifests through the making of the work (Hekman, 2008).

3.3.3 Experiments, Data, Analysis

With the participant drawings I considered how the animal subjects had been positioned in relation to the paper and any background. I noted the density of the mark making, and the levels of detail applied to the image. I took account of participants' ages and abilities. I read the images as representations of the participant's social world (Rose, 2012). I determined if the image subject incorporated autobiographical details and in a sense if the image was of the actual animal subject or if it was a representation of a type of animal. I looked at the images stylistically to determine if the artist was drawing on a set repertoire or if they were looking directly at the animal before them. I noted how much time participants spent looking at the subject during composition. I applied much of the same strategy to the participants' photographs, in short always looking for moments of engagement through practice. Sometimes I discussed the photographs with the children in order to generate additional information about their images. Throughout Chapter 7, I explain how the images were deciphered.

I analysed the drawing partly through observing ethnographically the process of the drawing, attending to the levels of immersion, evidenced through individuals'

concentration and body positions. I paid attention to the extent to which individuals observed the animals, and where they were looking whilst they were drawing. I also listened to the chatter that it often produced, and sometimes asked questions. However, facilitating drawing, for example, helping someone perform tasks such as sharpening a pencil or obtaining more paper, combined with observation outlined above, meant that often I had to move in and out of different forms of *attending to*.

Often the resulting images were less interesting than the process, partly due to the participants' drawing abilities. However, the images existed as evidence of the artist's experience of its making and also their relation to the animal subject. I reflected upon and analysed the participants' drawings according to a range of considerations. Foremost among these I was interested in evidence of engagement, and signs of connectedness to the animal as a subject rather than an object, such as a generic pig instead of a specific individual.

Earlier I described the way in which a drawing or a photograph can produce an embodied sensory recall upon returning to the image. This experience is personal; it could only work for me, or perhaps another for whom the image triggers a form of sensory memory. This memory is a more of a surface recall than the punctum (Barthes, 2000), which I consider manifests from a deeper place and therefore often requires time to connect to and decipher.

3.3.4 Becoming-with: Experiments

I engaged with the concept of becoming-with distinctly from becoming animal, in that whilst, as Aloi stated, it is possible to learn a lot about others through becoming animal, becoming-with seeks to foreground the corporeal ways in which subjects become

through co-evolutions, and through the ongoing co-productions of life (Haraway, 2003, 2008).

Haraway (2003, 2008) uses 'becoming with' in a processual way; it is ongoing, there is no arrival point. Haraway famously stated that 'the partners do not precede their relating; all that is, is the fruit of becoming with: those are the mantras of companion species' (Haraway, 2008, p.17).

The relating is co-constitutive, and through this relation we are in a state of 'becoming with'. Haraway explores her relationship with her dog, Cayenne, by considering how they train for agility contests together, and by considering their co-made evolutions and history. Haraway demonstrates that the relation between care and response-ability involves an ethical obligation to learn from, through, and about the other (Haraway, 2008). This extends the notion of care, illustrated by Cayenne, to an exploration of pet culture, species development, colonial development and shepherding. From this engagement, Haraway extends her investigation to ethics, politics and laboratory animals. For Haraway, then, the 'thick and dynamic particularities of relationships-in-progress' (Haraway, 2008, p.134) manifest as an ethical obligation to 'become worldly' through unravelling the complex entanglements of history, culture and biological evolution that have brought Cayenne and Haraway into being together (Haraway, 2008). These dynamics and entanglements demonstrate the interrelations between care, theoretical attention, and corporeal practices with others (van Dooren, 2014).

Becoming-with is a way of relating, a doing, rather than an attribute of a specific relation, such as domestic companion species relationships. Haraway states that '[c]ompanion species are ordinary beings-in-encounter in the house, lab, field, zoo, park, truck, office, prison….city streets, factory and more' (Haraway, 2016, p.13). In this

sense becoming-with is a mode of attending and a performative approach to the more-than-human world. In this research I considered that through intending to develop becoming-with practices, the attention shifted from how participants experienced the experiments towards considering how the participants experienced the animals, and further, attending to the relations that were being enacted.

Chapter 8 develops this research further through interventions that took place at Kentish Town City Farm. The interventions grew in response to the drawing experiments. The interventions were methodologically distinctive from the experiments in that the aim was to reorientate the normative categorising of the animal through the intervention structure. This work was a manifestation of the understanding that inventive methods are performative in the worlds they research (Lury and Wakeford, 2014). I became 'curious about the creative potential of [my] own knowledge practices' (Marres et al., 2018, p.11). This curiosity provided a means to introduce the recognition of the animal as subject as a normative understanding, and therefore I attempted to further explore the porous nature of categories and boundary structures. The research then shifted from methods articulated as becoming animal towards Haraway's notion of becoming-with in order to produce engagement practices that actively involved attending to the animals as responsive subjects involved in the making of multispecies encounters.

3.3.5 Repurposing Naturalist Methods
The pedagogical approach at both Camley St. and the London Zoo focuses upon biological and fact-based information that inadvertently emphasises a distance

between humans and the more-than-human world[18] (for example, attending to taxonomic criteria as a means of knowing an animal, as discussed in Chapter 6). I was interested in mobilising and repurposing naturalist and field researcher drawing as a method designed specifically for developing immersion and embodied communication between humans and nonhuman animals in the field site contexts, rather than engaging in naturalist and field researcher practices, with the aim of learning about the animal. Therefore, the aim was to explore how human CWN could develop through attending to the animal as a subject. I understood this process as a form of becoming naturalist in order to become animal. In the same way that the work of a naturalist or an artist involves concentration, immersion and proximity, the interventions invited embodied attention and attunement through practices that aimed to elicit care. This approach enabled me to experiment with repurposing the methods used by naturalists and ethologists and to consider how observational practices, such as mapping, can create connective nature experiences.

3.3.6 'A Day In The Life Of…'

Here I provide a short summary of the 'A Day In The Life Of…' intervention, including a description of two novel methods developed at the end of the research. The aim of the interventions was to create a sphere to conduct multispecies attunement and becoming through introducing a range of repurposed naturalist practices, formulated as a range of observational and mapping tasks: photographing, mapping, drawing and making notes, which sought to draw the participants into a closer engagement with their chosen animal. As the intervention progressed, I developed additional methods to involve participant and animal bodies in closer, more intimate encounters. I did this

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[18] This claim is based upon my ethnographic research, which I discuss in the following chapters.

firstly through inviting participants to 'co-breathe' with their partner animals and secondly through inviting participants to directly follow their animals. Two weeks later the participants were invited to collate and edit their own data into five books about their experiences. This book making day presented the opportunity for the participants to review their experience and to discuss what had happened.

Firstly, the participants were invited to make cycles of data recordings of an animal of their choice over three days. The participant drew a map of their animal's enclosure or range. Then, at each cycle, they found the animal and plotted its position on their map. Next, they completed a questionnaire, noting down the weather conditions, what the animal was doing, and if there were other animals around. Lastly, at the end of each repeating observation they made a photographic portrait of their animal. There were additional drawing activities that were not recurring methods. The recurring methods aimed to act as a structure through which becoming-with would occur.

3.3.7 Co-breathing

I introduced a method which I call co-breathing. This involved the participants breathing alongside their partner animal. The aim was to invite a closer body practice and relation between species. This method aimed to invite the participant to focus upon how their partner animal was viscerally feeling, and how it was feeling in relation to the other things that were going on (such as people running around or changes in weather conditions). It aimed to draw both the human and the animal into a direct becoming-with relation. I discuss this process in detail in Chapter 8. I developed this practice because after the first morning of the intervention I did not consider that the observing and mapping were enough to rupture the human as observer and therefore thought a closer, more level approach was necessary. I was trying to think of an approach that would not require any skill, and could not be judged as correct or incorrect. The idea

probably came from my own (limited) experiences of breathing in yoga and meditation but the co-breathing was not meant to be a human awareness or healing practice in any way. I did, however, find that many of the children needed to be shown how to breathe with awareness, which was not something I had anticipated. I thus developed the process to first incorporate feeling one's own breathing and then aiming to attune it to the other's breathing.

3.3.8 Wander-lines

Towards the end of the observation period, I incorporated a form of mapping in order to enable the young people to directly follow the animals: body-following-body. Again, as with co-breathing, the aim was to bring the process more closely to a being-to-being relation instead of a human observational method. I call this 'wander-line' drawing, as it was based upon the wander-line drawings conducted by Fernand Deligny (1913–1996). Wander-line drawing at the city farm was an encounter which involved the human participant following where the animal moved around the city farm grounds, gesturally recording the animal's movements, and moments, using a pencil to make lines and marks on tracing paper. The tracings could be built up over one another in order to develop a sense of the density of movements in space-time. Deligny developed the practice for gesturally mapping the movements of the young autistic people he cared for in order to learn through intersubjective experiences translated into the drawing practice.

3.3.9 Intervention Data Collection and Analysis

I collected or documented participants' work for later analysis. When participants made work they wished to keep, I documented the work. If they were not attached to their work, I kept it. During the intervention they made notes and later, books, and I kept

these and assimilated their work into further notes and summaries. I was careful not to interrupt the participants' engagement by asking them questions; rather I let them follow their own chatter or thoughts. Yet, at the same time I tried to encourage them through being interested. I was always most interested in observing their levels of engagement with and articulation of the animals as subjects. I analysed the maps, notes, photographs and various other works produced by the participants in relation to my own ethnographic observation. I considered that the data needed to be analysed as a whole situated human-animal relation, and therefore attended to component parts in relation to the other data. In order to analyse the interventions, I also followed Deligny in the sense that Guillaume Logé puts it:

> Deligny does away with the usual, comfortable analytical tools (i.e. observation and interpretation) and instead proposes we disconcert ourselves. Wander lines are first an invitation to 'break' the analytical frameworks, ready-made conceptions and blanket terms. The fluidity of wander lines is the affirmation of a seizure of power by a man freed from all societal determinism.

> (Logé, 2013)

Doing away with the usual analytic tools, speaks to a materialist ontology which argues that relational onto-epistemological approaches require different methods and different types of analysis (Fox and Alldred, 2015; Hekman, 2008; Barad, 2008). Fox and Alldred (2015) propose that data be analysed through a break from individualistic interpretation, instead calling for attention to the courses taken by affective flows, questioning their micro paths. Overall, I followed a process of asking myself what was evidence of connectedness with the animal as a subject, and what was evidence of distraction. Susan Hekman calls for a materialist analysis that aims to bring things to

light (Hekman, 2008). This analysis, she explains, is not a matter of uncovering truths, but of making truths apparent (ibid, p.111).

I was interested in understanding how the observation tasks would engage and immerse the young participants. For example, I explored whether being engaged in the practices influenced the participants' knowledge of the animal as a subject, and whether this practice foregrounded or invited a less mediated form of caring with the animals in comparison to the work/care routines that they were normally encouraged to engage in. Inviting the children to develop their observation skills and attention to the other animal offered them the chance to meet the animal outside of the normative practices and knowledge of the everyday farm animal-farm volunteer encounter. The analysis for the co-breathing depended largely upon my observation of the participants' breathing. This observation was difficult, especially as individuals were returning to their animals every few hours, spread over the entire farm area. They were asked to record their experiences in their notes; however, many of them did not, and did not have much in the way of emotional literacy to explain their experience. I therefore balanced my own observations with asking them directly what they thought, and further through noting where they had commented on this method. I considered that if there was no comment they either found the activity meaningless or did not take part. Where they commented, I had to determine if they genuinely felt moved by the process, or if they were following instructions. I based this decision on my assessment of the participant in question combined with their other data and my knowledge of their experience with the animals.

With the wander-lines, I followed a similar process to the analytical treatment I had given to the gestural qualities in the drawings. Here, though, I gave additional attention the movement of the animals evidenced through the micro nature of the tiny lines. My

analysis of the visual work was always enmeshed with the observations from the field sites, along with any conversations I had had with informants and participants. In this sense, I followed an assemblage-based analysis strategy which could not always be separated out neatly into steps and parts. The previous chapter contains additional information about the participants and informants. Chapter 2 also provides a list of the experiments, interventions and methods and materials. The empirical chapters provide examples and illustrations of the data and analysis.

Figure 7: Bird in Blackburn Pavilion at London Zoo.

Chapter 4. Applied by Humans: Interpretations of Animals

> Anthropomorphism: The attribution of human characteristics or behaviour to a
> god, animal or object.

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(*Oxford English Dictionary*, 2017)

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4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I explore different interpretations of animals and investigate how interpretations are performative in human-animal encounters, and consider, in turn, how this performativity affects CWN. This chapter thus addresses the ways that epistemological practices are enacted through interpretations of animals. I argue that taking into account the different definitions and uses of anthropomorphisms is important in order to comprehend how people form experiences of connectedness with animals. I propose reconfiguring the meanings of anthropomorphism to produce a more distinct understanding of human–animal relations. I argue that anthropomorphism is more accurately a range of interpretive processes applied by humans to nonhumans.

Firstly, I demonstrate that interpretations of anthropomorphism are contingent upon the author's ontological and epistemological position. I then discuss a range of meanings of forms of anthropomorphism and empathy that relate distinctly to animals. I develop this discussion by providing an argument illustrating how interpretations of animals are mediated through individual epistemologies, drawing on Eileen Crist's examination of naturalists (1996) and Despret's (2010) analysis of Arabian Babblers Birds. I discuss sociological interpretations of animals in the everyday. Lastly I explore how an

ecofeminist approach to animals shifts the focus from cognitive interpretations towards embodied communication.

4.1.1 Anthropomorphism: Performing Animals

There are many terms to describe types of anthropomorphism and, more confusingly, the same term carries different meanings within different disciplines. I provide a glossary of some key definitions of anthropomorphisms in Appendix A, and I try to situate and explain types of anthropomorphism as they appear in this text. The most basic understanding of anthropomorphism is the ascription of human traits to others, and, as the chapter progresses, it will become clear how unsatisfactory this definition is for considering the complex ways in which nonhumans are interpreted.

Within disciplines concerned with the study of animals from both the behaviourist and ethological traditions, anthropomorphism is generally situated along a spectrum between two positions: firstly, the orthodox fixed position that only humans are able to think and have complex feelings beyond instinctive drives; and secondly, a more open, comparative, position that regards species as potentially capable of intentions and emotion (Bekoff, 2002). Both positions agree that there is a gap in what we can understand about how nonhumans experience the world (Guthrie, 1997). The aim here is not to question the pros and cons of these different epistemological approaches in relation to the production of knowledge, but rather to evaluate them in relation to the production of connectedness. As this chapter unfolds, I explore *interspecies empathy* and *like me* explanations of animals in order to excavate the connective and immersive encounters embedded within epistemologies and portrayals of animals.

Within orthodox accounts of animals, mental and emotional state attribution is regarded as an anthropomorphic mistake (Spada, 1997, p.38). However, underlying this

attribution are a range of beliefs which I illustrate, drawing upon Bekoff and Allen's (1997) categories of cognitive ethologists as 'slayers, skeptics, and proponents' (p.314). *Slayers* are those who consider that any attribution to animals of mentalistic capabilities is a mistake and should therefore be avoided. The solution to this problem is 'banishing the study of animal mental processes and thereby the use of mentalistic terminology' (Spada, 1997, p.39). From the slayer perspective, research on mentalistic processes and consciousness in animals cannot be empirically tested and thereby proven (Bekoff and Allen, 1997, p.315).

Sceptics are categorised as those who do not argue outright that animal consciousness does not exist and cannot be studied, but do retain epistemological reservations. The concern is situated in relation to the observational field methods of cognitive ethology (Bekoff and Allen, 1997, p.316). Some argue that neuroscience or laboratory experiments would be better able to investigate the inner workings of animal minds (ibid, pp.316-324).

The mechanisitic approach that seeks to research animals under controlled experimental conditions has been undermined by increasing the amount of field-based evidence that points to animals using tools, for example, as shown by Dian Fossey (1932-1985), who worked in Rwanda with mountain gorillas, and Jane Goodall (1934), who has worked extensively with chimpanzees in Tanzania (Bekoff, 2002). A further example of animal culture not drawn from primates is David Mech, who evidenced that rather than regarding wolves as fiercely hierarchical, headed by an alpha male, it is more accurate to understand wolf behaviour as being structured around family dynamics with parents and cubs working as a team (Mech, 1999; Kolar-Matznick, 2002). There is evidence of a movement away from a mechanistic view of animals

towards the recognition that animals do have cultures, mental states, and emotions (Despret, 2010; Massumi, 2014). As Massumi puts it:

> The rigid image of the animal as a mechanism dominated by the automatism of instinct is showing signs of slackening, to give greater margin to individual variations.

(Massumi, 2014, p.1)

Some theorists propose that the definition of anthropomorphism be widened to include mistaken ascriptions generally:

> It seems reasonable to use the same term to refer to the opposite kind of mistake also, namely to the denial that an animal possesses a human mental characteristic when, in fact, the animal does possess that characteristic.

(Lehman, 1997, p.105)

The advantage of this position is that it foregrounds human performativity in the ascription of traits, or lack thereof, to nonhuman beings. To return to Bekoff and Allen, their third category, *proponents*, are those who embrace the discipline of cognitive ethology and consider that it has produced valuable data on animal mindedness, for example, Marc Bekoff (2002) and Donald Griffin (1915-2003), 'the founder of the modern field of animal thinking and consciousness' (Yoon, 2003). However, whilst *proponents* are willing to research animal mindedness, they also urge caution against 'folk psychology' (Bekoff and Allen, 1997). Many ethologists are in favour of the use of 'critical anthropomorphism' (Bekoff, 2002) *Critical anthropomorphism* is a term proposed by Gordon Burghardt indicating that caution needs to be applied when using

anthropomorphism and moreover that anthropomorphic interpretations need to be tested against a range of data sources (Burghardt, 1991; Bekoff, 2002). In many respects the arguments here relate to epistemologies (Guillo, 2015). Dominic Guillo argues that the divide is not between those who consider animals to be machine-like and those who do not, but rather between those who aim to investigate the world as phenomena reducible to mechanistic systems:

> [T]he life sciences regularly generate a deeply reductionist discourse about society and human culture: in sociobiology (Wilson, 1975), and most recently in behavioural ecology and evolutionary psychology (Pinker, 2002). Far from defending the existence of any boundary, these dominant perspectives in their specialty aim to forge a naturalistic explanation of sociocultural phenomena.

> (Guillo, 2015, p.124)

Guillo's (2015) argument is that the notion of a biological divide between humans and animals is culturally situated and that differences in scientific epistemologies performatively produce ontological truths in either reductive mechanistic epistemologies or in more interpretive disciplines. He argues that not only animals but also humans are subjected to this dichotomous thinking (ibid, p.124). In Chapter 1, I argued that CWN is dominated by quantitative methods that do not address the affective and emotional aspects involved in connective more-than-human experiences (Pyle, 2003). Guillo's argument suggests that in some disciplines, as noted above, both humans and animals are researched without attention to interrelational affective and felt experiences.

Thus far, I have provided an overview argument of how claims of anthropomorphism need to be understood within their situated disciplinary contexts. Furthermore, all interpretations of animals need to be understood as human interpretations of animals. What is of import here for this research is to consider how the differing practices produce more or less connective experiences. In order to explore this issue further, in the following section I provide explanations of anthropomorphism useful in relation to the aims of this thesis.

4.2 Categories of Anthropomorphism

Firstly, I update the *Oxford English Dictionary* definition with Guthrie's definition, as the latter explains more accurately how anthropomorphism is normatively used in relation to corporeal animals. Guthrie (1997) adds that anthropomorphism is 'the ascription of human traits in others, which are not actually present and are thus a mistake' (p.52).

Guthrie's baseline definitions can be expanded through attending to the processes involved in interpreting others. Throughout this thesis I draw on Bob Mitchell's conception of anthropomorphism as 'inter-sensory matching' or 'subjective anthropomorphism' (Mitchell, 1997, pp.416-419), which I consider to be one version of *like me* anthropomorphism.

Mitchell's argument is that much of the time, interspecies relations are based upon an understanding developed through regarding animal behaviour as *like me* through a process of 'intersensory-matching', meaning that an observed experience is matched against something similar that one has experienced via cognitive or sensory processes, and thus identified (Mitchell, 1997, p.419). This process is subjective because experiences—such as anger, for example—are known in psychological terms

through subjective rather than through external quantification (ibid, p.418). Thus, this process is distinct from human trait projection in which there is no matching, only ascription. However, it is often not clear which type of anthropomorphism is being employed.

Furthermore, there is a distinction within *like me* anthropomorphism that relates to the degree to which the *like me* association is individualized. Animal studies theorist Kay Milton distinguishes between interspecies relations that involve interpretations based on being 'like me' as opposed to 'like human':

> …it is this use of personal experience to understand others that I suggest is taking place when people appear to 'attribute' emotions, purposes and personalities to nonhuman animals, as well as to human ones, but to call this 'anthropomorphism', and to lump it together with the attribution of human (rather than personal) characteristics to nonhuman things, is inappropriate. I suggest 'egomorphism' as a more suitable term. It implies that I understand my cat, or a humpback whale, or my human friends, on the basis of my perception that they are 'like me' rather than 'human-like'. As Mary Midgley expressed it: 'The barrier does not fall between us and the dog. It falls between you and me'.

(Midgley, 1983, p.130, cited in Milton, 2005, p.261)

Not only does this passage personalise *like me* anthropomorphism; it also identifies the animal as a subject rather than a generic kind of species: a particular cat or a particular humpback whale is like a particular person—rather than cats or whales are like humans. Hebb (1947) also made this distinction in relation to laboratory chimps. He explained that behaviour needed to be analysed in the context of what was considered normal to a particular individual rather than normal for a species of animal:

139

In short, the distinction between *shyness, nervousness* and *fear* is impossible

without knowing something about the animal; and the term chosen, in these

instances, is affected by knowledge of the stimulus, of the response, and of the

subject's experience and behavior in the past.

(Hebb, 1947, p.91)

In this context Donald Hebb is researching animals in laboratory situations but he still

became immersed in knowing the animals as individual subjects. Hebb argues here

that judgements about behaviour depend upon the proximity of the researcher in terms

of the extent to which the researcher knows the subject as an individual.

Anecdotal anthropomorphism occurs when the anthropomorphism is generated

through description, often within a text (Mitchell, 1997, p.407; Crist, 1994, 1996). For

example, if I say that I raced the dog across the lawn, I may believe that I am racing

the dog, or I may use the term as an adjective to explain how the dog and I were

moving. I do not know if the dog considers us to be racing or what word or concept a

dog would use to describe what we are doing. I use the word 'race' because it is the

human way of describing the event. Further, when I tell you that I had raced the dog

across the lawn you may, or may not, interpret this event in the same way. Anecdotal

anthropomorphism can be accidental, in that the human happened to use a descriptive

word, or it can occur because there is no other word to explain the behaviour. I now

turn to consider interspecies empathy, which is arguably a form of anthropomorphism.

4.3 Categories of Empathy

Interspecies empathy is regarded by some as an anthropomorphic mistake (Kennedy, 1992; Wynne, 2007). However, from a phenomenological perspective, it is necessary to interrogate what empathy involves. Empathy can be productively explained by drawing upon animal studies theorist Kenneth Shapiro's definition:

> I take empathy to refer to a moment in which I, if only focally, forget myself and directly sense what you are experiencing.

> (Shapiro, 1997, p.278)

> Implicit in the empathic moment are several features which point back to the momentarily passed-over self: a variable sense of confidence as to whether the empathically given meaning is accurate; a sense of control which allows me to stop experiencing what you are experiencing, to have some distance from it. More generally, then, there is a sense in empathy that this is the experience *of the other* – as direct and poignant as the given sense of refusal is, it is not *my* refusal, it is not my *experience.*

> (Shapiro, 1997, p.279)

The variable sense of 'experience' and 'confidence' described by Shapiro above are not possible to quantify, or to empirically 'prove' against the critique of anthropomorphism as a mistake, but rather rests upon circumstantial, experiential, validation. Validating interspecies empathy is, therefore, open to accusations of being human trait projection anthropomorphism (Kennedy, 1992). If one takes the definition of anthropomorphism to mean the ascription of discretely human traits to nonhumans, and empathy to mean experiencing another's feelings (Shapiro, 1997, p.279), then the

two terms should *not* fit together, unless the empathy is a mistake. Either empathy is a mistake and it is anthropomorphism. Or, if it is not a mistake, then it is therefore not a form of ascription but a form of embodied knowing. Experiencing the (nonhuman) 'other' is not the same as a 'like me' anthropomorphic process; Shapiro makes clear that empathy is the *experience* of the other. It is possible that the 'other' is also 'like me', but empathy, as described by Shapiro, is a direct experience—rather than a matching process as described by Mitchell (1997, p.419).

Carolyn Pedwell (2014) questions in what ways, and through what forms of measurement, it is possible to know or feel what another feels, or experiences. This *knowing* relies, she argues, on a matter of matching experiences, based upon selecting how others feel through the matching registers:

> Whilst some theorists suggest that 'accurate' empathy can be achieved by way of imaginative reconstruction of another's emotional state without 'the observer' needing to experience 'the same' feelings as that person, other scholars maintain that empathy requires the presence of identical emotions.

> (Pedwell, 2014, p.2)

Pedwell questions the feminist argument that proximity and affective interconnection leads necessarily to empathy followed by caring towards subjects. Empathy is not always accompanied by care, and greater empathy may imply greater power in already uneven geo-political relationships (Pedwell, 2014, p.2). This problem raises questions about whose experience is valued. For example, if humans decide they can empathise with animals, and then speak for them, clearly these decisions present both ethical and political dangers. Pedwell suggests that empathy can be reimagined so that rather than

a form of moulding others' experiences into identifiable expressions, through matching, empathy could instead be understood 'as a complex and ongoing set of translational processes involving conflict, negotiation and imagination' (ibid, p.5). Pedwell's perspective is situated within her research on humans. It is a challenge to consider a framework to negotiate meaning within multispecies contexts, though researchers do try. Tironi and Hermansen, for example, attempt to co-design zoo-animal apparatuses with animals through a complex process of observing and responding to their responses to the designs (Tironi, and Hermansen, 2018). Understanding the complexities of empathic interpretive processes and being prepared to try and communicate, are akin to Bekoff's arguments for careful anthropomorphism. Lori Gruen also describes a form of complex empathy that is entangled with feeling care rather than confidently feeling the same direct experience:

> Entangled Empathy: a type of caring perception focused on attending to another's experience of wellbeing. An experiential process involving a blend of emotion and cognition in which we recognise we are in relationships with others and are called upon to be responsive and responsible in these relationships by attending to another's needs, interests, desires, vulnerabilities, hopes and sensibilities.

(Gruen 2015, p.3)

This version of empathy also aims to move away from a belief that the experience is matched or is a direct perception. Gruen's entangled empathy draws attention to the entangled experience of feeling care through perception, which results in a feeling of obligation to the other. Gruen is a feminist theorist who has developed the notion of entangled empathy within the wider feminist care tradition. The 'ethic of care' was first

developed by Carol Gillingham and Nel Noddings (Gruen 2015, p.30). Later, the term 'feminist care tradition' was used by Carol Adams (1990) and Josephine Donovan (1990). Gruen argues that central to this tradition are two approaches: 'The first is to pay attention to context; the second is to develop our 'attention' to 'care'' (Gruen, 2015, p.28). Attention is focused upon individuals and on animals as not being 'like us', but rather different to us and requiring us to attend to their differences as much as we can (ibid, p.35).

On one hand, to consider animals as being 'like us' is a connective form of anthropomorphism, because it recognises that 'like us' animals are sentient and have feelings. Gruen, however, critiques the notion that animals are 'like us'. She rather argues that animals are not 'like us' because their sentient feelings and lifeworlds are not like ours and cannot be organised in ways that would be appropriate for the humans involved. This point highlights a form of slippage between 'like us', meaning similarly alive and sentient, and the definition of 'like us' utilised by Gruen involving direct human trait anthropomorphism. This slippage also speaks to a key aim in multispecies research to foreground the animal in its own distinctness—rather than defining it in relation to the human (Gruen, 2015; Birke, 2009).

A further conflation is the arrogant form of anthropocentrism[19] (Gruen, 2015, p.24), which places humans apart from other species, and thus produces assumptions that many characteristics, abilities and emotions are discrete human traits, rather than potentially shared multispecies traits. Gruen differentiates between ordinary anthropocentrism and arrogant anthropocentrism through explaining the ordinary form

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[19] I use Gruen's definition of arrogant anthropocentrism throughout this thesis.

as an inescapable trait of being human. We cannot escape our human bodies or minds, and thus we experience the world from a human-centred position. Arrogant anthropocentrism is 'a type of human chauvinism that not only locates humans at the center of everything, but elevates the human perspective above all others' (ibid).

A further understanding of empathy is discussed by Despret and termed 'embodied empathy' (2013a). Despret argues that understanding embodied empathy is not a matter of conceiving of empathy as a direct knowing of the other; rather it is, she argues, like Pedwell (2014), a range of processes. Despret's interest is in how empathy can be understood as becoming open to embodied communication:

> Empathy becomes multiple, as are bodies, as are encounters, as are animals who are the living actors of these encounters. Embodied empathy......shifts its meanings from one situation to the other.

(Despret, 2013a, p.69)

Embodied empathy involves 'making the body available' (ibid, p.70) to embodied communication between species, which manifests in non-prescriptive and unimagined ways. Despret (2013a) and Haraway (2008) illustrate embodied communication through the work of Barbara Smuts and the baboons with whom she conducted research:

> . . . the process of gaining their trust, changed almost everything about me, including the way I walked and sat, the way I held my body and the way I used my eyes and voice. I was learning a whole new way of being in the world – the way of baboons . . . and I was gradually learning to send such signals back to them.

(Smuts, in Haraway, 2008, p. 24, cited in Despret, 2013a, p.68)

The above quote by Smuts illustrates how the body practice led to a form of empathic knowing of 'the way of baboons'. Smuts' work involved complete immersion into the everyday lives of the baboons, and through opening her body to their ways, she was prepared to alter her walk, voice and other characteristics and movements. These alterations, then, suggest a form of empathy that does not involve assuming a knowing of the other, but rather giving oneself over to becoming *like* the other.

Laying out these differing perspectives and processes has illustrated the complexity involved in interpreting nonhuman animals. I drew on these interpretive frameworks throughout the field work. I now turn to consider how different disciplinary epistemologies produce situated knowledges of animals (Haraway, 1988).

4.4 Examining the Use of Anthropomorphism

4.4.1 Naturalists, Anthropomorphism and Empathy

In the following accounts, I consider that whilst naturalist methods risk 'going too far' (Spada, 1997), their methods produce versions of animals as having mental and emotional states with lifeworlds and animal socials. Furthermore, I demonstrate that researchers who practice naturalist and immersive ethological methods become intimately involved in their subject's lives, suggesting a potential route to how people connect with nature. In line with my overall thesis, I explore this possibility further through my field research.

Crist (1996) considered the work of early 20th century naturalists George and Elizabeth Peckham, who applied verstehen methods to the study of wasps. Verstehen approaches were absorbed into sociology by Weber (1978/1922), Schutz (1967/1932)

and later Garfinkel (1967) as an interpretive approach to the human social. It involved understanding human actions as comprehensible only by taking account of subjective intention (David, 2010). Through a method of intense observation, intentions behind actions enable a making sense of the social, and people's 'lifeworlds', relying upon the notion that humans have the capacity to *know* how another will feel or think in a given situation (Crist, 1996, p.800). Crist provides an illustration via the following excerpt from George and Elizabeth Peckham's explanation of wasps' actions as part of a known and understood wasp culture:

> Her [The wasp's] search had been unsuccessful – she carried nothing. In the realms of wasp-life, disappointments are not uncommon and this time she had us to share her chagrin, for we felt as tired and discouraged as she perhaps did herself.

(Crist, 1996, p.815)

In the above account it is possible to see forms of anecdotal anthropomorphism, human trait anthropomorphism and perhaps also interspecies empathy—though it is not possible to qualify exactly which terms can be applied without being able to discuss the subjective experience of the observation. However, the notion of knowing how the other feels is apparent and so, too, is the concept of the wasp lifeworld.

In human social science, this notion of the lifeworld sits within accepted interpretive research methodologies. In relation to human observations of animals, however, it presents two challenging views: firstly, that animals have intentions and reasons for their actions; and, secondly, that humans can empathise with how a nonhuman will feel or think. Crist (1996, p.829) demonstrates that by taking the position that the animal

147

does have intentions, and by attempting to faithfully describe the actions in ordinary rather than technical systemised language, a kind of anthropomorphic environment develops, where an animal action is not necessarily anthropomorphised directly, but anthropomorphism manifests through the rich description. The effect of common conceptions of wasp and human life, especially in connection to domestic life—possessing a 'dwelling place' (Crist, 1996, p.806), a 'doorway' (ibid) 'gazing out on the landscape' (ibid), or 'keep[ing] house all day alone' (ibid)—is to form a connecting line between the wasps and the humans:

> The connecting link between wasps and humans does not remain a single thread, but becomes a resilient cable as it is spun over and over by a plethora of common vernacular terms of life, action and feeling.

> (Crist, 1996, pp.807-808)

The language used by George and Elizabeth Peckham to describe the wasp lifeworld is slightly dated now; for example, 'keeping house' is no longer an everyday term. The text explains how the anthropomorphic description builds up an understanding of the wasps as beings, but this understanding is potent in part because preceding the language is the immersive observation through which the interpretation manifested. Using technical language has the opposite effect of initiating a mechamorphic view of animal behaviour (Crist, 1996, p.817), which would be equally a construction of the wasp mediated through human understandings of the world.

By using everyday anecdotal language, mental attributes are not overtly ascribed to animals; they become tacitly layered up assumed 'givens'. Anthropomorphism, in this instance, is therefore not about directly giving animals human qualities, but rather

making animals seem human-like through describing the observed actions of animals. Thus, through utilising everyday human language, with a perspective focused upon intention and personhood, anthropomorphism manifests through the text and the understanding of what is being seen (Crist, 1996). Furthermore, embedded within naturalist accounts is an emotional involvement casting no doubt that George and Elizabeth Peckham are connected to the wasps' wellbeing.

Despret (2010) develops this understanding of field observations as mediated through their authors in her comparison of researcher methods in the study of Arabian babbler birds. One researcher, Zahavi, uses a naturalist method whilst the other, Jon, uses classical methods of ethology. Zahavi, like the naturalists in Crist's descriptions, considers his research subjects as beings and sees them as individuals. For example, for him some of them 'grumble all day long' (Despret, 2010, p.8) whilst others remain quiet. He calls the birds to him and sometimes feeds them crumbs—he is not concerned by his presence as an observer. Jon the ethologist, on the other hand, keeps a physical distance and observes the birds using set strategies, and systems aligned with evolutionary theory. The passage below illustrates how Despret explains their differences:

> Jon and Zahavi inhabit the two extremes of a continuum between "scientist" and "naturalist" ways of construing behaviour: you may find their position on that continuum by taking into account the role of models, the question of methodology, or the issue of anthropomorphism. However, the issue of anthropomorphism, which is generally what gives most of the characteristics to this continuum, has slightly shifted from its usual conception. Jon does not reproach Zahavi's babbler for thinking like an "anthropos", he reproaches the bird for thinking like a naturalist: Zahavi's babblers neither follow regular rules nor seek them; they trust what they see; they live anecdotally— all naturalist's way of

149

acting and thinking. By contrast, Jon's babbler, as a matter of fact, does not think like an "anthropos", he/she thinks like someone who obeys cognitive rules of nature — he/she thinks and acts like a good scientist.

(Despret, 2010, pp.10-11).

Despret suggests that Jon anthropomorphises the behaviour of the birds, because he is seeing the expected 'scientific behaviour' in the birds. Zahavi, on the other hand, anthropomorphises the babblers as if they are *like him*, and Despret sees the naturalist behaviour in his birds. Despret demonstrates that both versions of the birds depend upon the researchers, as authors, whose methodological rules and biases become apparent in the descriptions of the babblers they present. Much of the analysis of the babbler behaviour is not factual, but informed opinion that can become substantiated through a combination of massing evidence, and through evidence produced using different methodologies. In terms of anthropomorphism, Zahavi's approach uses 'like me' or 'like naturalist' anthropomorphism, whereas Jon's approach could be described as 'like me' or 'like scientist'. Zahavi's account provides a closer and more embodied relationship with the birds. Zahavi becomes immersed both through physical proximity to the birds, as opposed to Jon's professional distance, and through his emotional immersion wherein he attends to them through comparison.

Zahavi relies on knowing his birds and is confident in his ability to understand their motives. This confidence can be described as based upon empathy, as defined by Shapiro as experientially sharing another's feelings or intentions (Shapiro, 1997, p.279). However, this confidence can also be thought of through an extension of 'like me' anthropomorphism which I described earlier, wherein understanding forms from a combination of knowing the other and interpreting the other's behaviour based upon a

'like me' ascription through either direct trait matching or a more abstract sense of shared personhood.

Research methods that involve immersion create a specific corporeal interrelation, with scientists who have a proximity to their subjects being more likely to form opinions of animals as persons (Despret, 2010, p.4). Ingold (2000) and Milton (2005) discuss 'being' and actively existing in the environment as making our relations and sense of self and by extension, our sense of others as selves. Ingold stresses the difference between Western notions of mind as the part of the being/body which experiences life, and other ontological positions according to which the self is experienced through mobile bodies in active spaces, and is affected and affects other bodies and objects (Ingold, 2000, pp.49-52).

Immersion in another's lifeworld is elucidated by Haraway through an account of Barbara Smuts' field research with baboons. Smuts described how over time she stopped acting like a researcher, by keeping her distance and trying to remain invisible (Haraway, 2008, pp.23-24). Instead Smuts worked to become embedded into the baboons' lifeworld. Smuts learnt the importance of greeting through body language (ibid, pp.24-25). Within the baboon culture the occurrence of these greetings took place several times a day (Haraway, 2008, p.25). Both Haraway (2008) and Despret argue that trust is formed through touch, which is more reliable than eye contact or sound (Despret, 2010, p.15). Haraway (2008) terms this contact 'embodied communication' (p.26). She analogises analogises it to a dance—where each successive greeting is reliant upon, and given meaning through, the greetings that come before and after.

In some instances, such as when Zahavi says that the birds 'grumble', we can identify the description as anecdotal, but other occurrences are less visible. Crist (1996)

identifies certain strategies, such as text and the verstehen approach, as forming our understanding of the observed subjects, whilst also creating an overall anthropomorphic environment. I have argued that embedded within the immersed anthropomorphic and subjective interpretive processes is a manifestation of connectedness. Despret (2010) illustrated how the epistemological frameworks are at play in the anthropomorphic accounts given by Jon and Zahavi, that manifested namely as versions of the babbler birds. Zahavi's experience of the birds produced an immersive and embodied account of the birds.

In this section, I have explored comparisons between naturalist and ethological methods for understanding animal behaviour, and I have argued that anthropomorphism is a complex set of different interpretive strategies. I have also demonstrated that whilst naturalist approaches do include 'like me', as well as anecdotal anthropomorphism, they also attend to closer, immersive and embodied relations with animals in their environments, which present animals as having inner worlds and their own species-specific social worlds (Ingold, 2013).

4.4.2 Interpretations in the Everyday

I now turn to more everyday contexts in order to reflect upon uses of anthropomorphism and interpretation in accounts of human companion animal relations. This reflection is intended to support the conception that, in relation to experiencing connectedness, it is not necessary to find specific categories of animals or places. Animals are present and are interwoven within almost every aspect of human social and cultural lives: as food, fiction, film, fashion, sport, leisure and art. There is a kind of cultural hierarchy whereby anthropomorphism is regarded as a symptom of folk psychology (Bekoff and Allen, 1997). For example, Clive Wynne argues that

anthropomorphism, even of the reformed varieties, should have no place in an

objective science of comparative psychology. Fundamentally this is because

anthropomorphism is a form of mentalism, and as such is not amenable to

objective study. Labelling animal behaviors with everyday terms from lay

psychology does not explain anything.

(Wynne, 2007, p.125)

Arluke and Sanders (2007), however, take a different view. They have conducted

extensive ethnographic work on human-dog relations. They note that language is an

overrated form of communication, often following the work of Erving Goffman (1959),

who documented and explained the importance of non-verbal communication between

humans which takes place through bodies. Arluke and Sanders state that 'through

understanding the bodies and behaviours of companion animals we actively construct

a view of their minds' (Arluke and Sanders, 2007, p.66). Thus, through attending to

embodied forms of communication, we learn about the animal in ways which may or

may not involve anthropomorphic accounts and portrayals. Language is of limited value

in forming understandings between humans and animals, and only through time and

actions can communication and empathic understandings be known, and in a way that

moreover depends upon the confidence that Shapiro (1997, p.279) describes in his

definition of empathy. Anthropomorphism is, in part, a tool for giving voice to bodily

actions. Whether the worded explanation of a companion animal's feelings or thoughts

are specifically human, or based upon a 'like me' approach or even an imaginary 'like a

dog' approach, cannot be verified:

Behaviourists and ethologists roundly condemn anthropomorphic descriptions

while everyday pet owners and most members of the animal-rights community

153

routinely make use of anthropomorphism as a dominant vehicle *for* making

sense of animal behaviour.

(Arluke and Sanders, 2007, p.67)

Arluke and Sanders are referring to the perceived divide between behaviourist and ethologist experts and ordinary folk, who are dismissed for using anthropomorphism. Companion animals are also regarded by some to have a lesser status than those in other categories. Baker states in his book *Picturing the Beast: Animals, Identity and Representation*, that 'cats are simply less real than cows' because domestic pets are somehow excluded from categories of 'real' animals and are therefore not taken seriously (Baker, 2001, p.20). This exclusive categorisation is also exampled through Haraway's (2008, pp.28-29) complaint about Deleuze and Guattari's portrayal of pets in their explanation of becoming animal: for Deleuze and Guattari, it seems pets as animals are 'Oedipal animals each with its own petty history, 'my' cat, 'my' dog' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.281).

Haraway explains that Deleuze and Guattari's use of the term *pet* was intended to mean a particular type of human–pet relation, or even a particular pet-human moment, wherein the pet-animal is too constructed and embedded within a human ideation of whatever it is supposed to become. From Deleuze and Guattari's (1988) perspective there is no affective force available to an emplaced pet for it to engage in becoming animal. But, Haraway argues, their view diminishes pet animals as passive receptors of human culture, and diminishes the human animal relation to one of pettiness. Haraway states that from this view 'the pack, or pure-affect animals, are intensive, not extensive, molecular and exceptional, not petty and molar – sublime wolf packs in short' (Haraway, 2008, p.29). Haraway argues further that there is 'scorn for the homely and

154

the ordinary' (ibid). Haraway has for a long time challenged this view of pets, by weaving anecdotes and examples of her dog Cayenne into her texts, as well as discussing wider more general human–pet politics and cosmologies (Haraway, 2003). Validating pets and anthropomorphic interpretations of animals is a practice of arguing for the agency of all animals, demanding that they are attended to as beings who do not communicate in the same ways as humans do.

Anthropomorphisms can be understood as sense-making that 'sometimes go[es] too far' (Spada, 1997, p.45), namely as human trait projection, as 'like me', and as interspecies empathy. Multispecies ethnography conducted by researchers, such as Arluke and Sanders, produces interpretations of human–animal relationships that aim to open up mechanistic portrayals of animals presented through some behaviourist and cognitive ethological accounts. Like the naturalist research, previously described by Crist and Despret, these interpretations can produce more textured accounts of human-animal encounters, underpinned by explanations based upon regarding animals as persons. Furthermore, attending to non-linguistic behaviour, to body language and to affect, produces different conceptions of what it means to feel empathy, or to feel connected.

Interspecies interpretations and understandings of animals are authored and shaped by the methods that produce versions of animals and human–animal encounters. Interpretations therefore also exhibit the embedded beliefs of the methodology and aligned ontology (Lestel et al., 2014). For example, the naturalists used methods that incorporated 'like me' and empathic strategies which construct versions (often represented via anecdotal anthropomorphism) of animals as minded, with their own lifeworlds. Everyday companion animal relations hold the potential for interspecies connectedness through embodied communication and immersive interrelations.

155

Theorists such as Arluke and Sanders (2007) and Haraway (2003) consider that experiencing ordinary as well as exceptional animal encounters can be connective. Many accounts of field researchers that evidence experiences of being immersed in the lives of animals, can also be understood as experiences of becoming immersed in the animals' ordinary worlds. For example, according to Haraway, it was when Smuts became a part of the baboons' ordinary everyday experiences that she felt able to understand them (Haraway, 2008).

The focus in this thesis in on whether particular methods and interpretations of animals create distance or whether they encourage connectedness. It is not therefore relevant to consider how valid particular knowledge-making practices are for making knowledge. For example, a mechanistic approach to animals is less likely to encourage connective experiences in comparison to an embedded approach described above. The interest here is in how such research becomes a practice of emotional distancing. I therefore end this chapter with a discussion of how knowing through care manifests different ontological and epistemological practices as put forward by feminist scholars interested in reorientating care as an ethical obligation towards animals.

4.5 Care

In the previous section on empathy, I briefly introduced the feminist care ethic. Feminists have put forth arguments for animals to be treated as subjects (Gruen and Weil, 2012; Birke, 2007; Haraway, 2008). Feminists take an intersectional approach that draws together the oppressions of animals, women, people of colour and other marginalised groups. Gough and Whitehouse argue that through the patriarchal system which privileges (white) masculinity and reason, the bodies of others are posited together in a binary opposition (Gough and Whitehouse, 2018, p.4). Philips argues

intersectionally that 'caring must be understood and developed as integral to a wider political agenda which challenges the atomisation of the individual amplified by neoliberalism' (Philips, 2016, p. 480).

Feminists challenge the association between women and nature in Western culture which revolves around fixed binary positions, along with hierarchies that position Western white men in places of power (Alaimo and Hekman, 2008). The supposed close relation between women and animals, like women and nature, does little for either group (Noske, 1997; Plumwood, 1993). Feminist science scholars have been enormously influential in challenging the epistemologies that reproduce uneven categories, binaries and hierarchies (McCall, 2005). For example, feminist scholars such as Evelyn Keller (1985) and Sandra Harding (1986) produced accounts of bias in research and critiqued the latter's claims of objectivity.

I will firstly draw out more distinctly how notions of care in feminist and relational theories provide insightful ways to bring together the concept of care and feelings of connection embodied within material multispecies encounters. Doing so will enable me to explain how individual beings and bodies are central to my earlier critique that in CWN research, abstracted portrayals of animals are subsumed into nature within conservation public engagement. In the following section I argue that care and knowing are entwined practices (Despret, 2004, p.130), and I therefore argue that feeling CWN is a practice of embodied care and knowing. In the course of my argument, it will become apparent how my critique of CWN research is situated from within this perspective that connects caring and knowing through embodiment.

In relation to Gruen (2015), cited earlier, and many other feminists in the care tradition (Adams, 2014; Noske, 1997; Plumwood, 1993; Haraway, 1988), there is a move

towards thinking in terms of the value of situated caring, that is, caring from an experience-based position. Gruen states that 'impartial reasoning is the highest form of ethical deliberation in the traditional approaches' (Gruen, 2015, p.33), which she critiques, arguing that in effect such approaches '[s]ever . . . a problem from its roots' (Kheel, 1993, p.255, cited in Gruen, 2015, p.12). Furthermore, as Haraway (1988) and Latour (2000) argue, knowledge is situated, regardless of whether we acknowledge this fact, and cannot therefore be impartial. Gruen's (2015) position is that if we follow the route of attempting to be impartial and of thinking outside of the situation, we are likely to miss what matters (p.25). Gruen further argues that being disembedded risks 'creating alienation' and she critiques orthodox universalist approaches that attend only to generalised and non-specific beings, 'based on abstract universal principles deduced through careful, albeit detached, reasoning' (ibid, p.8). The beings in question are interchangeable, and she argues that particular situations have to be fitted into general rules and disconnected from the experiences of actual persons (ibid, p.35).

María Puig de la Bellacasa develops the notion of care as a *doing*, drawing on Haraway's work, which she argues provides a way of thinking that does not require oppositions and splits, but creates webs of connections and ways to move forward (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2012, p.201). She refers to Haraway's claim that beings do not precede their relating (Haraway, 2008) in order to articulate the situated, doing-ness of care. Ethics from this standpoint cannot become disembedded or abstracted. Making knowledge, learning, or researching are understood as inseparable from care, and have consequences and are thus ethical acts. Interpretations of animals enacted through epistemologies that reduce behaviour to instincts, for example (Egerton, 2016), or that respond to behavioural conditioning, for instance (Capshew, 1993), performatively construct animals as having particular abilities and ways of being in the world (Despret, 2010; Latour, 2000).

Moreover, …affirming that beings do not pre-exist their relatings means that our relatings have consequences. Multiplying through connection first, rather than through distinctive taxonomies is consistent with a confidence that feminist (knowledge) politics are not dedicated to deconstruction of the given, but to 'passionate construction', to 'passionate connection' (Haraway, 1997: 190).

(Puig de la Bellacasa, 2012, pp.204-205)

Feminist theorists, such as Gruen (2015), Haraway (2008), Puig de la Bellacasa (2012), and Despret (2004), acknowledge the inclusion of care in knowledge-making practices, which entails feeling connection. Furthermore, as Despret writes, 'The practice of knowing has become a practice of caring' (Despret, 2004, p.130). What is at stake here is both the moral obligation (Philips, 2016) and the ontological understanding of the processes and affects that mediate knowledge-making practices. Therefore, to make knowledge is an ethical process; knowledge makers need to attend to the situatedness of their interpretative processes. Through risking knowing as a practice of caring, a researcher risks being accused of making an anthropomorphic mistake. Despret (2013a, p.58) is interested in researching 'risky practices', including 'risking' being deemed to be anthropomorphic in order to become involved in knowledge-making practices that are both embodied and situated. In the following sections, I argue that to feel connectedness involves embodied knowing, and that connection is inextricably entwined with knowing and with care. It is through embodied knowing that we care and feel connected. Philips argues that care involves a complex weaving between imagination and embodied processes:

This includes the interplay between mind and body that produces the embodied experiences which enable individuals to develop empathy and the

understanding of the other that is often not a product of conscious thought, but which originates in the body. We are moved to act morally through a personal and embodied caring.

(Philips, 2016, p.477)

Philips's argument requires some unpacking in that she weaves together empathy and understanding with imagination and embodiment as a complex process that may or may not include cognitive awareness. My research aims to develop inventive methods to investigate how cognitive, imaginative and embodied experiences in turn manifest as connective and caring experiences.

4.6 Summary

This chapter has presented a range of epistemological interpretive frameworks for understanding animals. I have argued that interpretations of animals are representations of animal traits and need to be attended to as such (Lestel et al., 2014). This argument is close to Bekoff's (2002) and Burghardt's (1991) position of critical or careful anthropomorphism. Furthermore, I have demonstrated that researchers come to know their research subjects as subjects through situated embodied practices. Through becoming open to the complexities of empathetic understandings and affective knowledge-making practices, connective experiences are more likely to occur. I have also explored the relationship between knowing and care through a discussion of feminist understandings of entangled empathy (Gruen, 2015). This chapter underpins my decision to repurpose naturalist and field researcher experiences as CWN methods, which were discussed in the methodology (Chapter 3).

Figure 8: Medea looking over the train tracks at Kentish Town City Farm.[20]

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[20] Medea standing with her back to Shirley the cow's paddock. She is looking in the direction of the large grassy railway embankment and goats, with housing beyond. This photo portrays the city farm as a nature space densely interwoven with human fabrications and organic forms.

Figure 9: Camley St. in winter 2010 before much of the development.

Chapter 5. Urban Nature-Places: The Field Sites

5.1 Introduction

I have argued that within conservation (for the most part), nature is understood as 'the place where nature is not' (Cronon, 1995, p.11), and that urban-dwelling people are often assumed to have a nature deficit (Lorimer, 2017). These understandings have, in turn, produced urban or nature typologies of animals (and other nonhuman life forms) with related sets of norms and cultural practices attached.

Conservation-based CWN research does not address the relationality of space and thus struggles with exploring natureculture experiences in relation to CWN (Whatmore, 2002). The effect of conceiving nature as a distinct type of non-urban space, is the

reduction of the urban to an embodiment of non-nature (Gandy, 2002). Researching urban nature-places provides the opportunity to investigate how social and scientific categories and conceptualisations respond to and manifest with material spaces and corporeal animals. Furthermore, I concede that although space is more productively understood relationally as types of naturecultures, there are spaces that are experienced as urban through the intensities of buildings, roads, and people and other elements (Keniger et al., 2013) Therefore, this research investigated urban nature-spaces and categories of the urban-dwelling animals who can be encountered in those places. I aimed to explore how some animal categories, such as companion, farm and domestic, are excluded from CWN discourses[21], whilst other animal categories, such as wildlife and specimens, are included in nature and therefore worthy of attention in relation to CWN[22].

This chapter provides an overview of the three field sites: the Lond0on Zoo, Camley Street Natural Park and Kentish Town City Farm. In Chapter 2 (p.77), in the research design, I provided an explanation of the field site selection criteria in order to indicate a range of animal categories in formal urban nature-place contexts.

Together, discourses embedded within the three field sites expose many of the tropes of urbanism, which will become apparent through the descriptions of each site. For example, it is impossible to think about Camley Street Natural Park without touching upon tensions between regeneration, gentrification and local communities. Likewise, the London Zoo cannot be understood without paying attention to its formation during

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[21] Here I refer to research that addresses the benefits of CWN for pro-environmental behaviour rather than research that addresses CWN in relation to human wellbeing and utilises companion and domestic categories of animals.
[22] See Chapter 1 for a discussion of these points.

the early Victorian era, when architects and planners sought to create ordered urban spaces from the chaos of the pre-modernised nineteenth century London (Berger, 1991). The Kentish Town City Farm furnishes a lens outside of conservation and thus enabled me to consider how the emplacement of animals in a farm setting, instrumentally utilised to benefit the wellbeing of local people, compares to that of the animals at Camley Street, who are curated in order to provide a wildlife educational experience in the heart of central London. Each site offers different versions of animal spaces, each with their own agenda, governmentalities and requirements in relation to the animals and humans.

Animals have many roles in city life. For example, they are working animals: police dogs, falcons for pest control; sources of food such as chickens, rabbits and cows; companion animals, such as dogs and cats; as well as used for sport, for example, cock fighting and dog racing. The animals in my field sites also have roles and work. The zoo animals are presented each day as spectacles and specimens; the animals at Camley Street Natural Park are observed, spotted, captured and identified. At the city farm, the animals provide work for volunteers but also, in some cases, provide food.

Determining whether an animal is deemed to be part of a particular version of nature is dependent upon a range of social concerns and constructs. For example, a pigeon may be considered wild or feral, a pest, a pet, a sport animal, or even supper (Jerolmack, 2013). Each category is determined by the animal's socio-spatial relations. Some of these categories overlap with more than one version of nature, whilst others are positioned in binary oppositions (Urbanik, 2012). I aimed to research the implications of animal categories on human-animal encounters at the field sites. Firstly, I provide an overview of the London Borough of Camden where the three field sites are positioned. I then situate each field site through a summary discussion.

5.1.1 The London Borough of Camden

My three field sites are approximately a mile apart from one another in the Borough of Camden, London[23].

Figure 10: Map of Camden, showing position of the field sites.

The London Borough of Camden was formed in 1965 by combining the metropolitan boroughs of Hampstead, Holborn and St. Pancras; these combined boroughs were 'by turns intellectual, wealthy and radical' (Kohn, 2010). St. Pancras was one of the most radical councils in the UK 'sometimes referred to as the Socialist Republic of St Pancras' (Brown, 2015). This radical status is reflected in the three field sites: The Zoo was the first scientific research zoo in the UK, and it is one of the oldest zoological

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[23] London Zoo sits on the border and is partially in Westminster.

institutions in the world, which was built with Royal patronage and aligned with wealthy and powerful individuals. Camley Street Natural Park was one of the London Wildlife Trust's first sites, and its inception occurred in tandem with that of the London Wildlife Trust. The Kentish Town City Farm was the first city farm in the UK. The three sites share innovative beginnings and, whilst the London Zoo reflects the wealth and presence of a metropolitan elite in Camden (e.g. through the powerful list of trustees, fellows and patrons), Kentish Town City Farm conversely reflects Camden's working class and informal heritage (Tindall, 2010). At Camley St. Natural Park, workers and volunteers are mainly educated in the environmental sciences and are mobile, staying at the project for a period of time whilst developing their careers (Interview with Zoe, January 2015). Whilst Camden is an ethnically diverse borough, all three field sites are primarily run by white British people (Agyeman, 1996, p.18). Researching three field sites with so many shared characteristics, as well as many differences, offers the potential for an illuminating analysis of how cultural discourses produce human-animal relations in the field site contexts[24].

The missions of the London Zoo and the London Wildlife Trust share intentions to support and promote conservation and to educate the public about conservation issues, such as endangered species and habitats. The zoo is the most animal-focused of the three field sites, in that its mission is the conservation of endangered animal species and their habitats. This animal-focused epistemological approach means that concerns and considerations about humans (both employees and the public) are secondary. The zoo interfaces with the public in order to 'motivate others to take

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[24] I have produced a table in order to summarise and navigate through the key comparisons. See Appendix B.

conservation action' through education, and to raise funds for its work[25]. Camley St. is also focused upon the preservation of nonhuman-nature, including animals; however, its focus is more specifically engaging people with local wildlife spaces and it, therefore, has a more embedded need to engage with the public. Camley St. is the only organisation out of the three field sites which directly stipulates that it aims to 'connect people with nature'[26].

Kentish Town City Farm, in contrast, is not a conservation-based organisation and, therefore, provides the opportunity to compare the aims and objectives and engagement practices of conservation organisational structures with a multispecies community organisation. The city farm principally regards itself as a people-centred community[27] organisation, aiming to increase human wellbeing through interactions with animals. As I discussed in Chapter 1, within conservation discourses, CWN is regarded as a prerequisite to engaging in positive environmental actions (Bragg et al., 2013a), whereas the city farm's aim to connect people with 'animals, nature, and the environment'[28] is motivated by the view that a connection with animals increases human wellbeing (Lovell, 2016). Whilst animals are an important part of the community, humans are therefore the primary focus of the farm's mission.

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[25] The quote is drawn from the ZSL website: https://www.zsl.org/about-us and https://www.zsl.org/about-us/strategic-aims [last accessed 1.8.2018].
[26] http://www.wildlondon.org.uk/about-us [last accessed 1.8.2018].
[27] I follow the city farm staff here. They frequently described themselves as a community, although they do not usually call themselves a 'multispecies' community.
[28] The KTCF Farm mission: the city farm does not have a concise mission across its media platforms, in part because it recently introduced a new director. The farm describes itself as '…a community charity that helps city people connect with animals, nature and the environment' (http://ktcityfarm.org.uk/about-us/ [last accessed 1.8.2018]). However, it is worth noting that this statement was influenced by this research.

5.2 The London Zoo (ZSL)

Figure 11: Zebras at London Zoo, framed by their enclosure.

5.2.1 The Zoological Society of London: One of the Oldest Zoos[29]

Sir Stamford Raffles founded The Zoological Society as an institution and a specimens collection for scientists in 1826. It has always been an elite institution with royal patronage and a powerful list of trustees and fellows. The zoological gardens are situated in Regents Park and were designed by John Nash in 1811, supported by Decimus Burton (who also designed many of the early zoo buildings) as part of a larger town planning project that stretched from St. James Park, including Trafalgar Square, to Parliament Hill. Regents Park had been a Royal Park since Henry VIII's reign; the

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[29] In this thesis, mostly I call the London Zoo 'the zoo' except where doing so would not make sense. I use 'ZSL' when referring to the institution rather than the place. The institution has another zoo site at Whipsnade Safari Park, as well as international conservation project sites. https://www.zsl.org/zsl-london-zoo

development in the early 1800s was part of the nineteenth century ordering of urban space. During this time, many farm and domestic animals were moved away from residential areas, and there was an effort to cleanse the city 'of animals either not under human control or considered enjoyable' (Noll, 2014, p.149). Beliefs about disease contagions began shifting and it was widely believed that smells could transmit diseases, such as tuberculosis. There was, therefore, a widespread move to police odours from manure, drains, slaughterhouses, and animals (ibid). Pigs were no longer welcome to run free and manure became regarded as a health hazard (ibid). The zoo epitomised the modernising dream to rebuild London in ordered laid out areas, with parks that aimed to improve morals and inspire healthy living among the working classes (Boyer, 1994). The zoo animals were presented with formal gardens which were under human control and enclosed within a curated environment.

The history of the zoo exemplifies and embodies the shift in human–animal relations that encompassed an increased distance between species (Berger, 1991; Fudge, 2017). Many of the London menageries closed around the same time that the zoo opened, including the Exeter Exchange and the Royal Menagerie at the Tower of London (National Fairground and Circus Archive). Some of the animals from the Exeter Exchange menagerie were moved into the zoo (ibid). This move marked a new relation between humans and animals away from the chaotic menageries, where animals were not separated from one another and from people (Mullan and Marvin, 1999). Moreover, in the menageries the animals were kept as exotic spectacles for amusement; however, at the zoo they became scientific specimens that were still observed and engaged with but from a new physical and epistemological distance (ibid). This move demonstrated a shift in the role and activity of the animals. In the menageries, they had been mixed up together, they moved around, and they were often shown in streets and at very close range to spectators (National Fairground and Circus Archive). Whereas

within the zoo, the animals were ordered by type, and largely kept in cages and at a greater distance from the public. They were regarded as not only specimens but also spectacles, whereby the animals would partake in shows, for example, chimpanzee tea parties that continued into the 1970s and elephant rides on Jumbo, the famous zoo elephant (Anderson, 1995). The material positioning of the animals at a greater distance from the spectators reflected the overall separation that took place between humans and animals during industrialisation (Berger, 1991) and the increasing domination of empirical science-based ontologies over folk and medieval knowledges of the world.

5.2.2 From Menagerie to Zoo

Figure 12: The zoo tigers observed by a group of humans.

5.2.3 Colonial Intersections

The London Zoo was intimately connected to colonialism (Armstrong, 2002, p.414) and it has always actively collected, named, and 'owned' species from all over the world. The same ships carrying colonialists carried biologists, collectors and naturalists, such as Darwin (Armstrong, 2002). Traces of the zoo's colonial past are evident today in the form of statues and architectural details (Field notes, 2014). and the hierarchical structure between levels of staff, flowing down to the exoticised animals (Interview with Ronda, 2014). The lineage between colonialism and conservation is present in the curation of many of the exhibits in exoticised styles, for example, the Gir National Park exhibit, named 'Land of the Lions', which opened in 2015 (Field notes, 2015). This exhibit includes life-size replicas of a derelict temple, Indian market stalls, pictures of Hindu goddesses and a comparison between a yogi and a flamingo, among many other design details. The enclosure signage explains how ZSL funds researchers and vets to train local people to protect the lions (Field notes, 2015), thus positioning the zoo as the experts with authoritative knowledge of how to conduct conservation work. Investigating the zoo demands that we pay attention to its spatial arrangements, its invitation to gaze and its colonial histories.

The docks and trade were at the heart of Victorian London and people were fascinated by the new and exotic creatures that were being brought back from colony countries. James Greenwood, the Victorian journalist and social commenter, published a piece called 'The Mysterious Pell's Owl' (Greenwood, 1874, pp.231-233) in which he suggests that an owl brought to the zoo by 'African explorers' was a 'fetish bird' with magical powers. He explains how the explorers considered the bird's powers to be 'heathen bosh':

Fetish was nothing but heathen bosh. How could it affect men, white, civilized

and educated? Ha! Ha! The idea was absurd!

(ibid, p.233)

Greenwood then describes the sickness and bad luck that the Pell's Owl brought with it to the zoo, even after its death and on to the taxidermist shop. This story brings together the fear and wonder that surrounded exotic collections and faraway cultures, deemed to be both savage and mystical. Greenwood's joke speaks to a different time when the enchantment humans felt for animals remained present at least to some degree(Fudge, 2017). The opening of the zoo marked a move from a human–animal relation of enchantment, to one of rationalist science evidenced by The Zoological Society of London as the first science-orientated collection of animals. However, the current zoo is still very much a space of spectacle (Mullan and Marvin, 1999); this aspect of the zoo environment can be understood as a form of curated 're-enchantment' (Thrift, 2008, p.65). Thrift argues that despite the widely held view in social sciences that in the West, modernity disenchanted life, the 'magic has not gone away' (ibid). Thrift argues that 'magic' is evident in New Age beliefs and practices, and avant-garde alternative cultures (ibid, p.66). However, he also argues that natures have become commodified, and in this sense I argue that the zoo presents a commodified enchantment (ibid, pp.70-73)

5.2.4 The Modern Zoo: Becoming Conservation-Focused

In many ways little has changed from the London Zoo's original position as an elite institution. Today the zoo retains an impressive list of trustees, funders and fellows. It retains its royal patronage and remains situated in a Royal Park. The animal enclosures remain built by prestigious architects, and the animals remain shown as

172

exotic specimens, for the most part, from exotic places, many of which were previously British colonies. The significant shift since the zoo's establishment has occurred in the discourses that the zoo frames itself with, namely, a move away from celebrating and projecting its colonial heritage towards emphasising its work in conservation and the protection of endangered animals. Many of the larger animals have been moved out to Whipsnade Safari Park, a larger sister zoo belonging to ZSL near Windsor. The London Zoo no longer keeps bears, sea lions, dolphins and elephants, for example. Education and conservation have now been developed as key public interfaces, whereas previously, the public focus was overtly upon animals billed as spectacles. The zoo runs daily shows, although rather than overtly promoting animals for their entertainment value, animal talks are presented as educational and interesting. For example, daily shows include demonstrations of hawks in flight and penguins diving for food, with narratives weaving between a combination of biological facts, anthropomorphic trait accounts of the zoo animals' behaviours and marketing information outlining the important work of ZSL (Field notes, 2015).

The London Zoo is part of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA[30]), and The Zoological Society of London conducts research across a range of international and national territories. The London Zoo is therefore the public face of a large conservation organisation, embedded within the complexities of conservation touched on earlier in Chapter 1. Some of the zoo exhibits are directly linked to research projects. For example, when the London Zoo gorilla enclosure opened in 2007 it was directly tied to a research project in Gabon[31]. Modern zoos work together through

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[30] WAZA: http://www.waza.org/en/site/conservation/international-studbooks [last accessed 1.8.2018].
[31] Gleaned from zoo information signage at the enclosure.

WAZA to control breeding and the management of zoo animal populations (Braverman, 2013). In practice, zoo animals are not wild animals in that they do not live outside of human control (ibid). However, as Braverman states:

> Husbandry practices, database tools, and population management models increasingly drift from *ex situ* conservation in zoos to *in situ* conservation in the wild and vice versa, as the interactions between these sites become more and more frequent.
>
> Braverman, 2015, p.13

This shift is due to the growing threats to animals living outside of human control, *in situ* (in place) rather than those in living *ex situ* (out of place) in zoos and other enclosed settings such as labs (ibid, p.3). As a result, the roles of zoos have changed, in relation to both public visitors and the animals. The London Zoo is now embedded into the biopolitics of maintaining animal life (ibid, pp.12-13). As Braveman explains, zoo biopolitics takes two forms. Firstly, it relates to the forms of governance interested in the control of individual bodies in order to maximise productivity and adherence to cultural stability through 'docility' (ibid, p.12). The second form relates to the control of species through population control, health, and lifespan (ibid, p.13). Recently scholars have argued that both these forms of biopolitics are applied to nonhuman animals as well as to humans (Braverman, 2015; Rutherford, 2007).

The tension between keeping animals wild (in situ) and keeping animals under control (ex situ), manifests visibly through the naturalistic zoo enclosure designs. The enclosures enact as curated versions of *pristine nature* snapshots, surrounded by fences and security wires. Although these enclosures are said to be beneficial for the animals who live in them (Fabregas et al., 2011), they also produce a sensory

encounter for human visitors that illustrates the value of the version of nature that zoos work to protect (Braverman, 2013, p.7). As Braverman explains: 'Without a wild, free and pristine nature, conservation in captivity is meaningless; and without the notion of captivity, wilderness as the very opposite of captivity cannot exist' (Braverman, 2015, p.4). Braverman's comment relates to the notion that zoos exist (now) in order to save animals in what is understood to be wilderness; part of the job of the enclosures is thus to materialise versions of wilderness for visitors.

The sensory affects of the zoo enclosures and overall design also enact as biopolitical processes that work on the human visitors. This has been documented by scholars such as Davies (2000), Bulbeck (2010), and Anderson (1995), who deconstruct the experiences of visiting zoos through looking at the technologies involved in the messaging and making of the spaces. My interest was in how these spaces act upon the potential connective experiences that visitors may have with zoo animals.

5.2.5 Persian Gardens: Connecting to Archetypes

Another way to read the space of the zoo is to consider Foucault's (1967, p.5) observation of the spatial arrangement of zoos and the ways this arrangement invites certain gazes. Foucault notes that zoos were originally laid out upon the design of Persian gardens. The designs incorporated a central fountain, with the four corners of the earth represented and divided by water ways, lines of trees and plants kept in a tangled yet beautiful state. The London Zoo follows this arrangement with a central fountain and tree-lined paths leading out towards different enclosure areas bordered by plant arrangements. In the historic paradise garden, animals held multiple roles not that dissimilar to those they hold now. They were trophies of power, used for sport and entertainment or food, and they were also sacred. In Foucault's terms, the zoo, like a Persian paradise garden, is a heterotopia: it exists as a kind of complete world, with its

own culture and is to an extent self-referential (Foucault, 1967; Smith, 2011). The zoo is relaxing because it is an escape from the outer world. London Zoo is positioned in a section of Regents Park known as the outer circle, whilst the inner circle is laid out with further gardens. This complex design foregrounds the zoo as a dream space that speaks to modernity and the dream of ordering both chaotic nature and chaotic space. Holmberg (2017, p.3) points out that the term 'zoo' refers to both order and chaos. What the zoo exemplifies therefore is a tautology—it is a space of supreme human control over animals, but it also alludes to an enchanted time, to the archetypal role of animals in human mythology. It alludes to a time when humans and animals were kin.

5.2.6 A Space for The Gaze
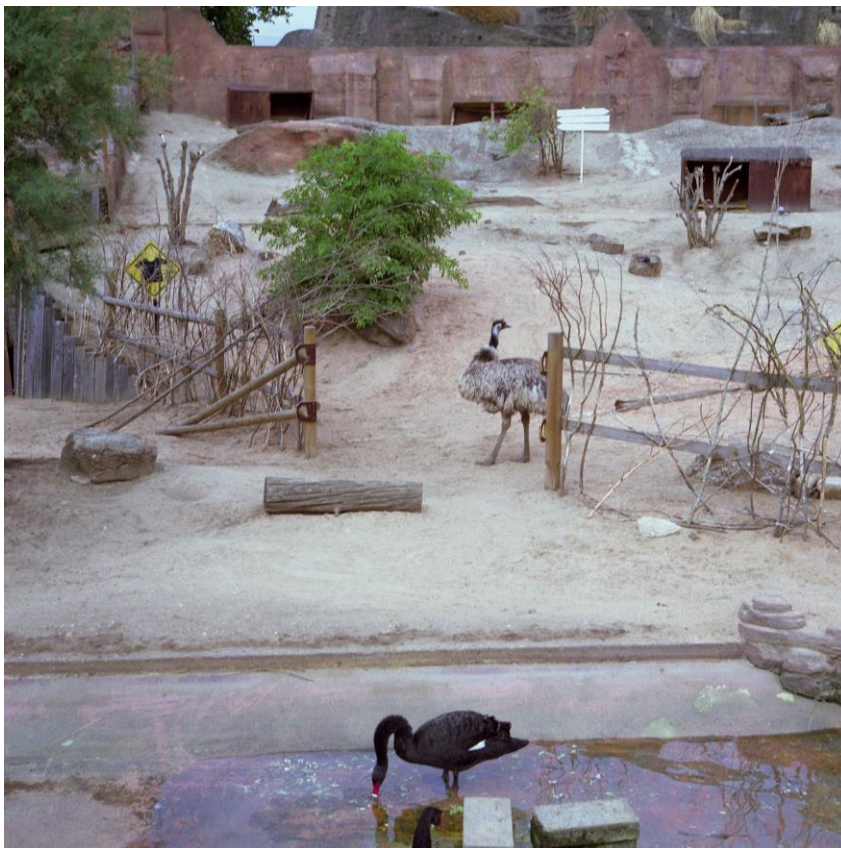
Figure 13: Birds living at the Maplin Terraces, which were originally built for bears.

The zoo is a space where nature, science, and culture collide (Anderson, 2004, p.174). However, much of the theoretical discourses on zoos neglect consideration of humans as mobile subjects. For example, work by Malamud (2007), Mullan and Marvin (1999), and Beardsworth and Bryman (2001) considers Foucault's analysis of the spatiality of the zoo by thinking about the zoo as a panopticon, describing the animals as surveyed in settings by visitors whose gaze operates in a subjugating way. In making these points, this work reduces a zoo visitor's engagement to a fixed position, whereas, in practice, visitors have mobile objectives and motivations (Pedersen, 2010). Whilst there is a clear corollary between the panopticon and the zoo, the notion of zoo as panopticon also reconfirms a binary position, whereby the picture that emerges reinforces a version of animals as passive objects, with humans in full control. As Beardsworth and Bryman observe:

> Confined animals may be subjected to a 'scientific gaze' or more specifically, a 'zoological gaze'. That is, they become objects of analysis in the discourses of such disciplines as ethology, parasitology, reproductive biology, animal nutrition and so on. More generally, they become the objects of a kind of 'recreational gaze' on the part of the general public who form the principal audience for the zoo's presentations.

(Beardsworth and Bryman, 2001, p.89)

On one hand, animals are gazed upon by 'experts' and, on another, they are gazed upon by visitors as 'recreation'. This type of visitor gaze is akin to John Urry's (1990) 'tourist gaze', whereby tourists enter the zoo with a 'stock knowledge' of what they will encounter based upon a culmination of cultural and media messages about animals and zoos (Beardsworth and Bryman, 2001).

177

Pedersen (2010) discusses Franklin's (1999) term the 'zoological gaze' specifically in relation to visitors, suggesting it can incorporate an anthropocentric visual consumption of animals or involve a 'more zoocentric or ecologistic form of zoological gaze concerned with species and habitat preservation' (Pedersen, 2010, p.58). Pedersen also describes a new, third definition which Franklin calls a postmodern zoological gaze (Franklin, 1999, p.189). According to Franklin, we are now experiencing a postmodern zoological gaze by which the human–animal species barrier is repeatedly breached and confused by inviting feelings of intense involvement with the animal's world (Pedersen, 2010, p.58). Pedersen's perception of visitor-animal interactions makes possible more mobile and complex potential understandings of nonhuman beings. Arguably, it is possible to regard the animal from a non-anthropocentric perspective even within an enclosed zoo (Smith, 2011).

The image of the zoo as a paradise garden where animals serve multiple purposes, including holding semi-deity status, relates to Pedersen's (2010, p.75) interpretation of the zoo as a space for multiple gazes, including the gaze of *awe*. The notion of feeling awe draws upon the archetypal role of animals, whereby they connect us to intersubjective psychosocial experiences. On this basis, it can be argued that zoos enable people to experience archetypal connections and connect to animals beyond their own individual lives and identities and, thus, feel more connected to the animals through embodied forms of knowing.

Many zoos, including the London Zoo, have developed sophisticated communication technologies in order to present the animals within ordered authoritative spaces (Davies, 2000). The notion of human control over the more-than-human world becomes materially evident within this ordering of chaotic nature. However, at the same time, zoos (as with all curated spaces) have unforeseen uses and offer

unplanned experiences (ibid, p.251). Bulbeck (2010, p.95) argues that with appropriate framing it is possible to have connective experiences with animals in zoo environments. The notion that the animals are fully controlled is, in part, a fantasy that manifests through the zoo enclosures. Andersen (1995, pp.3, 5) argues that zoos tell us mostly about the boundary making activities of humans and, furthermore, whilst the curated zoo spaces reaffirm the universalised male gaze, this gaze is only ever a partial view. Anderson expands upon this partial gaze in relation to its culturally situated meanings which are always shifting (ibid, p.7), and as Pedersen (2010) states, visitors bring their own mobile ways of seeing and engaging with animals. In this sense, the zoo can be experienced in unplanned for, unforeseen ways, and as Davies points out, 'the traditional zoo is ultimately an embodied encounter between humans and animals within a shared, albeit unequally constructed, space' (Davies, 2000, p.253).

Attending to the embodied encounters and the affective archetypal force of the animals presents opportunities to attend to the animals in more subject orientated terms. I investigated this opportunity through my ethnographic field research and drawing experiments, which I discuss in the following chapters.

5.2.7 Urban-Zoo

The zoo epitomises the dreams of modernity and retains its place as part of the scientific establishment. It is, in many ways, the most urban of the three field sites because, as a place, it does not allude to other kinds of spaces, such as wild spaces or farm spaces. Rather, the zoo portrays itself as an elite urban environment for seeing animals and its identity has always been rooted in the notion of being a part of the entertainments and scientific establishments of London. Comparatively, both Camley St. and the Kentish Town City Farm ground themselves in discourses that, in differing

manifestations, identify themselves in contrast to the urban spaces and processes taking place around them. I turn now to Camley St. Nature Park, which is about one mile east of the zoo and can be reached through a direct walk along the Regent's Canal running along both sites.

5.3 Camley Street Natural Park

Figure 14: Camley St. canal side, with the surrounding building works in progress.

Camley St. Natural Park is a small two-acre site in the Kings Cross area of Camden. Like the zoo, Camley St. aims to protect wildlife and engage the public with conservation issues. However, its focus is only upon local wildlife. Camley St. is

regarded as a London Wildlife Trust 'flagship' project, in part due to its centralised setting, and in part because it was one of the founding London Wildlife Trust sites. The site is sandwiched between the Kings Cross and Eurostar railway lines and Regent's Canal. It is completely surrounded by dense buildings and urban infrastructure. The grounds are laid out in a series of habitats, including a large pond, a meadow and a forest area. The site is peppered with informal signs explaining the habitats and their likely inhabitants.

5.3.1 From Industrial Wasteland to Nature Park

Examining the history of the development of Camley St. makes apparent the tensions between formal and informal uses of urban space, as well as illuminating some of the instrumental uses of nature in the city. Camley St. has been at the heart of a long and conflicted regeneration process, which is still ongoing.

The Camley St. site had been a derelict coal drop since the 1960s up to the early 1980s, when local people found orchids growing in among the weeds and debris along the canal edge and wanted to turn the area into a nature reserve (Inglis, 2007, p.227). The Greater London Council purchased the site and, for a peppercorn rent, leased it to the newly formed London Wildlife Trust. Volunteers organised and built the space, which includes a large pond, a marsh area, wooded zones, and a wooden visitor centre (Catterall, 2000).

The London Wildlife Trust formed in 1981 through the joining together of smaller local wildlife groups, including the Camden Wildlife Group, with support from the National Wildlife Trust group that was formed in 1912 by Charles Rothschild. Originally the trusts focused upon securing land for conservation purposes; they now operate as a

series of membership charities, with projects and groups connected through an umbrella ethos of protecting and developing wild spaces.[32]

The first urban nature reserves in UK cities were designated in the 1980s (Wheater, 1999). Interest in environmental matters was growing at this time, combined with a shift in park usage (Hannikainen, 2015). Surveys in the 1980s suggested that the demand for parks was changing: people wanted to use green spaces[33] for individual leisure activities and relaxation rather than team sports (ibid). Further, parks had become run down and the onus of funding was being shifted onto local councils, which in turn were trying to pass on the financial responsibility (ibid). Camley St. was one of the first London reserves.

5.3.2 Affective Space and Emotional Work

In an everyday sense, the park had tumbled along since its inception, keeping itself quietly going in a DIY fashion. Nursery and primary schools would visit but there were few organised activities (Catterall, 2000). There were several boats moored along its canal side edge and the project had an informal air. Outside the park, however, everything was rapidly changing. Eurostar trains began to move along one edge and station announcements started to echo through the park, along with the din of construction and traffic. During the first stages of the Kings Cross regeneration (Inglis, 2007), the site remained solid in its categorisation and presentation as a wildlife nature park. According to Inglis, a local who frequented the park regularly:

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[32] https://www.wildlifetrusts.org [last accessed 1.8.2018].
[33] 'Green space' is a term used to indicate space that is available for recreation, that has vegetation, e.g. recreation grounds, parks, heaths, and reserves. It is distinct from open space, which in contrast refers to space that is open for people such as town squares. 'Green space' also alludes to the notion of nature as constructed and controlled by people (Hannikainen, 2015).

> The presence of birds, wild flowers, trees, ponds and canal so fill the mind that
> the noise of construction and traffic recede from consciousness, and images of
> industry – first the gasholders and later the cranes – are softened as the pond
> reflects them.
>
> (Inglis, 2007, p.226)

Inglis's description was written in 2007 when the development first began. Although the park can feel like a haven, it has become increasingly difficult to view it as such at the present time, as buildings have solidified themselves around the park borders. The canal side towpath is also now heavily used by people cycling, jogging and walking, so the space has shifted from a forgotten industrial area to a construction area, and now to a densely populated corporate styled international space. Phil Jeffries, a local activist who was involved in the formation of Camley St., remembered the early excitement of building the park as an embodied investment in community:

> 'For those who were involved,' comments Phil Jeffries, 'and those who value it,
> the commitment is not simply to Camley Street but to the emotional and
> physical energy, the moral recreation, that went into it.'
>
> (Jeffries, Camley St activist, cited in Catterall, 2000, p.200)

The above quote hints at the original activist and local community energy and feelings of ownership that came from finding and creating the site. However, as Kings Cross has developed and become a major international transport intersection and development site with global significance, many other stakeholders are now involved in the park.

Figure 15: Camley St. with meadow in foreground and building works looming.

5.3.3 Becoming Kings Cross Central: An Urban Nature-Place

The Kings Cross area surrounding Camley St. has undergone a particularly intense and extensive redevelopment. The project was in the making for several decades before construction work began, which saw the failure of various investors and plans and political changes moving the proposals in several directions. Kings Cross Central (named 'Central' by the developers) is one of the largest regeneration projects in Europe and, through the international Eurostar rail terminus in London, is now directly linked to other European cities. The area can be understood within the conceptual frame of neoliberalism in several respects. In geography, neoliberalism is understood as a contested set of processes (Castree, 2003). I take Philips' broad definition that 'the neoliberal agenda argues that the interests of society are best served by the individual maximisation of self-interest, which is most effectively achieved through the

operation of the market and devolution of regulatory authority' (Philips, 2016, p.472). Civic space one of the most contested topics surrounding the development. Argent, the main developer, wanted the roads within to be private, whereas local activists argued that the area needed to retain free public access (Holgersen, 2007). Whilst retaining the public roads has been hailed as a success, the entire area is policed by private security guards (Field observations, 2015). Rutherford argues that part of neoliberal processes involves the dissemination of governance to distributed private groups: 'neoliberal governance has made it such that there are multiple sites of governing' (Rutherford, 2007, p. 292). Privatised forms of governance are apparent in the Kings Cross development through the private security force and the developers' control over the aesthetic uniformity of all of the commercial units (Field observations, 2015). The regeneration area is the manifestation of negotiated rights and governance. Whilst the main Granary Square, for example, appears to be civic space, it is ordered and governed by the developer, Argent (Holgersen, 2007).

As land values have increased, there is less and less disused, forgotten space to re-make. Currently, the ability of local people to make their own community fabric is less and less possible and, as Jeffries stated above, the emotional and physical were intertwined in that making. Jeffries's term 'moral recreation' alludes to the feeling of value in making a nature space and conserving the wild flowers that the founder members discovered already growing there, and in feeling the potential to make a space directly within and for a community.

In this context a local activist group, The Kings Cross Railway Lands Group (KXRLG)[34], campaigned in response to the impact of regeneration on the area and its residents, including the future of the nature reserve. A decades' long fight with successes and failures on both sides shaped the park we see today (Holgersen, 2007; KXRLG). Allies and Morrison, the main planning consultants, wanted the Camley St. Nature Park to become a park for people, rather than for wildlife, and to link it with a green square which lies almost adjacent, but is separated by the canal (Holgersen, 2007). Their people-centred vision for green space demonstrates how nature spaces are contested (Hannikainen, 2015). For example, whilst the developers and planners wanted to maximise the amount of valuable green space that would be used by all people in the regeneration area, the Kings Cross Railway Lands Group and the London Wildlife Trust wanted to preserve the space for their established communities and local wildlife (Holgersen, 2007).

The developers and planners wanted to maximise human usage of the space, whereas the KXRLG wanted the space to remain a wildlife park. The Kings Cross area could either be viewed as 'Kings Cross Central', implying its position as a node through which many people move, by utilising the train infrastructure and the amenities, or it could be experienced as a local place for residents and people who work there each day.

Local activist Michael Edwards described the Kings Cross regeneration as not 'primarily a process serving the low- and middle-income people in whose name

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[34] KXRLG were a loosely organised group of activists and campaigners including local residents and professionals working in and around the area. Camley St. interests were represented in part by this group and in part by the Wildlife Trust organisation.

regeneration policy was developed: rather it is seen . . . as essentially a business activity aimed at growth and competitiveness' (Edwards, 2009, p.23). For the Kings Cross developers, the park is a spatial demonstration of their local responsiveness: demonstrating how they have worked with and listened to the local community and shown that they are not solely profit driven (Edwards, 2009). To the local community, the park demonstrates their own agency in the remaking of Kings Cross (Central). Holgersen (2007, p.97) stated that the then park director told him that it would have been 'political suicide' for Camden Council to get rid of the park, but it would have also been suicide for the Wildlife Trust to give up the park. Examining grey literature and activist archives reveals several versions of the negotiations that took place during the Kings Cross development planning. Overall, the narrative is one in which Camley St. has had to compromise by reforming to become a more professional and public space in order to survive in the development.

The pressures on the space are still continuing. In July 2017, a footbridge across Camley St. was built, linking it directly to the Kings Cross Central development and the Coal Drop Yard shopping arcade. This link has reduced the size of the 2-acre reserve. For the Wildlife Trust, the park has reduced in size but grown in its potential to introduce people to the concepts, ideology and brand of the London Wildlife Trust and Camley St. Camley St. will be given a new building to host its activities on site in return for losing some of its space[35]. Urban nature parks are an important way for conservation organisations to promote nature and caring for wildlife (Hannikainen, 2015). By giving over land to make the bridge, the park itself will become more accessible and better known to the people using Kings Cross Central. Whilst the park

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[35] The following weblink provides the Wildlife Trust's information about the bridge: http://www.wildlondon.org.uk/node/7088 [last accessed 1.8.2018].

will lose some of its peaceful space, it will become a better known and used resource, certainly by people if not animals. However, this arrangement can also be regarded as the Wildlife Trust giving into pressures from Camden Council and Argent, the developers. Philips defines the neoliberal agenda, like Rutherford (2007), as being the argument that 'the interests of society are best served by the individual maximisation of self-interest, which is most effectively achieved through the operation of the market and devolution of regulatory authority' (Philips, 2016, p.472). The development at Kings Cross Central has been a matter of tension between the self-interest of the developers and the agenda of local residents and workers. Camley Street is both a local organisation and part of the national group of Wildlife Trusts—it therefore also has a mixed set of agendas to balance.

Through giving over part of the park, and agreeing to a new building, Camley St. has agreed to be enveloped by the overall Kings Cross Central aesthetic. The messy canal boats that had been moored alongside the park for decades have been removed (Field observations, 2017). Whilst this arrangement can be regarded as an exchange—i.e. the park is given a new building—and an improvement for the Wildlife Trust as an organisation, in relation to the wildlife living at Camley Street, it may not be so beneficial.

5.3.4 Everyday Life at Camley St.

Running in tandem with the threat from urban development is the growth and development of the London Wildlife Trust. Currently at Camley St., there is no active local resident community in evidence as a core group of people working, volunteering or using the site. (During my time there conducting field research, I did not meet any people from the immediate surrounding area.) Volunteers I met were environmental science students, people hoping to work their way into paid employment with the

Wildlife Trust, and a small group of people who enjoyed working at the site but came from different areas of London.

5.3.5 The Educational Purpose of Camley St.

According to Wheater (1999), Camley St. was always meant to be an educational resource. This intention is not mentioned in the accounts of its inception by Inglis, a local teacher, or the urbanist Bob Catterall, who wrote about Camley St. during its early years (Catterall, 2000). During the nation-wide shift in environmental education during the 1980s, there was an ideological contestation of the rural/urban binary which privileged rural and green as good and urban and grey as bad (Agyeman, 1996, p.11). Environmentalists felt they should be teaching people about their own local environments rather than bussing people out on fieldtrips to learn about other environments (ibid). Camley St. is a realisation of this movement.

As Kellert (2002) and Miller (2005) argue, having space for free play and exploration engenders feelings of CWN. As the park becomes more formally managed and curated, the potential for this form of connection in this location has become reduced, although it may manifest elsewhere. The current education programme is aligned with the national education strategy (Interview with Zoe, January 2015), as well as with a more countercultural Forest School pedagogy (Cree and McCree, 2012). Forest Schools were developed from the free-play movement of the 1970s which was inspired by Rudolph Steiner and Scandinavian attitudes to children and the outdoors. This 'CWN' pedagogical paradigm found in Forest Schools was adapted to align with the more urban UK context (ibid). Furthermore, British people were deemed to be more distanced from nature and outdoor activities compared to their Scandinavian counterparts (ibid). During the 1980s and 1990s, the free-play movement fell out of

favour with the establishment and informal education became aligned with the national education strategy (ibid). There is currently no provision for play at Camley St.

The different stakeholders at Kings Cross experience the place, and the changes to the place, from their own individual and professional perspectives (Massey, 1994, p.121). In that sense, Kings Cross generally is a complex intersection of local residents, people who visit the space for work, and tourists. Each group experiences a different affinity with the area. Today the space is increasingly curated and will become more formally stitched into the wider urban development now that the bridge has been built and more so, perhaps, when the new building is erected.

People who visit the space are encouraged to engage through one or another activity, and in doing so come to articulate their experience at the park as primarily one of learning (Field observations, 2015). Doing nothing, hanging around, playing aimlessly or spontaneously, relaxing in a way that does not incorporate a distinct activity, is tacitly discouraged (Field observations, 2015; Interview with Hector, June 2015). However, as Paul Corrigan (1990) and Bev Skeggs (2016) argue, hanging around is a working-class activity, which may seem to be doing nothing, but actually a lot is going on. Whilst the area is ostensibly open to all, it is accessible only through participation in prescribed activities and means of engagement (Field observations, 2015). The service providers, many of whom are volunteers, are in effect carrying out this demarcated service delivery in exchange for credentials, experience, and notches on a career ladder (Interview with Zoe, January 2015; Interview with Marie, May 2015). Part of my volunteer induction involved being told how volunteering could lead to training and further opportunities with The Wildlife Trust. With this practice comes various technocratic governance processes, such as health and safety assessments, lesson plans, strategies for engagement, budgets, materials, volunteer management and other

paid worker hierarchies. These processes order the space performatively and as a result Camley St. becomes more fixed as an established nature park.

5.3.6 The Animals

The animals at the nature park are mainly typical garden animals and pond animals. The canal is linked through to the ponds. Ducks and moorhens sometimes swim across. During my time at the park, I rarely saw any animals apart from pond creatures and insects during the mini-beast hunts (discussed on p.82). The park is not specifically animal-focused and is designed around a series of habitats, such as log piles, a meadow grass area, and a forest area. This design is partly intended to encourage biodiversity, but it also supports the project education programme by increasing the types of habitats people can learn about. Whereas the zoo and the city farm are both animal orientated, with animals kept in enclosures, Camley St. was founded on the basis of its biodiverse vegetation, including the orchids described earlier. Although Camley St. has fewer animals to see, none of them is enclosed. On one occasion, I heard the then director of the park describing local foxes as a nuisance. She stated that she wished she could prevent them from entering the park. This comment illustrates both her focus on the park as a curated space, and further, the mobile categories that urban animals are encountered through.

5.4 Kentish Town City Farm

The city farm is about 1.5 miles north-west of Camley St. The two sites are linked by the railway that runs alongside Camley St., which separates into two sections once at the city farm. The river Fleet also runs between the sites; however, it now runs underground through water tunnels and meets the canal very near to Camley St. All three field sites are approximately one mile from one another and linked by

191

infrastructure. The city farm, like Camley St., began informally but was not managed by a larger organisation like The Wildlife Trust.

Figure 16: Marjory escapes and goes for a walk at Kentish Town City Farm.

5.4.1 The First UK City Farm

Like Camley St., Kentish Town City Farm has its roots in community activism and came into being during a time of local community need. However, examining its history reveals an interesting intersection between community arts, working-class identity and community resistance. Kentish Town City Farm was the first UK city farm. It was formed in 1972 by Ed Berman and Inter-Action, a community engagement collective primarily interested in theatre-based work and community arts (Berman, 2013). Kentish Town City Farm is an atypical city farm for three key reasons. Firstly, despite its current lack of art as social action (where art is engaged with for a direct political intention) in comparison to the other London city farms, it retains a strong commitment to

community arts activities and runs several art clubs on a weekly basis. Secondly, it has retained a close-knit, local, working-class community who work and volunteer at the city farm and who are resistant to pressure from funders and the Camden Council to become professionalised. For example, some of the farm staff resisted engaging with evaluation, because they did not feel comfortable judging or labelling people from their own community (Field notes; Discussion with Wayne, 2015-2016, Terry, 2015-2016 and Nina, 2015-2016). Thirdly, the animals are an integral part of the community. In comparison to the conservation field sites that promote the value of the environment and of other species with an apparently altruistic motivation (Miller, 2005), the city farm aims to work for better community relations and human wellbeing. Animal welfare is a contentious subject, with people expressing different opinions about the wellbeing of some animals. For example, some people thought that Shirley the cow was lonely on her own, whereas others thought she was fine, if a bit bored (Field notes, 2015). There were also issues around cruelty to the animals such as whether it was okay that the young male kid goats were castrated on site without pain relief (Interview with Nina, 2016).

The city farm founder Ed Berman's approach involved inviting people to live and work communally, and to experiment with interventions that loosen social structures through games and role-play (Unfinished Histories)[36]. Inter-Action aimed to be both artistic and informally educational; Berman was keen to enable young people to learn new skills that had resonance for them, such as making a record and designing T-shirts, which in the 1970s were high currency objects for young people (KTCF, 2013). Members of Inter-Action both lived at and ran the city farm until 1989 (Berman, 2013).

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[36] Inter-Action set up the first dedicated community arts centre in the UK (Bishop, 2012, p.180), based around the corner from the city farm at the site that is now the Talacre Sports Centre.

The community arts movement is normally positioned within counterculture and left-wing politics (Bishop, 2012, p.187). However, Berman considered that his approach was apolitical (ibid). He was opposed to reliance upon the state for funding and rather he wanted to engender community action that broke the local people away from what he perceived as dependence upon the state for solutions (Berman, 2013). This ideology was central to the project and also to the interests of Inter-Action. The members of Inter-Action instigated the projects in Kentish Town and gave people skills, but then moved on, hoping that people would take ownership along the way through learning to think imaginatively and to work together (KTCF, 2013). In many respects, this heritage continues in the form of working-class pride that is performed through caring well for the animals.

5.4.2 The City Farm Movement

The city farm movement remains relatively small and under researched. In many ways city farms are urban care farms, in that they provide people with opportunities for therapeutic interactions with animals. They aim to engage people with farm animals to facilitate learning about animal care, food production and agriculture. However, city farms do not fit with rural farms, because they have no economic agenda or actual farm animals: ''care farming' is defined as the use of commercial farms and agricultural landscapes as a base for promoting mental and physical health, through normal farming activity' (Hine et al., 2008). Kentish Town City Farm has resisted the 'care farm' label, and until recently has preferred to consider the project as a community run farm, rather than a service for specifically identified groups of people (Interviews with Nina and Juliette, 2015). Care farming UK, the organisation that promotes and represents care farms, lists some of the city farms on its database and there are website links between Care Farming UK and the National Federation of City Farms and Community

Gardens. However, city farms are regarded as an add-on to wider care farm discourses, which themselves are positioned within wider wellbeing frameworks. The specific role of city farms for urban communities is not fully attended to and risks becoming overlaid with care and further, for particular groups of humans. Since my research began, the Kentish Town City Farm has acquired a new director who is embracing current policy and funding pressures to become a care farm (Interviews with Nina and Juliette, 2016).

5.4.3 A Working-Class Project

Over time, the activities at the city farm have shifted from being focused on art and action to becoming play and community activities. The earlier use of arts for skills training has been dropped, and the skills and education focus has shifted entirely to the animals, mostly articulated through care practices. Originally art was introduced as a form of social action by Inter-Action whose incentive was to empower the local community, and to give them tools to become skilled and self-reliant (Berman, 2013; , 2013). Inter-Action was a part of a wider movement involved in using art for political change: 'activist artists went out to the streets seeking to engage with the audience in order to readdress urgent social, political, economic and environmental problems' (Rooke and Wissel, 2015).

Since Inter-Action left the city farm in the mid-1980s, there remains a sense of equality and value for all people, but the focus is now upon empowering volunteers by giving them structured animal care routines and responsibilities (Langan, 2013). The city farm workers that remained were largely from the local working-class community (ibid). They had moved away from the communal decision-making structure that Inter-Action had operated within and instead divided control of the city farm between animal care, education, and general management and coordination (Interview with Wayne, 2015).

The emancipatory and empowering vision and action embodied during the moment of the city farm's inception (which was also part of the wider community action and counterculture movement of the 1970s and early 1980s), did not fully succeed or find ways to sustain itself potentially, partially due to political tensions. During the 1970s and 1980s the community arts movement was antagonistic in that it aimed to challenge the elite hierarchies of art and the value system that privileged high art over low community and popular art (Bishop, 2012). Community art projects were compromised through their dependence upon state agencies for funding (ibid, pp.187-189).

Community projects became professionalised and forced into service provision models in order to secure funding (ibid). The Kentish Town City Farm community was caught in the midst of this political movement, and yet was also resistant to adopting middle-class artistic practices. Once Inter-Action left, the city farm was run by local people without formal arts training. The staff told me that they identify as a working-class project, and they told me about some of the strategies they employ in order to retain local working-class visitors who they perceive as being in need (Interviews with Wayne, Nina, and Louisa, 2015). During my field work, there was a concern about the mum and toddler group which has been taken over by middle-class mums; the local estate mums had shifted to a toddler group at a different community centre. The staff discussed the problems of getting the people they wanted to come and to keep the farm as an authentic space for local people (Interviews with Nina and Louisa, 2016). Skeggs (2016, pp.145-173) argues that 'class is always about the struggle between groups over control, in which exploiters and exploited fight it out'. This observation seemed to be the case at the city farm, where the staff wanted support from local people, but went to quite a bit of effort to keep certain people away (Field observations, 2016).

Ethical problems of community engagement practice are complex. For example, epistemologically utilising art and creative practice as praxis for opening up and expressing personal and social issues presents ethical problems for practitioners. For instance, as Cubitt stated:

> …though it may develop expressive powers in participants, we are always reluctant to tear down the fragile unity of the self that is being expressed. That is the kind of risk it is perhaps fair to ask yourself, but not of others, relative strangers.

(Cubitt, 1995, cited in Bishop, 2012, p.189)

Perhaps without the influence of Inter-Action, the city farm fell into safer practices that were not challenging in the same way. Furthermore, whilst for Inter-Action, and Ed Berman in particular, the city farm was a form of social experiment aimed at emancipation, for the local people, it was a place for relaxation as much as for personal growth.

5.4.4 Pressure to Become a Care Farm

Today the Kentish Town City Farm is very different to the days of its inception. There are tighter controls around animal husbandry and the farm's funding depends on outcomes relating to the current praxis of the 'care farm' as a service for segmented groups (e.g. people with learning disabilities, mental ill health, people with autism), rather than funds available for a community of all humans and animals together. The city farm, like Camley St., is under pressure to formalise in order to retain funding. The care farm movement currently has a lot of momentum and feeds into wellbeing discourses that demonstrate the positive effects of nature and animal interactions upon

human mental wellbeing (Gorman, 2017). In the UK, different funding models for wellbeing activities currently being piloted, and arguments swing back and forth between health and welfare policymakers and commissioners regarding who should pay for this funding (Smith, 2016; Bragg, 2013, p.3).

Compared to London's other urban farms, Kentish Town City Farm stands apart. During interviews with farm staff, I found considerable ambivalence regarding the pressures to become professionalised as either an education-focused organisation or a whole-hearted care farm. Whilst they do provide services, such as education tours and therapeutic riding, until very recently they have, unlike other farms, avoided corporate sponsorship. There is an inner core of volunteers from the local community who are not labelled with any specific need or requirement, yet are supported tacitly through being 'one of us' or one of 'our children' (the latter is a term applied to any child who is a regular visitor). The city farm relies upon a large number of local volunteers and has a strong network of support. This support structure gives the organisation some resilience (Packham, 2013, p.220).

5.4.5 The Animals

In a sense, the animals are a proxy community. Unlike their human counterparts, they are clearly labelled and overtly identified as requiring care: for instance, to be fed and mucked out, and given exercise, attention and shelter. The city farm animals are subject to many of the same power dynamics with humans as are the conservation field site animals. However, because visitor interaction is focused through farm animal care practices, such as mucking out and grooming, the productions of humans and other animals are corporeal encounters that are made and remade. On one hand, these encounters are not necessarily specifically about individual bodies; they also exemplify an approach, a practice and a method for engaging with the more-than-

human world. Many of the multispecies relationships have been built up over many weeks or even years, and there is, therefore, a complex entanglement of shared and separate understandings and multispecies allegiances. These relationships exist at different proximities such as between animals with staff and volunteers, but also with returning visitors who feel connected to a particular animal. A staff member told me that over three generations of the same local families visit the city farm and share time together through coming to know the animals through caring for them (Interview with Wayne, 2016).

Different people feel different connections and stakes in relation to particular animals. For example, a local Hindu group asked to sponsor the cow, as visiting her and knowing she is well cared for would have had a particular significance for them. Their request was turned down, however, as the city farm staff considered granting this request would encourage an improper relationship with a 'farm' animal and turn her into a religious cow, whereas she is a farm cow. However, although the cow lives at the city farm, she is not farmed as such, and is rather a symbolic farm animal. This incident highlights one of many ways in which the animals at the city farm give meaning to people in particular, often in personal and intimate ways. Community tensions and divisions play out through the animals and in this way the animals act as a proxy community.

Thus far, I have not provided a description of the city farm as a place. The city farm is a barely curated space. Everything about it is utilitarian and imbued with a work aesthetic. There are a couple of amateur murals and some ugly pieces of sculptures that sit around neglected and half-forgotten. On one side of the site is a housing estate that overlooks the city farm in direct proximity. The city farm grounds are split down the middle by large railway lines. The goats' outdoor area runs quite far down the

199

embankment. The yard is made of concrete and surrounded by animal stables, barns and poultry housing. Positioned in the middle of the yard is the large animal transit lorry. It is painted a glossy green and stands proudly, holding the space. Further up there are three grass paddocks and a second railway—this time passing over the city farm on a Victorian bridge. Staff told me that they do not want the city farm to look too pretty or clean—they want to keep the 'cupcake brigade' out, and they know that looking mean and rough helps them maintain their community (Interview with Nina, 2015). The muddled space, with half-complete projects and utilitarian buildings, speaks to the post-war era when the local area was recovering from heavy bomb damage. Staff and volunteers spoke to me about their family memories of the slum clearances and the terrible housing problems. When the city farm first opened, the bombed spaces were still in the midst of the area (Interview with Nina, 2016). Furthermore, the local people have witnessed new people move in, alongside the gentrification of most of the housing. This change brings me back to the animals. Following Studdert and Walkerdine (2016), I suggest that the animals provide the community with a 'second skin':

> When conditions for a community are continually unstable, rigid kinds of rules as containment help to keep fear away by providing what Bick (1968) called a 'second skin', a rigid set of rules used to maintain commonality in the face of what can be experienced as potentially annihilating.

> (Studdert and Walkerdine, 2016, p.191)

It is the animals that hold the community together through the strict care routines that are interwoven within the project identity as a space of work and pride. I further suggest that the soft emotional caring—the tactile affective experiences that the

humans share with the animals as a multispecies community—is also integral to the safe feeling provided by the animals. In this sense the animals are guardians of the community of people. If the material farm spaces were tidied up and made to look inviting, the local people fear they would be pushed out and replaced by the newer middle-class community.

Figure 17: The farm lorry in the middle of the yard: a source of pride.

5.5 Summary

In this chapter, I have provided a socio-spatial description of the field sites where the research was undertaken. I showed namely how the three sites offer different forms of encounters with animals, which I attend to in the following chapters. Whilst each site is situated in the London Borough of Camden at close proximity to one another, they offer very different experiences of animal encounters. They also cater to different demographic groups of humans. The London Zoo is the most established of the three

spaces and operates as an elite science-based institution. It charges a high entrance fee and presents enclosed animals as exhibits. I discussed its colonial heritage and also alluded to its potential to connect visitors with archetypal feelings towards animals. In the following chapters, I reveal the experiences of visiting different animals mediated through specific ontological and epistemological beliefs and practices. The zoo retains an urban form that reflects its inception at the height of modernity, when capitalism was regarded as a progressive movement forward and an antidote to the chaotic spaces of Victorian London.

Camley St., on the other hand, has been quickly absorbed into the surrounding neoliberal regeneration. It has lost its local community roots and has become a re-envisioned version of a community nature reserve. It depends upon its education service delivery—which is aimed at schools rather than local community groups—for funding and long-term security. Despite this fact, it remains open access and does provide a 'haven' for people to escape to from the business of the surrounding train terminals and corporate shops and restaurants.

Lastly, the city farm, which, like Camley St., started from informal roots, demonstrates a different form of multispecies relations. At this project, human wellbeing is prioritised over altruistic environmental concerns. The animals are domesticated and require care, which in turn provides work and meaning for the local community. Although the animals are portrayed as farm animals, for the most part they are looked after and encountered as companion community animals. The city farm animals therefore have the closest emotional and physical proximity to the local visitors.

All three sites position animals in terms of human categories and uses. Each project defines itself through the animals (and plants, in the case of Camley St.) that reside at

their sites, and each project forms its governance around animal wellbeing, policies and public interfaces. In the following three chapters, I investigate the potential of these specific multispecies constructions to promote and elicit feelings of CWN. I show how my research was able to tease out experiential differences and potentials for connection in these spaces.

Chapter 6. Anthropomorphic, Affective Encounters and Care: How Conservation Makes and Unmakes Human-Animal Relationships

Figure 18: The London Zoo Casson Building, which originally housed elephants.

6.1 Introduction

In the following ethnographic analysis, I draw out the key concepts of the human–animal interactions in my research by attending to the dominant organisational structures, as well as the slippages—the converse moments and glimpses of

multispecies *flourishing* (Haraway, 2016). These interactions included the visually observed and *felt*, affective multispecies interactions that enacted the abyss between humans and the rest of life as a space of possibility. Events that unfolded at the field sites provided clues for how to understand the more-than-human world as being inclusive of humans as well.

My analysis responds to the earlier claims that CWN research utilises reductive methods that do not attend to experience-based multispecies encounters. Rather than attending to embodied communication and experiences mediated through their spatial situatedness, I found that within conservation public engagement, there is an overemphasis on education and cognitive interactions as the primary means of engaging publics with nature.

This analysis is divided into four sets of empirical vignettes, based upon verbal accounts of animals, spatial presentations of animals, animal proximity and agency and care enactments with animals. I have selected these vignettes in order to elucidate the situatedness of interpretations and the materiality of human–nonhuman animal experiences. Whilst there were other cases I could have drawn upon, these four vignettes relate distinctly to key areas of the research. The first set of vignettes responds to my critique in Chapter 1, namely that accounts of animal behaviour are mediated through the ontological and epistemological position of the interpreter. I concentrate on anthropomorphic explanations of animals, firstly through looking at accounts of human–goat interaction at the London Zoo[37], comparing an on-message,

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[37] In this chapter, I concentrate on some zoo animals: goats, lions, tigers, and gorillas. Whilst visiting an owl or a stick insect involves a great many differences, what remains consistent is the zoo-emplacement and the ontological and epistemological productions of animals.

formal account by a zookeeper to the account of workers at Kentish Town City Farm. I then compare these accounts to a zoo explainer's account of the zoo-tiger family dynamics in relation to the zoo-tiger enclosure. I argue that the people giving portrayals of the animal, reflect the host organisation's ontologies through an embodied interpretation of the animal (Despret, 2010). I suggest that the explanations, and therefore the productions of animals, are relational, depending on not only the account giver, but also the person to whom the account is given.

The second set of cases presents descriptions of seeing animals, and directly attends to my critique in Chapter 1 that CWN research requires qualitative investigation of multispecies encounters in urban nature-places. Most of the interactions between visitors and zoo animals do not directly include zoo staff, but rather are mediated through the curated enclosure spaces and signage. Within this set of cases, I firstly argue that complex naturalistic enclosures enact animals within anthropomorphic environments akin to Victorian dioramas (Davies, 2000, p.255). Secondly, I argue that whereas such exhibits close down human-animal encounters, other spaces, such as Camley Street Natural Park, can present an opportunity for people to engage in more open and imaginative interactions. Throughout the second set of cases, I draw upon Sabloff's (2015) notion of 'totemic imagination' (p.9), wherein people feel a sense of affinity with other beings.

In the third section, I explore proximity with animals. This set of cases attends directly to the lack of attention in CWN research to animals as agentile subjects involved in affective corporeal interspecies relations. Firstly, I investigate how the interspecies proximity at 'Gorilla Kingdom' (the ZSL Mountain Gorilla enclosure) creates stressful experiences for both human visitors and immured mountain gorillas. I then focus on one last zoo vignette by providing an auto-ethnographic story of an encounter with Jae

Jae, the male zoo tiger. Through this account, I expand upon the experience of not knowing how to address the animal, through drawing attention to affect as a communicative force between beings. This account considers the affective potential of multispecies communication in the zoo setting.

The final section of the chapter focuses on the notion of care. In Chapter 4, I argued that caring for nature and feeling CWN are forms of embodied knowing. In this section of the chapter, I draw upon a vignette to analyse how children at Camley Street engage in meaning-making and caring for insects. This vignette provides the opportunity to explore how caring for animals is enacted as an embodied practice. Through these cases, I am able to examine how the conservation field sites are performative in the making of and attending to some, but not other, multispecies caring and connective practices.

6.2 Anthropomorphism: The Epistemological Impact of Language for Animals

Figure 19: Co-Co climbing at Kentish Town City Farm.

6.2.1 Anthropomorphic Explanations of Goat Behaviour by Zoo and City Farm Workers
I am going to open this discussion by drawing upon an event that took place early on in my fieldwork. On a day following grooming and mucking out the goats at Kentish Town City Farm, I encountered the London Zoo resident pygmy goats. By analysing this event, I intend to demonstrate the ways in which the tellings and explanations of animals' actions reflect ontological anchors which steer how we conceptualise other animals, and how this conceptualisation in turn underpins our human-animal engagements.

In Chapter 4, I discussed the ways in which explanations of animals are produced by, and reaffirm, ontological positions and perspectives. I drew upon the Arabian babbler bird research employed by Despret (2010) to exemplify the ways in which animals are portrayed according to the ontological and epistemological framework of the theorist or researcher. Despret described how the naturalist produced babbler birds that behaved like naturalists and the behaviourist found that the birds behaved like evolutionary behaviourists. One of my research aims is to investigate the ways in which the ontological anthropomorphism of the organisations affects human visitors' interactions with nonhuman animals at the sites.

The explanations of animals make apparent the ways in which the organisations' ontological versions of animals and permitted norms of encounter can be understood as 'animaling', thus suggesting that categories of human-animal divides are culturally constructed and are ongoing in a performative manner (Birke et al., 2004, pp.169-170). Birke et al. develop their argument by constructing the notion of the hybrid relation as existing within a space between the two subjects, whereby identity is not fixed within any one being, but rather resides in the relations between the subjects (ibid, p.170).

Ontological frameworks are also performed through the roles that people take on, which become embodied and enacted as identities, such as 'zoo keeper', 'farm worker', and 'visitor'. These identities are, therefore, invisible actors in our field of multispecies encounter (Goffman, 1959). The contingent nature of our human–nonhuman multispecies interactions that are enacted through interspecies practices, activities, tellings, and embodied forms of anthropomorphism, are articulated as ascriptions of animal intentionalities and descriptions of those other animals who cannot disagree, and on whom humanised animaling is thus imposed, at least to a

degree. This 'degree' is the contested area, which is the site of disagreements about anthropomorphism between scientists and theorists. It is also dependent upon all the other actors involved in the making of the animal subject.

I now illustrate how explanations of the two zoo goats both constructed their characters and defined my encounter with them. On the occasion in question, I visited the zoo one day after I had groomed the goats and mucked out their shed at the city farm. I had washed in between and was wearing different clothes and boots. I decided to visit the goats' enclosure, which is the only area of the zoo where humans and animals can interact freely, as I was interested in comparing the two herds. The zoo keeps pygmy goats, unlike the city farm, which has larger, mostly hybrid English goats. To my surprise, as soon as I entered the goat enclosure the two biggest zoo goats somehow instantly selected me from a crowd of visitors and came directly up to me. They stood on either side of me, each facing one of my legs, scratching their heads and butting quite hard near my knees at my boot buckles. They kept this behaviour up and even followed me as I moved around their enclosure. I wondered if the goats could detect the city farm goats' scent on me.

I asked the zookeeper what he thought they were doing and he told me they simply wanted to scratch their heads and were probably drawn to my metal boot buckles. However, I felt this explanation seemed unlikely to be the sole reason, given that the enclosure was full of scratching posts, edges and fencing. Furthermore, there were at least another 15 people milling around within the enclosure to choose from, and the two goats appeared to have singled me (or at least my boots) out. When I had moved away they followed me and continued butting and did not just move on to the next potential scratching object. They were not only scratching, either; they were *butting* and scratching! The zookeeper's response showed that he chose to stick to what he knew;

goats like scratching, and that is why they do it. His explanation both removes me, as an animal, from consideration, and removes the possibility that the goats had other ideas and intentions. His explanation excludes the human–animal–body relation by taking me, as a person, out of the situation (Despret, 2013), whilst the goats' behaviour is described in a reductive cause-and-effect manner:

> Talking about how the body is involved in the encounter emphasizes that the embodied practicalities of knowing are part of the story. It is to insist upon the fact that if we are to understand how scientists may talk about their animals and how they make them known, and if we are to elucidate how these animals gain new identities through the very practices, we would be better served if we told stories about these embodied encounters.

(Despret, 2013, p.69)

In ignoring the body, the zookeeper stuck to the notion that animals are understood without paying any attention to human researchers or scientists; according to him, the goats were not responding to me as a body, but were only responding to the detail of metal upon my boot buckles. When I next returned to the city farm, I asked the staff what they thought of my zoo goat experience. I wanted to know if they would give me the 'proper' animal behaviour explanation or if they would give me a different interpretation. Firstly, I asked the stockman, Wayne, for his interpretation and he began by agreeing that the goats just wanted to scratch. I then pushed him a bit further by asking directly if he thought the previous day's farm goat scent could still be detected upon me, despite my change of clothes and boots. Wayne agreed it was possible that the goats could smell the city farm goats and made a joke about my hygiene routines and the importance of washing after mucking out. I also asked the city farm coordinator, Nina, and the director, Juliette, what they thought. They both, like me, were

unsure and thought that the zoo goats might be able to detect the city farm goats via some form of sensory transmission. It seemed plausible that yes, the goats could smell the city farm goats, but then again, maybe the goats were simply very selective and drawn to the metal boot buckles.

There was no definitive answer available to explain the goats' behaviour, although someone who has studied or lived with goats would probably provide the most plausible explanation. From the zoo perspective, permitted anthropomorphism is the most mechanical explanation of the goats' behaviour, and the more agency that is ascribed to the goats, the less plausible this explanation becomes. However, being willing to question potential goat-intentions acknowledges that there is a *gap*[38]—we do not know for sure; we can only provide a *best guess*. This stance is regarded as 'careful anthropomorphism' (Bekoff, 2002, p.49) as it retains the caveat that our guess is the best guess and furthermore, takes a position that remains open to other experiences and potential explanations. Being open keeps us attentive and able to consider that goats have their own sociability, which may include some form of sensory transmission between the city farm and zoo goatherds.

The zookeeper gave a simple explanation in the context of speaking to me as a zoo public visitor. Perhaps if I had asked the question as a co-worker of some kind he would have been more open to other potential readings; however, in his role as a zookeeper addressing me in my role as a zoo visitor, it would not have been proper for him to present a version of the goats that attributed this level of mindedness or sociability (Birke, 2004) to them. Visitors and resident animals are not supposed to

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[38] The gap is the divide between humans and animals wherein we cannot know what it is like to be other than human. See Spada (1997, p.44).

interact in this way, which I argue goes beyond the permitted norms and roles that tacitly control visitor-animal interactions. In this case, the goat behaviour is interpreted as mechanical: as an instinctive drive to scratch and a preference for the metal on my boots, rather than any potential underlying intention or interest or other kinds of agency on the part of the goats. The zookeeper's explanation to me was presented as a known fact, whereas the city farm staff's explanations leave the goat behaviour open, thus demonstrating an understanding that we do not *know for sure*. The zookeeper presented zoological knowing as a voice of authority in explaining other animals' behaviour (Despret, 2004, 2010), rather than as one of many ways of knowing (Despret, 2013b, p.31). This presentation occludes the gap in our knowledge of other animals' behaviour: rather it shuts down the potential ways we may concede that animals behave, and the potential ways that humans and animals may interact (Haraway, 2016; Despret, 2004).

In order to move away from reasoned knowledges of goat behaviour, we need to instead think about how alternative forms of knowledge and understandings affect theorists. Kathleen Stewart, for example, invites a closer analysis of haptic reactions and sensations:

> The first step in thinking about the force of things is the open question of what counts as an event, a movement, an impact, a reason to react. There's a politics to being/feeling connected (or not), to impacts that are shared (or not), to energies spent worrying or scheming (or not), to affective contagion and to all the forms of attunement and attachment.

(Stewart, 2007, p.16)

If we apply the question 'what counts as an event?' to the event with the goats described above, then the goats' behaviour exists as a personal mystery to me, one that exists affectively, body-to-body, I have experienced the goats' incessant butting and have felt them persist, even as I tried to walk away, and I consider that this experience counts as an event. It had an impact on me and upon them also: they felt my legs resist and hold their butting and I felt their persistent knocking into my legs, demonstrating to me that they are active participants with their own concerns. The manner in which the goats speak across my field sites is political in that the question introduced through their behaviour has political affects: it made visible the different human approaches to animal interpretations presented through the staff explanations to me as a visitor. The goat behaviour introduced the question about potential communication between the two species of goats at the two sites, which in turn provoked insight into the human–goat relations. As well as being the researcher, I also became a vehicle of goat transmission and possibly an actor in their inter-goat relation. The goat event does not lead to concrete answers. From an exploratory position which does not require a definitive explanation, it is possible to become open to the notion of goats having agencies that humans do not calibrate. This possibility may be what Bekoff (2002) refers to as 'careful anthropomorphism' (p.49).

The city farm staff's responses were more open. Whilst they still contemplated the mechanistic interpretations of the goat behaviour, they also offered contemplative opinions that ascribed more complex intentions and sociability to the goats. In this sense, the city farm staff were more interested in thinking about what goats do 'with' humans (Despret, 2004, p.122), and they were interested (ibid, p.124) in thinking about how goat worlds operate. The city farm workers' responses reflected my ethnographic

understanding of the site as a space drawing largely upon lay multispecies knowledge[39]. The zookeeper's response echoed the position of the zoo as an expert-led organisation. The staff's responses can be read as an embodiment of their organisations, which affected the portrayals of the animals presented to me as a public visitor. The organisational ontological position performatively sets up specific human–animal relations and understandings that will affect how humans connect with animals.

In this section, I have drawn upon my experiences with goats at the city farm and the London Zoo in order to explore how, in everyday practices, the organisations' ontological positions actively control and normalise explanations of goat behaviour, and these expectations in turn mediate how visitors engage with the goats. Through attending to the everyday productions of ontological anthropomorphisms and articulations of human–nonhuman others, the tangles become apparent and less established, and visible productions of nonhuman animals that are present also become visible. As Stewart (2007, p.1) says, widely used terms and concepts '…do not in themselves begin to describe the situation we find ourselves in.' By thinking further and attending to untidy affects, such as those experienced when the goats were butting my buckles, we may not produce immediate tidy explanations, but we nonetheless create the beginnings of new ways of thinking about multispecies relations.

6.2.2 Tiger Family Dynamics: A Zoo Explainer's Account of the Zoo-Tiger Family

In this next case study, I aim to explore an anthropomorphic portrayal of zoo tigers by drawing upon a zoo explainer's account of the tiger family characteristics and feelings.

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[39] Only one staff member has formal animal care training. None of the staff is trained in animal behaviour, whereas the zoo staff are formally trained in animal behaviour, as evidenced through the zoo's website.

Unlike the pygmy goats, the tigers are definitely regarded as 'proper' zoo animals: they are endangered, exotic and extraordinary in fleshy, as well as symbolic and archetypal ways. The goat zookeeper's response had been on-message with the standard narrative of nonhuman animals from a zoologist perspective. However, the tiger explainer's account was not as straightforward, as the explainer strayed from the 'proper' zoo telling of tigers and utilised human trait projection in order to explain the tiger's behaviour. I will explore Crist's (1996) understanding of language creating anthropomorphic environments, discussed in Chapter 4, and will argue that, in the context of the zoo, this form of anthropomorphism, whilst less mechanistic, maintains a human power through adopting an anthropocentric stance.

When I met the zoo explainer, she portrayed the tigers through heavy usage of human trait ascription and a 'like us' anthropomorphism. She told me about Melati, the Sumatran tigress and her three young cubs. The explainer described the tiger family utilising strong gender stereotypes. She told me that Melati is 'such a good mum, but very tired' and that the male cubs are 'boisterous and keep her very busy', whilst the female cub is 'very good and likes to stay quietly by her mum'.

Animal explainers are either volunteers or low paid workers and they mostly do not have formal scientific training[40]. Their role is to engage the public in positive zoo experiences. This particular explainer's description of the tigers produced a counter version of zoo animals, this time portrayed as people through utilising human trait ascription. From my observations this form of anthropomorphism was utilised at the zoo, but not given the same status as the zoological animal-behaviourist portrayals of

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[40] Information accessed from the ZSL jobs website: https://www.zsl.org/about-us/jobs [last accessed 6.7.18].

animals. This difference is not strictly delineated, as I observed some staff combine technical and anecdotal forms of language to describe the animals. The anecdotal constructions did not, however, carry the same authority as the technical interpretations of animal behaviour.

The explainer's description can be understood as drawing upon an internalist approach using subjective descriptive language (Crist, 1999, p.3), as opposed to an externalised descriptive approach used within rationalist animal portrayals. An internalist approach occurs when the description originates from inside the explainer, typified in naturalist portrayals in the twentieth century (Crist, 1996).

As I listened to the explainer, I felt my own resistance beginning to rise, and I judged that she was talking about humans rather than tigers. Rather than using anecdotal language to describe them, I felt that her portrayal slipped into human trait anthropomorphism. Her heavily gendered description of the cubs' behaviour was at odds with my own internalised version of the tigers. Despret critiques the use of empathy where it assumes that it is possible to know how another feels, rather than take a position that acknowledges that the other's experience is theirs alone:

> Empathy allows us to talk about what it is to be (like) the other, but does not raise the question 'what it is to be 'with' the other'. Empathy is more like 'filling up one self' than taking into account the attunement.

> (Despret, 2004, p.128)

Melati, the tigress and the cubs would not have been transformed by either the explainer's feelings or mine, and our descriptions of their characters did not involve

attunement but rather relied upon a form of empathy produced from human trait projection. Despret (2004) argues that through embodied practices that involve attunement with the other, we 'become-with' (Despret, 2013b), thus creating a new understanding and knowledge of the other. Despret (2004, p.29) also argues that this form of empathy is a tool that needs to be attended to, regardless of whether it is innate:

> Empathy may be innate – or not – but it ought nevertheless to be cultivated, nurtured, educated. Romanticism is no more than the belief that 'feeling for another' belongs to some sort of naıve state of nature.

> (Despret, 2013a, p.61)

Despret tells us that feelings are not the result of soppiness or of sugar-coating experiences, but rather that taking emotion seriously and carefully, and attending to affect, whilst remaining open to using other tools, leads to embodied communication and knowledge. The explainer's account expresses a desire, shared by visitors, to be involved in the tiger's lives and to know them; however, the zoo dynamic permits limited forms of knowing through direct encounter.

The explainer's tiger portrayal is at odds with the overall zoo aims to engage people in science and conservation through the descriptions presented on information boards throughout the tiger exhibit area. Information about the zoo tiger focuses upon the endangered Sumatran tiger habitat, including threats from poachers and the palm oil industry. The conservation message is told through the story of Hari, who was Melati's

father. Hari was captured in Sumatra and placed in a conservation park, before coming to live in the zoo before Melati was born[41]. Part of the solution to combat tiger poaching and probable extinction is, we are told, breeding programmes in zoos, like the London Zoo, for purposes of achieving genetic variance and increased tiger numbers. The actual zoo resident tigers (Melati, Jae Jae and cubs) are, therefore, presented as part of the breeding programme necessary for tiger survival (Braverman, 2013). The story begins with wild Hari (at the start of his life) and moves on later to national park-captive Hari and then, through his lineage, from Melati to the further captive bred tigers. The zoo-bred tigers are, therefore, presented as proxy wild tigers through the telling of Hari's ancestry and story. The narrative takes the visitor further away from actual fleshly tigers and towards disembodied tigers living in Sumatra. As Rutherford explains, 'Governing becomes the construction of certain truths and their circulation via normalizing and disciplining techniques' (Rutherford, 2007, p.293). The experience of zoo-tiger messaging is one that confirms that the zoo's actions are correct in order to save the tigers. This messaging is further conflated with the zoo explainer's anthropomorphic account of the tigers, which enacts them as pet tigers (Braverman, 2015).

On several occasions, I have observed visitors asking if the tigers can go back into 'the wild'. I believe there is a fair amount of confusion between the explanation of the work of the ZSL zoologists, who protect the habitats and create corridors, and the individual tigers, who are often mistakenly understood as having been saved and given sanctuary in London or specifically bred to be 'put back' into the wild. To date it is not possible to rehome tigers in wild places.

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[41] Information from the ZSL website (https://www.zsl.org/zsl-london-zoo/exhibits/tiger-territory [last accessed 2.7.2018]) and zoo tiger enclosure signage.

On the one hand, the tigers are presented by the explainer almost as pets through utilising human trait gender stereotypes. On the other hand, their corporeal bodies are exhibited amid a complex story of a different set of Sumatran tigers who are in danger. Neither of these two narratives invites knowing the tigers as zoo tigers that are neither saved wild tigers, nor domesticated cats. The result is that, whilst the endangeredness of Sumatran tigers is real, the conservation mission to save them does not care to face the corporeal zoo tigers as subjects (Haraway, 2008, p.17). The zoo keepers probably care for the individual tigers, but the zoo as an organisation takes a universalist approach, whereby the individual tigers are kept on display and used by the inter-zoo (WAZA) breeding network, in order to support the greater good of tiger conservation (Braverman, 2015).

The tigers, who are not domesticated animals and do not live alongside humans in any companionable form, are described utilising the language of popular companion animals. By contrast, the goats, who have co-evolved with humans over centuries, are described in a technical manner that ignores any potential relation between myself, the human, and the goats.

This categorical confusion was echoed in an evaluation commissioned by the zoo: 'Learning about animals, science and conservation: Large-scale survey-based evaluation of the educational impact of the ZSL London Zoo Formal Learning programme' (Jensen, 2010). In the research survey questionnaire and data analysis, it was expected that the children would not see the zoo animal in front of them, but would instead engage with the whole exhibit message and learn about animals situated in their correct habitats. Where the children's answers indicated that they were seeing or relating to the actual zoo animals directly in front of them, these instances were

regarded as a negative learning outcome ibid, p.79). This case intimates that the zoo actively intends for their resident animals to be read as symbolic forms of other invisible abstracted animals living in natural habitats.

The tiger experience, therefore, presents two versions of tigers: one is the disembodied abstracted wild tiger version presented through the formal zoo messaging, and the second is of a humanised-tiger family living in the zoo, delivered by the explainer. In one sense, this presentation works very well because to think of the tiger family as being busy with their everyday tiger family concerns distracts the observer from thinking of the tigers as enclosed, controlled zoo animals, whilst at the same time, our sympathy is drawn to other tigers living far away. However, neither version invites a closer 'staying with the trouble' (Haraway, 2016) with the actual tigers living in the zoo. We are encouraged to ignore their tiger-ness, to be 'uninterested' (Despret, 2004, p.21), rather than interested and encouraged to engage more openly and honestly with the tigers or the complex politics of tiger conflicts, in which our own consumption of palm oil is complicit, for example. Both Haraway and Despret, and feminist scholars in general, argue that being 'interested' is being available and openly attentive to what matters to the other (Despret, 2004, p.21). To care is be active, therefore, and involves wanting to know—wanting to know more about the other, and all of the politics involved in palm oil production and how these politics affect tigers, for example. This wanting to know is partly what Haraway (2016) means when she uses the term 'response-able'. Being 'response-able' requires responding to the other and allowing the other to also respond in a way that enables that other to be attended to.

The conservation narratives of animals, which utilise technical language, are constructed as 'externalist versions of animals' (Crist, 1999; Birke, 2004), and steer us away 'from the trouble' (Haraway, 2016)—from direct emotions for animal subjects.

Instead, this version presents narratives of wild species underpinned by an ethic of reasoned abstractions (Gruen and Weil, 2012).

6.3 Encounters in Place: How Spaces Foster Imaginative and Distracting Experiences

Figure 20: A zoo visitor muses at Gorilla Kingdom.

6.3.1 Affective Distraction, and are the Lions Less Real than the Gorillas?

Thus far I have discussed the ways in which verbal articulations and explanations of animals rely upon ontological anthropomorphic values and beliefs, which are also embodied within the identities and roles of people involved in the organisations.

This case presents a discussion of seeing animals and concentrates upon the productions of animals embedded (by humans) 'in placeness' (Philo and Wilbert, 2000, p.22). Seeing animals occurs at all three field sites, though it is only at the zoo where this seeing is the main pastime for visitors. At the zoo, most interactions between visitors and zoo animals are not directly influenced by zoo staff, but rather are mediated through the curated enclosure spaces and signage. Furthermore, the animals have nothing to do apart from breed and be *seen*.

John Berger wrote his famous essay, 'Why Look at Animals', 40 years ago and within it he articulated that people visit zoos 'out of a curiosity which is both so large, so vague and so personal that it is hard to express in a single question' (Berger, 1991, p.22). There is a substantial amount of research on zoos from different disciplines. For example, in Chapter 3, I outlined zoological research focusing upon whether zoos are succeeding in achieving their aims regarding visitors, citing as examples the work of Moss and Esson (2013) and Jensen (2010). Further, in the preceding Chapter 5, I drew attention to sociological and geographical research that considers how people engage with zoos, for example, Davies (2000) and Holmberg (2017). However, Berger's interest was neither in whether zoos are achieving their goals, nor in providing cultural deconstructions of zoos. He phrased his question thusly:

> Why are these animals less than I believed? … And this unprofessional, unexpressed question is the one worth answering.

> (Berger, 1991, p. 23)

Since that time, despite the many changes in zoo practices, popular understandings of animals and the formation of the interdisciplinary field of animal studies, Berger's

223

question remains only partially addressed in my opinion. In the following case, I reframe the question to think about how visitors both see and imagine animals and whether and how the animals are regarded as subjects and as corporeal beings.

In the following two vignettes, I aim to examine contrasting experiences between the zoo lion exhibit—that I argue produces touristic fantasy experiences for visitors—and Camley Street Nature Park—which I suggest spatially invites less curated and controlled engagements. I thread this comparison together with a consideration of the role of imagination in relation to Sabloff's (2015) notion of 'totemic imagination', which, she argues, is necessary for feeling connected with nature and is similar to biophilia:

> Biophilia….is basically the acceptance of difference, the love of and intense interest in the other, while the totemic imagination accepts the likenesses between human and other beings, and acknowledges and respects their relation.

(Sabloff, 2015, p.181)

Some of the research on CWN that I reviewed (e.g. Beery et al., 2015; Zylstra et al., 2014) defined connection through an account of biophilia; however, these accounts explained it as an innate trait, whereas Sabloff argues that the totemic imagination is a process that involves the imagination. In Chapter 1, I argued that CWN is researched and articulated through a quantitative framework that does not investigate or attend to creative interaction with the more-than-human world. In contrast, Sabloff's distinction between a focus upon difference and a focus upon similarity attends to the connected nature of species in multispecies encounters. For Sabloff, a lack of totemic imagination is what causes distanciation from nature. She argues that anthropologists fail to

understand totemism because they ignore the 'sense of affiliation and continuity between humans and other animals':

> The one commonality that pertains throughout the vast collection of instances of totemism – the transparent and marked sense of affiliation and continuity between humans and other animal – was precisely that which was not considered to be of major interest in these debates.

> (Sabloff, 2015, p.45)

Haraway (2016, p.35) states that it matters what 'stories tell stories'. Sabloff (2015, p.9) considers that by telling stories that involve removing animal metaphors and notions of their subjecthood drawn from our minds, we lose the imagination required to feel a sense of connection. Many of the zoo exhibits are curated in ways that distract visitors from the corporeal animal resident, and instead encourage visitors to engage in an affective, constructed experience of the whole exhibit, including storied far away symbolic animals. For example, in the previous case, I discussed uses of conservation storytelling as a means of regarding the resident animals, such as the tigers, as symbolic of or as of placeholders for, *other* tigers living in endangered habitats.

The actual animals become invisible and apparent only as signifiers for other imaginary creatures interwoven into their enclosures, which act as affective narrative experiences. However, this is not the kind of totemic imagination Sabloff speaks of; it is a pre-packaged, instrumentalised imaginary presented through a complex assemblage of enclosure fabric, textures and signage information. This achievement is what Davies (2000, p.250) calls the technological networks of communicative production.

I was walking in the zoo with Leas, a female adult artist, aged 24, who is not a regular zoo visitor. We went to the new 'Land of the Lions' exhibit, and walked above their enclosure along the recently built walkway. At the end, there are slits cut out of a wooden wall, enabling people to look down and catch a glimpse of the lion. Leas peeked through one of the openings and then turned and asked me:

'Would the lion really attack you if you were in their cage?'

'Yes, that's like saying would a cat really attack a mouse if it ran in front of it – of course it would'

'I suppose they are real lions and tigers even though they don't look or act like they are…'

(Field notes, 2014)

Leas[42] had a point. It is difficult to regard the zoo lions as active mobile beings who would respond should she enter their enclosure, although of course they would. The zoo lions do not seem exactly *real*: they appear static and embedded in their enclosure. I asked Leas about this appearance afterwards. She resisted my questioning of their *realness*, arguing that she knows they are *real* but that she also cannot believe that they would actually bite her, or do anything she did not want, 'like a toy or cartoon' lion. The zoo lions do not conform to mental images of lions probably drawn from TV documentaries. Berger (1991, p.17) tells the story of a woman (Mrs.

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[42] In 2014, I invited Leas to the zoo in order to observe how a visual artist, with no particular interest in or knowledge about the zoo, would read the space. She was one of several adults I walked the zoo grounds with over the course of my ethnography.

Carter) who was granted her dream of being allowed to stroke a zoo lion (Suki), but much to everyone's surprise, the lioness attacked her. The surprise, of course, occurred because nobody—not even the 'wardens'—realised that the lion was actually a lion, and not some form of anthropomorphised version of a lion. Yet, despite the power of the zoo to curate affectively distracting enclosures, with emplaced constructed zoo animals, 'the zoo cannot but disappoint' (Berger, 1991, p.28). And Leas was disappointed with the lions: on the one hand, we are disappointed because we expect real animals but, on the other hand, we do not. We expect anthropomorphised productions of human desires.

6.3.1.1 Affective Distraction

Figure 21: The Land of The Lions exhibit.

Figure 22: Actors Play the Part of ZSL Vets, Saving a 'Wild'/Taxidermy Lion[43]

The new 'Land of the Lions' enclosure is designed like a theatre set, with a lake bordered by the façade of a crumbling temple below the new exhibit walkway, and a model Indian village that works its way along the sides with fake market stalls and painted street furniture and signage. There are safari style cabins where tourists can spend the night and wake up to the sounds of the zoo dawn. The lions are embedded in and consumed by the model Gir National Park, pushing the lions into a make-believe space, and so it seems that the physical zoo lions barely exist. Like a mirroring of a Victorian taxidermy diorama that aimed to bring life back to dead animals:

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[43] Figure 22 depicts a taxidermy lion carcass metres away from living lions. The scene unfolded without any warning: ZSL actors played the parts of vets, treating an injured *wild* lion. This act illustrates a form of theatre within the exhibit.

The animals in the dioramas have transcended mortal life, and hold their pose forever, with muscles tensed, noses aquiver, veins in the face and delicate ankles and folds in the supple skin all prominent. No visitor to a merely physical Africa could see these animals. This presentation is a spiritual vision made possible only by the animals' death and literal re-presentation. Only then could the essence of their life be present. Only then could the hygiene of nature cure the sick vision of civilized man. Taxidermy fulfils the fatal desire to represent, to be whole; it is a politics of reproduction.

(Haraway, 1984, p.25).

So, whilst the zoo lions are alive (their 'veins' do move with flowing oxygenated blood), they are also fully encased within the zoological representation of the 'Land of Lions' exhibit. Visitors such as Leas and I lose our relational footing; our comprehension of the resident lions as *beings* is lost to us as we become distracted by the affective assemblage of the complex exhibit fabric and messaging.

The zoo experiences enacted as a field of distraction, wherein Leas and I entered into a curated encounter rather than engaging with the corporeal zoo animal. Increasingly sophisticated affective communication technologies (Davies, 2000) such as 'the Land of the Lions' exhibit create anthropomorphic environments (Crist, 1996), which obscure the zoo animals as subjects. The exhibit is built like a stage set, utilising colours and textures that aim to immerse visitors in an experience. Curated and storied versions of animals shrink the space of open engagement and totemic imagination through the planned-for curated encounter, placing both visitor and zoo animal into a passive relationship. As Anderson puts it:

…the new naturalistic enclosure delivers a culturally commodified and socially

produced nature, designed to shape a distinctive ('human') experience of

Nature for late twentieth – century audiences.

(Anderson, 1995, p.24)

The intensely curated 'naturalistic' enclosures have been developed since Berger's famous essay 'Why Look at Animals' (1991), mentioned above, with some successful outcomes—such as increased visitor attention and, in many cases, reduced stress for resident animals (Fernandez et al., 2009). However, these enclosures do little to encourage the 'totemic imagination' (Sabloff, 2015). Immersive exhibits such as 'Land of the Lions' present a simulacrum of a distant version of nature (Büscher et al., 2012, p.16), despite the corporeal proximity of the lions.

Figure 23: The pond at Camley Street Natural Park

I want now to compare this scene to Camley Street, where I observed children playfully looking for imaginary animals. The environment at Camley Street is enclosed and full of familiar plants and animals.

At Camley St. animals are not enclosed, but then neither are they very visually present. The space is arranged into habitats rather than enclosures, curated and gardened in order to support and encourage the growth of various types of indigenous species, such as stag beetles, bees and hedgehogs. Perhaps the lack of visible animal presence is due, in part, to the intensity and the density of human activities: the remaking of habitats and the ponds regularly scraped over by pupils with nets. Perhaps the animals are even less present here than in an average garden or city street. The zoo lions who are present, but not experienced as such, compare oddly with the notion

of a lack of animals at Camley Street, where somehow a blank fertile space exists, in which it is possible to emplace imaginary animals.

Much of the focus of the wildlife park, like that of the zoo, is upon educating children rather than encouraging independent play. Play in outdoor spaces has been found to encourage 'capacities for creativity, problem-solving, and emotional and intellectual development' (Kellert, 2005). Furthermore, 'playing and hanging out' was reported to be the most popular outdoor activity among a large-scale survey of young people in the US (Larson et al., 2011).

The activities and signage at Camley St., like those of the zoo, are situated within a scientific educational praxis that presents animals as specimens. Zoo enclosures are exchanged for curated habitats, designed to encourage wildlife and to recreate wild places for animals and also for humans. Whilst Camley St. does not encourage free play but rather promotes structured, educational activities for children, I did observe children engaging in playful activities and thinking in the space.

On several occasions I observed children engaging with imaginary animals. The first was during a mini-beast hunt where I asked two young girls, aged 7 or 8, what they were whispering about. They told me they were worried (although they looked excited) about whether there might be foxes or even tigers in the park. I agreed this possibility would be very exciting and they continued searching for woodlice to place inside their plastic specimen jar. The second occasion was when a boy, aged about 10, was visiting with his mother. He ran up to the main pond and saw a sign indicating that there are frogs in the pond. The photograph in the sign has been oddly cropped, however, and looks rather like a snakehead coming out of the water. The boy started shouting and running about, saying he was going to catch a snake. On the third

occasion, a girl from a Year 4 class group said she enjoyed seeing the hedgehogs, but the class had not seen any hedgehogs in the park. The imagined fox, snake, and hedgehog sightings are of animals that could be found in the park, yet are not generally seen by visitors[44]. From a conservation education perspective, the children have selected the correct animals for the habitat, thus demonstrating a positive outcome in relation to the aim of teaching children about habitats. Indeed, this result was one of the positive outcomes Jensen (2010) was looking for in the ZSL education research (discussed on p.52 and p.220) and also forms the content of the school starter activity for each Camley Street education session (Field notes, 2015). However, from my research perspective, The children in the above examples have placed imaginary animals into the material Camley St. habitat that is, in practice, sparsely populated by animals. Resident animals in the vicinity of Camley St. are hard to see and engage with within the framework of a school visit, or even a family visit, due to noise, time constraints, time of day and distractions, such as the task of the mini-beast collecting. At the same time, the space invites a call upon the 'totemic imagination' through the sighting of imaginary animals and produces a fertile atmosphere where nature and wilderness are emergent in the minds and bodies of the human visitors. In the following Chapter 7, I interrogate the experiential quality of Camley St. further through discussing a drawing experiment.

Unlike my experience at the zoo, the space at Camley Street elicits feelings of calm and affects people (Inglis, 2007, p.226). Even though the organisation and staff have created a very curated space where people are expected to come and take part in structured activities, I observed children engaged in imaginative play, and thus the

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[44] I did not witness children engaging in imaginary play at the zoo; however, they may have done so.

space seemed also to encourage a sense of freedom and excitement. Perhaps it enables people to connect with a sense of 'totemic imagination' (Sabloff, 2015), evidenced by the children opening up and seeking imaginary forest creatures. Conversely, whilst the corporeal zoo lions (and many of the other zoo animals) are easy to see, their enclosure masks them from view and they are therefore not easy to encounter and are perhaps, instead, perceived as unreal.

Camley Street has become more and more distinct from the surrounding new buildings and squares which make up the development of Kings Cross Central. Whilst on one hand, the park workers try and ignore their wider surroundings and maintain a wildlife space; on the other hand, the park is increasingly defined through its contrast to the surrounding development, and as a local visitor recently said to me, 'Camley is a real haven'. In comparison to the zoo with its focus upon animals, Camley Street is interested in all kinds of forms of wildlife and is experienced as a whole space rather than through engagement with individual animals and plants within particular habitat zones. The park is a series of constructed and curated habitats, yet in comparison to the ongoing surrounding regeneration it feels relatively *wild*—in the sense of uninfluenced by humans (van Dooren, 2016, p.41): the plants and trees grow in organized tangles, and there are relatively more animals than in the paved and built up areas.

6.4 Proximity: Like Us but Not Like Us

Figure 24: Visitors watching the gorillas.

6.4.1 The Gorillas Are Just Like Us: Proximity Between Us and Them

Thus far, I have discussed the implications of types of anthropomorphic explanations and constructions of animals, as well as considered how human sense-making and narratives of animals become embedded within the curated spaces. I argued that these places affect how we connect with both individual animals—such as the lions, along with the space itself—such as at Camley St., where I stated that the space invited an opening up to totemic imagination and connective experiences. Now, I want to return focus to the zoo, in order to consider how the proximity between the gorillas and humans at their enclosure created stress for both humans and gorillas. The gorillas often sit inside their enclosure looking outwards towards the human visitors. They do not seek to make eye contact with humans, as for primates this would be confrontational behaviour (Fudge, 2002). They rather create a field of awareness that

includes the human visitors, as their form of engagement. They eat, sort leaves and bedding; they chew and move around. They keep a wary eye on the humans whilst they go about their tasks, but do not hold a gaze. From a human perspective, their presence, their large bodies and activities are viscerally close and animated; we get a sense of their rhythm and concerns: their 'work', such as nest making and caring for their young. We (visitors) encounter them within a situated affective assemblage (Hickey-Moody, 2013, p.93), a relational collection incorporating their bodies, their 'doings' and their enclosure environment.

When 'Gorilla Kingdom' opened in 2007, there was only glass between the human (*us)* and the gorilla (*them).* However, over time the distance between *us* and *them* has widened. Shortly after the enclosure was opened, a rope barrier was placed in front of the glass, then a Perspex second barrier, followed by a wooden barrier a few years later, and then a second barrier. During my last visit the glass was coated in creeping green vine transfers falling down the windows, giving the gorillas partial cover from human view. Perhaps over time the gorillas will recede completely and become entirely indistinguishable from their enclosure fabric and, like the lions, become part of a fantasy diorama. The ongoing making of a divide between *them* and *us,* on the part of the zoo (including, at times, extra explainers and signs imploring the public to be respectful and quiet and not to bang on the glass), is evidence of human-gorilla conflict. Since the enclosure opened, there have been three gorilla deaths within the existing troupe, whose size has remained small, between 3 and 5 gorillas at any one time. Despite the additions of the barriers and signs, the deaths have never been publicly attributed to overexposure to humans, but have rather been explained as the result of inter-group dominance fights and jealousy.

Informative signs that explain to visitors which actions, such as loud noises, upset animals, as well as why and how, can improve interspecies relations and can increase visitor self-efficacy (Fernandez et al., 2009, p.7). At the gorillas' enclosure there is a rather reductive sign that reads: 'do not bang on the glass/it frightens *the animals'*. The sign does not provide any clues about better ways to attempt to communicate with the gorillas. It seems the normative good zoo visitor is expected to only look at rather than interact with the animals. The sign suggests an unwillingness on the part of the zoo to engage with the humans, preferring to hold them at a distance. During my field research, I frequently noted visitors making comparisons between humans and gorillas and I have heard expressions of surprise at how 'just like us' gorillas are. If there is a gorilla baby present, visitors again often report amazement that the babies look so human. Comments often include surprise that the parents care for their young and that the primates have inter-family relationships. Although I have heard visitors wonder what the gorillas think about the people, I have never witnessed a visitor attempt to directly address the gorillas. If one takes the proposition of the gorillas as being 'just like us' seriously, then it becomes odd, and impolite, not to consider a greeting (Haraway, 2008, pp.23-25). To greet them, or to attempt to greet them, would in practice entail a facing of them as both like us and also immured by or for us. Accepting that the zoo gorillas are sentient, through understanding their responsiveness to one another and to their environment, requires us to respond to them (Haraway, 2008). Acknowledging their being 'like us*'* or 'like us but not human' (Charles, 2014) requires that we 'stay with the trouble' (Haraway, 2016), by which I mean becoming sensitised to the uncomfortable reality of their captivity, which matters once they become recognised as *subjects.*

Of all the animals, the gorillas elicited the strongest reaction from the human zoo visitors that I observed. It seems that both humans and gorillas find their situation

stressful. I once witnessed a teacher break down in tears in front of her class and the gorillas. Leas told me, 'they look so human, it's freaky'. In a sense, the gorillas are too real; too 'like us'. They affect us in uncomfortable ways, regardless of whether we want them to; despite all of the adjustments to their enclosure design—the barriers, vines and signs, the solid divide between human and animal is ruptured. Taxonomic groupings, registers, indexes, and reasoned rational notions that explain our human superiority risk coming apart when we feel them to be 'like us', in the sense that they are beings too. Despret defines passion as a state that arouses interest and engagement such as I witnessed at the enclosure:

> What passion means refers neither to some parasitic supplement nor to some sweet story of love: it means to make an effort to become interested, to immerse oneself in the multitude of problems presented by a jackdaw or a goose [or a gorilla] to grow, to experience the following of a mother, the fear of strangers. It means to care.
>
> (Despret, 2004, p.131)

Feeling that the gorillas are 'like us' is feeling the connection between species which risks dissolving an arrogant anthropocentric ontological position (Gruen, 2015; De Waal, 2009), but at the same time, as Despret argues above, this feeling immerses one into a caring relationship. Further, as Haraway and Despret (and feminist care scholars more widely) argue, caring is not saccharine or easy; it demands *facing* and making *an effort*.

The physical and psychic divide between *us* and *them* is instead reinforced through the increased barriers. However, the barriers do not completely dissolve the connection

238

and an uncomfortable partial facing seems to occur. This situation could be ameliorated through signage that invites a connection and engenders feelings of agency in the humans to know how to behave with the gorillas, and that perhaps explains ways to *greet* them. Conversely, however, the layers of barriers, vines and signs act as authority pronouncements. They reinforce a divide between zoo and zoo visitor, and between those humans who can and those who cannot greet the gorillas. So much so that perhaps eventually the corporeal gorillas, and with them the encounter that could potentially invite a greeting or engender a form of facing, disappears. With that lost potential the chances of feelings of connection become frustrated from visitors not knowing how to care or respond. Here is an example where signage could help explain how to greet the gorillas, but instead states 'don't bang on the glass it/frightens *the animals*'. This example is an instance of where the zoo does not help itself or the visitors or the animals. Judging by the aims of its evaluation research, the zoo is aware of the value of conservation efficacy, yet it encourages the latter through attention to abstract concepts rather than the corporeal animals.

In this section, I have argued that the gorillas are experienced by visitors as being uncomfortably 'like us' and also demonstrably unhappy within their zoo habitat. Perhaps the new layers of plastic vines and the build-up of trees and ropes will serve to distract the humans and enable the gorillas to disappear into the background in the same way that the lions appear to have become invisible beings. In a sense, the zoo functions best when the animals are not too *real*. However, the zoo could become a space for encountering animals through facing them, and it could aim to engender response-ability with them (Haraway, 2008). I am going to end my observations of the zoo environment with one final account of a zoo-animal encounter: an auto-ethnographic telling of how I was affected by Jae Jae, the male zoo tiger.

6.4.2 When the Zoo-Tiger Demonstrated His Agency

The tigers' responses (particularly those of Jae Jae, the male tiger) to my observations to their enclosure taught me about the potentials of multispecies zoo-animal engagement. On every occasion that I went to the zoo, I always visited Jae Jae. I observed him eating, being given enrichment treats; I observed him prowling, pacing, sleeping lightly and sleeping densely. For a substantial amount of that time, Melati, the female tigress, and the tiger cubs were separated from Jae Jae by a fence that bordered along their entire enclosure. Melati and the cubs were only allowed outside for short periods of time. Melati and Jae Jae had been brought to London in 2013, as part of a project that planned for them to breed in the zoo. Sumatran tigers are virtually extinct, with fewer than 400 remaining, many of which live in national parks[45]. On one hand, the zoo aims to support efforts to keep the Sumatran species of tiger going, through designing the enclosure and selecting Melati and Jae Jae for breeding[46]. On the other hand, this arrangement means that the two tigers live in the zoo, and have very limited control over their lives. Although zoos exert biopolitical control over the animals including their lives, births, and sometimes deaths, they do so from a motivation to care for animals (Braverman, 2013). However, this action generally takes the form of caring that is willing to sacrifice the individual in favour of the group (Braverman, 2016, cited by Wolfe, 2016). Feminists reject orthodox animal ethics based upon valuing animals in terms of abstracted universalist judgements (Gruen, 2015; Gruen and Weil, 2012, p.479). Gruen and Weil describe orthodox ethics as

> the theories of human obligations and responsibilities to other animals [that]

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[45] World Wildlife Fund website: https://www.worldwildlife.org/species/sumatran-tiger [last accessed 1.8.2018].
[46] Information from the ZSL website (https://www.zsl.org/conservation-initiatives/conservation-breeding/sumatran-tiger-breeding-programmes [last accessed 1.8.2018]) and zoo information signage boards.

explicitly rejected the role of emotion in both establishing the moral claims

animals make on us and in motivating us to act on those claims. Singer and

Regan promote an understanding of emotion as separate from reason and

favor the latter as the grounds for animal ethics.

(Gruen and Weil, 2012, p.479)

Feminist scholars critique the orthodox approach for ignoring the emotional lives of

animals and facilitating the continued separation of emotions from value and reason.

However, there is no simple solution to what to do with the actual animals—both those

who live captive in zoos and those living outside in threatening conditions (Wolfe,

2016). Cary Wolfe suggests that in weighing the options for captive animals, there may

be little practical difference between a zoo and a sanctuary; in both situations the

animal is enclosed and under human control. However, he argues that allowing

animals to live without human instrumental concerns would be a better ethical position

(ibid). Thom van Dooren suggests that care needs to be critiqued by asking '*what* am I

really caring for, *why* and at *what cost* to whom?' (van Dooren, 2014, p.293). From a

zoo visitor perspective, caring about an abstract group of animals such as the

Sumatran tigers living in Sumatra, who are not present, becomes problematic when it

involves a form of transference through detachment from those with whom we are

materially with, directly facing[47].

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[47] Not all zoo animals or zoo enclosures are the same and, further, the *wild animal* messaging
that zoo discourses urge visitors to care about are also variable, with some enclosures directly
attached to distinct ongoing projects, whereas others are linked to more general descriptions of
the animal's place on the scale of endangeredness.

van Dooren (2016) argues that zoo animals need to be attended to as specific creatures, altered by their captivity, living in different ways to their non-captive counterparts. He stresses that it is better to think with what forms of becomings are possible, given the situation, rather than measure wellbeing and behaviour in relation to other animals living within different lifeworlds. The focus here lies in what kinds of becoming-with are possible between the zoo animals and the zoo visitors, and whether it matters if visitors believed they were looking at animals who are 'wild' and actually saved, or if they come to know the animals as individual zoo animals.

Jae Jae had to spend long periods of time on his own, whereas before the cubs were born he had been sharing space with Melati every day. Jae Jae appeared to recognise me when I visited, and I always made a point of wearing the same coloured jacket, as I thought my appearance might have been a factor. I observed the way he took in visitors, his gaze passing quickly over people with no interest: if you were not watching you would miss his assessment. Close to feeding time, for about 45 minutes beforehand, he would stay alert looking for the keeper and as soon as the keeper appeared, he would run as close to the keeper as possible. Over several visits, I felt that Jae Jae gave me closer inspections than he did most visitors; nothing in comparison to the keepers but much slower observational glances and returning looks, whereas the other public visitors received one pass-over glance only. During times when Jae Jae was circulating the enclosure in rounds, each time he passed me, he would check me—although only very briefly, whereas stranger visitors were dismissed after one glance.

On one occasion, Jae Jae walked across his enclosure directly and purposefully straight towards me and a man who happened to be taking photos beside me. As Jae Jae came closer and closer, I became afraid. I thought, 'I won't move back if the man

doesn't move back'. I felt stupid for being afraid, but was also really scared to remain standing there whilst the tiger walked straight up to me, despite the glass and metal frame between us. Jae Jae walked towards us directly, eyes towards us and with an immense power. Finally, at what seemed like the last second, the man and I both stepped back and then as Jae Jae was up to the glass, he expertly turned away and immediately sprayed upon a nearby post. The man's wife had seen us both step back and she came up and asked us what happened. The man said that the tiger 'came right up':

'Did he look at you?' she asked.

'Yes,' he said, glancing at me.

'It was quite scary,' I said.

'Yes, I saw you both step back,' the woman remarked.

'The glass wasn't convincing enough,' the man said.

(Field notes, 2015)

The woman asked if the tiger 'looked at us', which demonstrated the privileging of vision within our culture, but it was the body encounter that scared us. Incorporated within the body affect was a gaze: the tiger did *look* at us, but it was not a disembodied gaze. I think the reason the man glanced at me when he said 'yes' was because the tiger's *look* was more of a *feel*. To describe it as a look fails to describe what happened and does not seem an entirely truthful account. Incorporated into that moment, described as *a look,* was an immensely powerful feeling, a force that made us both step back. As soon as we did step back, the tiger turned around and sprayed.

243

When I wanted to step back, and when the man and I did finally step back, for those moments I was frightened. I experienced a moment of a feeling that Jae Jae could kill me if it was not for the cage. I think that Jae Jae knows that he can terrify me even with the glass and I (now) know that too. The man said, 'the glass wasn't convincing enough' and his statement is exactly right. The glass was not convincing because our belief in the glass was not psychically stronger than Jae Jae's intention and body presence. Jae Jae has the ability to affect me (and the man) and we have the ability to fear him. Despite cognitively knowing that the glass is there and that the tiger cannot get through it, we *felt* afraid. Emotion is 'a non-cognitive system of bodily response to environmental stimuli that forms the biological substratum of consciousness.' (Papoulias and Callard, 2010, p.40). Whilst we cognitively understood that the tiger was enclosed, our bodies still responded to his tiger body coming towards us and, moreover, Jae Jae seemed to be aware of our stepping back and of our fear, and he chose to mark the encounter by spraying. Before I stepped back, I felt stupid for feeling afraid; perhaps my body was affectively responding whilst cognitively I was reading the situation differently—I was conflicted and unsure how to respond, as Constantina Papoulias and Felicity Callard write:

> Response to environmental danger is not always and not necessarily mediated through a cognitive appraisal (that is, a mental representation) of the fearful stimulus, which would necessitate an engagement of the prefrontal cortex (one of the sites centrally implicated in cognitive functioning). Such a cognitive appraisal requires about half a second – an awfully long time for human chances of survival.

(Papoulias and Callard, 2010, p.40)

Papoulias and Callard explain why and how fear is not necessarily mediated through the mental representation in order to save valuable time if under threat. I was conflicted because my body was telling me one thing that was completely at odds with what my mind believed, i.e. that there was no threat of the tiger coming through the glass. The affect passed between Jae Jae and the humans (Papoulias and Callard, 2010) and the tiger probably felt something when we stepped back. Massumi (2014, p.9) discusses the role of bites in wolf cub play, whereby they learn the difference between a range of bites—a play bite, a warning bite, and bite *for real*. I do not know what game or non-game Jae Jae was playing, and thankfully I did not feel his bite, but perhaps I misunderstood his attention. As Despret states, 'Each emotional experience is an experience of 'making available', an experience by which both the body and what affects it produce each other' (Despret, 2013, p.71). The tiger acts, and the man and I respond, we feel fear, and I do not know what Jae Jae thinks or feels, but he becomes available through his active presence, despite being behind the glass.

Jae Jae created a friction (Tsing, 2004, cited in Despret, 2013a); he used his agency to frighten us, which did two things: it created a momentary rupture in the power dynamic between human and zoo tiger. Secondly, he challenged the anthropomorphic narrative imposed upon him. Perhaps he responded to my interest in him because he recognised me as someone who was interested in him (Despret, 2004, p.21). I do not know if he was playing, if it was a game, in the manner of Massumi's wolf bites (Massumi, 2014, p.9). I do not know what happened, but that does not eradicate the experience. It demonstrated Jae Jae's agency articulated through forms of resistance and friction available to him, and the restricted forms of engagement available between us in our relation as zoo visitor and zoo tiger.

The experience served to make Jae Jae more of a tiger to me. Standing for a long time with Jae Jae, I become both affected and somewhat attuned to his movements, somehow better able to feel his experience of zoo life. I feel his boredom and observed his limited choices. I watched him pacing, and occasionally break for a minute moment, a moment of hesitation (Stewart, 2007, p.3), a rupture, and then return to the circling or seeming to sleep, suddenly passed over, with a turn, a paw movement, a tail swish. Affect can make us hesitate (ibid, p.112) because we cannot (yet) process what we are feeling, or how we are affected. Attunement takes place both inside and outside of our bodies, within a hybrid, in-between space (Gruen and Weil, 2012). This moment is the space of connection. Returning to Berger's argument about looking at animals: 'Yet nowhere in a zoo can a stranger encounter the look of an animal. At the most, the animal's gaze flickers and passes on. They look sideways. They look blindly beyond. They scan mechanically. They have been immunised to encounter, because nothing can any more occupy a *central* place in their attention' (Berger, 1991, p.28).

Whilst Berger contends that a visitor cannot encounter the *look of an animal*, I disagree. It is not that you cannot meet the gaze of the animal; rather it is that if you do, you may *face* the animal. You may be confronted with his, or with her, actual zoo life. As Haraway (2008) puts it, being involved in attending to the animal's 'response-ability' is a facing of the other that entails receiving their response. To face the zoo animal, even without knowing what that other is saying, is already a step towards dissolving the notion that the animal cannot respond: 'That dualism should have withered long ago in the light of feminist and many other criticisms, but the fantastic mind/body binary has proved remarkably resilient. Failing, indeed refusing, to come face-to-face with animals, I believe, is one of the reasons' (Haraway, 2008, pp.71-72).

Figure 25: Jae Jae dozing and staring whilst being photographed by a visitor.

To stand in front of an animal, yet not enter into a 'response-able' relation, requires a form of detachment, encouraged by the affectively distracting curated spaces and signage at the zoo. Within many of the zoo encounters, it is not that the animal cannot respond; it is rather that the zoo visitor lacks a sense of efficacy that facilitates a face-to-face encounter, and with that facing, a form of care which involves becoming responsible. My experience of not knowing how to respond or understand the zoo tiger was, I felt, similar to the frustration I observed when many of the zoo visitors

encountered the mountain gorillas. In both scenarios the visitors and I did not know how to greet the zoo animal or what to do. We have no efficacy in the situation and this makes feeling connection problematic, because it becomes entwined with not knowing how to care meaningfully. The visitors are also under the control of the zoo, and are encouraged to care in prescribed ways laid out through zoo messaging and requests for support. It is therefore difficult to come 'face-to-face' with the corporeal zoo subject (Haraway, 2008, pp.71-72).

6.5 Care Enactments and CWN

Through the previous vignettes, the separation between care as an affective embodied encounter (van Dooren, 2014) and care based upon cognitive reason has become apparent. I demonstrated this difference firstly within the anthropomorphic accounts of animals that interpreted behaviour, either using technical mechanising language or else humanising anecdotal and human trait projection strategies. Secondly, I showed that the environments mediated attention as affective distraction or connection. I argued that this mediation either maps care to embodied and individual practices or else affectively emplaces care into representational ideas of species. Lastly, I explained how caring involves becoming interested and making an effort to know the other.

The following vignette demonstrates how children engaged in meaning-making tasks during a mini-beast hunt at Camley St., and evidences how their caring actions for the insects that they collected were not understood as a valued part of the activity. I argue that their care practices produced a form of knowing through doing (Ingold, 2000; Despret, 2013a). Through this discussion, I illustrate how separation between emotional life and reason is enacted through the pedagogy and the practices and

attention of the staff. I argue that this separation produces a detached understanding of children's encounters with the mini-beasts. I demonstrate that attending to the children's seemingly meaningless actions within the overall mini-beast activity produces an understanding of the children's actions as embodied care practices. In order to understand human connectedness, we need to become more attentive to care practices—to find them in the ordinary everyday goings-on (Rautio, 2013a, 2013b). In my analysis, I explain how the children engaged in their own care practices with the insects outside of the facilitator-led instructions for capturing, observing and identifying an insect. This engagement, I argue, suggests that the children were already connected, and were *being with the world* in ways that manifested in unforeseen practices.

6.5.1 Caring for the Forest Mini-Beasts

Figure 26: The forest area, near the mini-beast logs at Camley St.

When I was working as an education volunteer at Camley St., I was asked to help school children find insects to place into specimen jars. We walked the children, who were in a Year 3 class, aged 7-8 years, up to the mini-beast (insect) area. This area is a roped off section of the park designed for mini-beast hunts, with logs strategically dotted at intervals among some trees. Each log has a handle screwed into the top so that it can be easily picked up by hand, making any woodlice, beetles or other insects underneath apparent. As the logs are constantly being picked up by each visiting school group, as well as by any passing visitors who are interested, there are not many animals to find. I worked with a group of five children and helped them to lift the logs and look for animals. I was amazed to see that every child placed a piece of leaf, bark, or stone into the jar alongside their mini-beast, as if they could not bear to isolate the animals completely from their environment.

The children appeared to pick up the pieces and place them with the insects inside the jars, without discussion or question. I witnessed many of the children in the class perform this care response—attending to the insect as they followed the instructions to place it inside the jar. It was as if the *relation was already there*, as Rautio suggests:

> Being with the world (owing initially to Ingold 1994) is not about humans single-handedly forming and developing a relation to the world. Rather, it is about realising that the relation is always already there, and as much influenced by behaviour and existence of other co-existing species as it is by our intentional or unintentional actions.
>
> (Rautio, 2013a, p.448)

Rautio argues that to fully understand relationality we need to consider these kinds of acts, to pay attention to them as part of our *being in the world*, and further, she

250

suggests that to fully embrace relationality we need to consider that our behaviour is influenced by *other co-existing species.*

The teacher leading the group asked the children to look at their *specimen* and to try and identify the animal by observing whether the creature had certain characteristics such as wings, legs, a segmented body, and antennae. However, the children did not demonstrate an interest in this part of the activity; they wanted to carry on sorting and exploring the forest floor. When they were asked to return their specimens to the ground, they willingly did so, again taking care. This time, they were interested in trying to find the same floor-place or log where that animal had been found. This interest evidenced that the children's attention was focused upon what they found important (placing the insects back into the correct spot, or exploring the floor), despite the lesson plan's focus upon identifying specimens[48].

The children went along with the lesson and did what was asked of them. However, in addition, they re-designed the tasks to include care. They did not completely separate the animals from their environment; rather they selected pieces of twig or moss, for example, to accompany the insect into the jar. When the time came to return the insect, they made an effort to try and find the same spot where it had been found. After the session, I had an informal discussion with the teacher. I told her that I was amazed to see how much care the children had for the animals and described what had happened. She nodded and told me that they always do this and added that the children are cute. The notion that the children are cute misses the importance of the

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[48] When I took part in pond dipping, I also noted that the children rarely demonstrated interest in identifying the pond animals. I am not, however, intending to suggest that identifying animals is never of interest, but rather that within the lessons I attended, the focus on identification over the children's own interests was misplaced.

children's actions, and how the children related to the insects. The children understood the insects as beings and they did not want to separate them from their environments. They followed the lesson, but adapted it in ways that enabled them to care for the insects. During our discussion, the teacher did not agree that the children's care practice was important, but rather, described it reductively as cute. Perhaps, as someone trained in environmental science, she felt uncomfortable addressing the notion of caring about the insects for fear of seeming anthropomorphic (Lorimer, 2007). This example illustrates how the relationship between knowing and caring for the animals was present in the children's practice, but not in the adult understanding of the session. The teacher did ask the children to return the animals, so there were key elements of care built into the lesson design, but they were not acted on or valued in the adult practice. Furthermore, the name 'mini-beast hunt' couches the session in a particular relation between human and animal. If the children's caring behaviour had been openly commented upon, then care would have been articulated as being an important part of knowing, rather than relegated to a cute activity of young children. Feminist care ethics have argued that dismissing care creates 'disengaged versions of reality':

> [A] crucial contribution of standpoint theory to a thick version of thinking with care is how it showed that dismissing the work of care contributes to building disengaged versions of reality that mask the 'mediations' that sustain and connect our worlds, our doings, our knowings. From early on, the 'marginalized experiences' these theories referred to were mostly labours of care. By reclaiming these as a source of knowledge, they were rejecting a particular type of willpower for transcendence; an opposition to the obliterating of everyday actual relations in order to sterilize the production of knowledge.

(Puig de la Bellacasa, 2012, p.210)

252

Puig de la Bellacasa makes the above statements in reference to a feminist standpoint theory which argues for *thinking for* marginalised groups, in order to, from their perspective, produce thick versions of thinking or 'visions of caring' (ibid, p.197). The young children, likewise, have no voice to express what is meaningful to them, yet I was able to witness them caring profoundly for the mini-beasts. Without attending to that caring, the process of examining the insects is sterilised and becomes a lesser project than it actually was. The caring needs to be included as meaningful in the production of knowledge. Furthermore, this everyday knowing through situated caring is all around us, 'we do not always need to look far to find practices worthy of cultivation' (Rautio, 2013b, p.394). Rather than thinking in terms of the children's care being cute, if we take seriously the children's challenge that the individual insects are worthy of care, then we become challenged to face our adult practices that dismiss the insects so easily. Gruen and Weil argue that feminist ethics call for practices that draw together

> a praxis built on compassion, care, and empathy, one that includes cognition and affect in ways that cannot be dis-entangled, and that will lead to richer, more motivating approaches to under – standing and improving our relationships with others.

> (Gruen and Weil, 2012, p.479)

The mini-beast hunt did involve all of these elements: it was an affective body-to-body practice, incorporating cognition and learning, as well as care and empathy. The caring for the mini-beasts came from the children rather than the adults. Bragg et al. (2013a) argue that in order to elicit feelings of connection with nature, nature experiences need

to incorporate cognitive, behavioural and affective actions. The mini-beast hunt involved a very standardised delivery, foregrounding the educational taxonomic value of the insects; however, it may have also succeeded in supporting feelings of connection which, according to what I observed, were already there (Rautio, 2013b, p.396).

I observed the children responding to the insects, but I did not observe this being addressed by the adults present in a way that legitimized the value of care to the children. I did not form the impression that the adults were attending to how the children were being in the world. The mini-beast hunt had all of the components of a meaningful experience, and in many ways it did succeed in engaging the children. However, the instructional emphasis of the activity was upon the technical aspects of the experience. Through the enactment of animals solely as specimens, an opportunity was lost to engage in how we care for the more-than-human world.

6.6 Summary

This ethnographic discussion was divided into four sections that each responded to the thesis research questions through addressing different aspects of the critiques presented in the earlier chapters on anthropomorphism and conservation-based CWN research.

I drew on accounts of multispecies encounters at the London Zoo between visitors and goats, lions and mountain gorillas. I also discussed accounts of children and imaginary animals, and encounters between visiting school children and insects at Camley St. Nature Park. I shared auto-ethnographic accounts of my interactions with the city farm and the zoo goats and with Jae Jae, the zoo tiger. Through these vignettes, I provided detailed descriptions and analyses of everyday experiences and interpretations of animal behaviour. I was able to demonstrate that the zoo animals are active agents in zoo visitor encounters, and interrogated how the spatial constructions mediated the visitor-animal encounters and visitors' likelihood of experiencing feelings of connection.

In Chapter 4 I argued that there is a conflation between types of empathy and anthropomorphism in conservation public engagement communications. I argued that the kind of empathy experienced through naturalist and ethologist field research practices is not the same as representational and affective encounters. Through the vignettes, I explored some ways in which language, environments and practices create distinct portrayals and relationships with animals. I argued that sometimes these ways of mediating encounters with and understandings of animals are distracting or distancing and sometimes they are connective.

Through curated enclosures, and through the embedding of positive messaging, affective environments are produced that render the zoo animals as representations of

255

wild animals. I argued that a form of affective distraction and therefore distance from the corporeal animals occurs. I argued that this distancing is not conducive to feeling connection. I contrasted this distancing with how children play and use imagination in the environment at Camley Street, which enacts as a connective space—even though it does not have many visible animals.

I argued that separating reason from emotions through technical language in conservation public engagement creates a distanced experience of animals and nature. I am not advocating for technical language to be abandoned, but rather for care to be included and attended to in the making of knowledge. For example, I suggested the inclusion of signage that acknowledges the gorillas as subjects and that suggests how to greet them, might decrease stress between humans and mountain gorillas in their encounters with each other at the zoo enclosure.

Further, I illustrated how children demonstrated an innate connection with the world through their embodied care practices with insects. I argued that this form of caring needs to be valued by adults, so that urban nature encounters do not become distancing encounters with specimens performed through pedagogic interfaces.

Paying attention to individual encounters presents less human centred ontological human–animal relationships, that speak further to a less arrogant anthropocentric position (Gruen, 2015). Conducting research from a perspective that foregrounds experience and the notion of the animal as a subject, illuminates how ordinary behaviour (that of both animals and humans) is performative in making knowledge and feeling multispecies connections. This understanding involves including the experiences and feelings that are often deemed to be irrelevant or too subjective to be admitted into research.

I developed a typology of encounter by drawing upon Sabloff's notion of 'totemic imagination', in order to distinguish between affective distraction and connective encounters as experiential possibilities at the field sites. I argued that both are shaped by the organisations, as well as potentially ruptured through the agencies of individual animals. In this way, the ethnographic methods were enacting the social (Law and Urry, 2004, p.3) through a reorientating of the enclosure spaces and resident animals towards an affective register. I often noticed missed opportunities due to the reluctance on the part of conservation organisations to attend to feelings of animals and indeed feelings of humans. I considered this hesitation to be part of the heritage of mechanising animals and the fear of appearing anthropomorphic. I build on these findings in the following chapters through work that I developed with participants. This work enabled the research to become more inventive and offered a means to destabilise the normative cognitive bias in play. For example, in order to expand the research to attend to the corporeal nature of interspecies encounters, I developed gestural and embodied drawing experiments and body-centred interventions that involved material practices between participants and animals and spaces.

Much of this work was conducted at Kentish Town City Farm. This site provided a further opportunity to reflect upon strategies and structures in place within the conservation-focused field sites that became apparent through working in a differently orientated urban-animal-nature-space.

Figure 27: People in the gorilla enclosure viewing area.

Chapter 7. Becoming Animal Through Affective Inventive Methods

7.1 Introduction

In the following chapter, I provide an account of experiments that methodologically aim to both challenge existing organisational structures and invent connective practices within the field sites I researched. This account will extend knowledge of how people experience CWN through re-orienting the existing orthodox visitor engagement practices towards more attentive and connective encounters (Hickey-Moody, 2013, p.92). First, I outline the investigative aims, followed by an explanation of this inventive methodological approach.

Broadly, I aimed to make apparent and circumvent factors I experienced as distancing or distracting whilst also developing methods that encouraged practices that I defined as connective. Whilst many of the animals I encountered exhibited agency, many of the multispecies visitor interactions I took part in, or observed, did not have the capacity to involve the animals as subjects. For example, in the previous chapter I discussed the frustration that zoo visitors demonstrated at the gorilla enclosure. In response to strategies that I defined as distancing, I aimed to discover ways of circumventing the normative categories of animals, such as specimens, exhibits or farm stock, and to foreground the animals as agentile subjects in ways that elicit feelings of self-efficacy through the encounter.

I argued that the pedagogical processes did not attend to, or value, material caring interactions, for example, when I observed children during the mini-beast hunt attempting to add pieces of forest floor to their specimen in order to care for their

insects (p.251). In response to this lack of attention to material caring practices, the interventions aim to reorientate the normative values towards an inclusion of care and a relational perspective that encourages *facing* the other (Haraway, 2008, p.17) in ways that produce feelings of involvement and connection with the other.

I aimed to develop the notion that imagination facilitates empathetic connective experiences. In the previous chapter, I argued that the curated places can be understood as performatively either opening up or closing down imaginative experiences (Sabloff, 2015). In line with this understanding, I developed drawing methods in order to actively develop feelings of attunement with animal subjects. This activity further enabled the research to interrogate the ways in which proximity—both physical and emotional—with animals *can* involve an affective force that manifests as feelings of connectedness. Through drawing, I intended to introduce becoming animal experiences, designed to loosen the participants away from normative structures and senses of self in order to become sensitised to animality as an affect. Sensory becoming is explained by Deleuze and Guattari (1994) as a process of 'becoming other' in contrast to conceptual becoming, which they explain as something that is grasped in a fixed form (p.177). Becoming animal speaks to becoming other, and speaks distinctly to sensitising creative practices. Through the drawing experiments, I aimed to introduce sensory experiences as a means to reorientate the everyday farm human–nonhuman animal engagements away from conceptual becoming towards becoming animal.

During this research, I mainly worked with young people aged 8-13 and animals from the city farm. As I noted in Chapter 5, the children were a group who were loosely termed 'our children' by staff, as they regularly attended. Some children, however, who were booked in for specific activities or play schemes, were not considered 'our

children' (Interview with Nina, 2015). The farm staff wanted me to work with the regular children as much as possible because whilst this group hung out at the farm, they did not receive much in the way of adult attention or input beyond or outside of this setting (ibid). In this context, I was able to work experimentally with the people and animals that I came to know over a period of approximately a year and a half. The city farm provided an opportunity to develop a comparative analysis between animal categories (zoo, farm, and wild) and between conservation and non-conservation orientated organisations. I undertook this analysis firstly through exploratory drawing sessions at the three field sites, both on my own and with small participatory groups. I experimented, utilising drawing as a sensory medium to come to know the subject in situated contexts.

7.2 Repurposing Naturalist (Drawing) Methods as Connective Methods

The starting premise for the experiments was that naturalist and ethologist field researcher practices are immersive (as discussed in Chapters 2 and 4), affording empathetic feelings and feelings of attunement between researcher and researched. At both Camley Street and the London Zoo, the pedagogical approaches focused upon aspects of animal behaviour and facts that inadvertently emphasise a distance between humans and the more-than-human world (Field notes, 2015). For example, at Camley Street, I had observed the practices of attending to taxonomic criteria as a means of knowing an animal. I was interested in mobilising and repurposing naturalist and field researcher observation as a method designed specifically for developing immersion and empathetic feelings towards animals in urban nature-places. Thus I aimed to repurpose naturalist and field researcher practices by shifting the intention to learn about the animal towards an intention to connect with the animal. The aim in the experiments was to explore immersive drawing practices in order to investigate if these

produced experiences of human connectedness. I understood this method as a form of becoming naturalist in order to become animal.

My goal here was to utilise drawing as a process of *knowing* through *doing* connection with animals, thus developing states of immersion and attunement. This perspective is based on the idea, as Steve Baker argues, that knowledge is a practice rather than a representation and further, that thinking is 'embodied action' (Baker, 2013, p.237). Therefore, the process, from my perspective, was concerned with knowing as practice rather than knowing through making data in the form of representational objects. Through the process of making drawings in the urban nature spaces and in proximity to the research subjects (humans and nonhuman animals), my understanding of the other, and my relation to the other, developed. The drawings acted as images imbued with embodied moments of practice that could be later recalled and analysed as embodied forms of mobile data (Pink, 2009).

Here, I discuss a series of drawing experiments that took place across the field sites, some with participants and sometimes on my own. I explain how I encountered problems in the practice that corresponded to issues with anthropomorphic representation and articulations of animals that risked objectifying them. Furthermore, I consider whether in the participatory work in particular, I needed to extend the practice to develop the becoming states I was aiming for.

7.3 Gesture Drawing and Embodied Anthropomorphism

7.3.1 Drawing Tigers

The first drawing intervention I discuss took place at the zoo tiger enclosure with two participants. The aim of this intervention was twofold: firstly, I intended to discover

whether the assemblages of enclosure fabrics, designed textures, and media signage that mediate the multispecies encounters, which Davies (2000) calls 'the technological networks of communicative production' (p.250) discussed in the previous chapter, could be dissolved by encountering the animal as a subject through attentive drawing practice. Secondly, I aimed to discover the value of drawing. Drawing is a method, utilised by naturalists and ethologists for detailed mapping and documenting body taxonomies (Crist, 1996; Ernst Haeckel, in Jones 2008). My aim was to transfer and repurpose drawing as a connective becoming practice. Ingold understands drawing as a process that draws out attention. The act of drawing is also the act of observing: the mark making brings the observation into the world as gesture and description (Ingold, 2011b, p.17).

I decided to work at the tiger enclosure with two participants, Leana and Vasuki, aged 10 and 12 years, respectively. These two girls were willing to come to the zoo and furthermore, as they enjoyed drawing, I considered that it would be possible to conduct the experiment without having to attend to practical matters, such as whether they wanted to or felt able to draw animals. Moreover, this opportunity enabled me to consider how they approached drawing zoo animals. They were confident at drawing, but did not feel very comfortable drawing in public. Settling in with paper and pencils immediately established a different relation to the tigers. I selected the tiger enclosure because I had already investigated the space and had experience of zoo tiger encounters (as discussed in the previous chapter). During my previous visitor-zoo-tiger observations, I had witnessed how the tigers were the subjects of human trait anthropomorphism, and were described in familiar terms by the zoo explainer. I had also observed the zoo tigers being portrayed as representatives for other, wild tigers through their enclosure signage and within keeper talks. I had witnessed both of the tigers as being agentile, within the confines of their emplaced zoo lifeworld. By drawing

the zoo tigers, I intended to investigate what immersive engagement with them could produce. Working in this way did produce a kind of immersion. Yet, at the same time, the participants and I felt stifled and self-conscious due to the performative nature of settling into the space, which drew attention to us from other visitors. Working under this pressure created an intensity to the practice that perhaps drew my attention to the difficulties in representing the tiger. The heightened awareness of being watched became a sensory contagion that operated as a heightened awareness of the human drawing tiger process: every stroke evidenced the relation between (human)eye-(tiger)body-(human)hand-paper-(tiger)eye upon the page.

The drawing process made apparent embodied strategies for covering over and for anthropomorphising as a form of visually filling in the gaps between knowing and unknowing, and the space where there was no connection. Arguably these strategies were, in part, a matter of drawing skill, practice and knowing through experience, which could occur in relation to drawing a human or any object. However, experienced drawing is a developed skill where the mind and body of the artist come to an understanding of the ways in which the subject appears. It is a combination of using techniques and developing a style. When drawing a gesture, the artist aims to free themselves of those elements (technique and style) in order to open up to the embodied feeling lines that become an expressive representation. Sara Schneckloth (2008) explains her gestured drawing practice in the following way, which helps to explain this process further. She states:

> My practice takes up the capacity of the gesture in two senses of the word: as
> the kinetic mark issuing from the physical motion of the drawing body, but also
> as an act driven by the desire to convey a specific intention. Seeking a
> productive tension between the two, I characterize first by a sense of abandon

and raw instinct, *a loose and connected gesture*; the second as consciously putting into motion a set of hopeful potential relationships between artist and audience, a gesture toward community.

(Schneckloth, 2008, p.273)

Schneckloth draws abstractly and regards her work in relation to a move between her internal body and 'the skin of the drawing' (ibid) and the audience. In relation to the tiger drawing experiment, I understand this process through considering the 'desire to convey a specific intention' (ibid). In our case the desire to represent the tiger and the 'productive tension' dissolved in the absence of communication between bodies. The 'potential relationships between artist and audience' (ibid) again can be read as between drawer and tiger. When the relationship and the knowing was absent, then human trait anthropomorphism became relied upon. However, this reliance occurred in moments, in the speed of making a mark: it performed an embodied anthropomorphism. Schneckloth aims to connect with a community in the same manner that I considered drawing could potentially form connective relations between the tiger and us (myself and the two participants).

This instance speaks directly to the notion of using drawing as a means for immersion through knowing the other, the nonhuman world, and the fragility of this practice which relies (as perhaps all good drawing does) upon attending to the other and being true to the subject. To draw gesture requires a practice of remaining both immersed and open, and when this practice fails, style creeps in and overlays the raw expression. A drawing of a human will look like a generic human; similarly, a drawing of a mug will look like a generic mug. However, what became apparent in drawing the tiger was the moment when there was no referent: at this moment, the hand and eye did not know what to do

and drew a human eye shaped line. It is not the drawing of a preconceived stylised line that is of import; it is the fact that it was a human line. This line suggested that the eye and the hand collude in anthropomorphic strategies for not knowing. This collusion was also foregrounded by the difficulty of knowing the tiger in the zoo, which was made more viscerally apparent through the practice. In drawing, we feel the risk of making a mark that seems wrong not because the line looks wrong but rather because it is unfamiliar. As Despret (2013a, p.12) says of good scientists: 'They take risks.' If we take the risk, there is the possibility of connection, and of making a *tiger-line*; if we do not take the risk, we draw a familiar *human line*. For example, in my notes I wrote about how difficult I found the process, and the fact that it made more apparent how my drawing mind slipped into human trait anthropomorphism when I felt challenged and found sense-making difficult:

> I found the drawing particularly difficult—really hard to make a mark that wasn't anthropomorphic. I remember looking at Jae Jae and trying to understand how to transfer his head onto the page—but the shape of his skull suddenly felt too alien. When I looked at the picture of Melati, I remembered the feeling of putting in an eye shape line that wasn't really there—and looking retrospectively, I saw that the line, whilst making the drawing read, and have more form, also humanized her form—it was a human line.

(Field notes, 2015)
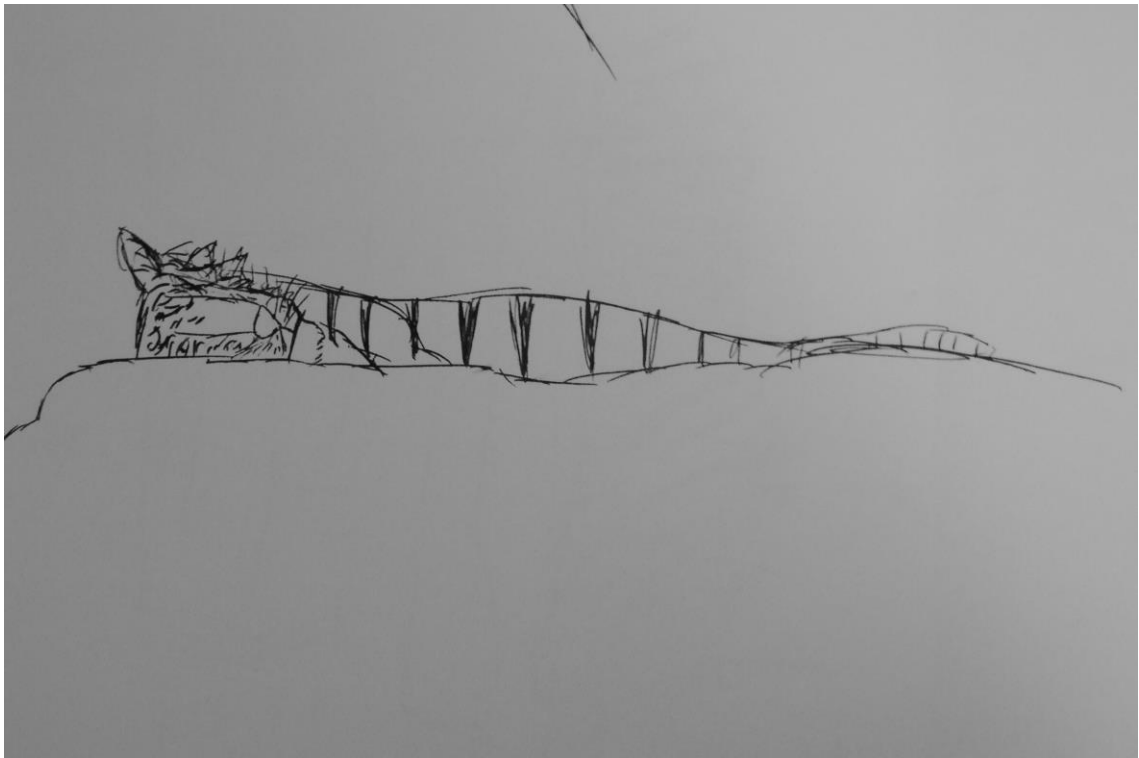
Figure 28: Melati (drawn by Vasuki).

I gave the girls drawing paper and fine liner pens to draw with. Fine liners are good because they do not permit going back or rubbing out; similarly to using film compared to digital photography, the medium (in this case, the fine liner) invites a sense of intention. I gave very few instructions; I did not tell what them what to include or not to include. I did ask them to observe the tigers and to attend to the actual tiger as far as possible rather than to draw from their imagination. I considered that if they observed the tiger, rather than drawing from their mind, then the relationship between drawing and line as producing marks of gestural observation would emerge. This emergent relationship is what Deleuze refers to as a haptic relation between hand and eye, where the hand is not subordinated to the eye-mind (Deleuze, 2014, pp.108-109). The image above, drawn by Vasuki, demonstrates shifting between attempts at feeling the tiger and making human lines; for example, she also seems to have drawn a human eye. This drawing can be understood as a tension between making haptic, gestural

267

lines and making what Deleuze refers to as digital drawing, where the hand is reduced to a mechanical finger (ibid, p.108). The stripes dominate over form, but this happened perhaps, in part, because Vasuki is a child looking up at the tiger who is lying on the very edge of a high (plastic, heated) rock. In the image, Melati's body is placed upon the rock and appears to be engaged with the drawing, yet her body is dissolving into the zoo rock and enclosure to a point where she becomes a slip of a zoo tiger.

Drawing the tigers produced an understanding of the animal in motion over time, in contrast to an almost instant photographic snapshot. Whilst the tigers were not moving quickly or much at all, their bodies were in constant motion, and the participants paid attention to their skin stripes because, I think, the stripes were one of their most mobile and confounding features—they appeared to loosen from the body and conjoin with other stripes in miraculous patterns. A different form of knowing the tiger was experienced through observing him moving, and this knowing became a *body without image* (Featherstone, 2006, p.235, citing Massumi, 2002) present within the drawing process. I relate this form of knowing to Massumi's (2002) concepts of *mirror* and *movement* vision (pp.58-59)[49]. In *movement vision* we perceive things differently: we do not see a series of stills (*mirror vision*), but rather, we employ a tactile eye that *feels* the intensities of gesture and subliminal movements that we do not consciously perceive (ibid, pp.57-59).

The drawing experiment raised some problems and did not succeed in several respects. For one, I had aimed to make drawings with animals that generated an

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[49] In a different context, it would have been possible to pursue drawing in the zoo. I did conduct drawing at other enclosures by myself; however, for the drawing to work as a participatory process, I think it would have needed formal support from the zoo in order to create a sense of a safe space.

immersion and feelings of attunement with the tigers; however, the zoo environment made the young participants and me feel stressed. After awhile, we wanted to leave. In the context of this being an exercise which involved participants, I did not intend to put them under pressure; therefore, *feeling stressed* was not a positive outcome. Secondly, the immured tigers could not be included as active participants, and instead became research objects. Within the visitor–zoo animal dynamic this issue was likely to be a recurring problem. I discuss making representations of animals in the following experiments as this form of engaging with animals became increasingly problematised within my and the participatory practices[75]. So, on the one hand, drawing the zoo tigers made apparent the fragility of drawing as a connective device and, on the other, it functioned as a tool for developing moments of knowing the other (Schneckloth, 2008). The drawing, therefore, needed to be situated within an approach that attended to the other, remaining vigilant to moments of rupture, such as when I drew the human lines.

It matters then how drawing is read and how it is judged, both by the person drawing and the one interpreting it. It matters in what context the drawing is performed; it matters also for the animal, in most cases at least, less in terms of the animal regarding the visual image in an ocular sense. Rather, the animal chooses how to respond, either through ignoring the whole process of drawing, or by engaging with the feeling of being drawn. The drawing creates an affective, sensory attention, which includes the sounds of the pencil moving over the paper surface that sometimes the animal seemed to tune into. Perhaps there was a connection through the sound and rhythm of the mark making that the animal attuned to, and a way of intersubjective thinking through rhythm described by McCormack (2013) as a form of pre-cognitive experience.

The hand and the eye together can make an anthropomorphic gesture, exemplifying how culture co-produces body performativity (Coleman and Ringrose, 2013), in so doing, wiping over and erasing the animal, for the sake of producing a coherent whole. But then, the image as a tool, also makes this work apparent, and speaks back to the body memory of the anthropomorphic moment (Schneckloth, 2008, p.278). What becomes manifested visually upon the page is an opportunity for re-feeling the encounter, and meeting the animal with the aim of articulating its specific subjecthood.

Figure 29: Jae Jae (drawn by Leana): 'A sense of the tiger hiding his face'.

7.3.2.1 Drawing with Children at the City Farm

Figure 30: Champion (drawn by Brinsop).

In order to think more about the difficulties that I encountered drawing the tigers at the zoo, I conducted some drawing sessions with small groups of children at the city farm. The city farm setting enabled me to work with animals in closer, more interactive settings. The session I will discuss included a group of 12 children aged 9-14 years.

271

The group were from the surrounding estates and were all regular farm volunteers who knew the animals well, and who spent many hours at the city farm playing and mucking out, feeding, and bedding down the animals[50].

When I conducted drawing sessions a few children always immediately withdrew, and I never managed to persuade some of them to try drawing at all. I soon discovered that the children have quite a fixed view of whether they can draw, and how they will draw. After several sessions that produced sets of anthropomorphic drawings, their animal pictures seemed to resemble their authors more than the chosen horse or goat subject as another, distinct being. The first sessions felt more akin to an invitation to draw the animal as a request to reproduce a rehearsed version of an animal whose referents were from an array of media representations. The drawing still was not producing the immersive and loose states I had intended, or 'lines of flight' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.267) that could be understood as a pathway to the immersive feelings of connection that I was interested in. The drawings of Champion, above (Figure 30), and Murphy, below (Figure 31), are different from the tiger drawings in several respects. At first I interpreted the drawings as less involved because they are floating in space, without any sense of being in place. Both sets of drawings depict anthropomorphic lines, evidenced through the lines that speak more to human forms rather than horse or tiger forms. However, the horse drawings appeared to be generic representations, with most of the detail in the hair and horse faces.

On one hand, these details resemble those found in media cartoon horse depictions, and serve as a means of describing the horses as beautiful, which also reflects how

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[50] For further information about the city farm see Chapter 5 (*5.5 Kentish Town City Farm*).

the girls actually spoke about them. In this sense, the horse drawings are expressions of how the girls feel about the horses. My interpretation of the drawings was based in part upon my observations of how the girls worked: how much they attended to the animal subject, and how much they drew from their minds. The horse drawings can be understood as expressions of the girls' internalised feelings for the horses, whereas elements of the tiger drawings evidence gestural connectedness with the tigers in place. The city farm pictures present a different form of connection based upon a personal knowing of the individual.

On the other hand, the horse drawings suggest an understanding of the horses as persons, which perhaps they are to the city farm girls because they know the horses well (Baker, 2000, pp.180-181), in comparison to the tigers, who were strangers to Leana and Vasuki.

Figure 31: Murphy (drawn by Hydra).

The horse in Figure 31 is one of my favourites of the field work drawings. The tail lines demonstrate the horse moving, even though the body is solid and fixed. The head demonstrates uncertainty about the taxonomic features of a horse and suggests that the artist was drawing from their mind rather than observation (Deleuze, 2014). What is interesting here is the texture and patterning in the head and hooves. They speak both to the artist's intention to depict the horse and to get the hoof shape right, for example, but also to the fact that the artist does not fully resist making decorative patterning marks—for example, where the hoof lines move upwards to the legs. The inclusion of the Mars red pen outline that looks like a different animal, gives the drawing vitality and

power and suggests hybridity. Ingold (2015, p.103) suggests that colour is both indeterminate and a branch of being. The red marks shout out difference and otherness, and their strength lies in tension with the gentler pencil marks of the head and mane. This is illustrative of drawing that reveals internalised feelings expressed as a horse-image: an expressive representation of what the horse is to the girl.

I noticed that many of the children's drawings have missing body parts. At times this could be explained by the fact that the animal had withdrawn, walked away and found something else to do, and that the child participant had become distracted. Perhaps the child's decision to stop was at times their response to how not to draw an animal line: the moment of having to take a risk, discussed earlier.

The drawing of Champion (Figure 30) shows only his head and face, which references the ways in which portraits are made of people rather than animals, suggesting that this drawing depicts who Champion is to Brinsop. The child has written Champion's name as if he is a celebrity, and has attended to his hair as a sign of his power and status at the city farm. Within multispecies aesthetics, static portraits of animals are critiqued by Madeline Boyd (2015b) for being an anthropocentric practice aiming to represent a complete being, rather than understanding beings as always co-produced in relation to one another. As she writes, 'this representationalism distances subject and object by assuming that individual subjects exist a priori rather than arising out of agential intra-action' (Boyd, 2015b, p.17). The notion of the complete being is problematised because it infers we can fully know the other from our privileged position. Steve Baker (2000, pp.180-181) defends at least some representations, arguing that they need to be read as *portraits* of individuals, made through an ongoing multispecies relationship, rather than reading them as generic animal objects. Baker points out that the problem lays with the viewer in such cases, as it is the viewer who

275

objectises the animal and thus separates it from the process of making the painting (ibid), which in itself is an anthropocentric practice. Baker suggests, however, that we often do not know, and cannot see in the image, the animal subjecthood that the artist may have been attending to (ibid, pp.179-182). The postmodern problems and discourses of representing animals have become understood as visual articulations of an arrogant anthropocentrism (Gruen, 2015) that positions humans above all other animals. This articulation of anthropocentrism is also intersectionally linked to other forms of oppression (for example, see Twine, 2014; Adams, 2014).

In reviewing this experiment, I thought back to my own anthropomorphic tiger drawing and started to question why I had assumed we should make representations of *complete* animals. I had envisaged the drawing as a reworking of naturalist immersive experiences and it had not been my intention to directly make naturalist drawings as realist portraits of animals. It seemed there was a gap between my theoretical intentions and my research practice. In part, this gap happened because we were struggling to feel immersion at the zoo. However, it also evidenced how the practice of *doing* in a way that involved the body in *sensory relation to the subject* provided a different awareness and data to then analyse. If there had not been a relation to the subject, the representational images would not have *felt* problematic.

The moments of attuning manifested when the drawing process became embodied and reached moments of connection that, as illustrated with the tiger examples, became lost when a cognitive judgement (Deleuze, 2014) about how to represent the complete animal was privileged. In a sense, then, the drawing in these contexts was a process of finding *and* losing connection. I needed to adapt the method in order to invite a different form of attention that depended upon opening up to the animal as a subject, rather than inviting the participant to make an anthropomorphised representation.

276

7.3.2.2 Becoming-with Shirley

Later, I went back to the city farm and made some ink drawings of parts of Shirley the cow on my own: her back, her eye, her head and front torso. These Shirley *parts* were an experiment in non-anthropomorphic drawing—giving attention to hair texture, to an eyelid: this experiment seemed to make it easier to feel the other without getting bogged down in subjecthood—whether mine or hers. Through focusing on the texture and details of form, I felt more direct access to the affective registers of her cow-body. I thought of a scientist dissecting a body in order to learn about it and wondered how that practice might feel. Perhaps a processual connection occurs; although I imagine that cutting up a body must involve a detachment, perhaps it also invokes a sense of connection. In any case, my affective dissection brought Shirley's being into sharper focus. The aim was not to make accurate records of the body parts—not in the sense of being uninterested in proportion, or formal representation, like a photograph. My aim was to record the feeling of her, the tuftiness of her fur, the impossible largeness of her head, the stillness of her body, and the extreme way her large upper eyelid sits over her eyeball. I related this desire to the way Schneckloth describes how gesture operates as a distilled experience:

> The gesture is informed by more than the impulse to mimic. It is a distillation of an experience both internal and external; it is a physical and psychological extension of the act of seeing, a somatically *felt* impulse to inscribe with a particular pressure, direction, duration and speed, the nuances of each fuelled by emotional states in perpetual flux.

> (Schneckloth, 2008, p.278)

In this sense, through my practice I was discovering how to utilise drawing as means of connecting to the other, through a form of abstraction and gestured marking that enabled a 'distillation of an experience' (ibid) of Shirley the cow. This process helped to eradicate the cultural codes and segmentation (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) of seeing animals whilst teaching me about those others. Whilst I drew in a sensitised state, I felt Shirley's attention and noticed her minute movements, for example, the way her head tosses when trains go past and people come by. I was beginning to feel a sense of attunement that came from relaxing into a form of drawing that had no agenda, other than doing drawing with her. I was returning to my 'ability to sense and respond' (Haraway, 2016, p.127), and Shirley, it seemed to me, became more attentive and responsive to me in return. Whilst discussing Despret's work, Haraway states:

> What scientists actually do in the field affects the ways 'animals see their scientists seeing' and therefore how the animals respond.
>
> (Haraway, 2016, p.127, citing Despret, 2014, p.36)

Figure 32: My drawing: Shirley's mouth.

So, through letting go of my own coded conceptions, I was learning to draw in a way that enabled me to empathically become attuned to Shirley. Also, as Haraway and Despret argue, and I also discovered, this form of attention changed how Shirley experienced and attended to me. Both the difficulties and the moments of immersion that occurred during the sessions at the tiger enclosure and with the children at the city farm were important steps to finding what Deleuze and Guattari (1988) term a line of flight (p.267), as a way towards *becoming cow:*

> Becoming is not to imitate or identify with something or someone. Nor is it to proportion formal relations. Neither of these two figures of analogy is applicable to becoming: neither the imitation of a subject nor the proportionality of a form. Starting from the forms one has, the subject one is, the organs one has, or the

functions one fulfils, becoming is to extract particles between which one establishes the relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness that are closest to what one is becoming, and through which one becomes. This is the sense in which becoming is the process of desire.

(ibid, p.318)

Here Deleuze and Guattari explain the motivation, the force that pushes through becoming, as a desire that loosens one away from the fixity of one's own being. I wanted to become sensitised to Shirley through finding a means to feel her in a conjoined, becoming animal experience. Through my escape from attempting to represent Shirley, and through allowing play and openness into the drawing practice, elements of her cow-body sensitised me to her whole being, her breath, her muscles and her vital rhythm of being. Seeing and feeling the problems, as well as feeling the fleeting moments of connectedness during the earlier experiments, enabled me to understand how I needed to move next.

Haraway uses the term *becoming with* in a processional way—it is ongoing; there is no arrival point. Partners do not 'precede their relating' (Haraway, 2008 p.17), implying that the relating is co-constitutive; through this relation we are in a state of becoming. I was learning how to co-constitute representations of animals, animals that I was coming to know through my own attention and proximity to them, through a combination of drawing and following, mucking out and grooming. These tasks were interconnected ways of knowing and ways of becoming-with (ibid). I had observed the children being engaged in many of these same animal practices, such as the daily mucking out and feeding routines. However, their attention worked in different registers: their worlds centred upon play, care work and being cared for (Field notes,

2016). For example, they often played with the ducks and goats, as well as each other. Lunch and tea were cooked on-site everyday for all the children, staff and volunteers. Children were always involved in the cooking and clearing up. Staff told me how the feeding of the children was a means to care for them, and to teach them about how to cook (Interviews with Nina and Louisa, 2015).

As I became embedded in the farm community I became a part of the staff conversations about the children. I was frequently told stories about individual children who had challenging home lives. I had regular meetings with Nina, the coordinator for children, and discussed my observations and field research in depth with her. The staff explained early on that the idea was for the children to learn the importance of care through caring for animals and being cared for by adults. On the one hand, it seemed the children were innately more fluid and able to switch between play and work than I was. On the other, they seemed to need to have a framework of delineated being, rather than being able to embrace notions of becoming more fluid. For example, I found them resistant to trying new things, or things that challenged them (Field notes, 2016). I learnt to build this resistance into projects. They did not *become* animal in my *adult* terms, but that is not to say they did not become animal; rather their becomings manifested in more fluid registers that required a particular attention[51].

7.4 Moving Away from Figurative Representation

The practice of drawing with animals made me aware, in an embodied way, of my relations with other animals (and humans). This mode of becoming aware through drawing was valuable in that it physically demonstrated and attended to the problems

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[51] Analysis was interpreted from participant observation and interviews over months of fieldwork in 2014-2016.

of the human and the nonhuman animal in relation to our distinctness and subjecthood. For example, the difficulty of knowing the *other* was evidenced through the marks on the page visible in drawing without making human-centred interpretations; in turn, this form of drawing illuminated Baker's arguments about representations of nonhuman beings from the perspective of embodied practice (Baker, 2000; Schneckloth, 2008). When I reviewed the participants' work, I found the farm children were resistant to working in less representational ways and I understood that this resistance implied a shift in their overall relation to the animal.

Furthermore, some of the time, I felt an affinity with the animal and considered that some of the animal subjects, some of the time, responded to my attention. I became aware of moments of attunement that came with immersion and bodily attention. I experienced connection as something fluid and fragile, which often slipped away as it emerged through my doing body into my consciousness. Drawings evidence such moments, and can, when reviewed sometimes, recall proprioceptive memory and sensory experiences felt during the making process (Schneckloth, 2008).

Through the drawing experiments, I came to understand how we are with animals in the field site contexts, as sets of assemblages and kinds of hybrids. Each situation and each animal invited connection in differing forms and also obstructed connection in differing ways. I had to continually remain responsive to place, people, animals and potential strategies for imagining what to do next. At the beginning, I attempted to mimic naturalist methods, but it was only when the methods became fully inventive and mobilised as becomings that the work came close to achieving my aims.

The process of learning to circumvent anthropocentric norms involved wrestling with how I behaved, and how I invited others to engage. For example, when the young

participants and I tried to draw the tigers we felt the oppressive structure of the enclosure, and the response of other visitors to our unusual behaviour. At the city farm, I had not thus far managed to break through the accepted forms of representing and understanding the animals with the children, although I had done so in my own practice of drawing with Shirley.

7.5 Sensing Lifeworlds: Imaginative Drawing in Affective Environments

I aimed to investigate whether attuning to the environment as a habitat or lifeworld for invisible, yet present animals could engender CWN. I investigated this possibility in relation to my wider arguments that imagination invites empathetic connective experiences, and how this experience of connection in turn relates to interspecies embodied communication.

Figure 33: My drawing: part of a coot, Camley St. Natural Park.

Camley Street presented the opportunity to experience the more-than-human world. Plants, trees, water and earth assembled as a wildlife park without clear delineation between urban infrastructure fabric and nature. The sounds of the train announcements that echo across the park, the noise from the trains, cars, building demolition, and joggers pacing along the canal towpath that punctuate the rhythm of the wind and the animals that inhabit the park. Buildings, cranes, mesh fencing, boats, and trains decorate the borders and act as a backdrop to the inner spaces, articulated as wildlife habitats.

In the previous chapters (5 and 6), I explained that there are not many animals visible at Camley Street, certainly not in comparison to the zoo and the city farm. Instead, I argued that the space functions as an environment with a sensory presence of (mostly) non-visible animal bodies. In Chapter 6 I suggested that this space Camley St therefore presented me with both a problem and an opportunity: there were no animals positioned in enclosures that were made easily available to draw, and any drawing of animals would therefore require patience and time to locate and observe them. But patience and time were not things I had available within the context of the participatory work, because I already discovered that my participants have quite short attention spans. I decided that if we focused upon the space as a sensory lifeworld instead, then I would be able to further investigate the notion of the space as being imbued with a lively and affective animate atmosphere. McCormack (2013) explains atmospheres as 'a concept with an affective resonance that precedes any attempt to theorize it' (p.6). Spaces can be sensed prior to cognitive meaning-making, and as such produce experiences of connectedness (McCormack, 2013). McCormack explains how sensing affective spaces requires attending to affects:

> [A]ffective spaces are processual: that is, they exist as worlds in ontogenetic

transformation whose variations can be sensed through different techniques of attention, participation and involvement-techniques that can and should be cultivated as part of the process of thinking.

(ibid, p.4)

Through the practices, I aimed to attend to the spaces via 'involvement-techniques' in order to invoke experiences of the affective flows and dynamisms that were ongoing. In Chapter 6, I argued that the space invited feeling into the totemic imagination, evidenced through my observations of the ways children open up and playfully imagine animals here. I consider totemic imagination to be a collective imagination inter-subjectively felt and shared by a community (Sabloff, 2015, p.9), rather than the anthropological interpretation of the totem as a symbolic structuring device (ibid, p.45). Becoming immersed in a space utilising totemic imagination is a form of becoming and is a connective practice. By which I mean not imagining identical things, but rather becoming open to imagination in an intersubjective, affective way. I considered that abstract drawing could also encourage immersion and feelings of connection, perhaps in a similar manner to how the animals, plants, trees and others in the space were felt by the children who I had observed playing imaginatively. Abstract drawing further presented the opportunity to capture data that could enrich the notion of the importance of place referred to in the earlier CWN literature. In Ernst and Theimer's (2011) study they suggested that 'place-attachment' (p.580) could be an important factor in the development of CWN, and Miller (2005) described 'appropriate places' to explore, characterised by not being overly curated but lending themselves to free play and exploration (p.431). Whilst Camley Street is definitely a wholly curated place, it had

however facilitated a degree of exploration and playfulness in the children that I observed during the ethnography discussed in the earlier vignette on p.249[52].

I gathered together a group of three adults and four children, aged 11-15 years (see *2.6 Research Design,* p.76). This group was a combination of family, friends and a mother and daughter who randomly asked to join in whilst we were there. I chose to conduct this experiment with family and friends because I wanted to experiment with something different, and it is easier to try out new things with familiar people, especially as the farm children were often resistant to and unsure of new things. Furthermore, Camley Street staff had refused to allow me to run formally organised sessions. Therefore, as this experiment was conducted in a guerilla, informal format, it would not have been possible to work with people I did not have personal relationships with.

The participants, who were already known to me, did not have a place attachment to the park[53], and were visiting because I had planned the trip. Therefore, this trip was a way to investigate the power of the place as an affective atmosphere, despite it lacking the place-attachment criteria cited above. Through experimenting with drawing in the space, it would become apparent if the curated wild-ness invited connective feelings among my participants.

We walked into a place where three paths meet and settled ourselves in the central node. From here we were close to the trees and could see the ponds and log piles in one direction, and the Eurostar fence and the Camden Council Building behind the

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[52] As discussed in relation to imaginary animals. See *6.3.2: A Space for Imaginary Animals: Fostering Totemic Imagination*.
[53] I knew they had not visited the park before.

trees on our other sides. The participants were asked not to be concerned about either finding or attempting to represent actual animals, but rather to take time to feel the space and to attune to the inhabitants of the space. I gave them paper, pencils, brushes and ink. They were then invited to make drawings through giving sensory attention to the space, being attentive to the animals within it, through sound, tracks and smell. The resulting drawings were free and playful in comparison to the ones from the zoo and farm drawing experiments. These affect drawings felt far looser and connected to the place in which they were made.

Figure 34: A bird's eye imaginary view of Camley St. (drawn by Fafnir).

Figure 35: Mini-beasts at Camley St. (drawn by Leas).

The two drawings above detail the ambient nature of the park, and the marks abstractly relate to animals and space. The overall effect is a sense of connected beings, connected to one another and moving within their worlds. I analysed these drawings in relation to reading the liveliness of the lines and marks: 'The line is no more, and no less, than life itself' (Ingold, 2011b, p.19). I analysed the gestural marks that evidence the 'movement of drawing' (ibid, p.16) as a form of haptic description (Ingold, 2011b; Deleuze, 2014).

I considered whether participants had engaged with the actual place, or with an abstracted imaginary place. For example, Figure 35 depicts some topological features of Camley Street as a sense of the ponds and the walkways. However, it utilises both gestural mark making and graphic mark making—such as the dots that represent the creature moving through the trees. The scale is also completely impressionistic—whilst

288

the trees stretch vertically over the height of the drawing, the creature which looks mostly like an insect would be enormous at that scale, as do the butterflies. I have therefore utilised a range of registers to analyse these drawings. Overall, I understand the drawings to present an assemblage of lively marks expressing the affective atmosphere of life in the park. In this sense I consider that the drawing session had succeeded in becoming an 'involvement-technique' (McCormack, 2013, p.4) that engaged participants in becoming animal.

Figure 36: View looking out from a nest: field drawing at Camley St. (drawn by Leana).

Figure 37: Naturalist drawing of a spider looking out from its nest
(By George and Elizabeth Peckham).

The two drawings above make an interesting comparison. Figure 36 is by Leana at Camley Street, whilst Figure 37, from a paper by Eileen Crist (discussed in Chapter 4), is an example of a naturalist drawing by George or Elizabeth Peckham in the early 1900s. The two drawings share a similar form and subject—they both are described by the artists as versions of animals looking out from their *nests.* Both drawings assume that the animals are 'looking', thereby suggesting an anthropomorphic ocularcentrism in interpreting the other species' behaviour. Both drawings understand the animal as having a nest, and the textured mark making that surrounds each animal expresses a conception of the animal having a lifeworld (Crist, 1996). Whilst the drawing objectives differed, the contents are similar, in that both drawings represent an understanding of animals having nests, which are portrayed as circular constructions. I consider that the intensity of the red lines of the nest in Figure 36 demonstrates a rhythm that can be

understood as 'no less than life itself' (Ingold, 2011b) or as evidence of attunement with the park through the affective technology of drawing (McCormack, 2013).

The participants at Camley Street reported feeling immersed in the site and enjoyed thinking of the space as an environment. Crist's analysis of the Peckhams' anecdotal language, creating an anthropomorphic atmosphere within their text, is a productive contribution to studying how people form understandings of other animals in relation to the felt environment, wherein the environment performatively encourages an understanding of the animal that anecdotally becomes translated through anthropomorphic text, or in this case, imagery.

I have used Crist's notion of the textual anthropomorphic environment as a way to think about affect in material spaces that curate encounters with animals, by drawing upon affective strategies that utilise imagination and haptic mark making. The drawing above made at Camley Street depicts an imaginary nest. The participant did not find an animal looking out from a nest. Even so, the drawing represents a connection with place through both the rhythmic marks and the understanding of animals as subjects with their own lifeworlds. The space at Camley St. contains animal life, which feels present though barely seen. Through the sensory drawing the participants managed to attune themselves to the notion of animals living embedded lives in the natureculture environment of urban and nature objects and structures.

In contrast, when drawing the tigers in the zoo, the space felt very restricting. The zoo tigers are entirely visible and tightly emplaced in the curated human environment of the zoo. The tigers have no space to make their own lifeworld and existence within. It felt as though for them it would be akin to a human being trapped in a prison or a hotel,

where someone comes in and orders the room according to the hotel rules and the resident can never fully relax or decide how to order their life.

In retrospect, my analysis of the city farm children being reluctant to try new things is based upon observing them situated at the city farm. If it had been possible to take them to Camley Street for a guerilla drawing session, their drawings may have loosened away from more representational registers. The drawings of the horses discussed earlier evidenced expression, but it was formulated through the format of portraits.

7.6 Becoming Response-able

As I discussed in the introduction to this chapter, the aim of the drawing experiments was to repurpose immersive methods through which field researchers, such as naturalists and some ethologists, develop empathetic feelings with their research subjects (Crist, 1996; Despret, 2013a). The drawing sessions were affected by the field site settings, the participants, and, of course, the animals. I came to understand that the *approach* to the drawing experiments—rather than the practice itself—was performative in the opening up or closing down of feelings of attunement with the animal subject. In this sense I was learning the practice of doing a research assemblage (Fox and Alldred, 2015; Ringrose and Renold, 2014). Moreover, this engagement often required working in resistance to the normative structures embedded within the spaces. The structures often encouraged a closed down responsiveness, and I was therefore experimenting with ways to circumvent them (McCormack, 2013, pp.9-10). However, the affects of the spatial ordering of the zoo were often overbearing, and therefore finding a way through to become-with the zoo animals who remained available was very difficult. The oft repeated notion that

spending time outdoors increases CWN (for example, Bragg et al., 2013a) seems improbable in overly structured contexts, and this view is backed by Miller's (2005, p.431) assertion that 'outdoors' needs to be an *appropriate place* for exploration. However, on many occasions the multispecies drawing experiments did succeed in opening up moments of attunement and attention to the animal in ways that foregrounded the animal as an agentile subject. The experiments therefore, at least some of the time, invited empathic attunement and becoming animal in the sense that participants were starting to shift towards affective attunements invited by the drawing experiments.

In the following chapter, I discuss the intervention project that developed the research onwards from these experiments at the city farm. The relation of human as expert observer and animal as observed had not been challenged or disrupted through the drawing. This lack of disruption was evidenced through the representational drawings discussed earlier. Further, the anthropomorphic drawing had invited a distancing anthropomorphic relation to the animal that was a barrier to the becoming states I had intended. I intended to address the difficulties of working with drawing held by many of the farm children, who, from my field observations, had struggled because of feeling self-conscious during the work. I aimed to develop strategies and methods to enable them to loosen up and feel more confident in order to encourage more connective experiences.

Furthermore, as my research experience progressed, my understanding of the need to attend to the animal developed. My sense of the ethical obligation embedded within the concept of care as becoming-with (Haraway, 2008; van Dooren, 2014) motivated me to develop practices for further affective proximity between the animals and the participants. The process developed into moving away from a focus on becoming

293

animal that was centred almost entirely on the *humans* becoming animal. I now attended to methods for human *and* animal becoming-with. The intention here was to attend to the relation between human and animal rather than to focus on the experience of the human.

Figure 38: Winston, with Brinsop, Aido and Wantley.

Chapter 8. Becoming-with: Moving from Experiments to Interventions

8.1 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to an intervention called 'A Day In The Life Of…'. This intervention was designed to extend the experiments in repurposing the naturalist and field researcher methods discussed in Chapter 7. The aim was to create a space to conduct multispecies attunement and becoming through setting up a structure and a range of observational and mapping tasks: photographing, mapping, drawing and making notes, which sought to draw the participants into a closer engagement with their chosen animal. As the intervention progressed, I developed additional methods to involve participant and animal bodies in closer, more intimate encounters. I did so firstly through inviting participants to directly follow animals, and secondly through inviting participants to 'co-breathe' with partner animals. Through developing these tasks, I was able to shift the value register of the encounters and support immersive and attuned interactions between humans and animals. The final section of the chapter discusses what happened when I planned a field trip to the zoo with the city farm children in order to experiment with similar methods in the zoo context.

After the experimental drawing sessions with the children at the city farm, I realised that I needed to find a way to translate the immersive and connective practices that I was learning from, into methods that could be adapted for the children and the animals at the city farm. The first drawing experiments had enabled me to think more about the problems of representing animals, and gave me an understanding of the forms of tacit resistance I was encountering with staff when I introduced different ways of engaging with and responding to the resident animals. Furthermore, it was very difficult working

with a large group of children who had short attention spans and low levels of confidence in trying new things. I was also coming to know the city farm as a chaotic space, where animals escape or make sudden demands, people come and go and plans get made and broken. In this context, it was always hard to plan and to orchestrate projects. I needed to be responsive to the ongoing-ness and contingent nature of the world (Lury and Wakeford, 2014). Animal routines hold the city farm in place: the animals' feeding times, mucking out times, and bedding down times never varied, and always brought all other activity to an end, as well as bringing the community together through shared activities.

The city farm human animal relations can in some ways be understood as 'de-passioned' (Despret, 2004, p.131) through care practices that are articulated as *work*, rather than a notion of *caring* for another being. At the city farm, caring for the animals is promoted as being meaningful for the (human-centred) production of food or for support of human wellbeing (Interview with Wayne, 2015). In practice, the animals were for the most part not actual farm animals; they are not slaughtered or bred or asked to produce milk, for example[54]. Many of the animals are cared for, for a range of reasons, and the animals in many ways, would be more closely categorised as community companion species, although not articulated as such. The ways in which care was articulated as work was similar to the way in which overt caring for the animals at Camley Street and at the zoo was problematised. I argued earlier that caring is not deemed to be scientific (Lorimer, 2007; Despret, 2004). At the city farm,

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[54] The chickens provide the city farm with eggs and the goats/kids, lambs, and piglets are sold each year, usually for meat. Otherwise, the animals live their lives. Further, this element of farming is more a matter of controlling numbers than to serve economic production. Lastly, the killing of animals is presented as a means to teach people about food production—i.e. that meat comes from animals.

the role of caring for the animals served to provide work and status for the people, and this care was performed through considering farm work as an activity for the working-class community.

The city farm imposes order through its cultural coding as a working-class project, situated within the midst of a gentrified area of inner London (Interview with Wayne, 2015). A central strategy for retaining its working-class credentials was through the practice of *working* with the farm animals, but there were other everyday community practices that also supported this identity (as discussed in Chapter 5 p.192). A further way of structuring the city farm was through engaging in activities that were craft- rather than art-based (Interview with Nina, 2016; see also Chapter 5 p.194). When my research was articulated as craft or community art drawing, it was acceptable; however, when it became understood as conceptual research, it was met with cynicism and resistance by some staff (Field notes, 2016). Working with the children at the city farm provided opportunities for experimentation; however, I had to make compromises in order to encourage them to engage in the research. This was worthwhile as it was only at the city farm that I could work with both humans and animals in a direct manner. I considered that the work at the zoo and at Camley Street was limited in this respect as my requests to develop body-to-body practices had been rejected at those sites and I could not secure formal permission to develop interventions there. The city farm presented an opportunity to work with animals with far looser categories imposed upon them due to the organisation being a multispecies community group rather than an actual farm—even if the farm did not regard themselves in that way.

I needed to move the drawing practices away from representational work; this shift risked creating tension as doing so entailed taking the children away from the activities through which they defined themselves. I overcame this risk by retaining the drawing,

whilst including some snapshot style photography practices I had set up with the children in the earlier sessions, but I also gently began to assemble more experimental engagement tasks around those more accepted practices.

Because the city farm staff were prepared to let me design my own activities without having to fit their organisational agenda, I was able to invite participants to work in ways that allowed me to gently antagonise the notion of anthropocentric human-animal relations. My aim was to create an *affective environment* through the intervention structure that dissolved the fixed notion of the city farm animal category and, instead, foregrounded the animal as a subject. I aimed to create a shift that dissolved the notions of instrumental caring, whereby animals are valued in relation to either human wellbeing or animal care as a part of food production. This dissolution was instigated through a shift from human-centred attention to attention centred on the human–animal relation, and through a further shift towards embodied practices.

8.2 'A Day In The Life Of …': Repurposing Naturalist Methods

From my previous experience of working at the city farm with this particular group of children in combination with my research aims, I devised a range of observational tasks that remained loosely based upon the notion of the repurposed naturalist practices. I knew the tasks needed to be short in order to engage people with short attention spans. They needed, further, to be activities that were easy and not open to judgement. I decided using tools and equipment would give the work an authority and make it more fun. I settled upon inviting the children to observe a partner animal of their choice in different ways in repeating cycles, every two hours, over three days. The observations involved mapping, photographing, drawing, recording and noting down relevant information. I designed the observations to be quick, to involve the use of as

many tools and methods as possible, and to be as easy to do as possible. I explained the tasks framed through the notion of acting like naturalists, whose role was to observe the lives of the partner animals—hence the title of the intervention.

The participants were a group of 17 volunteers, aged 9-15 years. Many of their families knew the staff socially, lived close by and attended farm events. Many of the parents had been farm volunteers when they were young. The children, in the city farm coordinator's words, 'come because they have nothing better to do, nothing going on at home' (Interview with Nina, 2016). The project took place during the Easter holidays in 2016.

I was interested in understanding how the observation tasks could engage and immerse the young participants. For example, I was curious whether being engaged in the practices influenced the participants' knowledge of the animal as a subject, and whether this practice foregrounded or invited a less mediated form of caring with the animals in comparison to the work/care routines that they were normally encouraged to engage in. Inviting the children to develop their observational skills and attention to the animal other offered them the chance to meet the animal outside of the normative practices and knowledge of the everyday farm animal-farm volunteer encounter.

Figure 39: Zu winces whilst she writes notes about Zorro the billy goat.

8.2.1 Creating an Observational Cycle with 17 Naturalists and Animal Partners[55]

Children were invited to make cycles of data recordings of an animal of their choice over three days. I had broken down the tasks into those that I asked the children to repeat every two hours, and those that I asked them to do at least once but in a more immersed manner. Each repeated observation involved the following tasks. Firstly, the child drew a map of their animal's enclosure or range. Then, at each cycle, they found the animal and plotted its position on their map. Next, they followed a questionnaire, noting down the weather conditions, what the animal was doing, and if there were other animals around. Lastly, at the end of each repeating observation they made a photographic portrait of their animal.

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[55] See Appendix C for detail on the observational tasks discussed here.

The observations that they were asked to carry out, only once or more, were drawing on large paper with charcoal, recording a minute of sound or video of their animal, and viewing their animal through binoculars. This last task produced a lot of fooling around, with many of the general public human visitors under secret observation and, as far as I know, none of the children used the binoculars to observe any of the resident animals. Over the observation days we amassed considerable data. Two weeks later the children analysed and edited their individual animal data into books. This process gave me the opportunity to discuss and review each participant's experience of the project.

After the first day, I introduced a new method which I called the *co-breathing* method. This method involved the participants breathing alongside their partner animal and feeling how that animal's breathing differed from their own and how, moreover, it differed each time the co-breathing took place. I devised this method in order to bring a more intimate body-to-body encounter between child and animal. I aimed to invite the participant to focus upon how their partner animal was viscerally feeling, and how it was feeling in relation to the other things that were going on (such as people running around or changes in weather conditions) and that it was involved in—such as eating or resting or walking around. Further, this focus drew the human into a direct becoming-with relation with the animal, as they could feel themselves breathing alongside their partner animal. Ingold explores breathing in relation to dissolving the boundaries of the self:

> Breathing is the way in which beings can have unmediated access to one another, on the inside, whilst yet spilling out into the cosmos in which they are equally immersed.

301

In the above quote Ingold speaks to the immersiveness that comes from being unmediated. In the research, this immersiveness was a way to reduce the normative care practices and to encourage the participants to experience a relational involvement with the animal as a being.

Asking the participants to observe how the animal engaged in specific activities and went to particular places shifted the co-relation. Through repeated mapping of where the animal went, a particular narrative of the other's lifeworld began to unfold. The mapping involved a shift from herding and telling the animal where to go, to passive watching of where the animal decided to go. The co-breathing positioned the human in a role of attending to the animal's breathing rhythm. Both of these methods were designed to shift the relation away from the human as being the one in control of the animal as object. Now the human was observing the animal as a being with its own agency and feelings. Furthermore, I was interested to see how those two tasks affected the drawing, note making and photography—those tasks which had been frustratingly anthropocentric in the earlier trials with the children producing anthropomorphic drawings and farm-focused understandings of animal behaviour.

The children were more willing to engage in drawing during the 'A Day in the Life Of…' project. For one thing, they were more confident with drawing in the context of the observation cycles and spent an entire afternoon drawing with their partner animals. It was apparent that some of the animals also took an active part, and interest, in the drawing process. This engagement was evidenced through the proximity of the animals to the artists, from whom they did not move away, and as the photographs

demonstrate (Figures 41 and 42), the animals engaged within a relationship of animal-child-drawing board. Both Whitey, the goat, and Emma, the chicken, sat still watching the girls drawing them. Despret (2004, p.124) reasons that in paying attention to an animal, the animal becomes both more interesting and further interested in being attended to. The animals seemed to like the peaceful drawing and they settled into a co-relation that appeared as a form of mutual attunement with the children. The chicken posed for Leana when she drew him. Some of the other children were not as confident, but mostly they made an attempt and seemed to feel some form of attunement. They wanted to show their drawings and became animated by the process in comparison to the previous drawing sessions. During this session the drawing lasted for the entire afternoon, from the end of lunch (2.00 p.m.) until animal bedding down time (4.30 p.m.). Because the children were so immersed, I was able to go around and observe them without being distracted in any way. I noted how still the animals were, and how the children were engaged with their partner animals. I only spoke to the children who spoke to me, and I spent some time just sitting in the sun whilst they worked. When each child finished they told me about their drawing experiences. Later when we made the data books, they photographed the A3 drawings and added them into their books.

Figure 40: Zennyo's duck.

The above drawing of a duck was made by a boy (aged 13) who had previously never been willing to draw. Unlike most of the children he wanted to talk to me during the drawing process. His partner animal was actually Shirley the cow, but he told me he would not be able to fit Shirley onto the page, so he drew this duck. We had a conversation about whether he was drawing from his imagination, and he insisted that he was. He asked me how to draw duck feet, and I told him to look at the feet of the duck, and eventually he tried to engage with the corporeal duck. You can see where he drew feet but then rubbed them out. The drawing was a struggle but also a success in that he engaged with the duck and the drawing. I interpret the thick outline as a boundary built from his cognitive understanding of ducks, which at the same time created a framework that enabled him to make the gestural and pattern lines within (Ingold, 2015). Upon reflection, I think the feet became a problem in the doing of drawing because attaching legs into the already present thick black lines may have felt

like a rupture of this boundary making framework of the drawing. These moments of rupture are part of the process of drawing and involve taking such risks (Despret, 2013a). This interpretation is based in part on my experience of drawing, on reading the drawing, and in observing the struggle that this boy worked through in order to make his drawing, and to engage at all with the duck in the process.

Earlier, I cited Baker's point that from looking at a representational drawing it is not always possible to see the relation between animal and human. From a viewer perspective, this set of drawings could be judged as objectising, and involving making the animal as a complete image (Baker, 2000). However, I consider that the attention and mark making evident in the drawings demonstrates a shift in practice from the earlier sketches towards a deeper concentration on the animal subject as a distinct being.

More importantly, from my perspective, at times the multispecies process enabled both child and animal to become 'companion-agents' (Despret, 2013b, p.29) working together in a way that became apparent as a felt experience. This partnership was, I consider, evident in the stillness and attentiveness of the participants and in the importance the children gave to their drawings afterwards.

Figure 41: Medea drawing Whitie.

Figure 42: Leana drawing Emma.

The act of making the drawing marks involved a body attunement within the process and became a way of connecting. The marks also existed as traces, as evidence of the affective force of connection. It was during such moments of attunement that the boundaries loosened and humans *became* animal in the sense that they were no longer being or acting according to the constraints of the cultural mechanics of human society (Massumi, 2014, pp.56-57). The children became-with animal in the sense that they became involved in the process of attending to their partner, and of finding ways to extend themselves away from their pre-existing notions of themselves as the kind of people who draw a certain way. Further, they allowed themselves to attend to the animal and feel the experience of the practice becoming-with (Despret, 2013b, p.36). In this sense, they were aware that they had co-produced the work.
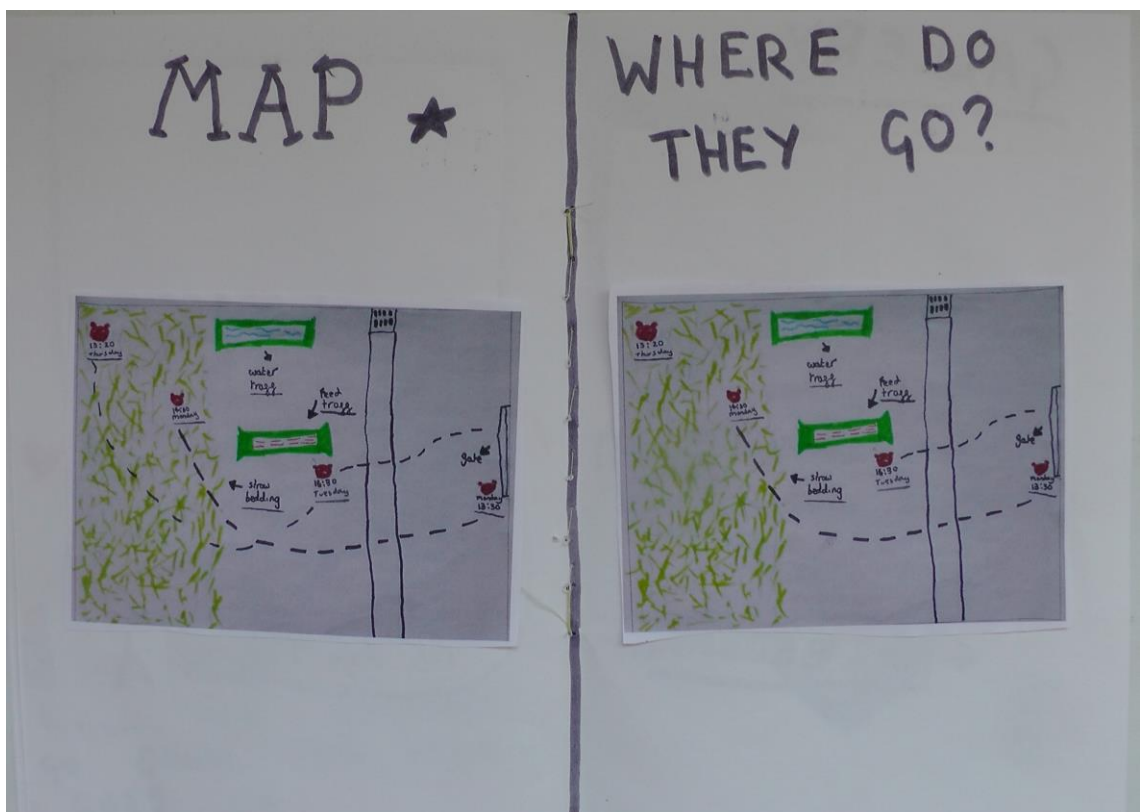

Figure 43: Map of piglet movements (drawn by Ladon).

307

8.2.2 Mapping Animals with Mobile Children

 Every two hours the children visited their animal and plotted its position on a drawn map of the enclosure area. They were able to see where the animal had moved over the course of a day or so. The children enjoyed thinking about their animals as beings with routines, tasks, likes and dislikes. The tasks opened up ways for them to think about their animals in this way. They often described the animals in 'like me' anthropomorphic terms and, for example, they paid particular attention to when the goats and sheep played together and their young stayed with their mothers. This attentiveness seemed to me to be, in part, a focus on things that the animals were doing and, in part, a reflection of what was of interest to the children and of what was comprehensible or common in their lives. In the same way that Despret (2010) demonstrates that the naturalists and ethologists produce versions of animals that were like them, the children also produced animals that were like them. As Haraway says, 'It matters what stories tell stories' (Haraway, 2016, p.35). For the children, it mattered that the animals wanted to play and to be close to their mothers. The children's storying manifested as the entanglement. This way of storying the animals suggested that the children had become immersed and connected with their animals as subjects and that their observations shifted their relationships into an actively involved and more caring proximity. In contrast, the visitors at the zoo appeared helpless and did not know how to encounter the gorillas (discussed in the previous chapter, see section *6.4.1 The Gorillas Are Just Like Us: Proximity Between Us and Them*, p.235); in the *doing* of the observational tasks the children became connected through deciphering and observing their animals.

8.3 Wander-Lines: Following the Animal

Figure 44: Zu Following a chicken during a wander-line drawing.

Towards the end of the observation period, I incorporated a second form of mapping in order to enable the children to directly follow their animals: body-following-body. This method did not replace the plotting of the animal position in a more ocular observation style, but rather developed as a separate related practice. I called this new version of following and mapping 'Wander-Line' drawing, as it was based upon wander-line drawings conducted by Fernand Deligny, who developed the practice as a way of connecting with autistic people[56]. Deligny's research attempts to communicate through body-to-body gestural connection via the tracing. Deligny developed the practice of mapping where and how autistic people moved around. He worked with them in a rural

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[56] I am grateful to the artist Imogen Stidworthy who told me about the work of Deligny in great detail and inspired me to appropriate the wander-line process for this research.

residential home, and some of the drawings are inside the house whilst others outside (Logé, 2013; Milton, 2016).

As with the autistic people in Deligny's care, it was not possible to definitively know if the animals wanted to take part in the research (Logé, 2013). However, this technique provided a means to share in the animal's lifeworld through following and embodying the rhythm of movement. Deligny was interested in finding a universal language—through mark making, with the line representing a movement that is experienced as an embodiment of the rhythm of thought (McCormack, 2013). Whilst it was not possible to definitively know how the animals experienced the wander-line drawing, this method was an attempt to form a connectedness that circumvented cognitive processes, and as such circumvented the normative registers of knowing. It was in a sense an attempt to bridge the interspecies gap through haptic attunement.

Lines and marks are made to communicate the subject's movements. Wander-line mapping involves a form of abstract mapping whereby the mark maker connects to the 'do-er' through the gestural recording of their flow and movement. I intended to assimilate the embodied gestural drawings that had produced feelings of attunement with the animal in previous sessions with the flow and interest in following the animal's activities achieved through the mapping tasks. This new wander-line method aimed to incorporate elements from both of the above and develop as a form of embodied communication that circumvented language. Deligny was interested in following movements and marking moments through an embodied attunement between the followed and follower. His drawings attending to moments of rupture when the flow and line of intention became distracted. Deleuze and Guattari (1988, pp.237-238) refer to these moments as *lines of drift*. I was interested to see how this quality of attuned movement might manifest in the children's drawings.

Whereas the mapping involved visiting the animal over several repeated sessions over a matter of days, the wander-line drawing was a one-off encounter which involved following the animal around the city farm grounds. The grounds are a space known in different ways to both the children and the animals. The children were following animal routes and were beginning to know the space from the animal perspective as a 'way of knowing the world . . . to think of our world as constituted of an infinite series of different ways of knowing, feeling and being affected' (Despret, 2013b, p.31, citing Bekoff, 2006, p.74). Despret and Bekoff suggest that to understand the world from a multispecies, non-anthropocentric perspective involves understanding that each species has different and distinct ways of knowing, and that therefore there are infinite ways of knowing. We can attend to other ways of knowing, but never fully know them, apart from our own way. The practice of following exemplified that there are many ways of knowing the world. The following gave the children the opportunity to understand something of the animal's way of knowing the world as one of an infinite number *of ways of knowing the world.*

I showed the children some of Deligny's wander-line drawings at the beginning of the exercise and I deduced, from their enthusiastic questions and desire to get going straight away, that they immediately liked them (Field notes, 2016). Even children who previously had expressed reservations about drawing thought they would like to try. The wander-line drawings worked because the process is abstract and made up of simple gesture marks, yet they have a vital flow that the children could relate to instantly. I gave them tracing paper, which they also seemed to like very much. The paper felt thick and slightly waxy and enhanced the lines they made as they followed their chosen animals. The chickens and the ducks at the city farm made the best wander-line subjects because they wander freely throughout the entire farm. Many of

the children therefore followed those animals, rather than attempting to follow a more static animal, such as a pig. The larger animals are kept inside enclosures and do not move so constantly—these would have made interesting subjects over a longer duration or, perhaps, for a slower adult human. The ducks and chickens provided a better match for the children, who like to be constantly moving as well. However, some children tried to follow the goats and the sheep, as they also move around frequently. The idea was to attempt to break away from language and cognitive knowing, towards an embodied knowing as a means for understanding the other.

The children managed to feel the difference between following and chasing through attending to the animals' comfortable distance and walking rhythm. This felt discernment required a particular form of attending and waiting and moving at the will of the animal. Further, the animal had to understand that they were not being chased and this understanding involved a level of trust. The children soon learnt very directly which things interested the animals and, for example, described how some of the time the animal would wander away by itself and then, at other times, return to be close to others of its kind.

This process therefore produced two shifts in the relation between children and animals. Firstly, as described, the children were invited into an affective involvement technique (McCormack, 2013, p.4) that enabled them to gesturally record the minute, felt moments of the animal body in motion, as a form of becoming-with. The marks detailed where the animal changed its mind or moved in non-decisive directions. Of course, the surrounding stimuli, such as loud noises and other bodies that became involved in the pathway, were not recorded separately but only suggested through the definition of the marks.

Secondly, the normative practice of herding and controlling where and how animals move around the farm was upturned. As a result the children engaged with the farm space on the animal's terms in ways reminiscent of the practices of hunters who would follow herds of migrating reindeer (Khakhovskaya, 2018). The balance between human and animal was shifted wherein the human enacted the role of the follow-er, the one who went where the animal chose to go. Ingold (2011b) describes the embodiment between land and bodies during walking as a form of wayfaring. Although the farm yard was a known place with well-worn practices, it was reinvented through the animal wanderings that ruptured the normative sense of space.

The wander-lines only detail the movement of the bodies. They speak of the relation between the animals and the children in that each mark is a manifestation to the haptic transcription of shared movement (Logé, 2013). This movement is how Deligny drew his drawings and it makes sense because there is not time to put in background detail. In any case, the drawings work as traces of moving through space and of moments of pausing, changing one's mind and other decisions. When I looked at the drawings all together, it was possible to see similarities where the animals have moved around large objects, such as the city farm lorry which sits in the middle of the yard.
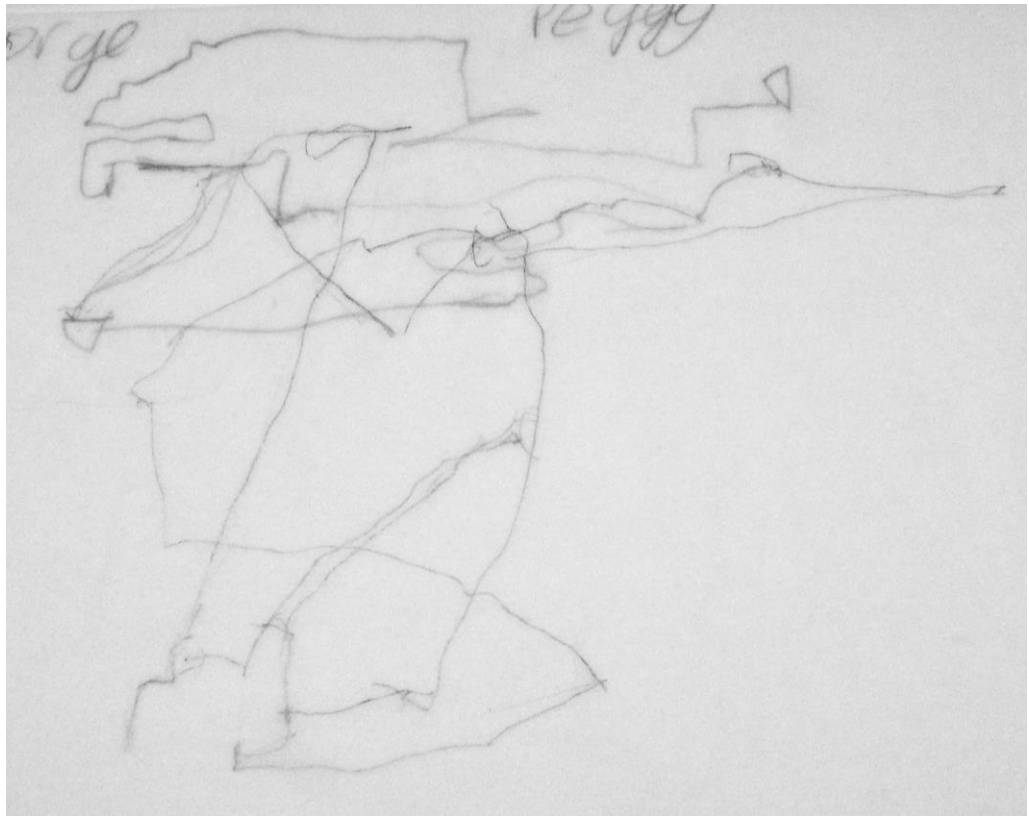
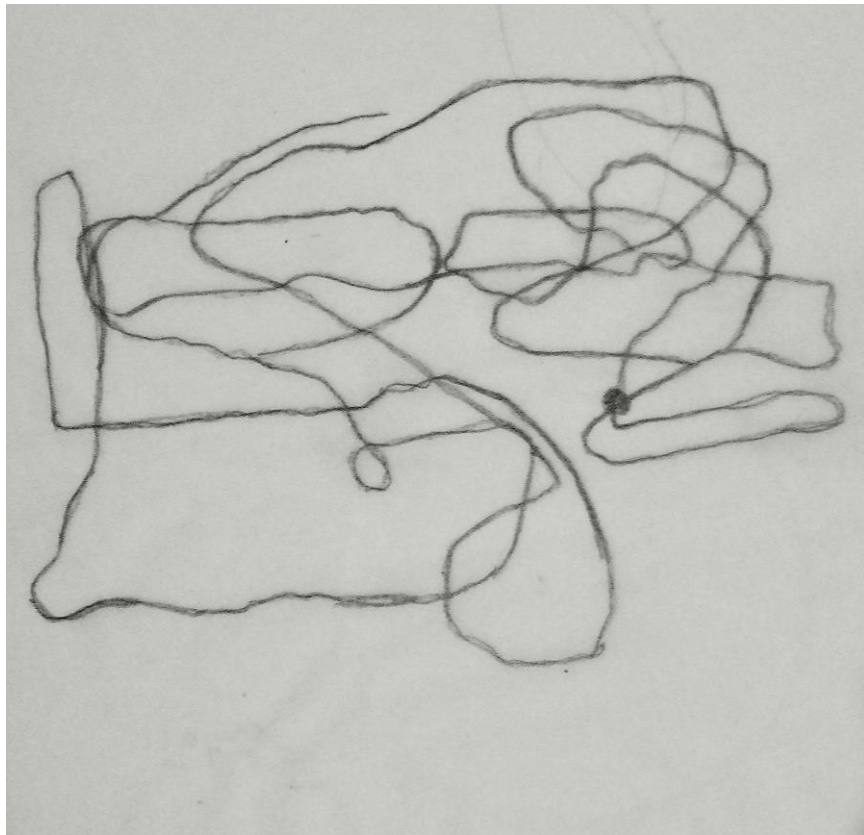**Figure 45: Wander-line by Zennyo following a goat.**

Figure 46: Wander-line by Mooinanea following a duck.

8.4 Co-breathing: A Practice for Embodied Empathy

> I prefer to think with breathing and ask how breathing is *enacted* and what breathing *does*.
>
> (Górska, 2016, p.17)

I came up with the idea of asking the children to breathe with their animals in order to bring their bodies into proximity with the animal other. Furthermore, it was apparent from the earlier drawing experiments that the children's self-consciousness and low self-esteem was a barrier that held them back from engaging in the observations. They had told me flatly that they could not draw, for example (Field notes, 2016). The co-breathing experiment required no skill and no prior knowledge and, because it was an invented practice, there was no notion of how to breathe correctly[57]. The experiment was initially regarded as weird, but by now I had built up enough respect with the children, and as they were enjoying the other tasks, most of them participated.

The co-breathing task offered a way of bringing the participants directly in contact with their and their partner animal's corporeal body. The participants firstly had to learn to feel their own breath and to then concentrate upon feeling both their own and the other's breath. I asked the children to do this along with the other repeating tasks, and to record their thoughts about the animal immediately afterwards. Many of the children were not able to write down their thoughts, but they still took part in the experiment.

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[57] Clearly, breathing is used in many meditation techniques and many would argue that there are right and wrong ways to breathe; however, in this context, it was not presented as anything other than breathing with the animal.

The experiment was a simple way of putting them directly in contact with their and the animal's corporeal body. It was a method for feeling the similarity between bodies breathing, and to experience emotion through breathing, thus inviting empathetic attunement (Despret, 2013a, p.71) to and knowing of the other through directly experiencing the other's rhythm.

The co-breathing became a method for feeling the similarity and the dissimilarity between bodies breathing, and of experiencing emotion through breathing, of coming to know the other through feeling both difference and similarity. Through the affective experience of co-breathing I hoped that *care for* through *knowing the other* would manifest as a vital becoming-with (van Dooren, 2014; Puig de la Bellacasa, 2012). Ingold (2015) argues that breaths are 'are constitutive moments of an implicate order which joins things on the inside, in relations of sympathy, rather than externally through articulation' (p.67). The co-breathing was a method therefore of inviting an emotional affective form of becoming-with, particular to each child and to each animal. Through breathing 'as if', like the other (Despret, 2013a, p.71), the children attempted to directly experience the animal other's rhythm as a form of being with. The excerpts below from the experiments of breathing with a piglet show how the participants reflected upon this attunement.

Figure 47: Piglet, photo by Ladon during some of the co-breathing.

Their tails are straight. They are still. Their breathing is slow.

They are eating pignuts. Tail is curled. They are breathing normal.

(Aido, aged 11, 2016)

Pooing and weeing, breathing good, slower than mine.

The weather is cold, sunny. The ground is muddy. The other pig is near to it.
The pig is sleeping. They are breathing slow.

(Puk, aged 9, 2016)

The participants' comments can be thought of as an expression of how the breathing experience mediated their knowledge of their partner animal:

> The changing pattern of breathing is perceived not only as information about the general physical condition of the animal and human body but also about the emotional state, or even, in the case of human beings, about spiritual development.

<div align="right">(Bakke, 2006, p.17)</div>

I was not intending for the participants to experience spiritual development; however, I did consider that this experiment introduced the participants to a more intimate form of knowing the other. A few weeks earlier, before I developed the co-breathing task, I had stood still filming Shirley the cow. Over time, I became aware of her and my breathing, and as I became immersed in listening and feeling both her and my body, I became more present in my awareness. Through the breath, internal experiences are felt and heard. Connecting to the other as one who also breathes, is a powerful way to connect to that other as a living, feeling being. Multispecies co-breathing with other animals has the potential to make the other apparent in a felt way, i.e. the animal as subject, and, furthermore, to suggest viscerally how that other being is experiencing being in that moment. Despret argues that this kind of knowing is not empathy, but rather embodied communication: 'experiencing with one's own body what the other experiences: it is creating the possibilities of an embodied communication. The 'as if' constructs partial affinities between bodies, it is a creative mode of attunement' (Despret, 2013a, p.71), which loosens the grip of the human self as a fixed discrete being (Despret, 2004, p.130). In Chapter 4 I discussed feminist critiques, which argue that empathy is not a case of believing one can entirely match another's experience, but rather a case of

feeling through affect the overall experience understood 'as a complex and ongoing set of translational processes involving conflict, negotiation and imagination' (Pedwell, 2014, p.5). Here, in relation to the co-breathing, the children became involved a form of experiencing that required loosening the sense of self in order to feel whatever manifested. Some children rejected the process, whilst others were moved by the experience and described their feelings and experiences (Field notes, 2016).

Over the course of the project, the children became more immersed in being with their animal partner and developed the confidence to describe how their particular animal was feeling. Over time, the participants were able to see that the animal breath changed according to what the animal was doing, thus drawing attention to breathing as a process that is enacted (Górska, 2016, p.30). For example, one girl, who had quite a negative manner generally, engaged enthusiastically with the breathing and chose to mimic her piglet breathing excitedly when he was waiting to be fed, but then also noted that his breathing was slower than hers when he was resting beside his sister piglet. Through co-breathing, the children began to experience a sense of their animal and themselves within a 'dwelling perspective' (Ingold, 2000, p.185) where each feels like an 'animal-in-its-environment' (ibid, p.186), now understanding their chosen animal as a subject with its own routines and experiences. Ingold argues the both humans and other animals have agendas, intentions, socials and concerns (ibid., p.51). Through experiencing the animal through its breath, the animal's subjecthood and experiences in relation to its actions—feeding, resting, playing—can become apparent.

Leana started out with a more distanced viewpoint. For example, her first observation stated, *'The chickens breathe slowly and sharply',* as if this is what all chickens, all the time, always do. Over the duration of her observations,

319

however, she became more focused upon her chicken, Emma, and what was 'usual' for Emma: *'I think she is breathing faster than usual',* and by the time of her last observation she observes Emma's breathing beyond a rhythmic speed, and now including attention to *'breathing slowly and puffing up her feathers'.* Through the physical breathing exercise, the participant shifted her cognitive awareness from a generalising notion of chickens as being with fixed patterns of behaviour and being, to an understanding of her chicken as a being who moves through different activities with shifting bodily experiences.

(Field notes, 2016)

This shift was apparent in a number of the comments by the children. Children started off thinking that a species of animal has a set breathing speed. I could have deduced from their first observations that pigs breathe more slowly than humans, goats breathe more quickly than humans, and chickens breathe 'slowly and sharply' (comment from Leana, see bove,2016). Humans were also deemed to have a set breathing speed and were the benchmark. However, over the course of the observations, mindsets changed and the breathing became understood in relation to the animal's behaviour. From this first set co-breathing descriptions, I might have deduced that sleeping animals breathe more slowly than eating animals, and that animals breathe *normally* when they are eating. However, as the work progressed the animals' breathing became explained in relation to behaviours rather than statically defined through the animal's ascribed species-hood. As the observations progressed further, the children became confident to describe what is usual or normal for their particular animal as an individual subject. The children had *become-with* their animals and now described them from a position of embodied knowing.

This shift in the children's perception of the animals implies an understanding of the relationality of our existence, of the always ongoing ways of relating. The children started to regard the breathing in relation to a sun-filled nap, or a new bowl of pignuts, and came to notice that a goat breathes differently beside its mother than when it is playing with other kids. In this sense, the breathing became understood as an expression of a state that gave meaning to the actions observed through the other methods:

> Breathing then is ecstatic in the sense that it allows us to participate in something bigger than our – selves. It keeps us necessarily open to what is more than we can confront, perhaps more than we can process.

(Bakke, 2006, p.21)

Whereas some children became excited by the process, roughly a third rejected it, which did not surprise me. In part because that is how the children were (i.e. hesitant to try new things), but also because I considered that the experiences were difficult to process for some of the participants. I did not push them or ask them about their experience if they did not volunteer information (Field notes, 2016). I took the position of an interested adult, but not an adult who was in an authority or caring role, because foremost I wanted the children to feel the legitimacy of their experiences (Hill, 2013, p.138).

Alongside coming to appreciate the animals as both other than human and subject, the co-breathing brought attention to the corporeal, visceral moments of being an animal in terms of bodily registers, such as touch and smell (for example, Haraway, 2008, p.26). In this way, experiencing the animal as a subject also invited and facilitated a sharing

of two subjects who experience and sense, although differently, in their worlds. In this sense, the 'like us' approach had evolved into a *like us* but *not like us* approach, which is the position of recognising that animals have their own *points of* view (Ingold, 2000, p.51; Birke, 2009).

Figure 48: Emma the chicken, A3 Charcoal (drawn by Leana).

8.5 Goat Entanglements: Who Needs the Researcher?

> What shape is this kinship, where and whom do its lines connect and disconnect, and so what? What must be cut and what must be tied if multispecies flourishing on earth, including human and other-than-human beings in kinship, are to have a chance?
>
> (Haraway, 2016, p.2)

At the end of the observation cycles sessions, I found most of the children in the goat barn playing with the goat kids. The children were crouched down and the goat kids were climbing up onto their backs, as if the children were rocks. In the goats' outside space, there are concrete blocks that the goats use for climbing, and now the children were mimicking the blocks and the young goats were hopping between them. When a goat found a comfortable human back to stand upon it nibbled the coat hood or other clothing. The children found this behaviour hilarious and were jiggling around. They moved when they needed to or wanted to check which goat was standing upon them. There followed a mad half hour or so, with the children and the goat kids moving around and upon one another, each scrambling for new positions and then briefly pausing before responding to one another in relation to the dynamic mass. Some of the goat mothers stood around at one end of the barn, although one mother even guided her kid up to the human children. The goat mothers were behaving much like human mothers watching children in a playground. This multispecies group had become one heaving collective of tangled bodies. Much of this was filmed, in jerky panning and scanning, by one of the children. When I arrived I stood and watched with Nina, who had found them before me. After a while we left them to their game. The goats were silent whereas the humans were continually calling to one another in order to check if

their clothes were actually being destroyed or just nibbled, and comparing who had which goat at any given moment.

When I looked back at the footage, I could see that whilst the humans are all making an incredible racket, the goats do not make any sounds and simply continue with their part of the game. Some of the goats were more interested in chewing the different coat fabrics worn by the human children, like a form of texture feast, and they jumped from back to back sampling coat hoods. The clothes were not being actually eaten, but rather they were being tasted and felt by the goat mouths.

Figure 49: Goat entanglement: stills from the children's video.

The goat kids were not yet socialised to be readily touched by the children, which made the human–goat entanglement more remarkable because somehow these goat kids were completely at home clambering upon the children, who were everywhere and making such a racket.

The goats and the children found a game they all wanted to play. The game produced a means for co-creating and co-becoming that took account of each species' body shapes and desires. The children found it funny to become rocks under goat hooves— the joke was partly one of an upturned hierarchy, a becoming nonhuman. The game provided an opportunity for sensory proximity, for being tasted and tasting the other. Both species of kids' bodies were in constant movement, each species limbs reaching out and settling—goats upon human backs and humans tucking and stretching and crawling into new rock-shapes and human–goat alignments.

This happening seemed like an apt end to the 'A Day In The Life Of…' intervention. The children and the goats had become hybridised and immersed with one another, and had found their own methods for connection. The game was co-designed by the children and the goat kids: a collective becoming organised through embodied communication, with each species somehow understanding the rules of the game. Despite the species boundary, each had stepped away into a hybrid space that involved human becoming goat, goat becoming human and all of them becoming collective.

This contagion involved communication through touch, and the norms of human–goat relations were loosened in order for this game to take place. The goats were able to taste and touch the humans on their own terms, in turn enabling the children to

experience the goat understanding of what was fun and of what constituted a meeting between the two species:

> It is quite possible to consider, however, that children, like any beings, might not need support in encountering the world and expressing to others something of these encounters – this takes place anyway, all the time. Children might not need adults to provide them with equipment and allocate special spaces and time for participation. They might need an adult to take seriously the things and actions with which they encounter their worlds anyway.

> (Rautio, 2013b, p.396)

As Rautio suggests, perhaps the children and the goats could just have been left alone. They had, by themselves, found a way of becoming that made my efforts seem ridiculous and laboured. However, the 'A Day In The Life Of…' project had couched the tasks and encounters within a levelling and intimate structure that may have germinated the moments in the goat barn. Furthermore, my attention to the ways in which the children performed becomings and caring actions, gave their actions and their feelings validation, and enabled them to explore their feelings for the animals.

Each task in the 'A Day In The Life …' project was enacted within the assemblage of tasks and spoke to the others. For example, the photography and the drawing, whilst posited within normative Western representational praxis, provided a way for me to conceive of and introduce the mapping and lastly the co-breathing. Those two methods provided a shift from observer/observed to a learning from the other as being-to-being. That shift in turn changed the relation between the children and the drawing. Together the tasks, it seemed, resulted in both the goats and the children developing their own body-to-body practice as a means of knowing one another.

328

It was an experiment in introducing and extending the notion of the animal as a subject within the environment of the city farm, which on the one hand categorises animals as farm animals and conceives of them from a human-centred position, and on the other, is also a flexible tactile place where relations are made through embodied care practices such as grooming, feeding and herding.

The methods developed as an ongoing journey with epistemologies, practices, trials, cameras, binoculars, paper sizes, text-based questions, clipboards and finally bodies breathing. Knowing became apparent and lost throughout the process, and the matters that mattered (Haraway, 2016, p.35) to the children and the goats were the ones that emerged in that final entangled moment.

8.6 Back to the Zoo: Experimenting with Place and Proximity

> . . . in order to get to grips with- to attend to if not completely capture – ordinary affects, methodologies need to 'attune' to different kinds of things.

> (Coleman and Ringrose, 2013, p.4)

I arranged to take the children to the zoo in order to investigate how the city farm children would respond to the zoo animals through similar methods of engagement. This trip would be an opportunity to investigate how the methods utilised at the city farm, performed within the zoo context. The field trip involved taking 21 children from the city farm summer play scheme to the zoo: 10 younger children, aged 8-11 years,

whom I had not worked with before and who were new to the city farm, and 11 children who had participated in the 'A Day In The Life Of…' intervention[58].

I designed a day-plan that incorporated a booklet questionnaire (see Appendix E), with pre- and post-visit questions. The questions were designed entirely to draw attention to thoughts and feelings that aimed to foreground emotional registers, and to attend to the animals as zoo animals rather than representational animals. Participants were also asked to carry out co-breathing and an ocular version of the wander-line drawing with an animal, where they would have to follow the animal with their eyes rather than with bodies. This version reduced the wander-line task, as it no longer entailed direct body-to-body following. The aim of this new activity was to trial methods that had proved to encourage feelings of immersion and becoming-with experiences in the city farm context. My earlier auto-ethnographic encounters with some of the zoo animals led me to consider that, despite Berger's contention that the zoo animals cannot return the human gaze (Berger, 1991, p.28), zoo animals do become *interested* in visitors if they are engaged with in a way that they find interesting (Despret, 2004, p.124). On one occasion, for example, when I was drawing a monkey, it came up to the glass and I pressed the white pages of my sketchbook against the glass facing towards the monkey who appeared keen to see what I had been doing (see Figure 1, p.11). This event was an impromptu response to the monkey's interest: it was not planned or thought through, but emerged through engaging with the drawing and the monkey. The monkey's interest meant that I stopped drawing and attended to showing the book instead, as a micro form of ethical obligation. I, therefore, wanted to see if the co-breathing and wander-line methods would provide an opportunity to engage in

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[58] See Appendix F for the list of participants and their ages.

practices that the animals might find interesting. The project offered the opportunity to investigate the value and relation of proximity, both physically and emotionally. The zoo animals were not known to the children in the way that the city farm animals were, and for the most part, the zoo animals are not even everyday familiar species. The zoo is a non-everyday place, designed for spectacular and educational encounters. I had to break the children up into groups of five children with one or two adults each, which meant that I could not be with all of the children during the field trip. This inability to attend to all the children was a problem as I had to rely on the other adults to facilitate the co-breathing and wander-line methods.

The animals at the zoo were strangers to the children; they were introduced to them within the noise and excitement of the zoo grounds. The zoo animals were often met behind glass or wire and there was, therefore, a greater physical distance. There were, of course, other differences: the children were outside of their everyday familiar environments and the zoo animals were presented as specimens or spectacles. The structures in place at the zoo, such as biological and conservation information and the complexly curated enclosures, were not designed for feeling intimate proximity with the corporeal individual animals. The distanced presentations of animals, embedded with the curated enclosures with whom the children had no relationship, was apparent in the resulting wander-lines.
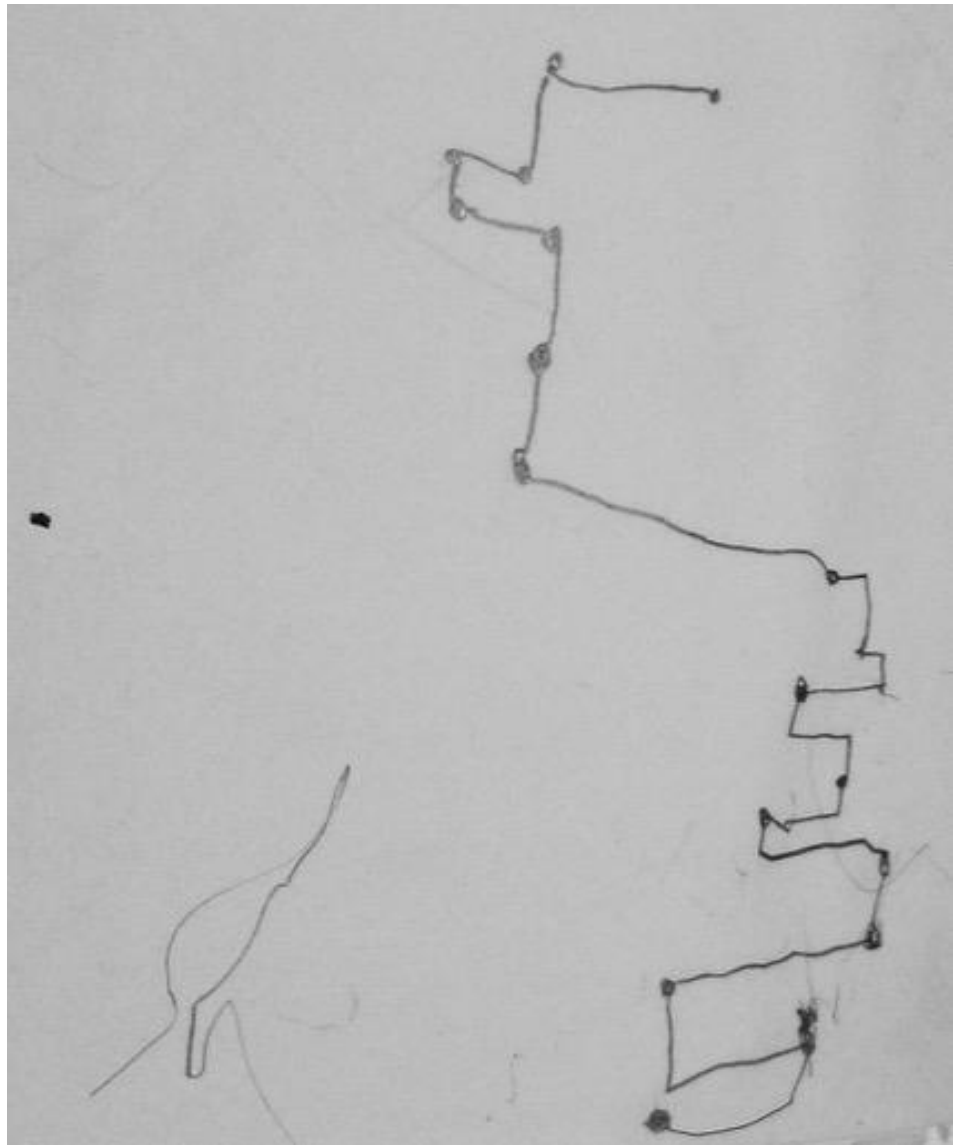
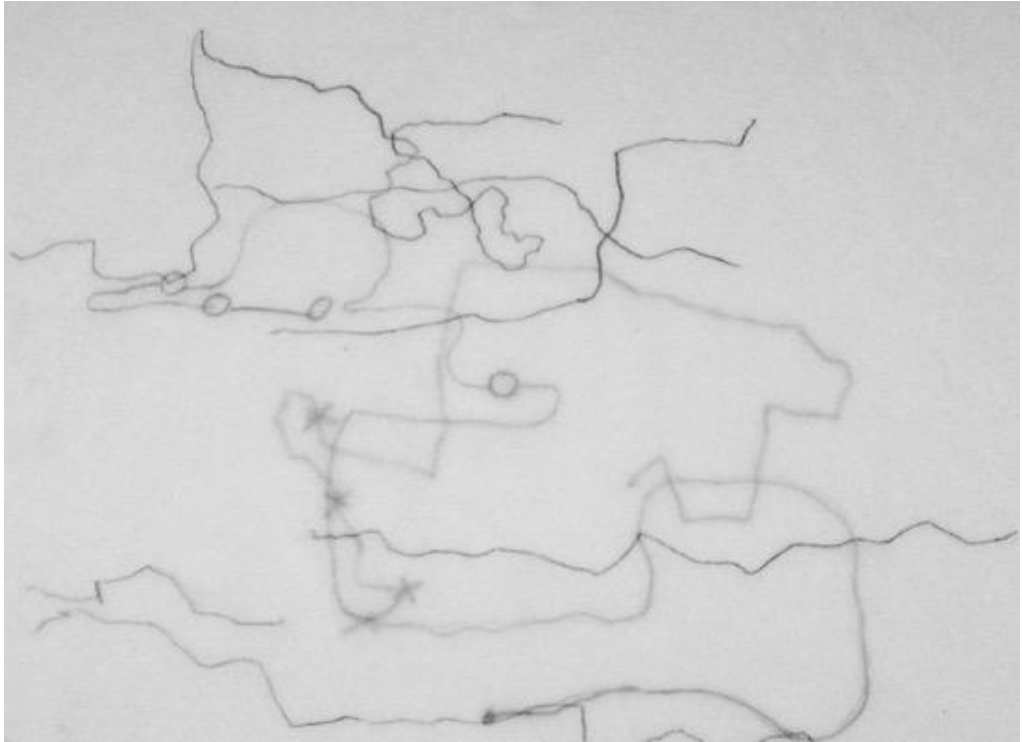**Figure 50: Zoo-ocular wander-line drawing of penguin followed by Lotan.**

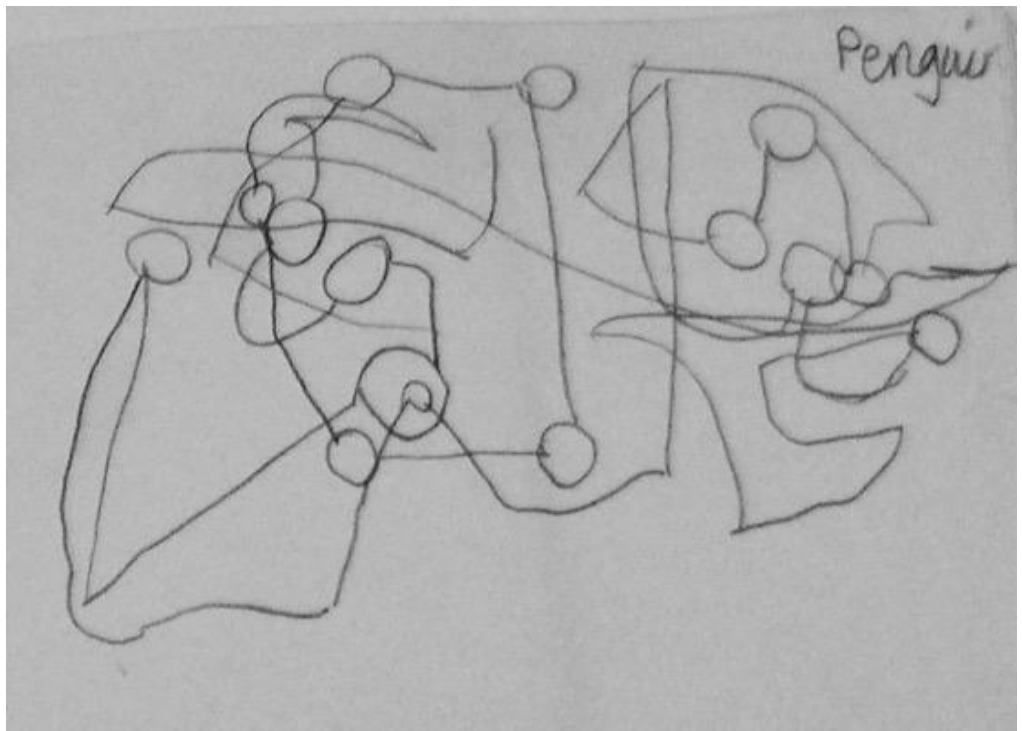**Figure 51: Farm wander-line drawing of chicken followed by Fafnir.**

Figure 52: Zoo-ocular wander-line drawing of penguin followed by Gyo.

The wander-lines made at the zoo incorporated much harder lines, with fewer evident moments of gestural attunement. Many of the children utilised graphic circles to indicate stopping points[59]. Whereas the city farm wander-lines were drawings, the zoo wander-lines were more like graphic maps, utilising the circle as a symbol of a pause—in comparison to the city farm drawings that had often produced tiny lines where the animal had wandered without the sense of going somewhere.

The zoo animals and the children do not have similar experiences of the zoo space, whereas, at the city farm, both the humans and the animals share place attachment to the grounds (Ernst and Theimer, 2011). Both materially know the enclosures, the yard and the paths, whereas at the zoo, the visitors have no place attachment, and there is little communal shared space with the animals. Like the animals, where the visitors may go is also controlled. Because the children could not physically follow the animal, it had to be an ocular following. The zoo following therefore involved the eyes reading the spaces through a more distancing process, in comparison to the city farm where the entire body is able to proprioceptively remember and respond (Massumi, 2002, p.58).

Conducting the co-breathing at the zoo proved even more difficult. It was challenging to co-breathe in this environment with many other animals and people around. Most importantly, it became apparent that co-breathing with an animal-stranger felt like an inappropriately intimate, and therefore invasive, means of engagement. Not only did the children I observed feel uncomfortable carrying out this task (Field notes, 2016),

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[59] I do not know how this symbol became used widely across many of the zoo-based drawings. There is a universality to symbols, and the circle as a stop sign is one such symbol, e.g. the London Underground map. Some of the city farm based drawings also used this language, although those farm marks mostly corresponded to a gestural index.

but I consider that it also felt like an intrusion into the zoo-animal's world—however diminished this world may be. In a sense, this difficulty highlights the vulnerability of the zoo animal subject, and the corresponding intimacy and companion-agency (Despret, 2013b, p.29) of the previous encounters with the animals from the city farm. This method did not yield any of the embodied moments that had taken place in the city farm setting. It did serve to illustrate, however, the value for multispecies relations when the human is involved with the animal other as individuals with shared experiences.

The aim of the questionnaires was to focus the children on their feelings for the zoo animals. This focus was designed in order to create an emotional resistance to the overarching distracting zoo affective environment, discussed earlier. This approach then, was also a form of method repurposing: rather than intending to capture data, I sought to use the questions as a means to create an emotion orientated environment. Doing so enabled me to loosely experiment with Crist's (1996) argument that ethological technical language invites an objectifying distance whereas anthropomorphic language invites subject-based feelings of connection. The questionnaire books asked the participants how they felt about the animals and the zoo, and further how they imagined that the animals think and feel. Thus, the questionnaire created a focus throughout the day upon caring and thinking about how we and the animals feel. This focused attention aimed to shift the value register from one of technical knowledge to one of sensory feeling and worked against the normative value register embedded into what I argued, in Chapter 6, is an *anthropomorphic affective environment* (Crist, 1996, p.832). In this same sense, it did not matter if the children fully engaged in co-breathing or the wander-line drawing; what mattered was experimenting with new forms of engagement, and with encountering the animals within a different register of value.

However, I had failed to fully take into account the impact of breaking the children into groups, with many of them led by other adults. It became apparent that some of the adults were sceptical of the research intentions and this scepticism signalled across to, and affected, the children. Some of the CWN research cited in Chapter 3 suggested that being with a role model supports feelings of connection (Ernst and Theimer, 2011, p.582). Based upon the zoo visit, it seemed that the value that an adult may accord to care practices and attention to animals can either open up or close down the likelihood of children feeling able to explore their experiences in these ways.

I do not discuss the questionnaire booklet data as findings as they are not relevant to the experimental aims. I did however use the answers to determine levels of participation and the extent to which they understood the zoo animals as subjects. The questionnaires were not designed to produce robust data, and they did not generate data that could be meaningfully analysed because of the following reasons. The pre- and post-questions were not designed to be directly comparable or to help determine if there had been a shift in value registers. Furthermore, knowing whether any shift was due to the zoo experience or the intervention would have been impossible. The 20 children had differing experiences throughout the day in that two adults were discouraging, and the children followed differing routes around the zoo. Furthermore, some children were familiar with the farm and its animals, whereas other children had little experience, or different experiences, of animals. Lastly the questions were too open ended to allow for meaningful analysis or coding without pushing the terms into reductive interpretations (Ringrose and Renold, 2014).

Having a small data set of children supported by adults where I had a useful amount of background information illustrates the complexities of ruling out performative agents in

the making of questionnaire data. The intention here was to repurpose the formula of a questionnaire as a framework to curate the event experience, namely through the shaping of the questions in order to enact a filter overlaying the zoo experience.

It may have been obvious that the children would not have engaged with the animals through the co-breathing and wander-line methods at the zoo, for all of the reasons outlined above. The lack of emotional and spatial proximity that was afforded in relation to the material enclosures, and through knowing the animal or not, affected how successfully the participants could engage in the becoming-with practices. The attempts to shift the value register and to form an intersubjective understanding of the animals as beings who have their own ways of knowing the world, only worked to some degree, and the shift felt very fragile.

8.7 Becoming Multispecies

In this chapter, my methodological aim was to implement interventions in order to explore potentials for connective multispecies encounters that produce attunement and embodied communication between participant humans and animals. This work built upon the experiences of the drawing experiments, and was designed to reduce objectifying and anthropocentric relations and increase understanding of animals as agentile sentient beings.

The children were introduced to the tasks as re-contextualised naturalist field research methods. This approach gave the work a context and purpose and the children identified themselves as researchers involved in knowing their partner animal. It presented an opportunity for to them to tell the story of their animal's daily activities, which shifted their relation to both the tasks and the animal. For example, during the

drawing experiment at the city farm, I had considered that the practice encouraged objectifying portrayals of the animals. However, when the drawing was performed within the 'A Day In The Life Of…' intervention, the ensuing drawing invited multispecies encounters wherein both animal and human became 'companion-agents' (Despret, 2013b).

Furthermore, this intervention directly responded to the life science-orientated engagement practices I had critiqued at Camley St. and the zoo, such as pond dipping at Camley St. and species identification methods described in zoo signage. My methods aimed to produce experiences of becoming-with states, rather than in order to transfer fact-based technical knowledge. This process demonstrated that fact-based knowledge was not bypassed; it was rather not privileged over foregrounding the animal as a subject. The intervention therefore involved a shift in value and attention to a more conjoined knowing that included cognitive information, as well as affective and embodied forms of knowing the other.

I explored the notion of proximity (both physical and emotional) with animals in relation to immersion, embodiment and attuning. I found that emotional proximity and material proximity do not in themselves lead to connective feelings. Rather proximity combined with sensitising to agency (both human and animal) and confidence in knowing the other, appeared to be conductive to states of becoming-with and experiencing connectedness. These processes are entangled and cannot be separated out as individual concise connective factors. This inextricable form of entanglement can be understood in relation to the co-breathing practice at the city farm with familiar animals in a familiar setting, in comparison to co-breathing with stranger animals in the unfamiliar setting of the zoo. The notion of co-breathing at the zoo felt like it was encouraging an inappropriate proximity towards a stranger. In contrast, at the city farm,

338

working with familiar animal individuals produced more attuned and empathic encounters. This difference in experience between the two sites also demonstrated how the zoo animals were understood by the city farm children as beings with a right to privacy and intimacy around their bodies. I considered that the zoo-based co-breathing and wander-line experiments exemplified the differences between agentile multispecies engagements and lop-sided encounters in which the animal becomes diminished through representational structures.

Through the 'A Day in the Life Of...' intervention, the children became the ones who knew their animal partners, and the animal partners became the ones who were attended to within a series of attentive practices. The animals took part in opening up to the methods, and this involvement in turn gave the children confidence in their own abilities to respond to their partners. In this way this situation set up a relational agency between both human and animal participants.

Chapter 9. So, How Are We with Animals?

This research investigated methods for becoming-with animals through de-centring the human subject and attending to animal others in urban nature-place contexts. This investigation was a response to concern expressed in conservation discourses (Bragg et al., 2013a; Mayer and Frantz, 2004; Lovell, 2016) as well as across a range of other disciplines (Fletcher, 2017; Ives et al., 2017; Beery et al., 2015) about increased experiences of disconnectedness from natures. Scholars concerned about the environmental crisis argue that in order for people to become engaged in positive environmental actions, they need firstly to experience CWN (Chawla, 1998; Jensen, 2010; Shultz, 2001). Although the relationship between CWN and positive environmental actions is widely agreed upon, some scholars argue that it is missing the point to think in terms of disconnection because humans are already connected (Rautio, 2013a; Alaimo, 2008). Thus it is perhaps more productive to consider how people may experience disconnectedness as a form of distraction. For example, Keniger et al. (2013) argued that urban living is distracting due to the density of noise, traffic, and stimulants (p.922). Others, such as Ian Fletcher (2017), Rutherford (2007), and Dickinson (2013), argue that the focus upon individuals is in itself a distraction from the main culprits of environmental destruction. From that perspective attention needs to focus on structural forces such as capitalism and the interconnected corporate interests with instrumental influence over the environment (Fletcher, 2017). In short, these scholars argue that the marketization of places is responsible for environmental destruction (Fletcher, 2017; Büscher et al., 2012).

My research approach followed the feminist materialist argument that a 'flourishing of the particular including the self, is intimately intertwined with the well-being and

flourishing of the general' (Philips, 2016, p.478). Through attending to the particular, affective flows and intersectional interrelations become visible and thus can be addressed. Feminist materialist approaches consider that the ordinary affects felt in the everyday (Stewart, 2007) are intra-actively interrelated with macro structural forces (Fox and Alldred, 2014). This research aimed to foreground animals as subjects during multispecies encounters to make visible how anthropocentric enactments are set upon animals, such as the instrumental categorisation of animals as, for example, *zoo*, *wildlife* or *farm* animals.

There have been many calls (Pyle, 2003; Moss and Esson, 2013l Ives et al., 2017) for further research and increased knowledge on how people form feelings of CWN. For the most part the studies replicate quantitative methodological approaches and provide a familiar spectrum of generalised findings (Ives et al., 2017; Zylstra et al., 2014; Bragg et al., 2013b). In contrast, this research implemented inventive methods in order to explore connective multispecies encounters in ways that acknowledged, and worked with, methods, data, research designs and researchers, all of which and whom were considered to be intra-acting in the making of knowledge (Ringrose and Renold, 2014). I took a lively interest (Lury and Wakeford, 2014) in each encounter in order to engage with what could possibly manifest through the research (Marres et al., 2018). From this position I developed novel methods that inventively asked how multispecies encounters could become connective within the urban settings I researched.

I conducted field research across two conservation orientated sites, the London Zoo and Camley Street Natural Park, and one city farm, Kentish Town City Farm. This field work aimed to address the first two research questions: 'How do urban human–nonhuman animal relations affect people's CWN? Subdivided into encounters with zoo

animals, city farm animals and nature park animals'; and 'How do the anthropomorphic and ontological positions of the field site organisations affect visitors' CWN?'.

The London Zoo, Camley Street Natural Park and Kentish Town City Farm provided the research with a range of curated spaces and animals living in a spectrum of anthropocentrically situated nature-places. Each organisation produced versions of natures that were in some ways different simulacra of the concept of pristine nature (Cronon, 1995; Büscher et al., 2012). I argued that urban places could more fruitfully be understood as intra-actively producing an *experience of urban-ness* (van Dooren and Rose, 2012). I therefore researched the field sites through a focus on their connective and distracting affective flows (Fox and Alldred, 2014). I investigated the affects of the different situated natures on human-animal encounters (McCormack, 2013), discerning how some spaces presented the opportunity for imaginative and embodied forms of encounters (Sabloff, 2015), such as Camley Street Natural Park, whilst other spaces were constructed in ways that closed down engagements through the force of their affective messaging technologies, for example, the 'Land of the Lions' zoo enclosure. I argued that affective distraction occurred within spaces, such as in many of the zoo enclosures that have been affectively designed to convey a particular immersive narrative and representation of an organisational message (Davies, 2000).

I formulated a topology of anthropomorphisms and empathies presented as a range of processes for interpreting animals. This approach provided the theoretical ground through which to examine how explanations of animals are manifested through interpretations that in turn enfold underlying ontologies. The topology of interpretive processes elucidated the complexity involved in understanding human engagements with (non-linguistic) animals and the more-than-human world more generally.

Throughout the field work I found that the categories imposed upon the nonhuman subjects in the research enacted as affective disruptors in relation to the potential to engage directly with animals as subjects. This understanding is reaffirmed by Dickinson (2013), who argues that labels and taxonomies presented during educational programmes create a distance between humans and animal others. For example, I observed that both the London Zoo and Camley Street reaffirmed the distancing view of animals, namely through privileging factual information as the main tactic to engender the development of CWN (Zylstra et al., 2014; Jensen, 2010; Dickenson, 2013). Learning solely about animals explained reductively through human-made categories (e.g. *specimen*, *wildlife, farm)* created an objectifying anthropocentric distance between humans and animal others, whereas, I showed, attending to the animals as subjects with lifeworlds invited a deepening of the encounters. I argued that direct encounters with animals operated through a different affective register to the engagements with animals who became abstracted through categories and objectised through facts. I found that connectedness was an experience (McCormack, 2013) sometimes available in spaces with animals—spaces which I had come to regard as open to imagination, and conversely unavailable in spaces I regarded as distracting. I considered that some individual animals appeared distracted and unavailable through human processes such as institutionalisation and emplacement (Berger, 1991). Many animals did not demonstrate an interest in either me or the participants (Despret, 2013a, p.66) and maybe some of them were just not interested in humans.

I developed a practice of affective spatial readings of place through considering the spaces as affective environments (McCormack, 2013) and drawing upon Sabloff's (2015) notion of 'totemic imagination' as a way to determine the imaginative and affective potentials available within spaces for the purpose of encouraging connective experiences. These potentials depended upon the extent to which a space has been

developed and curated (Miller, 2005) to a point where the opportunity for unmediated expressive and connective imagination is diminished.

The field site organisations mediated the multispecies encounters in various ways. One part of dissolving distancing practices is to make them visible (Marres et al., 2018). I conducted the ethnographic research in part as a practice of becoming (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) in order to become sensitised to reading the spaces and encounters therein. I developed a set of experiments and interventions, which rested on the premise that one way to dissolve distancing strategies is to develop and identify connective practices that can manifest within ordinary ways and places (Coleman and Ringrose, 2013; Stewart, 2007). I developed body orientated approaches, following Despret's (2013a) argument that interspecies empathy involves embodied communication. These practices succeeded in introducing a becoming open to the other through a body-to-body connection with animals.

The concepts of *becoming* and *becoming animal* were enacted as research methods and were therefore a theoretical simplification of the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari (1988). However, as a methodological tool, becoming offered a means to perform ethnography through a register that attended to the affective forces at play in the spaces and encounters.

Becoming animal was employed as a means to practice drawing in registers that attended to expressivity and gestural attunements. The experiments were conducted with young participants and I produced an analysis based upon both their subsequent drawings in combination with my observations of the events. Exploring the ways participants came to know and feel towards animals through drawing demonstrated the value of utilising body practices for exploring the more-than-human, non-linguistic

344

world. Participants produced representations, expressionistic accounts and gesturally attuned portrayals of animals during the research.

I foregrounded *becoming-with* as the relation of connectedness with another animal (Haraway, 2008). Becoming-with is a doing between corporeal beings, in contrast to the Deleuzian models of *becoming* and *becoming animal*, which, in this research, attended more directly to the flows of affect. The 'A Day In The Life of…' intervention aimed to encourage participants to become-with a partner animal through conducting a range of tasks such as drawing, mapping and making observations. The observations were made through attending to that animal's everyday comings and goings situated in relation to other animals, the space, weather conditions and any other environmental factors. These tasks were executed through the appropriation of naturalist methods, which I argued could be understood as more than practices for making knowledge about animals, because as a by-product, they also produce connective experiences for field researchers. Thus I loosely repurposed these practices as immersive practices for encouraging connectedness with animals.

Two novel methods that I developed were the co-breathing and the wander-line drawing methods. I regarded these methods as practices for becoming-with, as the methods involved an upending of the position of the human, as observer in control over the animals, towards a multispecies encounter orientated by attending to another corporeal animal, now introduced as a subject, rather than a type or category of animal. This practice involved the animal being understood as a subject with its own way of knowing the world (Despret, 2013b), and further provided a direct practice-based account of the *infinite ways of knowing the world* (Despret, 2013b, p.31; Bekoff, 2006, p.74).

The co-breathing involved sensing the animal's breathing rhythm through the felt practice of breathing with the animal. Engaging in this method was quite tricky with some animals, who have very different breathing rhythms to humans; however, it served to make apparent both the similarity between species (each animal breathes) and the particularity of differing animals' breathing when situated in differing contexts. As the breathing was repeated over several observation cycles during the intervention, human participants learnt to feel relational differences in their partner animals' everyday experiences—such as when the animal was resting, eating or walking around or performing other doings.

The co-breathing introduced a levelling of the interspecies relations, with breathing enacted in direct attuned relation to the animal other, and disrupted the normative anthropocentric privileging of the human. This method aimed to encourage the participants to experience embodied empathic feelings through becoming open to their partner animal, in an authoring role: through the animal's breathing rhythm, internal experiences were shared. Multispecies co-breathing with other animals has the potential to make the other apparent in a felt way, i.e. the animal as subject, whilst suggesting viscerally how that other being is experiencing that moment.

Over the course of the intervention the participants mapped where their animal was within enclosures and the city farm spaces over the course of the days. I introduced a second form of more directly following and mapping the animal in order to reduce the distance and role of human as observer. I called this 'wander-line' drawing, as it was based upon wander-line drawings conducted by Fernand Deligny (1913–1996). The wander-line drawing aimed to develop as a form of embodied communication that circumvented language. The children navigated the farm through following animal routes and beginning to know the space from the individual animal's perspective. Like

346

the co-breathing, the wander-line drawing involved rupturing the normative roles between humans and animals. In following the animals, the roles were reversed: what became important was whatever and wherever the animal chose to go. The human participant needed to attune to the animal's movement and body rhythm as a form of intersubjective thought process (McCormack, 2013). Thinking was experienced through movement and rhythm, rather than through cognitive processes, and as a result invited embodied empathic experiences.

Through utilising imaginative approaches, such as in the wander-line drawings and co-breathing, it was possible to loosen the practices away from normative understandings of the representative value of animal-images towards more affective and playful embodied multispecies encounters. I discovered ways of circumventing and dissolving the normative categories of animals, such as specimens, zoo animals and farm animals. I found that through employing novel strategies, such as following the animal as a subject, it was possible to reorientate encounters towards connectedness. This reorientation had a generative affect that widened out across the tasks, for example, with a visible shift in participants' attention during the drawing practices.

I found that whilst the zoo spaces did hold some potential for engaging with animals in non-anthropocentric ways, it was a diminished potential. In order to think less anthropocentrically it is necessary to become sensitised to the notion that others have lifeworlds, and in Haraway's terms, these are not 'especially nice' (Haraway, 2003, p.12) in relation to enclosed animals, for example, experiencing the animals as trapped within the zoo, caught in a specimen jar, or kept in the farm with little opportunity to engage in outdoor life experiences. More positive experiences of connectedness also surfaced through often fragile moments of attunement and feeling some sense of the

others' lifeworlds. These moments were a manifestation of becoming-with that needs to be valued and drawn upon for engaging people with more-than-human lives.

Becoming-with involves a relationship between *touch* as a form of knowing that leads to an ethical obligation to become worldly, according to Haraway (2008, 2016). The interventions evidenced *worlding* in a number of ways, though often these were small and fleeting. Haraway explains that 'caring means becoming subject to the unsettling obligation of curiosity, which requires knowing more at the end of the day than at the beginning' (Haraway, 2008, p.36). Through developing the experiments and interventions with the young participants, I witnessed how many of the children became curious. They began to ask questions about the animals both as individuals and as species types. Furthermore they also began to tell me about their experiences and thoughts about the animals, which had not been offered previously. I discovered that the children were already becoming-with their animals. Earlier in the research I had noted that when children at Camley Street demonstrated care for the insects, this caring was not attended to in a significant manner by the adults (p.254). I considered that within the everyday thrust and flow of the city farm, the meaning embodied within the human-animal relations was also at times lost.

For example, one boy told me about the death of a duck named Lenny. After Lenny died the regular volunteer children (who were known as 'our children') had decided to rename a different duck, who had previously been called Britney, Lenny. Thus Britney became Lenny. However, it transpired through later conversation with the coordinator that the staff were unaware that Britney had become Lenny, although they did know that Lenny had died. When the boy made this disclosure, he emphasised how much he loved Lenny. When I asked him if he meant *Lenny*, or *Lenny-Britney*, he seemed unclear. I found it interesting that it had been okay to dispense with Britney, in order to

keep a version of Lenny alive, and I wondered in what ways *Lenny-Britney* was a hybrid. I do not know how the group of children came to this decision; however, it was through the boy's experience of attending to *Lenny-Britney* through the research practices*,* that he chose to share this story with me.

The process of carrying out the intervention had prompted his explanation and confession that the duck he was partnering with was not *Lenny* but rather *Lenny-Britney*. In learning to attend to the duck as an individual through embodied immersive methods, *Lenny-Britney's* story came to light (Hekman, 2008) and further manifested the concern felt by this particular boy. The children were becoming-with animals in complex ways, through orientating the encounters towards foregrounding the animal as subjects. Furthermore, these experiences illustrate how becoming-with involves a particular touch, which broadens beyond a sensate feeling of connection. It rather opens out into the broader patterns interwoven into our becomings:

> [Touch] 'does not make one small; it peppers its partners with attachment sites for world making'— draws us out into complex interwoven histories of co-evolution and broader patterns of co-becoming.

> (van Dooren, 2014, p.293, citing Haraway, 2008, p.36)

The connective experiences that involved active participation in the world were those where the participants became curious and alerted to the ethical problems embedded in care, such as when the boy felt he had to tell me that Lenny was Britney. As Pedwell (2014) argues, empathy can provide a means for control, and thus so does touch, like other forms of sensory awareness. Caring for Lenny had instigated the shift in Britney's

identity after Lenny's death. However, after the intervention, through a different becoming-with, the boy came to regard the duck more fully as Lenny-Britney.

This example foregrounds the difference between anthropocentric co-evolvings, which are the always intra-active ongoing processes, and becoming-with. Becoming-with is more than just touch: it is the form of 'touch' that ''ramifies and shapes accountability' (Haraway, 2008, p.36). A form of coming to know the other as a subject, through an attunement that creates attachment, involving a form of care that manifests accountability.

In thinking through how connectedness can lead to flourishing in ways that incubate curiosity and care, it became apparent that several processes were involved. Rather than teach the children, I learnt to conduct 'deep listening' (Bull and Back, 2015) as a form of awareness that attempted to capture fragile moments and thoughts. Overall, this listening created space for care to emerge. And, it did emerge: through the particular attentiveness that the participants began to develop in relation to their partner animals. The anthropocentric normative engagement began dissolving, shifting towards a curiosity of the other as a different being, with its own lifeworld (Despret, 2013b). This central ongoing differentiation needs to be consistently nurtured and developed.

One participant noted that the farm sheep choose to stand under the railway arch in their meadow when the sun comes out. The participant had made this observation during the intervention as opposed to his daily herding of the sheep between night and day enclosures. He had found his ability for knowledge making. Although it is possible that he could make an incorrect observation, or come to an incorrect conclusion, his own experienced-based knowledge-making produced a curiosity in the sheep that

350

motivated him to go and spend an afternoon on the computer reading about sheep behaviour. This argument is similar to that presented in the discussion in Chapter 4 on the merits of accepting the existence of anthropomorphism in research methods conducted by ethologists and behaviourists, where some researchers urge caution against conducting research that may produce anthropomorphic mistakes (Bekoff and Allen, 1997). At the level of educating and engaging young people in relation to the more-than-human world, there needs to be space for mistakes and risk. Otherwise a different risk emerges: the risk that curiosity is lost and distraction replaces the inventiveness of legitimate forms of knowing through embodied practices (Despret, 2013a).

Through underlining the value and import of knowing the other in these ways, it becomes more apparent why and how curated forms of representations of animals are problematic. For example, a debate about the ethics of keeping enclosed zoo animals, a practice weighted within the many discourses of conservation such as endangeredness and breeding programmes, can overtake attention from the import of the everyday lives of individual zoo animals. Also, the experience of the individual zoo visitor, as a person who could become curious through encountering the animals, loses ground between all of the many complex concerns and discourses embedded into conservation. Producing distancing experiences of animals for visitors, however inadvertently, can be understood as formative in the making of disconnectedness.

The second two research questions asked, 'What can multispecies inventive methods bring to understanding and defining CWN in cities?', and 'What are the implications of this visual sociological inventive methods approach for animal studies and for conservation research?'.

The methodological approach enabled the research to continue evolving and responding within the research assemblage. This methodological evolution provided the opportunity for me to adapt methods, changes routes, materials and instructions as my understanding of the research process shifted. This approach therefore was one of ongoing making, which was not enslaved through the perceived need to come up with empirical facts or absolute definitions and answers. It was a sketchy approach full of lines of flight (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988), wherein the risk that the lines simply fly away or dissolve was always present. However, although the results were microscopic in comparison to the large quantitative data sets produced by others in CWN research (such as RSPB, 2013), this inventive practice was significant in that it produced changes in how at least some of the city farm children perceived their resident animals.

Moreover, the research experimented with approaches that were distinct from generalised forms of data. This research produced interpretations of how the affective experience of feeling connected manifested in the everyday urban nature-places. In so doing, I developed practices that others could introduce in order to foreground the relational aspects of multispecies encounters. The field research demonstrated value in making a space to engage with the animal outside of human ways of knowing: the epistemologies and practices and aims that frequently override the potential in feeling what we do not know, for example. I followed hunches and feelings in order to develop more caring engagements that sought to legitimize and make visible embodied forms of knowing the other. Thus I was not only introducing the ideas, to the participants, of becoming-with and of the animal as a subject. I was also emphasising that, through our work, the participants' feelings became legitimized through a reorientating of the register of care.

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387

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Appendices

Appendix A. Glossary of Anthropomorphisms

This list is in no way extensive. However, it covers the terms used in this thesis.

Anthropomorphisms

Anecdotal anthropomorphism: The anthropomorphism is generated through the text (Mitchell, 1997, p.407; Crist, 1996). For example, I say that I raced the dog across the lawn. I believe I am racing the dog, but I do not know what the dog considers us to be doing, or what word/concept a dog would use to describe that. I use the word race because it is the human way to describe the event. Further, when I tell you that I raced the dog across the lawn you may or you may not interpret this in the same way as if I told you that I raced a human (Crist, 1996).

Anthropocentric anthropomorphism: It is assumed that the characteristic is distinctly human, rather than a characteristic belonging to more than one species.

Careful anthropomorphism: We do not know for sure; we can only give a *best guess* (Bekoff, 2002, p.49).

Egomorphism is much in line with the 'like me' empathy version below, but Milton describes this process as a process of direct perception between two *individuals*—an individual human and an individual animal (Milton, 2005, p.261).

Mechanistic anthropomorphism: Any mindedness or emotional processes ascribed to animals are deemed to be an anthropomorphic mistake. It then follows that all

human animal bonds and relationships are based upon this error of anthropomorphism (Bekoff and Allen, 1997, p.313).

Human trait anthropomorphism: The attribution of human characteristics or behaviour to a god, animal or object (quoted from the entry for 'anthropomorphism' in *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2017).

Representational anthropomorphism: The animal is portrayed in human terms such as in advertising and media visual and text representations.

Empathy (or Anthropomorphism).

Entangled empathy: A type of caring perception focused on attending to another's experience of wellbeing. An experiential process involving a blend of emotion and cognition in which we recognise we are in relationships with others and are called upon to be responsive and responsible in these relationships by attending to another's needs, interests, desires, vulnerabilities, hopes and sensibilities (Gruen, 2015, p.3).

Like-me / interspecies empathy: Interspecies relations are based upon an understanding developed through regarding animal behaviour as 'like me' through a process of 'inter-sensory-matching', meaning an experience is matched to something similar that one has experienced via cognitive or sensory processes, and thus identified as such (Mitchell, 1997, p.419).

Interspecies empathy: Implicit in the empathic moment are several features which connect back to the momentarily passed-over self: a variable sense of confidence as to whether the empathically given meaning is accurate, and a sense of control which allows me to stop experiencing what you are experiencing, to have some distance from

it. More generally, then, there is an empathic sense that this experience is the experience *of the other*—as direct and poignant as the given sense of refusal is, i.e. it is not *my* refusal, it is not my *experience* (Shapiro, 1997, p.279).

Appendix B. Table of Field Sites

	London Zoo	Camley St	City Farm
Inception	1826 Scientists, politicians and aristocrats formed a society	1983 Grassroots community of volunteers	1972 Inter-Action arts group and local community together
Innovative/ first of its kind	First science-focused zoo	One of the first two London Wildlife Trust parks	First UK city farm
Organisational mission	Global animal research and conservation	Conservation of local wildlife/CWN	Human wellbeing through farm animal care
CWN in mission	Aim to motivate people towards conservation actions	Yes	CWN Instrumental for wellbeing
Educational pedagogy	Structured Education for primary and secondary schools	Structured Education programme for primary schools	Primary school educational visits
Organisation type	Large corporate charity, and international research institute	Formal UK wide NGO project	Semi-formal small local NGO project, founder member of UK network of care farms
Site activities	Animal exhibits Information shows Fellows events Corporate events Tourist events	Pond dipping Mini-beasts hunts Events for families Community service Corporate events Volunteering	Therapeutic riding Animal care work Volunteering Activities for young people Community events Corporate events
Ontological and theoretical discourses	Conservation Life sciences research Social marketing Business, tourism, and education	Conservation Environmentalism Community engagement	Care farming Community engagement Class struggle Counterculture
Access for humans	Entrance and activities fee	Free entry	Free entry
Public access	Set viewing and leisure spaces	Almost everywhere	Almost everywhere

Continued	**London Zoo**	**Camley St**	**City Farm**
Management	White/upper and middle classes, Biologists	White Middle class Environmentalists	White Working Class
Main visitor categories	Fee paying public Tourists/schools Children	General public Primary Schools	Local people Children People with disabilities Primary Schools
Enclosed animals	Yes	No	Some, but accessible to volunteers and the public. Animals are mobile.
Animal categories	Zoo animals, specimens, guard dogs, wild animals, meat	Wild animals Specimens	Farm animals, riding horses, bees, pet dogs Meat
Excluded/ discouraged animals	Pets Vermin/pests	Pets Vermin/pests, including foxes	Vermin/pests cockroaches, mice, some pets
Work carried out by animals	Being seen and photographed, performances.	Curated and presented as specimens, placed in jars and trays for inspection.	Being seen, 'cared for', combed, ridden, shown. Some animals provide meat and eggs.
Psychosocial work carried out by animals	Evidences human dominance and separation from other animals. Science as dominant and true way to understand the world. Conversely, animals regarded as awesome.	Antidote to regeneration and dense urban space. Provides evidence of authentic local community within a corporate area.	Public invited to engage in rituals of caring for animals. Animals become a proxy for human care. Provide work for unemployed working-class people.
Attitudes and uses of anthropomorphism	Is a mistake but good for engaging with public using human trait projection	Is avoided	Conflicting views, encouraged and regarded as a mistake by different stakeholders

Appendix C. 'A Day In The Life Of…': The Observation Methods

Action	Tool	Notes
Plot the animal's current position on the map	Map Repeat action	Map was drawn on A4 at start of project and then the animal's movement was plotted at each observation over the course of the project
Observe the environmental and weather conditions	Guide/Questionnaire Sheet/Clipboard Repeat action	A form with observation data sheets was provided for making recordings
Note down any other animals in the same enclosure	Guide/Questionnaire Sheet/Clipboard Repeat action	
If the animal is eating, and what the animal is doing	Guide/Questionnaire Sheet/Clipboard Repeat action	
Photograph the animal	Camera Repeat action	A visual document of the animal
Record the sounds or video footage near the animal for one minute	Camera or Sound recorder	To observe how the animal responds to sound
Close up and distant observation	Binoculars	The aim was to observe at both close and long range
Co-Breathing	Body Repeat action	Feel first one's own breath, then breathe along with the animal
Make A3 Drawing	Charcoal /Paper	To make a gestural 'feeling' observation
Wander-Line	Tracing paper, pencil	Follow the animal and record its movements, making a line drawing

Appendix D. Selected Pages: 'A Day in the Life Of…' Work-books
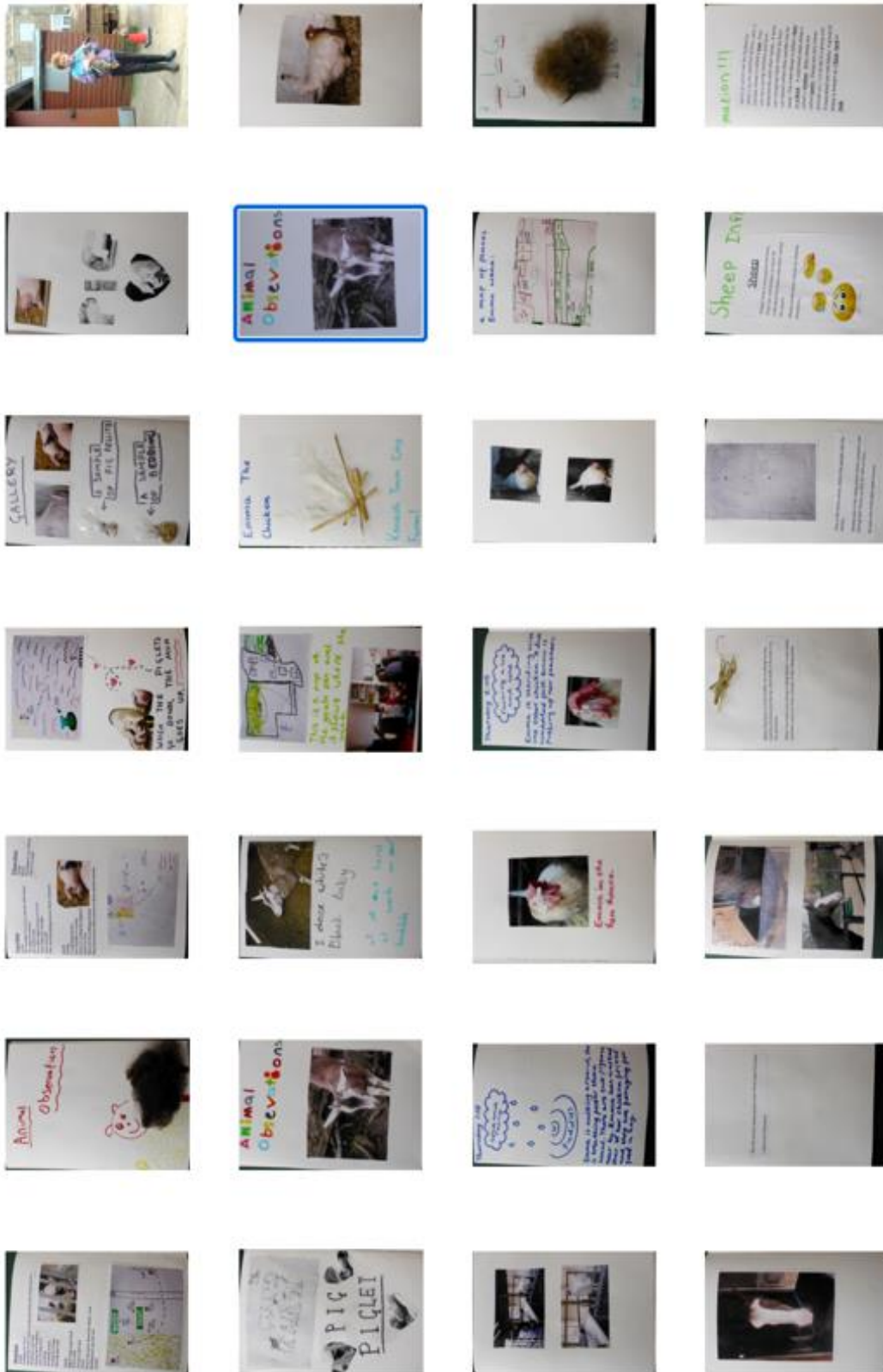
Appendix E. Zoo Trip: Questionnaire

Questionnaire To Be Completed At the Start Of The Day:

1/How many times approximately have you visited Kentish Town

City Farm?   ……………

2/Are you a farm volunteer/young farmer?   Yes/No

3/Have you visited London Zoo before?   Yes/No

If so, approximately how many times?   …………..

4/Have you visited other zoos before?   Yes/No

5/Do you think zoos are a good thing?   Yes/No

Why?

6/Do you think there is a difference between

  zoo animals and farm animals?   Yes/No

Why?

7/What things make you care about animals?

8/Do you think that caring about animals makes you care about nature generally?Why?

9/Do you think some animals have:

Similar feelings to humans   Yes/No

Different feelings to humans   Yes/No

Fewer feelings   Yes/No

No feelings   Yes/No

10/Do you think some animals think about the following:

Food Yes/No   Being happy Yes/No Memories Yes/No

Day dreams Yes/No Being warm Yes/No Playing Yes/No

Experiment 1   **'Wander-Lines'**

Have you already carried out this experiment exercise at the farm?   Yes/No

Choose an animal that is moving around quite a bit. Try and follow the animal's movements with your eyes, and record it on the page.

On the next blank page in this book, write the type of animal, and then make a line drawing that shows where the animal is moving: if the animal moves over to the left, make a line to the left, and so on. Try and feel with your pencil what your eyes are seeing the animal do.

You will end up with a squiggly line drawing.

Appendix F. Participants

(All human names have been changed)

Zoo visit	Zoo drawing experiment	Camley St. drawing experiment
Leas adult artist	Leana age 12	Leana age 13
	Vasuki age 10	Fafnir age 12
		Enoshima age 14
		Zilant age 10
		Ash adult
		Holly adult
		Brin adult
		Leas adult
Farm drawing experiment	'A Day In The Life Of…' intervention	Zoo field trip
Hydra age 10	Aido age 9	Aido age 9
Mooinanea age 11	Ladon age 10	Ladon age 10
Illuyankas age 15	Fafnir age 12	Fafnir age 12
Hydra age 10	Leana age 12/13	Leana age 12/13
Puk age 9	Medea age 13	Medea age 13
Tobi age 12	Brinsop age 10	Brinsop age 10
Vasuki age 10	Kina age 9	Kina age 9
Wantley age 11	Mooinanea age 11	Mooinanea age 11
Ying Lung age 9	Illuyankas age 15	Illuyankas age 15
Zennyo age 13	Hydra age 10	Hydra age 10
		Gyo age 8

	Puk age 9	Bakuna age 10
	Tobi age 12	Solange age 8
	Vasuki age 10	Vere age 11
	Wantley age 11	Bolla age 9
	Zennyo age 13	Coca age 11
	Zu age 10	Apalala age 10
	Ying Lung age 9	Kur age 8
		Lotan age 11
		Orochi age 9
Animals Shirley cow Marjory pig Zorro billy goat Whitie goat Co-co baby goat Rambo ram Peggy goat Lenny/Britney duck Melati tiger Jae Jae tiger		