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Finding Sanctuary: Australian Foxes and Dingoes and the challenges of rescue

Charlie Jackson-Martin

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Finding Sanctuary: Australian Foxes and Dingoes and the challenges of rescue.

Charlie Jackson-Martin

Supervisors:
Professor Fiona Probyn-Rapsey

This thesis is presented as part of the requirement for the conferral of the degree:
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Abstract

In Australia the term ‘sanctuary’ is used to define a very broad range of animal/human shared spaces, with no regulation as to who can and can’t use the term ‘sanctuary’ to describe their practices. On one hand the term ‘sanctuary’ is often used in Australia to describe the growing number of refuges for ‘domestic’ and ‘livestock’ animals rescued from agricultural industries. However, there are animal breeding facilities in Australia, (that breed, sell and exhibit animals for money) that also describe themselves as ‘sanctuaries’. For the last decade I have been running the “Sydney Fox and Dingo Rescue” and in this thesis I examine what it means to provide sanctuary to the foxes and dingoes we look after. My analysis is informed and shaped by Animal Studies literature on animal sanctuaries and the ethics of captivity. I highlight what it means to be a ‘true sanctuary’ and outline the ethical obligations sanctuaries like mine have towards both humans and non-human animals. The thesis also explores physical, psychological and legal forms of captivity for animals and how the cultural and historic significance of specific animals manifests in their need for sanctuary from persecution by humans. My own experiences running Sydney Fox and Dingo Rescue are an important aspect of this research, and I draw on these to contextualise the ethical dilemmas and challenges facing animal sanctuaries today.

Acknowledgments

Firstly, I want to acknowledge the Traditional Landowners for the Goulburn Region, the Gundungurra people. This thesis was researched and written on unceded Gundungurra land and I pay my respects to Country and Elders past, present and emerging.

The writing of this thesis took place amidst catastrophic bushfires, devastating floods and a global pandemic. I have slept on a couch with 52 evacuated dingoes in crates while the world around us burned. I have been flooded in for days at a time when roads to the sanctuary washed away. Some sections of this thesis were written from the passenger seat of a car on road trips to rescue orphan dingo pups and others in the waiting room of a vet or the hospital emergency department. Needless to say, there were times when it felt like I would never finish. And so, as I write this, I am reminded of the amazing supportive community of people who helped me overcome numerous challenges to make this thesis a reality.

I'd like to thank my supervisor Fiona Probyn-Rapsey. In 2014 I was lucky enough to take a course she was teaching at The University of Sydney. At the time, I had changed degrees twice and was feeling increasingly disenchanted with academia. I was running a small rescue operation (that would become Sydney Fox and Dingo Rescue) and university no longer felt like it had much to offer me. But finding Animal Studies was a revelation, it was life changing. There were people out there who cared about animals as much as I did, not only that but they were writing journal articles, books and university courses about it! At the end of that semester Fiona asked me if I'd thought about writing a thesis. It took several more years completing a Cultural Studies major and eventually transferring to the University of Wollongong before this could happen. This thesis is the fire that grew from the spark Fiona lit all those years ago. Fiona's patience, care and support have been a pivotal part of this project. I am so thankful for her kind and considered feedback and guidance and for her unwavering belief in me. Without her this thesis would never have been possible. I am forever grateful to Fiona as well as the School of Humanities and Social Inquiry and Wollongong University for giving me the opportunity and support needed to complete this thesis.

Equally as important to this thesis, is the community of the Sydney Fox and Dingo Rescue (SFDR). I want to thank both the human and non-human sanctuary residents and the extended community not only for sharing their stories and experiences with me but supporting my dream and allowing me the space and time to work on this thesis amidst the everyday chaos of sanctuary life (where time is precious). The biggest thank you goes to our live-in sanctuary volunteers, for their dedication and passion to the sanctuary and 24/7 commitment to caring for our multi-species community. Thank you to Jess, Tilly, Ella, Leyla, Sarah, Kim, Dana, Amy, Espee, Tania, Phon, Mikkey, Rocky, Lee, Emily, Callum, Miya and Darci. I also want to thank our rescue committee Bella, Rachel, Lexi and my partner Morgan, a team of fierce, intelligent, empathetic humans who have ensured that the administrative gears kept turning, events kept running and paperwork was done while I worked on this thesis. A huge thank you also goes out to all our shelter day-volunteers, transport volunteers and admin volunteers, in particular Patrick, Whitney, Jess, Lexie, Tanith, Shin, Stephanie, Greta, Ebony, Georgia A, Georgia H, Sonja, Anna, Francesca, Kirsten, Rebecca, Maddison, Kellea, Penelope, Sonia, Heather, Kelly, Vanessa, Jennifer, Christine, Lorraine, Tonia, Margaret, Carley and Sole. Nicola Watson deserves a special thank you not only for her work as a committed sanctuary volunteer but for taking the time to read this thesis and give such constructive and useful advice. Nicola's support has been absolutely invaluable.

A special thanks also goes to fellow local animal rescuers and friends Nicole, Alex, Mick and Tracey for always being there with unending practical advice and help with everything from broken generators and bogged cars to installing much needed rainwater tanks and a solar system at the sanctuary. Nicole and Alex also provided a safe haven for all our sanctuary residents during the 2019 bushfires and this is a debt I can never repay.

It would be remiss of me not to also acknowledge and give thanks for the incredible friendship and care provided to me by the non-human animal residents of the SFDR sanctuary. The foxes and the dingoes at SFDR are so much more to me than research subjects. They are my friends, family and kin. I want to give a special thanks to my best friend Frost. Frost has probably heard more about this thesis than anyone and I am so grateful for his caring company and unending patience. Thanks also goes to AJ,

Lincoln, Jorah, Percy, Imy and Winnie whose stories I have shared in this thesis. I hope I have done justice to each of your complex, multifaceted lives and characters.

Finally, I want to thank Ernie, an exceptional dingo who sadly passed away before this thesis was finished. Even though Ernie left this world far too young, he showed me what it meant to live every moment to the fullest. He approached everything in life with a sense of pride and stubborn confidence. He was never afraid to make himself heard and, in many ways, he helped me find my own voice. This thesis is for Ernie in the hope that one day we will live in a world where dingoes like Ernie can live long, rich lives free from suffering and harm at the hands of humans.

Certification

I, Charlie Jackson-Martin declare that this thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the conferral of the degree Masters of Research from the University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

Charlie Jackson-Martin
December 8th 2021

List of Names or Abbreviations

ADF – Australian Dingo Foundation

BDS – Bargo Dingo Sanctuary

DDS – Dingo Discovery Sanctuary, Research and Education Centre

DPI – Department of Primary Industries

LLS – Local Land Services

RSPCA – Royal Society for the Protection of Animals

SFDR – Sydney Fox and Dingo Rescue

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Introduction

In November of 2012, in a farm-house kitchen in country New South Wales, Australia, I met my first wild fox. ‘Robin’, the fox in question, had been found after his den was destroyed by a harvesting machine. The family friends who found him had rung vet clinics and wildlife organisations only to be told Robin should be euthanised because he was a ‘feral animal’. Unsure of what to do next, they asked if I would be interested in caring for him. I was a cat/kitten foster carer at the time, working and studying in the dense suburban area of Inner West Sydney, Australia. Naive 19-year-old that I was, I said ‘yes’. I caught the train and an old friend drove me the last 30 minutes to a rural property near the New South Wales-Victorian border. The first time I saw Robin I was almost afraid to touch him, he was so much tinier than I had expected, his dark eyes seemed impossibly trusting and huge. Later that day, I smuggled him home on an overnight train back to Sydney. I kept him warm tucked under my jumper, pressed against my skin. That night drifting in and out of sleep with the rocking motion of the country train, I thought to myself “how could anyone possibly describe this tiny, precious person as a ‘pest’ who should be killed”.



Figure 1.0 Robin, four-week-old fox looking at teddy bear, 2012.



Figure 1.1 Robin, seven weeks old, 2012.

I didn't know it then, but Robin would change my life forever. He was the beginning of what has become my life's work - Sydney Fox and Dingo Rescue (SFDR), a sanctuary devoted to foxes and dingoes. Today, nearly ten years later, SFDR is Australia's largest dingo sanctuary and only fox sanctuary. SFDR is home to over 100 animals, including up to six live-in human volunteers at any given time. The sanctuary itself is based on one hundred acres of dense bushland, consisting of 46 enclosures, a Colourbond shed converted into a house and two rustic caravans for volunteers. SFDR is a feminist, vegan-run sanctuary intended as a haven for animals that are otherwise seen as 'pests', 'ferals', and 'invasive species'. Individuals like foxes, dingoes, deer, rats, and feral cats are assigned a legal (and cultural) status meaning that they often cannot receive assistance from native wildlife organisations or domestic animal services.



Figure 1.2 The front gate at the SFDR sanctuary.

SFDR is located on a rural property in the Goulburn Mulwaree region of New South Wales, on unceded Gundungurra Country. European settlement of Goulburn and the surrounding region began during the 1820's, when colonists invaded the region, travelling from Sydney settlements¹. By 1828, the Tablelands region (which includes Goulburn) was home to 49,300 cattle and 172,000 sheep², with sheep outnumbering the human population 86 to one. By 1902, the number of sheep in the Tablelands region had reached 2.2 million. The identity of the Goulburn region today is still heavily tied to livestock farming, Merino sheep in particular. The region has been described by Goldney and Bowie as "one of the oldest and most disturbed, people-dominated agricultural regions in Australia".³ This ongoing relationship between animal agriculture and colonialism not only informs the relationship between settlers and the natural

¹ Karl W Butzer and David M Helgren, "Livestock, land cover, and environmental history: The tablelands of New South Wales, Australia, 1820–1920," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 95, no. 1 (2005).

² Thomas Melville Perry, *Australia's first frontier: the spread of settlement in New South Wales 1788-1829* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1963).

³ David Goldney and IJS Bowie, "Some management implications for the conservation of vegetation remnants and associated flora and fauna in the Central Western Region (NSW)," in *Australian Ecosystems: 200 Years of Utilization, Degradation and Conservation.: Proceedings of the Ecological Society of Aust.* (1990).

environment in this region, but also their interactions with and perceptions of foxes and dingoes, both in the wild and in the SFDR sanctuary.

In order to explore what it means to offer sanctuary to non-human animals, particularly in rural Australia, I have chosen to focus on foxes and dingoes. These are the animals that I have been privileged enough to spend the past decade living with, observing and getting to know individuals. Basing my research around these individuals (and species groups) also enables me to focus in on the complex and specific cultural factors that influence Australians' relationships with particular species outside of sanctuaries. Each species group has a different relationship with the settler imaginary and questions of who belongs and who is an outsider/invader.

Fossil evidence indicates dingoes have been present in Australia for at least 3,500 years⁴. A review by Fillios and Taçon in 2016 suggested that while the exact translocation route of the dingo is unknown, the established trade routes between Indigenous communities in North-Eastern Australia and regions such as South Sulawesi, Papua New Guinea, India, Taiwan and Timor are all potential origins of the dingoes' introduction to Australia⁵. Other researchers such as Savolainen et al.⁶ and Reponen et al.⁷ have used Mitochondrial DNA and single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) to suggest introduction dates of 5,000-6,000 years ago. Most recently, Zhang et al. have argued that the origins of the dingo lie in the arrival of domestic village dogs to Australia 8,300 years ago from Southeast Asia⁸. Since their introduction, dingoes have spread across Australia and are now present in all states and territories except the Island state of Tasmania. Today, because of these contentious origins, dingoes straddle an imagined line of introduced and native species, with arguments for their elimination and/or protection being tacitly framed along this fracture line of 'belonging'. Dingoes are governed by a complex web of

⁴ Melanie Fillios, Mathew S Crowther, and Mike Letnic, "The impact of the dingo on the thylacine in Holocene Australia," *World Archaeology* 44, no. 1 (2012).

⁵ Melanie A Fillios and Paul SC Taçon, "Who let the dogs in? A review of the recent genetic evidence for the introduction of the dingo to Australia and implications for the movement of people," *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* 7 (2016).

⁶ Peter Savolainen et al., "A detailed picture of the origin of the Australian dingo, obtained from the study of mitochondrial DNA," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 101, no. 33 (2004).

⁷ Sini EM Reponen et al., "Genetic and morphometric evidence on a Gálpagos I sland exposes founder effects and diversification in the first-known (truly) feral western dog population," *Molecular Ecology* 23, no. 2 (2014).

⁸ Shao-jie Zhang et al., "Genomic regions under selection in the feralization of the dingoes," *Nature communications* 11, no. 1 (2020).

legislation that both protects and condemns them in different places. It is the unique pest/native duality applied to the dingo that reveals the unstable ongoing colonial nature of Australian narratives of national belonging and its relationship to pastoralism. Wild dingoes are hunted, trapped, poisoned and killed for their role in the destruction of livestock. At the same time, they are bred in captivity in large numbers by dingo advocates, often supposedly in the name of conservation.



Figure 1.3 Kronos, a three-year-old dingo.

Foxes are much newer arrivals to Australia and were deliberately imported for hunting by British colonists. The first known report of a wild fox in Australia was published in the Geelong advertiser in 1845⁹. My own archival research indicates that

⁹ Ian Abbott, "The importation, release, establishment, spread, and early impact on prey animals of the red fox *Vulpes vulpes* in Victoria and adjoining parts of south-eastern Australia," *Australian Zoologist* 35, no. 3 (2011).

foxes likely migrated to the Goulburn region from their initial release sites in Sydney, and the first recorded sighting of a wild fox in the region occurs in the *Goulburn Evening Penny Post* in 1894¹⁰. Unlike dingoes, foxes' immigration status has never been in question; however, their perceived sense of 'belonging' in Australia has undergone a dramatic shift over time in line with shifting ideas about Australian identity, nationalism and 'native' animals.

This thesis is composed of my own first-hand experiences of sanctuary life with both foxes and dingoes over the past ten years. To borrow from Haraway, in order to talk about animals, we must become "dirty and knowledgeable"¹¹, and so throughout this thesis, I use my observations and relationships at SFDR to contextualise the ethical dilemmas and challenges facing animal sanctuaries today. I draw on biographical anecdotes and use photographs to show the individual lives and personalities of the foxes and dingoes who are the subjects of this thesis. I hope to bring their personhood to the foreground of the readers' minds, and in doing so, build a rich account, a 'multi-species ethnography' of sanctuary life for foxes and dingoes.

The term multi-species ethnography refers to the practice of research using ethnographic techniques to focus on the complex lives of non-human animals in the age of the Anthropocene. Kirksey and Helmreich describe the multi-species ethnographer as invested in the study of "organisms whose lives and deaths are linked to human social worlds"¹² working within what they describe as "contact zones where lines separating nature and culture have broken down"¹³. Elan Abrell suggests that this type of approach arose as a response to concerns by scholars such as Barbara Noske that research on human-animal relationships often relegated animals to property status, "objects mediating human relations"¹⁴ as opposed to active subjects with their own agency, needs and desires. Abrell usefully describes multi-species ethnography as "focusing an anthropological lens" on the "biographical and political lives of animals"¹⁵. Abrell also argues that such

¹⁰ "An English Fox," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post*, 17 July 1894, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/98512559>.

¹¹ Haraway

¹² Eben Kirksey and Stefan Helmreich, "The emergence of multispecies ethnography," *Cultural anthropology* 25, no. 4 (2010).Pp.544

¹³ Kirksey and Helmreich, "The emergence of multispecies ethnography." Pp. 546

¹⁴ Elan Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care* (University of Minnesota Press, 2021),pp 13.

¹⁵ Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*. Pp.14

an approach should aim to expose the continuous, rather than discrete nature of human/animal categories, by working to break down ontological binaries like “human-animal, nature-culture, subject-object, and person-property”¹⁶. While I am not an anthropologist, I use ‘multi-species ethnography’ rather broadly to refer to the way in which my direct experiences and observations of non-human animal lives and relationships are a crucial part of my knowledge and analysis. My research also builds on the work of other Animal studies scholars who have written about their first-hand experiences of sanctuary life. I draw on authors such as Miram Jones and patrice jones who have written about their work as co-founders of the VINE sanctuary and Catherine Doyle who has written about the concept of ‘true sanctuaries’ drawing on her work with the Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) at their three sanctuaries. I am a scholar, a sanctuary worker and an animal advocate, embedded in my research and directly engaged in the ethical issues raised by this thesis. It is this location and standpoint that informs and drives my investigation and desire to create better sanctuaries for both non-human animals and sanctuary workers.

The first chapter of this thesis, ‘Literature Review’, is an overview of Animal studies scholarship from the past ten years on the unique environments and potential for multi-species communities created by animal sanctuaries. I begin by defining several fundamental frameworks for understanding animal issues, drawing on the work of Will Kymlicka and Sue Donaldson to discuss welfarism, ecological approaches, basic rights, and relational rights approaches. I also discuss Lori Gruen’s concept of entangled empathy. I explore how different theorists such as Timothy Pachirat, Catherine Doyle and Elan Abrell define animal sanctuaries and discuss what sets sanctuaries apart from other facilities that house captive animals like zoos and circuses. Finally, I draw on patrice jones’ unique ethnographic research based on her first-hand experience at VINE sanctuary to discuss the role of intersectionality in sanctuaries.

The second chapter of this thesis, “Make kin not babies”, discusses the ethics of captive breeding within sanctuaries. Using Catherine Doyle’s concept of ‘true sanctuaries’ and ‘pseudo sanctuaries’¹⁷ I argue that breeding dingoes is incompatible with

¹⁶ Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*. Pp.15

¹⁷ Catherine Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception," *Animal Studies Journal* 6, no. 2 (2017).

being a ‘true’ sanctuary. Firstly, I explore the main arguments used by self-described ‘dingo sanctuaries’ to justify breeding practices. These include conservation of ‘pure’ dingo bloodlines, providing ‘ambassador’ animals for zoos and finally, the supply of dingoes for the native pet trade. I draw on Thom van Dooren’s concept of ‘violent care’¹⁸ to reveal the contradictory logic underpinning dingo conservation breeding programs and use the work of Fiona Probyn-Rapsey to highlight how the ‘pure’ dingo is a construct of human thought¹⁹, existing only in human-controlled captivity. I argue that captive dingo exhibits in zoos have no educational value and that the native pet trade commodifies dingoes, turning them into what Rosemary Collard describes as ‘biocapital’²⁰. Finally, I make the case that captive dingo breeding not only harms captive dingoes but perpetuates colonial notions of taxonomic purity as well as normalising captivity, things sanctuaries should arguably be working to dismantle, not preserve. In conclusion, I suggest that Donna Haraway’s aphorism “make kin, not babies”²¹ is a more fitting ethos for true dingo sanctuaries, which should prioritise relationship-building, kinship and multi-species community over reproduction.

The third chapter of this thesis, “True sanctuaries: ‘all captivity is a problem for animals’”, will focus on the ethical dilemma of captivity within sanctuaries. In the first half of the chapter, I show that captivity is much more than physical confinement. Using the work of Lori Marino, Rosemary Collard, Alexandra Horowitz and Katja Guenther, I discuss the many ways in which captivity manifests for non-human animals, focusing on the example of the red fox. I explore Marino’s argument that captivity is “a state of being”²², stemming from human control over animals, alongside Horowitz’ concept of ‘constitutional captivity’²³. I use these arguments to make the case that foxes have experienced captivity of one form or another since they were first captured and imported to Australia for hunting.

¹⁸ Thom Van Dooren, "A day with crows-rarity, nativity and the violent-care of conservation," *Animal Studies Journal* 4, no. 2 (2015).

¹⁹ Fiona Probyn-Rapsey, "Dingoes and dog-whistling: A cultural politics of race and species in Australia," *Animal Studies Journal* 4, no. 2 (2015).

²⁰ Rosemary-Claire Collard, *Animal Traffic: Lively Capital in the Global Exotic Pet Trade* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2020).

²¹ Donna J. Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble : Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016.).

²² Lori Marino, "Captivity," in *Critical Terms for Animal Studies* ed. Lori Gruen (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2018). Pp. 99

²³ Alexandra Horowitz, "Canis Familiaris: Companion and Captive," in *The Ethics of Captivity*, ed. Lori Gruen (New York: Oxford University Press).

Throughout the third chapter, I draw on historical newspaper articles. Using textual analysis, I discuss the discursive relationship between the introduction of foxes to Australia and settler-colonial notions of nativism and belonging, arguing that foxes are held captive in Australia through their legal and cultural status as an introduced species. Because of SFDR's geographic ties to the Goulburn Mulwaree region, I have used historical Goulburn newspaper articles. These articles are a form of primary source material and provide a snapshot of contemporary views on foxes at the time they were written. I reviewed 465 articles about foxes from three historical newspapers: the *Goulburn Evening Penny Post* (1881-1940), *The Goulburn Herald* (1881-1907), and *the Goulburn Evening Post* (1940-1954). Articles were sourced using the trove.nla.gov.au online archive. Goulburn media offers us a prime example of the rise in a uniquely Australian identity built 'on the sheep's back'. While I choose to focus on the Goulburn Mulwaree area, I make the case that attitudes toward foxes in Goulburn at the turn of the twentieth century represent a microcosm of broader changing sentiment in Australia toward native and introduced species as a whole. In the second half of the chapter, I draw on my own experiences running a sanctuary to explore the ethical obligations sanctuaries have to critique captivity and improve the captive lives of animals. I explore Jones' concept of 'free feeling captivity'²⁴, Guenther's proposal for 'humane communities'²⁵ and Emmerman on the role of sanctuaries in the work of 'moral repair'²⁶ for human/animal relationships.

The fourth and final chapter of this thesis is a conclusion that draws together the analyses from the preceding chapters in order to offer a nuanced list of principles for 'true sanctuaries' that recognises the complex dilemmas faced by sanctuaries. With very little regulation on who can use the term 'sanctuary', these principles serve multiple purposes. Firstly, I hope that they provide a framework for lay persons to use when assessing the legitimacy of sanctuaries. Secondly, I hope that in conjunction with the thesis as a whole, these principles will guide sanctuaries and animal advocates' to reflect

²⁴ Miriam Jones, "Captivity in the context of a sanctuary for formerly farmed animals," in *The ethics of captivity*, ed. Lori Gruen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

²⁵ Katja Guenther, *The Lives and Deaths of Shelter Animals* (Stanford, California Stanford University Press, 2020).

²⁶ Karen S. Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy: The Problem of Captivity and the Need for Moral Repair," in *In The Ethics of Captivity*, ed. Lori Gruen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

on how to improve practices by encouraging them to provide greater agency for the non-human animals in their lives and take a more intersectional approach to the long-overdue processes of moral repair for human/animal relationships.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

An emerging area of research within Animal Studies focuses on the unique environments and potential for multi-species communities created by animal sanctuaries. In this chapter I will account for major work in the field of Animal Studies that is focussed on animal sanctuaries. Firstly, I will define several fundamental frameworks for understanding animal issues including welfarism, ecological approaches, basic rights and relational rights approaches and entangled empathy. These frameworks, in particular, the basic rights approach and entangled empathy, are foundational components of both theorists and sanctuaries that will be discussed in this thesis. Secondly, I will discuss the etymological origins of the word ‘sanctuary’. I will then explore how different theorists define animal sanctuaries and what sets sanctuaries apart from other facilities that house captive animals. The writers I will focus on in this chapter include patrice jones, Elan Abrell, Timothy Pachirat, Catherine Doyle, Lori Gruen, Will Kymlicka and Sue Donaldson. It is this scholarship that forms the basis for my own sanctuary’s ethics (Sydney Fox and Dingo Rescue), and the recommendations for sanctuaries that will be outlined in the conclusion of this thesis.

1. Frameworks for understanding animal issues

1.1 Welfarist, ecological or basic rights?

Much of the current debate around animal care and animal issues falls into three basic frameworks- a ‘welfarist’ approach, an ‘ecological’ approach, and a ‘basic rights’ approach. However, the Animal studies theorists this chapter will discuss, are critical of the dominant patterns of thinking that characterize animal welfarism. The following is a summary of these frameworks with a particular focus on ‘the basic rights approach’ which forms the backbone of Animal studies scholarship.

Donaldson and Kymlicka describe the ‘welfarist’ approach as a view which “accepts that animal welfare matters, morally speaking, but which subordinates animal welfare to the interests of human beings”²⁷. While under a welfarist approach, humans do

²⁷ Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A political theory of animal rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). Pp.3

bear some responsibility toward non-human animals, ultimately humans remain at the pinnacle of the moral hierarchy, which means “animals can be used within limits for the benefit of humans.”²⁸ An ecological framework takes a different approach again, what could be described as ‘big picture thinking’, focusing on the health of ecosystems rather than individual animals²⁹. Ecological holism can provide a framework to critically examine human practices like habitat destruction that harm animals and ecosystems alike, however as Donaldson and Kymlicka point out, “the killing of animals can be claimed to have a neutral or indeed positive impact on ecological systems... the ecological view comes down on the side of favouring the protection, conservation, and/or restoration of ecosystems over saving the lives of individual animals of nonendangered species.”³⁰

In contrast to welfarist and ecological approaches, a basic rights framework for non-human animals recognises that animals, like humans, “should be seen as possessing certain inviolable rights: there are some things that should not be done to animals even in pursuit of human interests or ecosystem vitality”³¹. Furthermore, Donaldson and Kymlicka state that an animal rights framework should recognize that animals “do not exist to serve human ends: animals are not servants or slaves of human beings, but have their own moral significance, their own subjective existence, which must be respected”³².

While past scholarship on animal rights frameworks have often focused on ‘negative rights’, Donaldson and Kymlicka argue instead for a new approach, one which explores ‘the animal issue’ through concepts of positive moral obligations as well as ‘relational duties’. “In sum, we believe that a more expansive account of ART — one that integrates universal negative rights owed to all animals with differentiated positive rights depending on the nature of the human – animal”³³. Donaldson and Kymlicka use the example of humans’ obligation to domestic animals such as dogs who have been deliberately bred to be dependent on us in contrast with non-human ‘wild’ animals such as ducks and squirrels. Both groups of non-human animals have very different needs in their relationships with humans, “different relationships generate different duties —

²⁸ Donaldson and Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A political theory of animal rights*. Pp.3.

²⁹ Donaldson and Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A political theory of animal rights*. Pp. 4.

³⁰ Donaldson and Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A political theory of animal rights*. Pp. 4.

³¹ Donaldson and Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A political theory of animal rights*. Pp.4

³² Donaldson and Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A political theory of animal rights*. Pp. 4

³³ Donaldson and Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A political theory of animal rights*. Pp. 11.

duties of care, hospitality, accommodation, reciprocity, or remedial justice... Our relations with animals are likely to have a similar sort of moral complexity”³⁴.

Donaldson and Kymlicka state that part of the reason scholarship on animal rights in the past has lacked in-depth exploration of positive relational rights is that many animal rights proponents find themselves taking abolitionist standpoints (See Francione, 2008)³⁵ “treating animals ethically means leaving them alone”³⁶. The goal of animal rights therefore becomes not to protect non-human animals with human society but rather “to protect nonhumans from human society. The goal is an end to nonhumans’ ‘domestication’ and other forced ‘participation’ in human society.”³⁷ Donaldson and Kymlicka challenge this, arguing that the complicated reality of human-animal relationships is that human-animal interaction is, and likely always will be, inevitable³⁸ because “humans do not exist outside of nature...throughout history, and in all cultures, there is a clear tendency — perhaps even a human need — to develop relationships and bonds with animals”³⁹. The complex nature and inevitability of human/animal relationships can be thought of, at least in part, as what necessitates animal sanctuaries. As long as exploitative or unequal human/animal relationships persist, or humans continue to deliberately breed domestic animals who cannot survive without human help, sanctuaries will be necessary. Further work by Donaldson and Kymlicka specifically on sanctuaries can be found later in this chapter.

1.2 Entangled Empathy

Finding kindness, compassion, and concern in the animal kingdom challenges our notions of what other animals are like and the kinds of relationships they can have with others, sometimes even across species.⁴⁰

³⁴ Donaldson and Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A political theory of animal rights*. Pp. 6.

³⁵ Gary L Francione, *Animals as persons: Essays on the abolition of animal exploitation* (Columbia University Press, 2008).

³⁶ Donaldson and Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A political theory of animal rights*. Pp. 9.

³⁷ Donaldson and Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A political theory of animal rights*. Pp. 10.

³⁸ Donaldson and Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A political theory of animal rights*. Pp.8.

³⁹ Donaldson and Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A political theory of animal rights*. Pp. 9.

⁴⁰ Lori Gruen, "Empathy," in *Critical terms for animal studies* ed. Lori Gruen (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, , 2018). Pp. 141

While Donaldson and Kymlicka have focused on developing a positive model of animal rights Lori Gruen promotes ‘entangled empathy’⁴¹ as an alternative to a rights model. Gruen reasons that rights models have a tendency to prioritise conflict over responsiveness and care. Entangled empathy discourse both compliments and at times challenges Donaldson and Kymlicka’s ideas of relational rights and obligations in human/animal relationships. Gruen explores the nuanced ways in which empathy can be a pathway toward resolving human/animal conflict and lays the groundwork for more compassionate forms of coexistence. Fundamental to the concept of entangled empathy is the recognition and acknowledgement that we (humans) are already involved in a variety of relationships with non-human animals, and that these relationships are often negative and exploitative – and lacking in empathy. If the first step of Gruen’s approach involves identifying the relationships we as humans already have with non-human animals, then the next step is recognising that empathy is not strictly a human phenomenon. Empathy in its most basic form, can be thought of as a state of understanding or knowing what another person is experiencing or feeling. Humans are not alone in feeling empathy⁴². Gruen argues that there is a wealth of literature supporting the idea that non-human animals experience and express empathy⁴³, both directed towards members of their own species and other species (see Preston and de Waal⁴⁴, Premack and Woodruff⁴⁵).

Gruen describes entangled empathy as an experiential process that includes “perception, reflection and concern”⁴⁶ about another’s wellbeing emphasising the need for responsibility and attentiveness to other relationships with others, both human and non-human. Gruen calls on us to recognise the similarities and differences between ourselves and others (in particular non-human animals) and recognise the uniqueness of each situation and relationship. Through careful observation, effort and understanding, Gruen argues we can then alternate between our own perspective and perspective of

⁴¹Lori Gruen, *Entangled empathy: An alternative ethic for our relationships with animals* (Lantern Books, 2015).

⁴² Gruen, "Empathy." Pp 141

⁴³ Gruen, "Empathy." Pp 141

⁴⁴ Stephanie D Preston and Frans BM De Waal, "Empathy: Its ultimate and proximate bases," *Behavioral and brain sciences* 25, no. 1 (2002).

⁴⁵ David Premack and Guy Woodruff, "Does the chimpanzee have a theory of mind?," *Behavioral and brain sciences* 1, no. 4 (1978).

⁴⁶ Gruen, "Empathy." Pp. 147

others we are trying to empathize with⁴⁷. This process should involve self-reflection about ones' own and others' social position, life experience and history including race, gender and other intersecting forms of oppression and privilege. In the case of non-human animals we can reflect on things like the ability to express species specific behaviours, access to social relationships with conspecifics and others, living environment and past experiences including trauma: "Entangled empathizers will try to work through complicated processes of understanding others, human and non, in situations of differential social, political, and species-based power."⁴⁸ Gruen argues that only by asking these types of complex, relational questions about our own internal biases can we start to move toward accurately empathizing with non-human animals and improving human/animal relationships.⁴⁹

Entangled empathy is of particular relevance to the sanctuary movement because unlike abolitionist discourse, Gruen, as with Donaldson and Kymlicka, acknowledges the complicated, ongoing and inevitable nature of human/animal relationships. Rather than seeking to abolish human/animal relations, Gruen seeks to make these connections "responsive and responsible" by "attending to another's needs, interests, desires, vulnerabilities, hopes and sensitivities"⁵⁰. Gruen's philosophy of entangled empathy, and how we can use empathy to improve human/animal relationships plays a huge role in the social culture we try to foster in our community at my own Sanctuary, Sydney Fox and Dingo Rescue, as I will go on to discuss in the chapters to follow. Next, I will outline what sorts of institutions might be considered 'sanctuaries'.

2. What is a Sanctuary?

In Australia today the term sanctuary has come to define a broad range of animal/human shared spaces. On one hand the term 'sanctuary' is often used in Australia to describe the growing number of refuges for 'farm animals' rescued from the agricultural industry and given safe haven by humans typically committed to caring for these animals for the rest of their lives. In 2021, Vegan Australia listed 69 Australian

⁴⁷ Gruen, "Empathy." Pp. 147

⁴⁸ Gruen, "Empathy." Pp. 150

⁴⁹ Gruen, "Empathy." Pp. 148

⁵⁰ Lori Gruen, "Entangled Empathy: How to Improve Human-Animal Relationships," interview by Marc Bekoff, 2015, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/entangled-empathy-how-to-improve-human-animal-relationships_b_6760696.

Farm Animal Sanctuaries⁵¹. Conversely however there are animal breeding facilities in Australia, that breed, sell and exhibit animals for money⁵² which also describe themselves as ‘sanctuaries’. One example of this is Victoria’s ‘The Dingo Discovery Sanctuary’/DDS (otherwise known as the Australian Dingo Foundation- ADF), whose founder Lyn Watson was reported to have been taken to court in 2013 for allegedly selling and smuggling 6 dingo puppies bred at the facility to the US for exhibit in a privately-owned roadside zoo⁵³. Another example is the ‘Koala Park Sanctuary’, a for-profit, privately owned zoo in Sydney New South Wales which was fined \$75,000 in 2016 and banned from acquiring any new Koalas after failing to provide vet care to three critically ill koalas. One of the koalas was seized by animal inspectors from the RSPCA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) after being found “dehydrated with an emaciated body and signs of chlamydia”.⁵⁴

Are facilities like The Dingo Discovery Sanctuary or the Koala Park Sanctuary ‘true’ sanctuaries? Do Sanctuaries have certain ethical obligations to the animals in their care and the broader community? With these questions in mind, the following chapter will discuss how different animal studies scholars define the term ‘sanctuary’, and in doing so examine what, if anything, sets a sanctuary apart from other institutions such as zoos that also house captive animals.

2.1 Imperial and Military roots of ‘sanctuary’

When considering how to define an animal sanctuary, Timothy Pachirat offers an interesting approach grounded in both the historical meaning of the term ‘sanctuary’ as well as early historical iterations of sanctuaries and their relationship to colonialism. Pachirat notes that most etymologies of sanctuary trace the roots of the word back to the Latin “sanctuarium... for holy place,” emphasizing its close relationship to “sacer, for

⁵¹ , Vegan Australia accessed July 15, 2021,

https://www.veganaustralia.org.au/vegan_farmed_animal_sanctuaries.

⁵² Bradley Smith, *The dingo debate: origins, behaviour and conservation* (Csiro Publishing, 2015).

⁵³ Peter Bodkin, "Aussie Lyn Watson accused of dodgy dingo smuggling ring," (May 2 2013 2013).

<https://www.news.com.au/travel/travel-updates/aussie-lyn-watson-accused-of-dodgy-dingo-smuggling-ring/news-story/1dba3579fbf338d9c3dca8410c13a190>.

⁵⁴ Stacey Roberts, "Koala Park Sanctuary fined \$75,000," (February 3 2016 2016).

<https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/the-hills/koala-park-sanctuary-fined-75000/news-story/1a25697c8ee77b9dc8e4636bcc0cc9e9>.

sacred”.⁵⁵ This early definition likely entered the English vocabulary through the Old French ‘sainctuarie’⁵⁶, and has been attested to in English in this sense since 1374. The Oxford dictionary defines the term sanctuary as:

A church or other sacred place in which, by the law of the medieval church, a fugitive from justice, or a debtor, was entitled to immunity from arrest.... any place in which by law or established custom a similar immunity is secured to fugitives.⁵⁷

Pachirat explores some of the earliest ‘animal sanctuaries’ which were for wild animals. He argues that sanctuaries have a politicized history, tied to colonization and European imperialism and that this history should not be discounted in modern sanctuary discourse. Pachirat notes that some of the first written references to animal sanctuaries do not occur until the 18th century in Europe and European colonies. The rise of animal sanctuaries can be seen as taking place in tandem with the industrial revolution (1760-1830)⁵⁸ and periods of European colonization in the global South. Sanctuaries began as spaces designed for plants and animals who, according to the white, colonial European imaginary, needed protection- namely so they could survive for future human use. Prior to industrialization and colonization, Pachirat argues that such protection was not perceived as necessary. Pachirat states that inherent to wild animal sanctuaries is the repositioning of “what is wild” as “...utterly dependent on human paternalism.”⁵⁹

Pachirat uses the example of the world’s first ‘wildness sanctuaries’ in British occupied Tabago (1763) and Barbados (1765), to highlight this relationship between colonisation and animal sanctuaries⁶⁰. British imperialists decreed that portions of woodland be preserved and in doing so dispossessed the traditional land owners (the Tabago Caribs) creating what have been described as early examples of ‘conservation refugees’.⁶¹ In many ways this idea of sanctuaries as spaces containment, captivity and

⁵⁵ Timothy Pachirat, "Sanctuary," in *Critical terms for animal studies*, ed. Lori Gruen (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018). Pp 337

⁵⁶ Sabrina Fusari, "What is an animal sanctuary? Evidence from applied linguistics," *Animal Studies Journal* 6, no. 2 (2017). Pp. 143

⁵⁷ Oxford English Dictionary quoted in Fusari, "What is an animal sanctuary? Evidence from applied linguistics." pp143

⁵⁸ Thomas Southcliffe Ashton, "The industrial revolution 1760-1830," *OUP Catalogue* (1997).

⁵⁹ Pachirat, "Sanctuary." Pp 339

⁶⁰ Pachirat, "Sanctuary." Pp. 340

⁶¹ Mark Dowie, *Conservation refugees: the hundred-year conflict between global conservation and native peoples* (MIT press, 2011).

Rosaleen Duffy, *Nature crime* (Yale University Press, 2010).

separation for ‘wild’ plants and animals is both antithetical and equivalent with regards to modern sanctuaries for wild animals. As Gruen states; “wild animal sanctuaries around the world are making a huge difference for captive animals... yet, even when captive animals have their futures secured . . . they remain captives.”⁶² Pachirat argues that there are ongoing “historical legacies linking the imposition of wilderness sanctuaries to racist colonialism” that cannot be discounted. Pachirat believes that because of this colonial history, we need to rethink and reimagine wild animal sanctuaries as “sites of resistance in the struggle for global social justice”⁶³ whilst simultaneously recognising the parallels between contemporary animal protection efforts and the “imperialistic racism at the heart of the creation of the some of the world’s first animal sanctuaries”⁶⁴. Pachirat also points to a US military definition for sanctuary; “a nation or area near or contiguous to the combat area that, by tacit agreement between the warring powers, is exempt from attack and therefore serves as a refuge for staging, logistics, or other activities of the combatant powers.”⁶⁵ Pachirat draws on this definition to argue that animal sanctuaries can also function as staging sites for advocacy and resistance.

2.2 True Sanctuaries and Pseudo-Sanctuaries

In “Captive Wildlife Sanctuaries: Definition, Ethical Considerations and Public Perception”⁶⁶ Doyle explores the defining features of what she describes as ‘true sanctuaries’, as opposed to ‘pseudo sanctuaries’ and what separates sanctuaries for wild animals from other facilities that house captive wild animals. Doyle’s interest in sanctuaries stems from her work with the Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), which runs three US based sanctuaries for elephants, bears and big cats rescued from the entertainment industry⁶⁷.

When defining the term ‘sanctuary’, Doyle states that the core mission of a sanctuary “is to serve the individuals in their care by putting their interests first and foremost”⁶⁸. Doyle is a proponent of the definition used by The Global Federation of

⁶² Gruen, *Entangled empathy: An alternative ethic for our relationships with animals*.

⁶³ Pachirat, "Sanctuary." Pp 343

⁶⁴ Pachirat, "Sanctuary." Pp 343

⁶⁵ US Military Dictionary, "The Oxford Essential Dictionary of the US Military," (Berkeley: Oxford University Press, 2001).

⁶⁶ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception."

⁶⁷ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception."

⁶⁸ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp. 58

Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) who state that a “sanctuary is a facility that provides lifetime care for animals that have been abused, injured, abandoned, or otherwise in need.”⁶⁹ GFAS is a US not for profit founded by a number of animal protection organisations including; Born Free USA, The Humane Society International and the World Society for the Protection of Animals⁷⁰. GFAS run a globally recognised accreditation program for animal sanctuaries. Their website lays out a number of conditions that must be met to be an accredited sanctuary or ‘true sanctuary’; “they cannot buy, sell or trade animals, use them for commercial purposes, breed them, or allow the public to come into direct contact with wild or feral animals”⁷¹. Other ethical obligations and responsibilities for sanctuaries outlined by Doyle include that sanctuaries should provide lifetime care to their animal residents and provide “spacious and enriched environments, increased opportunities to engage in species-specific behaviours, and the greatest degree of autonomy possible”⁷². Doyle also suggests that true sanctuaries should also “observe a no-breeding policy”⁷³. She also argues that while true sanctuaries should not allow the public to have direct contact with wild animals in their care, public tours of sanctuaries may be necessary for fundraising to support the animals or animal advocacy⁷⁴.

In contrast to ‘true sanctuaries’, Doyle argues, exist ‘pseudo sanctuaries’ which “take advantage of the positive association with the term sanctuary”⁷⁵ but also might “actively breed, offer photos with animals for a fee, or take wild animals off-site for fundraisers, parties, school presentations, and corporate events... engage in breeding and/or displaying hybridized and inbred wild animals such as white tigers, who are prone to serious congenital defects”⁷⁶. Pseudo sanctuaries do not act with best interests of their animal community members in mind and much more closely resemble zoos than true sanctuaries. Doyle notes that the general public are often unable to differentiate between true sanctuaries and pseudo sanctuaries, arguing that public information campaigns may be necessary to educate people about the crucial differences.

⁶⁹ "What is a sanctuary?," GFAS, accessed August 2, 2021, <https://www.sanctuaryfederation.org/about-gfas/what-is-a-sanctuary/>.

⁷⁰ "The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries - Helping Sanctuaries Help Animals," Encyclopaedia Britannica accessed August 20, 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/explore/savingearth/helping-sanctuaries-help-animals-the-global-federation-of-animal-sanctuaries>.

⁷¹ GFAS, "What is a sanctuary?."

⁷² Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp 58.

⁷³ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp.65

⁷⁴ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp.58

⁷⁵ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp. 59

⁷⁶ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp.59

Doyle also explores the sanctuary-zoo distinction, arguing that zoos are increasingly appropriating the term ‘sanctuary’⁷⁷. Fusari (2017) has also written about this semantic drift in the use of the word sanctuary to describe commercialised, zoo-like facilities, noting the dangerous co-existence of ideas surrounding conservation and captivity and the word ‘sanctuary’, that have been present and on the rise since the 1950s. Fusari argues that facilities such as zoos (which she does not consider to be sanctuaries) have begun to appropriate the term ‘sanctuary’ as a way to “legitimize their existence”⁷⁸. Doyle points out that while sanctuaries prioritize the welfare of animals as individuals, zoos typically prioritize human outcomes. She points out that zoos are touted as places where humans can ‘connect with nature’ and learn about animals and the environment⁷⁹ (often at the expense of captive animals). Even in the case of conservation breeding programs in zoos, Doyle argues that the welfare of individual animals is always secondary to the zoos aims, where species welfare typically takes priority⁸⁰. Animals often develop health issues from confinement and Doyle notes that European zoos “euthanize an estimated 3,000-5,000 animals per year”⁸¹, these animals are considered excess to their needs. Doyle contrasts this with true sanctuaries where every life is precious.

However, sanctuaries are not above reproach. Doyle points out that there is no escaping the fact that sanctuaries are also epicentres of captivity and human control over animal lives; “humans control every aspect of an animal’s life, including where they live, what and when they eat, and with whom they socialize”⁸². Things like handling animals for healthcare, which can be extremely stressful for animals, are often unavoidable in a sanctuary context. With this in mind, Doyle describes processes like ‘protected contact training’ which can offer less stressful ways of medically examining and treating wild animals in captivity. Protected contact training involves using positive reinforcement training to teach captive animals certain behaviours (like holding out a paw) that can help with veterinary procedures. While this does not remove the need for potentially invasive medical treatments, it does allow animals some autonomy over when and how they

⁷⁷ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp.60

⁷⁸Fusari, "What is an animal sanctuary? Evidence from applied linguistics." pp149

⁷⁹ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." pp.61

⁸⁰ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." pp.61

⁸¹ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." pp.61

⁸² Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp.63.

participate in their healthcare. One of Doyle's other main concerns is that sanctuaries run the risk of becoming a way for people to normalise non-human animal captivity⁸³. In this regard, Doyle argues that true sanctuaries have a responsibility to engage in advocacy that encourages the public to ask difficult questions about their relationships with animals and animal captivity⁸⁴. Doyle states that "true sanctuaries are the only ones to condemn the very concept of captivity."⁸⁵

Captivity is never far from my mind when it comes my own sanctuary Sydney Fox and Dingo Rescue (SFDR). Doyle's argument that true sanctuaries have a responsibility to critique captivity and not normalize the concept of captive animals is a key guiding ethic at SFDR. Our sanctuary is home to captive wild animals (mainly foxes and dingoes) who are in the unique position of often being able to survive outside of captivity, but unable to legally be released. Once a fox or dingo is removed from the wild, they can never go back. The inevitability of our sanctuary residents' lifelong captivity comes with a deep sadness. Working to end captivity for future generations is our responsibility and the beginning of a process of long-overdue moral repair.

2.3 Farmed Animal Sanctuaries

In 'Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement', Donaldson and Kymlicka explore different models adopted by US farm sanctuaries. They argue that farm sanctuaries in particular, have traditionally followed a model they describe as the 'refuge + advocacy model'⁸⁶. They describe these sanctuaries as grassroots operations, typically in rural areas, often founded by a small group of individuals and funded by donations. They are generally run by volunteers. Donaldson and Kymlicka describe refuge + advocacy sanctuaries as providing a safe haven and lifelong home to the animals they rescue, but also generally performing some type of public education and advocacy, often this will involve tours of the sanctuary in order to try foster connections between members of the public and residents of the sanctuary. These connections are intended to foster long-

⁸³ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp.63.

⁸⁴ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp. 82.

⁸⁵ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp. 55.

⁸⁶ It's important for the purposes of the following discussion to note that many sanctuaries encompass aspects of multiple ethical frame works and rarely fit neatly and precisely into one category.

term changes to behaviour in the human visitors- for example no longer consuming animals.

Donaldson and Kymlicka are critical of the refuge + advocacy model because of what they perceive as a lack of impact on visitors to the sanctuaries as well as the constraints placed on non-human animal residents. Donaldson and Kymlicka describe the refuge and advocacy model as reliant on “changing the beliefs of individuals one by one.”⁸⁷ They are sceptical about the efficacy of such a model, which relies on “individual transformation”⁸⁸ and cite research by Humane Research Council in the US which found that, “only 1 in 5 vegans/vegetarians sticks with the diet”⁸⁹. Furthermore, Donaldson and Kymlicka note that we “do not know the pre-existing views or dietary habits of people visiting sanctuaries; we do not know whether their behavior changes after their visit (and if so, whether this change is sustained).”⁹⁰ Until such time as this is better researched, stories of this type of transformative change are what they describe as “more an article of faith than a well-established fact”⁹¹. So while visits and tours of farm-animal sanctuaries may produce short-term effects on small numbers of people, Donaldson and Kymlicka describe such effects as “temporary and non-transformative due to the limits of an individual conversion model of social change”⁹². According to Donaldson and Kymlicka this focus on the power of individual conscience, by both some sanctuaries and the animal rights movement as a whole, detracts from the political and institutional structures we should be focused on, to create large-scale, genuine change⁹³. They write:

We have to do more than change individual beliefs and desires concerning animal consumption; we have to create communities of interspecies justice that support those beliefs and desires, and connect them to broader conceptions of, and strategies for, social and institutional change⁹⁴

⁸⁷ Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement," *Politics and Animals* 1, no. 1 (2015).. Pp. 53

⁸⁸ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp. 53

⁸⁹ "How many former vegetarians and vegans are there? ," 2014, accessed August 19, 2021, <https://faunalytics.org/how-many-former-vegetariansand-vegans-are-there/>.

⁹⁰ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp. 53

⁹¹ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp. 53

⁹² Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp.53

⁹³ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp. 54

⁹⁴ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp. 53

Another concern raised by Donaldson and Kymlicka, often seen in farm animal sanctuaries, is the way in which sanctuary experiences/visitor programs might impact human visitors' concepts of "animals' natures, status, and roles"⁹⁵. Whilst farm sanctuaries undoubtedly offer visitors the opportunity to see animals living in starkly different settings, and vastly improved conditions compared to factory farms, Donaldson and Kymlicka note that many farm animal sanctuaries do share similarities with 'traditional' farms: "pastoral settings with fenced pastures and yards, and red-roofed barns with animals segregated by species, being cared for by human stewards."⁹⁶ Seeing sanctuary animals in settings like this may have the inadvertent effect of reinforcing our assumptions about "where farmed animals belong"⁹⁷ particularly in relation to humans. As opposed to challenging these assumptions, particularly ideas of confinement, captivity and human control and entitlement. I will revisit the ethics of captivity within sanctuaries in the second and third chapters of this thesis.

Finally, Donaldson and Kymlicka are also critical of sanctuaries operating under a refuge and advocacy model because of the way in which paternalism within such a model can limit "animals' participation in key decisions"⁹⁸. Donaldson and Kymlicka point out, "sanctuaries, not just as communities of conscientious and committed staff and volunteers caring for animals"⁹⁹ but rather they need to be thought of as institutions, and just like all caring institutions "roles, rules, and practices structure social relations... allocate power in very specific ways"¹⁰⁰. If we stop and consider public sanctuaries that follow a refuge and advocacy model, Donaldson and Kymlicka describe an institution where "a concentrated and segregated population (the animals) is cared for by paid experts and/or volunteers with defined roles."¹⁰¹ While animal care is at the forefront of the institution's goals, a clear hierarchy exists between the animals and their human caregivers "who make the decisions" about the animals and their care, "under terms established by humans"¹⁰². This power relationship between carers and their charges is one Donaldson and Kymlicka note is not limited to animal sanctuaries, it also poses

⁹⁵ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp. 53

⁹⁶ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp. 54

⁹⁷ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp. 54

⁹⁸ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp. 56

⁹⁹ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp. 55

¹⁰⁰ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp. 55

¹⁰¹ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp. 55

¹⁰² Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp. 56

challenges for other care institutions such as orphanages, domestic violence shelters, retirement homes, institutions for humans with intellectual disabilities and homeless shelters.¹⁰³

Borrowing ideas from the disability activist movement Donaldson and Kymlicka argue that while traditional refuge + advocacy style sanctuaries function like ‘total institutions’, but like other oppressive or paternalistic care institutions i.e. nursing homes or psychiatric facilities, sanctuaries have the potential to transform into communities focused on belonging, agency and self-determination¹⁰⁴. “Under the right conditions, animals may often be in a better position than we are to figure out how they want to live, and in ways that we may be unable even to imagine”. Donaldson and Kymlicka suggest some of conditions that might be necessary for sanctuaries to function as intentional communities. They suggest that sanctuaries should “attempt to determine what sort of social life an animal wants to have, including their preferences to be part of an interspecies (or breed, or sex) community, and then support these preferences through creative design of space and structures to support choice, while limiting risk.”¹⁰⁵

Principle amongst Donaldson and Kymlicka’s scaffolding for sanctuaries as intentional communities is non-hierarchical social relations and shared community membership or citizenship for both human and non-human sanctuary residents. Justice, Donaldson and Kymlicka argue, in the context of sanctuaries, requires setting up conditions under which animals can have the greatest level of self-determination possible. Conditions where animals can make choices about how they live, whom they live with and what their needs are; doing away with the idea that human caregivers are better positioned to make choices on behalf of animals.

2.4 Property and Improperty: ecologies of care and rescue

One way in which we can try and define sanctuaries and separate them from other facilities that provide care to in-situ animals like circuses or zoos is through their ethical goals and frameworks. Elan Abrell’s ethnographic study of US animal sanctuaries ‘Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care’, describes the sanctuary as

¹⁰³ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp. 56

¹⁰⁴ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp. 64

¹⁰⁵ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp. 58

“a space of exception from the typical treatment of animals ...that challenges the larger cultural, political, and economic contexts in which they are reducible to living property”¹⁰⁶ Abrell, like Pachirat, notes the struggle sanctuaries face and their inability to ever completely fulfil their ethical goals- with the “medical, dietary, and psychological needs of different animals to the spatial constraints’ making sanctuary care a matter of “compromises and sacrifices.”¹⁰⁷ Where Donaldson and Kymlicka focus on animal citizenship and rights-based frameworks, Abrell focuses his work on the ability of sanctuaries as spaces that can ‘unmake’ or challenge the property status of animals and the complications and contradictions this poses for sanctuaries. A sanctuary as Abrell defines it, is a space in which animals are “neither fully autonomous subjects nor property. Instead, they can be understood as improperty: living beings within a shifting spectrum between property and subjecthood.”¹⁰⁸

But what does it mean in practical terms to be a sanctuary that strives to ‘unmake’ animals property status? Abrell suggests that this process of unmaking can be achieved through sanctuary caregivers everyday practices of relating to animals as subjects¹⁰⁹ (rather than property). Some of these practices might be as simple as addressing of needs of animals as individuals rather than as a population or species group. Other practices described by Abrell include ‘care goals’ aimed at achieving animal happiness and psychological wellbeing¹¹⁰ as well as efforts to provide animals with more autonomy and control over their spaces and companions¹¹¹. However, Abrell recognises that the process of unmaking and gaining of subjecthood for animals may never be entirely complete because “in the end, sanctuaries themselves are ultimately larger cages”¹¹²., embedded within the same socio-political and economic systems they try to challenge and disrupt. For example, many sanctuaries rely on things like sanctuary tours and other forms of animal exhibitionism and visitor/animal interactions that could be perceived as exploitative.

¹⁰⁶Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*. Pp 3.

¹⁰⁷Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*. Pp. 3.

¹⁰⁸ Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*. Pp 19.

¹⁰⁹ Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*. Pp. 14

¹¹⁰ Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*. Pp. 65

¹¹¹ Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*. Pp. 66

¹¹² Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*. Pp. 17

Abrell describes what he views as a wide variety of multispecies communities. Though they may not all reach the bar set by Donaldson and Kymlicka's model for fully autonomous animal citizens, Abrell argues that many sanctuaries function as multispecies communities because of their unique ability to begin the moral repair necessary to unmake the property status of non-human animals. When animals gain subjectivity, they become active members of communities with individual relationships, desires and needs. Abrell suggests that even when sanctuary animals cannot be fully unmade as property or achieve true citizenship, they are afforded rights that inaccessible to many animals outside the space of sanctuaries; "basic rights to life, sustenance and freedom from harm"¹¹³. Abrell describes sanctuaries as part of a fundamental "transformation in human-animal relations"¹¹⁴ necessary for our shared future, at least in part because of their persistent belief that "humans and animals could live well and free together"¹¹⁵.

2.5 VINE Sanctuary

Author and activist patrice jones has a unique relationship with sanctuaries compared to the other scholars explored in this chapter. jones is the co-founder (along with Miriam Jones) of VINE Sanctuary, a US farm sanctuary, which began as Maryland (as Eastern Shore Sanctuary) in 2000 and later relocated to Vermont in 2009. Today VINE is home to over 700 animals¹¹⁶. Their website describes the sanctuary as; "an LGBTQ-led farmed animal sanctuary that works for social and environmental justice as well as for animal liberation"¹¹⁷ and jones herself has expressed her commitment to "'queering' animal liberation"¹¹⁸ by highlighting the intersections between speciesism and anti-LGBTQ bias. The unique approach of jones through her work at VINE Sanctuary has been the subject of ethnographic work by authors such as Abrell and Donaldson and Kymlicka. This is largely due to VINE's commitment to forming a "unique multispecies

¹¹³ Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*. Pp. 175

¹¹⁴ Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*. Pp. 178

¹¹⁵ Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*. Pp. 178

¹¹⁶ "Home," accessed September 14, 2021, <https://vinesanctuary.org/>.

¹¹⁷ Vine Sanctuary, "Home."

¹¹⁸ Lori Gruen and Fiona Probyn-Rapsey, *Animaladies: Gender, Animals and Madness* (Bloomsbury, 2018).

community”¹¹⁹, one that is co-created by both the human and animal residents, as well as jones strong commitment to intersectionality¹²⁰.

For jones, intersectionality and care should be the heart of sanctuary work¹²¹. jones describes VINE as a space that exists to combat the “particularly grievous intersection of sexism and speciesism to which neither feminists nor animal advocates were attending sufficiently.”¹²² jones is also a strong proponent of Lori Gruen’s work around empathy (discussed earlier in this chapter) and she believes that it is through the use of empathy that we can improve both our relationships with non-human animals and our animal advocacy:¹²³

When we listen to animals whom we recognize as being already engaged in the pursuit of their own wellbeing and liberation, we don't get stuck in human-constructed theoretical deadlocks and are therefore more free to be their allies..¹²⁴

jones uses the example of ex-cock fighting roosters to highlight the importance of intersectionality in her sanctuary work. jones describes roosters as “both the victims and the unwitting agents of human sexism”¹²⁵ arguing that the exploitation faced by cock fighting roosters is highly gendered¹²⁶. jones states that roosters have become symbols of masculinity and therefore cockfighting roosters are, by extension, ways for some men and boys to express their own masculinity through violence¹²⁷. Although illegal in all US states cock fighting persists illegally particularly in Southern US states as well as in Central America and South America. jones explains that roosters involved in cock

¹¹⁹ Vine Sanctuary, "Home."

¹²⁰ The term “intersectionality” was coined by Black legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw and refers to the way in which different forms of oppression and privilege are interconnected. See Kimberlé W Crenshaw, *On intersectionality: Essential writings* (The New Press, 2017).

¹²¹ Patrice Jones, *The Oxen at the Intersection* (Lantern Books, 2014). Pp. 358

¹²² Jones, *The Oxen at the Intersection*. Pp. 139.

¹²³ Patrice Jones, "Damned and Dammed Desire in Animal Exploitation and Liberation," in *Animaladies : Gender, Animals, and Madness*, ed. and Fiona Probyn-Rapsey Lori Gruen (Bloomsbury Academic & Professional., 2018). Pp. 201

¹²⁴ Patrice Jones, "Afterword," in *Entangled empathy: An alternative ethic for our relationships with animals.*, ed. Lori Gruen (Lantern Books, 2015).

¹²⁵ Patrice Jones, "Fighting Cocks," in *Sister species: Women, animals and social justice.*, ed. Lisa A. Kemmerer (University of Illinois Press, 2011). Pp. 54

¹²⁶ Patrice Jones, "Roosters, hawks and dawns: toward an inclusive, embodied eco/feminist psychology," *Feminism & Psychology* 20, no. 3 (2010).

¹²⁷ Jones, "Roosters, hawks and dawns: toward an inclusive, embodied eco/feminist psychology."

fighting are socialised to believe that other roosters are predators¹²⁸, who must therefore be attacked and fought off. The roosters are “provoked by injections of testosterone and methamphetamines, armed with steel blades”¹²⁹ and then set upon each other to fight to the death. Because cock fighting is illegal and typically associated with illegal gambling activity, fights are often shut down by authorities and the roosters are seized. Post seizure roosters are most commonly killed, because they are perceived as too aggressive to ever be rehabilitated or live normal lives. Jones contests this, arguing that fighting cocks can and have been rehabilitated at VINE sanctuary. Jones argues that roosters are not inherently aggressive animals, and it is only through extreme measures of deprivation and abuse that became fighting cocks - “Roosters fight from fear, not aggression”¹³⁰. Aggression is not a part of the vocabulary of their masculinity, the desire to fight and kill is drilled into them and therefore it can be unlearned. Jones describes VINE’s rehabilitation process for ex-cock fighting roosters as; “using the same principles that a psychotherapist might use to help patients overcome phobias or posttraumatic stress”¹³¹. Roosters are gradually taught not to fear other birds and how to socialise with them without violence. Jones notes that contrary to the widespread belief that these roosters cannot be rehabilitated; “we’ve never had a fighting cock so incorrigible that we couldn’t find a place for him to be free. Fighting unto death is not their natural behaviour.”¹³² Once rehabilitated, roosters at VINE have the choice to roam the 500-acre sanctuary, wandering the woods and perching in the trees¹³³. VINE offers them not only a life but agency, the ability to choose where they sleep and who they spend time with. This ability to make choices and form relationships is crucial to Jones’ framework for sanctuaries as multi-species communities.

Animals at VINE are not only perceived as individuals, but thinking, imagining, social people with their own emotional needs and desires. Abrell describes VINE’s founding philosophy as “birds will be birds”, meaning that Patrice, Miriam and the VINE community would make decisions based on “what they thought birds, and specifically each individual bird, wanted for itself, rather than what they thought would be best for it

¹²⁸ Jones, " Fighting Cocks." Pp. 55

¹²⁹ Jones, " Fighting Cocks." Pp. 55

¹³⁰ Jones, " Fighting Cocks." Pp. 55

¹³¹ Jones, " Fighting Cocks." Pp.55

¹³² Jones, " Fighting Cocks." pp. 56

¹³³ Jones, " Fighting Cocks." pp. 46

as humans.”¹³⁴ VINE co-founder Mirum Jones describes this aspect of VINE’s mission, to increase animal agency and freedom, as striving for “free-feeling captivity”. This means creating the fewest impediments to animal movement as possible and maximising animal choices and animal involvement in decision making. Unlike some sanctuaries where animals are segregated by species and contained within designated fenced paddocks, VINE allows animals to choose who they spend time with and form meaningful inter-species relationships. The cows, chickens, ducks, sheep, emus and other sanctuary residents are free to roam the sanctuary grounds including the forested areas. while still subject to some restrictions (that remain practically necessary) such as boundary fences, sterilization and necessary medical care, the sanctuary endeavours to ensure animal residents are “as free as possible”¹³⁵ to live their lives, form relationships and engage in species-specific behaviours. We will return to the concept of free-feeling captivity in Chapter 3: “True sanctuaries, ‘all captivity is a problem for animals’”.

¹³⁴ Abrell, Elan L. "Saving Animals: Everyday Practices of Care and Rescue in the US Animal Sanctuary Movement. 2016. City University of New York." PhD diss., PhD dissertation. Pp. 257

¹³⁵ Jones, "Captivity in the context of a sanctuary for formerly farmed animals."

Chapter 2: True Sanctuaries - ‘make kin not babies’.

Introduction

In the previous chapter of this thesis, I explored several descriptions of sanctuaries that prohibit deliberate breeding/reproduction. Dingo breeding, by self-described ‘dingo sanctuaries’, is common across Australia. One of Australia’s best-known dingo breeding programs occurs at the Dingo Discovery Sanctuary and Research Centre (DDS), otherwise known as the Australia Dingo Foundation (ADF) in Victoria. Other Australian facilities that either currently breed dingoes or have bred dingoes in the past and describe themselves as sanctuaries include Bargo Dingo Sanctuary (NSW), Durong Dingo Sanctuary (QLD), Bushland Dingo Haven (VIC), Jirrahlinga Koala and Wildlife Sanctuary (VIC), and Secret Creek Wildlife Sanctuary (NSW). These arguments typically centre on preventing the possible extinction of dingoes in the wild and propose several ways breeding dingoes in captivity can achieve this goal. Firstly, captive dingo breeding is purportedly a way to conserve ‘pure’ dingo bloodlines and maintain an ark-like backup population. Secondly, dingo breeding provides ‘ambassador animals’ for zoos and other facilities to increase public awareness of the plight of wild dingoes. Finally, dingo breeding creates a ready supply of dingo puppies for the native pet trade. Through pet ownership, the argument can be made, humans will form stronger and more meaningful connections with dingoes, thus increasing their value and ensuring their survival – either in captivity as pets or through increased support for in-situ conservation measures. Accounting for these rationalisations, I make the argument that breeding dingoes is incompatible with being a ‘true’ sanctuary¹³⁶. I argue that captive dingo breeding not only harms captive dingoes but perpetuates colonial notions of purity as well as normalising captivity, things sanctuaries should be working to dismantle, not preserve. I use Catherine Doyle’s concept of ‘true sanctuaries’ to discuss dingo sanctuaries in Australia. I will also draw on Thom van Dooren’s concept of ‘violent care’ to better understand the contradictory ways in which dingoes experience conservation breeding programs, making the case that dingo sanctuaries have a responsibility to examine the violence dingoes experience as a result of captive breeding as well as the ‘logics’ and discourse that drive

¹³⁶ Rosemary-Claire Collard, "Putting Animals Back Together, Taking Commodities Apart," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 104, no. 1 (2014/01/02 2014), <https://doi.org/10.1080/00045608.2013.847750>, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00045608.2013.847750>.

that violence. Finally, I will argue for a sanctuary philosophy that prioritises relationship-building, queer kinship (following Guenther) and multi-species community over reproduction and works to dismantle the cycle of inter-generational captivity that plagues Australian dingoes. I conclude by arguing that Donna Haraway's aphorism "make kin, not babies"¹³⁷ is a more fitting ethos for true dingo sanctuaries.

1. Arguments in favor of breeding dingoes

The most widespread justification for captive dingo breeding is species conservation through both ex-situ breeding programs and public education using ambassador animals. The Dingo Discovery Sanctuary/Australian Dingo Foundation (DDS/ADF) describe their facility as "a unique conservation establishment" which aims to "preserve and conserve the gene pool of the original dingo"¹³⁸. The DDS/ADF also run public education programs aimed at "raising awareness for the dingoes"¹³⁹, where the public can pay to interact with 'ambassador' dingoes for a "very good price"¹⁴⁰. Similarly, the Bargo Dingo Sanctuary/ The Australian Native Dog Conservation Society (BDS) describe themselves as dedicated to "keeping and breeding the Australian Native Dingo as a pure species"¹⁴¹, they also list public education amongst their primary functions¹⁴² and offer paid dingo encounters where "you and the children can pat, feed and cuddle a dingo"¹⁴³.

In order to unpack the merits of these types of justifications for captive dingo breeding, sections one and two of this chapter will consider the following questions: firstly, do pure dingoes exist and if so, do they need conserving? Secondly, do captive animals have educational value and do they promote an interest in conversation? Additionally, using van Dooren's concept of violent care, I will explore how dingo breeding programs affect individual dingoes and whether they are morally justifiable for sanctuaries.

¹³⁷ Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble : Making Kin in the Chthulucene*.

¹³⁸ "Home," Australian Dingo Foundation, accessed February 8, 2020, <https://dingofoundation.org/>.

¹³⁹ "Education," Australia Dingo Foundation, <https://dingofoundation.org/education-resource/>.

¹⁴⁰ "Dingo Encounter Tours," Australian Dingo Foundation, accessed August 15, 2021, <https://dingofoundation.org/dingo-encounter-tours/>.

¹⁴¹ "Home," Bargo Dingo Sanctuary, accessed August 8, 2021, <https://dingosanctuarybargo.com.au/>.

¹⁴² "About us," Bargo Dingo Sanctuary, accessed August 8, 2021, <https://dingosanctuarybargo.com.au/about-us/>.

¹⁴³ "Entry Ticket," Bargo Dingo Sanctuary, accessed August 8, 2021, <https://dingosanctuarybargo.com.au/donation-type/entry-ticket/>.

1.1 Ex-situ breeding and conservation

Braverman argues that for many zoos and wildlife parks, the ex-situ breeding of animals for eventual reintroduction to the wild is their “defining rationale”¹⁴⁴. But Braverman¹⁴⁵ and Hutchins¹⁴⁶ note that conservation breeding programs are far more complex than a simple or genuine desire to repopulate ‘the wild’ with animals at risk of extinction. Braverman argues that ex-situ breeding programs largely owe their origins to a system of changes to national and international legal codes phased in throughout the late 1970s in Europe and the United States of America.¹⁴⁷ These changes limited the ability of zoos and wildlife parks to remove wild animals from their habitats to exhibit them in their facilities. To remain open, these facilities needed to begin ex-situ breeding programs¹⁴⁸. Braverman suggests that over time, in order to remain socially relevant and with the rise of conservation biology in the 1980s, zoos and other animal facilities began to justify their existing breeding programs, originally designed to produce exhibition animals, as ex-situ conservation measures. The stated aim was to sustain “genetically diverse, demographically stable, and viable captive populations ... to serve as assurance colonies should wild populations go extinct”¹⁴⁹. By aligning themselves with the growing public interest in animal protection and conservation of at-risk populations in the wild, zoos were able to differentiate themselves from circuses and other captive animal facilities that existed solely for entertainment.

Hutchins et al. note “there are far too many endangered species and not nearly enough space to breed them all in captivity”¹⁵⁰. The issue of habitat loss also means that in many cases there is “far too little habitat remaining in which to reintroduce them”¹⁵¹.

¹⁴⁴Irus Braverman, "Captive for life," in *The Ethics of Captivity*, ed. Lori Gruen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). Pp.195

¹⁴⁵ Braverman, "Captive for life."

¹⁴⁶ Michael Hutchins, Brandie Smith, and Ruth Allard, "In defense of zoos and aquariums: the ethical basis for keeping wild animals in captivity," *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 223, no. 7 (2003/10// 2003), <https://doi.org/10.2460/javma.2003.223.958-2>, <http://europepmc.org/abstract/MED/14552481>

<https://doi.org/10.2460/javma.2003.223.958-2>.

¹⁴⁷Braverman, "Captive for life."pp 193

¹⁴⁸ Irus Braverman, "Conservation without nature: the trouble with in situ versus ex situ conservation," *Geoforum* 51 (2014), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2013.09.018>, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0016718513002200>.

¹⁴⁹ Braverman, "Conservation without nature: the trouble with in situ versus ex situ conservation."pp. 196

¹⁵⁰ Hutchins, Smith, and Allard, "In defense of zoos and aquariums: the ethical basis for keeping wild animals in captivity." Pp. 515

¹⁵¹ Hutchins, Smith, and Allard, "In defense of zoos and aquariums: the ethical basis for keeping wild animals in captivity."

Hutchins et al. describe reintroduction programs as, “difficult and expensive”, ultimately “treating the symptoms of species loss rather than the causes”¹⁵². As McGowan et al. state in their 2016 article on IUCN guidelines “not all threatened species may require or even benefit from ex situ management...nor do all ex situ populations provide direct conservation benefits”¹⁵³.

Consider the example of the Dingo Discovery Sanctuary/Australian Dingo foundation (DDS/ADF), one of Australia’s best-known dingo breeding facilities. When describing their own breeding program, the DDS/ADF argues that “the gene pool of the original dingo” can be “preserved and conserved...by means of a breeding establishment”¹⁵⁴ so they can “one day help release dingoes back into the wild”¹⁵⁵. Simultaneously, however, the DDS/ADF website also states that “the pure dingo in the wild is doomed”¹⁵⁶ and that “there is no way that our Sanctuary, or indeed any/all of the dingo breeding sanctuaries in Australia today combined can save the species”¹⁵⁷. Is the dingo doomed in the wild or doomed in captivity? Or perhaps both? These types of contradictory statements reveal the unstable nature of the logic used to justify captive dingo breeding.

Ex-situ programs that do not exist to complement in-situ habitat conservation measures have very little chance of achieving their stated goal of conserving endangered species¹⁵⁸. Therefore, if ex-situ breeding programs genuinely intend to breed dingoes for release into the wild, we must consider the likelihood of survival. The DDS/ADF states that whilst captive breeding “in no way impairs their natural instincts,” their facility produces “tractable and socialised”¹⁵⁹ pet dingoes (this will be explored in greater detail

¹⁵² Hutchins, Smith, and Allard, "In defense of zoos and aquariums: the ethical basis for keeping wild animals in captivity." pp.515

¹⁵³ Philip J.K. McGowan, Kathy Traylor-Holzer, and Kristin Leus, "IUCN Guidelines for Determining When and How Ex Situ Management Should Be Used in Species Conservation," *Conservation Letters* 10, no. 3 (2017), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/conl.12285>, <https://conbio.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/conl.12285>. pp 362.

¹⁵⁴ "Our Sanctuary," Australian Dingo Foundation, accessed August 12, 2021, <https://dingofoundation.org/sanctuary/>.

¹⁵⁵ <https://www.smh.com.au/national/under-threat-at-home-dingoes-go-global-20090512-b1we.html>

¹⁵⁶ "Uncertain Future," Australian Dingo Foundation, accessed August 12, 2021, <https://dingofoundation.org/uncertain-future/>.

¹⁵⁷ Foundation, "Uncertain Future.", Australian Dingo Foundation

¹⁵⁸ McGowan, Traylor-Holzer, and Leus, "IUCN Guidelines for Determining When and How Ex Situ Management Should Be Used in Species Conservation."

¹⁵⁹ "Our dingoes," Australian Dingo Foundation, accessed August 12, 2021, <https://dingofoundation.org/our-dingoes/>.

in section 1.5) and captive ambassadors for zoo exhibits (see section 1.4). Unlike the DDS/ADF, the Bargo Dingo Sanctuary does not sell dingoes to the general public; however, they also describe captive-bred dingoes as having the potential to be “delightful companions in the family environment”¹⁶⁰. It has been my experience running a dingo rescue facility that the temperament and behaviour of captive-bred dingoes vary considerably from their wild-born counterparts. Over the past nine years, Sydney Fox and Dingo Rescue has had dingoes surrendered to our rescue who were originally bred by the DDS/ADF, Bushland Dingo Haven, Featherdale Wildlife Park, The Reptile Park and Dargo Downs Wildlife. In my experience working with dingoes, even when socialised from a young age, wild-born dingoes are substantially more destructive, prey driven, energetic, timid and reactive than captive-bred dingoes. They are also invariably better at jumping, digging and climbing – all traits that would increase their chances of survival in the wild.

While releasing dingoes into the wild is currently illegal, even if this were to change in the future, Jule et al. note that most captive-bred large carnivores will in fact die if returned to their natural habitat¹⁶¹. When reviewing 45 different examples of carnivore reintroduction studies worldwide, Jule et al. found that the survival rate for animals such as wolves, bears, foxes and tigers and other species was, on average, just 33%¹⁶². The most common causes of death were all human-related, along with starvation¹⁶³. Researchers concluded that “captivity negatively influences animals’ capabilities to survive” and “can result in a lack of appropriate ‘wild’ type behaviours”¹⁶⁴. This is supported by other research into behavioural variance in captive-bred animals by researchers such as McPhee¹⁶⁵. It is not difficult to believe that captive dingo descendants would face similar challenges if they were ever released. In particular, this is due to

¹⁶⁰ "About Dingoes," Bargo Dingo Sanctuary, accessed August 12, 2021, <https://dingosanctuarybargo.com.au/about-dingoes/>.

¹⁶¹ Kristen R Jule, Lisa A Leaver, and Stephen EG Lea, "The effects of captive experience on reintroduction survival in carnivores: a review and analysis," *Biological conservation* 141, no. 2 (2008). Pp.360

¹⁶² Jule, Leaver, and Lea, "The effects of captive experience on reintroduction survival in carnivores: a review and analysis." Pp.361

¹⁶³ Jule, Leaver, and Lea, "The effects of captive experience on reintroduction survival in carnivores: a review and analysis." Pp. 361

¹⁶⁴ Jule, Leaver, and Lea, "The effects of captive experience on reintroduction survival in carnivores: a review and analysis."pp.361.

¹⁶⁵ M Elsbeth McPhee, "Generations in captivity increases behavioral variance: considerations for captive breeding and reintroduction programs," *Biological conservation* 115, no. 1 (2004).

selective breeding which has focussed on producing better ‘pets’, an issue I will return to. And so the question must be asked, with no hope of reintroduction or release, is the ongoing, life-long violence of captivity justifiable or necessary in the case of the dingo?

1.2 Violent Care

Thom van Dooren’s work on ‘violent care’ explores the harms captive breeding inflicts on individuals. Van Dooren defines violent care as a process of human intervention into non-human animal lives, largely occurring at the “dull edge of extinction”¹⁶⁶ where individuals’ welfare and lives are “abandoned or sacrificed”¹⁶⁷ by conservationists for the continuity of a species. He writes, “in the context of conservation biology...care of the species often trumps other considerations, including the wellbeing of the individual animal”¹⁶⁸. Van Dooren describes some of the many forms of violence the contemporary conservation breeding movement typically relies upon: “abandonment, suffering, captivity, and killing”,¹⁶⁹ both of the species being conserved, and other sacrificial species that do not meet the criteria of ‘rare’ and ‘native’, such as non-natives and animals killed for food.

When describing the manifestation of so-called ‘violent care’, van Dooren uses the example of the Whooping Crane, one of North America’s most endangered bird species¹⁷⁰. Early efforts at conserving the Whooping Crane centred on protecting areas of remaining habitat and preventing hunters from shooting the cranes during their yearly migration¹⁷¹. Van Dooren describes these efforts as “slow but, over time, relatively successful”. However, with only a single population of Whooping Cranes, conservationists feared they were at risk of disease or other localized disasters. As a result, breeding programs were established in both Canada and the United States in the 1960s to maintain genetic diversity in captivity and to breed birds that could later be released into the wild¹⁷². Van Dooren describes the complex intersection of “care for a species and care

¹⁶⁶ Van Dooren, "A day with crows-rarity, nativity and the violent-care of conservation." pp.13

¹⁶⁷ Van Dooren, "A day with crows-rarity, nativity and the violent-care of conservation."; Thom Van Dooren, *Flight ways* (Columbia University Press, 2014).pp. 116

¹⁶⁸ Van Dooren, *Flight ways*. Pp. 116

¹⁶⁹ Van Dooren, "A day with crows-rarity, nativity and the violent-care of conservation." Pp.2

¹⁷⁰ Van Dooren, *Flight ways*. Pp. 87-122

¹⁷¹ Van Dooren, *Flight ways*. Pp. 90.

¹⁷² Van Dooren, *Flight ways*. Pp. 90.

for individual birds”¹⁷³ that occurs in these captive populations, which he says involve stories of both “intense and dedicated care”¹⁷⁴ as well as “ongoing and unavoidable practices of violence”¹⁷⁵.

In the case of the Whooping cranes, “the conservation of the species has required that the good of individuals... be “sacrificed”¹⁷⁶. Because Whooping Cranes do not readily breed in captivity and are often viewed as “poor parents”¹⁷⁷, cranes in these programs are hatched from artificially incubated eggs taken from wild crane nests (the nesting crane will then lay more eggs) or eggs laid by artificially inseminated cranes in captivity¹⁷⁸. Chicks, hatched in captivity, are typically not parent-reared; instead, they are raised by human surrogates in costumes, sometimes with puppet cranes, and taught migration routes using ultralight aircraft. Van Dooren argues that the dedicated care given to the individual cranes is driven by a deep investment in the survival of the species. Taking the eggs away from parents and rearing them with human surrogates produces the maximum number of chicks. However as a result of being raised by humans, the chicks face a range of developmental issues, which often undermine their ability to form normal relationships with other cranes¹⁷⁹. Whilst some cranes raised in captivity have gone on to successfully find a partner once released, others find their “social and sexual cues are out of kilter”¹⁸⁰. These cranes are left to “live out their lives ostracized and alone”¹⁸¹. Costume rearing means that some Whooping Cranes demonstrate imprinting behaviour and habituation toward humans. When released, these cranes will often visit suburban areas in search of human company¹⁸². Van Dooren argues that imprinting is inherently a coercive practice that fundamentally shifts and moulds a bird’s social identity and ability to engage in conspecific social behaviours. In addition to imprinting, van Dooren points to other issues with Whooping Cranes in captivity, including problems with physical development resulting in toe and leg issues¹⁸³. While van Dooren leaves us in no doubt that the human caregivers of the Whooping Cranes put an immense amount of time and

¹⁷³ Van Dooren, *Flight ways*. Pp. 91.

¹⁷⁴ Van Dooren, *Flight ways*. Pp. 91.

¹⁷⁵ Van Dooren, *Flight ways*. Pp. 92.

¹⁷⁶ Van Dooren, *Flight ways*. Pp. 91

¹⁷⁷ Van Dooren, *Flight ways*. Pp. 94

¹⁷⁸ Van Dooren, *Flight ways*. Pp. 93.

¹⁷⁹ Van Dooren, *Flight ways*. Pp. 91.

¹⁸⁰ Van Dooren, *Flight ways*. Pp. 103.

¹⁸¹ Van Dooren, *Flight ways*. Pp.103.

¹⁸² Van Dooren, *Flight ways*. Pp. 99.

¹⁸³ Van Dooren, *Flight ways*. Pp. 106.

care into raising them, he questions the ethical implications of these interspecies relationships. He writes, “My objection is not to the birds themselves...Rather my objection is to the broader framework of practices that has produced these, often vulnerable and fraught, lives”¹⁸⁴.

Similarly, in the case of the dingo and current captive breeding programs, we might ask, is it ethical to subject generations of dingoes to life in captivity? Especially when that captivity potentially consists of confinement, family separation and the inability to engage in normal wild-type behaviours, i.e. hunting. At the DDS/ADF, enclosures for adult dingoes are described by Smith and Watson (2015) as being “2m by 15m including 12m of flooring made from quarry rubble (gravel) and a 3m section of concrete slab”¹⁸⁵. This is the minimum size required by the DELWP (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning) for Victorian dingo permit holders. Unlike the cranes, dingoes have no legal avenue or hope of a return to ‘the wild’. The images below show the DDS dingo enclosures. The dingoes live in these small, bare enclosures where they are bred to produce offspring who will be separated from their parents and sold¹⁸⁶. Their existence hinges on the unrealized promise that one day laws will change and the dream of a safe habitat for the dingo to return to will still exist, in country with one of the highest rates of land clearing and habitat destruction in the world¹⁸⁷.

¹⁸⁴ Van Dooren, *Flight ways*. Pp. 104

¹⁸⁵ Smith, *The dingo debate: origins, behaviour and conservation*. Pp. 287.

¹⁸⁶ Smith, *The dingo debate: origins, behaviour and conservation*.pp.286

¹⁸⁷ Preece, Noel D., and Penny van Oosterzee. "Australia is a global top-ten deforester and Queensland is leading the way." *Green Left Weekly* 1163 (2017): 9.



Figure 2.0: Video footage of the DDS/ADF dingo enclosure as seen in 'The story of Wandi'¹⁸⁸.



Figure 2.1: Video footage of the DDS/ADF dingo enclosure as seen in 'The story of Wandi'¹⁸⁹.

1.3 Purity and dingo extinction myths

Conservation of the 'pure' dingo is perhaps the most common argument used to justify captive dingo breeding practices. The term 'pure' appears on the DDS/ADF

¹⁸⁸ 'The story of Wandi', *the Age*, May 8, 2020. Online video news broadcast.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=871842356653260>

¹⁸⁹ The Age, 'The story of Wandi'.

website at least 27 times¹⁹⁰, and the DDS/ADF boasts “the largest number of pure, unrelated dingo bloodlines in the world.”¹⁹¹ However, breeding facilities engaged in advocating for the conservation of the species by reference to species purity are in a bind; ‘purity’ cannot be guaranteed in the wild, where animals can run relatively free/r and choose their own mates. A fact the DDS and BDS both acknowledge with quotes such as these: “the pure dingo in the wild is doomed”¹⁹² and “few pure dingoes are left in wild”¹⁹³. ‘Dingo purity’, as with all ‘purebred’ dogs, becomes a promise realised only through human selection in captivity. However, in the case of dingoes, the ‘purity’ being sought is conceived of as having *originated* in the wild, while the debate on dingo purity and dingo origins is far from clear cut. In this section, I will discuss some of the complexities surrounding arguments about dingo purity to highlight how the cultural and political impact of purity arguments is felt differently by those whose ‘genes’ are favoured for future conservation and those seen as ‘wild dogs’ and thus targeted for eradication as pests across Australia.

Arguments about the conservation of dingoes in Australia today and their dwindling numbers are premised on a paradigm of genetic purity or distinctiveness that is perceived as compromised or diluted by interbreeding with other dogs. Conservation researcher Kylie Cairns notes that “legislatively a dingo is of conservation value only if it has no dog ancestry”¹⁹⁴. However, the efficacy of the methods currently used to establish dingo ‘purity’ is far from agreed upon. As recently as 2020, research into dingo genetics and dingo ‘purity’ in wild populations relied on reference samples from the DNA of as few as 50 dingoes, 37 of whom bred in captivity. Purity was assumed based on “pedigree’ (captive breeding history), phenotype, and/or skull morphology”¹⁹⁵. Cairns et al. acknowledge that despite their obvious concerns about hybridisation, it is “possible that there are DNA regions undergoing natural selection in dingoes and dingo hybrids” and that “genomic regions introgressed from domestic dogs are selectively advantageous

¹⁹⁰ Search conducted on September 3, 2021.

¹⁹¹ Foundation, "Our dingoes." Australian Dingo Foundation.

¹⁹² Foundation, "Uncertain Future." Australian Dingo Foundation.

¹⁹³ Sanctuary, "About Dingoes."

¹⁹⁴ Kylie M Cairns et al., "Geographic hot spots of dingo genetic ancestry in southeastern Australia despite hybridisation with domestic dogs," *Conservation Genetics* 21, no. 1 (2020). Pp.78.

¹⁹⁵ Cairns et al., "Geographic hot spots of dingo genetic ancestry in southeastern Australia despite hybridisation with domestic dogs." Pp. 79

in dingoes”¹⁹⁶ adding that the conservation and evolutionary impact of hybridisation is “poorly understood”¹⁹⁷. This is supported by Smith et al., who state that hybridisation could be “an important source of genetic variation and adaptation, rather than a threat to species ‘purity’”¹⁹⁸. Brad Purcell, has noted that it is often impossible to differentiate a ‘pure’ dingo and a dingo-dog hybrid¹⁹⁹. While still raising concerns about hybridity, Purcell reasons that the pure dingo is “a construct of human thought”²⁰⁰. The genetic debates continue.

In a 2018 social media post introducing their new litter of dingo puppies, Secret Creek Wildlife Sanctuary stated that “dingoes are disappearing mostly due to cross-breeding with wild dogs”²⁰¹. Put a different way - dingoes are breeding themselves into extinction. Probyn-Rapsey has critiqued this sort of thinking and the way that “dingo birth”²⁰² through “wayward” reproduction²⁰³ with dogs has been mobilized by humans to create myths of dingo extinction. Probyn-Rapsey describes the way in which wild dingoes fail to recognise and adhere to the species boundaries and categories we humans ascribe to them²⁰⁴. To fixate on dingo purity and the idea that dingo hybridization is akin to dingo extinction is not only to deny the dingo autonomy over her choice of mate but also to erase a long history of dingo inter-breeding with dogs before and after European settlement. She argues that the ‘pure’ dingo is constructed only through the conceptual link between hybridity and extinction made by dingo biologists²⁰⁵. The majority of wild dingoes today live and die in the liminal spaces between categories: pure/hybrid, dog/dingo. Wild dingoes are exercising their freedom to choose a mate, and perhaps that is what ‘we’ humans, accustomed to managing dog ‘breeds’, find so challenging.

1.4 Captive ambassadors

¹⁹⁶ Cairns et al., "Geographic hot spots of dingo genetic ancestry in southeastern Australia despite hybridisation with domestic dogs." Pp.88

¹⁹⁷ Cairns et al., "Geographic hot spots of dingo genetic ancestry in southeastern Australia despite hybridisation with domestic dogs." Pp.88.

¹⁹⁸ Bradley P Smith et al., "Taxonomic status of the Australian dingo: the case for *Canis dingo* Meyer, 1793," *Zootaxa* 4564, no. 1 (2019). Pp. 176.

¹⁹⁹ Brad Purcell, *Dingo* (Sydney: CSIRO PUBLISHING, 2010). Pp.15-41.

²⁰⁰ Purcell, *Dingo*. Pp. 30

²⁰¹ <https://www.facebook.com/AustralianEcosystemsFoundation/posts/2138286319532122>

²⁰² Probyn-Rapsey, "Dingoes and dog-whistling." Pp.57

²⁰³ Probyn-Rapsey, "Dingoes and dog-whistling." Pp. 71

²⁰⁴ Probyn-Rapsey, "Dingoes and dog-whistling." Pp. 63

²⁰⁵ Probyn-Rapsey, "Dingoes and dog-whistling." Pp. 69-70

And here is the thing, the truth - the animals' truth that underpins the entire enterprise of zoos and aquariums and gives the lie to the possibility of positive ecological karma emanating from this institution: the animals don't want to be there. And the people don't care.²⁰⁶

Another common justification for captive breeding programs is public education. Facilities like the Dingo Discovery Sanctuary argue that exhibiting these 'species ambassadors' will teach the public about the plight of dingoes in the wild, and in doing so, promote conservation attitudes. In a 2021 news article in the Port Stephen's Examiner, Oakdale Wildlife Park announced the birth of two dingo pups²⁰⁷. The article notes that from July 10th, the wildlife park will be offering "private encounters with the two new dingoes for visitors to purchase". These encounters "will enable visitors [to have] hands-on interaction with the pup along with a conservation talk by Oakvale's keepers." The transactional relationship between paid human interaction with dingoes (especially puppies) and conservation education is common in the world of captive dingoes.

However, Marino et al. (2010) found "no compelling evidence"²⁰⁸ that zoos cause positive attitude changes or promote interest in conversation in visitors. Marino et al. argue that despite having education and conservation-oriented objectives, the impact of zoos is under-researched and poorly understood. There is presently no evidence-based research to suggest captive dingo exhibits change attitudes toward wild dingo conservation. In "The Problem with Zoos", Malamud argues that rather than serving as educational facilities, zoos cater to "audiences' less noble cravings for amusement parks, or even freak shows..." and patrons "show no inclination to improve their records as plunderers of natural resources, or to embrace the logic of sustainability in their exploitation of energy, food, land and natural resources that displaces other animals"²⁰⁹. Malamud states that it is "inherently impossible" for a zoo to be "ecologically good"²¹⁰, because as institutions zoos are not designed to educate or facilitate a better understanding of animals or conservation, rather they are primarily places of "commerce and

²⁰⁶ Randy Malamud, "The Problem with Zoos " in *The Oxford Handbook of Animal Studies*, ed. Linda Kalof (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017). pp 400

²⁰⁷ Ellie-Marie Watts, "Two new dingoes born at Oakvale swells Salt Ash wildlife park's pack to five," (July 8 2021 2021). <https://www.portstephensexaminer.com.au/story/7332302/pups-join-oakvale-dingo-pack-photos/>.

²⁰⁸ Randy Malamud et al., "Do zoos and aquariums promote attitude change in visitors? A critical evaluation of the American zoo and aquarium study," *Society & Animals* 18, no. 2 (2010).

²⁰⁹ Malamud, "The Problem with Zoos ". pp. 398

²¹⁰ Malamud, "The Problem with Zoos ". pp. 399

spectatorship”²¹¹ that “promote our belief that we are entitled to see everything and have power and control over everything”²¹². Central to Malamud’s argument that zoos serve no educational purpose with regards to conservation and animal welfare is the oppositional nature of commerce and ecology. Malamud states that while zoos may “look ecological”,²¹³ this is simply the result of greenwashing and hides their true capitalist goals. He goes on to argue that if zoos truly had any desire to stem the “skyrocketing extinction rates”²¹⁴ then after two centuries of zoo-going the “tide of our destruction”²¹⁵ of the natural world would have slowed rather than increased over time while caged zoo animals continue to suffer.

In *Zooland* (2013) Braverman makes the case that rather than acting as species ambassadors, at best, animals in zoos might motivate the public into caring about nature more broadly²¹⁶. However, at their worst zoos can also negatively influence conservation attitudes by normalizing the idea that wild animals belong in captivity²¹⁷. If animals are seen as safe and perhaps even content in captivity, there is less of a perceptible need to conserve them in the wild. Despite a shift in modern zoos toward more ‘natural’ habitats, zoos still present us with highly sterilised, controlled environments - there are protective barriers, ventilation systems and waste management procedures designed to “dampen smells and heighten visibility”²¹⁸. While animals in the wild might only be glimpsed in the most fleeting of ways, animals in zoos live in enclosures designed to maximise viewing. If the goal of zoos is to educate the public about wild animals, Braverman argues that “the very act of seeing animals...already undermines the animal’s wildness”²¹⁹ and in doing so also undermines the authenticity and educational value of zoos and ambassador animals.

Take the following example. A 2021 article in the Daily Telegraph revealed that Taronga Zoo, Sydney, a self-described “leader in conservation”²²⁰ with several dingoes

²¹¹ Malamud, "The Problem with Zoos ". pp. 399

²¹² Malamud, "The Problem with Zoos ". pp 399

²¹³ Malamud, "The Problem with Zoos ". pp 399

²¹⁴ Malamud, "The Problem with Zoos ". pp 400

²¹⁵ Malamud, "The Problem with Zoos ". pp 400

²¹⁶ Irus Braverman, *Zooland: The institution of captivity* (Stanford University Press, 2012). pp. 90

²¹⁷ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception."

²¹⁸ Braverman, *Zooland: The institution of captivity*. Pp. 72

²¹⁹ Braverman, *Zooland: The institution of captivity*. Pp. 72

²²⁰ "Governance ", Taronga Zoo, accessed October 10, 2021, <https://taronga.org.au/about/governance>.

in their collection²²¹, were actively poisoning wild foxes and potentially killing other non-target species using 1080 poison²²². One of the most significant threats to wild dingoes is 1080 – otherwise known as Sodium fluoroacetate a lethal poison used by government agencies and private agricultural sector to kill cats, foxes and dingoes. In order to maintain control over their artificial habitats and regulate which animals have access to the facility, the zoo deemed it necessary to use a controversial poison, one which in the wild poses a huge risk to many of the animals they claim to be conserving.

1.5 Dingoes and the native pet trade

In addition to the dingoes sold to zoos and other commercial facilities, every year in Australia hundreds, if not thousands, of dingoes are bred and sold in captivity as part of the native pet trade – including by self-described dingo sanctuaries such as the DDS/ADF²²³. As we have already discussed, dingoes bred in captivity cannot legally be released into ‘the wild’. With no centralised, federal records of dingo ownership and legislation around dingoes varying greatly from state to state, it is impossible to know exactly how many dingoes are bred and sold as pets each year.

The idea of domesticating wildlife both as a conservation strategy and for the exotic pet trade is not unique to dingoes. Growing interest in the decline of certain Australian species has prompted some scientists to make a case for the sale and ownership of certain native species as ‘pets’. Archer²²⁴, Hopwood and Oakwood²²⁵, and Chapple et al.²²⁶ have all argued in favour of endangered native animals such as quolls being bred and sold as pets not only to bolster their overall numbers but to change public perception of their value. However, this approach has been strongly critiqued by Viggers and Lidenmayer, who raise a number of practical concerns such as “stress-related and husbandry-related diseases, problems with access to appropriate husbandry and

²²¹ "List of Animals at Taronga Zoo Sydney," Oz Animals accessed September 20, 2021, <http://www.ozanimals.com/travel/list-of-animals-at-taronga-zoo-sydney>.

²²² Ben Graham, "Taronga Zoo using controversial 1080 poison to kill foxes," (June 23 2017). <https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/mosman-daily/taronga-zoo-using-controversial-1080-poison-to-kill-foxes/news-story/813a7bf9b86000b5943e7a7fa3057950>.

²²³ Smith, *The dingo debate: origins, behaviour and conservation*. Pp 284

²²⁴ Michael Archer, "Monstrous moggies or charming chuditches," *Nature Australia* 26, no. 8 (2000). Pp.70-71

²²⁵ Meri Oakwood and Paul Hopwood, "A survey of the attributes and requirements of quolls that may affect their suitability as household pets," *Australian Zoologist* 31, no. 2 (1999). Pp. 365-375

²²⁶ Rosalie Chapple et al., "Cats or quolls?-Australian native mammals as pets," *Conservation in a Crowded World: Case Studies from the Asia-Pacific*. pp.256-276

veterinary care, and the potential for inappropriate breeding to select particular anatomical traits”²²⁷. Collard takes this critique further, delving into the ethics of captivity. Collard argues that underpinning the exotic/‘wild’ pet trade is a deeply “exploitative and uneven relationship between humans and animals”²²⁸ based on the commodification of individuals’ bodies and lives. Captive dingoes bred and sold as pets become what Collard describes as “lively capital”²²⁹, their value is not only tied to the fact they are living property but their ability to perform both the role of companion and wild animal simultaneously. Collard argues that the erosion of an animal’s wildness entails “extraordinary degrees of violence and suffering”²³⁰ as animals are disentangled from their social networks and instead become reliant on human-provided support.

In *The Dingo Debate*, Smith describes puppies being sold by the DDS/ADF on an “order-type basis”²³¹. Smith also describe the sale of ‘pet’ dingo pups to “suitable members of the public”²³² as a “good source of income”²³³ for the DDS/ADF breeding program. The DDS/ADF website states that “Puppies [dingoes] are ready for new homes from mid-June to early October each year”, and “ordering” of puppies should be done in January²³⁴. Research by Smith in 2014 on dingo ‘pet’ ownership indicated that 38% of dingo owners recruited for the study had purchased their dingoes from a dingo breeder or dingo association such as the Dingo Discovery Sanctuary, 28% from a wildlife park and 18% had bred the dingoes themselves ²³⁵.

It is important to note that captive-bred or not, dingoes do not necessarily make ‘well behaved’, ‘docile’, domestic ‘pets’. In *the Dingo Debate* Smith describes captive dingoes as having “a strong prey drive”, as well as being “good at escaping and opening locks... hard to train and difficult to socialise with humans.”²³⁶ These traits

²²⁷ Karen L. Viggers, and David B. Lidenmayer, "Problems with keeping Australian native mammals as companion animals," in *A Zoological Revolution. Using native fauna to assist in its own survival*, ed. Daniel Lunney and Chris Dickman (Mosman: Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales and the Australian Museum, 2002).Pp. 131

²²⁸ Collard, "Putting Animals Back Together, Taking Commodities Apart." Pp.161

²²⁹ Collard, *Animal Traffic: Lively Capital in the Global Exotic Pet Trade*.

²³⁰ Collard, "Putting Animals Back Together, Taking Commodities Apart." Pp. 151

²³¹ Smith, *The dingo debate: origins, behaviour and conservation*. Pp.283.

²³² Smith, *The dingo debate: origins, behaviour and conservation*. Pp.283.

²³³ Smith, *The dingo debate: origins, behaviour and conservation*. Pp.283.

²³⁴ "Owning a Dingo ", accessed October 20, 2021, <https://dingofoundation.org/owning-a-dingo-2/>.

²³⁵ Bradley P Smith, "Living with wild dogs: personality dimensions in captive dingoes (*Canis dingo*) and implications for ownership," *Anthrozoös* 27, no. 3 (2014). pp. 426

²³⁶ Smith, *The dingo debate: origins, behaviour and conservation*. Pp 263

are what ensure dingoes a place as apex predators and safeguard their survival in the wild. But they are also antithetical with what many ‘pet owners’ consider to be the necessary behaviours of a good ‘pet’ and why so many dingoes find themselves surrendered to shelters. There are very few human families that are suitable to live with dingoes. Firstly, such a family must include no prey animals like cats, birds, rabbits, or sheep that a dingo may consider food. Secondly, they must be willing to accept a dingo’s shy, reclusive nature around strangers and their destructive behavior, such as digging and chewing. Dingoes require continuous new forms of mental stimulation and large amounts of daily exercise. Combined with their ability to jump two meters, open latches and door handles and dig several meters underground to escape a yard or enclosure, the practical issues with keeping dingoes in a domestic setting are clear.

In addition to the direct relationship between many dingo sanctuaries and zoos and the sale of dingoes as privately-owned pets, conservation breeding of dingoes may have an impact on the dingo pet market *discursively*. Arguments in favour of conservation breeding may also lead to an increase in dingoes being privately bred for the pet market. While dingo conservation scientists rarely or at least explicitly make the case for saving dingoes from extinction through ‘pet’ ownership, conservation discourse around the necessity for captive breeding of dingoes continues to shape broader popular understandings of the inherent value of dingoes as pets. One consequence of the interconnected nature of conservation breeding discourse and the dingo pet industry is ‘backyard breeders’. These are often unaffiliated, amateur breeders who may have purchased their pet dingoes from either a dingo breeding facility or even a privately-owned wildlife park or zoo. These breeders typically have a very limited understanding of ecology and/or genetics but believe through breeding ‘pet’ dingoes and selling their offspring that they are part of valuable efforts to conserve dingoes.

I encounter many examples of the discursive relationship between ‘conservation breeding’ and ‘backyard breeding’ through my work with rescue dingoes. In 2015, SFDR rescued six dingoes after they were surrendered by a backyard breeder, at the direction of a Sydney council after welfare complaints stretching back several years. When we arrived, we found ten sickly-looking dingoes living in a tiny 60-metre square Sydney backyard with nothing but dust and a gutted car frame as shelter. There were empty plastic food bags littering the ground alongside a chewed-up kids’ paddling pool. I remember

asking the former owner if any of the dingoes had ever been walked on a lead. He told me that except for Luca, who was chained to the front porch, none of them had left the backyard where they were born. A black carpet of fleas crawled up my legs from out of the hot dust as the owner told me how much he loved dingoes and how important dingoes are to the Australian environment. As we loaded the emaciated dingoes into our car to take to our sanctuary, the owner again tried to explain his actions: ‘they’re going extinct, you know’ he mused, ‘If we don’t keep breeding ‘em there’ll be no dingoes left’.



Figure 2.2 Bam-bam when she was first rescued from a backyard breeding situation.

The mother of all the dingoes we rescued that day was allegedly born at a privately owned Wildlife Park in New South Wales and purchased by this backyard breeder several years earlier. Wildlife parks are known to breed dingoes and offer park visitors the opportunity to hold the dingo puppies for a paid photograph²³⁷. At least some of the park-goers believe that their money is funding dingo conservation. This is a common misconception amongst visitors to zoos and wildlife parks, who are unaware of the differences between sanctuaries and commercial businesses. When writing on the topic

²³⁷ For example: Vesey, Harrison, “Dingo puppies take centre stage at Featherdale Wildlife Park”, *The Courier*, June 10, 2017. <https://www.thecourier.com.au/story/4721187/dingo-puppies-take-centre-stage-photos-video/>

of captivity and sanctuaries, Doyle has stated that the core mission of a true sanctuary is to “serve the individuals in their care by putting their interests first and foremost”²³⁸; this is at odds with the goals of commercial animal businesses, whose mission includes generating income. However, as public opinion shifts towards a more compassionate attitude toward wild animals, it has become necessary for zoos and for-profit wildlife parks to highlight the welfare of non-human animals beyond their ability to generate income.

The mother dingo in this anecdote, allegedly born at a commercial wildlife park and subsequently used for backyard breeding is just one example of the intersection where commercial breeding of dingoes and amateur backyard breeding collides. ‘Conservation’ is used here to license not only dingo breeding in zoos and wildlife parks (giving the false impression that the dingoes being bred at these facilities will perhaps one day return to the wild), but also for much less visible, private breeding-for-profit - often in poor conditions. In the case of dingoes, the word ‘conservation’ is now deeply implicated in complicated networks of commodity exchange, forced breeding and captivity.

Perhaps one of the most egregious aspects of captive breeding is the ongoing separation of families and bonded individuals; “the trauma of separation”²³⁹ is something Doyle argues captive animals separated from their family and peers carry with them for the rest of their lives. The effects of such separation, both physiological and behavioural, have been researched in a variety of animals, including primates²⁴⁰, cheetahs²⁴¹, giraffes²⁴², sheep²⁴³, cows²⁴⁴ and horses²⁴⁵.

²³⁸ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp.56

²³⁹ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." pp 74.

²⁴⁰ Michael P Hoff et al., "Separation and depression in infant gorillas," *Developmental Psychobiology: The Journal of the International Society for Developmental Psychobiology* 27, no. 7 (1994).

²⁴¹ CR Ruiz-Miranda et al., "Vocalizations and other behavioral responses of male cheetahs (*Acinonyx jubatus*) during experimental separation and reunion trials," *Zoo Biology: Published in affiliation with the American Zoo and Aquarium Association* 17, no. 1 (1998).

²⁴² Loraine R Tarou, Meredith J Bashaw, and Terry L Maple, "Social attachment in giraffe: response to social separation," *Zoo Biology: Published in affiliation with the American Zoo and Aquarium Association* 19, no. 1 (2000).

²⁴³ Pascal Poindron, R Soto, and A Romeyer, "Decrease of response to social separation in preparturient ewes," *Behavioural processes* 40, no. 1 (1997).

²⁴⁴ Alain Boissy and Pierre Le Neindre, "Behavioral, cardiac and cortisol responses to brief peer separation and reunion in cattle," *Physiology & Behavior* 61, no. 5 (1997).

²⁴⁵ ME Mal et al., "Behavioral responses of mares to short-term confinement and social isolation," *Applied Animal Behaviour Science* 31, no. 1-2 (1991).

Over a nine-year period studying wild Western Australian dingoes, Thompson observed that lone dingoes were uncommon, with dingo pack sizes ranging from two to 12²⁴⁶. Dingo pups receive “intensive maternal care”,²⁴⁷ typically remaining with their mothers until they are 12 months or older. Dingo pup rearing is alloparental, with multiple pack members providing food for pups as old as 20 weeks²⁴⁸. Despite their well-understood maternal bonds, the separation of captive-bred dingo pups from their parents at a young age is extremely common. The Victorian Government’s website on dingo licensing notes that pups can be sold by breeders from seven weeks old, which is described as “young enough to ensure they are able to form a sufficient bond with their new owners”.²⁴⁹ Collard notes that the early separation of mothers and offspring is common in the world of exotic pets and captive breeding, where “mother raised” animals are seen as retaining “a degree of ‘wildness’ that makes them less controllable”²⁵⁰.

In the case of the separation of parents and offspring by captive breeding facilities like the DDS/ADF, separation of bonded individuals is deemed necessary because of space and a focus on population management and genetic selection rather than the importance of individual relationships. Dingoes’ sexual partners are chosen for them by humans at the DDS/ADF²⁵¹, and dingoes live in breeding pairs. When their pups are five weeks old, they are removed from their mothers and housed separately²⁵², where they can also be exhibited to the public²⁵³ until such time as they are sold or traded to another facility or matched with a breeding partner continue the cycle of captivity and commodification.

2. Make Kin not babies

The dingoes at Sydney Fox and Dingo Rescue are desexed and will never have the opportunity to reproduce. Rejecting biological reproduction does not mean that true

²⁴⁶PC Thomson, "The behavioural ecology of dingoes in north-western Australia. IV. Social and spatial organization, and movements," *Wildlife Research* 19, no. 5 (1992).

²⁴⁷Thomson, "The behavioural ecology of dingoes in north-western Australia. IV. Social and spatial organization, and movements." Pp544

²⁴⁸Thomson, "The behavioural ecology of dingoes in north-western Australia. IV. Social and spatial organization, and movements." Pp544

²⁴⁹ "Frequently Asked Questions," Victoria Government DEWLP, accessed September 18, 2021, <https://www.vic.gov.au/frequently-asked-questions-private-keeping-dingoes>.

²⁵⁰ Collard, *Animal Traffic: Lively Capital in the Global Exotic Pet Trade*.

²⁵¹ Smith, *The dingo debate: origins, behaviour and conservation*. Pp. 291.

²⁵² Smith, *The dingo debate: origins, behaviour and conservation*. Pp 287, 291

²⁵³ Foundation, "Dingo Encounter Tours." Australian Dingo Foundation.

sanctuaries do not provide a fertile ground for growing relationships and finding kin, as I will show in this section, following the work of Haraway and Guenther. At SFDR we try to facilitate and nurture other types of social relationships. We work to create what Haraway might describe as “rich multispecies assemblages”²⁵⁴ by “unravelling the ties of genealogy and kin, and kin and species”²⁵⁵. Haraway argues that reproduction is not the only means of creating kin and building community. She suggests that kin can and should mean something more than “entities tied by ancestry or genealogy.”²⁵⁶ Haraway prepossess “the stretch and recomposition of kin” acknowledging that “all earthlings are kin in the deepest sense”²⁵⁷. This extends to humans and non-animals alike in the context of sanctuaries. Through the type of care practices that constitute everyday sanctuary work, Sydney Fox and Dingo Rescue volunteers build complex and lasting multi-species kin-relationships both within our sanctuary but also the extended community.

To borrow from Haraway, “how we make kin matters”²⁵⁸, and so at SFDR we ‘make kin’ in several ways. Firstly, we do not separate bonded partners or choose our dingoes’ partners for them. This means that if dingoes come to our sanctuary in a bonded pair or bond strongly with another dingo or dog whilst at the sanctuary, we will try our best to house them together (unless their behaviour indicates that they no longer want this, or it is unsafe for them to remain together). We also try our best to prioritise rescuing dingoes that are kin to the dingoes already in our care – this means not only blood relatives but dingoes or dogs that have lived together previously or are from the same breeder or facility.

²⁵⁴ Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble : Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Pp.101

²⁵⁵ Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble : Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Pp 102

²⁵⁶ Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble : Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Pp. 102

²⁵⁷ Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble : Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Pp.103

²⁵⁸ Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble : Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Pp. 103

One example is of this is Bruce and Casper. Bruce is a shepherd dingo mix. His human caregivers contacted us because they were struggling to manage his prey drive after Bruce and their dog Casper had killed a stray cat and their neighbours' two rabbits. Casper is a husky they purchased from a breeder three years earlier, and Bruce is a rescue from the Taree Pound. Their intention was to find a breed-specific husky rescue for Casper or alternatively take her to the council pound and surrender Bruce to our sanctuary. Bruce and Casper's human carers assumed that SFDR would only be interested in offering sanctuary to Bruce, given that Casper was a husky and not a dingo. But considering the bond between Bruce and Casper, there was no question in my mind that they would remain together and both come to the sanctuary.

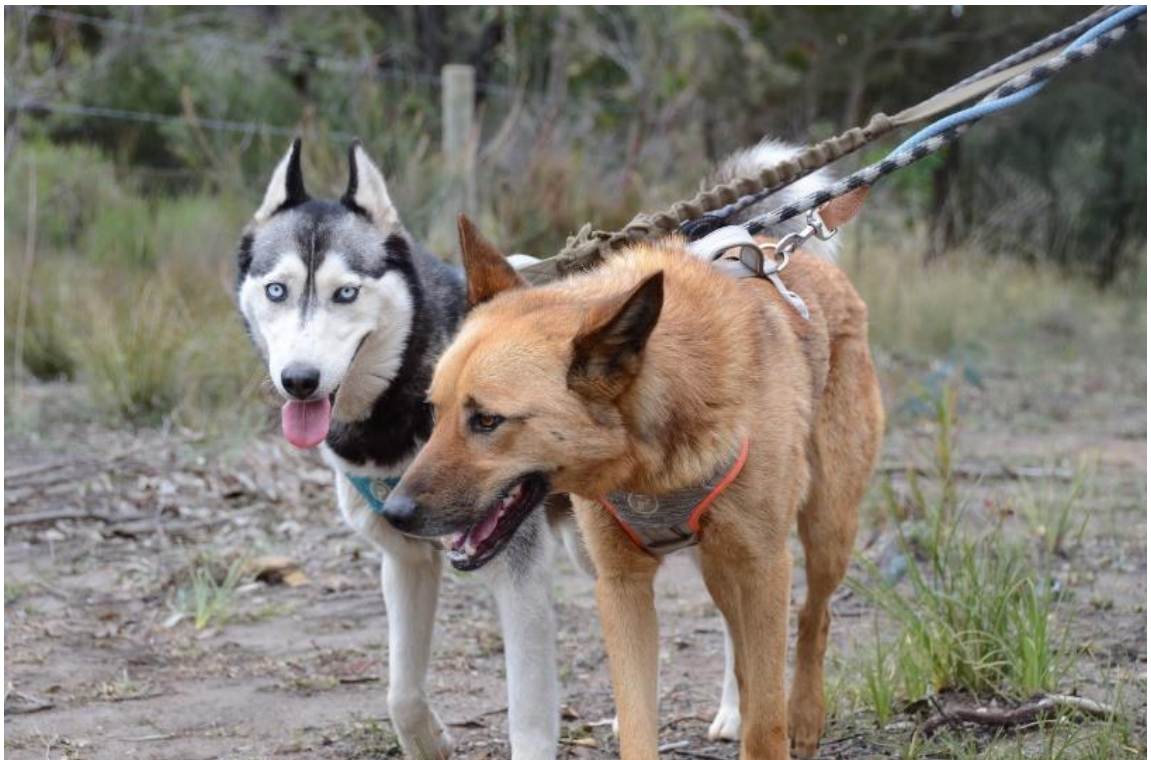


Figure 2.3: Bruce three-year-old dingo and Casper four-year-old husky.

Another way SFDR endeavours to allow our dingoes to make kin and choose their families is how dingoes are introduced and housed. Dingoes are reactive, dominant animals. In the wild they live in pairs or small family groups. This means not all our dingoes are able to live together, or they could badly harm each other in struggles for territory or partners. However, our dingoes do live with companions in groups of two to six. As much possible, we allow them to choose their companions – including allowing older dingoes to choose to help raise and care for orphan dingo pups who have lost their biological parents. When a new dingo arrives at the sanctuary, we introduce them to as

many others as possible, going for long bush walks with groups of dingoes over several days or weeks till they choose their companions.



Figure 2.4 Friends six-year-old Django (left) and four-year-old Beyonce (right).

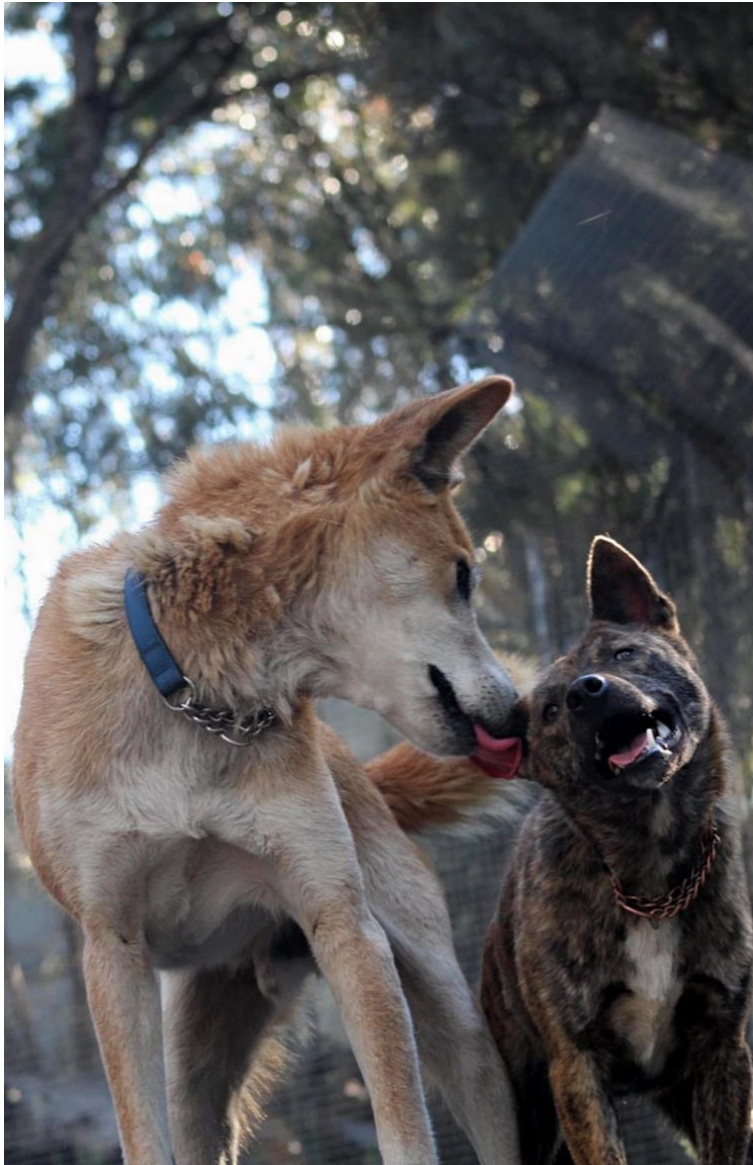


Figure 2.5: Friends one-year-old Scotty (left) and six-year-old Diesel (right)²⁵⁹.

²⁵⁹Jess Brown, "“Scotty and Diesel” " (2021).



Figure 2.6 Two-year-old brothers Yerra (left) and Marlu (right) play-fighting²⁶⁰.

3.2 Kin beyond the physical sanctuary

Despite SFDR's strong focus on community and relationships, we are not entirely removed from the traumatic practice of separating kin. SFDR runs a rehoming program for desexed rescue dingoes who can be adopted as companion animals. Whilst we have strict rehoming guidelines, the ethics of continuing this program are never far from my mind. Our decision to adopt dingoes to the public means that regardless of our good intentions, we are essentially participating in their continued commodification and traumatic captivity in much the same way dingo breeding facilities do. Whilst we have a policy of trying to rehome bonded pairs of animals together, we often need to separate sibling groups or larger families as the chances of more than two dingoes finding a home together are slim.

²⁶⁰ Jess Brown, "'Yerra and Marlu'," (2021).

SFDR's current rehoming program is driven by both practical considerations for space and the welfare of individual dingoes. The demand for space for new dingoes in need of help is continuous and overwhelming. Every day SFDR receives calls from people wanting to surrender their 'pet' dingoes or people who have found injured or orphaned wild dingoes in need of help. Realistically we have space for 50-60 adult dingoes at the sanctuary. The sanctuary is almost always at capacity, with 82 dingoes, puppies and adults currently in care –they are housed in fenced enclosures, albeit large ones. Our smallest enclosures are 60 meters square, our the largest are just over 12,100m square (three acres) - it is our eventual goal for all dingoes at our sanctuary to have at least a one-acre enclosure. We also have a list of more dingoes waiting to come to the sanctuary when space is available. Our rehoming program permits us to move dingoes out of the sanctuary and into suitable homes, allowing us to rescue more dingoes who would otherwise be killed (by pounds or their former 'owners') or remain in unsuitable living situations. A domestic home for our dingoes means that whilst they are still living with the trauma of ongoing captivity, they can experience more individual attention, enrichment and exercise with their new caregivers than we would be able to provide at the sanctuary.

When a human family adopt one of our dingoes, they become a part of our extended community and kin network. Over 500 animals, including 200 dingoes, have transited through the SFDR sanctuary to find permanent homes. Adoption is a process involving multiple introductions between humans and dingoes, and dingoes and other companion animals. As well as yard checks, help with fencing and home preparation, and education about diet and behaviour. It is not only about humans choosing dingoes, but also dingoes choosing humans.

After this is complete, it is not uncommon for their new families to stay in contact with SFDR monthly or even weekly with updates and to ask for our advice. It has always been a policy of our sanctuary to help families who adopt through our sanctuary with training, unexpected vet bills and even emergency accommodation. Animals are always welcome back at the sanctuary if their human families can no longer care for them. Through these extended networks, we have the opportunity to remain connected with the animals we have cared for and their new families and create a foundation to educate a

broad and diverse community about our sanctuary practices and ethos. Haraway suggests we use the apt metaphor of networks of fungi to describe the building of these complex and crucial community networks “...we have a mammalian job to do, with our biotic and abiotic sympoietic collaborators, colaborers. We need to make kin symchthonically, sympoetically. Who and whatever we are, we need to make-with— become-with, compose-with— the earth-bound”²⁶¹.

Sanctuary outreach work, through this network of extended kin, has the potential to create long-term change in human/animal relationships and do the important work described by Abrell in creating animal subjectivity and ‘unmaking’ the property status of non-human animals, because “kin making, is making persons”²⁶².

3.3 Sanctuary volunteers and interspecies connections

SFDR is also home to between four and eight live-in volunteers at any time and up to twenty part-time day volunteers. ‘Live-ins’ stay at the sanctuary in on-site caravans or bring their own campervans or even rooftop tents in the warmer months. Some of them stay for a few weeks; others might stay half a year or more. Day volunteers typically spend 5-6 hours volunteering at the sanctuary a couple of times a month.



Figure 2.7 Dingo Beryl and volunteer Leyla in the volunteer accommodation.

²⁶¹ Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble : Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Pp. 102

²⁶² Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble : Making Kin in the Chthulucene*; Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble : Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Pp.103

Volunteers are a crucial part of the community at SFDR and form unique and lasting relationships with the animals at the sanctuary. Take the example of Lincoln. Lincoln is two-year-old dingo. He was found as a stray in Parramatta, New South Wales. After three weeks of evading council rangers, he was caught by a local woman who had been feeding him in a park. The details from Lincoln's microchip helped establish that he had been recently sold online. His new human family had Lincoln for less than twenty-four hours when he escaped their yard. Neither his breeder nor the couple he had been sold to wanted him back- describing Lincoln as "anxious, difficult and impossible to contain". Concerned about rehoming Lincoln, Parramatta Council contacted SFDR. Lincoln arrived at our sanctuary suffering from severe anxiety, he would shake, alarm bark, and try to escape by throwing himself at the sides of his enclosure. Since arriving five months ago, Lincoln has improved considerably. We have learnt that he loves other dingoes and that he is extremely food motivated. Knowing this has helped us make him more comfortable. Lincoln is still incredibly fearful of men. However, he has a special bond with many of the female volunteers. He will sit in their laps, lick them and roll on his back to have his belly rubbed. Lincoln often sleeps at night with the live-in volunteers in their caravan. When a new female volunteer starts at the sanctuary the existing live-ins make sure to introduce them to Lincoln, ensuring that Lincoln finds someone he is comfortable with. This way volunteers know when their time at the sanctuary is over and they leave, Lincoln will still have a human friend and confidant he trusts. When live-in volunteer Leyla's six-month stay at the sanctuary was coming to an end, she engaged in this unofficial hand over process. Leyla spent several days introducing the new live-in volunteers Miya, Callum and Jess to Lincoln. Leyla asked them to promise that Lincoln would be able to sleep in the caravan sometimes and made sure that Miya and Jess in particular would continue Lincoln's socialization process with humans and other dogs and dingoes. When another volunteer Sarah, who had befriended Lincoln left the sanctuary to go home to Canada, Leyla video called her so that she could see Lincoln. Lincoln responded to Sarah's voice and seemed visibly happier after their interaction. Live-in volunteers like Leyla have not only provided Lincoln with day-to-day companionship but have also written Lincoln an adoption profile, taken photos of him, posted about him on social media, forming a crucial part of the holistic care practices that will hopefully see Lincoln find a home outside the sanctuary.



Figure 2.8 Lincoln (left) with Noah (right) and live-in volunteers Sarah and Leyla.

Guenther describes these types of unique human/animal relationships that form in sanctuaries and shelters as built on “queer practices of kinship”²⁶³. She argues that relationships in these multi-species spaces are fluid and able to exist outside the scope of ‘normal’, heterosexual family life, meaning they do not require the “ordering of sex, intimacy and reproduction”²⁶⁴. This is not to say these relationships are not without a deeply meaningful for those involved, and Guenther notes that during her research at an LA animal shelter, women volunteers in particular, developed “preferred and voluntary relationships with animals... because they found these relationships more satisfying than those with humans”²⁶⁵. By caring for animals like Lincoln who are often seen as difficult or undesirable by their former owners, volunteers are uniquely positioned to resist

²⁶³ Guenther, *The Lives and Deaths of Shelter Animals* Pp. 18

²⁶⁴ Guenther, *The Lives and Deaths of Shelter Animals* Pp. 18

²⁶⁵ Guenther, *The Lives and Deaths of Shelter Animals* Pp. 17

narratives of desirability and build meaningful queer kinship. Through these practices, volunteers at SFDR form both short-term and long-term connections with the dingoes, foxes and the sanctuary community as a whole –they become a part of the complex multispecies assemblage and extended network of kin sanctuary spaces can create. As a sanctuary, SFDR strives to be a space where our human volunteers can learn the depth of connection possible with non-human animals and carry the knowledge and weight of this kinship with them and pass it on to others, even after they leave the sanctuary.

The practices of building queer kinship that take place at SFDR are ongoing and intergenerational. Volunteers who have moved away from the sanctuary often come back to visit, bringing friends, family, or partners to visit the sanctuary. One of our youngest volunteers, Cora, has been coming with her parents to the sanctuary since she was four months old. When Cora, now six years old, comes to the sanctuary with her parents to volunteer, her first stop is her friend AJ, a nine-year-old male dingo. AJ is a permanent resident here at the sanctuary, and has history of abuse and neglect by his former owner prior to coming to SFDR. When SFDR were first contacted about AJ he was described to us as “aggressive and dangerous”. This is not the AJ we know today. AJ has a large outdoor bush enclosure, other dingoes to spend time with, and whether he interacts with humans is now his choice. When AJ interacts with Cora he does so with a level of care that shows he understands she is a child/pup, and Cora, in turn, treats him with both respect and affection. AJ will lick Cora’s hands, accept food from her and rub his face on her, marking her with the scent glands in his cheeks. When they walk together along the bushy trails at the sanctuary, Cora holds AJ’s lead, and he walks slowly beside her, looking back to check she is keeping up. As she gets older, Cora is beginning to understand why AJ and the other dingoes live at the sanctuary and about both the trauma and necessity of captivity. It is important to both her parents and I that Cora understands that dingoes belong in the wild and that while captivity is presently the only option for the dingoes at the sanctuary, that does not mean it is morally justified. Cora and AJ’s connection is just one of many human/animal relationships at SFDR that demonstrate the transformative potential of sanctuaries for both animals and humans, offering us an

example of what Abrell describes as “an alternative future trajectory for a more humane, sustainable world”²⁶⁶.



Figure 2.9a Cora and AJ on a bush walk.



Figure 2.9b Cora and AJ interacting through enclosure fence.

²⁶⁶ Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that true sanctuaries do not breed dingoes. Dingo breeding programs (and indeed most, if not all, ex-situ breeding programs) contraindicate some of the most basic principles of sanctuaries. By exploring the primary arguments used to justify captive dingo breeding programs I have destabilized and critiqued constructs of dingo purity and rarity, using the work of Probyn-Rapsey to show that wild dingoes today live and die in the liminal spaces between categories: pure/hybrid, dog/dingo. Using van Dooren's concept of 'violent care' I have painted a picture of the fraught lives of dingoes used for captive breeding, questioning both the conservation value and educational value of such programs. 'Sanctuaries' that breed dingoes are often tied to the native pet trade and the lines that divide conservation breeding and zoos from backyard breeding of dingoes are often permeable with dingoes moving between these spaces. Using Haraway's aphorism "make kin not babies" and Guenther's account of queer kinships I have argued that instead of breeding, 'true' sanctuaries can refocus their efforts on building community and multispecies kinship. Kin making is a crucial part of the care practices that Abrell describes as necessary to 'unmake' the property status of animals. True sanctuaries and their unique practices of kinship and care can provide us with a road map of how to live differently, love differently and co-exist in less violent ways with other animals.

Chapter 3: True sanctuaries: ‘all captivity is a problem for animals’.

Introduction

A key feature of Animal studies scholarship has been a sustained focus on the ethics of captivity -whether in zoos and wildlife parks, captive breeding facilities or even domestic confinement as ‘pets’. Critically examining spaces of captivity, as well as sanctuaries themselves, can offer important insights into the practical and ethical problems that captivity poses for animal sanctuaries. In this first half of this chapter I will discuss physical, psychological, and legal forms of captivity and the challenges captivity poses for non-human animals. Using the example of Australian foxes, I will discuss the discursive relationship between the introduction of foxes to Australia and settler-colonial notions of nativism and belonging. I will argue that foxes are held captive in Australia through their legal and, just as importantly, their *cultural status* as an introduced ‘pest’ species which cultivates a level of acceptance of the violence directed at them. I will demonstrate this through historic newspaper articles from my local region (Goulburn) that establish changing attitudes toward foxes in line with an ever-evolving Australian national identity. In the second half of this chapter, I will draw on my own experiences running a sanctuary for foxes to discuss the complex web of legislation that governs both wild and captive fox lives in Australia. I will explore the ethical challenges and obligations of sanctuaries, by discussing Jones’ concept of ‘free-feeling captivity’²⁶⁷, Guenther’s proposal for ‘humane communities’²⁶⁸ and Doyle’s argument that ‘true sanctuaries’²⁶⁹ must condemn captivity. Lastly using Emmerman’s work, I will explore the complicated role sanctuaries can play in ‘moral repair’²⁷⁰ for human/animal relationships.

1. Animal captivity

Consideration of the concept of captivity has two sides. One is the effect of captivity on other animals. This requires us to consider who they are. But the

²⁶⁷ Jones, "Captivity in the context of a sanctuary for formerly farmed animals."

²⁶⁸ Guenther, *The Lives and Deaths of Shelter Animals*

²⁶⁹ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception."

²⁷⁰ Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy."

other side of the issue requires us to examine what captivity, that is, being a capital, says about who we are.²⁷¹

Lori Marino's account of captivity and its effects on wild animals highlights the psychological effects, behavioural and physiological impacts of captivity on nonhuman animals who do not, and cannot, thrive in captivity. Marino describes captivity as "a persistent psychological state of extreme dependence, tedium, and anxiety"²⁷². When describing the issues faced by animals in captivity Marino points to abnormal behaviours routinely triggered by confinement and artificial enclosures in particular such as; "head-bobbing and pacing, unresponsiveness, excessive submissiveness, hypersexual behaviour... self-inflicted physical trauma and mutilation, stress-induced vomiting and excessive aggressiveness"²⁷³. Serious and even fatal attacks on humans by captive animals in zoos and wildlife parks are surprisingly common, even by species not known for their aggression and who would normally avoid humans in wild. There have been media reports of serious and sometimes fatal animal attacks on humans in Australian zoos by tigers²⁷⁴, lions²⁷⁵, crocodiles²⁷⁶, brown bears²⁷⁷, emus²⁷⁸, elephants²⁷⁹, koalas²⁸⁰, and polar bears²⁸¹.

Marino's critique of captivity is supported by Collard and Emmerman. Emmerman states "all captivity is a problem for animals"²⁸² pointing to the way that

²⁷¹ Marino, "Captivity." Pp.108)

²⁷² Marino, "Captivity." Pp.99

²⁷³ Marino, "Captivity."

²⁷⁴ "Tiger attacks Australia Zoo keeper after becoming 'hot and bothered'," (January 21 2016). abc.net.au/news/2016-01-21/tiger-attacks-australia-zoo-keeper-after-becoming-hot-bothered/7104642.

²⁷⁵ Kelly Fuller and Ainslie Drewitt-Smith, "Shoalhaven zookeeper Jennifer Brown critical after being attacked by two lions," (May 29 2020). <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-05-29/lions-attack-woman-at-shoalhaven-zoo/12299950?nw=0>.

²⁷⁶ Drewitt-Smith, "Shoalhaven zookeeper Jennifer Brown critical after being attacked by two lions."

²⁷⁷ Malcolm Sutton, "Adelaide Zoo's dark history a tale of massacre, dismemberment and drunk elephant handlers," (November 9 2018). <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-09/tour-the-dark-history-of-the-adelaide-zoo/9791234>.

²⁷⁸ Alana Tindale, "Mother-of-two poses for a grinning selfie with a cheeky emu named Bert at Sydney Zoo - before he EATS her luxury Tiffany earring," (April 20 2021). <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9487115/Sydney-Zoo-emu-called-Bert-steals-eats-expensive-Tiffany-earrings-mother-leans-selfie.html>.

²⁷⁹ "These are some of the most horrifying zoo attacks in history," (January 4 2018). <https://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/real-life/true-stories/these-are-some-of-the-most-horrifying-zoo-attacks-in-history/news-story/f65337de9dc564b0e7eae546aa4a8de0>.

²⁸⁰ Jano Gibson, "Cranky koala meaner than stolen croc," (March 30 2006).

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/cranky-koala-meaner-than-stolen-croc-20060330-gdn9jt.html>.

²⁸¹ Sutton, "Adelaide Zoo's dark history a tale of massacre, dismemberment and drunk elephant handlers."

²⁸² Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp. 222

confinement of captive animals “reifies human control over these animals’ lives.”²⁸³ In her work on the exploitation of wildlife through the exotic animal trade, Collard describes captive life as harmful in large part due to the “impossibility of re-creating animals’ social, intellectual, and dietary requirements [in captivity]”²⁸⁴. This can result in “boredom, anxiety, dysregulation, hypersensitivity to environmental change, uncontrollable aggression, self-inflicted wounding, post-traumatic stress disorder, malnutrition, disease, and death.”²⁸⁵ A 2018 article reporter Malcolm Sutton describes the tragic life of Karta, an orangutan at Adelaide Zoo. In 2009, Karta used a stick to short circuit the electric fence around her enclosure and escape. Keepers speculated that she was looking for her dead mate Pusung who had recently passed away²⁸⁶. She was captured and the enclosure repaired. Between 1995 and 2015 Karta gave birth to six still born babies, and in January 2017, after her seventh still birth “the grief-stricken animal” (Karta) “gave up and passed away.”²⁸⁷

Collard is critical of the physical and emotional trauma captive animals are subject to, arguing that “more wild animals than ever before live enclosed in cages”²⁸⁸. Collard describes exotics pets and zoo animals as “lively commodities”²⁸⁹, “who engage in their own world-making practices. At the same time... legally and materially property”²⁹⁰. Collard argues that captivity is just a part of this property-making, commodification process, whereby animals are changed from “free-ranging forest and desert residents” to “captive property in someone’s living room or backyard.”²⁹¹ Like Marino, Collard points to the ways in which captivity limits individuals from normal conspecific relationships, instead centring the human/animal relationship and creating an entanglement of “human-provided supports”²⁹², noting that captive animals suffer “extremely high mortality rates, as well as stress, trauma, and ill health.”²⁹³ While Collard’s focus is predominantly on exotic pets, her critique extends more broadly to all human-animal relations under

²⁸³ Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp. 221

²⁸⁴ Collard, "Putting Animals Back Together, Taking Commodities Apart." Pp.158

²⁸⁵ Collard, "Putting Animals Back Together, Taking Commodities Apart." Pp. 158

²⁸⁶ Sutton, "Adelaide Zoo's dark history a tale of massacre, dismemberment and drunk elephant handlers."

²⁸⁷ Sutton, "Adelaide Zoo's dark history a tale of massacre, dismemberment and drunk elephant handlers."

²⁸⁸ Collard, *Animal Traffic: Lively Capital in the Global Exotic Pet Trade*. Pp.265

²⁸⁹ Collard, *Animal Traffic: Lively Capital in the Global Exotic Pet Trade*. Pp.265

²⁹⁰ Collard, *Animal Traffic: Lively Capital in the Global Exotic Pet Trade*. Pp.265

²⁹¹ Collard, *Animal Traffic: Lively Capital in the Global Exotic Pet Trade*. Pp.309

²⁹² Collard, *Animal Traffic: Lively Capital in the Global Exotic Pet Trade*. Pp.799

²⁹³ Collard, *Animal Traffic: Lively Capital in the Global Exotic Pet Trade*. Pp.309

capitalism, which she describes as “unequal and characterized by rising domestication and declining wild life”, with animals experiencing “escalating violence.”²⁹⁴

Horowitz extends this critique of captivity, to include domestic companion animals. Horowitz’s work on captivity is important because, like Marino and Collard, she argues that captivity is much more than physical confinement. Horowitz argues that even man’s best friend the domestic dog (*canis familiaris*) is “fundamentally held in captive by humans... Their movement is restricted; their diet is regimented; their sexual impulses thwarted.”²⁹⁵. Dogs are what Horowitz describes as “constitutionally captive”²⁹⁶, their existence regulated by state laws and city regulations. More than this though, dogs are captive by design, thanks to centuries of human-controlled breeding for domestication, dogs are captives “in the sense of the species”²⁹⁷. For the most part, domestic dogs cannot survive without humans – in the case of breeds like French Bull Dogs, they may require airway surgery to breathe, and they can no longer give birth naturally. Artificial selection, namely for aesthetics, has resulted in grievous health effects for many dog breeds²⁹⁸.

At least 40% of Australian household’s own a dog²⁹⁹. The RSPCA states that many dog owners have “adopted ‘pet parenting’ behaviours that resemble parent-child relationships”³⁰⁰. And yet as Horowitz notes, there are key differences between how we treat our pets and our human children. Dogs are subject to various forms of confinement (crates, yards and pens) and often spend long periods of time isolated and alone. Tools such as collars and leads have been used to control and restrict their movement for at least a thousand years³⁰¹. Some places require dogs to be leashed in public³⁰², and certain breeds such as greyhounds may also be required to be muzzled³⁰³. Often collars, leads, crates and yards are viewed as necessary measures to keep dogs safe. Horowitz suggests

²⁹⁴ Collard, *Animal Traffic: Lively Capital in the Global Exotic Pet Trade*. Pp.332

²⁹⁵ Horowitz, "Canis Familiaris: Companion and Captive." Pp.7

²⁹⁶ Horowitz, "Canis Familiaris: Companion and Captive." Pp. 7

²⁹⁷ Horowitz, "Canis Familiaris: Companion and Captive." Pp.9

²⁹⁸ Horowitz, "Canis Familiaris: Companion and Captive." Pp.12

²⁹⁹ "How many pets are there in Australia?," Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, 2020, accessed December 7, 2021, <https://kb.rspca.org.au/knowledge-base/how-many-pets-are-there-in-australia/>.

³⁰⁰ RSPCA, "How many pets are there in Australia?."

³⁰¹ Horowitz, "Canis Familiaris: Companion and Captive." Pp.15

³⁰² Sahar Adatia and Jimmy Singh, "A guide to leash laws in NSW," (September 9 2019). <https://www.criminaldefencelawyers.com.au/blog/a-guide-on-dog-leash-laws-in-nsw/>.

³⁰³ "Greyhounds and Muzzles," Greyhound Rescue, 2020, accessed December 7, 2021, <https://greyhoundrescue.com.au/2020/07/21/greyhounds-and-muzzles/>.

that captive lives of dogs, and the human desire to ‘protect’ them through containment and regulation exemplifies the complicated nature of captivity.

Guenther also reflects on the nature of captivity for dogs and other companion animals. Her work on captivity largely centres on an ethnographic study of a Los Angeles animal shelter PAWS. She describes the way in which shelters can often have the unintentional effect of normalizing violence against both animals and humans through the use of captivity and other practices of control; “Incarceration, caging, disciplinary power, disruption of kinship bonds, normalizing judgments, violence, and killing... Each of these practices of domination seeks to control the movements, location, and behaviour of animals”. Guenther draws parallels between animal shelters and institutions of human incarceration. Both animal shelters and human prisons exist at what Guenther describes as the nexus of “helping, policing and killing”³⁰⁴. While the purpose of modern shelters, at least in part, is to reunite lost animals with their human caregivers and find new homes for homeless animals, Guenther describes the much darker origins of these institutions; “stray cats and dogs who found themselves picked up by animal control typically did not survive the encounter; until the end of the 1800s, close to 100 percent of animals picked up by animal control agencies were killed”³⁰⁵. Shelters and pounds are therefore premised on the idea that “free-roaming animals are the mark of an uncivilized society”³⁰⁶ and the perceived need to contain, control (and often kill) animals that stray outside the boundaries of human control. Furthermore, Guenther argues that the conditions of shelter animals and their captivity reflects “a particular set of worldviews about animal care, human-animal relations, and incarceration”. Guenther reasons that “As long as we police, cage, and kill animals, we will continue to do so to humans as well”³⁰⁷.

Animal sanctuaries, as spaces that are ideally motivated by a self-reflective critique of human domination over non-human animals, are not immune or outside of any of the criticisms that these scholars, and others, have raised about captivity. Donaldson and Kymlicka have criticised some sanctuary models as reinforcing ideas of human entitlement over animals as well as paternalistic ideas about protection through human

³⁰⁴ Guenther, *The Lives and Deaths of Shelter Animals* Pp. 34

³⁰⁵ Guenther, *The Lives and Deaths of Shelter Animals* Pp. 7

³⁰⁶ Guenther, *The Lives and Deaths of Shelter Animals* Pp. 7

³⁰⁷ Guenther, *The Lives and Deaths of Shelter Animals* Pp. 241

control and confinement³⁰⁸. Others, like Doyle, argue that sanctuaries “run the risk of becoming a way for people to normalize and feel better about captivity”³⁰⁹. Emmerman also highlights the conflicting nature of captivity in sanctuaries - what she describes as “a genuine moral dilemma that has no clear solution”³¹⁰. On the one hand Emmerman states it is the mission of sanctuaries to “make life better for animals and to put their interests above anyone else’s”³¹¹ and yet animals within sanctuaries remain “permanent captives”³¹². Emmerman argues that this means most sanctuary animals, like all captive animals, live lives of “confinement, curtailed activity, and boredom”³¹³ making the work of improving the lives of captive animals vital for sanctuary workers and volunteers who must recognise the trauma of captive life.

2. Australian foxes

2.1 The arrival of foxes in Australia

Marino describes captivity as “a state of being”³¹⁴ and indeed from the beginning of their journey to Australia, foxes have been both physical and metaphorical captives, unable to escape the powerful colonial and nationalistic discourses that bind them. In this section, I will give a brief outline of the history of Australian foxes and illustrate their relationship to settler-colonialism as well as their ongoing discursive links to concepts of Australian nationhood that increases their vulnerability. I will show that the history of the Australian foxes is one that is fraught with contradictions and paradoxes, as the fox transforms from a fellow British immigrant to a foreign invader who must be contained, controlled, and killed.

The first red foxes were brought from Britain to Australia during the 1840’s. Wild foxes from England or Europe were captured alive and then faced a gruelling sixty to eighty day journey by ship to ports in either Melbourne or Sydney³¹⁵. Many would not have survived the journey. The earliest newspaper reference to wild foxes in Australia

³⁰⁸ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp. 68

³⁰⁹ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp.74.

³¹⁰Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp.223

³¹¹ Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp.223

³¹² Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp.221

³¹³ Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp. 225

³¹⁴ Marino, "Captivity." Pp. 99

³¹⁵ Abbott, "The importation, release, establishment, spread, and early impact on prey animals of the red fox".

was published in 1845 in the Geelong Advertiser³¹⁶. The article states that two foxes were killed by hounds at “Mr. Fairfax Fenwick’s station” near Point Henry, Geelong, south-eastern Australia³¹⁷. By the 1890’s foxes had spread across large portions of Victoria and New South Wales from multiple release sites³¹⁸, including into the region of Goulburn where Sydney Fox and Dingo Rescue is based.

Archival research by Abbot³¹⁹ and Fairfax³²⁰ indicates the upper-class British tradition of fox hunting was the predominant driving force behind the importation and release of foxes in Australia. Though ultimately the introduction of foxes was not only about leisure (hunting) but was also an active part of taming the new colony through familiarity and control. Dunlap argues that settler-colonialism is intrinsically linked to dominion and control over the natural landscape, including its human and non-human inhabitants. He describes the introduction of animals like foxes as a part of the settlers’ “continuing attempt to come to terms with their new lands”³²¹ but also a sign that “they had conquered or were conquering the land”³²² [Australia]. This is supported by Struthers, Montford and Taylor who argue that Australian colonists often deployed “animals to achieve colonial ends”³²³, a part of what Dunlap refers to more broadly as “ecological imperialism”³²⁴.

The introduction of foxes to Australia can be conceptualised as an element of settler-colonists engaging in a familiar and age-old method of exerting human control over animal bodies to reaffirm their dominion over the natural world through acts of violence. We can see this firsthand in early accounts of Australian Acclimatization Societies. Founded in the early to mid 19th century, Acclimatization Societies existed

³¹⁶ Abbott, "The importation, release, establishment, spread, and early impact on prey animals of the red fox".

³¹⁷ Abbott, "The importation, release, establishment, spread, and early impact on prey animals of the red fox".

³¹⁸ Abbott, "The importation, release, establishment, spread, and early impact on prey animals of the red fox".

³¹⁹ Abbott, "The importation, release, establishment, spread, and early impact on prey animals of the red fox".

³²⁰ Russell J Fairfax, "Dispersal of the introduced red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) across Australia," *Biological Invasions* 21, no. 4 (2019).

³²¹ Thomas R Dunlap, "Remaking the land: the acclimatization movement and Anglo ideas of nature," *Journal of World History* (1997). Pp. 304

³²² Dunlap, "Remaking the land: the acclimatization movement and Anglo ideas of nature." Pp. 304

³²³ Kelly Struthers Montford and Chloë Taylor, *Colonialism and Animality: Anti-Colonial Perspectives in Critical Animal Studies* (Routledge, 2020). Pp. 3

³²⁴ Dunlap, "Remaking the land: the acclimatization movement and Anglo ideas of nature."

across Australia, Queensland, Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia and Tasmania. These member-run private clubs were responsible for the importation of hundreds, if not thousands, of plant and animal species to Australia – foundational to these societies was the concept that social stability was tied to natural order and familiarity, both of which could be artificially engineered through the extermination of some species and the introduction of others.

The existence of Acclimatization societies is evidence of British colonists overwhelming desire to remake the alien Australian landscape in a way that allowed for both knowing and control. The inaugural meeting of the Acclimatization Society of NSW was held in Sydney on December 2nd, 1861 (reported in the Sydney Morning Herald on December 3rd, 1861)³²⁵. As early as 1862 it was stated that members of the society were purchasing animals and plants from Europe, South Africa³²⁶, India³²⁷ and even China³²⁸ “as might be considered for introduction to New South Wales”³²⁹. In 1862, the Sydney Morning Herald reported that Dr. Bennet of the Acclimatization Society “brought before the council the following account of the secretary bird of South Africa, and which he considers will be both valuable and useful to introduce into the colony of New South Wales”³³⁰. Dr. Bennet’s rationale for importing the secretary bird, which he believed would reduce the number of snakes in the colony through predation, was that “it is invaluable, feeding almost exclusively on snakes, seeking out and destroying them... stalking with a staid military step”³³¹. England is almost entirely devoid of snakes, especially venomous snakes and so it was a priority for the Acclimatization Society to find a way to eliminate them from the new Australian colony. This proposal by Dr. Bennet is an example of the way in which colonists sought to capture and weaponize animal

³²⁵ "General meeting of the Acclimatization Society", *Sydney Morning Herald (NSW : 1842 - 1954)* (NSW), 03 December 1861 1861, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13063131>.

³²⁶ "General meeting of the Acclimatization Society"; "Acclimatization Society of New South Wales," *Sydney Morning Herald (NSW : 1842 - 1954)* (NSW), 28 August 1862 1862, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13233455>.

³²⁷ "Acclimatization Society of New South Wales."

³²⁸ "The Acclimatisation Society," *Empire (Sydney, NSW : 1850 - 1875)* (Sydney, NSW), 15 May 1862 1862, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article60475442>.

³²⁹ "The Acclimatisation Society."

³³⁰ "Acclimatization Society of New South Wales."

³³¹ "Acclimatization Society of New South Wales."

bodies, in order to not only reinvent the Australian landscape, but actively exterminate native flora and fauna that did not comply with their image of a 'new England'³³².

In this way, captivity for introduced animals like the fox extends far beyond their capture, confinement, and importation to Australia - even after they have been released, introduced species remain under human control, their very existence premised on their human-appointed roles. However, should they fail in these roles they can and will be violently exterminated. One example of this is the cane toad, captured in Africa and brought to Australia to try and control another introduced species - the cane beetle. When this proved unsuccessful, they were deemed a noxious pest³³³ and are now killed in varied and brutal ways- freezing, clubbing, gassing etc.³³⁴

2.2 From Countrymen to feral pests: once a convict now an invader.

An animal or group of animals may come to represent, in arbitrary fashion, a particular social group, or maybe an entire nation. Once an animal is charged with this representational status, it means that every positive act towards it simultaneously endorses the nation or group that it represents. In this way animals become inextricably tied up with human morality and politics.³³⁵

After their introduction to Australia, species such as foxes during the late 1800s are described by Adrian Franklin as symbols of the "heroic triumph of British colonial culture"³³⁶ in that they have been captured, imported and released as an ongoing effort by the settler-colonisers to "replace inferior indigenous nature"³³⁷. In light of their status as fellow colonisers, we initially see positive descriptors used in Goulburn newspapers for foxes such as: "fine" (1895³³⁸, 1906³³⁹), "splendid" (1897³⁴⁰, 1898³⁴¹), "harmless"

³³² Dunlap, "Remaking the land: the acclimatization movement and Anglo ideas of nature."; Dunlap, "Remaking the land: the acclimatization movement and Anglo ideas of nature."

³³³ Rick Shine, *Cane toad wars* (University of California Press, 2018).

³³⁴ Shine, *Cane toad wars*.

³³⁵ Adrian Franklin, *Animal nation: The true story of animals and Australia* (UNSW Press, 2006). Pp. 6-7

³³⁶ Adrian Franklin, "An Improper Nature? Introduced Animals and 'Species Cleansing' in Australia.," in *Human and Other Animals: Critical Perspectives*, ed. Bob Carter and Nickie Charles (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). Pp.195

³³⁷ Franklin, "An Improper Nature? Introduced Animals and 'Species Cleansing' in Australia. ." Pp. 195

³³⁸ "A SECOND FOX," *Goulburn Herald (NSW : 1881 - 1907)* (NSW), 09 August 1895 1895, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article101112014>.

³³⁹ "GUNNING," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 31 May 1906 1906, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article104777653>.

³⁴⁰ "Fox Killed at Pejar," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 05 August 1897 1897, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article104548472>.

³⁴¹ "Taralga," *Goulburn Herald (NSW : 1881 - 1907)* (NSW), 09 September 1898 1898, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article114425642>.

(1904)³⁴² and “[a] curiosity”(1906)³⁴³. It was not uncommon for hunting parties during this period to allow vixens or kits to escape in order to ensure the longevity of the sport (NSW 1883³⁴⁴, QLD, 1898³⁴⁵, VIC 1898³⁴⁶); “A vixen, came out by the brook... We left her, like true sportsmen, to be a breeder.”³⁴⁷ Despite these positive descriptions, however, freedom for the newly Australian fox was conditional and limited. Foxes were brought to Australia to play a part in a violent social ritual that involves cycles of release, capture and eventual death. Early fox hunts in Australia, following the British tradition, almost always involved the release of what was known as a “bagged fox”³⁴⁸. These foxes were kept in cages by the master of the hunt, and then brought out in a bag and released on the day of an organised hunt. The fox would then be pursued by hunting dogs, who were followed in turn by hunters on horseback. After hours of pursuit, the exhausted fox would be bailed up by dogs and either shot and killed or sometimes recaptured and kept for future hunting parties³⁴⁹. Over time, more and more foxes escaped these planned hunts and began to breed and establish themselves as wild populations. However, this only led to larger, more organised “fox drives” which often included a picnic lunch and prizes for the most foxes (and other animals) killed³⁵⁰. Symbolically, foxes may have been revered in early Australia for their clever nature and splendid looks, but the reality for the Australian fox at this time was one of ongoing fear of pursuit, capture and eventual death.

³⁴²“Do Foxes Kill Lambs?,” *Goulburn Evening Penny Post* (NSW : 1881 - 1940) (NSW), 01 October 1904 1904, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article98769236>.

³⁴³“Fox for the Park,” *Goulburn Evening Penny Post* (NSW : 1881 - 1940) (NSW), 01 December 1904 1904, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article98761044>.

³⁴⁴ “A run with the Quorley hounds,” *Wagga Wagga Advertiser* (NSW : 1875 - 1910) (NSW), 21 June 1883 1883, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article101925868>.

³⁴⁵ “The Kennel,” *Queenslander* (Brisbane, Qld. : 1866 - 1939) (Brisbane, Qld.), 29 January 1898 1898, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article21445179>.

³⁴⁶ “Fox pest and hunt clubs,” *Age* (Melbourne, Vic. : 1854 - 1954) (Melbourne, Vic.), 04 October 1898 1898, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article192571612>.

³⁴⁷ “A run with the Quorley hounds.”

³⁴⁸ James Howe, “Fox hunting as ritual,” *American Ethnologist* 8, no. 2 (1981).

³⁴⁹ Howe, “Fox hunting as ritual.”

³⁵⁰ Glen Saunders et al., *Managing vertebrate pests: foxes* (Australian Government Publ. Service Canberra, Australia, 1995).



Figure 3.0 A group of Sydney Hunt Club members, Rouse Hill NSW, 18 July 1895³⁵¹.

The violent nature of the relationship between humans and foxes worsened at the turn of the century following federation and World War I. Around this time, in what Franklin describes as “a spectacular reversal”³⁵², foxes’ cultural position of familiarity was taken over by species perceived to be more ‘Australian’ – through their status as ‘native’ animals. Foxes were not alone in this repositioning in the popular imagination, which also affected many other introduced species. When writing about this cultural shift, Franklin notes that the ‘Australian’ identity was “new and fragile”³⁵³, the majority of the population now consisted of people born in Australia (rather than Britain) and introduced wild animals were unwanted reminders of Australia’s “rejected colonial status”³⁵⁴. Franklin suggests that as introduced species were increasingly maligned, they were replaced by native species like possums, echidnas, kangaroos and wombats, who became the “totemic centre of newly forming Australian social solidarities”³⁵⁵. One example of the newfound desire to protect the once-loathed Australian native animals is the NSW

³⁵¹ "A group after the Hunt, Rouse Hill, 18 July 1895 / photographer unknown," (trove.nla.gov.au/work/179753196: His Hou Trust NSW, 1895).

³⁵² Franklin, "An Improper Nature? Introduced Animals and ‘Species Cleansing’ in Australia. ." Pp. 197

³⁵³ Franklin, "An Improper Nature? Introduced Animals and ‘Species Cleansing’ in Australia. ." Pp.197

³⁵⁴ Franklin, "An Improper Nature? Introduced Animals and ‘Species Cleansing’ in Australia. ."Pp.195

³⁵⁵ Franklin, "An Improper Nature? Introduced Animals and ‘Species Cleansing’ in Australia. ."Pp.195

Native Animal Protection Bill passed in 1904. Described by a 1904 article in the *Yass Evening Tribune* as “a useful measure”³⁵⁶ the bill noted that certain species would be “absolutely protected” from killing, capture or confinement for a minimum of six months of the year (August 1st to January 31st). Species listed included: Red kangaroos, Wallaroos, Native Bears (Koalas), Wombats, Platypus, Echidna and Flying Opossums (sugar gliders)³⁵⁷.

Evidence of the conative shift in the cultural status of foxes can be seen in Goulburn’s three main newspapers. Through language and media representation we can trace the making of the fox into a violent, criminal invader, a ‘non-native’ who doesn’t belong. The fox is constructed as a threat to Australian culture and nationhood, to be regulated and/or exterminated. Of the 465 articles I examined through my research, 424 describe or refer to either methods of fox death or dead foxes and just 41 refer to living foxes. The number of newspaper references to fox death and the degree of violence used to kill foxes increases dramatically in the early twentieth century, peaking in the 1940’s. It became commonplace to poison Australian foxes with strychnine around this period and other articles refer to foxes being stabbed(1950)³⁵⁸, choked (1944)³⁵⁹, strangled (1944)³⁶⁰, skinned alive (1944)³⁶¹ and beaten to death with a stick or other object (1904³⁶², 1905³⁶³, 1909³⁶⁴, 1944³⁶⁵, 1945³⁶⁶, 1949³⁶⁷), in some cases by boys as young as ten years old³⁶⁸.

³⁵⁶ "Protecting Native Animals," *Yass Evening Tribune (NSW : 1899 - 1928)* (NSW), 28 January 1904 1904, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article248624032>.

³⁵⁷ "Protecting Native Animals.."

³⁵⁸ "Killed fox with pocketknife ", *Goulburn Evening Post (NSW : 1940 - 1954)* (NSW), 29 March 1950 1950, Daily and Evening, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article104336863>.

³⁵⁹ "Choked a fox to death," *Goulburn Evening Post (NSW : 1940 - 1954)* (NSW), 18 August 1944 1944, Daily and Evening, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article103144491>.

³⁶⁰ "Three Of A Kind," *Goulburn Evening Post (NSW : 1940 - 1954)* (NSW), 23 June 1944 1944, Daily and Evening, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article103145382>.

³⁶¹ "Tale of a fox," *Goulburn Evening Post (NSW : 1940 - 1954)* (NSW), 08 May 1944 1944, Daily and Evening, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article103144371>.

³⁶² "A Fox Killed with a Stick," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 17 September 1904 1904, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article98753705>.

³⁶³ "Crookwell," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 26 October 1905 1905, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article98732984>.

³⁶⁴ "Queanbeyan," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 07 September 1909 1909, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article103674357>.

³⁶⁵ "Tale of a fox."

³⁶⁶ "From everywhere," *Goulburn Evening Post (NSW : 1940 - 1954)* (NSW), 20 July 1945 1945, Daily and Evening, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article103220530>.

³⁶⁷ "Fox made hard fight with two men," *Goulburn Evening Post (NSW : 1940 - 1954)* (NSW), 01 August 1949 1949, Daily and Evening, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article104530832>.

³⁶⁸ "Killed fox with pocketknife ".

KILLED FOX WITH POCKETKNIFE

PERTH: Ten-year-old Jim Riley stabbed a fully grown fox to death with his pocketknife.

Chased by a dog in the bush near Collie, the fox hid under a log.

Jim pulled it out and killed it. He carried the fox to his uncle's farm, where he has been holidaying.

Figure 3.1 "Killed Fox With Pocket Knife. Perth: Ten-year-old Jim Riley stabbed a fully grown fox to death with pocket knife."³⁶⁹.

The article in figure 3.1 was not intended to reprimand Jim, instead the article presents the heroic act of a young boy killing a fox with a knife as an oddity unusual enough to be reported on, but morally neutral at best, an acceptable behaviour within the community at the time given the killable nature of foxes.

Another example of the escalating violence toward foxes can be seen in a 1912 article in the *Goulburn Evening Penny Post* which describes a "considerable crowd" in Goulburn chasing a fox down the main street with "cricket bats, pokers and other lethal weapons"³⁷⁰ in order to beat her to death. This article, and others, demonstrate that over time fox killing became less of a rich man's sport and more of a social duty for all Australian men. We can contrast this act of socially permitted, collective violence with the treatment of other animals at the time. For example, an article from the *Goulburn Herald* (1902)³⁷¹ describes a man being sentenced to spend two months in jail for beating

³⁶⁹ "Killed fox with pocketknife".

³⁷⁰ "A fox in the city," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post* (NSW : 1881 - 1940) (NSW), 13 February 1912 1912, EVENING, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article102114039>.

³⁷¹ "General News," *Goulburn Herald* (NSW : 1881 - 1907) (NSW), 23 July 1902 1902, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article100500958>.

a dog to death. This type of violence when directed at a dog (presumably a domestic dog) is viewed as socially unacceptable, however when directed at a fox such actions are endorsed as necessary.

In addition to an increasingly violent relationship between humans and foxes, there is also a growing relationship between Australian foxes and foreign invaders through language and media representation in the twentieth century. In 1904, they are described in the *Goulburn Evening Penny Post* as “Unwelcome in our neighbourhood”³⁷², this same year the presence of foxes is also described in the same newspaper as both an “invasion” and a “scourge”³⁷³. While the word ‘pest’ is commonly used, after federation we also see much more negative, visceral language to describe foxes evoking a sense of both outsidership and criminality: “menace” (1904³⁷⁴, 1935^{375 376}), “looting”(1907)³⁷⁷, “lair”(1907)³⁷⁸, “curse” (1905³⁷⁹, 1909)³⁸⁰, “terror” (1907)³⁸¹, “havoc” (1907³⁸², 1929³⁸³), “thief” (1912^{384 385}), “intruder” (1918)³⁸⁶, “robber” (1921)³⁸⁷, “plague” (1929³⁸⁸, 1933³⁸⁹).

³⁷² "Tarago," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 07 July 1904 1904, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article98766202>.

³⁷³ "The fox pest," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 01 September 1904 1904, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article98760502>.

³⁷⁴ "Crookwell," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 30 July 1904 1904, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article98762941>.

³⁷⁵ "Invasion of foxes," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 13 June 1935 1935, DAILY, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article103389181>.

³⁷⁶ "Crows and hawks," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 15 August 1935 1935, DAILY, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article103392926>.

³⁷⁷ "Grabben Gullen," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 08 August 1907 1907, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article98776124>.

³⁷⁸ "Narrawa," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 16 April 1907 1907, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article98773282>.

³⁷⁹ "Imported pests," *Goulburn Herald (NSW : 1881 - 1907)* (NSW), 24 November 1905 1905, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article100543675>.

³⁸⁰ "Bungonia," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 16 September 1909 1909, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article103673509>.

³⁸¹ "Invalid hatches eggs in bed," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 28 November 1907 1907, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article98778197>.

³⁸² "Bungendore," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 28 December 1907 1907, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article98778395>.

³⁸³ "Plague of foxes," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 01 July 1929 1929, DAILY and EVENING, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article99341085>.

³⁸⁴ "New fruit thief," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 08 February 1912 1912, EVENING, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article102120305>.

³⁸⁵ "A fox in the city."

³⁸⁶ "Fox Killed in Goulburn," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 27 April 1918 1918, EVENING, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article99030403>.

³⁸⁷ "Foxes at Towrang," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 25 January 1921 1921, EVENING, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article98933762>.

³⁸⁸ "Plague of foxes."

³⁸⁹ "From everywhere," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 06 July 1933 1933, DAILY and EVENING, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article102860709>.

In a 1913 article published in the *Goulburn Evening Penny Post* titled ‘The Glories of the Hunt’, the author compares the act of hunting a fox with war, describing the fox as “an enemy”, “a crafty son of a famous family of the yellow peril”, “not a Japanese, but bold Mr. Fox”³⁹⁰. This article as whole is a manifestation of the type of anxieties shaping white ‘Australian’ identities at this time. The tale is littered with racial language directly coding the fox as an invader. ‘Yellow Peril’, in this case, is a reference to the widespread fear among Australian settlers, that Asian nations, in particular Japan, would invade or take over Australia through mass migration. The hostility and hatred of foxes is so pronounced that the language used to describe foxes is that of war and armed conflict against an insidious foreign invader.

The “anthropocentric taxonomies”³⁹¹ that underpin the definitions of native and non-native species in post-federation Australia persist into modern times. This native/non-native taxonomic divide is described by Stanescu and Cummings as troubling because of its reliance on the belief in static neo-colonial borders³⁹². National borders and border control are largely colonial concepts. Plants, animals and ecosystems do not fit neatly within human defined borders. Franklin argues that rather than being “natural or primordial”³⁹³, nations like post-federation Australia are “carefully constructed”³⁹⁴, overshadowed by the risk that they might fall apart at any time. Franklin argues that Australia’s hatred of not only introduced species, but all outsiders, is fuelled by a sense of “boundary anxiety”³⁹⁵. Australia is an island nation; thus, migration and invasion are perceived as constant threats to the new nation. In addition to this, Franklin suggests that the colonists’ own status as British immigrants posed an internal threat to the legitimacy of their claim to an Australian identity. An attachment to native species and the desire to protect them, allowed settler-colonists to embody what Franklin describes as “the role of custodian of the land”³⁹⁶, and in doing so provided a sense of eco-belong, “each new campaign or policy announcement that promoted native animals or sought the eradication of introduced animals simultaneously reinforced national values”³⁹⁷. Stanescu and

³⁹⁰ "The glories of the hunt," *Goulburn Evening Penny Post (NSW : 1881 - 1940)* (NSW), 18 March 1913 1913, EVENING, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article98861535>.

³⁹¹ Matt Calarco et al., *The ethics and rhetoric of invasion ecology* (Lexington Books, 2016).

³⁹² "Invasion of foxes."; Calarco et al., *The ethics and rhetoric of invasion ecology*.

³⁹³ Franklin, "An Improper Nature? Introduced Animals and ‘Species Cleansing’ in Australia. ."Pp. 197

³⁹⁴ Franklin, "An Improper Nature? Introduced Animals and ‘Species Cleansing’ in Australia. ."Pp. 197

³⁹⁵ Franklin, "An Improper Nature? Introduced Animals and ‘Species Cleansing’ in Australia. ." Pp. 198

³⁹⁶ Franklin, *Animal nation: The true story of animals and Australia*. Pp. 17

³⁹⁷ Franklin, *Animal nation: The true story of animals and Australia*. Pp. 17

Cummings note that in addition to concepts of borders and nationhood, the native/non-native divide also relies on closed-ecosystems³⁹⁸, the belief that eco-systems are static and do not, or at least should not, change over time. This concept has been refuted by many Australian ecologists including Arian Wallach et al., who state that “all life counts in conservation”³⁹⁹ making the case that conservationists’ “moral circle” should be expanded “to include all wildlife”⁴⁰⁰, not only species considered ‘native’.

3. Captive for life: fox laws, regulations and permits.

The historical pattern of vilification and control of foxes continues in modern times. Fox life and death today is controlled by a variety of state legislative acts and regulations. Perhaps the most significant of these is the New South Wales Biosecurity Act 2015⁴⁰¹ and the associated instrument Biosecurity Regulation 2017, which lists foxes as a pest animal⁴⁰². Crucially, their status as a pest species under this Biosecurity Regulation means they are not subject to the same animal welfare laws as many domestic species and/or native wildlife. The Government website Pestsmart.org lists a variety of ways in which foxes can legally be captured and killed including CO2 fumigation of their dens, poisoning (1080 or PAPP), shooting, cage traps, soft net traps, soft-jaw leg hold traps and foot hold traps⁴⁰³. Foxes can legally be hunted using both standard firearms or bow and arrow⁴⁰⁴.

Sydney Fox and Dingo Rescue have sixteen permits granted by the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) which allow us to legally ‘own’ our resident foxes. These permits protect our foxes from many forms of violence and death that wild foxes face; however, they come with their own unique types of violence and control. The permits were granted to SFDR after foxes were first declared a pest species in New South Wales

³⁹⁸ Calarco et al., *The ethics and rhetoric of invasion ecology*.

³⁹⁹ Arian D Wallach et al., "When all life counts in conservation," *Conservation Biology* 34, no. 4 (2020). Pp. 2

⁴⁰⁰ Wallach et al., "When all life counts in conservation." Pp. 2

⁴⁰¹ "Biosecurity Act No.24," (New South Wales, 2015).

<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2015-024>.

⁴⁰² "Biosecurity Regulation ", (New South Wales, 2017).

<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/sl-2017-0232>.

⁴⁰³ "Model code of practices for the humane control of foxes," accessed December 8, 2021,

<https://pestsmart.org.au/toolkit-resource/code-of-practice-fox/>.

⁴⁰⁴ "Game and Feral Animal Control Regulation," (New South Wales, 2012).

<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/sl-2012-0428>.

in 2014⁴⁰⁵, and permit numbers are linked to microchips implanted under the foxes' skin. Prior to the 2014 Pest Control Order (PCO) it was legal to rescue and care for injured or orphaned foxes and to keep foxes in captivity without a permit – releasing foxes was however illegal. In 2014, when the PCO was passed, SFDR were able to negotiate with the NSW DPI and Local Land Services (LLS) on behalf of 52 fox carers for permits to be granted allowing them to continue caring for their foxes provided they met certain requirements and underwent regular inspections. No new permits to keep foxes in captivity (for non-commercial/exhibition purposes) have been approved since 2015. This is despite the Biosecurity Act 2015 allowing the DPI to grant such permits⁴⁰⁶.

Our fox permits come with a plethora of rules that govern how our foxes are housed, and how and when they can leave both their enclosures and the property. Their enclosures cannot be part of a human dwelling, and must have a roof, floor and locked double gates and the property must have boundary fencing. Part of fox captivity is this carefully controlled distancing from humans - foxes can be kept in captivity, they can be exhibited (with commercial permits), but they must be separated from humans - a carefully constructed type of 'wildness' is maintained even in their captivity. It is likely that the separation of human/fox that is stipulated by law is in large part due to the discursive influence human/fox relationships can have over broader public attitudes to foxes in Australia. In 2014, with the advent of the NSW Pest Control Order for Red Foxes, I was told by Department of Primary Industry representative Paul Meek that by rescuing foxes and depicting them as being capable of meaningful connections with each other and with humans, I was changing public attitudes toward foxes. This ultimately made it more difficult for authorities to maintain public support for fox culling programs, in particular the use of 1080 bait. Sadly, it is at least in part because of the potential for sanctuaries to radically reshape and change public opinion, that the New South Wales government decided to outlaw the rescue and care of injured and orphaned foxes.

Our sanctuary is routinely inspected, without notice, by armed police officers and DPI representatives to ensure we are abiding by the permit conditions and not illegally

⁴⁰⁵ "Local Land Services (European Red Fox) Pest Control Order 2014 ", ed. Local Land Services (NSW Government Gazette, 2014). https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/602038/Red-fox-PCO-2014.pdf.

⁴⁰⁶ "Biosecurity Act No.24."

rescuing foxes. The Local Land Services Act 2013⁴⁰⁷ grants DPI and/or LLS authorised officers sweeping powers allowing them to “inspect the premises... search the premises... examine, seize, detain or remove any pest in or about those premises”⁴⁰⁸. I know of several wildlife carers who have had foxes seized by DPI or LLS officers since the 2014 PCO came into place. One such fox was named “Jorah”. Jorah was a one-year-old rescue fox who had one eye and three legs. Jorah’s carer did not have a permit for him, though they did have permits for two other foxes. Their home was raided by police, RSPCA and LLS officers on a Friday afternoon in 2016. Their home and yard was searched, Jorah was seized and in less than an hour he had been transported to an RSPCA vet clinic and euthanised. Without a permit Jorah was an illegal pest, whom LLS officers could “seize, detain or remove... or destroy”⁴⁰⁹.



Figure 3.2 One year old fox Jorah in his enclosure.

⁴⁰⁷ "Local Land Services Act No 51", (New South Wales, 2013). <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/act-2013-051?>

⁴⁰⁸ "Local Land Services Act No 51

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⁴⁰⁹ "Local Land Services Act No 51

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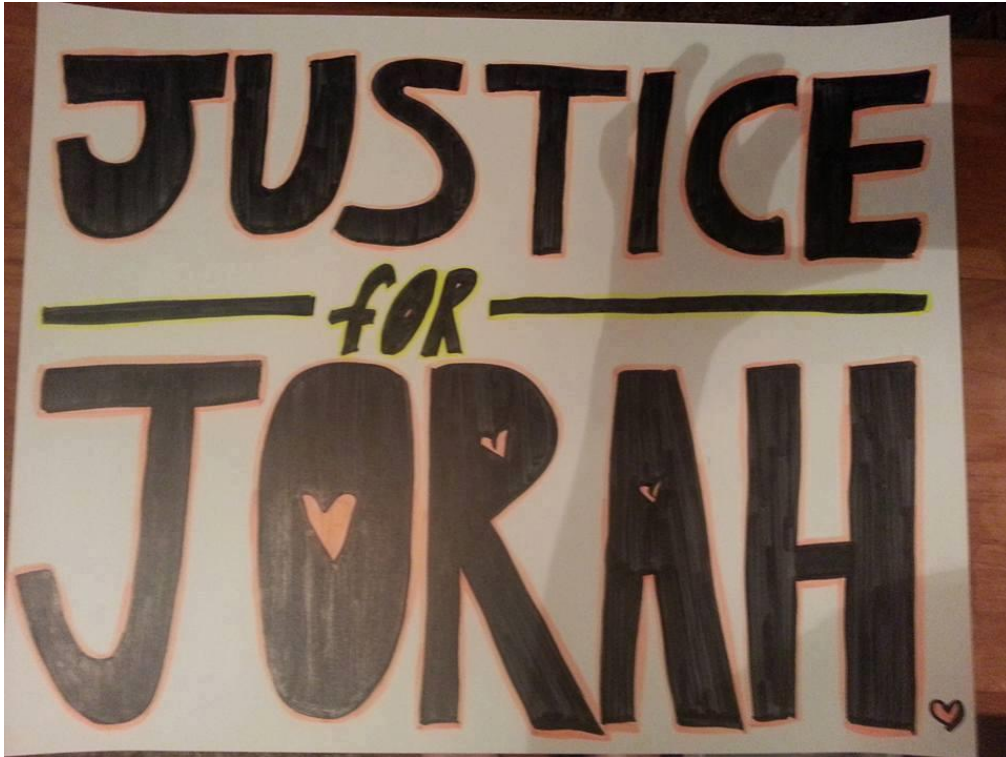


Figure 3.3 A handmade sign that reads “Justice for Jorah” made by his carer for a protest held after his death at the Local Land Services Office in Parramatta.

Under our permits, the foxes at SFDR are only allowed to leave the property for vet visits, we must provide notice to the DPI 24-hours prior to the trip and the foxes must travel in a secure, locked crate to a single vet clinic listed on our permits⁴¹⁰. The foxes are only allowed to leave their enclosures for walks in a fenced area using 2 metal leads, a collar and harness⁴¹¹. All captive foxes must be microchipped⁴¹², and during inspections each fox must be caught and scanned to ensure their microchips match the ones listed on the permit. The DPI must inspect and approve any changes or extensions to our enclosures or any new enclosures. Captivity for our foxes is a complex combination of physical constraints and legal restrictions; from their movement to their housing, diet and vet care every aspect is controlled by a complex web of laws and regulations.

4. Sanctuary foxes: practical and ethical challenges

⁴¹⁰ "Individual Biosecurity Permit - Red Foxes," ed. Biosecurity and Food Safety Department of Primary Industries (2018).

⁴¹¹ "Individual Biosecurity Permit - Red Foxes."

⁴¹² "Individual Biosecurity Permit - Red Foxes."

All captivity is a problem for animals just as all captivity is a problem for humans even if we observe that some forms of human captivity are more conducive to flourishing than others.⁴¹³

The individual experience of captivity for the foxes at our sanctuary varies greatly, and therefore the challenges each of them face are unique as we try to ensure they have the most fulfilling lives we can offer them. Some of the foxes at SFDR were found by members of the public at a very young age and have never known life outside the sanctuary and the confines of captivity. ‘Imy’, for example, was found at approximately three to five days old. She was handed into a vet clinic by a member of the public who assumed she was a dumped puppy. She weighed less than 200grams and her eyes were still closed. I bottle fed every two hours at first, and she often slept in my shirt, pressed against my skin which seemed to comfort her. Even now as a five kilogram, seven-year-old adult, Imy is extremely humanised, she can go for walks with us on a leash, she will groom volunteers’ hair (a social fox behaviour) and roll on her back offering her stomach for belly rubs. She even wags her tail and makes a high-pitched excited scream when she sees humans or dogs she knows. Contrast this with Percy. Approximately eight years ago I was sent a photo of a three or four-month-old fox in a small cage trap, he was drenched and muddy and the message was short and brutal. It said something like “can you rescue this fox? Otherwise, will drown him. Must be picked up today.” When he first arrived at the sanctuary Percy was terrified of humans and even eight years on, he is tolerant of us but has little to no desire for human company. He won’t eat in front of strangers and shows none of Imy’s affection for our human volunteers. Both these foxes live in large outdoor enclosures, they have other foxes for company, regular enrichment activities, and access to a wide range of foods. Despite this I have no doubt they both experience the multiple limitations of captivity; boredom, frustration, and stress to name just a few. But Imy and Percy’s experiences of captivity are different, shaped by their lived experiences and individual differences. While Imy craves human attention and affection (which poses its own ethical challenges), any type of human contact for Percy is at a best a source of indifference and at worst a huge stressor. It is these individual experiences and knowledge from time spent with our sanctuary residents over the past ten years that I will try and

⁴¹³ Emmerman, Karen S. “Sanctuary, Not Remedy: The Problem of Captivity and the Need for Moral Repair.” In *The Ethics of Captivity*, edited by Lori Gruen, 213-230. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

draw on in the following discussion of captivity and our ethical obligations as a sanctuary to try and improve the captive lives of our sanctuary residents.



Figure 3.4 Imy seven-year-old fox grooming volunteer Sherri's hair.

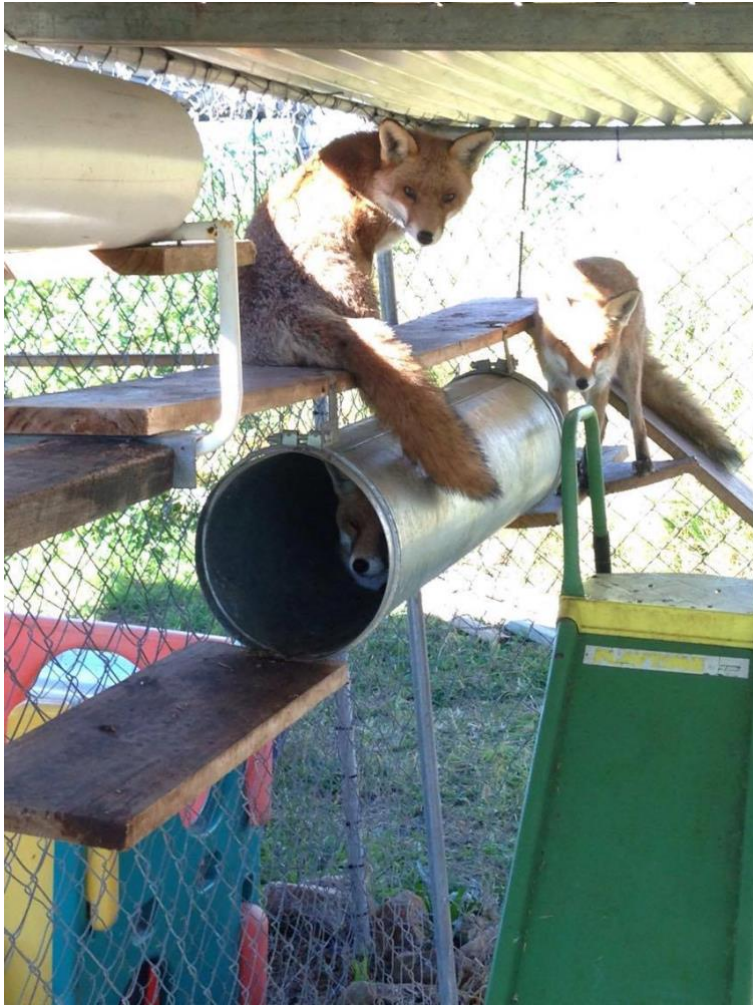


Figure 3.5 Percy eight-year-old fox with foxes Tybalt and Ghost.

4.1 Creating free-feeling captivity

Perhaps the most obvious source of stress for captive animals are the limitations placed on their basic freedom of movement. Humans control their physical and social lives, through fences, cages, and other limitations on physical movement, enforced routines and involuntary medical procedures. Humans decide what they eat and when, who they interact with and where they live in a totalitarian type of control. Even for sanctuary workers who are critical of captivity, some of these restrictions are necessary. For example, not only are we legally required to house our foxes in enclosures, if we didn't separate them from other animals at the sanctuary such as the dingoes, they could be badly injured and killed - dingoes will hunt and kill foxes in the wild.

Captivity within sanctuaries poses what Miriam Jones describes as a “troubling dichotomy”⁴¹⁴. True freedom isn’t possible for many sanctuary animals - they may have life-long injuries or disabilities, perhaps they cannot legally be released, or they are domestic animals who no longer possess the survival skills to live in ‘the wild’. For whatever reason, we live in a world where for some animals the only choice is death or captivity. With this in mind, Jones argues for the need within sanctuaries to strive for what she describes as “free-feeling captivity”⁴¹⁵, whilst acknowledging that “what we do is not the same thing as providing actual freedom to the people who live here”⁴¹⁶. Jones describes free-feeling captivity as creating a sanctuary community where non-human animals are “as free as possible”⁴¹⁷, and are able to live lives that are “as rich and meaningful to them as possible”⁴¹⁸.

Jones describes the careful process of establishing what free-feeling captivity might look like for different animals using the example of her own sanctuary VINE, co-founded with patrice jones; “we rely upon a combination of acquired knowledge and continuous observation... Acquired knowledge comes from a variety of sources, including accumulated information from veterinary visits, information shared with other sanctuary workers, as well as articles and books”⁴¹⁹. However, Jones notes that it is observation of the animals as individuals that provides the most valuable knowledge; “continuous observation...is a more powerful tool when ensuring that life in captivity resembles, to the furthest possible extent, life in freedom”. Using the example of chickens, Jones notes first it is important to establish a baseline;

“Chickens of all types (whether “meat” or “egg”) show interest in life ...They need chicken companions of both sexes, space, interesting things to get under and climb over, a combination of sun and shade, clean food and water (warm in the winter and cool in the summer), and a clean shelter at night. These are baseline requirements that help inspire baseline positive behaviors.”⁴²⁰

This baseline is what sanctuaries should strive for as a minimum, but over time this baseline should be challenged and built on using observation of individual

⁴¹⁴ Jones, "Captivity in the context of a sanctuary for formerly farmed animals." Pp. 92

⁴¹⁵ Jones, "Captivity in the context of a sanctuary for formerly farmed animals." Pp. 91

⁴¹⁶ Jones, "Captivity in the context of a sanctuary for formerly farmed animals." Pp. 96

⁴¹⁷ Jones, "Captivity in the context of a sanctuary for formerly farmed animals." Pp. 91

⁴¹⁸ Jones, "Captivity in the context of a sanctuary for formerly farmed animals." Pp. 93

⁴¹⁹ Jones, "Captivity in the context of a sanctuary for formerly farmed animals." Pp. 93

⁴²⁰ Jones, "Captivity in the context of a sanctuary for formerly farmed animals." Pp. 92-93

differences. This process of constant learning, using observation and empathy better equips sanctuary workers with the skills necessary to ensure sanctuary animals lives in captivity are “as rich and meaningful to them as possible”⁴²¹.

What could free-feeling captivity look like for captive foxes? Free-feeling captivity as we understand it at SFDR is an ever-evolving process of improvement as we not only learn more about our foxes but build bigger and better facilities for them as resources become available. On a practical level free-feeling captivity for our foxes, just as with VINES chickens begins with research and observation- not only of captive foxes, but wild foxes. What do they enjoy doing? How do they express happiness and contentment? Anger or sadness? Legally and practically, we are limited in our ability to take our foxes out of their enclosures - for this reason we try to make their enclosures as enriching as possible as well as continuing to build larger, more natural enclosures over time. On a practical level, observation and research has helped us understand the need for places for the foxes to run, dig and climb. Many foxes like to be able to observe their surroundings and so we provide raised platforms as well as tunnels, hidey-holes and den boxes which satisfy their curiosity to watch the goings on at the sanctuary while still feeling safe and concealed from humans and other predators. Foxes also like to dig and cache/bury food, so we provide sandpits, and different substrates like woodchips and straw.

My time with foxes at the sanctuary has also taught me that most foxes are extremely social animals, and all the foxes at our sanctuary currently live in groups of two to six. During the catastrophic 2009 bushfires, our foxes had to be evacuated from the sanctuary and boarded at our vet clinic in Sydney for approximately a month, during this time they were separated into pairs due to space constraints. To this day, I struggle to find words to describe the sheer level of unbridled joy I witnessed when the foxes returned to the sanctuary and were reunited with their social groups. One bonded group - Imy, Drogon, Corby, Miri, Osha and Lew, when let out of their travel crates into their enclosure, did laps running, jumping, and squealing. They ran in nose to tail, wagging their entire bodies in joy. Occasionally one fox would collapse, rolling on their back exhausted, eyes half closed and mouth open - quite literally smiling. When this would

⁴²¹ Jones, "Captivity in the context of a sanctuary for formerly farmed animals." Pp. 93

happen, the other foxes stopped running, circling around the fox lying on his or her back, licking their faces and trilling with excitement before starting to run again. This went on for at least twenty minutes until the foxes settled down in groups of two or three, exhausted in the straw on the floor of their enclosure to rest. This is not to say that all foxes enjoy the company of all other foxes; their social dynamics are complex, and we work to introduce multiple different foxes to one another in order to let them choose their companions. But foxes live rich social lives and company is essential to their wellbeing.



Figure 3.6 Foxes Osha and Drogon.

As well as the companionship of other foxes, some of our foxes enjoy human companionship - but most do not. Our most human-averse foxes live in enclosures made up of different modules connected by tunnels. This means when our volunteers clean the enclosure the foxes are able to choose to leave and move down the tunnels to a human-free section of their enclosure. Our sanctuary workers all understand the importance of

foxes being able to choose whether or not they interact with humans. As Jones states, “we leave them alone unless, and until, they make it clear they want some attention from us.”⁴²².

We can’t offer our foxes freedom, but we can give them the agency to make choices, form social connections and provide enriching living environments where they can engage in species-specific behaviours. When it comes to free-feeling captivity, intentionality matters. To borrow from Jones, at SFDR “we believe that in the context of an ideal world—one in which all animals were free to live their lives as they chose—our work would be unethical.”⁴²³ This is to say we dream of a future where we don’t need to keep foxes (or any other animals) in captivity - but sadly the world we live in now requires that we do. This intention and commitment to providing greater freedom and agency to our sanctuary residents is a key part of who we are as a sanctuary community.

4.2 Challenging, not normalizing, captivity for animals

In her work on sanctuaries, Doyle emphasises the need for ‘true sanctuaries’ to actively work against normalising captivity. However, as we discussed above, sanctuaries are themselves a form of captivity, and therefore limited by what Abrell describes as the “necessities of captivity”⁴²⁴. This creates an interesting and difficult dichotomy. Abrell notes that it would be “difficult to reconcile...[working at a sanctuary] as a caregiver with a hard-line abolitionist position.”⁴²⁵ As institutions of captivity how can sanctuaries work to destabilize and critique practices of animal captivity? The following section will use Doyle’s concept of ‘true sanctuaries’ as well as Abrell’s work on the possibilities and limitations of animal sanctuaries to explore this question.

Abrell notes that sanctuaries stand “in contrast to conventional modes of human-animal power relations”⁴²⁶, this enables sanctuaries to function not only as “spaces for interspecies care”⁴²⁷ but also communities with the potential to challenge the established norms for human/animal relationships. Abrell notes that simply by existing, sanctuaries

⁴²² Jones, "Captivity in the context of a sanctuary for formerly farmed animals." Pp. 92

⁴²³ Jones, "Captivity in the context of a sanctuary for formerly farmed animals." Pp. 95

⁴²⁴ Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*.

⁴²⁵ Elan L Abrell, "Saving animals: Everyday practices of care and rescue in the US animal sanctuary movement" (Doctor of Philosophy, City University of New York 2016). Pp.150

⁴²⁶ Abrell, Elan. "Introduction: Interrogating captive freedom: The possibilities and limits of animal sanctuaries." *Animal Studies Journal* 6, no. 2 (2017): 1-8. Pp3

⁴²⁷ Abrell, Elan. "Introduction: Interrogating captive freedom: The possibilities and limits of animal sanctuaries." *Animal Studies Journal* 6, no. 2 (2017): 1-8. Pp3

challenge the societal status quo of animal exploitation and human supremacy and that through “their transformation of conventional human-animal power hierarchies, humans and sanctuary animals are arguably co-creating species-queered heterotopias”⁴²⁸. At the same time, sanctuaries still struggle with “the reinscription of some of the same modes of interaction they subvert, such as the restriction of animal freedom to the spaces of the sanctuary”⁴²⁹. One way to “expand the bounds of captive freedom”⁴³⁰ is through Jones’ concept of free-feeling captivity described in section 4.1. Doyle, however, argues that sanctuaries have a greater responsibility to advocate against captivity beyond the boundaries of the sanctuary fences, stating that:

True sanctuaries must lead the public to question the connection between their own relationships with wild animals and the role that plays in perpetuating their captivity, with the goal of ending the systems of abuse and exploitation that have created the need for captive wildlife sanctuaries to exist.⁴³¹

Doyle notes that in many ways sanctuary conditions can “can hyper-accentuate the shortcomings of captivity”⁴³², revealing that despite improved conditions (when compared to a zoo, circus or similarly exploitative form of captivity) wild animals still fail to thrive. Rather than hide this fact, Doyle says sanctuaries are uniquely positioned to draw attention to the fact that there is no form of captivity that could be considered “ethically or morally justified”⁴³³. Doyle states that sanctuaries can achieve this through public education⁴³⁴, including ensuring the public do not have direct contact with wild animals⁴³⁵. Sanctuaries that are open to the public must ensure they do not become a way for people to “feel better about captivity”⁴³⁶ and Doyle suggests sanctuaries “may mitigate a zoo-like experience by escorting visitors and providing information about the individual animals in their care, including details on their previous lives, rescue story, and the larger problems associated with breeding and keeping wild animals in captivity”⁴³⁷. A large part

⁴²⁸ Abrell, Elan. "Introduction: Interrogating captive freedom: The possibilities and limits of animal sanctuaries." *Animal Studies Journal* 6, no. 2 (2017): 1-8. Pp5

⁴²⁹ Elan Abrell, "Introduction: Interrogating captive freedom: The possibilities and limits of animal sanctuaries," *Animal Studies Journal* 6, no. 2 (2017). Pp. 5

⁴³⁰ Abrell, "Introduction: Interrogating captive freedom: The possibilities and limits of animal sanctuaries." Pp. 5

⁴³¹ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp. 55

⁴³² Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp. 57

⁴³³ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp. 57

⁴³⁴ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp. 58

⁴³⁵ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp. 58

⁴³⁶ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp. 74

⁴³⁷ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp. 58

of what differentiates true sanctuaries from zoos and pseudo sanctuaries is an ongoing critique of captivity and the desire to offer animal residents greater agency and freedom. Simultaneously Doyle argues that true sanctuaries must recognise that “even the improved conditions they provide are still not enough to meet the needs of the animals in their care, making their captivity morally problematic.”⁴³⁸ This is because “wild animals are never entirely comfortable with their captivity”.⁴³⁹

Doyle describes requests that PAWS (a wildlife sanctuary) receives from members of the public seeking a more “ethical way” to spend time with captive wild animals, “they see a true sanctuary as the preferred way to satisfy their desire to look at these animals”, expressing their “discomfort with visiting zoos”⁴⁴⁰. Similarly, SFDR receive requests from people wanting to visit our sanctuary and interact with our foxes and other animals. While this may indicate that public attitudes toward zoos are shifting, it also demonstrates people’s lack of understanding of the mission of a true sanctuary. We try to use our responses to these messages to explain why SFDR does not support facilities such as zoos that exhibit animals where humans pay to interact with animals. We do this primarily by reframing human/fox interactions from the perspective of the fox. Wild foxes are typically shy, reclusive animals, they are naturally fearful and flighty. Foxes do not enjoy the company of strangers; meeting new humans (whether these humans are ‘fox lovers’ or not) is a source of stress and anxiety for foxes and does nothing to improve their welfare. By educating the public about the natural behaviours, personalities, and lives of wild foxes (and other wild animals) we can, to borrow from Doyle, contrast this with “the constraints and deprivations of captivity,”⁴⁴¹ and in doing so create “a deeper understanding of the ethical problems created by their confinement.”⁴⁴² Foxes are not happy captives or pets; they are wild animals who live in captivity because it is the only legal option. Love for foxes both as a species and as an individual should be based on respect, the desire to give them as much freedom (including from the unwelcome human gaze) as possible. Through public outreach, sanctuaries can lead the public to question captivity and interrogate animal exploitation but also offer alternative, new ways to experience nature and spend time with animals.

⁴³⁸ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp.70

⁴³⁹ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp. 69

⁴⁴⁰ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp. 74

⁴⁴¹ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp. 75

⁴⁴² Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp. 75



*Figure 3.7 Wild juvenile fox near Mudjee*⁴⁴³.

4.3 Working toward moral repair

Sanctuaries are the best we can do to make amends to animals humans have harmed. They are sites of hope but also of pain, of triumph over trauma but also of continued trauma, of new beginnings wrapped in an inescapable past and captive present.⁴⁴⁴

Described by Donaldson and Kymlicka as “the heart of the movement”⁴⁴⁵, sanctuaries are sometimes viewed by animal activists and animal right proponents as a last stop for rescue animals, a sign Emmerman says translates to “a sense that the moral work is done... and we can turn our attention elsewhere”⁴⁴⁶. However, as we have already discussed, all captivity is a problem for animals - and sanctuaries are no exception. This section aims to use the work of Emmerman to address the question of whether restitution is possible for animals harmed by humans, and what role sanctuaries can play in the process of moral repair for human/animal relationships.

⁴⁴³ Lucca Amorim, "Wild fox juvenile near Mudjee," (2020).

⁴⁴⁴ Emmerman, Karen S. "Sanctuary, Not Remedy: The Problem of Captivity and the Need for Moral Repair." In *The Ethics of Captivity*, edited by Lori Gruen, 213-230. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

⁴⁴⁵ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement."

⁴⁴⁶ Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp. 215

In August 2014, I received a call from a cat carer who had been caring for a feline kitten given to her by a vet clinic. The 'kitten' had been found by bushwalkers alone in the middle of trail. He weighed just 90grams. After 48-hours, with the help of the internet, the cat carer had begun to wonder if this five-day old 'kitten' was in fact a fox kitten rather than a cat kitten. He was dark grey and with his ears and eyes closed, in hindsight it's easy to see how he could be difficult to identify. "What do you think?" she asked me on the phone after emailing a photograph. "I don't know", I had to admit, "what does he smell like?". Foxes have a distinctive sweet musky smell, even as neonates. "Not like a cat." she mused, "more like a ferret". Still not one certain exactly what sort of animal I was going to rescue, I drove 17 hours to collect a fox kitten who would come to be known as "Winter" or "Winnie". I bottle fed him day-and-night, every three hours at first. He was so small he would curl up and fall asleep in the palm of my hand. My partner at the time told me she was afraid to fall in love with someone so fragile. We were both convinced he had only a tiny chance of survival. But survive he did. I cried when Winnie opened his eyes for the first time, and again when he took his first steps. To begin with he lived in a make-shift humidicrib made of a large plastic storage tub and then graduated to a dog crate and eventually an enclosure where he could interact with the other foxes. Because Winnie was hand reared, he is extremely humanised. Not only can he not legally be released into the wild, but he would have almost no chance of survival outside of captivity. When he was young, I would take him out to the dog park near our sanctuary (which at the time was based in suburban Sydney). The fenced dog park was easily ten times the size of Winnie's enclosure and while at first I would only walk him on leash, eventually I felt confident enough to let him run around the park off-leash and interact with small dogs when the park was relatively quiet. Winnie loves to run, and seeing him race around the dog park, pouncing on insects and digging in the dirt was incredibly special. However, at the end of each joyous sprint, there it was - an inescapable fence. He could probably climb it, but where would he go? Captivity is his only reality. Any joy I felt seeing him enjoy this relative freedom was overshadowed by the ongoing mixed feelings I have about captivity. Reminding both Winnie and I, that no matter how big the cage, it's still a cage. Since 2015, under new permit conditions, Winnie is no longer allowed off leash even within a fenced park or exercise area. He is classed as a biosecurity threat. His permit conditions specify that he can only leave his DPI approved enclosure

to be exercised in a fenced area with two metal/chain leads⁴⁴⁷, further restricting his already limited freedoms. It's easy to paint Winnie's rescue as a success story, and indeed many animal lovers no doubt see it that way. He escaped death and lives in relative safety at the only fox sanctuary in Australia. But to quote Emmerman, "animals in sanctuaries are permanent captives. As captives they face a life of confinement. Though we can give the animals more space than they had in exploitative captive environments, we can never give them a natural life."⁴⁴⁸ Winnie will never hunt, raise young, or experience any sort of freedom beyond the fence line of his enclosure. I want to believe that Winnie doesn't understand what he's missing but that would be an insult to his intelligence. He has seen the wild foxes at the sanctuary on the other side of the fence at night, stalking mice and chasing moths in the moonlight – experiencing a freedom that will always be out of reach for him.



Figure 3.8 Winnie eight-day-old fox being bottle fed by Charlie

⁴⁴⁷ "Individual Biosecurity Permit - Red Foxes."

⁴⁴⁸ Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp. 201



Figure 3.9 Winnie twelve-day-old fox opening his eyes for the first time.⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁹ Amy Sem, "Winnie bottle feeding," (2014).



Figure 4.0 Winnie seven-week-old fox at the park with Charlie.⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁵⁰ Amy Sem, "Winnie at the park," (2014).



Figure 4.1 Winnie four-month-old fox held by Charlie



Figure 4.2 Winnie, five-year-old- fox sleeping on the living room floor.



Figure 4.3 Winnie, seven-year-old fox in his enclosure.

This brings us back to Emmerman's discussion of moral repair and restitution. Scholars such as Taylor have argued for the need to compensate non-human animals for the harm they experience at the hands of humans through some form of proportional

system of restitution⁴⁵¹. Emmerman notes that sometimes sanctuaries are seen as a means of achieving this. Using the example of chimpanzees used in medical research, Emmerman quotes the New England Vivisection campaign which claims to be aimed at providing chimpanzees with “permanent release and restitution in sanctuaries”⁴⁵². But is restitution for the harms caused to animals during medical research even possible? Emmerman argues it is not, stating that “the belief that sanctuaries provide restitution is prevalent enough that policy makers may justify harms to animals with the idea that restitution through sanctuary is possible”⁴⁵³. It is because captivity is such an essential part of sanctuaries that Emmerman argues, “compensatory restitution is rarely achieved.”⁴⁵⁴ The harms animals have experienced at the hands of humans are ongoing even within sanctuaries, because, as Emmerman notes, it is “unavoidably true that we are unable to alleviate all of the harms of captivity”⁴⁵⁵.

This is not to suggest that sanctuaries don’t have a valuable role to play in improving human/animal relationships. Emmerman argues that while we should not think of sanctuaries as ways to “wash away” the harms done to animals by humans, sanctuaries can and do play a role in the much needed “work of moral repair”. Moral repair can be thought of as the concept of rebuilding mutual trust and shared moral standards. Emmerman notes that while restitution is often seen as a way to compensate and move on from a negative or exploitative relationship, the moral repair work that takes place at sanctuaries is about acknowledging ourselves as “deeply connected to the suffering other”⁴⁵⁶. According to Emmerman, moral repair should be thought of as both “incomplete and imperfect”⁴⁵⁷. It is about “more than calculating a just compensation”,⁴⁵⁸ which is often impossible to quantify; rather, those engaged in the process of moral repair should look to systems of power and “features of those systems that need improvement”⁴⁵⁹. Sanctuaries shouldn’t be seen as utopias, but rather “the best option available from an array of unsatisfying options”⁴⁶⁰. Emmerman argues that captivity in

⁴⁵¹ Paul W Taylor, *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 1986).

⁴⁵² Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp. 217

⁴⁵³ Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp. 218

⁴⁵⁴ Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp. 215

⁴⁵⁵ Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp. 225

⁴⁵⁶ Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp. 225

⁴⁵⁷ Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp. 226

⁴⁵⁸ Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp. 225

⁴⁵⁹ Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp. 225

⁴⁶⁰ Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp. 226

sanctuaries can never “make things right” and while sanctuaries might be “the best we can do to make amends” they should be seen as yet another call to action against animal exploitation “one step in the journey of moral repair rather than a final destination in a journey of compensation”⁴⁶¹.

4.4 Humane Communities

Engaging in practices of moral repair can take many different forms, all of which involve new ways of thinking about human-animal relationships. Katja Guenther proposes one approach to this, which she calls “the humane communities revolution”⁴⁶². As with Jones’ concept of free-feeling captivity, Guenther’s humane communities revolution considers human/animal relationships through an intersectional lens. Guenther argues that such a revolution requires “radical reimaginings of intersectionality, democracy, and inclusion”⁴⁶³, centred on “feminist approaches to care, which reject dualisms (human/nonhuman, man/woman) ... while never letting power off the hook.”⁴⁶⁴. Guenther describes her approach as bringing “animal abolition into partnership with movements for the liberation of women, Black and other people of color, gender/queers, and others who live at the margins”⁴⁶⁵. Guenther describes the potential for a world where animals are “no longer subject to systemic violence and no longer private property”, a world where animals can “live peacefully with each other and with humans.” In practical terms, Guenther argues for an approach that firstly addresses the social issues that require animals to enter into the shelter system or be taken in by sanctuaries in the first place. She describes issues like human homelessness, rental restrictions on animals and breed based legislation, suggesting that animal advocates should be working to support programs for low-cost housing, rent control and higher minimum wages⁴⁶⁶. Guenther also notes the need for changing attitudes around where animals belong in public spaces, arguing in favour of trap-neuter release programs for stray/feral cats who would otherwise face euthanasia in the shelter system⁴⁶⁷. While Guenther’s suggested interventions focus on problems faced by companion animals like cats and dogs to prevent them entering into

⁴⁶¹ Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp. 228

⁴⁶² Guenther, *The Lives and Deaths of Shelter Animals* Pp. 235

⁴⁶³ Guenther, *The Lives and Deaths of Shelter Animals* Pp. 245

⁴⁶⁴ Guenther, *The Lives and Deaths of Shelter Animals* Pp. 241

⁴⁶⁵ Guenther, *The Lives and Deaths of Shelter Animals* Pp. 241

⁴⁶⁶ Guenther, *The Lives and Deaths of Shelter Animals* Pp. 243

⁴⁶⁷ Guenther, *The Lives and Deaths of Shelter Animals* Pp.243

the shelter system, similar social activism and outreach programs can be utilised by sanctuaries to improve other types of human/animal relationships. SFDR work with the New South Wales Juvenile Justice system to run animal education programs with incarcerated youth. We give talks that cover practical topics like first aid for injured wildlife and more abstract topics like stereotyping, speciesism and building empathy for non-human animals. SFDR has recently began discussions with Department of Justice representatives about extending this program to work with at risk youth in the broader community. In conjunction with increased access to other social welfare services, it is our belief by teaching practices of animal care, empathy and communication skills we can have a positive impact on other risk factors that lead to youth incarceration. Ultimately Guenther argues that systemic change requires a “change in hearts and minds”, suggesting that “the project of justice for animals requires justice for people”. Therefore, any type of moral repair for human/animal relationships must involve a radical shift in “power relations among humans and between humans and non-human animals”.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have built on the argument that “all captivity is a problem for animals”⁴⁶⁸. True sanctuaries have a responsibility to not only question captivity but to actively critique and destabilize the institutions and discourses that perpetuate captivity for non-human animals. Using historical newspapers from the Goulburn region, I have demonstrated that captivity for foxes is much more than physical confinement. Captivity for the Australian fox is a process of ongoing human domination and control, beginning with colonisation. Foxes were imported by the British settlers and weaponised as a form of ecological imperialism. Foxes in Australia today are still subject to excessive and violent systems of control. Foxes are ‘held captive’ through both legislation and cultural practices that are tied up in ideas of nativism, national identity and fear of outsiders. Their legal status as pest animals means even within sanctuaries, foxes’ bodies are heavily regulated and controlled via permit conditions and other legal forms of regulation. Using the example of my own sanctuary, I have explored the complicated nature of captivity within sanctuaries. While captivity is a necessary part of life for both foxes and dingoes at Sydney Fox and Dingo Rescue, there are practices we can engage in, to both improve captive life for our animal residents and condemn captivity as whole. Using the work of

⁴⁶⁸ Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy." Pp. 223

Jones, I have discussed ‘free-feeling-captivity’ within sanctuaries and what this might look like for foxes. Finally, I have explored what role sanctuaries can play in what Emmerman describes as the work of “moral repair” for human/animal relationships. Using Guenther’s concept of “humane communities” I have discussed the need for an intersectional approach to justice, highlighting how justice for animals requires justice for other marginalized groups.

Conclusion

Through sharing experiences of sanctuary life over the past decade, this thesis has explored the complex and nuanced world of Australian animal sanctuaries. Using the example of foxes and dingoes, I have drawn on my own observations and experiences and textual analysis of newspaper articles, to argue that sanctuaries possess a level of ethical responsibility and have a duty of care to their residents (both human and animal). While acknowledging the complicated history and ongoing broad usage of the word ‘sanctuary’, I have come to understand the following principles as the core foundations of true sanctuaries:

- I. **Duty of care:** a sanctuary will first and foremost consider the physical and mental health of its residents and not engage in activities that jeopardize the welfare of residents.
- II. **Agency and subjectivity:** a sanctuary will recognise the subjectivity and individuality of residents/members of the sanctuary community and work toward providing greater opportunities for freedom and agency based on individual needs, with a particular emphasis on the ability to engage in species-specific behaviour and social relationships.
- III. **Non-exploitation:** a sanctuary will not engage in activities that involve the exploitation of animals for financial gain, particularly at the expense of animal health and wellbeing.
- IV. **Non-perpetuation:** a sanctuary will attempt to prevent reproduction not only to conserve sanctuary resources for existing residents and future rescue animals but in order to not create more animals who will have to live their lives in captivity.
- V. **Resistance:** a sanctuary will resist and advocate against societal norms that involve the exploitation, captivity, consumption of animals and other forms of non-human animal death for the benefit of humans.
- VI. **Repair:** a sanctuary will recognise not only the past harms experienced by animal residents, but also the ongoing harms of captivity within sanctuaries. A sanctuary will work to actively make amends for these harms and endeavour to repair and improve human/animal relationships.
- VII. **Intersectionality:** a sanctuary will acknowledge the intersectional nature of oppression; in doing so., sanctuary work will endeavour to listen to and include marginalised voices and recognise the complex nature of privilege and oppression both within and outside of human/animal relationships.

I begin with the fundamental assertion that true sanctuaries have a duty of care toward the physical and mental health of their residents. To borrow from Donaldson and Kymlicka, sanctuaries must “put the needs and safety of animal residents first”⁴⁶⁹. I have chosen to exclude the word ‘safety’ from these principles because of issues raised by scholars such as Jones, who point to the fact that humans have a tendency to fall into curtailing animal freedoms in the name of protection and care⁴⁷⁰. Abrell argues sanctuaries do the important work of ‘unmaking’ animals’ status as property through sanctuary care practices that acknowledge animals as individuals with unique needs⁴⁷¹. It follows therefore that principle II focuses on the importance of treating non-human animals as subjects, deserving of agency and self-determination. Principles III and IV draw on Doyle’s work on ‘true sanctuaries’. Using the guidelines for sanctuaries proposed by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS), Doyle argues that two of the defining features of sanctuaries, compared to other animal facilities such as zoos and circuses, are firstly their commitment to non-exploitation and secondly non-perpetuation⁴⁷².

Chapter two, “make kin not babies”, describes the harms of captive breeding, suggesting that instead of reproduction, sanctuaries should prioritise relationship-building, kinship and multi-species community. Captive breeding perpetuates inter-generational captivity, something Doyle argues sanctuaries should condemn, not support, stating that “wild animals are never entirely comfortable with their captivity”⁴⁷³. This is supported by Collard in her work discussing the trauma of captivity⁴⁷⁴ and Van in his work on the ‘violent care’ of ex-situ conservation⁴⁷⁵. This heralds principle V, which states that sanctuaries should resist and advocate against harmful social norms like captivity. Principle VI continues along this line, highlighting the need for sanctuaries to reflect on their own positioning in relation to the harms of captivity and take an active role in what Emmerman describes as the work of ‘moral repair’⁴⁷⁶. Chapter three “True

⁴⁶⁹ Donaldson and Kymlicka, "Farmed animal sanctuaries: The heart of the movement." Pp. 50

⁴⁷⁰ Jones, *The Oxen at the Intersection*.

⁴⁷¹ Abrell, *Saving animals: Multispecies ecologies of rescue and care*.

⁴⁷² Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception."

⁴⁷³ Doyle, "Captive wildlife sanctuaries: Definition, ethical considerations and public perception." Pp. 69

⁴⁷⁴ Collard, *Animal Traffic: Lively Capital in the Global Exotic Pet Trade*.

⁴⁷⁵ Van Dooren, "A day with crows-rarity, nativity and the violent-care of conservation."

⁴⁷⁶ Emmerman, "Sanctuary, Not Remedy."

sanctuaries, ‘all captivity is a problem for animals’”, has discussed several pathways to begin this work including creating what Jones calls ‘free feeling captivity’ and what Guenther describes as a ‘humane communities revolution’. Guenther argues that such a revolution for non-human animals requires “radical reimaginings of intersectionality, democracy, and inclusion”⁴⁷⁷. This thesis has discussed the historical and cultural relationship of colonialism to modern attitudes about Australian foxes and dingoes, demonstrating the interrelated nature of oppression. This brings us to the final principle; ‘VII Intersectionality’. Guenther argues that “justice for animals requires justice for people”, and patrice jones notes the importance of social and environmental justice in achieving animal liberation⁴⁷⁸. All of the principles, in total, are not all easily achieved. We should think of these principles as recommendations. They are something to aspire to and work towards, a part of the ongoing and crucial work of sanctuaries in paving the way for a more compassionate multi-species coexistence.

⁴⁷⁷ Guenther, *The Lives and Deaths of Shelter Animals* Pp. 245

⁴⁷⁸ Jones, "Fighting Cocks."

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