Knowledge and Death in Animal Care

An Ethnographic Project in a Chicago Animal Shelter

Emily Jetmore

Senior Thesis in Anthropology

Prof. Lynn Morgan

Monday, April 30, 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	2
Introduction	3
Chapter One: Communication	38
Chapter Two: Adoptability	61
Chapter Three: Education	83
Chapter Four: Euthanasia	110
Conclusion	135
Bibliography	146

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe so much to the staff and volunteers of the Anti-Cruelty Society for their help in making this project a possibility. I am immensely grateful to them for including me in their communities and sharing their world with me. Thank you for putting up with all of my questions and allowing me to share your answers.

I want to recognize my professors Lynn Morgan, Matt Watson, Elif Babül, Kate Singer, and Christian Gundermann for their help during various stages of this project, for reigning in my occasionally out of control enthusiasm, and for treating this project with as much love and kindness as I have for it.

This project would not have been possible without support from Mount Holyoke's LYNK fund, which allowed me to conduct funded summer research as an undergraduate, an outrageously special opportunity.

I'm thankful for my mom, dad, and stepmom Julia for cheering me on this year, and for raising me to love dogs.

Thanks to Emma Dolan and Rumi Handen for sharing this incredible/exhausting experience with me. I would have burnt out without your collaboration. I raise a toast of blue champagne to you both!

I am so grateful for my friends Olivia, Maren, Maggie, Katie, Rachel, Maddie, Julia, Teagan, Eli, Kira, Mollie, and Thalia for caring about my writing, and for loving me through this being the only thing that I could talk about for months.

And thank you to Hailey. I could write you your own separate 150-page document overflowing with a bonkers amount of love and gratitude.

INTRODUCTION

Discussions about objectivity and truth aside, Chicago has the best summers of all major American cities. Perhaps any summer would come as a relief to a city enduring arctic temperatures and buried by lake effect snow for a significant portion of the year, but in the summer something especially shimmery seems to seep up from the pavement or drift off the lake. A cool breeze whipped my now-too-long hair into my eyes as I stepped out of my home in Little Italy, the same breeze that would carry me on my bike as I zipped down the hill on Kinzie, somehow consistently dodging the inattentive drivers of River North and making it to the shelter in one piece. I'm noticing most days the sky and the lake are this same brilliant shade of blue, which the skyscrapers reflect back and forth between one another. The city holds a sleek kind of glow, and I adore it.

On this particularly gorgeous summer day, however, rather than reveling in the crystal clear, unobstructed corner of the sky above the Anti-Cruelty Society's courtyard from a shady bench, I had my entire sweat-drenched body wrapped around a huge dog named Norman as I struggled to hold him still enough to slip a leash around his neck.

Norman and I had met 20 minutes earlier, as I arrived for my Dog Adopts volunteer shift and did a lap of the adoption room to familiarize myself with any new dogs available that day. Norman was a black pit bull, a year old, and his whole body wagged along with his tail. He had come into the shelter without a name, which I could tell because "NORMAN" had been hand-written on his cage card, a decision someone internal had made. He looked up at me, his whole body seemingly a smile imploring me to take him outside, so I removed the leash I carried draped around my shoulders to move him with me.

The magic ended there. A second after I had gotten the leash slipped around his neck, Norman jumped up and caught the leash in his mouth. My immediate reflex was to pull the leash back; that was Norman's response as well. Suddenly the thick rope between us was no longer a tool I used to lead him (and it may have only ever been that in my mind) and became a connection between us against which we both tugged. My leash wasn't working like I wanted it to, and my heart raced as I struggled with him.

Think about tension, I would later write in my notebook.

I eventually managed to get him outside, where he darted between spots of other dogs' urine with little regard for the pace at which I liked to walk or the way my arm liked to stay in its socket. The leash from my hand to his neck was now a formality, really. All dogs were required to be on leashes, a rule assumed to be so obvious in the city it was rarely spoken, and were not allowed to touch any other dogs. For a while I thought this rule was a dramatic precaution, but the week before I learned a dog had gotten off leash in the courtyard and bitten another dog in the face. The escapee was then euthanized. Though there were no other dogs in the courtyard at the moment (a relief) I worried the instability of my control over Norman. He didn't know the rules, and I didn't want literal or metaphorical blood on my hands.

Norman lost interest in the urine and refocused on the leash. He caught the leash again, and once more we were playing tug-of-war. Sweaty, because of both anxiety and the hot sun, I decided I'd had it. Thankfully we were standing close to the door to the lobby, and perhaps I could get the leash out of his mouth long enough to get us out of this precarious situation. I reached down to try and wriggle the leash out of his mouth, but he lurched back so suddenly that the slack loop around his neck popped over his ears and landed near his

face. If he were to let go of the leash now, the leash would not catch his head and hold him back and there would be no connection between us. He could run freely through the courtyard, and would most definitely outrun me.

I panicked, and I jumped on him.

I caught Norman between my legs and locked an arm around his chest. I sat down a little, pinning down his back legs. This probably was not a good look, and might have appeared a bit aggressive from an outside observer, but Norman couldn't have cared less. He continued to whip his head around trying to catch the leash. I looked up, trying to see if anyone from behind the front desk on the other side of the glass double doors was on their way to help me. No help was in sight, so I quickly wrestled the leash from Norman's mouth and shoved it back over his head. Before he could grab it again I opened the door and we lurched inside.

The front desk workers and a small crowd of people hanging in the lobby all looked at me with inquisitive eyes. No one said anything, but I could feel a swirling cloud of judgments directed at me. Had I been too rough? Too careless? Too ignorant of what to expect? I was missing out on something. I wanted to be a good volunteer, but what would they have done differently in my situation? A bit defeated, I quickly pulled Norman back into his kennel, wrestled the leash from his mouth a final time, and shut the door.

This is a thesis about many little games of tug of war, some more literal than others. In my everyday work as a volunteer, animals like Norman yanked me around. Sometimes this involved sore arm muscles, and other times it involved a radical reconsideration of how to communicate with animals and who I was in relation to them. I also pulled against my fellow animal care workers; our mutual love for animals was the strand of rope, and we

pushed and pulled each other with our different understandings and imperatives. In this project I consider how these games play out, trace them as they develop, and examine if, how, and why they are won. Being with animals and moving through the world with them may be a particular challenge, but this struggle is not unique to the encounters humans have with animals; communication with any other is just as unstable. In this thesis I examine how the Anti-Cruelty Society attempts to navigate and resolve these implicit tensions involved in, to simply state their mission, "building a community of caring by helping pets and educating people."

Methods

It is challenging to trace exactly where this project started, and the circumstances under which it came to fruition. Regardless, I will try. As an academic engagement, my interest in animal care began the summer after my first year of college. In the summer of 2015, I worked at a private animal hospital in the Lakeview neighborhood of Chicago in what I thought would be an insignificant summer job. As a veterinary assistant there, I came into contact with cats and dogs in ways I had never encountered them before. I learned how to handle nervous or jumpy animals so veterinarians and technicians could safely examine them or administer treatment, I comforted animals waking up from anesthetization after surgeries or dental procedures, and most impressionably, I was occasionally responsible for handling the bodies of recently deceased animals after they had been euthanized. I had never seen a dead cat or dog before, and it took me a while to get used to the casual attitude with which my fellow employees approached death and dead

bodies. Despite this, I adored this experience for the way it brought me into frequent contact with and allowed me to help animals, and additionally for the anthropological significance I began to draw from it in conversation with my classes in medical anthropology. How did the troubled doctor-patient relationship shift when one side of the equation, the animal, could not advocate for itself? How were structural forces that manipulated the health of human populations also at work on animal lives? How did dead bodies become so normal? My deepening passion for animal care grew with my deepening investment in anthropology, a discipline that over time I became more and more certain could help me begin to engage with these fascinating questions.

I returned for two summers following this experience, both to continue being in contact with animals and to continue developing these investments. The third summer (in 2017, the summer before my senior year) I had hoped to formalize my presence at this clinic as an anthropologist. Euthanasia was to be the central point of my investigation. I was exploring questions about death, killing, and human-animal relationships in an independent study with Professor Matt Watson, and felt confident I had the theoretical background sufficient to sustain an independent ethnographic project. However, after contacting the owner of the clinic and describing my intentions, she expressed her concern that my presence as a researcher might not be appropriate in some of the settings I wanted to access, and my interactions with clients might negatively impact the business. I was not going to be able to do my research at the animal hospital. However, she put me in contact with Dr. Claire Ingram, an upper-level administrator at the Anti-Cruelty Society, a large animal shelter located in the River North neighborhood of the city. This, she told me, could perhaps be a more appropriate setting for my research.

Disappointed but still eager to pursue the questions I set out to ask, I reached out to Dr. Ingram, or Dr. Claire as she is known to most of her staff, about the possibility of pursuing this project at the Anti-Cruelty Society. She sent me back a couple of forms to fill out and requested a research proposal, and I enthusiastically sent her a summary of some of the theory I had been reading in my independent study. While I would typically consider concealing the name of the organization at which I was working, the Anti-Cruelty Society asks to be mentioned by name in all publications of research conducted in its facilities. Dr. Claire was less than enthusiastic to read about Foucault and Agamben's competing regimes of death and killing. She worried that I, having never visited the shelter, did not understand its organization, and that my brash insistence in focusing on euthanasia could negatively effect the morale of shelter workers and volunteers. She would still consider me as a researcher, but I would have to shift my project significantly. With help from Professor Elif Babül, I adjusted my proposal to be more about care of and communication with animals, and focus a broader attention on human-animal relationships in the shelter environment. I agreed to be extremely sensitive when discussing euthanasia, if I discussed it at all. "I can do this," I remember thinking. A more holistic attention to the field was likely necessary, anyway.

After finishing the semester at Mount Holyoke and settling into my home in Chicago, I finally made my entrance into the Anti-Cruelty Society. This was in early June, a bit later than I had initially hoped to start as a volunteer. The volunteer training process is unsurprisingly designed for a person with limited time on their hands, not for a young anthropologist hoping to jump into the field as quickly as possible. Mandatory trainings were spaced weeks apart, many were already full, and certain levels of involvement

required a prerequisite number of hours in a different program. This complexity was dizzying as Luis, the staff member tasked with helping me find a volunteer position, explained it to me over email. He agreed with some hesitancy to allow me to train as a volunteer in Physical Exams, an upper-level program in the clinic that desperately needed volunteers, after I explained my background in as a veterinary assistant. I agreed, and showed up for the first day of training. Luis toured me around shelter, a maze of buildings, hallways, and rooms that to this day remain structurally incomprehensible. During this tour Luis mentioned for the first time that the Physical Exam program only took place on Saturdays and Sundays. Hoping to be much more present in the day-to-day happenings of the shelter, I asked Luis if I could be a part of a second program as well, one that met during weekdays. This was a highly uncommon level of involvement, as a somewhat confused Luis informed me, but he would also be able to set me up with a training session for Dog Adopts by the end of the week.

I slowly fell into a predictable rhythm. On Saturdays and Sundays, I would complete the standard 10:00AM to 2:00PM shift in the Physical Exams program. Mondays and Tuesdays I took three-to-four hour shifts in Dog Adopts. Wednesdays and Thursdays were my "weekends," though I spent them working back-to-back 12 hour shifts at the animal hospital where I had worked the two summers before, where they were experiencing a staffing shortage. Fridays were flexible, and I would either do another Dog Adopts shift, line up several interviews, or participate in a special program like Puppy Parades that required no additional training. I scheduled all of these shifts in advance using the shelter's online volunteer coordination process. Regardless of the day, I rode my bike from my home in Little Italy to the shelter in River North, a 20 to 25 minute process that without fail left me

sweaty but invigorated. I arrived every day with my tiny navy blue Moleskine notebook, in which I hastily documented the day's events and snippets of dialogue with other people that I thought might be worth remembering later. After every shift I would bike home, make a meal, and transform my jottings into much more detailed narrative accounts of what had happened that day. By the end of my time at the shelter these typed, single-spaced field notes made up a 180-page document. Writing these notes occasionally felt banal, but I enjoyed writing about surprising moments that made each day different and interesting.

My experience as a participant-observer clearly highlights the tension between those two terms. I was constantly worried that I was not spending enough time "in the field." Dog Adopts shifts did not start until noon, so most days my mornings were my own. Some days I tried spending more than four hours in a shift, but found my help as a volunteer wasn't needed or that the fieldnotes needed to document such a long shift also took a significant amount of time to write. My family made fun of me for being tired after working a four hour day, not realizing that my work bled over into the time it took me to write up my fieldnotes every day. At the same time, I could tell that my involvement was also above and beyond that of a standard volunteer. While every volunteer was asked to complete at least five hours of service a month, I was putting in about 20 hours a week. I established relationships with staff members and veterinarians who I saw consistently, connections other more casual volunteers did not have. While some other volunteers also spent considerable amounts of time at the shelter, the vast majority had other commitments like jobs, school, or childcare that kept them from participating to the extent that I was able. Trying to become the "native," in this case, would involve being less present

in the shelter, which would be counterproductive to understanding the shelter's inner workings as I intended. At the same time the volunteer role was the most effective way I could find that fulfilled a kind of reciprocity the shelter and its employees found valuable. Thus in order to make this project work as I wanted, I had to accept a role that was visibly unlike that of other volunteers to participate and observe.

Interviews were also a critical part of my methodology. I began to seek out interviewees on my very first day, as I took down email addresses of fellow volunteers I met. I continued this process, asking if people might be interested in being interviewed at some point and then following up later, during my entire time at the shelter. Halfway through the summer I posted in the Anti-Cruelty Volunteers Facebook group, introducing myself and my work, and asking if anyone wanted to meet for an interview. While this resulted in only a handful of new interviewees, all were from different volunteering programs, and I would not likely have come into contact with them or their experiences otherwise. Volunteers were much easier to contact and interview than staff members. I felt bad asking staff to put in more time at the shelter when they already spent such significant parts of their days there, and wouldn't be getting paid for this additional work. One animal care technician, Lara, seemed particularly anxious about time toward the end of our interview, so I eventually opted to interview staff members through informal conversation during downtime on the adoption floor. These conversations were not audio-recorded, did not include a consent form, and did not take away from the time a staff member would normally spend at the shelter during the day.

All in all, I conducted 20 formal interviews ranging in length between 30 and 90 minutes, at the discretion of the interviewee. Following the terms of the consent form each

one reviewed and signed, every interviewee has been given a pseudonym in this work.[1] All of my interviewees consented to have our conversations recorded, and I took some short notes during the interviews. When I returned to Mount Holyoke for the fall semester, the volume of material I had generated and the short period of time I had to wrangle it into a project with traceable dimensions overwhelmed me. At the urging of my advisor, Lynn Morgan, I chose to partially transcribe these interviews, documenting word for word only the pieces that seemed like they would be relevant to the themes that I wanted to draw out in more detail. These transcriptions and audio files, along with my field note document, are password-encrypted on my personal computer and will remain there and will not be distributed.

Sandra, one of the first volunteers I met at the shelter and the last person I interviewed, asked, "Am I the only brown person you've talked with?" I'm glad that my answer could be no. The demographics of my interview group are not radically transformative or exemplary of any form of social justice-oriented sampling methods. Largely, I lucked out and had a somewhat diverse crowd of people interested in contributing to my work. This should not detract from the fact that the majority (12/20) of my interviewees are white women. In this work, I will only highlight the racial or national background of my informants when it is something that they discuss as central to their understandings of animal care or the way that they do their jobs. I think it is unfair for me to speculate about the importance of someone's background or identity in their work unless they trace out its significance to them for me. Chicago is certainly a space with a long

[1] I am conscious that some of the people in this work are still somewhat recognizable. In order to reduce this potential breach of confidentiality, I have erased all identifying position titles and instead identify many of these people by the general program in which they participate (administration, Community Programs, etc.)

history of segregation and identity-based conflict and struggle, and the consequences of race, class, and nationality remain weighty and significant. This work will only just begin to touch the surface of that complex and complicated field.

Finally, to a significant degree, my research also includes many non-humans as active participants. When organizing this research I contacted a member of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) to ask if their review would be necessary for me to be approved to complete this project. I was informed that because my work was not invasive and I was not using them as test subjects in any way, IACUC approval was unnecessary. Part of the focus of this project is that communication (and therefore consent) is tricky with animals. Just like humans, the dogs, cats, and occasional bunnies and hamsters of the Anti-Cruelty Society helped me form opinions about the institution. I forged significant relationships with many of them, and learned new things from them. I'm unsure of how much being involved in this research impacted them. These animals are heavily personalized, have identities and histories, and also hold or held relationships with other volunteers and staff members. To recognize their roles as informants I have given pseudonyms to all the non-human animals as well.

I outline this bureaucratic process of getting where I was going and finding my feet to explain my methods, but also to highlight how the terms of my research were constantly in negotiation. The questions I set out to ask were not necessarily the questions I ended up asking, and the questions I asked of my fellow animal care workers were not necessarily reflective of the ultimate picture I sketch in this work. My methods evolved and felt sometimes very appropriate and other times a little uncomfortable based on the shifting situation in front of me. I was also surprised that the staff members and volunteers to

whom I explained my project seemed to have a different conceptualization of what doing research meant. They expected me to have firm research questions that would result in firm answers, and many were thrown off guard by my conversational style of interviewing. In late August as I began to inform people that I would soon be leaving to return to Mount Holyoke, they began to ask what conclusions I had found.[2] This consistently made me second-guess my research as legitimate and my methods as sound. However, anthropological work is full of surprises and instability, and it is this malleability that draws me to the discipline as an effective approach to research rather than the rigidity of scientific experimentation that the humans with whom I was working expected me to be conducting. This moment of challenge points me back towards the figure of the game of tug of war. All of the others with whom/which I interacted, human and non-human, yanked me around as they drew me into their world. Whether this was a game to be won or lost, I am not certain, but these others have transformed me in our encounters. My arm is delightfully sore.

Field Overview

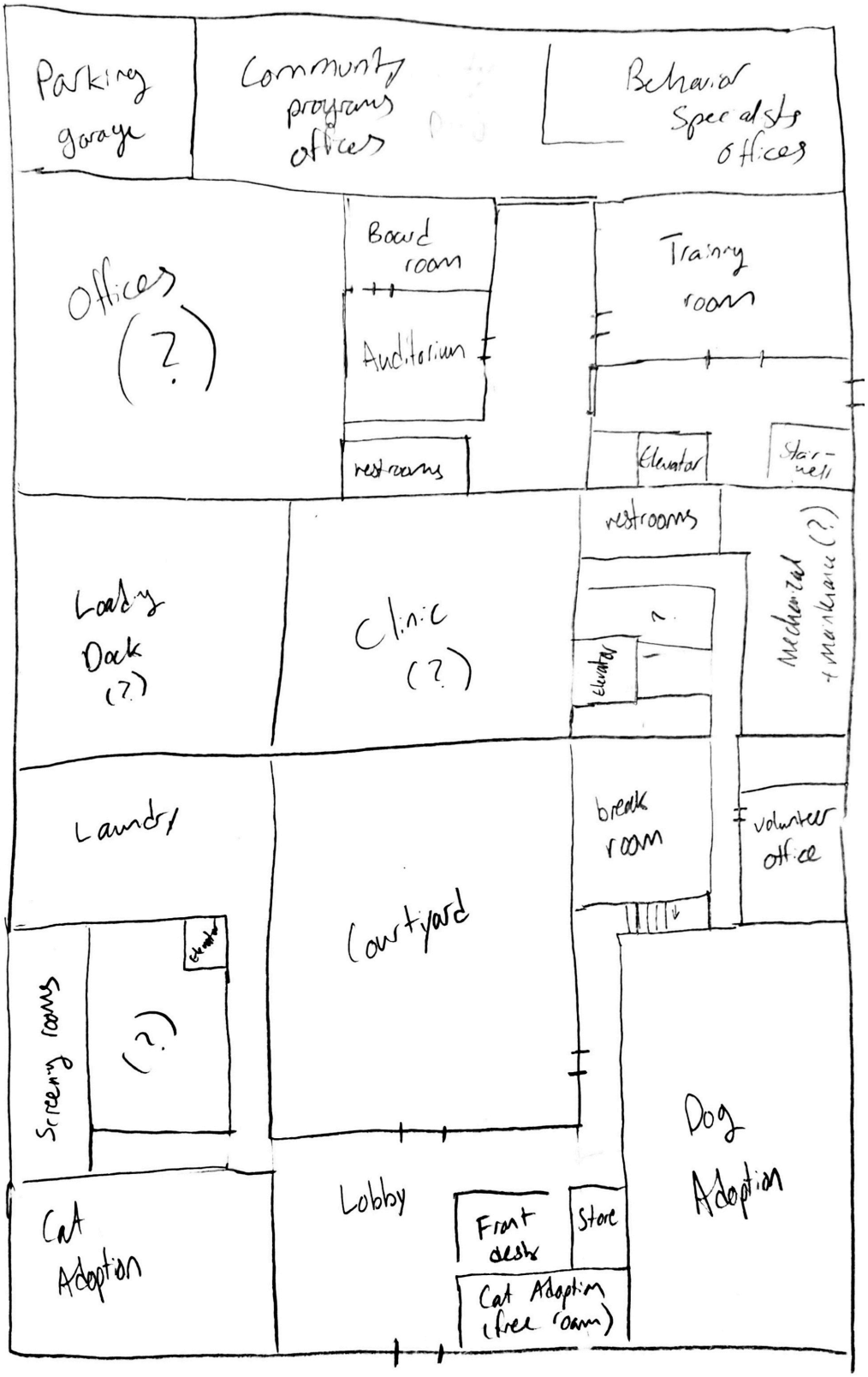
Earlier I mentioned my complete disorientation when attempting to understand the organization of the shelter, both in terms of physical space and in regards to employee and volunteer roles and responsibilities. In this section, I attempt to give some form to the organization, both spatial and human, in which I found myself. I do this to help my audience

[2] While I was unable to offer them solid or satisfying conclusions at the time, I intend to share this thesis in its entirety with all of the people who I interviewed, and I will encourage them to make it available to anyone else working with the shelter. I will also offer a two-page outline-structured summary to condense the enormity of this work for people who may not have the time to review it in its entirety.

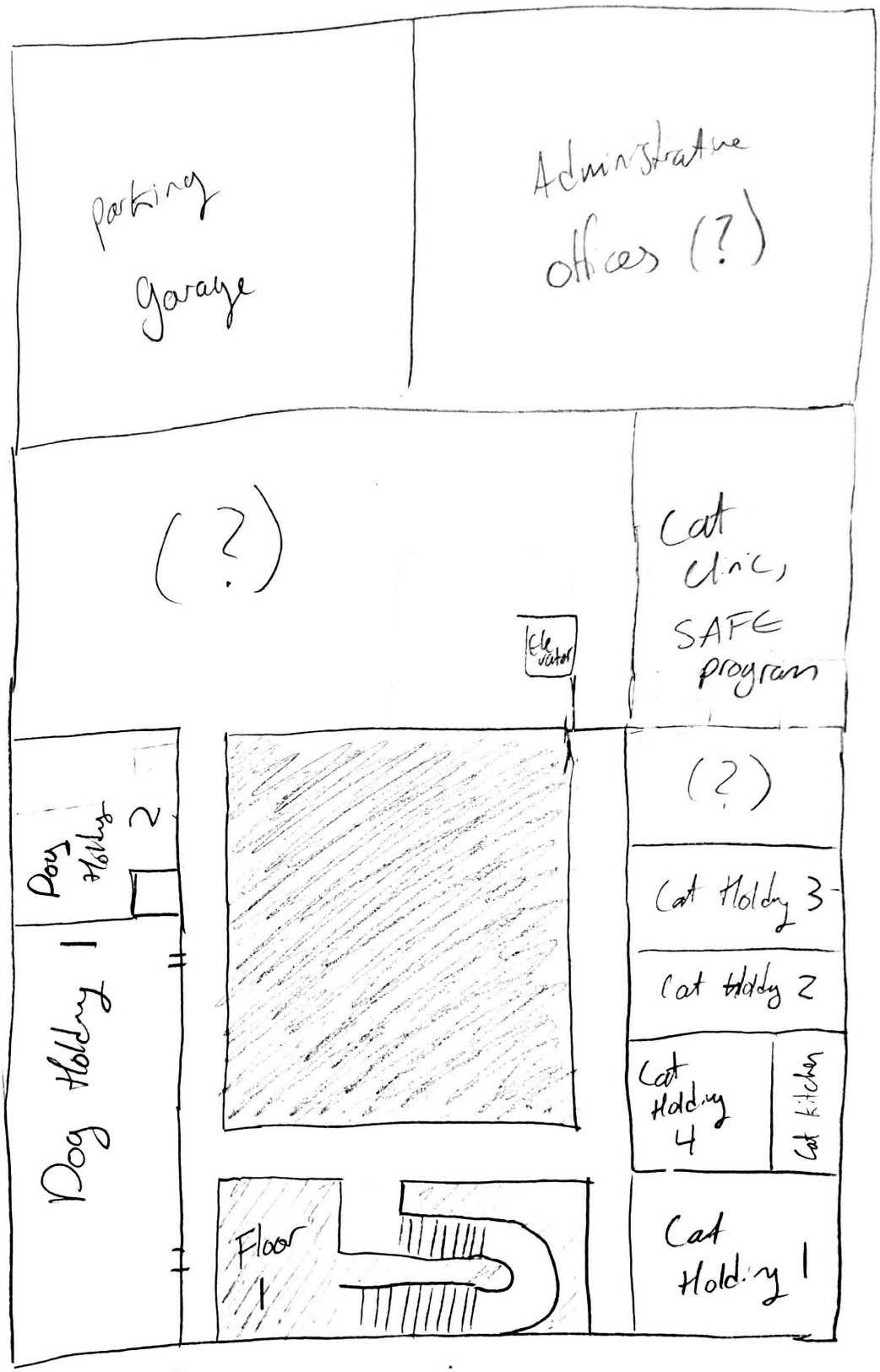
understand the areas to which I refer in this work, to ground the shelter as a concrete, not abstract, space, and to underscore the disorientation and confusion I often felt in navigating its layout. I am somewhat frustrated with my inability to trace these organizations with confidence or complete certainty; at no point did I sit down with any of my fellow animal care workers or interviewees and try to draw a map together. I wish I had asked after these things in more detail, but in the moment figuring out how to move from place to place as my responsibilities as a volunteer dictated seemed more important. I hope to demonstrate the space as I experienced it, and as fellow volunteers taught me to move through it.

On my first day at the shelter, Luis led me on a tour that took me through the winding hallways of the shelter. He said that while the layout might seem overwhelming right now, I would get the hang of it soon. He was partially right. The routes between important places for me became familiar. I learned what doors to take to get a dog easily from the holding rooms to the clinic, and then to the adoption floor. However, the building is much more sprawling than my typical routes. I got lost a number of times trying to get from the familiar lobby of the public-oriented adoption area to the administrative offices tucked further away in the building. One weekend the elevator was out of service, and I had to carry dogs up and down unfamiliar stairwells on a side of the building I had yet to visit. Moving through space as a volunteer was also challenging given that certain spaces were off-limits to people not participating in certain roles. For example, as a Dog Adopts volunteer, I had no reason to leave the first floor of the shelter. Wandering down into the clinic would be seen as intrusive or unhelpful. In fact, I only knew the door codes to get into the clinic because of my role as a Physical Exams volunteer. My familiarity with these spaces is not complete, but I attempt here to label and connect in space some areas that will

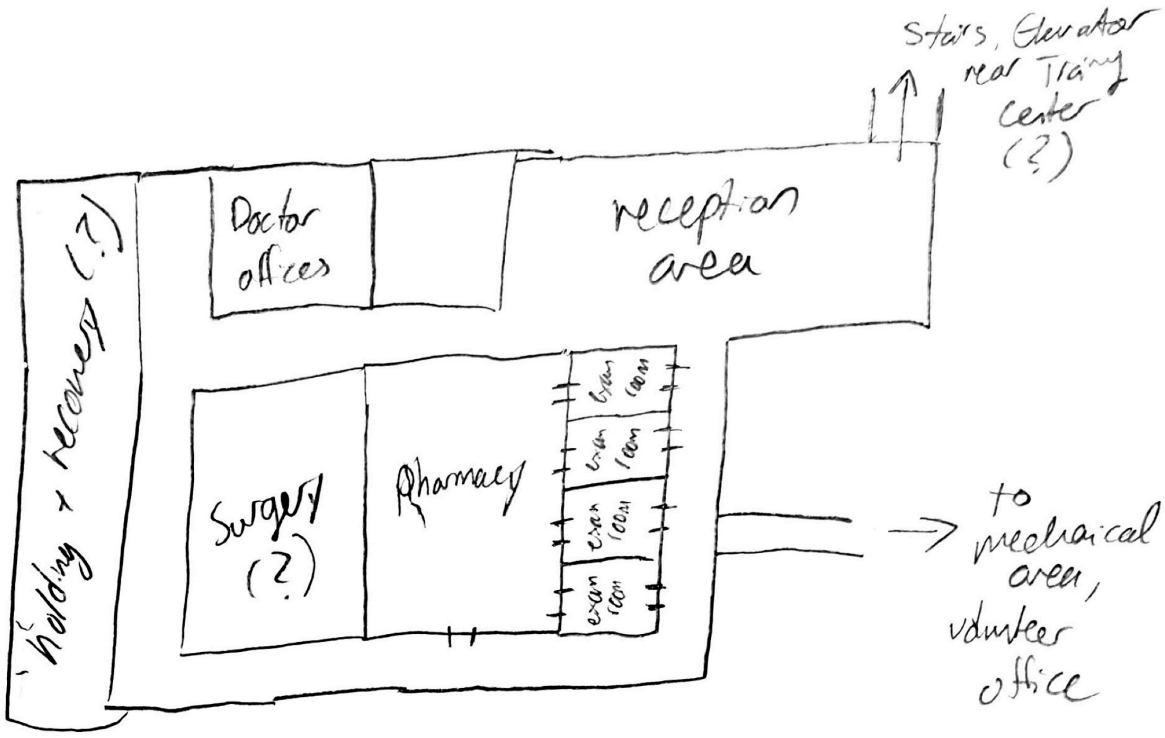
be frequently referenced. From memory, rather than in collaboration with Anti-Cruelty staff or volunteers, I have recreated rough (very rough) sketches of the shelter floor plans. The areas most unfamiliar to me are marked with question marks, though I would like to cast a large question mark over some of the areas, which I feel myself struggling to force into place. I hope these maps will be a resource for better understanding the spaces I discuss moving through in this work, and also act as a reminder of my incomplete and partial knowledge of the shelter.



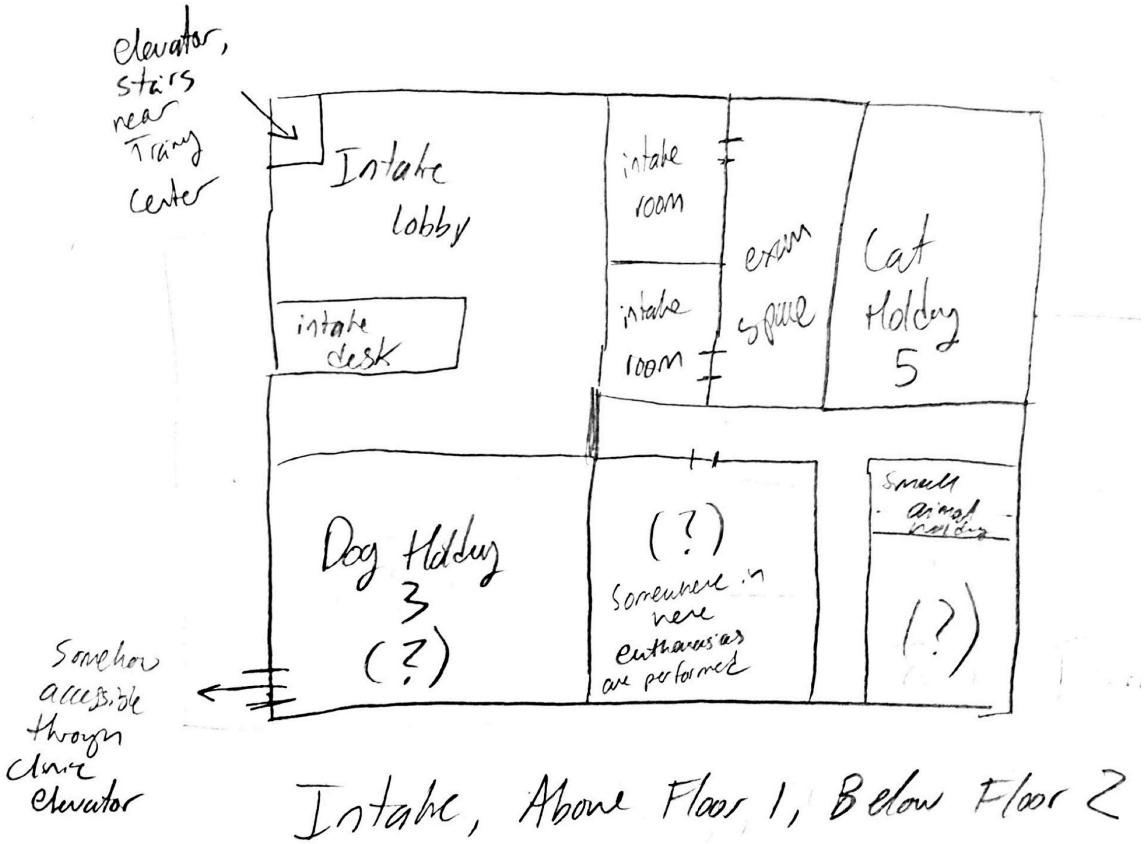
Anti Cruelty Society, Floor 1



Art: Cruelty Society Floor 2



Clinic, Below Floor 1



Intake, Above Floor 1, Below Floor 2

Not included in these maps is the Everyday Adoption Center (EAC), an off-site facility that houses some animals available for adoption in a PetSmart in the South Loop. During my time at Anti-Cruelty I did not visit this facility, as all of the volunteers for this program are specially cross-trained because they handle all responsibilities of both dog and cat volunteers as described below. The efforts and impact of the shelter are not limited to the half-block it occupies on Grand and Lasalle, and the real "field" expands much further into the Chicago community, as I will demonstrate later.

Had I participated in a different capacity at the shelter, the maps I would draw would certainly be different. The highest level of detail and confidence I am able to offer is in the dog adoption area, dog and cat holding areas, and certain parts of the clinic because these are the spaces I frequented in my Dog Adopts and Physical Exams volunteer positions. These particular volunteer programs are part of an organization of assistance that has grown and evolved over time, and allows volunteers to pick which skills and focuses they are best suited to use to help. Adoption programs are split between Dog Adopts and Cat Adopts; these volunteers are focused on matching visiting members of the public with animals they would potentially want to adopt, answering their questions, and giving animals breaks from their cages during downtime. Care programs are similarly split between dogs and cats, and have levels of specialization: Dog Care has levels I and II, Cat Care has levels I, II, and III. Volunteers in the Care programs work with animals before and after adoption hours (12:00PM to 7:00PM) to socialize with them and enrich a day

- Adoption
  - Dog Adopts
  - Cat Adopts
- Care
  - Dog Care I, II
  - Cat Care I, II, III
- Clinic
  - Physical Exams
  - Clinic Care
  - Post-Surgical Recovery
- Special projects
  - Administrative tasks
  - Puppy parades
  - Transports

otherwise spent mostly in a cage, and volunteers at the higher levels work with more reserved or challenging animals.

According to Miranda, a staff member involved in coordinating volunteers, the split between the Adoption and Care programs occurred because some volunteers began to get frustrated working with the public, and would rather spend more of their time working with animals. Volunteers also participate in Clinic programs: Physical Exams volunteers handle animals for exams when veterinarians give them health clearances, Clinical Care volunteers provide enrichment for ill or recovering animals, and Post-Surgical Recovery volunteers help wake animals up from anesthesia after surgical procedures. Other volunteers help with administrative or virtual tasks, or participate in less frequent special events like Puppy Parades, where dogs are walked through downtown Chicago during the lunch hour, and Transports, where volunteers help unload animals off of vans coming up from other overcrowded shelters. Volunteers are allowed to cross train in between any of these programs, and certain levels of experience are necessary to participate in some of the higher-level programs.

Volunteer roles were the most accessible to me as a participant in my surroundings, but I also interacted with a wide array of paid staff members who also had their own inner organizations. The first staff people that I met were those most visibly involved in care and adoption, the Animal Care Specialists. People who I interviewed who had previously worked in this position referred to it colloquially as “kennels.” These staff members monitored the adoption room and were the adoption volunteer’s go-to for questions they couldn’t answer. They also cleaned kennels and distributed food and medication. These staff members had an internal hierarchy that included managers and some people who

were trained to conduct the screenings of potential adopters before they were allowed to take an animal home. The Clinic team consisted of veterinarians and technicians. I did not interact much with the technicians, but saw them drawing and managing medications, handling animals, and being responsible for animals undergoing surgery or heartworm treatment. Veterinarians would perform surgery, see clients in the low-income clinic, attend to the health of the shelter's animals, and evaluate and clear animals' health so they could become available for adoption. The Community Programs team includes Humane Educators, who provide educational presentations for a wide variety of age ranges to emphasize proper ways to care for animals and combat violence in all its forms, and Volunteer Coordinators, who manage the expansive volunteer program. Field Services, while technically a separate division, works in close proximity to the Community Programs staff. They investigate allegations of instances of abuse or mistreatment of animals in the community, provide education and resources in those situations, and occasionally confiscate animals. A small group of Behavior Specialists work to assess and resolve behavior issues in animals on-site and also manages the Behavior Help Line, where members of the public can call in and ask for advice. Intake staff receive animals being surrendered to the shelter. All Intake staff are Certified Euthanasia Technicians in the state of Illinois, and perform low-cost owner-requested euthanasias and euthanasias of shelter animals when deemed necessary. Finally, the administrative staff includes the President and Vice Presidents who organize the

- Adoption/Care
  - Animal Care Specialist
  - Manager
- Clinic
  - Veterinarians
  - Technicians
- Community Programs
  - Humane Education
  - Volunteer Coordination
  - Field Services
- Behavior
- Intake
- Administration

shelter on a more structural level, engage in fundraising, and set goals and pursue new developments for the future of the shelter.

While structurally somewhat dry, I hope this outline functions as a glossary of roles and responsibilities that makes moving through the shelter with me as a reader a more chartable process.

Field Overview, but the Other Kind

I hate it when anthropologists give away all the good stuff in the introduction. Often I will encounter a book where the second half of the introduction is a deep dive into theory, stating cryptically the theoretical basis for the burgeoning argument the author has yet to develop. If I, the reader, can just fight with those dense five or so pages and grasp what they're trying to say, I then have the Big Argument locked down and the meat of the book becomes skimmable. That is not what I want the experience of reading this piece to be. I have woven the work of relevant thinkers throughout, intermingled with stories from my fellow animal care workers and encounters I had with dogs and death, illuminating patterns and relevancies as they emerge. Still, I am pressed to make this thesis identify itself in a traceable collective, and this project has a lot of homes.

So then, how do I introduce you to the field of work and theory this thesis follows without giving away the good stuff? What more do I need to fill you in on before we proceed? And why am I struggling so much in trying to present it to you? In part the challenge derives from my own conscious inability to trace completely the wide range of literatures with which I should have or could have engaged. I am 22, mortal, and a slow

reader. Rather than conduct an exhaustive literature review with conscious selections of where my project resides in the field, I've worked through a handful of books I liked that helped give decent form to my developing ideas. What I do instead is to outline the major communities and conversations in the history of anthropology that have influenced the shaping of this project. I structure this literature review as a journey from point A (the reflexive turn) to point B (the anthropology of science) to point C (multispecies ethnography) in full recognition that this linear progression does not do justice to the various lines of flight and relevant subcommunities that emerge in a fuller picture. History, much like any knowledge form, is particular, and the one that I present is also specifically situated. There are many other ways to tell this story that I do not include. Consciously I incorporate a founding-fathers based approach to the development of a particular moment in anthropology knowing that some of my readers may not be versed at all in the discipline. Ultimately, this project is a work of multispecies ethnography, and I will trace some of the key literatures that have shaped this community.

Anthropology is a discipline that questions itself, constantly turning over the parameters and methods it uses to define and defend itself. The emergence of cultural relativism and participant-observation, which would come to be staples of the discipline, mark some early reevaluations of the most effective ways in which to study human lives and cultures. Early evolution-minded anthropologists focused on ranking cultures on a scale of progress or development (e.g. Tylor 1871). American anthropologist Franz Boas destabilized this notion in his early attention to linguistics and recognition that languages made sense within their own context and could not be evaluated in the terms of a different language (Boas 1889). This idea was then extended from language to culture: one culture

could not be considered inferior within the terms of another, because those were never the terms with which that culture intended to move through the world. Cultures, then, ought to be considered and examined only on their own terms, in their own contexts. Many early anthropologists also wrote about cultures which they had no contact (e.g. Frazer 1890). This seemingly-stable ground shifted radically when Bronislaw Malinowski began fieldwork in Melanesia. Malinowski received considerable attention for actually going to the Trobriand Islands and living with the people he was studying, essentially beginning the practice of participant-observation. Rather than following the judgmental and evaluative patterns early anthropologists perpetuated from a distance, Malinowski sought to understand a culture on the native's terms (Malinowski 1922). Taken together, these significant changes initiated by Boas and Malinowski demonstrate an early push to recognize cultural Others as wildly different but wholly valid.

The work of Boas and Malinowski opened the door to the most radical turn that centrally marks the anthropology I know and love. Realizing that they were carrying their own cultural systems into the field with them, anthropologists began to reflect on themselves and their perspectives as equally worthy of scrutiny. Contemporary anthropology values ethnographers who are conscious of their positionality in relationship to the people or persons who they are studying. Clifford Geertz recognized that Malinowski's attempt to see from the native's point of view was not as simple as Malinowski made it look. Malinowski attempted to take an objective view of how natives think, feel, and relate, making his own cultural context and attitudes in presenting that information deliberately invisible. Geertz asserts that ethnographers cannot become native, though this does not preclude them from understanding the other through their own

perspective (Geertz 1974). Paul Rabinow demonstrates this reflexivity in action in *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco* (1977), in which he questions the degree to which the picture he paints of his informants is influenced by the way both parties move to create a new collaborative world in their encounter. Similarly, Vincent Crapanzano raises this question as it relates to the issue of reality and how informants conceive of it. He encourages the reader (and the ethnographer) to consider how their conceptualization of reality might not be an absolute, objective reality (Crapanzano 1980). Ultimately, the realizations that Geertz, Rabinow, and Crapanzano present in their work are evidence of anthropologists grappling with the true weight and consequence of cultural relativism and participant-observation on their discipline. This turn is a recognition of a destabilization of the concept of an objective, accessible, describable, and shared ultimate reality of experience which the anthropologist pursues, challenging what that pursuit may actually be all about.

Around the same moment that anthropology was undergoing its reflexive turn, historians and philosophers of science were simultaneously reflecting on and questioning their own work. A current of reflexivity and destabilization was sweeping through most of intellectual thought and theory mid 20th century. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* by Thomas Kuhn (1962) examined the idea of progress in science not as a linear set of discoveries bringing us closer to an objective truth, but rather as paradigm shifts upon paradigm shifts that change the rules for what "normal science" is and what can be accepted as fact. Kuhn's work caused a revolution itself, fueling burgeoning fields of attention to scientific practice in the social sciences. In anthropology, the study of science and scientific practice has been supported by the inwards turn described above, as rigid

Western knowledge taken for granted as objective is challenged as localized within a particular conceptualization of the real. In *Laboratory Life* (1979) Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar present an ethnography of scientific practice at a lab at the Salk Institute. Their tone is somewhat tongue-in-cheek as they represent the scientists and their confounding practices in the same light an earlier anthropologist might have represented the initially inexplicable practices of more culturally other natives. *Laboratory Life* demonstrated the practices of scientists in this context as highly focused on producing texts and interacting with machines. Latour can also be credited in the development of Actor-Network Theory, which is highly focused on the concept of beings and objects existing in systems in which they push and pull one another (Latour 2005) This deep and critical look into what science really is by the social sciences aided and was supported by anthropology's inward turn as ethnographic work in spaces of authority became more prominent.

Feminist thinkers have had a tremendous impact on the field of science studies. Feminism provided a framework for questioning the grounds on which science stood as an oppressive or authoritative institution, and how this organization could be challenged or restructured. Sandra Harding challenged the "woman question in science," or the problem of low representation of women in science, with the "science question in feminism," the issue of restructuring the sciences to contribute to feminist goals rather than better prepping women to participate in a system perpetuating domination (Harding 1986). Donna Haraway's early contributions took aim at universalizing discourses she recognized in feminist and scientific thought alike. Haraway promoted the figure of the incomplete and hybrid cyborg over that of the pure, whole, and bounded Enlightenment god(dess) as a model for thought and being, pushing back against the traditional authoritative model

(Haraway 1985). She also proposed a refocusing on partial perspectives in accounts of knowledge rather than authoritative or totalizing viewpoints that perform a "god trick," claiming to be more all-seeing and universal than they actually are. These "situated knowledges" emerged from a recognition of diverse and incomplete accounts of womanhood which could not individually account for the particularities of women's marginalization, but taken collectively each provided an important piece (Haraway 1988). This fragmentation of the authoritative point of view aligns well with the recognition of distinct but equally representative realities that other reflexive anthropologists acknowledged.

Some anthropologists of science settled on the life sciences as a field of focus. Feminist anthropologists once again contributed significantly to this emphasis with studies of how bodies and biology do not offer absolute truth, but are malleable and variable. For example, Emily Martin highlighted how seemingly unmarked textbook descriptions of sperm and egg cells depict gender roles in what is supposed to be a process free from cultural influence (Martin 1991). Working with biology and questions of life and liveliness allows anthropologists to challenge the nature/culture binary and suggest that nature is just as cultural as culture is natural, destabilizing the idea that studies of culture can reflect some positivist understanding of nature. Also recognizing this tension between nature and culture, Marilyn Strathern's work on kinship in Melanesia highlights a distributed and fragmented makeup of the individual, encouraging a reconsideration of that being as actually "dividual" (Strathern 1988). This rupture, in conversation with Haraway's cyborg model and Latour's actor-network, demands that the anthropologist consider the various beings at play in the constitution of the (in)dividual. A turn to how non-humans are

included in cultural processes and in the makeup of the complex human being (and vice versa) is thus prime to emerge from a strong heritage in the anthropology of science.

Before I turn my focus to the field of multispecies ethnography, let's take a breather and make a quick detour into a more recent affiliate of science studies that influences this work: affect theory. I involve conversations about affect in my analysis of human and animal relationships because the concept can draw beings together nonlinguistically, and a familiarity with this idea is necessary to understand some of the frameworks that I use. In this project, I describe many moments of intimacy between humans (mostly myself) and animals (mostly dogs) as critical ethnographic moments from which I glean a familiarity driven by the senses. This is that transformative moment of tug of war, in which one lights up through tactile and stimulating tension in an intimate moment with another.

While conversations about affect have been going on in philosophy and science since at least the 17th Century (Spinoza 1677), affect has recently flourished in popularity as a cross-disciplinary, loosely defined, and somewhat slippery focus. Neuroscientists have been interested in locating affect (feeling and emotion) in the brain (Damasio 2010, Panksepp 2004) while other scholars are more invested in affect as an embodied intensity manifesting somewhere beyond the self (Massumi 2015). Eve K. Sedgwick's exploration of affect offers it as an alternative to a psychoanalytical framework, one more cognizant of varied and open responses to drives than the traditional dualist framework. Sedgwick's conceptualization of affect is rooted in the thickness of touch and texture in experience, a more collaborative and communal take on way-finding than traditional, somewhat-detached phenomenological outlooks (Sedgwick 2002). Teresa Brennan has written about affective transmission as a force that can sweep up a community of people or move from

one body to the next as a quasi-biological and potentially pathological framework. She gives examples of how one can sense the feeling of a room full of people as they enter it, and get swept into that feeling (Brennan 2004). Other very recent works have attempted to combine science studies, affect, and ethnography, such as Natasha Myers' inquiry into how protein modelers' affective sensitivities influence the way they develop visual renderings of molecules (Myers 2015) and Lisa Messeri's exploration of planetary scientists' felt sense of resonance which validates the extrapolative thinking in their work (Messeri 2017). I use this somewhat unbounded concept of affect in this work to appeal to sensory experience and how it opens communicative space between humans and animals. Its inclusion as a theoretical framework may seem out of place in an anthropology thesis at times, as it is a somewhat different register with which to think. However, I hope to demonstrate its value in collaboration with a more typical ethnographic style as it opens ups an additional way to think about how beings, human and otherwise, navigate the world with one another.

Finally we may turn to multispecies ethnography as some sort of traceable and historically rooted community. Attention to the "non-human" in anthropological literature is not new (see Morgan 1868). However, the multispecies turn as a significant moment in anthropology is about more than just recognizing the animal's structural or symbolic role in human cultural organization. Rather, it is about centralizing the acknowledgement that beings are made and remade in social interactions with Others, and that those beings and Others do not need to be human to be significant. This decentering of the human as the unique and exceptional culture-having creature emerges directly from the historical current of science studies in anthropology that precedes it. The broad and diverse focuses of the field of multispecies ethnography are testament to the consequences of this shift.

Multispecies-focused anthropologists and other similarly oriented scholars have studied lab animals (Haraway 1997, Hayward 2010), farm animals (Rosenberg 2015), weaponized insects (Kosek 2010), animal rights and welfare (Dave 2014), ecology and environmental interaction (Viveiros de Castro 1998), microbial cultures (Helmreich 2009, Paxson 2008), fungus worlds (Tsing 2015), and much more. S. Eben Kirksey and Stefan Helmreich have written a detailed overview of the development of the field of multispecies anthropology that has captured many of the major movements and themes that I recapitulate here (Kirksey and Helmreich 2010). In this overview I also include many of the works published since 2010 that add to the density of this field. Given this density I must once again stress that I simply cannot introduce you to everything because I have yet to introduce myself to everything. Here, I offer you a relevant slice.

I cannot stress enough the tremendous impact that Donna Haraway's *When Species Meet* (2008) has had on this project. Most centrally, my work finds a home in the niche her work has carved out for attention to mutual world-building and obligation between humans and companion species. More than once I have openly wept in the Mount Holyoke College library reading this work. Building on the concept of situated knowledges and partial perspectives and drawing on reflexive anthropology's attention to intersubjectivity in encounter with the other, Haraway examines the particular complexity of how we come to communicate and make worlds with the non-human other. In this work, Haraway writes about her own experiences in "contact zones" with her Australian Shepard named Cayenne Pepper[3] as they navigate the world of agility. In these contact zones Haraway and Cayenne playfully communicate, coming together and falling apart with successes and failures in

[3] Cayenne Pepper Haraway and I share a birthday: September 24, 1995.

how well they are able to get along. Haraway's work takes companion species seriously as actors in an always-ongoing process of "becoming-with," or collaborative self-making, much like the playful and transformative tug of war. Just as Rabinow and Crapanzano forced anthropology as a discipline to reconsider the impact of the encounter between anthropologist and other, Haraway's groundbreaking contribution to the field makes it impossible to ignore the similar movement, partiality, and validity inherent in encounter with the non-human.

When Species Meet also opens a door to discussing obligations of care and responsibility between humans and animals. The kind of enmeshment Haraway describes means that the human and non-human are caught up in webs of consequence and utility; no one acts in a vacuum. Thom van Dooren studies birds and avian scientists, presenting an examination of the various consequences of care when birds are on the brink of extinction (van Dooren 2014). Naisargi Dave examines animal rights activists in India and the kind of becoming-animal entailed in witnessing animal suffering as a call to arms (Dave 2014). Matei Candea has written about detachment as a measured form of engagement with meerkat scientists working with the stars of Meerkat Manor, which he holds in contrast to the deep engagement of fans heavily invested in the show (Candea 2010). In addition, Haraway's more recent work (2016) stresses the urgency of responsibility not just to companion species, but also to the environment as a whole in the face of global catastrophe. All of these examples represent attention to the complexities of care and obligation felt by a wide variety of people in their engagements with animals. This project is particularly invested in multispecies anthropology as it emphasizes this obligation to care that the animal demands.

Finally, my project is situated in the corner of multispecies ethnography particularly attuned to communication between the human and the non-human. How does the non-human invoke its (his/her/their?) demands inherent in relations of care and responsibility on the human? One of the most significant barriers standing in the way of recognizing the animal as a legitimate other with which (whom?) the human can communicate is the absence of a shared spoken language. Try as I might, I have not been able to avoid the linguistic implications of taking seriously the non-human other. How does one communicate without a shared language? To push further, how does one communicate without a shared conceptualization of language? Eduardo Kohn tackles this issue in his examination of the relationship between the Runa people, their dogs, and the Amazon as an entity (Kohn 2013). He argues that while humans may be exceptional in their capacity for symbolism in language, this does not mean that non-human beings lack the capacity for any form of representation. The Runa work to interpret their dogs' dreams from what they see as their dogs' points of view, and they see the dogs as doing the same thing with them, a mutual movement and adjustment to enter into a realm of communication. Kohn's work demonstrates what it looks like to take a posthumanist framework (e.g. Wolfe 2009) seriously, in which the human is decentralized as the exceptional center of attention and (re)situated within a web of relations that radically includes non-human beings.

This thesis does not engage with multispecies artwork, though art has been a central sub-focus of multispecies ethnography, especially in experimental practice. Kirksey and Helmreich acknowledge the Multispecies Salon as an important moment in the solidification of multispecies focuses in ethnography. The Multispecies Salon was an event held at the American Anthropological Association (AAA) annual meetings of 2006, 2008,

and 2010 that featured discussion and artwork from anthropologists working beyond the human. The art galleries are of particular interest because they represent a multidisciplinary coming together of artists and anthropologists. Many of the artworks displayed involved non-humans as participants, such as Eben Kirksey and Marnia Johnston's piece that was a survey of organic life in the San Francisco Bay Area, all drawn together at the AAA, intermeshed and intermingling (Kirksey and Helmreich 2010). I mention this moment primarily to highlight the importance of including non-humans as real collaborators in anthropological work, something that Haraway, Kohn, and many others have drawn attention to in their work. Animals are not just "good to think" but also "good to think with" (Haraway 2008). Multispecies ethnography values the non-human as an influential agent of world-building, and the ethnographic practice itself is not immune from that touch.

Finally, while this thesis focuses on the implications of these multispecies imaginings on relationships with dogs, this thesis will not draw significantly on specific literature about pit bulls. I intentionally signal this boundary of my own project to acknowledge the extensive field of literature regarding these dogs and their potential relevancy to my project. In my time at the shelter I encountered a large number of dogs that could be classified as pit bulls (already an unstable breed designation), some humans that were nervous about pit bulls, and others who were enthusiastic about their care and inclusion. It is undeniable that pit bulls have a particular stigma in American popular culture, and a negative reputation perpetuated in the media which could potentially offer me a flashy avenue in which to situate this work. Rachel Levine and Justyna Poray-Wybranowska have written about the history of the pit bull as a "dangerous dog" and the

ties between this public image and the criminalization of drug use and racialization of poverty in the mid-20th century (Levine and Poray-Wybranowska 2016). Vicki Hearne similarly attempts to destabilize the notion of the inherently dangerous pit bull as she describes the adoption and training of a dog portrayed as massively violent (Hearne 1992). The underlying current here is that companion animals are malleable in their relations to humans, something I describe much more in detail with the concept of the adoptable subject in Chapter Two. While pit bull discourses were present in the shelter, I worry much deeper engagement would lead me astray from the central focus of this project. I bracket this corner of the multispecies (specifically companion species) field for potential future engagement.

At this point, I could offer you a history. Much like the work that I trace here, it would threaten to sprawl on for many more pages than this thesis already occupies, as I make conscious cuts and mark partialities. I similarly struggle with the limits of my own ability to sufficiently trace such an extensive background and its implications. In the interest of condensing this expanse, I largely sidestep the history of the institution in which I am working in most of my analyses. In *The Companion Species Manifesto* (2003), Donna Haraway references "the birth of the kennel" as a nod to Michel Foucault's *The Birth of the Clinic* (1973), an overview of the history of medicine and the development of the "medical gaze." Like any institution, animal shelters have emerged from historical situations that foster the growth of organization and control, one I could similarly excavate. However, throughout the body of this project, I focus more on my own ethnographic experience than I do on history. I could be accused of taking culture out of time and presenting a picture of a static group never influenced by external forces. Instead, I intend to privilege consciously

the immediate over the historical in hopes of nurturing the intimacy of the moments of sensory connections I present. By no means do I claim that these moments and the obligations and entanglements they indicate are ahistorical. Rather, I want to prioritize the experiential moment as it is more central in my analytical framework. Much like the role of the pit bull, the history of the shelter institution is a complexity for another day.

To conclude: In this project, I align my work particularly with the science studies heritage of multispecies ethnography to think about how the "god-trick" (Haraway 1988) is enacted in relationships between animal care workers and companion animals at the Anti-Cruelty Society, and the consequences and instabilities that bloom in that constant (re)navigation. I trace how knowledge is formed with and about animals, demonstrating the forces that produce an authoritative knowledge of the ultimate "correct" ways of caring for animals that emerges from partial perspectives.

Chapter overview

This thesis traces the development of authoritative knowledge about animal care in the Anti-Cruelty society from its incipience in the face-to-face human-animal encounter to its eventual spread to Chicago communities and beyond. In Chapter One, I discuss many of the responses to my initial questions regarding communication between the human and animal. I highlight the instability and unpredictability of an encounter with an animal; the understandings gathered from these encounters are not total or authoritative, but are functional. In Chapter Two, I analyze formations of subjectivity in the shelter. The unstable knowledges from the human-animal encounter become authoritative as the shelter

attempts to organize around a "right way" to provide care. Shelter workers make designations about which animals are more or less adoptable, forming imperatives to foster particular animals that can be with humans in ways deemed more convenient or comfortable. In Chapter Three, I consider how this knowledge-made-authoritative spreads through the shelter and the city. Internally and externally these prescriptive knowledges rub up against other ways of understanding or caring for animals implicit in a wide range of culturally diverse Chicago communities that get classed by the shelter as "misunderstandings" or "superstitions." Finally, in Chapter Four I consider the life-or-death consequences of these expectations of animal communication and behavior through a discussion of euthanasia. Animal care workers handling euthanasia struggle to order their affective chaos in encounters with death and the dead, similarly tying in concepts of the "right way" to care or feel to the way that they navigate these situations. Ultimately, I hope to demonstrate that the particular way of being with animals that the shelter promotes is one of many in a wide field of possibility rather than an objective truth by highlighting the moments in which this authoritative knowledge is formed and negotiated, as well as when it slips.

CHAPTER ONE: COMMUNICATION

"One of the skills that I've developed here is my repertoire of meows, and my purring."

Mark is the Vice President of Operations at the Anti-Cruelty Society, and has been working for the organization in some capacity for 35 years. I'm sitting in his office on a morning in late June as we're doing this interview, and I'm still uncertain of how to best record using my phone and subtly inching my device toward him. Mark speaks softly, and I wonder if I'll be able to pick up his purrs.

"Will you do it for me?" I ask.

Cat purrs are not a daily occurrence for me, as someone who embarrassingly has to take a double dose of allergy medication to make it through a volunteer shift where I handle cats. Mark's purr is soft, barely audible in the recording I play over and over again through my headphones, coming through as short waves, a kind of revving. From what little I know, that sounds just like a cat purr to me.

Mark has learned his purr over time. He has watched thousands upon thousands of animals come into this shelter as a volunteer, staff member, and now an executive. He has a deep love for animals ("I'm a cat person," he whispers to me, "I have to keep that mostly a secret.") that has endured through a wildly dynamic shelter that has seen ups and downs, "bad old days" of widespread euthanasia and a contemporary period where half of the shelter's canine population is imported from out of state. Through all of these contexts, Mark has developed this purr as a practiced, tested, and generative way of getting along with cats.

He stops, I laugh, and he explains. “Cats often react to it. I’ve had cats actually become quite aggressive, cats that are not very cat-social. In most cases it elicits a purr response back from them, sort of a get-to-know-each-other kind of moment, and it helps relax them.”

When Mark purrs, what is he saying? He knows that this practiced message he sends out is an incitement to something, but he has only a tentative certainty of what kind of response he is going to get. Mark readies himself for surprise when he reaches across the species divide toward the shelter cat, using a tool of communication that is reminiscent of language, but is marked by far more instability. He aims to comfort, to help relax a stressed cat, to form a bond, but also knows that this is a risky maneuver. Does Mark achieve what he aims to accomplish? How could we know?

In this chapter, I aim to flesh out the complexities of human and animal communication as it plays out at the Anti-Cruelty Society. The process of getting along across a species divide is an ongoing theoretical conversation I began to outline in the previous chapter, and much of it has involved considerable distance from the testimonies of people who live and work with animals daily. At the Anti-Cruelty Society, humans and animals must learn how to process one another’s wants and needs in conversation with an institution with specific aims of care and societal integration of animals in particular ways deemed desirable. Through an engagement with their testimonies, I will explore the cautious yet formulaic ways that staff and volunteers meet and come to know the stories and experiences of animals within the shelter. I will analyze the simultaneous certainties and anxieties that my fellow animal care workers and volunteers have in communicating with animals to propose a refocusing on how surprise and crisis are navigated and

managed as a tool for crossing the species divide. While Anti-Cruelty staff and volunteers recognize the futility of fully understanding an animal's communication or how to best communicate with them, they still manage to navigate this uncertainty and develop relationships where they can effectively give love and care. I will demonstrate how examples from my fieldwork line up with or diverge from current theoretical conversations surrounding how to be with others across the precarious species divide, and how those divergences open up new ways of understanding the non-human other.

Reaction, response, and language

Mark uses the word "react" to describe how cats change their behavior toward him when he purrs. Perhaps this is not the best word to describe what is going on here: Jacques Derrida would certainly problematize it. In "And Say the Animal Responded?" (2003) Derrida engages with the question of the difference between reaction and response in conversation with Lacan, who argues that the heart of the animal/human divide is that humans have language, while animals do not (123). Lacan sees the animal as "prewired" (123) in its reaction to stimuli, whereas the human's involvement of the unconscious and desire open them up to more possibility in response. Derrida contests this, and likely so would most volunteers and staff that I interacted with at Anti-Cruelty. Derrida demonstrates that the animal and the human are both using sign systems, and both are engaging in forms that demand response, which he acknowledges is Lacan's criteria for having language (124). Ultimately, Derrida wants to challenge this distinction between reaction and response, and thus challenge the distinction between the animal and the

human. This theoretical background is useful inasmuch as it grounds us in an ongoing conversation to which the volunteers and staff of Anti Cruelty can certainly contribute. These humans encounter animals in ways that demand their response every day, and they engage in activities (such as Mark's purrs) that assume the animal is also capable of responding.

This was not the first time that Derrida examined the concept of response, as it was a central question in his ten-hour seminar about the autobiographical animal given in 1997. In this piece, published as "The Animal that I Therefore Am" (2002), Derrida notes how the gaze of the animal other demands his own response, which in this case is a reevaluation of his own being and constitution as a human:

> I no longer know who I am (following) or who it is I am chasing, who is following me or hunting me. Who comes before and who is after whom? I no longer know where my head is. Madness: "We're all mad here. I'm mad. You're mad." I no longer know how to respond, or even to respond to the question impels me or asks me who I am (following) or after whom I am (following) and the way I am running. (379)

Derrida is interested in how the human responds to the gaze of the animal, and if and how the animal responds to the human calling its name. Response, for him, is tied up in how an encounter will pose the question "who am I?" to either party. He focuses specifically on how the human is thrown into a paralyzing crisis here, one which prevents him from moving forward with confidence in any meaningful way to be able to get along with the animal other.

Derrida seems to think that in quotidian encounters with animals, humans typically do not see the animals as demanding a response (382). The animal is not perceived to be asking anything of them, or attempting to reach across a species divide humans have so forcefully conceived. This is part of why his crisis is such a striking one, and why he

represents this realization as so earth-shaking. However, the establishment of an institution of care like the shelter fundamentally understands companion animals as necessitating or seeking out human interaction, attention, or aid. Animals can initiate human interaction, but the positioning of the human as the care-giver and the animal as the care-receiver constitutes the animal as always demanding some human response. Mark does not experience the same incapacitating revelation that Derrida does because the give-and-take relationship of caregiving was already seen as a given. The shelter as an institution demands that he move past Derrida's paralyzing crisis. When Mark purrs to a shelter cat, he does so because he is compelled to respond to what he perceives as the cat's call for help or need for comfort. Thus Mark's purrs at once justify and diverge from the scene that Derrida begins to set: like Derrida, he recognizes the gaze of the animal as a Lacanian linguistic incitement to communication and response. However, unlike Derrida, Mark is not paralyzed in a crisis of self-constitution, and the established relation of human as caretaker and animal as the cared-for gives him a framework in which he can communicate across a species divide with some confidence.

This connection of care relations to an incitement to response is something created and maintained within human-animal relationships in the shelter. Attention to the various ways that shelter workers and animals alternately succeed and fail in moving past this crisis illustrates effective and progressive tools of non-human communication. Their shared understanding of care is evident in the frustrations some staff and volunteers feel when relating to an external public who may not share the same kind of value system.

And say the human responded

Selena and I sat down in Charlotte's Corner after our Physical Exam shift wrapped up. She requested this as the spot for our interview so she could spend time with Ace, an older black cat she had been fostering for a few weeks and had recently returned to the shelter from her home. Selena explained to me that Charlotte's Corner is designed for cats that do poorly in cages, and gives them lots of space to explore and hide. As we walked in and sat down, two men also came in and started to look around for the cats, calling out to them and reaching into the hidey holes to pet them. Selena introduced them to Ace and explained that he liked distance, and that it was best to be quiet around him and let him warm up to you. The men talked to each other about how cute he was, and then left. Once they were out of the room, Selena shook her head and sighed.

On multiple occasions, I've heard Selena express a disdain for working with the public, and she explained to me that this was one of the reasons that she switched to working in Physical Exams. "It's better for me not to see things. As you can see the gentlemen who were here, they weren't even trying to be quiet or considerate of the cats' needs. And I know that they weren't aware of that, but it's still difficult for me to watch." Selena feels as though her experience and exposure to cats has given her a different level of knowledge about animal care and communication that outweighs that of the general public: "Having people not know as much about cats as I do means volunteering in this section of the shelter isn't a good idea. And it's not that I'm a super, super knowledgeable person, but I know more than the average person."

Much like Mark, Selena has developed tools for approaching and being with cats over time. She is sensitive to the way that interactions with cats demand an attention to uncertainty, and for her this manifests in a cautious approach. These methods have worked for her; she classes them as a kind of knowledge, and she expects for others to have had similar experiences. She is frustrated that others outside of the shelter do not understand cats the same way that she does to the point that she is unable to engage with them. To return to Derrida, Selena's frustration is similarly rooted in an ability or failure to cross the species divide in communication. However, Selena herself already knows about and responds to the cats' ability to respond. She is more concerned that the other, less-knowledgeable humans involved are reacting rather than responding, and wishes they would learn to make fewer assumptions and be better responders. The public seems not to be struggling with or pushing through this Derridan crisis in the same way Selena feels compelled to, perhaps underscoring a unique and more intense animal encounter that the animal care worker gets to experience or chooses to cultivate.

Amy, a staff member and former animal care technician, similarly understands the importance of attention to the particularities of an animal's incitement to response. She explained that one of the most common misunderstandings that she has recognized in people coming into the shelter either as new volunteers or potential adopters was a tendency to approach all animals the same way. "Some of these dogs have been hit and will flinch when you come by, so you really have to like earn their trust and go slow and stuff like that." She told me a story about intentionally finishing her cleaning work early as an animal care technician so she could work with a small group of Chihuahuas who were particularly slow to open up to human interaction. One, who was the "hardest nut to crack,"

took about two weeks before she would come out from hiding under her bed and approach Amy. “People do call me the Chihuahua whisperer here because you do have to like, really slowly approach these dogs. They’re like, so nervous and I think they’re so shut down here at the shelter and they’re so small and they just want to protect themselves… Chihuahua communication is a little different, you gotta take it really slow.” Amy here underscores Chihuahuas as having specific needs, and implies that not everyone is able to recognize that. Generally approaching animals with enthusiasm does not mean animals will always respond as they are expected.

I also saw this tendency evidenced in how some potential adopters would interact with a particularly nervous dog that was at the shelter for an extended period of time. Ellie, a 4-year-old black hound mix, was surrendered to the shelter as part of a bonded pair with her companion dog Joey, and for a few weeks the staff tried to promote them as a pair adoption. This was uncommon, but the pair was left together because Ellie was much more receptive to human interaction with Joey around. Ellie was hesitant to leave her kennel without Joey, and it was always a team effort to get them out in the courtyard together. While working a Dog Adopts shift, I helped another volunteer, Heather, take the pair outside to meet a family that was considering adoption, and we sat with them while the mother and daughter interacted with both dogs. Heather handed them a bag of hot dogs to share with the dogs. Joey wagged his tail and enthusiastically took the hot dog pieces they held in their hands and extended toward him. When the daughter reached out to give Ellie a hot dog, she started to growl, and Heather pulled her away. The mother and daughter continued to play with Joey for a few minutes before going back inside.

In this case, Ellie and Joey demanded different kinds of response from the humans reaching across the species divide, and their human interlocutors attempted to respond with a specific type of care relationship that worked for one dog but not for the other. Knowing to approach a new animal slowly and being open to possibility and surprise from their response is a tool to navigate the crisis of self that Derrida describes in the human-animal encounter. The divisions that Derrida recognizes and aims to disentangle fall apart here as well: humans do not always engage in the sign systems that Lacan describes and they fail to make kinds, or recognize grouped variation (e.g. Kohn 2009) out of the too-broad categories of dog or cat. It is not necessarily a fault or lack on the animal's part that communication may stumble or fail. Rather, humans ought to call into question their own capability to respond to the particular presence of the animal. Ultimately, this challenges and destabilizes the idea of humans having superior command over language (a central tenet of humanist thought) as they are shown to similarly stumble in a communicative encounter.

Storytelling and Affect

The development of knowledges regarding how to get along well with animals takes on a variety of forms individualized on encounter-by-encounter bases. What adjustments, re-learnings, and cautions are necessary for the privileged kind of communication that animal care workers are able to manage, and how do they become specific? On an early Monday morning I met with Andrea, a Dog Care volunteer who had just finished up an 8am shift and agreed to speak with me after. We sat in one of the adoption screening rooms,

vacant because the shelter had yet to open to the public, and she told me all about her purebred boxers. Andrea works in both Dog Care and Dog Adopts, and acknowledged her position as a volunteer as important because of the unique opportunity she had to gain more information through face-to-face interactions with the adoptable dogs. She confessed that recently she had not been reading the cage cards for more information on the dogs before she takes them outside. "I prefer to read [the dogs] in the moment." She looked for excitement and jumping in the kennel as signs that a dog wanted to go out, and talked about the joy of watching how an animal responds to certain situations to better figure out what they need.

These histories and knowledges, however, are not always easy to come by. Sometimes they fully escape understanding. While she enjoyed getting to know an animal, Andrea also underscored a lurking uncertainty that haunted her interactions with shelter dogs: "Unless you know their story and you've raised them, you don't know." Andrea described specifically the case of Xena, a skinny yellow lab that I had met briefly the first week I trained as a Dog Adopts volunteer. I remember Xena curled up in the back of her kennel, the epitome of the sad-puppy-dog-eyes shelter dog, unwilling to stand up for volunteers to walk her outside. "I would have loved to know her story," Andrea told me. In that case, she said, a bit more background information would have been helpful. Whereas many animals had detailed sheets of information filled out by previous owners attached to their cage cards, some animals, like Xena, were transported from overpopulated shelters in the American South and taken into the shelter without any of that sort of documentation of their history or behavioral trends. Andrea acknowledged how hard this made it to interact with Xena, and to "know what we're safe doing." She said there was no way to know

whether Xena was sad, stressed, missing her people, or if she had been abused. This uncertainty and her inability to connect with the dog limited the ways she could safely and confidently interact with her, and she ultimately had to disengage to avoid the possibility of an aggressive response toward her outreach, which could potentially result in an injury for Andrea or a euthanasia for Xena. Andrea recognized that the same animal behavior could be the product of a wide variety of different contexts, and a familiarity with that context could ensure more certainty as to how the animal might respond.

Confidence, knowledge, and the processes that generate them are elusive. On one hand, my animal care interlocutors have demonstrated that responding to animals can be navigable. On the other, they recognize that this is not unilaterally the case. Relationships with animals in the shelter environment can perhaps best be understood as individualized or particular manifestations of infinite possibility. Derrida has notably described the space between the gaze of the human and animal as a bottomless abyss, holding the potential and instability before the animal or human come to have names or be of particular kinds (387). That open, abyssal field of potential is evocative of Brian Massumi's descriptions of affect and its relation to emergence. Massumi describes the field of potential that comes to give real things form and interrelation:

> A germinal or 'implicit' form cannot be understood as a shape or structure. It is more a bundle of potential functions localized, as a differentiated region, within a larger field of potential. In each region a shape or structure begins to form, but no sooner dissolves as its region shifts in relation to the others with which it is in tension. There is a kind of bubbling of structuration in a turbulent soup of regions of swirling potential. (34)

Combining these two theoretical engagements, the forms of human and animal can be understood as particular emergences from that soup or abyss. Derrida conceptualizes the abyss as a barrier to communication, but Massumi's attention to affective and sensory

engagement points to this open and messy potential as navigable through other forms (like attunement or attraction) that emerge and dissipate within the field. Attention to those kinds of connection helps make Derrida's crisis in his encounter with the animal less paralyzing and allows the human to know the animal, even if that knowledge is tenuous or partial. Animal care workers learn animal stories through documented histories and through individual encounters. These stories are attempts to organize potential and stabilize this unpredictable encounter with some degree of certainty. They are what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari might call lines of flight, or mappable forms of rootedness, connection, or explanation that can fracture from the rhizome (here, a field of potential) and point toward the more complex forms of interconnectedness and fracture underneath it (Deleuze & Guattari 1980). Stories are precarious, demonstrated by Andrea's hesitancy to assume anything about Xena's background, but when they are accessible they can provide extra connection, explanation, and navigability to the unpredictability and uncertainty of communicating with animals.

As an example of the guiding impact of stories, I want to introduce Jackson, an overweight eight-year-old black lab with a greying muzzle. When I first met him in mid-July, he had a red card in his cage card holder marking him as unavailable for adoption. He eschewed the bed and blanket made for him and instead slumped over on the floor, reluctant to stand up unless I had a treat in my hand. I'm hesitant to make assumptions about his experience, especially in an anthropological engagement, but at that moment I didn't have much prior experience with him off of which to base any familiarity. He looked sad. He *felt* sad. I wanted to take him outside and show him more attention, but since he was not yet approved for adoption, Dog Adopts volunteers like myself were not allowed to

interact with him. Instead, I would feed him treats through the kennel door and pet him as he would gently wag. Eventually I pulled his cage card, sat in front of his kennel, and started reading his information. Jackson had been surrendered to the shelter for the reason of "owner death/illness," and there was a detailed, hand-written questionnaire stapled to the standard information sheet that every animal in the shelter had. The sheet had been filled out by the son of the former owner, and in the "anything else?" section at the bottom, he had written that his mother had recently died from a long illness, and Jackson had been her closest companion for the last bit of her life. The son was unable to care for Jackson, so he had surrendered him. I flipped through a few other papers that were attached and a couple entries in the medical section stood out to me. Most animals have just one entry with their weight and other health notes, but Jackson had two. One was from three days earlier when he had been surrendered and weighed in at 110 lbs, and the other from 2009 and his weight was listed as 16.9 lbs. Jackson's story came together for me: this was his second time at the shelter, and his medical records had survived the past 8 years. His former owner must have adopted him as a puppy, and then he had outlived her. I was deeply moved by this, feeling the heaviness of this moment and the additional gravity that no one else working there that day knew or felt like sharing that story. Of course he was sad. His friend who had helped make a life with him for the past 8 years was gone, and he was back where he had been before that life started. I would be sad. I *was* sad.

Writing this and reading this, I worry I may be acting as a bad anthropologist. With what authority can I speak on Jackson's understanding of the world? By highlighting my own perceived affective attunement with him, I understand his world through how it makes sense in my world. I can't be sure how Jackson experienced his history. Perhaps he

had always been a mopey dog, perhaps he didn't recognize that he had been in this shelter before. But against that precariousness I saw a line in which I did really know Jackson, and this close familiarity allowed me to be with him in an exceptional way. These are the tools that I have to understand him (affective attunement and storytelling), and I have different tools for getting to know humans. Both can be considered partial and tentative familiarities rather than expansive authoritative knowledge. Andrea had a particularly interesting answer when I asked her to say more about how she understood the communication that she received from animals. She had been talking about her understanding of how animals were feeling by looking in their eyes, and when I asked how she determined feelings from looks she said, "Oh, I anthropomorphize everything. I just think that when you're a dog person you do, until you're a real expert and you don't." Andrea sees her identification with the animal as a shortcoming or a mark of a lack of expertise. Perhaps I do too. We both recognize these connections as tentative, unstable but impactful familiarities that allow us to get along with animals.

In Jackson's case, having a story made it easier for me to understand and connect with him in a way that felt workable. Few shelter animals are complete blank slates (puppies and kittens born in the shelter might be an exception), but there are different levels of accessibility for the histories they carry, and as was the situation for Xena, sometimes these stories are inaccessible. How do animal care workers gain information from animals when they do not have a documented story yet? How are these good-enough workable familiarities formed?

Up Close and Personal with Haraway

We cannot hold off any longer. Through all this talk of partial knowledges and individual encounters, it is finally time to dive into Donna Haraway's canon of feminist science studies, animal studies, and the intimate interplay between these concepts she so intricately traces. First, Haraway's interest in getting along well with the animal other is especially relevant to solidifying an understanding of some of the kinds of communication already examined here, and for providing a strong theoretical foundation from which to continue my analysis. In her most companion-species-centered book *When Species Meet* (2008), Haraway engages with Derrida and is clearly put off by his depiction of the abyss as unbreachable. Her main frustration with Derrida is his refusal to empathize with the perspective of the animal, similar to my own hesitation and tentative progression through the crisis I outlined above (21). She argues that, rather than getting stuck in a paralyzing crisis, humans can understand the existence and experience of the animal other by looking at the way the gaze of the animal reconstitutes the subject of that gaze: "We are, constitutively, companion species. We make each other up, in the flesh." (16) According to Haraway, the other can be effectively understood through its impact on the self.

I have waited so long to deeply explore Haraway's work because I wanted to give Derrida his due and demonstrate how some moments from my fieldwork fit quite well in the framework of paralysis and crisis that he presents. I certainly do not want to throw Derrida out completely, and perhaps I am more hesitant to do so than Haraway because his abyss is essential for grasping the kind of knowledge Haraway promotes as partial, tentative, and unstable. Given her historical opposition to universal models of totality perhaps she wouldn't be too upset by this reading. The idea that the other can be

understood through its impact on the self links back to some of Haraway's earlier work on situated knowledges (Haraway 1988) and the cyborg as a theoretical model (Haraway 1984). The cyborg resists arborescent original unity and wholeness, and instead promotes a rhizomic hybrid that challenges traditional philosophical Enlightenment values. The concept of situated knowledges supports a familiarity with the world (in Haraway's writing this can be representations or understandings of nature or feminist political unity) from a particular standpoint that recognizes itself as incomplete, without a god's eye authoritative view. In Haraway's work speaking for the other is closely linked to a breakdown in certainty and a simultaneous commitment to continuing to move and know with remade, less-stable certainties. Derrida's work reinforces the necessity of that skepticism.

Haraway is also very interested in ordinary encounters that she describes as being "in the mud" (30) rather than philosophically removed and above the felt. Derrida does a similar thing by talking through his experience with his own cat: "The cat I am talking about is a real cat, truly, believe me, *a little cat*. It isn't the figure of a cat." (374) It is in this space of real rather than extrapolated, distant, or metaphorical encounters with animals that I hope to meet both Haraway and Derrida with my fieldwork. Haraway discusses the concept of the contact zone as a space where she and a particular animal (in this case her Australian Shepherd Cayenne Pepper) are able to form a connection in the form of a world-building "us." (208). This connection is necessarily particular and relies heavily on bodily presence, but Haraway also understands that there are other disembodied players like histories and social forces tied up in the moments of coming together like what she highlights in successful agility trials with Cayenne. This can help us understand the simultaneous interplay between what stories help animal care workers know about

animals and how they gain that knowledge simultaneously through playful experimentation with the real particular animal in various contact zones. In my own fieldwork, my interviewees would sometimes switch back and forth between registers of talking about animals-in-general and animals-in-particular in their navigation of communication with their companions. These following examples aim to flesh out some encounters in contact zones that highlight how the general and the particular layer together to facilitate a kind of worlding and us-making that allows for a conceptualization of the animal other, a connection we can understand as communication.

Making Contact: Looks and Proximity

Sandra and I started training as Physical Exam volunteers on the same day, and I interviewed her on my last day as a volunteer before I returned to school. She bookended my fieldwork quite nicely. Sandra is Indian-American, and she said she didn't know many other Indians who volunteered in animal shelters. She figured this was linked to most Indians she knew seeing dogs and cats as wild and potentially threatening rather than as companions. In Sandra's particular case she grew up without pets, and this is what motivated her to volunteer at the shelter. This experience also transformed her own expectations of what animal care should look like, and she was surprised that the way she got along with her first dog, Reese, was different than how most people anticipated her to be with him. She was especially surprised that other people would talk to their dogs, which she saw as ineffective communication. She said she felt like an idiot trying to "baby talk" to

Reese, and instead opted to communicate nonlinguistically. Other shelter staff and volunteers referred to this form of communication as "body language."

However, Sandra recognized more physical or embodied forms of communication to be more beneficial to understanding and being with Reese. She felt that the kind of looks that Reese would give her and his proximity to her were the most important ways that she could determine what he wanted or how he felt. She described how when he wanted something, he would lock eyes with her and move toward her. "He gets up really close to me like this and looks up at me and makes eye contact and just sits there," Sandra got out of her chair in the interview room and moved very close to my face, locking eyes with me intently. "And then if I don't do anything, he gets a little closer, and stares at me, and then he starts putting his paw on my knee if he doesn't feel like he's getting a reaction." She got closer, and pushed at my shoulder with her hand. When Reese wanted something, he worked to create a physical space of encounter similar to the one Haraway describes being in with Cayenne Pepper when playing agility. The impact of Reese's gaze brings Sandra out of herself and into a relationship where Reese urges her to move with him. This is also tenuous, and Sandra can resist or miss involvement. But knowing that Reese wants something is most immediately bodily and depends on a contact zone connection.

Sandra also highlighted how a kind of typified generalized knowledge guided her away from communicating with Reese linguistically. Not all of her interactions were determined by these face-to-face encounters, but she also made determinations based on understandings that she had gained externally. Reese is a large white Great Pyrenees, and Sandra would occasionally reference his breed as a justification for some of his behavior. "His barks have got a purpose, because they're working dogs, they're originally working

dogs, and they keep that mentality, and barking is your first form of defense. So if he doesn't verbalize, I guess I don't verbalize either." For Sandra, knowing something about a group of dogs like Reese allows her to know Reese specifically better, and reconfigure the way that she communicates with her particular dog. The general here can mark the particular, but in Sandra's case it does not overshadow it.

Mark presented another interesting example when we chatted in his office. Captured by his discussion of hesitancy and caution in approaching animals that might be struggling with the newness of the shelter, I asked him more about his strategies for building trust with animals that might be facing (or producing) uncertainty. He described the leash as one of the most important tools of physical connection, emphasizing that tangible linkage as something that can lead up to a careful creation of a contact zone:

> You can have a dog that's leashed to a wall or loose in a kennel or even loose in a room, trying to have a real interaction with them can elicit a fight or flight response. If you have them on a leash and that leash is in your hand, that direct connection will often times result in an ability to have a longer interaction with that animal directly, because there is, there is a physical response that they have to being connected to you. And so, with little ones, you sit down on the floor, you take the leash, and if they don't want anything to do with you, you can just very slowly shorten that leash up one hand at a time and sort of reel them in 'til they're here and once they touch you, or you touch them, it's generally then just a matter of time before they're in your lap. And once they're in your lap, once they're in your arms, you will likely be on the road to success.

Just as Reese worked to lead Sandra into a contact zone with his gaze and physical presence, Mark used a leash as an instrument of touch and proximity to lead small nervous animals into contact with him. In both of these instances there is communication going on: Reese is trying to indicate he wants to go outside or needs attention from Sandra, and Mark is trying to convey that there is no need for the small dog to be nervous, and that he is a safe person to be around. This physical intimacy cautiously creates spaces where they can

be together and figure out what a "we" looks like. Haraway's depictions of the contact zone tend to focus on successful moments of synchronization with an animal she already knew well, but contact zones can also be useful tools for the generation of new information and understanding.

Perhaps one of the most vibrant contact zones in the shelter is the courtyard, where volunteers walk dogs and potential adopters are able to spend time with animals they might want to adopt. It is just steps away from the Dog Adopts room, and most days had a view of a crystal blue summer sky with the tops of some of the city's tallest skyscrapers peeking through. This was one of the first places that Marianne took me when she was training me as a dog adoption volunteer. The courtyard is completely closed off from the street and surrounded on all four sides by different parts of the shelter. It has three levels, all connected by a long ramp and stairs. The exterior far wall is decorated with the names of donors, as are the many benches and trees that dot the space. Every morning staff and volunteers hose down the area, and Marianne described to me how a new heating system had been installed so that snow would melt off the concrete slabs in the winter instead of having to be shoveled off. The courtyard is a space where people come to know more about dogs: it facilitates that close physical contact that can be so helpful in getting to know an animal that has been a stranger to this point. There are some rules that govern the playfulness of this interaction: the dog must stay on leash, cannot interact with other animals, and children are not allowed to hold the leash. However, through these minimally-mediated encounters, the potential adopter is able to gain an understanding of what a particular dog is like through an experience of how they are transformed in contact with that animal. This space is also helpful for volunteers to get a better familiarity with the dogs

that are available for adoption so they can use that information to match dogs with adopters; it can also simply produce warm moments of connection with dogs, which is a big draw for the volunteer program. For me, it was the backdrop of one of my favorite games of catch this summer.

Stella is a tan and white shepherd mix that I met in mid July. She initially caught my attention with the timbre of her bark, a frequent but soft high woof that seemed out of place with the size of her body. I read her cage card and discovered that she had been given a "Special" behavior designation because she was deaf in one ear. Taking her bark as an indication that she was tired of being confined to her kennel, I grabbed a leash and a stuffed toy and took her outside. It was a warm, sunny day, and she trotted alongside of me as we walked the length of the courtyard. I waved the toy in front of her face, hoping that she might be interested, and initially she was not. I sat on a bench and she sat in front of me, letting me scratch behind her ears. I tossed the toy out in front of her, and this time she hopped up, picked it up with her mouth, and brought it back to me. I tossed it into the air a short distance away from us, knowing the leash wasn't long enough for a fully involved game of fetch, and she snatched the toy out of the air before it hit the ground. I put my hand out, expecting her to give it back like before. Instead, she dipped her head low and then swung her nose up toward the sky, launching the toy into the air toward me. I caught it, surprised. I had never caught a toy a dog had thrown at me before; it had always been the other way around. So Stella and I sat in the courtyard for a long while, tossing the toy back and forth between us. Eventually a pigeon landed nearby and Stella got distracted. We lost our rhythm, and a few minutes later I took her back inside.

Stella surprised me. I was not expecting our play to take the turn that it did, but the way our movements, intentions, and attentions lined up made me feel a connection unlike the kinds that I usually felt with other dogs I would take out into the courtyard. We were together in a moment not unlike the coming together that Haraway describes having with Cayenne during agility trials. I couldn't stop smiling. The game of catch was short, but for that moment I understood what she wanted and she (seemingly) understood me. Without the courtyard as a play space, we could not have come together in the way that we did. We needed that kind of physical proximity, aided by the leash connecting us and the movement of the toy between us, to lock in with one another so effectively. I do not know Stella's entire story, I don't know where she came from or if playing catch like this had been an important part of her life before the shelter, but I do know that we had that particular moment right then, and that she is a dog who makes me feel good. In that contact zone Stella and I communicated attunement to one another through this game, snapping together to form a very special and impactful moment for me. Play spaces like the courtyard are areas where particular humans and animals can explore what it means to be an "us," and wade through the affective consequence of breaking down the boundary of the species divide.

Moving Forward

For animal care workers, a crisis of the self is not an option. Their work demands that they move forward through paralysis, anxiety, and uncertainty. However, this also means that conversations with them about how they do work effectively will necessarily

highlight uncertainty and instability that is frequently encountered in communication with animals. Ultimately, having a full or authoritative picture of what an animal wants or needs from a care worker is not possible, and animal care workers similarly struggle to get their own good intentions across to the animals for which they hope to provide care. Communication, then, can only be understood insofar as it occasionally fails. It is not a perfect or reliable process. However, it is functional, and the stories and knowledges animal care workers gain and share can demonstrate how humans and animals are able to navigate uncertainty together.

In this chapter, I have traced the crisis of encounter with the animal other as it makes the human reconceptualize their self and separateness from the animal. Ultimately that species boundary begins to break down as humans and animals come together in contact zones that facilitate a kind of communication and mutual understanding that is physical and affective but also influenced by external or shared human knowledges. The animal care workers I met and many of the animals I came to know as an animal care worker myself have helped me understand how an openness to surprise and attention to one's own experience is more than sufficient in getting along well with animals. Determining the best way to provide animal care is not formulaic, but rather depends upon a constant cautious approach sensitive to the particular and variable response from the animal other.

CHAPTER TWO: ADOPTABILITY

My interview with Quinn marked the first of my forays into the Humane Education and Training wing of the building. She had given me instructions for finding her office over email, but predictably I got lost in the labyrinthine hallways and corridors connecting the parts of the shelter that were familiar to me with this new, uncharted territory. A handful of the people who I later interviewed in their offices in this wing would laugh when I asked what kind of changes they had seen over time and explain that this building hadn't been here when they started. The education and training center had been added to the building in 1999, somewhat haphazardly affixed to the side of the existing building as the shelter grew, demanded more space, and purchased nearby property. All this to explain why I was five minutes late to this interview.

When I finally got where I was going, I walked past a sign that said "free roam zone" on the door, urging me to be cautious of any animals that might bolt out as I walked in. To my left on the other side of a baby gate, two kittens tussled on the tile floor next to the cubicles of the members of the humane education team. I climbed over another gate to the right, toward the behaviorists, to find Quinn. When we first spoke, Quinn was working as a Behavior Specialist but informed me that after 11 years of working in this department she would soon be shifting to work with the Humane Education team on the other side of the office suite in just a few weeks. A large tabby cat walked across the divide between Quinn's desk and her coworkers' to nuzzle my hand. Quinn explained that these were office fosters, usually shelter animals with weak immune systems who ran a high risk of health issues in the typical shelter environment. I thought about the warmth of getting to hold a kitten at

your desk every day, and smiled at the lack of distance or alienation between deskwork and the matter of animal care at hand. This chapter and the next will centrally feature the work of the staff in these hard to locate departments and the widely felt impact it has on how animals are understood and circulated as subjects within the shelter.

I was interested in Quinn's work for a lot of reasons. I had seen her in a variety of roles during my short time at the shelter, and knew that behavior evaluation was a critical step in the adoption process. I had seen potential adopters barred from adopting a dog that had been assessed to have behavior challenges because they didn't have time or resources to pursue training, so I viewed behavior as one of the major humps to get over when trying to accomplish the goal of getting animals out of the shelter and into homes. I wanted to know more about how Quinn would make these determinations and categorizations. A few days I had also seen Quinn remove a grey pit bull named Sugar from the adoption floor, whose cage was shortly thereafter cleaned out, and I didn't see her again. I had never personally taken Sugar outside for a walk but knew that she had been a long-term stay at the shelter, and I asked Quinn what had happened. She hesitated, sighed, and told me she had been involved in the decision to euthanize Sugar.

"She was one of those really obnoxious cases… one of those multifaceted, tough decisions." She said that Sugar had never bitten anyone, but based on how other dogs had behaved before her, Quinn figured she could bite, and she might. Quinn also noted that Sugar wasn't a very social dog, which was concerning because she was a pit bull. She told me, "it's unfortunate, but pit bulls still need to be held to a higher standard than other breeds." Sugar also came to Anti-Cruelty from a different shelter in Chicago and had no paper records, and Quinn noted that this made it challenging to predict with certainty how

she might behave in the future. These factors and this instability coalesced into the very definitive decision to euthanize Sugar. I was captivated. Anti-Cruelty does not call itself a no-kill shelter (a theme I will dig into more in Chapter Four) but the metrics they have for euthanasia are pretty stringent. The shelter never euthanizes for space, but aggression and illness are the primary (and often only) reasonable justifications for euthanasia. What Quinn was highlighting in Sugar was a little different. Broadly, Sugar did not have the characteristics that made her an adoptable dog. Her sustained failure to adhere to the certain standards and characteristics expected of her made her too unstable a subject, and she could then no longer be cared for effectively by a shelter set up to function in particular ways. Quinn described the work that the behavior staff does as determining "those [animals] we can work with here in the shelter and those we can't." The shelter only works inasmuch as its animals can follow the guidelines of their status as subjects.

In the previous chapter, I touched on the tension between how face-to-face encounters with animals can be generative of new information about particular animals and how prior knowledge and information about those animals shapes the way they are encountered or understood. The work that Quinn does, in collaboration with many other staff and volunteers, straddles that tension. In this chapter I will focus more on how those understandings about appropriate ways to be with animals come to form a mandate that shapes encounters and orders the kind of possibility and unpredictability that comes with understanding an animal other. With the creation and maintenance of the adoptable subject, the shelter creates imperatives and fosters bodies that do or can reasonably fulfill them. Thus there are no "organic" encounters with animals- just as the way that a human may feel comfortable approaching an animal is influenced by prior experience, the animal

itself is institutionally molded into those preexisting forms. History and expectation here have power. Through a thorough examination of the metrics and consequences of the creation of the adoptable subject, I will demonstrate the force of the shelter's intervention in human-animal relationships as that encounter comes to be not limited to the individuals coming into contact but rather includes history, knowledge, politics, and power in its development.

The Subject, Discipline, and Adoptability

The concept of subjectivity that I employ here is the one explored in the work of Michel Foucault, prominently in *Discipline and Punish* (1975) and *The History of Sexuality* (1978). Foucault discusses how bodies are made docile through technologies of discipline in institutional settings, representing an historical shift over time from public displays of criminals' violent punishment to a more localized and regimented exercise of control over individuals (1975:141). He outlines the impact of control and surveillance over space and time, and how these regulations give order to the unknown, unseen, or unparseably multiple. He emphasizes that these structures of control have consequences for the bodies of the individuals over which they exercise power:

> This new object is the natural body, the bearer of forces and the seat of duration; it is the body susceptible to specified operations, which have their order, their stages, their internal conditions, their constituent elements. In becoming the target for new mechanisms of power, the body is offered up to new forms of knowledge. It is the body of exercise, rather than of speculative physics; a body manipulated by authority, rather than imbued with animal spirits; a body of useful training and not of rational mechanics, but one in which, by virtue of that very fact, a number of natural requirements and functional constraints are beginning to emerge. (155)

Thus bodies themselves come to reflect the values of the mechanistic systems in which they are ordered. Foucault uses the terms *biopower* and *biopolitics* to describe this writing of power onto bodies. He further traces the history of this process in *The History of Sexuality,* underscoring an historical transition from sovereign modes of governance, in which the sovereign had the power to make dead and let live (135), to biopolitical modes where an invisible and distributed state could make live and let die (138). Foucault is interested in this shift because of its implications in how a government is able to manage populations. Similarly I am interested in how a regimented animal shelter produces companion animal subjects along lines that privilege or mandate certain human-animal interactions over others.

In discussing discipline using Foucault's work, I clearly run the risk of comparing an animal shelter to a prison. I hesitate to do this because I do not fancy myself in the vein of aggressive animal rights activists diametrically opposed to any form of animal confinement. I worry that a prison comparison is a slippery slope into this camp, and want to clearly distinguish that I am talking about institutions in general, just as Foucault generalizes his examination of disciplinary power to schools and hospitals. I do not see anything inherently punitive about this way of being with companion animals, and do not jump to condemn these institutions. With that hesitation in mind, it is hard to ignore some key similarities to a prison that make this Foucauldian analysis of subjectivity make sense. The animal shelter is an institution, like Foucault's prisons, schools, and hospitals, that writes power onto bodies. Time and space are regimented. Each animal has unique identification information and its own separate cage. Animals are very intentionally kept separate, and unintentional contact between them is to be avoided: once a staff member grabbed a leash

out of my hand to pull a dog backwards when I came around a corner too quickly. Staff and volunteers come in to take animals outside or socialize with them on specific schedules, and the time of their trips to the courtyard and if they urinated or defecated are documented on a clipboard kept behind the scenes in the adoption room pantry. Eating and drinking habits are recorded daily on a small card kept with other identification information. This kind of regulation and separation of animal bodies creates the same kind of institution of discipline that Foucault describes, producing subjects that can be managed and idealized along with the mission and values of the shelter. Through these methods the shelter is able to produce certain types of animal subjects fit to fulfill its mission.

Adoption services are at the heart of what the Anti-Cruelty society does. They state their mission more broadly: "Building a community of caring by helping pets and educating people." It is certain that the wide variety of services the shelter offers extend well beyond the adoption room. The daily operations with which I was most centrally occupied as a volunteer, however, were focused on helping animals move through and out of the shelter. The shelter was not seen as a destination or an ideal place for animals to stay, but rather a transitional point from which they could move into people's homes as companions. By nurturing adoptable subjects, Anti-Cruelty is involved in the Foucauldian biopolitical process of "making live." Animals are given relevance, or political life (Agamben 1998), marked by their ability to be wanted by humans and to fit into their lives. So how does adoptability come to be calculated and demonstrated? How do we understand here the "right" way for animals to be included in our lives?

"Adoptability," as my fellow volunteers used it and as I found myself using it, is a multifaceted term. First, it is a status designation for animals within the shelter

bureaucracy. Many animals reside under the auspice of the shelter, but only a particular subset is available for the public to interact with and adopt. However, adoptability is also used in reference to behavioral traits some animals possess that make them appealing to potential adopters. Before launching into the specific metrics of how this status is allocated, I want to give a brief overview of how animals move into the shelter and how they leave it to illustrate the various moments in which animals become adoptable and how the status of adoptability is achieved. While it may seem somewhat mechanistic, it further elucidates the interplay between "adoptable" as a technical and behavioral term, and as a subjectivity.

The individual animal's progression through the shelter begins with intake. Animals may enter the shelter through a few different channels. Some are surrendered by their former owners in person in the shelter's intake area. Occasionally cats will also be surrendered in person when found as strays. Others come from transports from other overpopulated shelters (either from the South[4] or from local shelters in the city) that would otherwise euthanize them. Transports of these kind are much more common for dogs than for cats. Finally, a small handful comes from Field Services investigations of allegations of abuse, where animals may be taken away from owners in violation of animal care laws. None of these animals are immediately available for adoption upon intake; they must first pass behavioral and medical screenings to become adoptable. Animals may be euthanized during these evaluations if they are deemed aggressive beyond the behavioral team's capacity to rehabilitate them, or sick or injured beyond the medical team's ability to heal them. All animals not already spayed or neutered will undergo this surgery, including most

[4] I discuss more thoroughly how implications of overpopulation influence the way the South is imagined in comparison to metropolitan Chicago in Chapter Three.

animals that are surrendered while they are pregnant.[5] Certain animals may also be flagged for rescue during this process. The shelter partners with external rescue organizations that will take and care for animals of a certain breed or animals with more challenging medical issues. Those determined to be healthy, behaviorally suitable, and not otherwise appropriate for rescue pass to the adoption floor, where they may be handled by the general public, and by care and adoption volunteers. These adoptable animals may become unavailable if they become ill or begin to exhibit "unadoptable" behaviors, in which case they must be reevaluated by medical or behavioral staff before regaining their adoptable status. Members of the public must undergo a screening process led by shelter staff to approve them for adoption of an animal before the animal can leave the shelter with a new owner. There is no time limit on an animal's stay, and they remain available until adopted, or until their behavior or health degrades to an unrehabitable point. And the cycle begins anew with every new intake.

So what behaviors are adoptable and unadoptable? What particular characteristics get fostered through this process? I should also note that the following discussions of behavior and medical evaluations disproportionately include dogs over cats, and excludes completely the small mammals occasionally available for adoption. My work on the adoption floor was exclusively with dogs, and I have not seen firsthand how cat adoptability is determined within that separate space. I did have the opportunity to work with cats as a physical exam volunteer, and they consequently play a much larger role in that analysis.

---

[5] Sometimes veterinarians will perform a "spay and abort" surgery and abort the animals' fetuses. Other animals far enough along in their pregnancies will give birth in the shelter. This is often promoted on the shelter's social media pages, though caring for neonatal puppies and kittens is a significant investment of time and resources.

Behavior: Adoptable and Adaptable Orientations

Wendy is the only volunteer I met who I figured put in more hours on the adoption floor than I did. We also started volunteering at about the same time. She seemed to always be around, flitting between the courtyard and the kennels, training for a new program, or having a long conversation with a potential adopter about a particular dog. Wendy was always in motion. On our way back to an open screening room where we would sit and chat for a while, we ran into a young couple leaving a different room. "Should I say congratulations?" Wendy asked them hesitantly. The couple nodded and Wendy hugged them, smiling effusively and wishing them luck. She explained to me that Rex, a long-term stay, had just gotten adopted, and she had helped to facilitate that.

Wendy described her work as a Dog Adopts volunteer as getting to be a matchmaker. "Every single dog here, they're all adoptable, they just need to meet the right person." She had a hard time describing what particular behaviors were more or less adoptable because the process was so individualized and dependent on what a person was looking for in a dog. She used Rex as an example. Rex was about 80 pounds, a very sizable pit bull, completely black except for a few spots of grey on his face that reflected his eight years of age. He would also stand in his kennel and bark a low, loud bark whenever anyone walked by. Wendy recognized that this combination of factors could come off as threatening, and could steer potential adopters away from him. As volunteers, however, Wendy and I both knew that Rex was one of those dogs whose behavior changes completely when out of his kennel. He would walk well on a leash, loved to cuddle, and

would spend time outside sitting with you in the sun. Wendy told me the couple that had just adopted him had seen her sitting outside with him and inquired then; they had never seen his in-kennel behavior. Rex had been an "adoptable" dog all along, but it was all about the context that Wendy helped to curate.

Wendy recognized that the most important thing Dog Adopts volunteers could do was spend time to get to know the available dogs so they would be able to explain what they were really like to potential adopters. "It's like, you sell a product," she said. "You have to know your product first in order to sell that. Luis [a volunteer coordinator] told me that we are doing marketing here. We don't really sell the dog, but we kind of sell them in a different way, to promote them." Here Wendy and fellow volunteers are engaging in a conversion of the information gained from communicative exchanges described in Chapter One to conceive them as adoptable subjects (and as commodities) potentially appropriate for whoever is visiting the shelter in search of a dog that day. For Wendy, there is no one ideal model for the adoptable dog, no one prescriptive way for a dog to be included in a human's life. Rather, this is a process of seeking out and highlighting the best, most appealing qualities of a particular dog and seeing how they align with human desires.

Andrea, the Dog Care volunteer with the purebred boxers, recognized that this process of matching did actually follow some particular trends. As a Dog Care worker, she said her first priority was to make sure that every dog had an opportunity to go outside in the courtyard recently, and her second priority was to make sure they presented well to potential adopters. "You want them right in that sweet spot," she said, with them being neither too active nor retreated. A dog jumping, grabbing at the leash, and barking excessively could be off-putting, and a dog cowering in the back of the kennel could be

more upsetting than appealing. Sometimes getting to this sweet spot involved giving active dogs some time to run around off leash, or giving reserved dogs some gentle company or quiet support to open them up to more stimulation or human attention. Other times the sweet spot could be reached through clicker training. I had watched this training method in action a few times. The volunteer would use a small instrument that made a short, popping click when you pressed it and then give the dog a treat if they were otherwise behaving desirably. The idea was that the dog would start to associate the click, the treat, and the behavior together. The click could then produce the good behavior. This training method would also have the effect of drawing the dog's attention to the human, demonstrating a visible interest in the potential adopter.

Certain attentions, however, were less desirable. When describing some of the reasons that Sugar was euthanized, Quinn described her peculiar disregard for most humans. "Sugar wasn't just super snuggly and all into you. She would check in and be like, OK, thanks for the butt scratches, I'm out. And one of the typical defining characteristics of a pittie is they're all over you." It was hard to get control over her attention and train her. One type of human could command her attention, however: small kids. Sugar stayed for a while at the Everyday Adoption Center, where staff noted that she was particularly reactive when children would walk by her kennel. She noted her own uncertainty about what that stimulation could mean, and what its consequences could be. "I noticed it when we were out in the courtyard; the only reason she stopped doing the [leash-grabbing] thing was because there was a small child about fifteen, twenty feet from us. And that was just holding her attention, I couldn't get her attention." Attentiveness alone was not appropriate adoptable behavior for Sugar; what makes attentiveness desirable is the ability for the

human to exercise control over it. The inability of shelter staff to get her focus or alter her behavior made it challenging to pull her into an institution of adoptable subjects who could be made to live in the way that the shelter was designed to produce them, and thus failed to thrive.

This discussion of attentions and variance in their directionality lines up well with Sara Ahmed's discussions of a queer phenomenology, which can open a door for a better understanding of how certain ways of being with animals are prioritized and how that impacts the animals themselves. Ahmed is writing about how sexual orientations can be understood and better navigated with the tools of phenomenology, or through an analysis of the orientations toward objects made available to one in space and consciousness (544). This phenomenological work emphasizes how individuals (living or material) are made through how others are directed toward them and relate or interact with them (551). This is not unlike Haraway's description of the co-construction of humans and animals through their relationships with one another (Haraway 2008) but Ahmed is specifically invested in the forces that draw actors together into relation. Objects or bodies take form as they appear on a proximal horizon apprehended by another object or body (552).

Dogs with differing orientations to humans and other objects in their world can be understood within the same framework. The dog behaviors discussed above demonstrate a wide range of orientations that dogs can take on to the bodies and objects around them. These dogs come to be distinct entities in how they relate to those external others. Within this wide range of orientations certain "tendencies," to borrow Ahmed's word, emerge, are prioritized, and are fostered above others. Ahmed also describes how through this mechanism certain ways of being and being with become compulsory through inheritance

and continuation across linear time (557). Thus dogs that are oriented toward humans in particular ways deemed desirable are preferred for adoption by those humans, and other dogs who are not already oriented this way are pressured to develop along that trajectory.

So after all, what is the "certain way" of being with animals that gets privileged? What mainstream currents emerge? As Wendy highlighted, these ways of being with animals are multiple, but can also follow trends. But through the behaviors that Quinn and Andrea highlighted as either desirable or undesirable, it is evident that the shelter has determined that, as a general trend, adopters are looking for an animal who will listen and who can be under human control. Traits like eye contact, sitting quietly, and seeking out physical proximity to humans all suggest a kind of animal interest in the human indicating a readiness to respond, and to respond in ways that humans can predict or understand (see Chapter One). Ahmed also highlights the disorientation that comes with having to shift oneself out of shared patterns or trajectories that have been established, something that is typically undesirable. When adopting, humans don't want to experience that disorientation. They are able to avoid it by selecting dogs to include in their lives for whom they don't have to move much. The adaptable dog is the adoptable dog. This unequal power distribution in who gets to make up whom challenges the beautiful image of mutual co-constructive worlding that Haraway has painted.

Ahmed's attention to compulsory heterosexuality as a force that structurally manipulates orientations is helpful in understanding the role of the dog in a family structure. The whole framework of adoption evokes the image of incorporating an animal into the quintessential heteronormative structure of the family unit. I discuss heteronormativity here not as a difference between families led by a gay or straight couple,

but rather as a force that makes the family and its typical structuring an utmost central unit of society. Within this framework, animals come to be seen as children. I would hear potential adopters refer to other dogs they had at home as their "furbabies" and talk about bringing a new dog home as adding a "brother or sister" for the current dog, or even as a sibling for current children. Louisa, a physical exam volunteer, concluded our interview by saying, "They're our babies. They're our family. I don't care what anybody says." The adopted dog is not just a child; it is an infant that demands a human adult to care for it. Ahmed underscores how heteronormativity as a deeply ingrained social structure comes to replicate itself to maintain this power and order and pass similar orientations into the future. The family similarly has an impact on perpetuating the dog that responds well to a human wanting to care for it on their terms.

Making Bodies in the Clinic

Working as a Physical Examination (PE) volunteer gave me an up-close view of the kinds of decisions being made about adoptable animal bodies. These evaluations of health were slightly different than what I was accustomed to from working at a private veterinary clinic, marking a development of a certain kind of "healthy" and thereby adoptable subject. During PEs, I would hold animals for exams and assist the veterinarian with getting blood samples and giving vaccines and watch as they evaluated an animal's health over a wide variety of metrics. Each of the veterinarians had a slightly different way of doing things, but all of them would check an animal's range of motion by manipulating their limbs, check for luxating patellas (loose kneecaps), listen to the heart and respiration, examine teeth, draw

a small blood sample, and give a rabies vaccine. They could then make a determination about the animal's future: they could become available for adoption in the shelter, get scheduled for a spay or neuter surgery, be sent to a rescue organization, or receive medication and continue to stay in the shelter while they recovered from a temporary illness. Veterinarians here are also engaged in the making of the adoptable subject through this determination of what kinds of bodies become available to the general public for adoption and what bodies are transferred out of the organization.

The variation in veterinarians' examination styles was occasionally frustrating when trying to determine the criteria with which they were making their evaluations. Dr. Myer, for example, would sometimes look at a dog's teeth, shout "whoa!" and move on with the exam, eventually making thorough notes on the cage card when he was finished. He was not very conversational, and I had to prod him to get him to explain what he had found so remarkable. Dr. Osmet, on the other hand, would explain aloud all of the things the exam was showing her. Once she passed around her stethoscope so we could all hear a very pronounced heart murmur she had just found on a kitten. Her explanations were the clearest, and demonstrated to me the metrics with which veterinarians would make their decisions. Largely it boiled down to future expense. Luxating patellas and heart murmurs are both evaluated on a grade system (1 being the best, 4 being the most severe) and the higher categories (grades 3+) would generally involve an expensive surgery or treatment that could be prohibitive for the average adopter. Here the worry was that these future unexpected costs could lead to neglect of the animal, or the animal could be returned to the shelter if the adopter couldn't afford the surgery. The medically adoptable subject is one that, as far as a veterinarian can tell, will be medically low-maintenance in the future. This

somewhat preventative conceptualization of health considers and constructs the long-term wellbeing of the animal to include not having to return to the shelter.

While working in the clinic, I was surprised to discover that the line between medical and behavioral evaluations was not so clean cut. One of the most particularly memorable mistakes I made as a Physical Exam volunteer was pulling an angry cat out of a cage. Working in this volunteer program was a process of unlearning for me as far as cat handling went. At the animal hospital where I first learned how to hold cats for medical procedures and examinations, there wasn't much wiggle room. As much as we tried to keep animals calm and cooperative, sometimes circumstances called for me to reach into a cage, pull a fractious cat out, and then hold it still for a blood draw. I was never very good at or eager to do this (as the enduring scars on my hands and forearms will attest) but I had figured out a handful of strategies for getting the job done. I thought my know-how and readiness to risk my skin would be an asset for the PE program.

So when a few weeks after I finished my training I asked for a towel to throw over the head of an orange cat who hissed at my outstretched hand, I was surprised that Laura, a seasoned PE volunteer, looked at me incredulously. She urged me to just leave the cat in the cage. "No," I insisted, thinking she might be mistaking my age for inexperience, "I can get this." I found a small hand towel in the corner of the room, tossed it over the cat, quickly reached in and grabbed him by the scruff, and pulled him out from the corner in which he had lodged himself. This trick had probably a 20% success rate at the hospital where I worked, where pets were intruded upon much more frequently and invasively. Here, it was working like a charm. As I held the cat on the exam table he hissed again, and Dr. Osmet asked if I wanted to put him back. Again, I said no, lightly jostling the cat's scruff to distract

him. Dr. Osmet pressed her stethoscope to the cat's chest and listened for a moment, then said she couldn't hear the cat's heart or respiration over his low growl, and told me to put him back. Defeated, I returned him to his cage, and he scratched my shoulder with his nails as a souvenir when I let go of him.

Later, Laura explained to me that it wasn't worth it to get the cats riled up like this because veterinarians would not complete their exams if it looked like animals were going to get aggressive. A bite would almost invariably result in that animal's euthanasia, which was not something that I had had to consider at a private veterinary clinic. I had wanted to push as many animals through the medical screening process in my four-hour shift as possible. However, this experience revealed to me the dual nature of the medical exam: not only was it there to determine if a pet was healthy, but it also stood as a barometer for temperament. Dr. Myer later echoed Laura's sentiment. He told me that every veterinarian on staff had different qualifications for what animals they would and wouldn't clear, but overwhelmingly no one would force an animal though the process if it meant they would be putting an animal with the potential to be fractious on the adoption floor. Being able to withstand the unusual poking and prodding of a veterinarian to become available for adoption thus becomes another mechanism in the creation of the adoptable and predictable animal subject.

The differences in how veterinarians select animals to examine also adds an extra layer to this dual behavioral/medical evaluation. During my first shift working with Dr. Franklin, he only kept us for an hour and a half (out of a four hour shift) and we only examined a small handful of cats. Intrigued by all of these differences, I asked Dr. Myer, an upper-level veterinarian at the shelter, why some veterinarians followed other patterns.

Dr. Myer said his personal criteria was checking the cage cards to see if the animal "had eaten, drank, peed, and pooped normally" before he would do an exam, and he would PE any animal that met all of these qualifications. Dr. Franklin told me that he would only examine cats because he knew most volunteers he would be working with had a hard time with large dogs. He also made his selections primarily based on who seemed to be the most friendly:

> I know I was told when I first came here to look at their little cards, see if they eat or drink or do whatever, but if a cat is nice enough and has been here for a day, I don't expect it to necessarily have eaten. […] Not all cats that are at the front of the cage, rubbing against it, are going to behave the way you want them to. But that's generally more of an indication of, hey, I'm interested, what's going on, let's be friends, that sort of thing. Some of them, you stick your hand in there, they run back and they're just being a jerk then. Or if they're sitting there and then they get up and come over, then generally that's one that wants to interact as well.

The criteria of Dr. Franklin's PE selection process is not unlike the behavioral criteria that other teams in the shelter use to nurture adoptability. Dr. Franklin is interested in working with cats who are interested in him, who are oriented toward him in attractive ways. The behavioral evaluation here is a gateway to the medical evaluation, and unadoptable behavior disqualify some animals from getting their PE and moving on to the adoption floor.

Maintenance and Breakdown

Adoptability is not a one-time achievement for an animal but rather an ongoing status that they must maintain. Sugar, for example, had been on the adoption floor for months before she was euthanized. At one point she had been adoptable both technically and medically/behaviorally, but this status slipped away from her as time progressed.

Quinn acknowledged that this was something that happened occasionally, and linked it to the stress of the shelter. “We do our best, but we’re not the Hilton… it’s loud, it’s smelly, it’s unfamiliar.” This could be overwhelming for new animals, bring out new behaviors in them, or cause them to change behavior over time. Quinn said one of the telltale signs of this process beginning to happen was when a dog would bite at a leash like it was a chew toy when someone would go to take them outside. For some dogs carrying an actual chew toy could redirect this behavior, but for others the behavior would continue. Sandra, the PE volunteer I met on my first day, linked behavior degradation specifically to the shelter being an institution. She saw the role of a dog program volunteer as enriching dogs’ lives “…to give them a break from being in an institutionalized, loud situation where they have no sense of control, ever. It *is* an institution.” A dog would get “institutionalized” after being bored in their cage all day and losing their socialization skills.

Ironically, then, the shelter is a space where the institutional methods of discipline that Foucault describes are simultaneously in pursuit of and counterproductive to the creation and maintenance of the adoptable subject. Foucault describes a highly regimented and deeply effective institution in his description of the prison, so where and how does the shelter break away? Adoptable subjects are certainly produced and effectively incorporated into human lives regularly, but not always. To fully regiment as Foucault describes would violate the kind of caregiving volunteers like Sandra hope to provide in nurturing an animal’s “sense of control.” Ultimately what results is a soft bubbling of potential and slippery animal beings captured within a general trend of certain bodily and behavioral patterns being nurtured. The Anti-Cruelty Society may resemble some aspects

of the institution of discipline Foucault describes, but ultimately the adoptable subject is more loosely composed and prioritized.

I worry somewhat that this chapter has fallen into a doom-and-gloom mindset by highlighting a regimenting of possibility, so please allow me to tug you back in another direction through some of the joy that pops out of these slippery situations. Towards the end of my time at the shelter, Anti-Cruelty took in a large litter of puppies from the Animal Welfare League, the city's other major open-admission shelter, which at the time was overpopulated. The puppies were about eight weeks old and were scheduled for spay and neuter procedures but were having digestive issues, failed their physical exams, and needed to recover before they could have surgery and become available for adoption. At about the same time, the shelter received a transport of dogs from another shelter in the south, effectively filling every open cage in the Dog Holding areas. The puppies had nowhere to go. However, the cat population was low at the time, and a Cat Holding room was completely open. A shelter manager made the decision to move the puppies there for a week while their bellies recovered, and sent out an email to all dog program volunteers encouraging us to go upstairs if we had some time to give the puppies attention.

After a late afternoon shift in Dog Adopts, I climbed the staircase from the lobby to the top floor of the shelter to find the cat holding room where the puppies were being held. Two other volunteers were sitting on the floor, a black, white, and tan cloud of a puppy running in between them. I walked in, careful to shut the door without the puppy escaping. Each puppy had its own space in the wall of cages in the room. I counted- there were ten of them, nine males and one female. Some were passed out asleep, while a couple others whimpered or barked at the volunteers sitting on the ground. I grabbed one of the

whimpering puppies out of his cage and walked over to the window to look at the construction going on across the street, bouncing him like a baby until he stopped crying.

"Can we let them say hi?" one of the volunteers asked, motioning in between my puppy and hers. The other volunteer said she thought that since they were all from the same litter, it should be fine. Dogs rarely get to interact with one another in the shelter, so this felt like a big moment. I placed my puppy on the ground and the two of them began to tussle and chase one another around the room. One of the volunteers let another puppy out of his cage, cautioning that we would have to keep track of them so we could put them back in the correct cages. All of the puppies had tab bands on for identification, but those were sometimes mislabeled. More puppies woke up as their siblings ran around the room, and after a few sympathetic glances between the three of us, we opened all of the cage doors and put all ten puppies on the ground.

What followed was just short of a tornado. The puppies whipped around the small space, yapping softly and crashing into one another. They climbed all over me and the other volunteers. They chewed at my volunteer apron, untied my shoelaces, pulled my glasses off my face, and one even got a hold of a chunk of my hair. I grabbed some rope bones and started playing tug with one of them, but then another grabbed the rope out of my hand and tugged against the puppy still attached at the other end. This was the tension I was living for. This playful pulling, this tug of war, is indicative of the texture of a mutually determined liveliness pushing through the cracks of a relationality only structured by constraint. These puppies tugged me into a joyful alternate imagining of being-with in their game. Sitting on the concrete floor with this mess of puppies swirling over me was one of the most purely joyful moments of my whole summer, and in context with this chapter was

the result of a breakdown of a regimented system through which chaos, surprise, and an unexpected tornado of fur bubbled through.

Conclusion

In Chapter One I discussed how encounters with animal others can open in to fields of possibility and potential, and highlighted the instability of fully knowing a companion animal. This chapter has explored the concept of "adoptability" as it attempts to limit fields of potential and rectify that instability by nurturing more predictable and manageable companion animals. The shelter as an institution aims to produce Foucauldian docile bodies eager to listen to and respond to humans, bodies that are appropriately human-oriented and healthy enough to not become a financial burden. By producing these adoptable subjects, the shelter helps to shape an ongoing tendency of a "right" way to be with animals, and a knowledge of how humans and animals ought to get along. This is just a tendency, and can encompass significant variance and deviation, but also represents the formation of a replicable trend with the goal of stabilizing an unstable and open field of potential ways of knowing or getting along with a companion animal.

CHAPTER THREE: EDUCATION

Emma has been working at the Anti-Cruelty Society for about eight years, and in that time has run the gamut of shelter positions. She began as an Animal Care Specialist, moved to Intake, and now works in the Humane Education department. Her perspectives and experiences in these various departments will be integral to my analyses of their reach later in this chapter, but I was particularly captivated by the story she told about her early background in animal care. Emma grew up in rural Arizona, where the circumstances of life and the way animals were included in it were radically different from how she now experiences them in Chicago. The picture she paints of her understandings of animal care in her childhood and how they bleed into how she practices animal care today is a seamless image; she's done my work for me. I reproduce her account here with minimal omissions.

> I can tell you about things that were normal to me. We had dogs growing up. We always had at least two dogs. Everyone lived in trailers somewhere, in the mountains, not trailers that were like attached to anything, just like propped up on cinderblocks. So what was normal, when I was growing up and we had dogs running around the country, was we were gone for the day, trailer was locked up, dog door locked up so the dogs couldn't go in and out, and the dogs were outside. They didn't have a dog house or anything, their shelter was under the trailer. It was propped up by cinderblocks. Obviously protection, shade, nice cool shade, and that was that. It was my job as a ten year old to fill their water bucket and their food bucket, so while we were gone they had access to food and water, which was pushed under the trailer so they could get to it and it wouldn't get hot in the blistering sun. And our dogs, just like everyone else's dogs, would roam around the countryside in their little dog pack, and they would just chill. That was like their little dog posse. When everybody was home, then dogs were allowed in.
>
> Everything that I just preached [against regarding] parasites in outdoor cats, that's what we were doing with our dogs. Our dogs had ticks, our dogs had fleas, I think I had ticks two or three times. I'm really glad I didn't get Lyme disease as a child, because it certainly could have been a possibility, based on how we lived with our animals. So they would sleep inside with us. I didn't know anybody who had cats. I don't think I knew someone who had cats until I moved to Chicago. When it came to equipment, you had your nylon collar and your choke collar, those were your options when you went to the store to buy dog stuff. Name brand dog food, not

> a thing. I don't even remember what we were feeding our dogs, probably just whatever was on sale. We were feeding our dogs, that was the important part. There's a pet boutique on every corner in Chicago. We would go to the corner store and buy all our dog stuff.
>
> And we were considered pretty good dog owners. We got our dogs vaccines, our dog was spayed, our neighbors considered us great dog owners. We let them in, we cuddled them, which is more than some people would say. I knew some people whose dogs lived outside, they had dog houses, if they wanted to hang out with their dog they would go outside to hang out with their dog. It's interesting because this is the opposite of what we teach kids about pet care. We have made an entire presentation that's called Bogart's Story, that follows a field service case of an outdoor dog that was emaciated. What I'm describing here is exactly what we describe not to do. Using our trailer as a shelter was not an adequate shelter under the humane care for animals act. I have no idea how the Humane Care for Animals Act applied to Arizona in 1996, I don't know, I was 10, but I'm sure that it was not adequate shelter, underneath a trailer. We would provide food and water, but if it was really cold that day, in the winter, or if it would be cold in the mornings, that's just how it was. It was like this common conception of, they're a dog. They belong outside. They have fur. They don't need shoes or anything. And that's just what the culture was.
>
> Pet care standards are a lot higher in the city, whether that's because of laws improving or that people have found out within the past decade about caring for animals, and animals' emotions, and their needs for everything. They don't have the same human needs, and you can run into a lot of problems if you start treating your cat like a people. Humans, cats, and dogs all have a different set of needs. There's something to be said about recognizing that your cat needs playtime. They need stuff to do. Recognizing the need of an animal based on their species is more prevalent, I don't know if it's a Chicago thing, that is one thing that's been awesome about living here, is that people are more concerned about the needs of their pets, at least like in the whole. Otherwise so many pet boutiques would not be able to coexist.

Emma clearly differentiates between life with animals in Arizona and life with animals in Chicago. Not only does she see them as distinct, but she sees the way humans care for animals in Chicago as more informed, more accommodating, and generally better than the way they were cared for in Arizona. A cultural relativism alarm started blaring in my head. The story Emma told about her dogs in Arizona was not one of suffering, and she couldn't conceptualize the looming threat of parasites being brought inside until she was

out of that context. What was so inadequate about animal care in Arizona, and how did Emma come to understand and feel this inadequacy?

Training and formulating human-oriented animal subjects is not the only kind of change Anti-Cruelty aims to engender. They are also involved in structural work with humans, impacting the way that appropriate ways of being with animals are conceived of within the lives of humans in the shelter, in Chicago, and even nationally. Over the course of this work I have been tracking partial knowledges as they are formed and consistently negotiated, and as they gain traction when they are acquired and become shared. The previous chapter focused on how animals are moved to better align with human desires for how they will be included in their worlds. In contrast this chapter will examine how humans come to be aligned with the mission of the shelter, and how a prescriptive way of being with animals plays out in diverse and complex human lives. As a volunteer I was not working closely with departments involved in this kind of education, but was fortunate enough to interview many staff members doing this work. This chapter is largely rooted in their testimonies. By isolating important moments from these conversations I hope to demonstrate the ripple effect of prescriptive models of animal care as they move from the shelter to the Chicago community to extend and interact with national imperatives of care.

Re-learning Relationships: Staff and Volunteers

Emma is not the only staff member I talked with who had a story about reconciling prior misconceptions with the shelter's philosophies of care. Amy and Miranda are both affiliated broadly with the Community Programs division of the shelter, which

encompasses both the Humane Education department and volunteer services. They are also both children of immigrant parents. Amy's family is from Ireland, and she described a similar reflexive frustration with the way she used to know how to care for animals: "They have very different standards of pet care there, so I didn't really… we had outdoor cats, they didn't really vaccinate, they were just really uninformed. But I've always loved animals […] Like I think that, now my mom is super informed, like all the animals are neutered and spayed but a lot of people, they just don't know." Amy here constructs her family and people like them as unenlightened rather than cruel for including animals in their lives in a way the shelter does not condone, and later she discussed how this background had helped her take on a perspective of humane education that was less "preachy" and more understanding of people's diverse upbringings. Miranda describes a similar unfamiliarity with her proper standards of care in her Polish family. "A lot of people in the Polish community don't even think about spaying and neutering. They're not even aware of that as an option and even if they are it just seems like kind of a why would you do that, spend the money on that [...] There's a lot of myths out there that we end up dispelling." Separate from her heritage, Miranda also acknowledged the embarrassment she held at one time from purchasing her first cat from a pet store, "but I've learned to own it, because we have to own our stories." Both of these women are able to track distinct shifts in their knowledges of animal care, in which they came to know information perceived as "more correct" about how humans and animals should be with one another. Amy and Miranda's experiences are both testament to the kind of reconciliation that goes on in the construction of a collective understanding of the "right" way to care in Anti-Cruelty's staff that aligns with the mission of the organization.

Amy also discussed the process of volunteer selection with me, emphasizing that they did have an application process and not every person who applied made the cut, or followed through with volunteering. My own approval as a volunteer followed a different trajectory than most, as I was fast-tracked through the application and general orientations most volunteers go through based on the brevity of my project and the animal handling experience I already had. Amy's description of her work coordinating volunteers helped me fill in some of those gaps. Part of Amy's job was reviewing applications and making sure that volunteers' interests lined up with the goals of the shelter. Often they would approve volunteers' applications and then work to clear up misconceptions they held about animal care, or how the shelter could best do its work, over time. The major red flags she identified were volunteers who were interested in "Cesar Milan dominance training," a kind of negative reinforcement training that was not compatible with the positive reinforcement the shelter aimed to cultivate, and people who mentioned working with a no-kill shelter, which was not something that Anti-Cruelty claimed to be.

Miranda, who also coordinates volunteers, mentioned that it was important to get volunteers behind Anti-Cruelty in all of its specific philosophies in animal care because people with other values could "stir up trouble" and work in opposition to what the organization is trying to accomplish. She described some clashes with volunteers who tried to save every single case, and who felt like important work might not be getting done if they weren't there. She sensed this attitude from volunteer application where someone said they thought the animals looked sad when they walked by, and they wanted to make the animals feel loved. Miranda seems to be a very peppy person, but I could sense her exasperation as she relayed this to me. "It's like, well, they are feeling loved." Without a

sense of collective agreement on how to best provide care, Miranda felt that the shelter would have a hard time accomplishing its goal. Deviation from this trajectory could destabilize the entire operation.

Helen is a PE volunteer and trainer who had hands-on experience both personally and with other volunteers in adjusting personal beliefs or misunderstandings to the Anti-Cruelty philosophies of care. Helen has been volunteering at the shelter for longer than any other volunteer, and this trajectory covers a time span of about 25 years. Helen began her origin story similarly to Emma and Amy, attributing her misunderstandings to a different cultural upbringing: "My mom grew up in a more rural area, so her view of animals was they belonged outside. You know, like the cat belonged in the basement, a whole different mentality than what we have now." She got her own cat when she got her first apartment, and later adopted a dog from Anti-Cruelty. She emphasized that she didn't know much about dogs, and she ended up seeking behavior classes from Anti-Cruelty. As a volunteer, she started out working in the Cat Adopts program, but later moved to PEs because she grew frustrated working with an ill-informed public. "Just the little information that they come in with, like you want to send them out and say go, do some research, and come back when you know a little, basically, a little more." While training people for PEs she was also sometimes frustrated with volunteers' own misunderstandings. She was shocked when one of the volunteers she was training hit a dog who wasn't cooperating. "And I just look at her, you go, what are you doing? You can't ever do that. And she's like, 'Well, that's how it was in my house growing up, when a dog did something wrong we'd roll up a newspaper and whack it.' Well, that's not how we do things here." Overall, it seems that Helen is frustrated and shocked with others' inability to adjust to the expectations of animal care that the

shelter has that she was able to pick up on. Her frustration is indicative of a drive to pull more and more people into this shared and institutionally supported view.

Not unlike the dogs being trained to become adoptable subjects, staff and volunteers working for the shelter must be trained to align themselves with the mission and message of animal care as the shelter specifically defines it. A unified base is seen as the most effective way for the shelter to accomplish its goals. This involves the development of a mindset of gentle condemnation of alternative ways of knowing how to be with animals and the formation of Anti-Cruelty's modes of relationality as authoritative models. Donna Haraway's work on situated knowledges and partial perspectives is once again relevant here. Haraway is opposed to the "god trick of seeing everything from nowhere" (581) that comes with traditional scientific objectivity, and instead advocates for perspectives and knowledges that are consciously incomplete and informed by the observer's positionality (Haraway 1988). The knowledge of animal care the shelter cultivates becomes authoritative when it sets itself apart from and above other knowledges or ways of being with animals. These knowledges are similarly informed by experience but are in opposition to the methods of care that best help the shelter form adoptable subjects and manage the swirling and risky possibility of animal encounters. It is the god-trick that allows Anti-Cruelty to achieve the goal of spreading their model of care by cultivating their knowledge as authoritative. The care workers and the personal transitions they discuss above are indicative of the incipient stages of the movement of this knowledge as it comes to be shared within the organization and turn its view on the exterior: the city of Chicago.

Education within Chicago

"Structural change a SUCCESS?" I've double underlined the word success in my field notebook. I'm back in my interview with Mark and he is listing numbers and statistics demonstrating a decline in annual intake and euthanasia rates, a tangible victory he attributes to city-wide spay and neuter efforts that have helped to curtail the pet population. While they do not take sole credit for this, the shelter's low-cost or no-cost spay and neuter services and policy to only adopt out animals who have undergone this surgery has reduced unwanted litters of puppies and kittens surrendered to the shelter, and the stray population has also shrunk. As a general trend the shelter takes in fewer and fewer animals every year. Mark says this has helped reduce the pet population to a degree where Anti-Cruelty no longer has to euthanize animals for space. This structural change involving an intervention in the Chicago community at large helps Mark demarcate between "the bad old days" of widespread euthanasia and now, with a better controlled pet population.

The surprise evident in my double underlining is the product of my own training in medical anthropology and attention to humanitarianism that so often results in an acknowledgement of structural issues care workers did not consider or ignored while performing their work. Habitually, my papers for these classes have ended with a general invocation for more attention to upstream forces (McKinlay 1979) as what will help care workers provide care more effectively. More often than not they also contain a unilateral condemnation of capitalism as an economic, subject-producing system. Also habitually, I had assumed that I would be able to make a similar call to attention about how the shelter

might be able to better achieve its goals: through structural change.[6] It appears here that Mark and other members of the institutional leadership have already levied with the external and structural changes needed to prevent unnecessary intakes and deaths, and these changes have been widely successful according to the numbers and metrics by which the shelter evaluates itself.

Making structural change, however, necessitates reaching out into the city that the shelter serves and adjusting community attitudes toward animal care. The authoritative knowledge that the shelter has cultivated institutionally becomes a mandate for human-animal relationships as the shelter tries to encourage a cultural shift in the Chicago community. The frustrations felt by staff members engaging with the community at large highlight the specificities of and values within the model of relationality that the shelter supports. They also render more traceable the dynamics of this spread of knowledge through the alternative ways of knowing or being that shelter workers encounter, condemn, or attempt to envelop.

Attempting to make structural change in a community within a framework of care can demonstrably be effective in decreasing the euthanasia rate. However, this outreach can also follow patterns of exploitation that date back to colonization and missionary expeditions. When early Europeans came to the Americas and made contact with indigenous people, they saw them as savages because they did not share cultural logics with the Europeans, who understood their own cultures as developed and superior. The colonizers shared (overwhelmingly forcibly) their own cultural doctrines, like their

---

[6] It should not have surprised me that this work was already in process. Mark has his degree in anthropology, and Miranda studied sociology. They've been doing the work that other scholars might publish a whole book acknowledging the need for. Are there contemporary ethnographies highlighting the work of (formal or casual) anthropological critique put into action?

government and religion, with the indigenous people to help civilize them and save their souls.[7] Through this transmission of European knowledge, many native people's knowledges (and native people themselves) were devalued and extinguished. These trends recur in forceful ways even today: missionary trips, humanitarian aid efforts, and voluntourism can fall into harmful patterns of sharing one's own cultural values as superior to another through an idiom of care (see Crane 2013 and Wendland 2010 for example). I do not offer this historical perspective in order to draw a strict comparison, but rather to highlight how caring in practice is precarious without due attention to cultural relativism.

When humane educators reach out into Chicago communities, what kind of complex histories and cultural differences do they encounter? To put it bluntly, who needs saving? In the spirit of full transparency, I want to note that this section is consciously lacking the full depth of detail it really deserves. Lining this project up with the history of race, poverty, and violence in Chicago is critical for thinking about what knowledges are spread and how, and I can't do justice to the expansive intricacy of this situation in this aside. This is only a glimpse into a small sliver of history, and I am highly conscious of its insufficiency. With that in mind, I offer a piece of an historical overview of the intersection of race, poverty, and violence in Chicago, largely focusing on Black communities, to better contextualize the shelter's interactions with these communities and the pushback against authoritative knowledge they present.

---

[7] Curiously and perhaps relevantly, these attempts to civilize natives involved a notion of the divide between the human and the animal. Beth Conklin has described how a negotiation of humanity played out in the early colonization of the Americas (Conklin 2001). Discussion and debate surrounded the full humanity of indigenous people because their cultures were so different (Conklin gives the example of cannibalism, the focus of her book). I mention this to point to a potential focus for future study: how does this historical trend of colonial caring for the non-human reverberate in how humans provide care for animals? See also Mel Chen (2012) for more analysis on the animalization of racialized groups.

Following the rapid industrialization of the United States after World War II, Black Americans from the South migrated in large numbers to the industrial Midwest. This was part of a long historical period (1916-1970) called the Great Migration, which led to the flourishing of a significant Black community in Chicago (Grossman 2005). Many of these new Chicagoans were seeking better economic opportunities in the surge of industrial employment, but the supply of workers quickly exceeded the demand and many were left jobless. The Chicago Housing Authority sought to offer support through public housing, and build low-cost subsidized high-rise apartments around the city. While they did offer people a place to live, these public housing projects concentrated people fighting over scarce resources together, becoming a hub for crime that made people unemployable and perpetuated the cycle of poverty (Schodorf 2006). Will Robson-Scott's documentary *Chi Raq* focuses on the massive amounts of gang violence and death that occur in these systemically high-poverty communities and highlights a feeling of hopelessness and futility that pervades and perpetuates these killings (Robson-Scott 2013).

Violence in Chicago is a hot topic in popular discourse, with major news outlets occasionally covering shootings, Donald Trump's frequent references to out of control crime and violence, and my own dad's sardonic announcements of the weekend death toll at every Sunday brunch. Many of the Community Programs staff with whom I discussed outreach were highly conscious of the visibility of this violence and talked about the challenge of teaching people to care for animals when human life can be so precarious. Understandably, they see violence and suffering and want to help, and some see the educational outreach tools they have in their careers as effective ways they could approach this problem. The stage is set for a neocolonial enforcement of the "right" (but actually

culturally situated) way of caring onto a marginalized community. Humane educators could spread the Anti-Cruelty Society doctrine of proper animal care and the values that accompany it as the authoritative knowledge most of them have accepted it as. However, this is much simpler in theory than in practice. As they struggle to share their knowledge with these communities impacted by poverty and violence, they realize that knowledge may not be as universally applicable as a stable truth as they had previously understood. In the following examples I highlight these struggles, realizations, and negotiations as staff from the Humane Education Department have shared them with me.

Perspectives from Intake

Emma worked in Intake four and a half years ago, and qualified all of her statements about this work by saying that she thought things had shifted pretty significantly since she was last there. The cartography of the shelter certainly has evolved. Until very recently, in 2014, Intake was located in the space where adoption screenings take place, right across the lobby from the adoption rooms. People adopting and surrendering animals would walk in through the same door; someone who had just euthanized a dog would share lobby space with someone who had just adopted a puppy. From a few long-term volunteers I heard that some people would surrender an older dog only to turn around and adopt a new, younger dog. Emma recognizes that this was challenging, especially in retrospect now that Intake is on the opposite end of the building from the kennels, but in the moment it was a dynamic she learned to navigate. Initially Emma did not agree with many people's reasons for surrendering their animals. She told me a story of a man who refused to get his

cat spayed, and would surrender litter after litter of kittens to the shelter. “He would just say, I can’t stop thinking about all the happy kids that are going to get kittens for Christmas! And it was one of those like, that’s not the point, sir, you’re doing your cat a harm.” Eventually, however, she came to sympathize more: “It was hard for me not to be a little jaded at first, but after a while you realize, even people who I don’t agree with, like, it’s not my life, and I can’t help people if I’m too busy judging them.”

In our interview Emma also recognized that the circumstances under which some people would surrender their animals were unavoidable. Housing availability was a major issue, and she recognized moving as one of the primary reasons a person would surrender an animal. “As an animal shelter employee, it’s easy to fall into the trap of saying I would never live somewhere where my pet wasn’t allowed. That’s a really easy judgment to make especially if you’re not living in the situation. But I think after working in intake, just the realization that it’s so hard for people to find affordable housing when they have dogs, especially big dogs.” I also encountered this working with the public as a Dog Adopts volunteer. One potential adopter was upset that all we had available one day was pit bulls, because her building did not allow that breed. Another family came in looking for a puppy, and was frustrated that I couldn’t tell them how big the puppies we had at the moment would get because we were uncertain about their breed, and their apartment building had a 40 pound weight restriction. The adoption screening process also required that adopters provide documentation that this new animal would be permitted in their living situation. The shelter clearly wants to promote a general understanding of animals having a permanent place in their owners’ homes, but these experiences, coupled with Emma’s growing sympathy, demonstrate how larger structural issues complicated the spread of

this imperative of care. The people surrendering their animals were not necessarily careless, but were rather grappling with circumstances outside of their control.

Emma's experience in Intake led her to eventually transition to working as a humane educator so that she could do more work in prevention rather than damage control. She says that in Intake she would often encounter people at their lowest point; transitioning to Humane Education would allow her to make surrendering an animal a less and less necessary option for community members. "We're trying to get kids, or teens, or adults the information they need so that ideally, they don't reach that low point." She saw working in Humane Education as contributing to finding a solution to a problem, rather than just coping with the problem. This solution, as the humane educators approach it, involves community outreach, presentation-based engagement with youth and teens, and partnerships with schools and other organizations in order to spread key themes of the shelter's model of care. Miranda described these presentations as having highly targeted messages: one talked about appropriate ways to approach a new animal, another discussed legal definitions of abuse and cruelty and how to identify them, and another discussed links between animal-directed and human-directed violence. "We're just trying to bring people into the fold," Miranda told me.

Humane Education and Race

One afternoon I watched Brett, who rounds out my Humane Education interviewees along with Miranda, Amy, and Emma, give a presentation to a group of about 40 elementary school age children who were participating in an external summer program. This

presentation, he had told me a week ago when Miranda helped get me an invite, was called The Pact, and focused on how humans and animals had evolved together in a relationship of mutual support that obligated us to show them care and kindness. He dimmed the lights in the room and projected a Powerpoint presentation accompanied by dramatic music, video footage, and his own narration. Brett engaged with the children as they added their own commentary; his youth theatre experience was evident, and this was not his first time with a rowdy audience. His presentation highlighted dogs and humans working together, condemned trends of abuse like dog fighting and seal hunting, and underscored the importance of spaying and neutering pets. He then cast some of the children as actors in a play recounting the Greek folktale of Androcles and the lion, in which a man shows kindness to a wounded lion and is later defended from a sovereign's persecution by that same lion, and the children enthusiastically acted along with his narration. He then asked the children what they thought the moral of the story was. One responded that it was a story about outsmarting your enemies, and another said it was about kindness toward others. Brett told them that in his interpretation, the moral was that kindness always benefits you more than cruelty, and that showing kindness to animals helped foster kindness toward other people as well. He then gathered all of the children and brought them into the dog training room. Quinn, who was now working for Humane Education, brought out three puppies and let them run around the room between the children. Brett encouraged them all to practice being gentle.

After the group had been loaded back onto their bus, I sat down to chat with Brett. He dug deep into some of the heavy themes and topics he would broach with the children and teens with whom he worked. One common misconception that he found himself

addressing was superstition that led people to abuse, neglect, or abandon their animals. "We do horrible things to animals because we actually believe superstitions," he told me. "I'm amazed at the number of people who are afraid at having a cat around their baby because they're afraid that the cat is going to smother the baby."[8] These superstitions are similar to the misunderstandings that frustrated Helen when potential adopters would be turned off by certain cats for what she considered superfluous reasons. Brett confronts these superstitions directly because they lead to different understandings of how animals can and should be included in human lives, specifically highlighting an imperative to include them rather than being distant from them.

Similarly, Brett discussed reading the room to determine the experience level of a specific group of children so he could best direct his messaging. From this he had identified certain trends and effective solutions for bringing more people into the fold, as Miranda described. In this account, Brett discusses how he combats one trend of animal rejection and encourages kids to include animals in their lives:

> I'll hear one say, ah, I hate cats. Every once in a while I'll hear a kid say that. And it always fascinates me, too, because it tends to be folks from the African American community. Black kids. And they talk about how much they hate cats, they've got this species phobia, because a lot of them were scratched as kids, or had stray cats in the neighborhood growing up, and it was always very scary, and that's understandable. And I go, you know, it was the ancient Egyptians who domesticated cats. So, your ancestors created something that you hate. And I hope it makes them reconsider something, like, the fact that this animal exists is a part of your culture. Like, you shouldn't hate it, you should, like, admire it. You should feel protective of it, because it's something that your ancestors played a part in.

This example caught me because of the deliberate link that Brett drew between a racial community and a distrust of cats. It also points toward an axis of place, race, and violence

[8] As surprising or unfounded as this idea appeared to me (and apparently to Brett as well), this understanding has been well ingrained in European and colonial American lore since perhaps the 17th or 18th century (Mikkelson 2007)

that the Humane Education staff work alongside of as they reach into and jostle around in communities with understandings and positions toward care and relationality divergent from their own.

It might be easy to suggest that by drawing a link between a racial community and an aversion to the kind of inclusion of animals the shelter promotes, the shelter engages in a missionary-like delivery of salvation-knowledge to ignorant Chicago natives. Perhaps it does, and it would not be an unsupported claim to make. Kim TallBear (2013) has discussed parallels between the imperialist practice of mining resources from colonized communities and a scientific community fueled by whiteness and modernity that has appropriated Native American DNA as a knowledge object and identity marker (136). She also highlights a hegemonic white-scientific way of understanding relationality and identity supported by genetic research as it comes to overshadow Native American ways of understanding the essence of one's being (193-4). Similarly, authoritative knowledge like that which the shelter has cultivated can take on an unmarked, distant, or natural-looking superiority interacting with and bolstered by the mechanisms that maintain and naturalize white supremacy. However, I hesitate to lean fully into the consequences of this association because of the solution that Brett develops to help him and his message move comfortably and carefully through this encounter. Brett proposes that the black children he works with should reconsider their hatred for cats based on the cat's domestication in Egypt, promoting a kind of pan-Africanism where these children can take pride in their diasporic association with this historical achievement. These kids don't have to deny their blackness to transition their understandings of animal care toward what the shelter is aiming for because Brett paves a path through their blackness to get to his central message sponsored

by the mainstream hegemonic regime of care. Brett promotes the development and practice of a situated knowledge that can be easily linked back to, included in, and supported by the authoritative model of human-animal relations the shelter cultivates.

Humane Education staff members also discussed a common thread they encountered in their daily work: a connection between violence in communities and violence against animals. Brett said that trying to talk to kids about violence against animals would often open up conversations about community violence at home, and this was the specific focus of one of the department's presentations on dog fighting directed toward older children and teens. "We can talk about exploitation, we can talk about abusive relationships, parasitic relationships, how people sometimes justify treating an animal or a person a certain way because that's what they feel that animal or person is there to do for them." Brett also acknowledged that humans who abuse animals when they are young often grow up to be people who abuse other people, and saw the work that Humane Education was doing as intervening in that larger structural trend. "Anti-Cruelty is in our name, and there are a lot of anti-violence movements going on. And we talk about it as far as gangs, child abuse, spousal abuse, domestic violence, and so on. But with animals, that's sort of like looking at a root cause." Working to prevent violence against animals was not seen as just one of many facets of anti-violence work, but rather as an intervention further upstream (McKinlay 1979) that would prevent or dispel continuing cycles of violence further down the line. Miranda noted a similar theme in her own experience:

> It's hard if they are in a neighborhood that's ridden with violence to think about animals when they're concerned about themselves, and their own resources, and safety. There's a sensitivity we have, too, when we go into those neighborhoods to be like, yes, we're here to talk about animals, but if we can teach communities to care about animals they also start caring about people.

Miranda's and Brett's attitudes toward structural community violence situate their own work as critical for addressing Chicago's violence epidemic.

At moments they mirror the kind of missionary knowledge sharing described earlier, with the doctrine of animal care acting as a kind of salvation from violence. At others, they reflect more of an openness to strategies beyond their own work as necessary and a recognition of other ways of knowing as necessary to making these interventions.

Applying Standards Inequitably

Linda forgot that we were meeting, and went out on an errand a couple minutes before our interview was supposed to start. Once again I had gotten lost in the maze of hallways and stairwells between the familiar shelter area and the unfamiliar office spaces in the training building, and the stranger who eventually directed me to Linda's office told me I could take a seat in there and wait while he tracked her down. A few kittens walked in and out, disinterested in my outstretched hand. I looked around to the decorated walls. A poster nearby had a black and white image of a dog baring its teeth in a display of aggression, while blurry in the background were men with clenched fists raised above their heads. They appeared to have dark skin, and appeared to be cheering. The caption read, "what drug dealers, rapists, and child molesters do on their day off" in small white letters.

Linda is an upper-level member of the Field Services team, the division of Anti-Cruelty that transports animals within the city between shelters and investigates claims of abuse reported to the shelter. The department, which shares office space with the Humane

Education staff, is composed of only a handful of people with very wide-reaching jobs. Linda's work brings her directly into neighborhoods and into conversations with specific Chicagoans to determine if the way they include animals in their lives and homes is up to the standard of the Humane Care for Animals Act, which legally standardizes appropriate shelter, food availability, and other general measurable standards of care. She told me that while confiscating animals was rare, it was something she and her coworkers would do to remove an animal from a situation of abuse if they were not successful in helping an owner make changes, and if they had the legal backing to do so. These animals would then be brought to the city facility, Chicago Animal Care and Control, or to Anti-Cruelty.

In her work, Linda grapples with how to apply a standard legal expectation of care to a city made up of variably resourced communities. Sometimes in attending to allegations submitted to the shelter Linda would discover that the potential violators were maintaining the basic minimum standards of care the law outlined, but she was still interested in engaging them in conversations about how they could do more for their pets, and improve a legally permissible situation that was not optimal in Linda's eyes. Since many allegations were about dogs being left outside for long periods of time, often Linda and her coworkers would provide plans for dog owners to build outdoor shelters for them. They also distributed flyers about legal minimum standards of care. Linda also recognized that it was challenging to expect what she (or the shelter at large) saw as optimal care from every community in Chicago:

> I always say to people that what you see in Wilmette might offend you more because of the culture and educated, economically affluent environment and you have certain expectations, whereas when you're in Englewood and you're dealing with the reality of people that are underserved, and overwhelmed by economic disadvantage, you can't base the same criteria on your interactions. You have to kind of individualize it. And it sounds weird to say, because it sounds like something I

> would be alarmed by or would kind of flag if I heard somebody else say it, but […] it's not fair to use a cookie cutter approach in all of these situations. For some of these people they can't even afford to clothe and feed their kids, so you can't expect them to have toys and enrichment going on, or have a dog in a home where there's barely a stick of furniture have the same creature comforts as someone else would provide in another part of the city.

Initially this shook me up a bit. I felt that she was advocating for directing less attention and fewer resources to Englewood, which is well known in Chicago for being a high-poverty and high-violence neighborhood, and similar economically disadvantaged communities. Wouldn't giving them less attention further under resource them?

This approach further underscores the difference between legal standards of care and the model the shelter hopes to replicate in the community. This model of inclusion impels humans to foster a companionship with animals that extends beyond survival and that appears joyful and rich. Creating this appearance demands resources and material objects that are often outside the reach of people who cannot afford them, and this exposes the shelter's model as presumptive of an excess of resources or income that can be spent on an animal. Though it markets itself as universally applicable, this model of care carries an unmarked economic privilege. At the same time, Linda described how sometimes in these situations she would find herself weighing the fate of the animal if she more forcefully intervened. If a dog was taken away from a neglectful situation, it would likely be placed in a shelter where, depending on the dog's immediate adoptability, it might be euthanized. She would ask herself if the animal was really better off spending significant time in a shelter or potentially being euthanized than living in a home where they were surviving but maybe not thriving by Linda's standards. Linda would like to see toys and evidence of enrichment and general comfort for an animal in a home she investigates, but she is also grappling with how she has seen animals living rich lives in the under-resourced

communities with which she interacts. In her work Linda must actively confront the way that the assumed economic privilege behind the shelter's model of care falters when it is brought into communities prevented from achieving that standard by much more structural issues. Her originally concerning statement makes more sense when it is understood as a product of her own grappling with this significant challenge.

To come full circle, Linda points back to addressing structural issues as the most effective way to resolve this dilemma. She acknowledges that the economic disadvantages she highlighted earlier are product of upstream forces. The better treatment of animals she personally hopes to encourage depends on this structural change:

> I do think that until we deal with our own societal problems and deal with the inequities and dysfunction and chemical imbalances, we're not really going to be able to solve that completely, not to say that we should stop trying, not to say that we haven't made inroads, but I don't think we're going to have a state of grace as far as animals are concerned until we've gotten there ourselves, and care about each other and stop shooting each other… this is a really scary time to be out in some of those areas.

This is a bit different than Brett and Miranda's view, which pointed to learning to care for animals as a pathway to learning to care for humans. Linda sees changes in humans' care for one another as more consequential. Perhaps both groups of people are right, and attention at both levels is necessary. The Humane Education and Field Services departments both appear to be working alongside of and intervening in a transference of a particular way of knowing made difficult by large structural issues that differentiate and under resource the city's communities.

Ultimately, Emma, Brett, Miranda, and Linda's experiences demonstrate that the knowledge volunteers and staff recognized as universal truth in their incorporation into

the shelter's mission is actually quite challenging to apply universally. This knowledge is not authoritative, but rather situated in the shelter and in their own particular privilege.

National Contexts and Care

Clearly, the culture of the Anti-Cruelty Society does not correspond to the bounded or static ways of knowing or organizing the world that classical ethnographers described in their works. The shelter interacts with far too many other groups to operate concisely as a bounded form. I have demonstrated above how those interactions occur on an individual and community-based level, and how people struggle to articulate particular forms of knowledge as authoritative in comparison to other ways of knowing. The Community Programs staff's challenges in spreading their message to the Chicago community underscore how Anti-Cruelty's imperative ways of caring cannot yet be accepted by the entire Chicago community, and are not universally acknowledged as truth. However, the shelter's reach extends beyond the limits of the city, and animal care workers rearticulate the authority of their knowledge about animal care against other more geographically distant communities.

Anti-Cruelty partners with the Animal Transport Alliance (ATA), an organization that moves pets typically from shelters in the American South to either Anti-Cruelty or a similar shelter in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Every couple of weeks, and sometimes more frequently, a large blue van parks in the loading dock of the shelter, and volunteers and staff help unload about 40 new dogs that have made a long journey from Oklahoma, Tennessee, Mississippi, or Alabama. I first found out about these transports on a Sunday

after the shelter had received a surprise transport from Oklahoma that was intended to go to Milwaukee, but had to divert to Anti-Cruelty because the Milwaukee shelter was suddenly unable to accept so many dogs. As a result, every cage in the shelter was full, and the volume of PEs we had to get through that day was much higher than the average day. I investigated their largely blank cage cards, which carried no history other than their shelter of origin, and was amused discover that these dogs had all been renamed to fit a theme: they were all named for Harry Potter characters.

When I asked around a few weeks later, a staff member named Kelly told me that the point of the transports was to help with population control. People in the South, she told me, were much less likely to spay and neuter their pets. Shelters in that area received a much higher volume of surrendered animals than Anti-Cruelty did because of unwanted litters. Kelly used the phrase "high kill"[9] to describe these Southern shelters. They had to euthanize animals at a higher rate out of necessity, because they simply did not have the resources to keep up with the volume of their intake. By taking these animals out of the South, Anti-Cruelty was able to directly intervene and save their lives. It also allowed the shelter to combat the issue of relatively low supply and high demand for adoption in the city by supplementing their population with a larger variety of dogs.

In Chapter Four, I will discuss more thoroughly the rhetoric used around overpopulated shelters in conversation with a broader focus on euthanasia practices and attitudes in the shelter and in the community. I mention it now because I want to highlight the way that this distinction allows the shelter to articulate Chicago, not just individuals or groups within the city, against "the South" as a seemingly homogenous entity. Given the

[9] I examine the political challenges to the language of "kill/no-kill" in shelter designations in Chapter Four.

reduced euthanasia rate and higher spay and neuter rate in the city, the shelter (and even adopters) can mark Chicago as particularly good at caring for animals, because they can accommodate animals from the South that might otherwise meet a quicker end. This urban center positions itself as more advanced (and, to stay consistent with the narrative around authoritative forms of knowledge, more correct) and therefore in a position to assist other communities that just haven't gotten the hang of it yet. Depicting "the South" in a less flattering light is designed to make Chicago look better at the expense of a geographically distant community.

None of my interactions involved anyone explicitly saying that Chicagoans were better at caring for animals than Southerners. However, the undercurrents were certainly there in some of my interactions with potential adopters. Later, when I used what I had learned from my conversation with Kelly to explain what I knew about the backstory of a couple of dogs, a woman quickly asked "and that was from a kill shelter?" before I had even discussed that factor. She didn't seem to know that Anti-Cruelty could also be classed as a "kill shelter" because it does practice euthanasia in certain situations, yet it was easy for her to understand a distant Southern shelter as a killer, while she could see Anti-Cruelty to be doing something else entirely. I later found myself surprisingly upset when the children from a family adopting a puppy from an Oklahoma transport insisted on renaming him "Lucky Buddy" because he was lucky to have a home with them. This seemed like an absolutely unreasonable thing over which to fume, but I was so frustrated this family seemed to think they were the only ones who would ever want to give a puppy (typically the most popular adoptees at the shelter) a home. Later in our interview, Miranda and I talked more about how people adopting or volunteering sometimes saw themselves as

saviors. By adopting a dog from a Southern shelter, they could position themselves as contributing to a life being saved, and simultaneously position the South as a place from which animals needed to be saved.

Again, care can easily follow patterns that are invisibly exploitative. While it may seem to the adopter that saving an animal from a "kill shelter" is neutrally good, these actions mirror the missionary attitudes present in cross-cultural interactions that involve an exchange of knowledge or doctrine. In getting to be saviors, Chicago adopters (and to some degree the staff and volunteers who facilitate this narrative) assert their way of being with animals as more correct or appropriate than the way things are done in the South. This furthers a national transmission of knowledge that the shelter similarly attempts in more local areas that are more successful in holding shelter staff accountable.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have traced authoritative knowledge about animal care as it effects shelter workers, as it reaches the Chicago community, and finally as it interacts with national narratives about care in different parts of the country. All of these examples underscore that transmission of authoritative knowledge is variably successful and unsuccessful, largely because it is a situated knowledge that attempts to articulate itself as universal and unmarked by particular experience as a truth. Recommending that shelter volunteers, staff, and adopters start to challenge their own perspectives as universally ideal does not necessarily involve peeling back the reach and scope of the shelter, or abandoning a commitment to help others. Rather, it involves reconceiving exactly what helping looks

like. Situated knowledges can still interact with and shape other knowledges; however, they must mark their partiality and remain open to collaboration across difference. Instead of spreading a doctrine, the shelter ought to consider how listening to other viewpoints rather than condemning them as wrong or less ideal can open them up to newer, communally constituted knowledges about care.

CHAPTER FOUR: EUTHANASIA

"Hey, do you have a Band-Aid?" A man with dark hair and a button-down shirt, likely on his lunch break from work, approached me holding up his hand. It was a slow day and I had been writing in my field notes journal during my shift. I closed it and slipped it into the front pocket of my volunteer apron.

His finger was bleeding. "That dog bit me, but it's not that bad. I just need a Band-Aid." He showed me a tiny cut smaller than the size of a dime welling up with blood just behind his fingernail.

"Which dog?" I asked, surprised any dog on the adoption floor would bite. Unadoptable behaviors like that were typically noticed in medical exams or by volunteers, and potential adopters didn't need to worry about their own safety around those dogs.

"The black one, over there in the corner." He gestured across the floor. Sammy, an eight-month-old lab mix. I had spent time with him out in the courtyard, and knew he was a bit wiggly, but had never worried about him biting.

I told the man I didn't have a Band-Aid, but sent him up to the front desk to try and find one. I knew something was wrong, something was off. What happened to dogs who bit? I walked over to Sammy's cage and he looked up at me, wagging, eager for attention. I grabbed his cage card out of the card holder and a small piece of paper that had been tucked behind it fell to the ground. I picked it up. Someone had written in all caps on a folded brown paper towel "NO FINGERS IN CAGE." The man hadn't seen this Sammy-specific warning, but someone had placed it there, knowing something was possible. I felt uneasy.

I took a different dog outside and sat in the sunshine, holding her leash between my knees as I furiously scribbled what had just happened in my field notes. When we walked back in, I saw Tonya, an intake staff member, walking Sammy out of his cage. She smiled and waved at me, generally an upbeat person. Over the next 20 minutes or so I flitted between potential adopters, the courtyard, and Sammy's kennel. His cage card disappeared, and his run was cleaned out. For now I could only guess what was happening, but based on the similarity to what had happened with Sugar, the possibility that Sammy was being euthanized seemed more certain.

I was working that day with Wendy, a frequent and diligent volunteer. I felt nervous exploring publicly my dread of what was happening – what I had facilitated? – especially because I knew the shelter executives who had allowed me to be here as a researcher in the first place had strongly cautioned me against probing too much into questions about euthanasia. Fortunately Wendy asked all of the questions I was too hesitant to ask. I shared what I knew with her about the bite and Wendy, anxious for Sammy's return, began interrogating staff members.

"Do you know what happened to Sammy?" Wendy asked Christy, the staff member pushing around the food cart that day. Christy raised her eyebrows, realizing she had information that had not yet reached the rest of us, and drew a cutting line across her own throat. Sammy had been euthanized because of the bite.

Wendy was distraught. "They can't do that, he should be given another chance," she insisted.

"It's too late, they've already done it."

"How big was the bite?" Wendy turned to me, pulling me in as an in-the-moment authority.

"It was really small." I demonstrated on my own hand how big the bite had been.

"It was small! He's not an aggressive dog, there should be a second chance."

Wendy and I stood against the small cages in the center of the adoption room. She was overflowing with solutions to remedy what she understood as a tragedy. They should hire more behaviorists to work with dogs like Sammy so they could be rehabilitated, rather than euthanized. The staff should be more transparent with volunteers so volunteers could help in assessing those weighty decisions. Someone should find the man who was bitten and let him know what he has done, because he should be ashamed. "There are no second chances, they just kill them," she muttered. I felt torn. On one hand I wanted to feel Wendy's outrage with her, but on the other I knew Sammy had been euthanized for a reason that made sense to someone somewhere in the shelter, and not as a ruthless act of violence. In my position as a researcher and anthropologist, I couldn't emulate her shock. Christy found us again and said she wanted us to know, because she worried we wouldn't have found out otherwise. "I'm going home, I'm too depressed," Wendy sighed.

A month or so later during our interview, I asked Wendy to reflect more on this moment. She admitted that at the urging of some of the volunteer coordinators she had taken a week away from the shelter to give herself a break and collect her thoughts. She had taken her concerns about the lack of second chances for Sammy to the volunteer coordinators who explained some further complexities. Legally, they had told her, after a bite they were required to euthanize the animal, decapitate it, and send the head to a lab so

it could be tested for rabies.[10] "That's just their policy," she told me. A volunteer coordinator had also told her that she was a valuable volunteer, and he didn't want her to get too sad because losing her would be a loss for the dogs as well. That reinvigorated her. "If I give up, it means I give up all the dogs here, and I don't want to do that. They deserve better."

Reflecting on this moment pains me because I wonder if I did the right thing. There was a lot I didn't know about consequences, policies, and rabies law that had I understood, might have influenced my actions in the moment. I knew I wasn't fully responsible for Sammy's death, but I certainly felt implicated in a process I wish could have transpired differently, without resulting in an unexpected death. As I have come to understand in my interactions with shelter staff and volunteers who regularly encounter euthanasia, my own trepidation is not uncommon or infrequent in the shelter care world. Other human care workers similarly struggle with euthanasia, which they see as at once an emotionally painful infliction of death and a gentle alternative to other forms of suffering or incommensurability with shelter functions. Following my prior examination of how care systems and ways of being with animals come to be imperative, in this chapter I focus on how euthanasia practices specifically move through this negotiation and ultimately come to be understood as care practices themselves. I will examine more closely how the shelter discusses euthanasia, teaches how to practice euthanasia, and deliberately sets this

[10] This is not completely true. Rabies observations were common in the private veterinary clinic where I worked, in which an animal was examined on the first and last day of a 10 day period following a bite for symptoms of rabies. If the animal was rabies current (up to date on vaccine) it could stay in the home, but if not it was quarantined at a facility for 10 days. The brain test was an alternative if resources for quarantine were not available.

infliction of death apart from the forms of violence and killing the shelter otherwise works to combat.

"The Bad Old Days": Change Over Time

Mark, an upper-level shelter administrator with whom I spoke about his purring communication with cats, also had a lot to say about euthanasia practices in the shelter, as he once worked as a staff member in this division. Mark has worked with the shelter for 35 years, and was able to trace significant changes in attitudes and practices of euthanasia over time. Originally, the shelter used euthanasia as a way to manage pet overpopulation before spaying and neutering were widely understood as staples of companion animal care. Pet owners in Chicago would surrender their pet's unwanted litters to the shelter when they did not have the desire or resources to care for them. Before Mark's time, Anti-Cruelty would use a decompression chamber to euthanize animals, but the shelter came under significant public critique following a newspaper exposé regarding the potential for pain, distress, and suffering it could inflict on a dying animal. When Mark first started as a volunteer at the shelter in the early 1980s, he noticed staff members marking cages at the end of the day, and those animals would soon disappear. He knew that these animals had gone too long without being adopted, and were being euthanized to make space for other animals to potentially find homes. Euthanasia was necessary because the shelter was under-resourced and was doing what it could to give as many animals as possible a chance. This frustrated Mark, and he almost quit because of it. However, after a brief break, he took

a paid staff position and became one of the people who culled the adoption floor and euthanized animals.

Unlike many staff members who became disenchanted from the often exhausting and emotionally painful work of animal care, Mark invested a career in decreasing euthanasia rates, and today he experiences the rewards. Early in his career the rates of surrender were astronomically high, with comparatively low rates of placement in homes; as a result, about 75% of animals surrendered would be euthanized. "There were days, weekend days for sure, where a staff member would be assigned to the euthanasia room and that's what they did, just put animals down. And so there were days I might have euthanized 100 animals." He specifically highlighted how many of the animals he euthanized were puppies and kittens, the unwanted litters of breeding animals. While the "cuteness factor" of these young animals makes them popular for adoption now, the overcrowding of these animals was too great, and many would be euthanized on arrival.[11] He also noted a sense of animosity between animal care workers and the public. The public blamed the shelter workers for euthanizing many animals, and the care workers blamed the public for the high volume of animals they needed to euthanize. However, as spay and neuter practices grew as community and national initiatives, rates of surrender began to drop. Mark participated in spay and neuter publicity by euthanizing an animal live on television ("It wasn't my call to do that," he informed me) to draw attention to the need of community participation to reduce the euthanasia rates.

[11] Amy from Community Programs underscored that while the rates of surrender of litters has decreased dramatically, neonatal kittens are still often euthanized by the shelter when they are unable to find fosters who can bottle feed them every two hours. While sad, she told me, this was often more humane than allowing them to starve to death in a cage.

Euthanasia at the Anti-Cruelty Society today looks different. Spay and neuter procedures are national imperatives, and Mark notes that this has dramatically reduced the numbers of litters and unwanted animals surrendered. To further contribute to this effort, the shelter will not adopt out any animal that is not spayed or neutered. Today, Mark says, the shelter may euthanize 100 animals a month, and 90% of animals the shelter takes in will be placed into homes (a 10% euthanasia rate, a massive drop from 75%). Euthanasia is performed by Intake staff members who are Certified Euthanasia Technicians, a licensure the state of Illinois now requires to ensure legally determined humane standards of euthanasia. Since euthanasia is overwhelmingly performed by injection of a sodium pentobarbital solution, the legal management of euthanasia practice also allows for the regulation of controlled substances. Reasons for euthanasia have also shifted from overpopulation and lack of appropriate care resources to untreatable illness and aggression. "We haven't had to euthanize for space in years," Mark reports. Mark and other shelter workers who have been with the Society for many years recognized a decreasing euthanasia rate as one of the major improvements the shelter has been able to initiate. This decrease does not come from a simple refusal to euthanize but rather a radical restructuring of attitudes toward animal care so that fewer animals are put in a position where care workers deem euthanasia their most humane future. I am deeply moved by Mark's story and work. As he recounted his experience during "the bad old days," I could tell this work had been painful for him, but despite that, he endured it. Mark put in considerable work and pushed through the emotional difficulty of constant contact and participation in death so that less of that work had to be done, and so fewer animals died.

Donna Haraway discusses this kind of work in *When Species Meet* (2008), where she draws attention to the concept of sharing suffering. She urges humans to be more attentive to the way their interactions with non-human others result in non-human deaths, and consider how those interactions might play out more responsibly. Her focus in this section is primarily on lab animals and considering human/animal relationships within "the idiom of labor" (80) in which animals do the work of suffering and humans "do the work of paying attention and making sure that the suffering is minimal, necessary, and consequential" (82). This human work becomes deliberately more difficult and humans share in the animal suffering as they become sensitive and respond to animal pain. Haraway stresses that this does not rule out continued and collaborative work between humans and animals. This new attention to suffering and pain instead urges the human involved in this work to break down their position as superior and think about how they might handle their relationship with non-human others more responsibly (71).

Mark's work is exemplary of sharing suffering. He made his own life more difficult by enduring for years the pain of ending lives (*puppy lives,* a veterinarian who knew Mark would later stress to me) so that fewer lives would have to end. He did not fully move away from the system that generated the pain but remained with it, endured suffering, and worked to end it. To add a layer of complexity, the suffering that Mark (or anyone involved in euthanasia in animal care) shares may be all his own. No one can claim to be inside an animal's head during the euthanasia process or to feel exactly what that animal is feeling. Euthanasia by injection appears painless:[12] the animal becomes unconscious, relaxes, and vital biological systems like respiration and circulation slowly shut down. When an animal

[12] This is not always the case, and deaths can appear surprising. I will address this later (pg 122)

care worker recognizes a suffering to share in the dying animal, that sensitivity to death is tied up in cultural (and capitalist) logics that value long lives and paint lives cut short by an external intervention as tragic. The affective sensitivity that allowed humans and animals to communicate emotionally and have partial understandings of one an others' experiences (see Chapter 1) is influenced here by external structures and forces that manipulate and situate the human's comprehension of the animal experience. I don't aim to resolve or account fully for this dynamic. It still stands that Mark's efforts for fewer animals to die, a small part of a national movement, have been successful. In continued conversation with Haraway, this example and its complexity demonstrate how the breakdown of the divide between human and animal is more of an ongoing negotiation accomplished only partially and always in conversation with external forces and logics (from which Haraway stresses we can never fully disentangle ourselves).

Are We Killing? The Language of Euthanasia

I've avoided the k-word with as much grace as I can muster up to this point, and I'm sure that "inflicted death" is starting to appear clunky and suspicious. Now, I must address why. Dr. Claire, an upper-level shelter administrator, forced me to radically reconsider the way I thought and spoke about euthanasia when in our interview she stressed, "I'm a veterinarian. I've euthanized thousands of animals in my career, but I've never killed one." Dr. Claire had read and rejected my initial proposal to spend my summer researching at Anti-Cruelty in my earlier description of my fieldwork saga (see Introduction), and it was indeed a convoluted document that cited Haraway, Foucault, and Agamben. She worried

that my interest in responsible forms of killing would be misguided and misapplied to the shelter environment, and that asking people about the kinds of killing they were doing would be a blow to employee morale. At that moment, I did not yet understand the weight of the word "killing" within the shelter and the complexities it carried. In that interview Dr. Claire stressed that euthanasia and killing were different things, and I came to better understand the absolutely essential nature of that staunch line in the conversation around language and euthanasia as care work that staff members shared with me.

The Anti-Cruelty Society does not call itself a no-kill shelter, but rather highlights its open-door admission policy. The shelter works to be transparent, acknowledging openly that it will perform euthanasia in extreme behavioral and medical cases, but never for space. The open-door policy means the shelter will take in any animal regardless of species, breed, age, health, or their own availability of space (and find creative ways to make room, if necessary), something that not all private shelters in the city can claim. In the eyes of many upper-level staff members, the language "no-kill" shelters used to talk about themselves was somewhat self-defeating to the larger mission of structurally combating the need for euthanasia. Dr. Claire outlined the challenges of this designation and why the shelter avoided it. To never practice euthanasia, she argued, was a form of cruelty. A shelter could designate itself as "no-kill," never euthanize, and then allow old or sick animals to succumb to illnesses and die painfully, or let animals with dangerous behavioral issues languish in cages for their entire lives. Euthanasia might be ending a life, but it was a desirable alternative to worse forms of living. "No-kill" shelters often had the same policies as Anti-Cruelty and would euthanize under extreme conditions, but use the term "no-kill" when talking about themselves to articulate their shelter as more moral or humane against

shelters that might need to euthanize for space more frequently. Dr. Claire saw this as more profitable as a marketing strategy for shelters than as an authentically productive movement to reduce euthanasia.

Miranda, an upper-level coordinator of the Community Programs division, underscored that using the term "no-kill" created unnecessary and counterproductive infighting in the animal welfare community. "If you're not using the term 'no-kill,' it's automatically assumed that you must be killing everybody, right?" Miranda told me she had been reading a lot of articles recently about the rhetoric shelters use to position themselves, and she found this one to be particularly troubling. "It creates a lot of division in the industry, and we're not working together. It creates a negative perception of certain shelters to the public, shelters that are doing amazing work." In our conversation Dr. Claire highlighted another shelter in the city that was well known in Chicago for its "no-kill" branding and reputation that had very stringent qualifications for intake, and generally refused to take pit bull breeds. These dogs, turned away from that shelter, would then be surrendered to Anti-Cruelty, the city facility, or a different shelter where they were still at risk of being euthanized. Some of these shelters were underfunded already, and gained a bad reputation as a counterproduct of the no-kill movement that prevented them from doing work on the same caliber as "no-kill" shelters. In Dr. Claire's eyes, "no-kill" was much more trouble than it was worth.

Dr. Claire, Miranda, and other staff members urged their coworkers not to describe shelters practicing euthanasia as "kill shelters," because killing created a negative image and distracted from the work every shelter was centrally engaged in: helping put animals in ideal situations where they could thrive. However, this imperative for a more cautious

use of language around this subject did not fully trickle down to all staff members and volunteers with whom I interacted. When some kennel staff explained the Southern transports to members of the public and me, they would describe the shelters the animals were being transported out of as "kill-shelters" and "high-kill areas" of the country. Similarly, some fellow volunteers mentioned to me that their dogs had been "rescued" from "kill shelters." Though the South is an entity far removed from metropolitan Chicago against which the city can articulate its values and superior forms of care in a much more distant way (see Chapter 3), this language perpetuates the kill/no-kill rhetoric and divisiveness that upper-level shelter staff hope to combat.

Because of this polarizing debate around killing and euthanasia, I avoid equating the two in this work. Animal care workers and euthanasia technicians struggle against this conflation daily, and work to reconcile how ending a life is widely seen as a violent act with the push to foster better, fuller, happier lives that animal sheltering more fundamentally entails. At Dr. Claire's urging, I don't want to make that work harder for them. By presenting this discussion and using terms like "inflicted death" when necessary, I hope to highlight the complexities these care workers must navigate and the rhetorical currents that make their work challenging.

Learning Euthanasia: The EBI Workshop

Eager to ask more questions and to get as involved in discussions and practices of euthanasia as I was allowed, I began poking around for new avenues of participation I could explore in the shelter. I figured Intake was the best place to start. My shifts as a PE

volunteer had placed me spatially close to the Intake rooms, as the only accessible table on which to perform exams near Cat Holding 4 was against a wall in a cramped area that the Intake rooms led into. Through occasional unobtrusive peeks into the rooms' small windows I had witnessed surrenders and euthanasias, but had been unable to hear much dialogue or ask any questions of Intake staff in the moment. I wanted to know more, but as a volunteer there was no easily accessible avenue to the inner workings of Intake. I got in contact with Tonya, the bright and bubbly Intake staff member who had eagerly answered my many questions about Intake work so far. She agreed to let me shadow her for a day, but when I emailed her the day before asking where to meet her, she informed me that Luis, a volunteer coordinator, had cancelled the shadow day and she was sorry but it was out of her control. I was given a bit of a run around, first to Luis and then to Miranda and finally to Mark. We sat on a bench and he laid out his hesitations: Intake was an emotionally sensitive job, and while he wasn't concerned by my own ability to handle it, he was more worried about how the presence of an outsider might impact the carefully tailored one-on-one relationship between the Intake staff member and the member of the public surrendering or euthanizing an animal. He told me again about a Euthanasia By Injection (EBI) workshop the shelter was hosting in its auditorium, and invited me to register. If I completed the workshop, he told me, he would try to set me up in Intake.

I eagerly enrolled in the workshop, and eventually completed a two-day training required by the state of Illinois for Certified Euthanasia Technicians that covered death processes, proper formulaic calculations of lethal doses, and legal specifications for the regulation of controlled substances. Ultimately, I ran out of time at the end of the summer and was unable to coordinate a shadow day in Intake. These face-to-face encounters with

death and end-of-life care are beyond what this particular work can cover, though the workshop itself offered an intriguing insight into the experiences of euthanasia practitioners and the social and emotional tools they use to navigate their worlds. I had been invited to this workshop as a primer for what I should understand about casual or daily euthanasia practices, and I walked away from it with a new understanding of how scientific perspectives on dying and death give shape to the way euthanasia technicians handle the experience of inflicting death and being in consistent contact with the dead.

The EBI workshop was held in the Humane Education building's Training Center. I walked in on the first day to a room full of about 25 people of whom I was likely the youngest. As we all introduced ourselves, I realized that with one exception excluding myself, everyone in the room was already a euthanasia practitioner and was renewing their certification. Some worked for shelters like Anti-Cruelty in the city, others for high volume shelters in more rural parts of Illinois, a few for city facilities both in and out of the city, and a few for a network of animal hospitals in the Midwest. I was surprised by the wide range of backgrounds represented, as well as the varying attitudes toward euthanasia that emerged as we progressed through the course. Some of these practitioners mentioned that they dreaded euthanizing animals and rarely had to do so, while for others it was a necessary, routine part of their careers.

In this workshop I came to understand how euthanasia practices follow a pattern similar to the process of normalizing particular ways of being with animals out of the wide range of possibilities as described in the previous three chapters. Moving through the act of inflicting death is slippery and often unpredictable, and the scientific explanations of euthanasia given in the workshop aim to make it more chartable, knowable, and navigable.

Heather, the woman running the workshop, passed out printed manuals with instructions about how to euthanize, how to calculate dosages, what substances and injection methods were legal and under what conditions, and how bodies would behave in death. The manual contained glossy images of the circulatory system, and a disembodied cartoon head of a dog with pieces of the brain labeled. The majority of the workshop involved Heather reviewing the manual and explaining the images. She used these as props to talk about how death was supposed to occur, what systems and vital functions would shut down and in what order, and to explain how the body could be expected to respond to these biological changes. Marilyn Strathern has written extensively about kinship systems of relations and the "dividual" in contrast to the individual (Strathern 1988); these images fit in to her understandings of relationality by suggesting that while they may interact sometimes with a known exterior, they ultimately appear self-determined in a chartable and anticipated way. Outside factors and variations are not important or threatening enough to include in the visual. Emily Martin has also discussed how images of the sperm and egg cells in textbook visual depictions of fertilization write masculine and feminine gender roles onto cellular actors whose movements are not so governed by human cultural forms (Martin 1991). Similarly, the isolation of the images of the brain and the heart on Heather's projection and their reproductions in the euthanasia manual create the impression of independence in these organs and make them appear to be a contained and knowable domain. This fragmented autonomous pseudo-whole appears to be removed, charted, and predictable.

Heather cautioned all of these observations, however, with caveats about what could go wrong. When actually euthanizing an animal in a real situation, the animal body

would not always follow these patterns, and Heather emphasized that euthanasia technicians should be prepared to navigate that unpredictability. She expressed frustration at Hollywood representations of a glamorous death, and highlighted how other people's expectations of what death should look like could make the euthanasia technician's job particularly trying at some points. "Some bodies may continue to show signs of life after you verify death," she acknowledged. She said it was always hard for an owner to watch an animal urinate when its bowels contracted following death, and that she would sometimes have to have uncomfortable conversations with emotionally vulnerable people about what death looks like when their animal would twitch or let out a sigh after she had confirmed the animal was dead. Another woman attending the training, Debby, chimed in with her own story about a conflict with a surprised owner. Debby had euthanized a woman's dog, a purebred Doberman, and had just verified death when the dog's lungs contracted and the animal let out a long sigh. The owner lunged toward Debby and attacked her, thinking that Debby was trying to convince her the dog was dead so she could steal the dog. Debby's coworkers intervened and the woman was arrested.[13]

Heather and Debby acknowledge the authoritative models presented by the scientific depictions in the euthanasia manual, as they provide only a partial depiction of death that a euthanasia technician must understand. Both women sought to provide additional information to add their own situated and partial knowledges (Haraway 1988) to present a simultaneously fuller and more personal invitation into understanding the work that they do. Just as shelter workers described in previous chapters manage the

[13] This story aches. Why? The Doberman's sigh reminds me of a less-physical form of the tug of war game. The owner recognizes this as an index of liveliness, and metaphorically she yanks on the leash of attachment as she lunges at Debby. The connection itself is a liveliness.

unpredictability of animal encounters, euthanasia technicians also work on the cusp of unpredictable encounters with the dead. This workshop challenged authoritative models that attempted to chart and make predictable the process of death by demonstrating the instability and surprises to which euthanasia technicians respond. Ultimately, the EBI workshop invited me to begin to consider how the charged act of ending a life is made more complex as it comes into contact with attempts to navigate unpredictability.

Sensitivity to Death: Coping Mechanisms

By providing personal accounts, Heather and Debby both emphasize the importance of their own sensitivity as a tool for navigating the unpredictability of the dead. They were not the only euthanasia practitioners that I encountered who spoke of the affective tumultuousness of euthanizing an animal. Mark's work to reduce euthanasia, for example, was clearly impelled by his own felt responsibility to the animals he was euthanizing. Similarly, other care workers in the EBI workshop described their own struggle to "keep it together" while practicing euthanasia. It might go without saying, but inflicting death takes an emotional toll on the euthanasia practitioner because their work is entangled with the strong association between ending a life and killing. Feelings like grief, vulnerability, despair, and responsibility that emerge from the everyday and are articulated against the casual as breaks from routine are more common in encounters with euthanasia, and can become routine themselves. Euthanasia technicians must develop the tools and coping mechanisms for an affectively messy situation that could easily become unmanageable if not effectively "kept together."

"The minute you tell anyone you're a certified euthanasia technician, they give you those eyes where they're like…" Emma, the former Intake worker and current Humane Education staff person, widened her eyes and cocked her eyebrow. "I would joke around with my friends that I have a license to kill, just like 007. I can kill an animal in 5 ways, 5 different veins." I was surprised by how often I found myself laughing along with animal care workers describing their work as euthanasia technicians in our interviews, given the morbid subject we were discussing. Emma recognized that often she needed to lean into a joke to be able to get through the day. This gallows humor, as she described it, was a coping mechanism that she used to distance herself from the potential vortex of emotions that she saw in media representations of death and dying. While media representations tried to pass death off as a beautiful tragedy, "there's nothing beautiful about dying and having excessive diarrhea expel from your butt and then all over everyone." She noted that making these jokes with her coworkers helped her detach from the concept of tragedy and form a sense of camaraderie with her fellow euthanasia technicians.

Mark recognized that the euthanasia room was a space where humor and negative feelings surrounding loss could simultaneously emerge. He noted that it was very easy to get wrapped up in what pet owners were feeling when performing owner-requested euthanasia, and to feel along with them:

> You have to step sort of outside yourself. The hardest time to do that is when you're faced with highly emotional owners. I won't be the only person to tell you that in the building. And because of their attachments and our own attachments, it's really easy to click into those overwrought emotional scenes. The key is to try and hold that back until we do the job that we need to do, and then you can, you know, click into it with them. I've actually wept more than once with people cause it's hard not to, it's a mirroring thing. I think it taps into the parts of your brain that store memories that are only accessible under situations like this because you don't want to go there often times.

Mark struggled to keep it together here, and strove to stay away from a consistent experience of deep, heavy emotion that could accompany moments with weighty associations. This is very similar to the kind of detachment that Emma saw herself practicing by recognizing humor in these situations. Mark also told me that occasionally he would find people's overwrought displays of emotion quite humorous. Sometimes people would take quite a long time to grieve over their animals' dead body, this would become frustratingly or humorously inconvenient for the euthanasia technicians who needed to continue through their workday, and they would have to interact with some unpredictable and outrageous characters. Mark described one man who, after his dog was dead, had whipped out a knife to cut off the dog's ear. "A lot of people take locks of hair and stuff… the bloody flesh was a bridge too far." Mark chuckled, remarking that this occasion had stuck with him out of thousands of euthanasias he had performed because of how dramatic and out of place it had been to talk down a man with a knife. "You can't always fully predict how people are going to react in emotional circumstances." Mark's own detachment highlights an awareness of the depth, unpredictability, and unchartedness of the affective field into which encounters with death unfold, and a conscious avoidance of the chaos that comes with "clicking in."

Some animal care workers who have not come face-to-face with death in the same way that euthanasia technicians do have also developed strategies for coping with being part of a system that euthanizes animals while not actually participating in the act itself. Marianne, an older woman and long-time volunteer who trained me for Dog Adopts, headed up a committee of volunteers who advocated for more volunteer involvement in the multi-faceted process of making euthanasia decisions. She recognized that volunteers

who interacted one-on-one with animals more frequently often became attached to animals and the idea of saving particularly challenging cases from euthanasia, and she wanted staff members to acknowledge those investments and dedications. I recognized a similar kind of frustration with staff in Wendy as she responded so viscerally to Sammy's euthanasia. When we discussed it later, Wendy mentioned to me that one of the ways she had been able to come to terms with this moment was by considering all of the other animals she could still save rather than letting the losses push her away from doing fundamentally valuable work. I heard this viewpoint later echoed in Dr. Myer, an upper-level shelter veterinarian: "There are just too many good animals in the world. […] Instead of investing my efforts in an animal that's going to take a lot of resources, I can invest my efforts in a bunch of animals that will take less." The volume of animals saved from death is again valued as one of the ultimate measures of success in animal care, and rationalizing euthanasia within that framework can make it more digestible when it could also be understood to work contrary to those goals.

Ultimately these coping mechanisms articulate the affective vulnerability some euthanasia technicians feel in their everyday work. Kathleen Stewart writes about a similar bubbling interchange between the banal and the intense in forgotten areas of the United States in *Ordinary Affects* (2007). She describes casual moments and coming-togethers that explode and resonate with a remarkable, otherworldly quality offset by the ordinariness of the occasion, which later dissipate and fall apart as inexplicably as they were manifested. Stewart outlines these phenomena in order to demonstrate affective sensitivity as a starting point for cultural inquiry, a fascinating endeavor, but I reference it specifically to solidify the intensity euthanasia technicians experience in transformative encounters with

(or producing) dead bodies. Animal care workers struggle to navigate this affective intensity as part of their ordinary, a depth of experience they sometimes avoid and sometimes embrace.

Grievability: Giving Life in Giving Death

"I've euthanized thousands of animals, but I've never killed one." Dr. Claire's words return to me as I try to draw together how euthanasia technicians and other animal care workers encounter death and the dead regularly, and how they organize their worlds around them. I discussed above the economic and ethical motivations driving the shelter's avoidance of "no-kill" terminology, but the distinction drawn between euthanasia and killing is much more complex and weighty than that, as euthanasia technicians' consistent grappling with their work has demonstrated. What does it mean to kill, and how do animal care workers set euthanasia apart from that?

Before beginning my fieldwork at Anti-Cruelty, I had started building a theoretical framework through which to examine euthanasia, which equated these inflicted deaths with killing. I was influenced by biopolitical theoretical literature that focused on how government and governance variably enlivened populations. Michel Foucault, my starting point eternal, has described the turn from sovereign power to biopower as methods of managing populations. The sovereign had the ability to decide which of its subjects could be put to death, while the others were left to live. In a new biopolitical system, the emphasis shifted to how populations were being made, and what bodies with specific characteristics were being nurtured and uplifted, while others were left behind and died in

invisibility. The distinction, in short, is that sovereign power is letting live and making die, while biopower is making live and letting die (Foucault 1976). Giorgio Agamben argues that this turn away from sovereign power is not so complete, and that making die is still common in modern totalitarian states. He outlines the Roman legal figure of the *homo sacer*, or sacrificial man, who is excluded from society and can be killed with impunity. The living society is then constructed around the killability of this excluded other (Agamben 1998). I was also reading Jason De León's *The Land of Open Graves* (2015) at the time, an ethnographic account of migrant deaths in the Sonoran Desert along the U.S.-Mexico border. In this work, De León highlights a practical example of Agamben's work: a zone of exception is created in this weaponized desert where the U.S. government can strategically abandon dying humans and build U.S. society around the weighty invisibility of their deaths. I was moved by all of this work because of its urgency, and I wanted to situate a project in conversation with these heavy topics of killing, violence, power, and alterity in pursuit of a work that could uplift and exemplify the shaky and fleeting concept of justice.

At the time, I believed that this framework could be useful for analyzing euthanasia. After all, weren't euthanasia technicians similarly able to kill without being punished, just as Agamben had described? Sure, they could pass it off as care, just as the U.S. government hid behind rhetoric of legality to justify and cover up deaths of migrants in De León's work! I felt smart. I felt edgy. But Dr. Claire wasn't having it. Her rejection of my project proposal that cited these works was a first step in her guiding me toward what she saw as a more reflective representation of the way that animal care workers experience and think about euthanasia. My time at Anti-Cruelty has pushed me to focus less on the moment of infliction

of death and more on the circumstances and feelings that envelop the people inflicting the deaths.

In that vein, Judith Butler offers what might be a more useful theoretical framework for thinking about the political relationship between life and death in *Frames of War* (2009). Butler urges us to consider life and liveliness as collaboratively maintained, a condition she refers to as precariousness because of the instability and unpredictability of this determination by the unknown (14). She also proposes an intimate connection between life and death through the idiom of grievability: in order for a life to matter, it must first be considered as something that could be lost and should not be lost.

> Precisely because a living being may die, it is necessary to care for that being so that it may live. Only under conditions in which the loss would matter does the value of the life appear. Thus, grievability is a presupposition for the life that matters. […] There can be no celebration [of life] without an implicit understanding that the life is grievable, that it would be grieved if it were lost, and that this future anterior is installed as the condition of its life. (14-15)

Plainly, the looming specter of death over the assumption that a life will be lived fully validates life as life. Life cannot be recognized without also recognizing the threat of death.

By inflicting death, the Anti-Cruelty Society and the animal care workers involved in it are recognizing the grievability of animal lives. Paradoxically, they validate the value of life by ending it. Animal care workers take animals out of situations where they would otherwise disappear, or fail to survive and thrive, whether this be a surrender from an owner who can no longer afford to care for them, a litter of newborn kittens found in an alley, or a neglected, starving, and matted animal being confiscated from an owner. It then brings that animal under the auspice of its care, recognizing that animal as deserving of attention to ensure its survival. The shelter actively intervenes in the systems of sovereign and biopolitical power that Agamben, Foucault, and De León describe that kill by exclusion

and abandonment by recognizing the animal subject as not necessarily killable, but definitely grievable. Animals are *seen* in the shelter, and their lives matter. Their deaths matter as well, and the recognition that animal care workers are able to give animals through the infliction of their deaths can be understood in this system to be acts that inflate the importance of their liveliness rather than cutting it short. Butler's framework can radicalize a conversation about death and killing that up until this point largely has focused on the violence of killing. She invites us to imagine how death can articulate the relative values of life, and how ending a life can come to be rationalized as an act of care.

Apocalypse

I've been texting with my girlfriend Hailey as I circle the drain of this chapter, hoping it will come together in a nice bow at the end. She sends me a tweet from our favorite astrology account, @poetastrologers, that says "2018 Valentine's Day present from a Libra: Their recent manifesto on the apocalypse" and I message back in fun, "This is me giving you a copy of my thesis I think." Her next message is a nicer bow than anything I can cohesively tie together at the moment and will have to do for now. She says, "every time a dog dies it's a small apocalypse."

I look back at Sammy's euthanasia like I'm staring at a small apocalypse. Recollections of Wendy's panic, my own regret, and the small gash on the man's hand are all still swirling together, bubbling up, and haunting me. I sense a little end of the world. "A small apocalypse," Hailey says. The world can end again and again in little ways. Who said an ending had to be permanent? The man got his Band-Aid, Wendy reconsidered her

priorities, and I wrote a paper. Sammy is still dead but his world ended with force and urgency. The value of his life was acknowledged in the fallout from his death.

In this chapter, I have toyed with a multiplicity of ways of understanding human infliction of animal death. It can be understood in one regime as killing, in another as an act of care, and perhaps in some euthanasia technicians lives it is experienced simultaneously as both. That chaos too may seem apocalyptic. I do not seek to resolve that chaos or pick one interpretation to value over the other. Rather, I lean into the same kind of coexistence with the multiple that I have promoted through this entire work. Just like there are multiple ways of knowing about how to be with animals, and promoting one as objectively better or more correct than another is dicey, so too are there multiple ways of knowing about death. Euthanasia technicians manage and move through this field of possibility with a diverse set of tools that should be similarly considered as different and relative reals.

CONCLUSION

At the end of every interview, I asked my interviewees if there was anything else they thought that I should know, that perhaps I wasn't asking them. Most would respond by asking what the project was about again, perhaps figuring that our light conversation about their casual day-to-day couldn't have given me much to work with (while almost invariably, it did). Others said they were done, and didn't have anything else to share. This was the case with Helen, the volunteer who has given her time to Anti-Cruelty for 25 years, fostered hundreds of animals, and cooks meals for her dogs every night. However, after I switched off the recording function on my phone and saved it, she said she had one more thing to add. "I really hope you show us in a good light."

I did not expect for writing a work of anthropology to tug on me this way. I used to be able to write critical essays with such ease, articulating clearly the problems with a certain author's work or argument. That author always remained a distant presence, one I could throw stones at safely from the comfort of the library reading room and through a medium submitted to my professor rather than one that could actually reach that author. I struggle to do the same in this work, which I will eventually email to Mark and Helen and Miranda and Selena, among others. With Helen's words ringing in my ears as I write, I have been hyperconscious that I might be producing a work that negatively represents the people who helped make it possible. Is my critique helpful, or is it mean-spirited? Were I clearly "studying up," a term describing ethnography focused on concentrated areas of power (Nader 1972), I might not have this hesitation. However, I am not convinced I can draw an equivalency between the Anti-Cruelty Society and the powerful economic or governmental institutions typically the subjects of a project that "studies up." I did interact

with many upper level staff members who held power over the organization of the institution and the work that they do. I also worked with volunteers just trying to practice their love of animals in the best way they knew how. Under these complex circumstances, it does not come naturally to me to draw out a heavy critique. I am grateful for Helen's comment because it reminds me to be cautious and conscious of the impact my writing will have on the diversely powerful community it aims to represent.

I also hesitate to critique too blindly because of how harsh criticism can often function as an avenue of rejection rather than a pathway to reform. Simply put, critique can be mean, and unproductively so. Bruno Latour has emphasized how critique seems to be much more about destruction than it is about fostering care, interest, and (dare we say it) love for the topic of study (Latour 2004). He acknowledges how critical tools have turned into weapons, which allies and enemies use back and forth against one another with little practical reward. "The critic," he says, "is not the one who debunks, but the one who assembles," (246). Rather than using scholarship to highlight a constructed nature of something a community of study believes in and to thereby invalidate its realness, he urges scholars instead to employ analysis to draw together the forces that make something real.

In my work, I aim to employ Latour's assembling-critique of debunking-critique by formulating my project to outline the systems that make particular ways of knowing about animals real or ideal to the communities of animal care workers I studied. I do not wish to discredit or destroy these conceptualizations of being in the world with animals, as they are just as real and lived as any other possibilities. That said, I still struggle with the complexity of the distribution of power in this field and how critique should be applied. In this work I have highlighted how valorization of particular knowledges as more

authoritative or "correct" than others can be damaging to those others, and I want to avoid being complicit in a similar process. I want to be kind and helpful in my analysis, but I also want to acknowledge potential shortcomings in ways that are constructive and not condemnatory. Overall, I hope that I have been successful in fleshing out the complexities and consequences of being in the world with animals at the Anti-Cruelty Society, simultaneously giving voice to and tempering a field of variably empowered voices.

As I pull this work to a close, knowingly drawing boundaries around a topic and experience that are still bubbling and pushing at every edge I try to enforce, this qualifier aims to reinforce the potentially dulled edges of what might otherwise be a crisp argument or critique. It would be against the spirit of a project so conscious of the instability of authoritative knowledge to perform my own god-trick (Haraway 1988) and assert my knowledge as absolute. I don't know everything, but that doesn't mean I don't know something. You know something now, too: the particularities and complexities of a certain kind of real. Knowing this realness, we can participate in an assembling-critique of the Anti-Cruelty Society that fosters the care-full spirit that Helen had in mind, looking after the object of study in its analysis rather than ripping it apart.

A Brief Review

So where have we gotten, and what do we know? This project has traced the development of partial and authoritative knowledges about animal care from their incipience in the face-to-face animal encounter to the eventual imposition of these knowledges on the Chicago community. Ultimately, this analysis has challenged the

absolute and imperative front that animal care workers tend to carry with their attitudes and practices by giving light to the forces that constitute these knowledges and pointing to potential alternative ways of knowing or understanding that they bump up against or quash. Plainly, there is not one right way to care for animals, but in this institution some ways of caring are valued over others. This thesis aims to outline why and how those particular values emerge, and to trace their consequences.

In Chapter One, I examined how animal care workers understand communication with animals, and how uncertainty and surprise play into these understandings. I discussed the concept of the species divide as something particularly marked by possession or lack of language, arguing that animals can and do respond rather than always simply reacting. Humans may in fact be seen as just as reactionary when they approach every animal as if it was the same. I then explored alternative forms of nonlinguistic communication that animal care workers draw upon to form their understandings of animals. Affective attunement is one way these people gain an impression of the information animals cannot communicate with language. Humans can also come to understand the animal through the way they mutually remake and influence one another in their encounter. They may not be able to fully know what an animal wants and needs, but they can more confidently understand and respond to the animal's impact on their own conceptualization of self. Communication is embodied as humans and animals work to build an "us" in physical play spaces. Care workers recognize that remaining open to surprise looks like responding to each animal as a particular case, which allows them to remain sensitive to how each animal moves them. In this chapter I stress that the understandings that result from these forms of

communication are partial and unstable, but that doesn't mean care workers can't use them to move forward and respond to an incitement to offer care.

In Chapter Two, I turn to looking at animal subjectivities, examining how particular ways of being with animals become imperative in the shelter to promote "adoptable" subjects. As an institution, the shelter is involved in biopolitical formulations of companion animals, giving certain animals an intentional kind of political life through various stages of evaluation. Animals oriented toward humans are considered most "adoptable," especially those that fit into human expectations of the role an animal should play in their lives. Thus animals that are able to respond to human demands, manipulation, and control are nurtured and fostered above others. I employ some phenomenological tenets to consider what object-options are available to animals and the normative forces that influence how they are oriented toward those object-options. These adoptable subjects are not just behaviorally determined, but also medically evaluated, as bodies that will not offer too much owner expense in medical care are selected as more adoptable than others. The institutionalization that allows biopower to be written onto bodies can also be counterproductive to the shelter's aim as some animals degrade in health or behavior due to long-term confinement and rigidity of daily life. Ultimately, this kind of formulation disrupts the equitable us-making process described above as animals are asked to move more to fit into human worlds than vice versa. This chapter demonstrates how the instability and partiality of understanding and being with animals described in Chapter One comes to be made more rigid and stable as animals are shifted to be more predictable and chartable in their adoptability.

Chapter Three focuses in on the Humane Education department and their role in taking partial knowledges of or about animals and transforming them into authoritative imperatives for the Chicago community. The staff members in this department reflect on the development of their own knowledges about animals, and how this process involved asserting the way of caring the shelter promotes as more "right" than their previous understandings. This department is involved in similar reconciliations between ways of caring and knowing as they attempt to pass their ideology on to other Chicago communities who, for many historical and political reasons, conceive of animal care differently. The roadblocks they encounter in spreading this knowledge reinforce that knowledge as partial. The inapplicability of this knowledge as a universal mandate becomes clear as they run up against the impact of racial discrimination, violence, and poverty in Chicago. This chapter stresses that authoritative knowledge about ways of being with animals cannot be effectively spread like a missionary doctrine, and instead invites a consideration of a revaluation of situated knowledge.

Finally, Chapter Four explored the consequences of partial and authoritative knowledges on the practice of euthanasia in the shelter. Euthanasia practitioners are involved in the process of sharing the suffering of the animals they are euthanizing, taking on the burden of making their own labor more difficult to ameliorate the pain (or even the death) that an animal must experience through their own felt understanding of suffering. Animal care workers were opposed to the language of killing because of how it was tied up in the no-kill movement, an effort that seems compassionate but may not very effectively reduce the sum total of animals euthanized and stir more trouble than it's worth. I discuss the euthanasia workshop I attended and the way it presented authoritative and

experiential knowledges about expectation and surprise around inflicting death. This also involves an examination of the ordinary and extraordinary affective experiences of euthanasia technicians as they navigate the weightiness of frequent implication in death. Ultimately, I argue that there are multiple ways to conceptualize the act of inflicting death, whether that be as killing or as a form of care, and animal care workers struggle to cleanly navigate this messy multiplicity. This openness to surprise, possibility, and the existence of other situated knowledges is a continuation of the similar themes of animal care discussed in previous chapters.

Briefly, I also want to highlight how this work is consequential for anthropology as a discipline in two central ways. First, in discussing the existence of multiple functional ways of knowing (about communication, about care for animals, and about death), this work upholds and supports an anthropology that is not in pursuit of a positivist understanding of something that is objectively real or universally true. The real and the true are socially constituted, and this project demonstrates an array of constitutions as they develop and compete for dominance. Second, working this intimately with animals and attempting to grasp completely the non-human experience leads to a conclusion that the non-human other cannot be fully comprehended. However, this also applies to the human other. Reflexive anthropology has demonstrated that full understanding from another's perspective is not possible, but that doesn't mean that impressions and interpretations can't be significant ways to represent an understanding. My work demonstrates a radical incorporation of the implications of the reflexive movement and pushes for a sustained reconsideration of the consequences of living with multiple reals.

Denouement

I now ask myself the same question I asked my interviewees at the end of our engagement. "Is there anything else you think I should know?" What more do I want to leave you with? I would be keeping something from you if I didn't mention that part of my motivation to do this project is rooted in my personal love of animals. Semi-jokingly, I told my friends I couldn't believe the Mount Holyoke LYNK fund was sponsoring me to play with puppies all summer. After reading this work, you certainly understand it involved much more than that. Still, being with animals brings me a lot of joy, and I'm doing this work because I know it's a place where happiness lives. That happiness bubbles through (against? aside of? athwart?) my critique and analysis, fuels it, and is fueled by it.

That said, I've got one more story for you. I want you to meet Gibson. Gibson was a six-week-old puppy I met during a Puppy Parade, one of five puppies the shelter had recently taken in from an unwanted litter. I had been charged with his care for the next two hours. Amy, who was in charge of these community events, was particularly excited to have actual puppies for this month's Puppy Parade. Typically these special programs would involve volunteers leading a small group of particularly well-behaved shelter dogs through downtown Chicago, occasionally stopping to allow pedestrians to pet them. Staff members would walk alongside and share information about upcoming adoption events and answer other questions. Eventually the parade would stop in a designated area where people on their lunch break could sit and play with the dogs for a few minutes. Having actual puppies was a rarity, and the turnout was expected to be significant.

Mark, somehow ever-present in my favorite recollections from this summer, was tagging along on this Puppy Parade. He tried to make it to a couple of these every summer, he informed me. As the parade launched from the shelter, puppies in arm and older dogs on leash, he filled me in on some of the history of these events. They had started two or three summers ago when staff and volunteers wanted to bring dogs to another organization's corporate event they had partnered with. It was a blue-sky summer day and the event was less than a mile from the shelter on the river, and Mark suggested they just walk the distance rather than taking a van they had reserved instead. This strategy worked seamlessly, and these Puppy Parades have been the preferred mode of transportation to similar mid-day corporate events ever since. We had been enlisted by a company whose headquarters were downtown to bring the dogs as a surprise break for their employees, but it was also a great opportunity for the shelter to promote itself and its events to the community, and they took advantage of it.

Gibson, to put it bluntly, didn't do much other than look cute. As we walked through the busy streets he looked around at the tall buildings and many people passing looking a bit dazed, eventually slumping into my shoulder and dozing off. "Happy Friday, wanna pet him?" I asked the pedestrians whose eyes we caught. Most of the people we encountered wanted a quick second of puppy time. Their faces lit up, and they paused in their tracks as they scooped Gibson up, or reached out to scratch him behind his ears. "This is the best," one person told me. "This is exactly what I needed today." Gibson couldn't have been bothered, but he brought out so much exuberance from passers by. His warmth, even on an already-toasty day, was comforting. Eventually the caravan of puppies, dogs, volunteers,

and staff arrived at the plaza where we were heading and spread out, ready to receive the crowds of employees.

Unsurprisingly, sleepy Gibson was a star. He spent most of the time being passed around between young women in professional wear, asking how and when he and his littermates would be available for adoption. There was lively debate about his breed ("We think he's a lab mix," "Looks like he's got a little pit bull in him," "One of them's fluffy, probably part golden retriever,") but largely most people repeated the same questions to me over and over, and I replied with the same answers. A few minutes in a staff member became concerned about the heat, and the puppies were swept away into a small baby carriage she had been pushing. She trickled water on their heads to keep them cool. After about 45 minutes we left the plaza where we had stopped, Gibson and the others curled up in a sleeping heap.

I felt *good*. Despite the heat and the overuse of my customer service voice, I chirped "Happy Friday!" along with the volunteers still walking dogs as we made our way back to the shelter. The puppies were whisked off to the back office space where they were being raised for quieter naptime. Anti-Cruelty's social media accounts posted updates over the next two weeks as the puppies got older and bigger, had spay and neuter surgeries, and became available for adoption. Unsurprisingly, they were almost immediately scooped up.

Just as I lifted Gibson out in front of me to invite Chicago pedestrians into his world, I offer him out to you. I hope you can feel that joy, that warmth, that possibility that he shared with the people on the street. Take a piece of this bundle of potential from my bright summer as a memento of this work, and keep your eyes peeled for it elsewhere. It's out there, I'm sure.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life.* Translated by Daniel Heller-Roazen. Stanford University Press, 1998.

Ahmed, Sara. "Orientations: Toward a queer phenomenology." *GLQ: A journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 12, no. 4 (2006): 543-574.

Astro Poets (@poetastrologers). Twitter Post. February 14, 2018, 6:44 AM. https://twitter.com/poetastrologers/status/963786112627101696

Boas, Franz. "On alternating sounds." *American Anthropologist* 2, no. 1 (1889): 47-54.

Brennan, Teresa. *The transmission of affect*. Cornell University Press, 2004.

Butler, Judith. *Frames of war: When is life grievable?*. Verso Books, 2016.

Candea, Matei. ""I fell in love with Carlos the meerkat": Engagement and detachment in human–animal relations." *American Ethnologist* 37, no. 2 (2010): 241-258.

Chen, Mel Y. *Animacies: Biopolitics, racial mattering, and queer affect*. Duke University Press, 2012.

Chi Raq. Directed by Will Robson-Scott. Protein, 2013.

Conklin, Beth A. *Consuming grief: compassionate cannibalism in an Amazonian society*. University of Texas Press, 2001.

Crane, Johanna Tayloe. *Scrambling for Africa: AIDS, expertise, and the rise of American global health science*. Cornell University Press, 2013.

Crapanzano, Vincent. *Tuhami: portrait of a Moroccan*. University of Chicago Press, 1980.

Damasio, Antonio. *Self comes to mind: Constructing the conscious brain*. Vintage, 2010.

Dave, Naisargi N. "Witness: Humans, animals, and the politics of becoming." *Cultural Anthropology* 29, no. 3 (2014): 433-456.

De León, Jason. *The Land of Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Migrant Trail.* Berkley: University of California Press, 2015.

de Spinoza, Benedict. *Ethics.* 1677.

Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. "Introduction: rhizome." *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia* (1987): 3-25.

Derrida, Jacques. "And say the animal responded?." *Zoontologies: The question of the animal* (2003): 121-146.

Derrida, Jacques. "The animal that therefore I am (more to follow)." *Critical inquiry* 28, no. 2 (2002): 369-418.

Foucault, Michel. “17 March 1976.” In *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France*, edited by Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana and translated by David Macey. New York: Picador.

Foucault, Michel*. The birth of the clinic*. Translated by Alan Sheridan*.* Tavistock, 1973.

Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. Penguin Books, 1977.

Frazer, James George. *The golden bough*. Macmillan and Co., 1890.

Geertz, Clifford. "" From the native's point of view": On the nature of anthropological understanding." *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* (1974): 26-45.

Grossman, James. “Great Migration.” Encyclopedia of Chicago, 2005. http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/545.html, accessed February 3, 2018.

Haraway, Donna. "Situated knowledges: The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective." *Feminist studies* 14, no. 3 (1988): 575-599.

Haraway, Donna. *A manifesto for cyborgs: Science, technology, and socialist feminism in the 1980s*. San Francisco, CA: Center for Social Research and Education, 1985.

Haraway, Donna. *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium. FemaleMan_Meets_OncoMouse: Feminism and Technoscience*. Psychology Press, 1997.

Haraway, Donna. *Staying with the trouble: Making kin in the Chthulucene*. Duke University Press, 2016.

Haraway, Donna. *The companion species manifesto: Dogs, people, and significant otherness*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003.

Haraway, Donna. *When species meet*. University of Minnesota Press, 2008.

Harding, Sandra G. *The science question in feminism*. Cornell University Press, 1986.

Hayward, Eva. "Fingeryeyes: Impressions of cup corals." *Cultural Anthropology* 25, no. 4 (2010): 577-599.

Hearne, Vicki. *Bandit: Dossier of a dangerous dog*. Perennial, 1992.

Helmreich, Stefan. *Alien ocean: Anthropological voyages in microbial seas*. University of California Press, 2009.

Kirksey, Stefan, and Stefan Helmreich. "The emergence of multispecies ethnography." *Cultural Anthropology* 25, no. 4 (2010): 545-576.

Kohn, Eduardo. *How forests think: Toward an anthropology beyond the human*. University of California Press, 2013.

Kosek, Jake. "Ecologies of empire: on the new uses of the honeybee." *Cultural Anthropology* 25, no. 4 (2010): 650-678.

Kuhn, Thomas. *The structure of scientific revolutions*. University of Chicago Press, 1962.

Latour, Bruno, and Steve Woolgar. *Laboratory life: The social construction of scientific facts*. Princeton University Press, 1979.

Latour, Bruno. "Why has critique run out of steam? From matters of fact to matters of concern." *Critical inquiry* 30, no. 2 (2004): 225-248.

Latour, Bruno. *Reassembling the social: An introduction to actor-network-theory*. Oxford university press, 2005.

Levine, Rachel, and Justyna Poray-Wybranowska. "American Bully: Fear, Paradox, and the New Family Dog." *Animal Alterity* (2016): 151.

Malinowski, Bronislaw. *Argonauts of the Western Pacific: An account of native enterprise and adventure in the archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea*. Routledge, 1922.

Martin, Emily. "The egg and the sperm: How science has constructed a romance based on stereotypical male-female roles." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 16, no. 3 (1991): 485-501.

Massumi, Brian. *Politics of affect*. John Wiley & Sons, 2015.

McKinlay, John B. "A case for refocusing upstream: the political economy of illness." *Patients, physicians and illness: A sourcebook in behavioral science and health* (1979): 9-25.

Messeri, Lisa. "Resonant worlds: Cultivating proximal encounters in planetary science." *American Ethnologist* 44, no. 1 (2017): 131-142.

Mikkelson, Barbara. “Murderous Moggies: Will a cat suck the breath from a baby?” Snopes, 2007. https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/murderous-moggies/ (accessed April 10, 2018)

Morgan, Lewis Henry. *The American beaver and his works*. Philadelphia: JB Lippincott, 1868.

Myers, Natasha. *Rendering life molecular: models, modelers, and excitable matter*. Duke University Press, 2015.

Nader, Laura. "Up the Anthropologist–Perspectives Gained from Studying Up." *Reinventing Anthropology* (1972): 284-311.

Panksepp, Jaak. *Affective neuroscience: The foundations of human and animal emotions*. Oxford university press, 2004.

Paxson, Heather. "Post-pasteurian cultures: the microbiopolitics of raw-milk cheese in the United States." *Cultural Anthropology* 23, no. 1 (2008): 15-47.

Poverty in Chicago. Directed by Brian Schodorf. PBS, 2006.

Rabinow, Paul. *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco: with a New Preface by the Author*. University of California Press, 1977.

Rosenberg, Gabriel N. *The 4-H Harvest: Sexuality and the State in Rural America*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky, and Adam Frank. *Touching feeling: Affect, pedagogy, performativity*. Duke University Press, 2003.

Stewart, Kathleen. *Ordinary affects*. Duke University Press, 2007.

Strathern, Marilyn. *The gender of the gift: problems with women and problems with society in Melanesia*. University of California Press, 1988.

TallBear, Kim. *Native American DNA: Tribal belonging and the false promise of genetic science*. University of Minnesota Press, 2013.

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. *The mushroom at the end of the world: On the possibility of life in capitalist ruins*. Princeton University Press, 2015.

Tylor, Edward Burnett. *Primitive culture: researches into the development of mythology, philosophy, religion, art, and custom*. J. Murray, 1871.

van Dooren, Thom. *Flight ways: Life and loss at the edge of extinction*. Columbia University Press, 2014.

Viveiros de Castro, Eduardo. "Cosmological deixis and Amerindian perspectivism." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (1998): 469-488.

Wendland, Claire L. *A Heart for the Work: journeys through an African medical school*. University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Wolfe, Cary. *What is posthumanism?* University of Minnesota Press, 2010.