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The Westminster Dog Show: A Probe into the Human/Dog Relationship

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“The one absolute, unselfish friend that man can have in the selfish world - the one that never deserts him, the one that never proves ungrateful or treacherous - is his dog. Gentlemen of the jury, a man’s dog stands by him in prosperity and in poverty, in health and sickness. He will sleep on the cold ground, where the wintry winds blow and the snow drives fiercely, if only he can be near his master’s side. He will kiss the hand that had no food offer, he will lick the wounds and sores that come in encounter with the roughness of the world. He guards the sleep of his pauper master as if he were a prince. When all other friends desert, he remains.”

- George Graham Vest, “Eulogy on the Dog”, 1870.

Abstract

This research paper explores the human-dog relationship in the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. Many researchers have explored human-dog relationships across a variety of settings (Haraway, 2003, Simon, 2015, Anderson, 1986 & Porter, 2018). I have conducted an ethnographic probe to review videos and other documentation of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* to explore the relationships between humans and dogs. I relied on interviews and videos surrounding the dog show to document how humans perceived their relationships with their dogs and how they interacted with their dogs. Common themes emerged from the interviews and interactions that were used to help describe the qualities of this human-dog relationship within the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. I suggest that the relationships examined as part of this probe showcased qualities of autonomic beings coming together for a common purpose. The relationships reviewed showcased a non-contingent connectedness between humans and dogs where they shared connectivity in their actions and emotions. Through the individual relationships examined, I suggest that these relationships exemplify companionship relationships. I also explore the cohistories of humans and dogs through the example of the relationship between humans and the Bulldog breed to showcase how social factors, like class and sport have shaped human-dog relationships. I explore the concept of dog breeding and suggest that although breeding involves manipulation of a dog’s genetics, the overall concept of breeding is an example of biopower that helps encourage breeders to breed with good intentions to produce high-quality and healthy dogs. Lastly, I explore human-dog relationships on a local and global level to suggest that this multi-species relationship can be described as an anthropo-zoo-genesis that is acted out through the production of affect towards one another.

Introduction

This research paper is an ethnographic probe into the human-dog relationship in the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. The specific relationships that are focused on in this research paper are those of dog handler-dog and breeder-dog relationships. The intent of this probe is to explore human-dog interactions that have been shaped around the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. I explore the singular human-dog relationships, the human-

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breed relationships, and the human-dog relationship. This probe is conducted across a timeline of events; the preparation for *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, the competition, and after the dog show. Each segment of time encompasses different environments and opportunities for interaction between human and dogs. Video footage, images and interviews have been analyzed for the purpose of exploring the interactions between humans and dogs in this research paper. This research paper includes a video montage of many of the moments that are discussed in this research paper in order to allow readers to watch human-dog interactions as they take place. This video was created and edited with Apple Quicktime Player. This ethnographical probe has showcased common themes across human/dog interactions. Many of the interactions that were analyzed as part of this probe showcased characteristics of companionship style relationships. I also suggest that the relationships examined in this probe showed characteristics of a non-hierarchical relationship between humans and dogs. This probe aims to showcase the complexity of human-dog relationships across local and global contexts. Through this analysis, I will attempt to showcase that human-dog relationships are complex bonds that are shaped by the interconnectivity of histories and cultures. The relationships examined as part of this research paper showcase characteristics of companionship relationships between humans and dogs in the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*.

Donna Haraway (2003) has explored companion relationships between humans and dogs and uses the term significant otherness to describe the complexity of human-dog relationships grounded in co-evolution and co-histories (Haraway, 2003, p.12). She emphasizes that human-dog relationships are shaped by an immersing of practises and stories connected through histories of living labour, class formations, gender, sexual elaborations, and racial categories (Haraway, 2003, p. 96-97). This research paper intends to expand on the work of Haraway to showcase the complexity of the human-dog relationship by further identifying characteristics of human-dog relationships that may be unique in the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. This research paper is a probe into the companionship relationship of humans and dogs at the most monumental dog show in the world (often referred to as the Super Bowl for dogs) the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*.

The human-dog companionship relationships explored as part of this ethnographical probe are portrayed through human-dog interactions across various environments; such as at home, on the road and at dog shows. The *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* creates a variety of opportunities for human-dog interactions, both in and out of the competition ring. This research paper explores how human-dog companionship relationships are expressed throughout the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. Human-dog relationships outside of the competition are explored as part of this multi-species probe because of the time and dedication outside of the ring that encompasses the lives of competitors, human and dog.

It is important to observe human-dog relationships as they are acted out in the context of the dog competitions (ex. showing or agility) because this realm of competition spans globally and the breed standards enforced at dog shows help shape preserve images of dog breeds. Dog shows, like the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, showcase dogs of the highest breed

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standards that embody how breeding and breeds are perceived and understood by dog fanciers. In my analysis below, many of the people competing at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* emphasize their connectedness with their dogs through working to prepare and compete at this dog show. Although my work focuses on one dog show, I suggest that my findings may also provide some insight to human-dog relationships across other dog show settings.

History of Humans and Dogs

Humans and dogs have lived along side each other for approximately over 140'000 years (McHugh, 2004, p.16). Early skeletal records dating back to 150'000 years ago have shown hominids and wolves in close proximity with each other - suggesting that both species lived closely amongst one another for hundreds of thousands of years (Galibert et al, 2011, p. 191). Dog remains at a human burial site have been found in Germany, dating back to 14'000 years ago which suggests evidence that dogs could have worked alongside humans to help them hunt wildlife (Galibert et al, 2011, p.191). Archeologists have found dogs burial sites as early as 11'000 years ago in Utah, U.S.A (Galibert et al, 2011, p.191) which indicates a certain importance of dogs to humans at that time. It is not definitively clear how both species have come to co-habit with one another, however, it has been argued that feral dogs learned to scavenge food from villages, which initially put them in contact and allowed them to socialize with humans (Haraway, 2003, p.29). Overtime, humans and dogs have co-evolved (Haraway, 2003, p.29) and shaped each other through an inherited historical connectedness (Haraway, 2003, p 97-98). Dogs have accompanied humans across a variety of activities like hunting and herding. Humans initial relationships with dogs may have stemmed from being mutually benefitting to both species - for example partnership between humans and dogs for hunting animals as food could have contributed to the success of both species. Across time, as societies have evolved and new cultural norms developed, multi-species relationships have been shaped around the norms of society (Simon, 2015, p.29). The idea that human-dog relationships are malleable indicates the complexity of this multi-species relationship. This research paper will explore the way that human-dog relationships have been shaped in the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*.

A Brief History of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*

The *Westminster Kennel Club Dog show* first begun in 1877 (Westminster Kennel Club). Dog shows were becoming increasingly popular internationally (Westminster Kennel Club). It was three men sitting at a bar in Manhattan who considered that the city of New York was developing rapidly - making it an ideal time and place to host a dog show (Westminster Kennel Club). The expansion and success of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* reflected the development of what was becoming one of the worlds most well-known cities in the world (Westminster Kennel Club). The very first dog show hosted 1201 dogs at Gilmore's Garden in Manhattan (Westminster Kennel Club). Its success was immediate and *Forest and Stream* magazine produced the following quote "*To say that the dog show held in the city last week was a success would but poorly convey an idea of what the result really was. It was a magnificent*

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triumph for the dogs and for the projectors of the show. We question if on any previous occasion has there ever assembled in this city such a number of people at one time, and representing as much of the culture, wealth and fashion of the town” (Westminster Kennel Club). In the following years, the show’s popularity brought in dogs bred by the Queen of England, a Russian Czar and an Emperor of Germany (Westminster Kennel Club). The *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* grew to become the world’s most monumental dog show. It also pre-dates the *American Kennel Club* (AKC) by seven years and may have influenced the creation of the *AKC* (Westminster Kennel Club).

The Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show Today

Presently, the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* hosts approximately 3000 dogs per year (Westminster Kennel Club). It has more than doubled in competitors since the first competition in 1877 (Westminster Kennel Club). Each year, the Dog Show is comprised of three competitions; *Best in Show*, *Masters Agility* and *Masters Obedience* (Westminster Kennel Club). In the following paragraphs I will provide a brief overview of the competitions.

The *Best in Show* competition takes place over several days. In the preliminary rounds, dogs compete for the *Best in Breed*, meaning that they are judged on appearance based on how much they fit their breed standard (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 11:00-11:46). A breed standard is comprised of set guidelines of what specific breeds should look like physically and act like (personality) based on their breed. Once a dog is chosen to represent each best in breed, the winners move to the next round, *Best in Group* (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 11:00-11:46). *Best in Group* competition arranges dogs in groups of similar types of dogs based on appearance and characteristics to decide a winner of each group. Once again, the judging criteria is based on how well a dog represents their breed standards. There are seven groups; toy, working, herding, sporting, non-sporting, hound, terrier (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 11:00-11:46). The winners of each group compete at Madison Square Garden in New York City for title of *Best in Show* (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 11:00-11:46).

To compete at the *Masters Agility*, dogs to be invited to participate based on their ranking at other agility competitions and have earned a high enough title in agility to compete (Westminster Kennel Club). The Masters Agility competition hosts 330 dogs that compete in two qualifying rounds for a standard agility course and a jumpers with weaves course (Westminster Kennel Club). The top ten dogs that score the highest in both rounds within each of the five height classes will move on to the Championship Round (Westminster Kennel Club). Agility courses are comprised of a variety of obstacles like jumps, A-frames, weave poles, teeter-totters and tunnel (Haraway, 2003, p. 59). Dog handlers are given a few minutes prior to beginning the competition to walk through the course and devise a strategy for running the course, dogs do not get to see the course before they run it (Haraway, 2003, p. 59). Dogs rely on the commands and signals of their handlers to guide them through the course (Haraway, 2003, p.59).

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To compete at the *Masters Obedience*, dogs must earn points at obedience competitions throughout the year to be invited to compete at *Westminster* (Westminster Kennel Club). This ensures that the highest ranked dogs are invited to compete. Out of the 250 invitations sent out by the *Westminster Kennel Club*, the first 30 dogs confirmed for participation will be the ones to compete at the *Masters Obedience* (Westminster Kennel Club). The completion consists of two rounds. First, dogs compete in AKC Open and Utility exercises (Westminster Kennel Club). The exercises that dogs are tested on include; dropping on command, directed jumping, retrieving over a high jump, scent discrimination and group sit/stay exercises (Westminster Kennel Club). There are no winners chosen in the first round because all dogs and their handlers compete together in a second round where they perform a 6-minute routine to showcase the broad spectrum of obedience (Westminster Kennel Club). The routine is uniquely created by each handler to display the knowledge and obedience of their dog (Westminster Kennel Club).

This research paper will predominantly focus on the *Best in Show* competition because it is the most highlighted event of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* each year. The following paragraphs will be broken down into two sections. The first part of this research paper will consist of a probe into individual human-dog relationships of pairs competing at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. The second part of this research paper will be a probe into the relationship between humans and dogs on a larger scale by looking at the relationship between the biological species in the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*.

Part One: Handlers and their Canine Partners

Autonomy and Connectedness

Through the observations made in this probe, I suggest that the human-dog relationship based on companionship. It is far more complex than a product of domestication of dogs. This section focuses on singular human-dog relationships to showcase the complexity of emotional connectedness within these multi-species relationship. The following paragraphs explore the interactions between humans and their dogs to showcase this complexity. To succeed in competitions at *Westminster*, the connection between handlers and their dogs is part of the key to success (Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2019, 0:30-0:45). There needs to be an emotional bond between the handler and dog (Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2019, 0:30-0:45). This research paper identifies attributes, such as teamwork, autonomy and companionship that can be used to describe these relationships. In order to demonstrate how these attributes can be used to understand these relationships between dogs and their handlers I will begin by relying on Myrdene Anderson's concept of cotame relationships.

Anderson (1986) explores human-dog relationships through a spectrum of tameness and domestication (Anderson, 1986, p.5, FIGURE 1. A System Display of Domestication and Taming Relationships). She explores the human-dog relationships between the Indigenous Saami people

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and the herding dogs which they interact with. She explains that historically, feral dogs learned to participate in hunts with the Saami people (Anderson, 1986). This emerged into a relationship where humans and dogs could come together for the sport of hunting but have their independence from each other at other times - these relationships showcased contingent connectivity based on engagement of activities (Anderson, 1986).

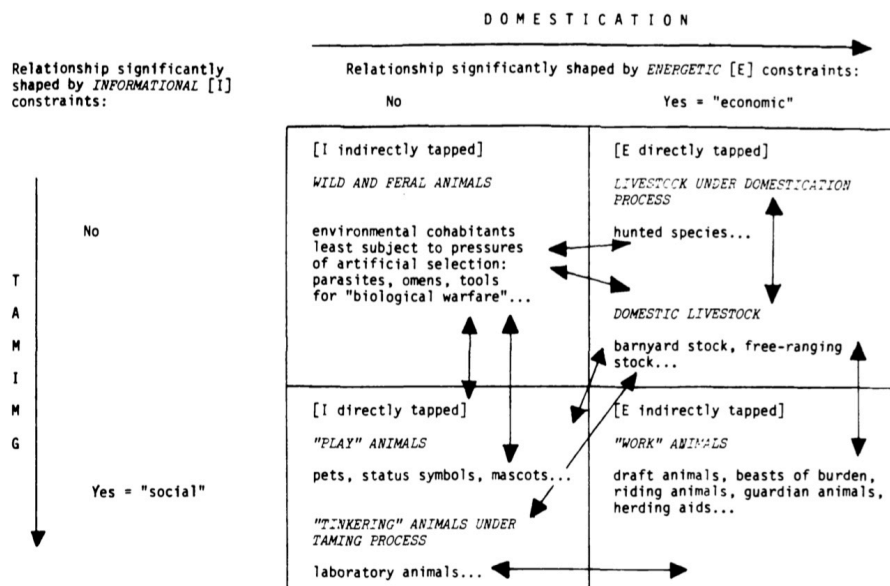
Anderson explains how taming and domestication are not unilateral with one another and they do not always happen deliberately by human action or choice (Anderson, 1986, p. 4-5). Domestication and taming of animals cannot be controlled because these multi-species relationships rely on phylogenetic and ontogenetic factors (information - the preadaptation for domestication, energy - investment into domestication) (Anderson, 1986, p.4-5). This means that certain animals have evolved to become more easily domesticated than others. By using the work of Anderson (1986) to state that human-animal relationships can be classified on continuums of domestication and taming it is possible for human-animal relationships to have characteristics of both (Anderson, 1986, p.4-5). Anderson (1986) suggests the relationships of Saami people and their herding dogs is a multi-species relationship that exhibits characteristics of taming. But, due to the individuality of each actor in the relationship, she uses the term 'cotame' to describe the complexity of the relationship and how the actors have willingly come together at times to participate in hunting together.

Anderson states that common conceptions of domestication are "*Involving artificial selection for desirable traits with humans in the position of control*" (Anderson, 1986, p. 3). However, this conception does not consider the autonomy or individuality of each individual within the relationship (Anderson, 1986, p.4). As Anderson exemplifies in the multi-species relationship between the Saami and the herding dogs, the dogs have autonomy. I suggest that this autonomy to act exemplifies a lack of control that the dog handler has over said dog. I rely on Anderson's use of the term 'cotame' to explore the individuality of each species within this multi-species relationship (Anderson, 1986, p.4-5). Anderson explores how the Saami people and the herding dogs are connected through interactions and activities but maintain a certain level of autonomy within their relationships (Anderson, 1986, p.3). She uses the concepts of cotaming to describe the relationship between the Saami people and the herding dogs. This relationship is *mutual* between dog and human. The herding dog and human are *in union* when they are working together, but when they are not working together, both species act autonomous of one another and are unconditionally attached to one another's actions (Anderson, 1986, p.10). This can be portrayed through how the dogs are raised almost like human children, they are not "trained" like most pets (Anderson, 1986, p.3). The pups are given lots of affection by the Saami people and the pups are encouraged when they exhibit independent and innovative behaviours (Anderson, 1986, p.10). A dog's success as a herding dog is determined by their own desires and initiatives (Anderson, 1986, p.10). Anderson also explains how a dog's initiative impacts the types of relationships they will form with humans and other dogs (Anderson, 1986, p.10).

Commonalities can be drawn between the Saami people and their dogs with handler-dog duos competing at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. Just as Anderson (1986) used the

term ‘cotame’ to describe human-dog relationships, there are parallels that can be drawn between her description of cotaming and to the human-dog relationships at *Westminster*. Anderson (1986) demonstrates that autonomy is a crucial component to the relationship between the Saami and their herding dogs that is attributable to the level of success that the pair will have as a herding team (Anderson, 1986, p.10). Through some of the video clips examined as part of this ethnographical probe, dog handlers have expressed ideas that reflect the autonomy their dog has and how their dog’s actions help contribute to their teamwork and successes at *Westminster*.

A System Display of Domestication and Taming Relationships, (Anderson, 1986, p.5, FIGURE 1. A System Display of Domestication and Taming Relationships



I suggest that dogs have the autonomy to choose work with their handlers during competition. Firstly, to demonstrate this, I use the example of Lobo the Siberian Husky and his handler Alan who compete at the *Westminster Master Agility Championship 2020*. Lobo begins the trial run ahead of his handler - he does not wait for Alan’s command to begin - he is distracted and pays little attention to Alan (Fox Sports, 2020, 0:28 - 0:44). Even after Alan is able to convince Lobo to listen to his commands, he is prompted to go through the weave poles, which he walks through slowly and the crowd laughs because it shows the dogs lack of cooperation to complete the course quickly (Fox Sports, 2020, 0:45 - 1:05). Lobo then walks away from the course as Alan calls him back (Fox Sports, 2020, 1:13 - 1:16). Lobo has no interest in his commands and jumps onto the course barrier to grab an object - perhaps he wanted to play (Fox Sports, 2020, 1:15 - 1:22). Lobo’s actions demonstrate the lack of willingness to want to work with his handler, no matter how many times Alan tried to call him back. The video of Lobo’s run shows the autonomy of his decision making - he chose not to run the course with Alan. He chose not to cooperate.

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In *Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* (2019) various interviews take place with the dog handlers and their dogs that explore their relationships with each other. There have been several instances where dog handlers discuss the perceived autonomy of their dog when discussing their dogs' behaviours while in competition. The examples I provide below explore how specific dog handlers perceive the teamwork between dog and handler in the context of competition. Through the examples provided below, many of the dog handlers state that their dogs want to work with them in competition, they *choose* to. I also use these examples to suggest that there is a certain level of autonomy that dogs and people have to choose to want to work together.

I begin with this example, in the documentary *Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* (2019) one of the dog handlers, Kim, is interviewed about her experiences competing with her dog, Louie, in the best in breed competition for the American Staffordshire Terrier Group. Kim describes how her dog is loved by her family and that he is a huge part of their life (*Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, 2019, 30:29-30:39). She states that she appreciates all the effort that her dog puts in every time they step into the show ring (*Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, 2019, 30:40-30:46). Kim's words showcase the love and importance of her dog, Louis, to her and her family. By stating that she appreciates the dog's efforts inside the show ring indicates that she believes her dog is consciously choosing to put in effort for her during competition. Kim, the dog handler goes on to say that despite losing best in breed, her dog competes purely just for her and that Louis knows that he made her proud (*Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, 2019, 31:10- 31:25). This shows that the handler, Kim, perceives her dog as having the intellectual ability to comprehend how to act in a way that makes his handler react positively. I cannot accurately state that dogs can understand complex human emotions, such as proud - however it should be acknowledged that maybe dogs can perceive human actions or emotions and learn to act in a way that evokes positive emotions or action by the human. The fact that the handler has acknowledged her dog's effort and actions as being his willingness to cooperate allows me to suggest the handler may believe the dog has the autonomy to act as he chooses during this competition.

To further exemplify the autonomy of competing dogs I draw on an example from two other dog handlers, a married couple named Katie and Adam who are interviewed in the *Westminster Kennel Club* documentary *Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. Katie and Adam explain how dogs choose the people they want to listen to or work well with (*Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, 2018, 2:55-3:18). In their past experiences handling dogs, they have found that certain dogs will work better with one human over another. They specifically refer to a Schnauzer that worked extremely well with Katie. They discussed how its important to find the dog that works consistently hard for you and "*pours his heart out for you*" (*Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, 2018, 2:55-3:18). The dog handlers interviewed demonstrate that through their experiences dogs have the ability to choose which handlers they want to work well with. This is an autonomous decision-making process that Katie and Adam have experienced in their careers as dog handlers.

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As part of the *Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* documentary the *Best of Terrier* group is shown competing at *Westminster* 2018. A Norwich Terrier named Winston wins and his handler, Ernesto, is interviewed after the competition. When Ernesto was asked about what convinced the judge to pick his Winston as the winner, he states that he had an idea of what Winston would do, but he just followed in the dogs lead (*Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, 2018, 35:55-36:04). Ernesto's statement has indicated that their success is due to a level of trust to act together between the dog and the handler. This shows the freedom to act as individuals working together.

The above paragraphs provided some insight of dog handlers' perceptions towards their dogs. The statements made by the dog handlers have lead me to suggest that the dog handlers in the above analysis consider their dogs autonomous agents within their human-dog relationships that have the ability to act as they choose. The initiative to work cooperatively with a human is the decision of the dog. This demonstrates the autonomy that dogs have within their relationships with humans.

In Myrdene Anderson's (1986) *From Predator to Pet: Social Relationships of the Saami Reindeer-Herding Dog*, she discusses the autonomy of the herding dog as a component of the cotame relationship between human and dog. The autonomy is a projection of the Saami people onto the herding dogs that cohabit amongst them (Anderson, 1986, p.3). Based on the above interviews with dog handlers competing at *Westminster*, the dog handlers' descriptions of their relationships with their dogs indicate that they project a certain level of autonomy onto their dogs and through dogs' willingness to want to work with their handlers. Similarly to the Saami herding dogs that are autonomous agents connected to humans through the actions of herding (Anderson, 1986, p.10), I suggest that show dogs are also autonomous agents that choose which humans they want to work with and when. This partnership requires the willing cooperation by both agents. It is a non-hierarchical and mutually cooperative relationship.

The previous paragraphs have showcased autonomy of dogs within the human-dog relationship as part of a contingently connected relationship - however this is only part of what it means to be cotame. Anderson states that "*Especially in the intimacy of taming an animal, however, the "tamer" is obviously integral to the process, and it is consequently a larger social relationship which is "tame," not the targeted animal. Neither taming nor domestication are or can be totally unilateral, deliberate or controlled*" (Anderson, 1986, p.4). This is why Anderson uses the word cotame to encompass the idea that taming is relative to social structure and the agents within the relationship. To further compare the work of Anderson (1986) and the relationships of dogs and their handlers, I next want to emphasize the connectedness of human and dog. Anderson states that autonomy is a relative construct that based on the dissipation of social norms (Anderson, 1986, p.4). She shows that dogs and humans are *unconditionally connected* through the actions in which they participate (Anderson, 1986, p.10). In the case of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, I aim to showcase the connectedness of the human-dog relationship through the actions in which humans and dogs participate.

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I begin with showing how connection is important to obtaining success at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. In *Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. The documentary introduces Wilma the Boxer and her handler. In the documentary they are seen competing at the *Best in Breed* competition for the Boxer group (*Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2019, 28:30-29:12*). Her handler explains what he think is an important part of their success. The handler states that “*You have to be one with your dog, if I move the leash a certain way she knows what that means.*”(Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2019, 28:46-28:55). Immediately after the handler makes this statement, he and Wilma are awarded *Best in Breed* (*Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2019, 28:55-29:12*). The documentary suggests that their teamwork had paid off and helped result in their win. The documentary shows footage of Wilma and her handler prancing around the show ring prior to winning best in breed - their connectedness is made apparent by the eye contact they make and by how gracefully they move together (*Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2019, 28:30-29:12*). Connectedness is part of the key to success.



Wilma and her handler competing at Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2020. ("The Latest: Wilma the boxer wins Westminster working group", 2020).

In another example, one of the dog handlers in this documentary, Laurie, prepares to show her Akita, Nik, as one of the finalist for best in breed. As they prepare for the show, she indicates that Akita's are a unique breed of dog because if you can get into their heads and hearts then you can get anything from them (*Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2019, 30:45- 30:52*). This statement from Laurie emphasizes the importance of having a relationship where the dog and handler are connected in order to be able to work together during competition.

Next, I aim to focus on the importance of handler/dog connectedness during competition. For this, I focus on agility competitions because of the demand for cooperation between dog and handler in order to succeed (Flaim, 2020). During agility, the dogs are required to use their knowledge to maneuver through the obstacles of the course, but the handlers are responsible providing commands so that the dog knows which obstacle to encounter next (Flaim, 2020). The

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American Kennel Club comments on the importance of connectivity and teamwork required to succeed at agility, “*After all, the secret sauce in agility, as in any canine sports, is intense teamwork across two species, so that canine contestants take the right obstacle, in the right order, from the right direction. Without that, even the fastest dog is just a ricocheting ping-pong ball.*” (Flaim, 2020). This statement indicates the necessity for cooperation between handler and dog that is needed for the sport of agility.

In the *Best of Masters Agility Championship at Westminster*, Border Collie, P!nk, and handler Jennifer Crank are seen competing in the *Best of Masters Agility*. During their run, P!nk and Jennifer win the 2020 Grand Champion title and they score within the top 50 fastest runs ever completed at *Westminster* (Best of Masters Agility Championship at Westminster, 2020, 11:47 - 12:00). For some people, this could be considered a huge achievement. During their run, the intense focus they have on one another is demonstrated through their constant communication and attentiveness of one another. Jennifer shouts commands at P!nk, like “*Tunnel!*” to indicate to P!nk to enter the long tunnel after she completes jumping over several obstacles (Best of Masters Agility Championship at Westminster, 2020, 5:28 - 5:31). P!nk is constantly communicating back to Jennifer in barks - she barks as she weaves through every pole in the obstacle course (Best of Masters Agility Championship at Westminster, 2020, 5:09 - 5:12). After P!nk and Jennifer complete their run, one of the interviewers speaking with Jennifer makes a remark about how talkative P!nk is as being a sign that P!nk really loves competing (Best of Masters Agility Championship at Westminster, 2020, 6:49 - 6:53). Jennifer states that the dog’s name is P!nk because she is named after the singer and she sings all the way through obstacle courses (Best of Masters Agility Championship at Westminster, 2020, 6:54 - 7:00). The way that P!nk interacts with her handler through constant verbal communication as they run agility can be used to suggest that communication is a sign of cooperation and in this particular scenario, their communication may have helped them to achieve one of the fastest runs in *Westminster* history.

However, P!nk is only one of several dogs that communicates with their handler as they compete in agility. Punk, the golden retriever (Best of Masters Agility Championship at Westminster, 2020, 9:21 - 10:24), Dig-it, border collie (“2014 Dig It as Westminster”, 2014) and Boca the Australian Shepherd (Fox Sports, 2019, 0:20 - 1:00) also continually bark to communicate with their handlers as they run through agility courses. These examples of verbal communication may be an indication of intertwined cooperation of handlers and dogs when competing at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*.

The examples provided above help demonstrate the connectivity of dog handlers and dogs as they compete in agility at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. I suggest that the verbal communication of humans and dogs as they compete together showcases how they are focused on one another and connected in their actions. Previously, I suggested that dogs and handlers have a certain level of autonomy that allows them to choose whether or not to cooperate with one another. The examples of dogs communicating with their owners as they run suggests that when each actor in the human-dog relationship does choose to work with one another that cooperation is exemplified through their interactions. Specifically, P!nk and her handler set a

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record time for running agility at *Westminster* and they were in continual communication with one another throughout their run. This is similar to the relationships described by Anderson (1986) between humans and dogs where they came together to for the mutual purpose of hunting. I suggest that the human-dog relationships can also be considered cotame relationships that are contingent upon a 'coming together' in certain situations.

In *Training Dogs to Feel Good: Embodying Well-being in Multispecies Relations*, Natalie Porter (2018) uses personal dog training experiences to state that wellbeing within the human-dog relationship is contingent upon the suspension of autonomy that allows them to be shaped by emotions and actions. She states, "*Cultivating a dog's well-being involves managing, or shaping, their corporeal responses to their material and social worlds, which includes the humans whose bodies and lives they are entangled with*" (Porter, 2018, p. 133). She argues that in order for dogs to experience wellbeing, humans cannot subject them to their own wants and desires, but rather connect with a dog by learning to understand their emotions and actions (Porter, 2018, p.112 & 113). Porter's views on human-dog relationships can be used to describe Jennifer's interactions with her Border Collie, P!nk. Her relationship with P!nk involves training the her how to act during competition. Part of this training involves Jennifer shaping her actions (vocal commands and gestures) to work with P!nk, and P!nk shaping her actions by listening to Jennifer's commands to understand what obstacle to overcome in what order. By learning to work through an agility course together they have the opportunity to learn from each other's actions and emotions. I suggest that their connectivity is exemplified through their success in agility trials. As P!nk is featured jumping into Jennifer's arms for a strong embrace and after completing a successful trial run shows suggests that they are connected through their emotions and actions (Best of Masters Agility Championship at Westminster, 2020, 5:34 - 5:43). Jennifer's actions and emotions are channeled through her commands to indicate which obstacles P!nk must maneuver through next. Similarly to many handlers and their dogs, P!nk and Jennifer can be seen as examples of Porter's conceptions of connectivity through care. They are connected through the desire to want to communicate and work together as a team does. Porter reflects on the work of Vinciane Despret (2004) to state that the most successful human-dog relationships are based on trust (Porter, 2018, p. 113). The trust comes from allowing each actor in the relationship to affect each other's actions and emotions (Despret, 2004, p. 115) - just as P!nk and Jennifer affect each other's actions and emotions when they work together as a team to complete an agility trial.

In *The Body We Care For: Figures of Anthro-zoo-genises* by Vinciane Despret (2004), uses the story of a man, Lorenz, and a goose to explain how multi-species relationships are based on the willingness to be affected by each others actions and emotions. This willingness is part of a multi-species approach that is influenced by actors immersing themselves in a new identity created by the desire of each species to interact (Despret, 2004, p.129). The relationship between Lorenz and his goose was a mutual adoption of one another (Despret, 2004, p.129). Despret identified how the goose was dependent on Lorenz because she treated him like his mother and Lorenz wanted to act as her mother (Despret, 2004, p.129). Much like Lorenz and his goose, dog handlers and their dogs competing in agility often times demonstrate the willingness to come

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together to work cooperatively together, to make it through an agility course. Despret described the anthropomorphism of this type of multi-species relationship as, “*being anthropomorphic means here to add new definitions to what it is to be a human being. Lorenz adds new meanings to love, and new identities that provide these new meanings.*” (Despret, 2004, p.130). I suggest that through the sport of agility, relationships like the one between Jennifer and P!nk represents Despret’s idea that multi-species relationships can be comprised of individual beings coming together to create a new identity based on their connection of emotions and actions. In this case I suggests that P!nk and Jennifer have created a common identity as an agile duo barreling through the obstacles of the agility course. The connectivity needed in order to succeed at agility might indicate a close intertwining of human and dog because of the immense focus on one another that they need to have.

I have used examples from human-dog dyads at *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* to demonstrate that dogs have autonomy within their relationships with their handlers. I suggest that this is evident through their right to chose whether or not to cooperatively engage in competition as a team with their handlers. This ability to choose to cooperate can be seen as an unconditional connectedness while competing together. Especially in agility, this cooperation is demonstrated through human and dogs’ connected focus, movements and communication with one another. The examples provided above portray relationships that are similar to the relationships of the Saami people and their herding dogs. Just as Anderson (1986) uses the term *cotame* to describe human-dog relationships between the Saami people and their herding dogs, I suggest that the individual relationships of dogs and handlers at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* can also be considered *cotame* relationships. Similar to the relationships described by Anderson (1986), handlers and dogs are autonomous agents that willingly come together to work together as a team to compete at *Westminster*. I suggest that this relationship cannot be considered domestication because dog’s autonomous decision to cooperate with their handler does not showcase an unequal relationship that would be a common component of domestication. In fact, through the work of Porter (2018) I suggest that the human-dog relationship has emotional implications that are portrayed through humans and dogs wanting to work for each other. I also suggest that this intertwining of emotions and actions is part of a greater anthropozoogenesis. Competitions like agility portray humans and dogs merging into a newly combined identity where their success hinges on their ability to work together.

The Companionship Relationship

In the previous section I have established that the human-dog relationship is one where the humans and dogs are intertwined in their emotions and actions. I now aim to further explore the connectedness of handlers and dogs through exploring the companionship and affection that dogs and handlers share with one another. For this, I draw on the work of Donna Haraway’s *Companion Species Manifesto*. In this manifesto, Haraway grapples with describing the complexity of the human-dog relationship (Haraway, 2003). She describes the connectedness of the human-dog relationship through stating:

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There cannot be just one companion species; there have to be at least two to make one. It is in the syntax; it is in the flesh. Dogs are about the inescapable, contradictory story of relationship - co-constitutive relationships in which none of the partners pre-exist the relating, and the relating is never done once and for all. Historical specificity and contingent mutability rule all the way down, into nature and culture, into naturecultures. There is no foundation; there are only elephants supporting elephants all the way down (Haraway, 2003, p.12).

Based on the above paragraph, Haraway uses the term natureculture to describe how human-dog relationships are based on the relativeness of the actors within the relationships (Haraway, 2003, p.12). This means that humans and dogs relationships are shaped by their intertwined histories and evolution (Haraway, 2003, p.12). She uses the term '*companion species*' to describe this multi-species relationship (Haraway, 2003, p.6). Haraway states that human-dog relationships are the evolving product of intertwined histories and evolutions (each relationship shaped by factors much larger than in and of itself) (Haraway, 2003, p.6). Humans and dogs are bonded significant otherness to one another (Haraway, 2003, p.16). Haraway problematizes infantilizing dogs because the relationship one shares with their dog is different than the companionship one shares with their children (Haraway, 2003, p. 95-96). She states that "*We need other nouns and pronouns for the kin genres of companion species, just as we did (and still do) for the spectrum of genders* (Haraway, 2003, p.96). I suggest that a family has evolved to sometimes include dogs and their owners and it is the creation of inherited histories that are lived out in the companion species relationships of humans and dogs (Haraway, 2003, p.96). Based on the examples provided below, I suggest that dogs have obtained their places in the homes of many humans and have become unique members of the family. I attempt to further Haraway's exploration of this companionship species relationship by observing interactions between dogs and their handlers, during and outside of the *Westminster Dog Show* to explore how companionship can be described through these relationships.

I draw attention to dog handler Esteban Farais, who has been showing dogs since he was ten years old (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 12:27-12:31). Esteban and his Pug named Biggie are shown in multiple *Westminster Kennel Club* documentaries. There is a variety of footage that showcases the connectedness between Esteban and Biggie. However, I will focus on the footage from *Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* because this documentary paints a coherent story of Biggie and Esteban's experiences at the 2018 *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*.

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Biggie and Esteban Farias winning Best in Toy Group at *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, 2018 (Press, 2018)

In *Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, Esteban talks about his life with Biggie the Pug. Biggie came into his life after he experienced the loss of his previous dog (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 12:30-12:12:38). Esteban explains that Biggie has filled the house with love (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 12:33-12:12:45). As Esteban says this, Biggie is shown sitting on his lap getting petted by Esteban, while Esteban's young child muzzles her face into Biggie and gives him a hug (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 12:30-12:12:36). Biggie receives affection from his family. As Esteban speaks about the love that Biggie has given to their family, he begins to tear up and states that he is getting emotional (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 12:44 - 12:47). The documentary goes on to show a variety of photos of Biggie with Esteban and his family. Biggie is seated on Esteban's lap in some of the photos and in others, Esteban's children are shown giving Biggie affection (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 13:00 - 13:17). In the documentary, a photo is shown of Esteban and his wife and children on the couch watching television together. Biggie is nestled in-between the entire family (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 13:04 - 13:07). Biggie also joins when the family plays soccer together outside (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 13:06-13:09). Esteban states that him and Biggie have a very tight connection ((Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 13:13 - 13:17).

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Esteban Farais, his family and Biggie the Pug watching Television Together (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 13:04 - 13:07).



Esteban is interviewed in between competitions at Westminster where he explains how much he cares about Biggie. He explains that the opportunity to win *Westminster* is very special because Biggie and Esteban are so bonded together and he loves Biggie so much (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 18:25 - 18:36).

As Biggie and Esteban later go onto compete in the best in group, their family is shown in the stands, cheering them on (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 21:48 - 22:01). Esteban's daughter cheers and claps for Biggie (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 21:48 - 22:01). Biggie and Esteban showcase their connectedness during competition as they maneuver together in front of the judge - their eyes focused on each other (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 22:02 - 22:11). Their family screams and cheers when Biggie wins the best in group and Esteban's wife is seen tearing up at the sight of their triumph (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 22:20 - 22:32). After an emotional win, Esteban explains that Biggie helped him calm down during the competition (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 22:47 - 22:55). Biggie is shown receiving hugs from Esteban's daughters after his win (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 22:55 - 22:58).

Biggie and Esteban go on to compete at the *Best in Show*. They do not win the *Best in Show* competition and their time at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* of 2018 is finished (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 40:38 - 40:41). After the competition, Biggie is pictured with Esteban and his wife and kids. Esteban states that he would like to thank Biggie for taking care of his family in the way that he does (family is pictured

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kissing and hugging Biggie (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 42:33 - 42:40).

Biggie and Esteban portray connectivity and affection in their relationship. This is exemplified through the way that they interact with one another during and outside of competition. They are connected in their actions through the activities that they willingly choose to do together (cuddle, play soccer, etc.). As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, Esteban states numerous times throughout the documentary how much Biggie means to him and his family. Biggie is constantly shown cuddling up and spending time with his family. The documentary showcases how close Biggie and his handler, Esteban are (as well as with the rest of Esteban's family).

In this documentary, Esteban does not infantilize Biggie. He never refers to Biggie as his child. Based on the paragraphs above, Biggie acts as a member of the family; showing affection to each family member and continually participating in activities with the family. Esteban expresses how important Biggie is to the family, but I suggest that Biggie's place in the family is not as a child. His place in the family is unique because as a purebred *American Kennel Club* affiliated Pug (Hill Country Pugs), Biggie is the product of years of selective breeding to adhere to the breed standards of the Pug (Haraway, 2003, p.67). Children are not selectively bred based on years of attempting to rear parents with specific desired genetics together. As Haraway describes, the human-dog relationship is significant in its own way and cannot be compared to the relationship one has with one's child (Haraway, 2003, p. 37). Even though, Biggie is featured spending time with Esteban's children, he does not draw resemblance between Biggie and his children in the documentary. Haraway also notes that "...*play between humans and pets, as well as simply spending time peaceably hanging out together brings joy to all participants. Surely that is one important meaning of companion species.*" (Haraway, 2003, p.38). The examples above that I have showcased of Biggie playing and spending time with Esteban and his family lead me to suggest that Biggie and Esteban closely fit how Donna Haraway describes the companion species relationship. Esteban's actions show that he acknowledges the special relationship that he and Biggie share. After being eliminated at the *Best in Show* competition in 2018, Esteban thanks Biggie for taking care of his family in the way that he does (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 42:33 - 42:40). I suggest that this statement shows that Biggie is a companion to this family, but he is also emotionally connected to the family emotionally as he "*takes care*" of them. Biggie and Esteban's relationship cannot be solely defined by their partnership in the show ring. They may be connected through actions during competition, but I argue that outside of the competition they are connected emotionally. Esteban states that Biggie has filled his house with love (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 12:33-12:12:45). Their relationship is that of a companion species relationship.

Handlers and their Canine Partners

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Through the above analysis, I have attempted to draw resemblance to previous work on multi-species relationships to showcase the complexity of individual human-dog relationships as they exist within the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. I have suggested that these relationships cannot be described as products of domestication of dogs because these relationships contain autonomous actors that are joined by the willingness to cooperate. This can be exemplified through the connectivity of their actions and emotions. I further suggest that it may be a companionship style relationship that describes the relationship between the handlers and dogs who compete at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*.

Part Two: The Big Picture

This section of the research paper focuses on the human-dog relationship at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* as a relationship between biological species. I first rely on the work of Ritvo (1986) to explore the co-evolutions of humans and dogs through the evolution of dog breeding. I use the example of the evolution of the bulldog breed to demonstrate how social factors shape the way that humans and specific breeds have interacted. I also discuss the breeding of dogs as a form of biopower that I suggest can be done out of the love for a breed or species. I use the work of Parreñas (2012) to understand the affect produced between human-dog relationships. I also rely on Despret's (2004) conception of anthropo-zoo-genesis to suggest that the affect produced between humans and dogs can be indicative of an anthropo-zoo-genesis between humans and dogs. I also explore what this multi-species relationship looks like on a local and global level. This section explores human relationships with breeds as well as dogs in general. It is important to look at this multi-species relationship from a global level because as Haraway notes these relationships are shaped by connected immersive social implications and histories (Haraway, 2003, p. 96-97). Therefore, I look beyond the individual relationships of handlers and their dogs to explore the larger social structures that shape these companionship relationships. Part two of this research paper explores two levels of companionship extending beyond individualized relationships; the human-breed relationship and the human-dog relationship, (meaning the biological species of dogs).

Human-Breed Relationships

In this section I explore the process of breeding dogs and the different social aspects that have allowed breeding to be considered positive and negative by many dog enthusiasts. I explore breeding as an act of love for the breed, and as an act that can be potentially harmful to dogs. For the purpose of this research paper, a breed is "*a subspecies or race with definable physical characteristics that will be reliably reproduced in the offspring of interbreed matings*" (Ritvo, 1986, p. 235). The following paragraphs explore the importance of breeding as it has evolved through the history of dog showing.

A Brief History into the Commencement of Dog Showing

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I begin this section with a review of Harriet Ritvo's *Pride and Pedigree* (1986) because it describes how dog showing and breeding has evolved. I focus on the history of breeding in order to better understand the human-dog relationship in the context of dog-showing as it has historically evolved. Ritvo (1986) explains that as breeding evolved, it presented various issues which I will discuss in the paragraphs below. Ritvo (1986) uses the example of the evolution of the Bulldog to showcase how this breed has been largely shaped by different social classes to become the dog that it is today.

In England, dog breeding became very popular in the 19th century (Ritvo, 1986, p. 227). Historically, dog breeding evolved as a way to reflect social status of people through the types of dogs they owned (Ritvo, 1986, p.227-228). Purebred dogs were seen as objects of high status (Ritvo, 1986, p.227). The type of dog someone owned also guided what types of leisurely activity one would partake in with their dog (Ritvo, 1986, p.228). For example, activities that were considered cruel to dogs, like bull baiting, were seen as the leisurely activities often participated in by the rural and urban working classes (Ritvo, 1986, p.228). Breeding and showing pedigree animals became an activity that people of different classes would come together and participate in (Ritvo, 1986, p. 229). It was an activity that segregated the different social classes in society because the quality of each animal reflected the standards of the owner (Ritvo, 1986, p. 229). Ritvo states that:

On the whole, middle-class pet owners were more anxious about the public standing of their dogs, and they wished to have their excellence proclaimed as loudly and as frequently as possible. Urban fanciers were apt to be more exclusively concerned with appearance than gentry whose dogs were at least supposed to participate in outdoor sports. And appearance was both more easily manipulable through breeding and a more reliable index of pedigree than behaviour. (Ritvo, 1986, p.240)

Selective breeding began to evolve as people recognized the importance of breeding animals with desired qualities (Ritvo, 1986, p. 231). There became a growing demand to know an animal's pedigree so that people could feel confident in the quality of the animal that they were purchasing (Ritvo, 1986, p. 231-232). Part of growing a strong pedigree meant not eliminating animals with less desirable traits from the gene pool (Ritvo, 1986, p. 232).

In the nineteenth century, the concept of different dog breeds began to emerge (Ritvo, 1986, p. 236-237). Dog breeds were initially characterized by their functions rather than by their appearances (Ritvo, 1986, p. 237). Dog breeding began increasing in popularity as people recognized the importance of breeding high quality dogs (Ritvo, 1986, p. 241). However, as dog breeding and showing became increasingly popular, issues with breeding fraud began to arise (Ritvo, 1986, p. 241). Disreputable dog breeders identified that cash value of high quality dogs and attempted to sell inferior dogs to unsuspecting persons (Ritvo, 1986, p. 241). As a response to this, the first *Kennel Club* was formed in 1873 to attempt to preserve the reputation of dog shows (Ritvo, 1986, p. 241). *The Kennel Club* "developed an interlocking system of shows and

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registration, designed to limit competition to a carefully screened segment of the canine and, implicitly, the human population” (Ritvo, 1986, p. 241). In 1874, the first Stud Book was created that documented the dogs that had been shown in shows since 1859 (Ritvo, 1986, p. 241). It became a way to track the pedigree of dogs (Ritvo, 1986, p. 242).

The first large dog show took place in London, in 1863 (Ritvo, 1986, p. 240). It created an opportunity for dog owner’s to compete for the best dogs. Dog showing became increasingly popular in London after that, drawing in between 1500 - 2000 competitors in each show (Ritvo, 1986, p. 240). As dog showing became popular, there were tensions surrounding which dogs should be included at dog shows (Ritvo, 1986, p. 242). Some people felt that non-sporting dogs should not be included in dogs shows (Ritvo, 1986, p. 242). Non-sporting dogs were associated as being dogs that occupied women, but had no real usefulness (Ritvo, 1986, p. 242).

Evolution of the Bulldog Breed

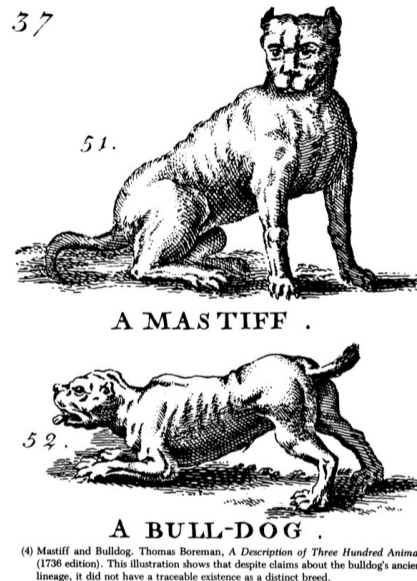
Historically, the introduction of bulldogs as pedigree show dogs is a prime example of the a human-dog relationship that was shaped by the perceptions of different social classes (Ritvo, 1986, p. 245). Ritvo explains:

The history of the bulldog and the bulldog fancy in the nineteenth century epitomized the way in which pedigreed dogs could represent the aspirations of their compulsively respectable owners. A fighting dog with the lowest social associations until mid-century, by 1880 it had become the darling of the refined and fashionable. Its new advocates not only equipped the bulldog with an improved character, but they remodelled its appearance and rewrote its history. (Ritvo, 1986, p. 245).

The bulldog was traditionally a breed that was associated with the lower-class activity of bullbaiting (Ritvo, 1986, p. 245). However, overtime the bulldog breed evolved to become a dog that was associated with upper-class dog fanciers in England (Ritvo, 1986, p. 245). Even as bulldogs grew in popularity, breeders began to professionally breed them, but for a long time bulldog breeders were associated with the lower-class of people who fancied dogs (Ritvo, 1986, p. 247).

Breeders began to contemplate what features made the bulldog breed a distinguished breed. Overtime, it became apparent that the traits that were considered to resemble bulldogs were indistinguishable among other breeds, specifically the Mastiff (Ritvo, 1986, p. 247). Bulldog fanciers organized a Bulldog Club in order to protect, define and preserve the breed (Ritvo, 1986, p. 250). The group worked to distinguish themselves from the people who still considered bulldogs to be fighting dogs (Ritvo, 1986, p. 250). Bulldog fanciers worked to change people’s negative opinions about bulldogs through highlighting the positive aspects of their characteristics (Ritvo, 1986, p. 250). For example, due to their traditional use for bullbaiting, Bulldogs were generally very courageous dogs as well (Ritvo, 1986, p. 250).

Mastiff and Bulldog (Ritvo, 1986, p. 248)



Overtime, bulldogs transitioned from being a dog associated with the lower-class activity of bullbaiting (Ritvo, 1986, p. 245) to becoming conflated with being one of the national symbols of England (Ritvo, 1986, p. 250). Bulldog ownership began to expand out of England and English people began to document that high quality bulldogs could only come from the British Isles - they began to defend the purity of the breed as stemming from this particular geographical area (Ritvo, 1986, p. 251).

Overtime, the Bulldog began to be disassociated with its historically aggressive past and began to be molded into a breed with specific standards and characteristics (Ritvo, 1986, p. 252). In present day, the Westminster Kennel Club states this about the Bulldog:

Despite common misconception this breed is simply called the ‘Bulldog’, not English, nor British. In contrast to his historical beginnings, today’s Bulldog is fun-loving, affectionate and well-rounded. Though originally bred for the brutal sport of bull baiting, today the Bulldog is represented in the ‘Non Sporting Group’ which is comprised of multi-purpose companionable breeds. With his classic, beloved sour-mug and his sturdy, muscular frame he has been selected the perfect mascot for many sports teams and businesses. He is often owner-handled in the show ring due to his less complex grooming needs and more unique presentation style. (Westminster Kennel Club, 2016).

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The *Westminster Kennel Club's* description of the Bulldog also demonstrates how the Bulldog can be used to exemplify how breeds have been shaped by their cohistories alongside humans. Just as Ritvo (1986) explains, the *Westminster Kennel Club* also identifies that perception of the breed has changed from being a part of a brutal sport to being a companion to humans. As Haraway (2003) explains, human-dog relationships are shaped by their cohistories. The history of the Bulldog breed exemplifies how the activities that humans and dog's partake in overtime can influence the way that they relate to one another. I use the example of the bulldog breed to suggest that the cohistories of humans and dogs has been shaped by the cultural factors surrounding breeding. The qualities sought out by breeding have been shaped by the cultural factors that surround them. The image of the bulldog was manipulated overtime to suit the changing opinions around bullbaiting. The image of the bulldog was refined to become an English icon. The following paragraphs explore the work of Haraway (2003) to explore the human-bulldog cohistory.



The present day Bulldog, Canadian Kennel Club Registered Bulldog (Bulldog, Canadian Kennel Club)

Cohistories

I now use the work of Harriet Ritvo's *Pride and Pedigree* (1986) and compare it to Donna Haraway's *Companion Species Manifesto* (2003) to demonstrate how historically human-dog relationships have been shaped relative to breeding and dog showing. I draw on specific examples from the breeding of bulldogs as it has been described by Ritvo (1986).

Donna Haraway uses the term cohistory to explore how the human-dog companion species relationship has been shaped historically by contingent foundations (Haraway, 2003, p. 12). She argues that to understand the human-dog relationship, it needs to be viewed historically (Haraway, 2003, p. 3). I explore how breeding and dog showing in relation to the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* are important for understanding how human-dog relationships have evolved in this context overtime.

Based on *Pride and Pedigree* (1986), human-dog relationships have in part been shaped by class structures and the social norms that are associated with different classes. This can be exemplified through the way that social class impacted what types of activities one would partake in with their dogs (Ritvo, 1986, p. 228 - 229). Activities like bullbaiting were usually enjoyed by lower-class members of society (Ritvo, 1986, p. 245). Meanwhile, middle and upper-

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class dog fanciers participated in dog showing in order to showcase the high qualities of their dogs (Ritvo, 1986, p. 237 & 240). The sport of dog showing has grown into an internationally popular sport that has allowed for humans and dogs to come together and work together in the show ring. I draw specific attention to the history of the Bulldog which I suggest is important for understanding Haraway's idea of the significance of cohistories in the evolution of human-dog relationships. The human-Bulldog relationship as described by Ritvo (1986) was shaped by the social factors surrounding sport. The human-Bulldog relationship changed as a result of the changing social beliefs. Bullbaiting was once a sport that was enjoyed by people perceived as the English lower-class (Ritvo, 1986, p. 245) and overtime animal welfare became more of a prevalent concern in society. The changing opinions of society prompted bullbaiting to end and the Bulldog became a symbol tied to English nationalism (Ritvo, 1986, p. 250). The negative perception of the breed evolved as the breed began to become distinguished with the present day image of the bulldog. I suggest that through the information provided above, social class has shaped the types of dogs that humans own, as well as what activities they participate in with their dogs. However, Ritvo (1986) also indicated that dog shows were a space where middle class people could transcend class barriers if they had a high quality dog. I now show how that idea can be applied to the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*.

Ascending Class Barriers through Dog Ownership

The dog show ring is a space that provides the opportunity for dogs and their handlers to transcend the social economic barriers that may otherwise categorize them in other social situations. For example, In the Netflix documentary, *7 Days Out*, dog handler, Mike Gowen, is featured stating that he is a middle aged, out of shape man without a lot of money (an average person) and at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* he feels that he has the opportunity to excel because of his dog, Emmy the Harrier (Westminster Dog Show, *7 Days Out*, 2018, 23:33 - 23:05). Emmy won a *Best of Breed* title in 2018 (Westminster Dog Show, *7 Days Out*, 2018, 24:02 - 23:59). Mike states that because of Emmy, his life has completely changed (Westminster Dog Show, *7 Days Out*, 2018, 23:33 - 23:05). Although a singular experience, Mike's thoughts provide some insight towards experiences of dog handlers competing at *Westminster*. His experience suggests that the *Westminster Kennel Club* may be a space where dog handlers can transcend perceived social class barriers by competing with high quality dogs. This suggests that the ability to make this ascension of social barriers is present within the context of dog showing.

Pembroke Welsh Corgi breeder, Bill Shelton is featured in an interview with the *Westminster Kennel Club* to discuss his love for the breed. Bill mentions that he has been involved with dogs his entire life (Breeder Series: Bill Shelton, 2017, 0:33 - 0:39). Bill states that he has dedicated his life to the sport of purebred dogs (Breeder Series: Bill Shelton, 2017, 0:37 - 0:43). He explains what he loves about dogs, it is that they have tenacity and do not take no for an answer, they find the person that will give them what they want (Breeder Series: Bill Shelton, 2017, 0:50 - 1:06). He relates dogs' tenacity and love for life to his personal experiences growing up in a lower middle class family where dog showing was an activity that he could excel at (anyone can do it and do it well) (Breeder Series: Bill Shelton, 2017, 1:06 - 1:40). Bill

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Shelton's interview provides another insight towards how dog showing can be a means of transcending class barriers with the teamwork of a high quality dog.

Based on the examples provided above, there is some indication that the ascension of class barriers may still be relevant to present day dog showing competitions, specifically within the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. I suggest that the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* is a space where social economic class barriers are suspended and allows people who consider themselves lower or middle class to become the best in the show ring.

Cohistories and Dog Breeds

The history of the human-bulldog relationship exemplifies how human-dog relationships are contingent foundations that are shaped by their relativeness to other factors, like history, leisure and social class. For example, the physical features that are still common to the Bulldog today have been influenced by the activity of bullbaiting because Bulldogs were initially bred to have physical characteristics that were advantageous for this sport (*Canadian Kennel Club*). Bulldog fanciers have attempted to preserve and protect the look of the breed overtime as a symbol of English history (Ritvo, 1986, p. 250). Humans' relationship with the Bulldog is an example of how contingent cultural factors, like popular leisure activities, have helped shape the way in which humans and bulldogs relate to one another. In the present day, bullbaiting is seen as inhumane and is no longer the popular sport that it used to be. The negative perception associated with the Bulldog breed has changed overtime and Bulldogs are appreciated for their unique appearances and companionate personalities (*Canadian Kennel Club*). The work done to preserve the original look of the breed has influenced the development of the Bulldog's breed standards and has encouraged humans to form companionate relationships with these dogs after they became less associated with bullbaiting (Ritvo, 1986, p. 250 & *Westminster Kennel Club*, 2016). I suggest that this disassociation encouraged humans and Bulldogs to form relationships in the context of pet ownership and in some cases companionship.

My review of Ritvo (1986) has also demonstrated how geographical location can play an important influence on the specific factors that shape the human-dog relationships. I suggest that the different cultural factors that shape human-dog relationships are relative to the location that these relationships play out in. For example, Ritvo showcases how Bulldogs were physically shaped by the preservation of the breed based on its design by its initial purpose (Ritvo, 1986, p. 251) and it was the social factors of encompassed by national beliefs from the specific geographical region of England that gave birth to Bulldog breed.

Ritvo (1986) also exemplifies how humans relationships with dogs has been influenced by how humans have perceived a dogs purpose based on its characteristics. I suggest that a dog's perceived purpose has impacted the way that breeds have come to evolve because of the selective breeding of certain traits that improve a dog's ability to fulfil its purpose. The reason I suggest this is because some of the most preliminary guides to distinguish breeds did so by the dogs perceived purpose or usefulness by the human (Ritvo, 1986, p. 235 - 237). For example,

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Ritvo (1986) draws on the work of - Johannes Caius's *Of English Dogges* (1576). The intention of this book was to be an exhaustive list of dog types (Ritvo, 1986, p. 237). The book distinguished dog types by their perceived purposefulness. He grouped dogs into three categories of purposefulness; hunting dogs, pet dogs and dogs that could do menial work (Ritvo, 1986, p. 237). I suggest that the way people perceived a dogs purposefulness was a necessary component of history that helped shape present human-dog relationships at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* because perceived purposes could have encouraged dog handlers to choose certain dogs for specific competitions - for example, Border Collies are very popular dogs competing at agility competitions. Dog showing has been influenced by humans growing interests in pedigree animals and pets. Pedigree dogs have purpose in demonstrating and maintaining healthy breed standards. This interest has created opportunities for dogs and handlers to come together to compete.

In order to understand the human-dog relationship as they are acted out at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, it is important to know the histories of humans and dogs to understand how social aspects have shaped those relationships (Haraway, 2003, p. 63). Haraway indicates that breed stories are made from layers of local and global contingent relations (Haraway, 2003, p. 63). I have attempted to use Donna Haraway's idea that breed histories are shaped by "*historical time on the scale of decades, centuries, populations, regions and nations*" (Haraway, 2003, p. 63) to showcase how the human-dog relationships acted out at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* have been historically influenced by contingent social factors like class, geographical location and culture overtime. I have exemplified this by using the work of Ritvo (1986) who discusses the emergence of breeding and dog showing. Although I mainly rely on Ritvo's brief history of the bulldog breed, I suggest that many human-dog relationships with different breeds of dogs may be shaped by similar relating contingent factors.

Dog shows have been a socially contingent factor that have historically helped shape human-dog relationships. I have suggested that the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* may be a setting that allows different social classes of people have the opportunity to transcend social class barriers with their dogs. It is important to draw attention to the fact that this would not be possible without the partnership of the dog. In order to succeed at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* one must have a dog that closely meets the breed standard and chooses to act according to the handlers commands.

However, the concept of breed standards needs to be explored in order to understand how this relates to companionship within the human-dog relationship. It is important to further explore the human-dog relationship as it relates to dog breeding because based on Myrdene Anderson's definition of domestication, "*Involving artificial selection for desirable traits with humans in the position of control*" (Anderson, 1986, p. 3), it could be suggested that the human-dog relationship is not a companion species relationship, rather one of control. It could also be argued that books like *Of English Dogges* are examples of human's control over the breeding of dogs. However, I suggest that this multi-species relationship is far more complicated than that of

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domestication. In the next section I take deeper look into the implications of dog breeding and how it relates to human-dog relationships showcased at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*.

Breeding and Domestication

In this section I examine two opposing thoughts - if dog breeding is an indication of a domesticated relationship (humans domesticating dogs) or if breeding is an important component to this multi-species companionship relationship. I once again use the definition provided by Myrdene Anderson to state that common conceptions of domestication have been perceived as artificially selecting traits to be prevalent within other species - desirable traits that are decided and controlled by humans (Anderson, 1986, p. 3).

Based on this definition I draw on the work of Scott Simon (2015) to help explore if the breeding of dogs is an indication that the human-dog relationship is similar to that of a domestication relationship or a companionship style relationship. In Scott Simon's *Real People, Real Dogs and Pigs for the Ancestors: The Moral Universe of "Domestication" in Indigenous Taiwan* (2015) he explores the triangular relationship between humans, dogs and pigs and the indigenous Seejiq Truku of Taiwan. Through a triangular relationship between humans, dogs and pigs Simon explores how human-animal relationships have changed overtime because of the influences of colonialism and post colonialism in social, legal, economic and political lenses (Simon, 2015, p.1). Multi-species relationships are shaped by the relationships of individuals and the social states in which they interact. Simon explores how domestication is one of many ways to describe multi-species relationships and in fact other factors may actually influence human-animal relationships that mimic the characteristics of domestication (Simon, 2015, p.4). Domestication depicts non-human animals as passive nonsocial objects, which is problematic because as exemplified in Simon's ethnography, the dogs that live amongst the Seejiq have a large amount of autonomy and are seen as hunting partners to the Seejiq Truku, not as domesticated pets (Simon, 2015, p.7 & 29). Societies can impose acts of biopower to exert control over bodies, as exemplified in this article through dog ownership in Taiwan which requires that dogs be registered to owners in order to be considered pets by the government (Simon, 2015, p. 20). However, the relationships of humans and dogs are relative based on a variety of factors and are not solely defined by forms of biopower. Many of the dogs in Taiwan have the autonomy to act freely. They are connected with the humans that they interact with, but free range dogs are not considered pets by the humans that they associate with (Simon, 2015, p. 15 - 16). As societies evolve and new cultural/ hegemonic norms develop multi-species relationships are shaped around these norms (Simon, 2015, p.29).

This article is important because it showcases the effects of biopower on human-dog relationships. Rules and regulations created by authority figures can influence characteristics of multi-species relationships. Simon states "*Recognition of other possibilities implies that legal regulations on animals impose certain forms of human-animal relations on others, disrupting existing forms of multi-species relations,*" (Simon, 2015, p.3) and in the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, there are many rules and regulations that shape the human-

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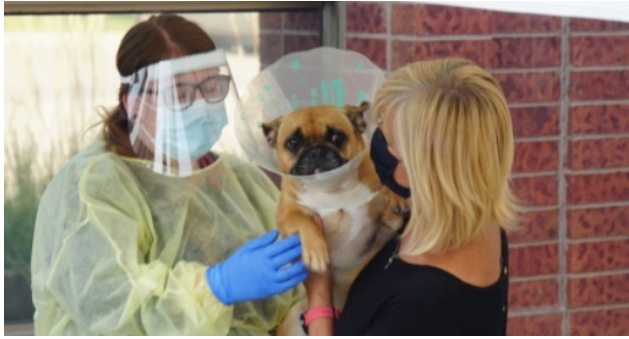
dog relationship. I suggest that the rules of the *Westminster Kennel Club* do disrupt existing forms of multi-species relations because of the demand to produce dogs of certain characteristics and behaviours. However, this form of biopower is a result of compassion for dogs and shapes human-dog relationships positively.

The rules used for dog showing are based on the *American Kennel Club* breed standards for each breed. Parallels can be made between the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* and the state in which the Seejiq Truku interact with dogs. The Seejiq Truku's relationships have been shaped by new forms of governance that impose laws that regulate the human-dog relationship (registration, microchipping and sterilization of dogs as pets) (Simon, 2015, p.20 & 29). However, their relationships are far more complex than to be considered a relationship of domestication. In relation to *Westminster*, breed standards have imposed certain rules that a dog's physical appearance must adhere to as closely as possible. Breeding is the process of control that humans can exert over dogs in order to breed selective traits. This is an example of biopower that governs human-dog interactions with regard to dog showing at *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. In this context, a dog's ability to conform to breed standards will determine their success in the *Best in Show* competition. Rules for breed standards dictate what physical characteristics are socially considered as desirable within the dog showing community. However, these rules are necessary in order to protect the health of dogs from genetic defects. In the paragraphs below I will further explore the compassion for dogs that is part of this form of biopower.

Breeding for the Love of the Breed

I suggest that domestication can be used to describe the concept of breeding because the selective breeding of dogs for the purpose of adhering to specific breed standards can be seen as a form of control over passive nonsocial objects (dogs). However, in my previous paragraphs I have suggested that dogs express autonomy and willingness to cooperate that is demonstrated when they compete in human-canine sporting events, such as agility. I now shift my focus to the concept of dog breeding and I suggest that when I looked beyond breeding to understand what purposes breed standards serve I found there to be a much more complex relationship between humans and dogs that should not be considered control in the form of domestication. Domestication cannot be used to independently describe the human-dog relationships portrayed within the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. Responsible breeders maintain high breed standards and aim to produce high quality litters (Bovsun, 2020). I suggest that when a breeder's objective is to breed high quality dogs, their relationships with the breed can exemplify compassion as part of a companionship relationship with the breed because the breeders actions can be influenced by one's love for the breed. In the following paragraphs I aim to highlight issues that occur due a lack of regulations and then present the positive outcomes of increased regulations (or increased biopower over dogs).

I draw attention to an issue that has received media attention in 2020. In 2020, *CBC News* began a series of inquiries into non-reputable dog breeding and the importation of dogs for sale into Canada. The inquiry began when a flight to Canada from the Ukraine was found to contain



Imported French Bulldog, Stella, receives surgery for patella luxation, (CBC News, Sick dogs trigger questions about imported pets, respected purebred Puppy List, 2020).

500 imported French Bulldog puppies on board - 38 of them dead on arrival (CBC News, 2020). CBC News (2020) attempted showcase the horror behind puppy smuggling into Canada from the Ukraine and other Eastern European countries. Puppy smuggling operations are done by large puppy mills that breed dogs in unsterile conditions (CBC News, 2020). These puppy mill breeders have used fake importation documents like forged vaccination records to get their dogs into Canada to sell to unsuspecting buyers (CBC News, 2020). Importing dogs is a lucrative black market business. Dogs can cost thousands of dollars to purchase. Importers can import breeds at low costs and then sell those dogs to Canadians for \$3000-\$4000 (CBC News, 2020).

CBC News further explored the puppy importation issue in a second inquiry and found that *Canadian Kennel Club* dog breeders were not all as reputable as many people believe them to be. There is a high demand for French Bulldog puppies in Canada¹ (Canadian Kennel Club, 2019) and according to one of the Canadian Kennel Club members, Brenda Comeau-Watson, about 75% of *Canadian Kennel Club* registered French Bulldog breeders were importers or did not meet the expectations of the *Canadian Kennel Club* standards (CBC News, 2020). *CBC News* (2020) stated that the *Canadian Veterinary Medical Association* has made statements that many of the dogs imported from other countries are sick with parasites, bacteria and viruses when they enter Canada and require thousands of dollars in treatment (CBC News, 2020). CBC News' inquiries posed serious concerns about the reputability of Canadian Kennel Club registered breeders. It highlighted the fact that even if the organizations Code of Ethics indicated that member breeders need to adhere to certain high standards of dog breeding, these rules were not being followed because of the lucrative opportunity to exploit highly desired breeds, like French Bulldogs for money (CBC News, 2020).

The major issue of puppy importation into Canada illustrates human-dog relationships that are contingent on factors of capitalism and occur due to a lack of regulations preventing such actions. The lack of rules surrounding puppy importation allows for black market dog breeders to make large amounts of profit selling dogs. Black market breeders have even infiltrated the once reputable *Canadian Kennel Club* registered breeder list. From this CBC investigation it is strongly suggested that many puppy mill sellers do not have their dogs' best interest in mind as often times imported puppies have been found to be very sick (CBC News, 2020). This indicates

¹According to the Canadian Kennel Club, the French Bulldog was the fifth most popular dog breed of 2019 (Canadian Kennel Club, 2019).

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that some human-dog relationships, outside of the *Westminster Kennel Club* context are not bound by the same rules that govern the sport of dog showing, and ultimately the quality of dogs. As an importer, the goal of the human-dog relationship may be based on financial benefit. The rules and regulations for breeding high quality dogs that meet breed standards are partially what shape the human-dog relationships portrayed at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* and these rules influence the interactions of dogs and their handlers.

Below, I explore interviews with *Westminster Kennel Club* dog breeders that explain their relationships with the dogs that they breed to show how in the context of dog showing, specifically at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, human-dog relationships are companionship relationships. In the following paragraphs I attempt to show that dog breeding can be done out of love for the when it is done with the overall goal of increasing the wellbeing and health of the species/breed. In the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club*, dog breeders aim to breed and show high quality and healthy dogs.

In an interview with the *Westminster Kennel Club*, Patti Jason, a Poodle breeder speaks about her experiences breeding. She explains that as a breeder “*You have to have an idea in your head of what you want your dog to look like, and so you have to know the breed standard. You would have to understand your dogs virtues as well as your dog’s faults so that you can improve them.*” (Westminster Kennel Club, 2020, 0:13 - 0:26). She goes on to say that *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* provides an opportunity for you to learn something new about how to improve how to show your dog and how to groom your dog (Westminster Kennel Club, 2020, 0:35 - 0:43). As a breeder, Patti is interested in how she can contribute to making the breed better through her experiences as a breeder and handler at *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. Patti’s affection for the Standard Poodle breed is exemplified by her desire to want to improve the breed (so that it adheres more to the breed standards). Although there is that aspect of control over the dogs’ bodies, it is an act of affection because it is done to improve the quality and health of the dog.

Bernese Mountain dog breeder, Loyal Bouaoun, is interviewed by the *Westminster Kennel Club*. She states how dogs are the perfect companions because there is a breed for every person (Breeder: Loyal Bouaoun, 2020, 0:01 - 0:08). Loyal goes onto to discuss her relationship with the Bernese Mountain Dog breed. She speaks about how Bernese Mountain Dogs share their lives with you, her relationship with her dogs is deeper than she could expect with any other living creature (Westminster Kennel Club, 2020, 0:17 - 0:25). Loyal states how these dogs get into your soul and want to become a part of you (Westminster Kennel Club, 2020, 0:30 - 0:35). She is shown beginning to tear up as she speaks about her relationship with the breed, and states that she hopes that she has changed their worlds because they have changed hers (Westminster Kennel Club, 2020, 0:36 - 0:46). Her emotional response highlights her appreciation for the breed. She articulates that her love is not for one specific dog, but for the Bernese Mountain Dog breed. I suggest that her response indicates that as a breeder, she breeds dogs with their wellbeing in mind as she cares so much about the breed.

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Layal Bouaoun and Patti Jason provide insight to their relationships with their dogs. Their interview's displays common themes such as appreciation and care for the dog breeds that they breed. Patti Jason states that she tries to identify the ways in which she can improve on the qualities of her dogs so that they will become more similar to the breed standards (Westminster Kennel Club, 2020). Layal indicates that she wishes to change the lives of the dogs she breeds in the way that they have changed hers (Westminster Kennel Club, 2020, 0:36 - 0:46). These statement shows their dedication to taking care of the dogs they breeds. Although these breeder's experiences cannot be generalized to the *Westminster Kennel Club* as a whole, their opinions have provided insight indicating that love for a breed can be connected with the desire to comply with breed standards and kennel club rules for the good of the breed.

In relation to the work of Scott Simon (2015), Simon showcases how human-dog relationships are shaped by societal norms and cultural influences and draws attention how biopower has the ability to forcefully shape these relationships. I rely on the work of Simon (2015) to acknowledge the force of biopower in the *Westminster Kennel Club* setting. I suggest that biopower is forced onto dogs through the rules and regulations of the show. The rules of the *Westminster Kennel Club* enforces dogs to be bred to a certain standard, which is beneficial to the breed because it helps ensure the health and wellbeing of dogs being raised by high quality breeders. Biopower can be beneficial to human-dog relationships because it dissuades dog breeders from producing low quality dogs. Breeders like Patti and Layal give insight to examples of breeder-breed relationships that have been shaped by breed standards and the rules of dog showing. Both breeders exemplified their desires to have positive impacts on the dogs that the breed.

Donna Haraway (2003) also examines human-breed relationships and suggests that a human's appreciation for the breed can be an example of a relationship of love with a breed because the love is not solely for one individual dog, but for all dogs of the same breed. Haraway refers to the ideologies of one of her dog mentors, Linda Weisser. Haraway notes that Weisser had been a Great Pyrenees breeder and a health activist for the breed for more than 30 years (Haraway, 2003, p.36). She states the importance of loving a breed as a whole and not just a particular dog (Haraway, 2003, p.36). Weisser advocates that for the good of the dog breed that humans have certain responsibilities as caretakers of pets. In order to preserve the reputation of breeds and to ensure the safety of other dogs and people, dog owners should euthanize aggressive dogs, so not to tarnish the reputation of the breed (Haraway, 2003, p.36). Weisser also identifies the responsibility of dog owners to become knowledgeable about how to take care of their dogs (training, medical needs, grooming, etc.) (Haraway, 2003, p.36). Weisser's thoughts showcase the important role of biopower on human-dog relationships that can be beneficial to dog breeds as whole - which she considers that humans can love a breed. Some governing institutions have the ability to order the euthanasia of aggressive dogs if they have injured other people or dogs. I suggest that this form of biopower over dogs can done for the love of the breed because it helps to prevent negative stereotyping of certain breeds as being aggressive and helps to ensure the safety of other dogs. Also, the social responsibility that Weisser mentions that owners have to educate themselves on how take care of their dogs is part of being able to exert

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biopower over the dog in ways that are beneficial to the dog - so that the dog's needs are cared for.

Trotter judging Longhaired Dachshunds at the Garden in 2008 (Dog News, 2020).



In the documentary *Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* (2019) Judge, Patricia Craige Trotter speaks about the obligations of a judge at *Westminster*. Patricia states that “*When you come to judge, you are responsible for picking those dogs that should be the breeding stock of the future.*” (Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2019, 19:00 - 19:06). She goes on to explain the different physical characteristics a dog should have in order to meet the desired breed standards and the dog show that it can do the job that it was bred to do (Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2019, 19:07 - 19:40). The statements made by Patricia exemplify how biopower is exerted in the competition ring, by the fact that judging *Best in Show* requires judges to examine dogs to select which bodies are the most favourable. However, this exertion of biopower over dogs is based on the purposes preserving the best of each breed. By selecting the breeds with the highest quality phenotypes the judges are selecting future breeding stock - in hopes that by breeding high quality dogs it can create better and healthier dogs in the future.

Based on the paragraphs above, there are various social factors that shape human-dog relationships. Biopower shapes the interactions of bodies based on rules and regulations. Simon (2015) exemplifies how forces of biopower can impede on previously existing multi-species

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relationships through the exploration of how the relationships between the Seejiq Truku and their dogs have been shaped by newly appointed laws (Simon, 2015, p.20 & 29). But, in the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, I suggest that the exertion of biopower over human-dog relationships is beneficial because by following of the rules of *Westminster Kennel Club* dog breeders and handlers adhere to standards of producing high quality dogs. The mission statement of the *Westminster Kennel Club* is “to celebrate the companionship of dogs while promoting responsible dog ownership, health, and breed preservation” (Westminster Kennel Club, 2018). Based on the goals of the *Westminster Kennel Club* highlighted in their mission statement it can be concluded that the rules of the *Westminster Kennel Club* are created based on the good intentions to promote breed health and preservation and the dog breeders who chose to adhere to those rules are doing so with the same good intentions that the *Westminster Kennel Club* promotes.

Dog Culture

What is dog culture? I use the term ‘dog culture’ to describe the social world that is constructed around human-dog relationships. I use this term to draw attention to the fact that companionship or love for dogs can extend beyond the singular dog, or the breed, and become a love for the biological species - which in turn shapes a larger cultural identity of dogs and humans in the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*.

In the following paragraphs I explore human-dog relationships outside of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* competition ring. Specifically, I explore the culture and atmosphere surrounding the *Dog Show*. I attempt to showcase how the human-dog relationship is influenced by human’s perceptions of anthropomorphism onto their dogs. I suggest that anthropomorphism shapes dog culture. I use the work of Parreñas (2012) to show how human-dog anthropomorphic relationships can produce affect that shapes these relationships on a local and global level.

Parreñas (2012) explores the multi-species relationships between humans and orangoutangs at a wild life rehabilitation centre in Malaysian Borneo. Many of the volunteers at this facility are British women who work along side subcontracted indigenous Iban men. Parreñas uses the example of custodial labor to demonstrate that affect is produced through the interaction of bodies which produce an unequal distribution of risk within the multi-species relationship (Parreñas, 2012, p. 675). Parreñas uses Despret’s (2004) idea that affect is an action that produces each subject within a relationship (Parreñas, 2012, p.674). Parreñas states that “*When it comes to beings that do not speak, feeling and touching are crucial forms of transspecific connection.*” (Parreñas, 2012, p. 675). I use an approach to exploring human-dog relationships that combines the work of Despret (2004) and Parreñas (2012) to showcase how the affect lived out through human-dog relationships can be used to describe the anthropo-zoo-genesis described by Despret (2004).

Despret described anthropo-zoo-genesis as a practise that constructs humans and animals in a new form of ‘*becoming*’ together (Despret, 2004, p. 122). Anthropo-zoo-genesis is a state of

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producing from the body and being produced by a new identity (Despret, 2004, p. 130). I refer to Parreñas (2012) to explore how affect can be used to describe the anthropo-zoo-genesis of these multi-species relationships at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* (Parreñas, 2012, p. 674). Parreñas (2012) identifies that affect between bodies can produce an unequal distribution of risk and vulnerability. I expand on the work of Parreñas (2012) to state that this unequal distribution is not prevalent in my examination of the companionship relationships portrayed at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. In the paragraphs below, I begin by exploring human-dog relationships on a singular level and I then explore how affect contextualizes anthropo-zoo-genesis on a global level. In this situation, I use the word 'global' to describe the world encompassed by this dog culture.

Affect and Anthropo-zoo-genesis between Humans their Dogs

Through my exploration of video footage of *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, I found that dog handlers and their dogs occasionally exhibited affect towards each other which shaped the anthropo-zoo-genesis of their relationships. In the following paragraphs I further explore the human-dog relationship to identify how affect can be produced as part of an anthropo-zoo-genesis in the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*.

In *Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, dog handler Heather Johnson, is interviewed by the *Westminster Kennel Club* about her Old English Sheep Dog, Elsa. Heather states that Elsa the dog is named after the Disney princess (Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2019, 01:55 - 02:00). Elsa's favourite activities include hanging out with Heather's children and being defiant when she is called on by Heather to come (Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2019, 02:01 - 02:09). Heather speaks about Elsa's personality in the show ring by explaining that she has a little bit of pizzaz (Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2019, 07:25 - 07:28). Heather states that Elsa knows she is important and she shines in the competition ring (Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2019, 07:28 - 07:31). Heather's comments provide insight towards her relationship with Elsa. Based on the work of Parreñas (2012) I suggest that Elsa forms a new anthropomorphic identity through her affect as she interacts with Heather. Elsa engages in play with Heather's children - as a child would do. I suggest that affect is produced through the interactions of Elsa and Heather and her family as they form new identities through their interactions with one another. Elsa acts similarly as another child in the family would act - playing with kids and being defiant to the mother of the family. Elsa's affect allows her to form a new identity with Heather as an acting part of Heather's family.

In *Part II "Meet The Dogs," 144th Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show 2020*, interviewer, Kristal Hart, speaks with dog handlers at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* of 2020. She interviews, the dog handler and breeder of Jetson, the Chocolate Labrador Retriever. The dog handler and Kristal discuss how in their opinions Labrador Retrievers have the best personalities (Harty, 2020, 7:51 - (10:44). The breeder explains how Labrador Retrievers like routine and schedule - they like to know when they are going to eat (Hart, 2020, 8:24 - 8:29).

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They learn to anticipate the behaviours of their owners (Hart, 2020, 8:29 - 8:31). Labrador Retrievers who learn to rely on the routines and behaviours of their owners form new identities through anthro-zoo-genesis because their routines rely on cooperation from humans and dogs (i.e walking the dog, feeding the dog, playing fetch). Dogs and humans are coming together to do these daily activities together, connecting their lives. I suggest that a Labrador Retriever can produce affect through the way that it chooses to interact with humans during routined actions and behaviour. The desire to want to go for walks or spend time with a human is the production of affect that contributes to the anthro-zoo-genesis because the dog is willingly conforming to connecting with a human through interactions, just as the human is doing towards their dog. The dog handler described Jetson as having a lot of personality (Hart, 2020, 8:42 - 8:46). For example, she describes him as having a very 'happy-go-lucky' attitude (Hart, 2020, 10:44 - 10:56). He loves to jump up on people and give kisses (Hart, 2020, 8:44 - 8:48). The dog handlers comments indicate that Jetson produces affect towards humans in a humanistic way (i.e giving kisses). Jetson is engaging in interacting with humans in a way that will understand. This is similar to the work of Despret (2004) who gives the example of Lorenz and his goose who begin to act similarly to one another, taking on behaviours of the other species so that they can connect with one another (Despret, 2004, p.129). The dog handler also states that Labrador Retrievers will communicate with their owners through barking when they want something or to express feelings of excitement or happiness (Hart, 2020, 9:09 - 9:14). This indicates that affect can be produced through a form of communication (ex. barking to show their happiness) that allows Jetson to express himself with humans. I suggest that Jetson's ability to communicate with his owner is a production of affect that suggest the becoming of anthro-zoo-genesis.

Kristal also interviews the dog handler of Gracen the Standard Poodle. The dog handler explains how Standard Poodles are great companion dogs (Hart, 2020, 11:07 - 11:18). The handler attributes anthropomorphic characteristics onto the breed by using the colloquial term to describe a person who acts lazy, a 'couch potato', to describe the behaviour of the Standard Poodle breed. She explains how Standard Poodles will do any kind of sport that you would like do with them, but they will also want to watch television with you - as long as they get to receive the companionship that comes from doing activities together (Hart, 2020, 11:07 - 11:18). The handler states that the Standard Poodle temperament should be very friendly and companionate (Hart, 2020, 11:45 - 11:50). Standard Poodles should be good with children and very good to "*do anything you would like to do.*" (Hart, 2020, 11:50-11:57). The handler explains how Standard Poodles adapt to people's activity levels because they want to do whatever their owner does (Hart, 2020, 12:31 - 12:41). Her explanation of what the breed should be like indicates that Standard Poodles who adhere to those standards express affect through their willingness for companionship. The anthro-zoo-genesis occurs when dogs express affect through wanting to engage in activities with their owners - from sports to being 'couch potatoes' together. Dogs and humans can find new identities in their connectivity with one another through their constant willing interactions. These interactions help form a new identity between humans and dogs, an anthro-zoo-genesis.

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The dog handler of Gracen the Standard Poodle was not the only dog handler interviewed by Kristal Hart that made similar statements about their dogs. A dog handler showing Black and Tan Coonhounds is interviewed by Kristal and the dog handler describes the breed as the type of dog that just wants to do whatever their owner does (Hart, 2020, 15:10 - 15:13). She describes how Black and Tan Coonhounds will be as active or as lazy as their owners - their behaviours are based on the desire to do whatever their owner does (Hart, 2020, 15:10 - 15:19). She also uses the term 'couch potato' to describe the dog's behaviour (Hart, 2020, 15:13 - 15:19). Once again, I suggest that the willingness to interact with humans in routinized behaviours exhibits a desire for interaction and companionship can be considered an expression of affect that produces anthropo-zoo-genesis of humans and dogs.

In *Crowned: Inside the 2017 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, dog handler Tod Hebert talks about his Dalmatian dog Athena. He refers to her as "Bratty Atty", a nickname based on the personality he perceives she has (Crowned: Inside the 2017 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2017, 07:11 - 07:16). Tod speaks about how the key to agility is focus and connectedness (Crowned: Inside the 2017 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2017, 07:21 - 07:27). He describes how a dog's emotions and behaviours can change as a result of the environment - a dog's affect can change. This is because the pressure of the environment (other dogs and people) can cause the dog to shut down, much like humans do (Crowned: Inside the 2017 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2017, 07:26 - 07:49). The way that Tod describes how dogs can react to the stress of being around many people and other dogs can be similarly compared to the human trait of performance anxiety. Performance anxiety can be described as "*It afflicts individuals who are generally prone to anxiety, particularly in situations of high public exposure and competitive scrutiny, and so is best understood as a form of social phobia (a fear of humiliation.*" (Wilson & Roland, 2002, p.47). This 'performance anxiety' can influence a dog's affect towards their handler. As Tod mentions, during an agility trial dogs should be connected with their handlers and this allows them to perform one on one with their handlers, but the change in environment can influence a change in a dog's affect. Therefore, this anthropomorphic relationship between humans and dogs may also impact their interactions based on the type of environment.

Based on the interactions above I suggest that singular human-dog relationships exhibit traits that suggest anthropo-zoo-genesis, as described by Despret (2004), within the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club*. The coming together of these human-dog relationships can be shaped by the affect that humans and dogs produce through their interactions. The affect that is produced as part of this human-dog relationship can be influenced by external factors like the environment. The examples I have provided above showcase some dogs' willingness to be companions with their humans. The affect produced through this relationship shows how dogs can act companionate, exhibiting similar behaviours to human affection (wanting to always be with their owners and giving them kisses) as a way of communicating affect in a way that humans respond to. I also suggest that the affect produced in human-dog relationships can be influenced by the environment around them. Therefore, the production of affect may be inconsistent across situations.

Anthropo-zoo-genesis and Dog Culture

Anthropo-zoo-genesis, as described by Despret (2004) can be applied to human-dog relationships on a large scale. In this section I explore the dog culture surrounding the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* in order to understand how this dog culture helps shape human-dog relationships. Parreñas (2012) explores multi-species relationships on local and global level. She also states that “*Affect does not reside within a human individual's body and mind nor does it solely reside within the interface of human bodies.*” (Parreñas, 2012, p. 682). Parreñas (2012) uses the example of volunteer work at an orangutang rehabilitation centre to describe how affect is produced through relationships of custodial labor (volunteers helping to rehabilitate orangutang). She states that “*Custodial labour describes how the production of affect, with all its intensities and ambiguities, generates the sentiments necessary to sustain commercial volunteerism and other forms of private-public partnerships that rely on the unequal participation of particular local and global subjects.*” (Parreñas, 2012, p. 683). In the previous section, I focused on the local level - singular relationships between humans and their dogs that produce affect through their interactions with one another. In the following paragraphs I explore anthropo-zoo-genesis of human-dog relationships on a global level and how the production of affect through local relationships contributes to the overall dog culture that surrounds the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. Unlike, Parreñas (2012) I suggest that human dog relationships do not rely on unequal participation but rather are companionate, equal, and mutually benefitting.

I aim to suggest that the dog culture surrounding the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* creates opportunity for human's to come together for their love of dogs. Through my review of video footage of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* I identified events that lead me to suggest that humans and dogs have immersed themselves in a culture within the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* that shapes these multi-species relationships.

I begin by stating that outside of the competition ring of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, New York City transforms to encompass the culture of the show during the week of the competition. In preparation for the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* several important events take place that contribute to the unique culture that surrounds the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. The first event that I use to showcase dog culture is the transformation that the Hotel Pennsylvania undergoes during competition week. The Hotel Pennsylvania transforms into a space catered to human-dog duos staying at this hotel while they compete at the show. In *Crowned: Inside the 2017 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* the video showcases dog-handlers and their dogs lined up to enter the grooming salon that has been constructed at the Hotel Pennsylvania (Crowned: Inside the 2017 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2017, 10:31 - 10:40). As the camera pans into the room, viewers are introduced to the ‘Doggie Concierge’ of the Hotel Pennsylvania, Jerry Grymek, who is in charge of, “*Pooch relations and barking.*” (Crowned: Inside the 2017 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2017, 10:40 - 10:48). A Husky is shown using a dog treadmill and various other dogs are being groomed in the

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background (Crowned: Inside the 2017 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2017, 10:40 - 10:44). As Jerry walks through the dog grooming salon, many dogs are being groomed and pampered in the background (Crowned: Inside the 2017 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2017, 10:49 - 11:06). In the dog grooming salon, there is an area filled with hay and hydrants so that dog's have their own dedicated bathroom inside the hotel (Crowned: Inside the 2017 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2017, 11:17 - 11:25). Jerry explains that his favourite part about doing this job is seeing all the dogs - he believes there might be one of every single breed staying at the hotel (Crowned: Inside the 2017 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2017, 11:07 - 11:17). He shares the interesting requests that he has received from dog owners so that their dog's are comfortable during their stays (Crowned: Inside the 2017 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2017, 11:22 - 11:17). Dog owners have requested cheeseburgers, pizzas and chicken sandwiches for their dogs (Crowned: Inside the 2017 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2017, 11:27 - 11:33). One person requested a red carpet be laid out upon their dog's arrival at the hotel and another person asked for an opera singer to be in the lobby to serenade their dog when it arrived at the hotel (Crowned: Inside the 2017 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2017, 11:34 - 11:42). Jerry explains that when the dog finally arrived he wore a tuxedo and barked at the opera singer for an encore (Crowned: Inside the 2017 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2017, 11:43 - 11:46).

Hotel Pennsylvania opens Dog Grooming Salon during the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. Husky shown on Dog Treadmill at the Grooming Salon (Crowned: Inside the 2017 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2017, 10:45)



The Hotel Pennsylvania becomes a space that encompasses and shapes dog culture through the creation of new opportunities for humans and dogs to interact. The Hotel Pennsylvania has dedicated Jerry's position at the hotel to be entirely devoted to fulfilling the desires of humans and their dogs. Anthropomorphism is subjected onto the dogs at the hotel's dog grooming salon when they are seen running on treadmills and being pampered or groomed by humans, receiving treatments similar to being at the spa. Affect is produced through the interactions of humans and dogs. Through the actions mentioned above, affect is produced by humans in the way that humans ensure that their dogs are comfortable and happy during their

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stay at the hotel. By purchasing human food like cheeseburgers and pizza's humans are treating their dogs. Affect is produced through the grand gestures that humans have done for their dogs, like ordering opera singers to greet their dogs. Anthro-zoo-genesis can be exemplified through the way in which affect is produced. In the examples provided above, humans attempt to care for their dogs in ways that would also be similar to the way that humans show care for other humans (ex. buying their dogs human food like a cheeseburger). Throughout this research paper I have described how dog handlers have considered their relationships with their dogs to be partnerships where success in the dog show ring is a shared effort of the dog and handler. Affect is produced by the dogs when they eagerly want to work with their handlers or when they want to show them affection and in return, dog handlers produce affect through treating their dogs well.

Hotel Pennsylvania Dog Grooming Salon Toileting Area (Crowned: Inside the 2017 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2017, 11:19)



Local human-dog relationships that produce affect are components of the larger dog culture that shapes human-dog relationships in the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. Similarly to how Parreñas (2012) describes how human-orangutang relationships help sustain commercial volunteerism, I suggest that the affect produced through human-dog relationships promote a dog culture that is based on companionship.

Outside the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* competition, the Hotel Pennsylvania hosts a dog fashion show during competition week. This fashion show is open to dogs competing at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. It is an opportunity for dog owners to dress up their dogs in outfits and parade them for others to see. It is an event that I suggest demonstrates the anthro-zoo-genesis of the human-dog relationship. In the Netflix documentary, *7 Days Out*, dog owners are interviewed during the dog fashion show at Hotel Pennsylvania. One of the dog

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owners interviewed is featured holding her Chihuahua who is dressed up in a white and gold outfit with feathers and ruffles (Westminster Dog Show, 7 Days Out, 2018, 39:12 - 39:04). The dog owner explains that her dog's name is JR and she has her own couture line (Westminster Dog Show, 7 Days Out, 2018, 39:12 - 39:04). Another dog owner is shown pushing her dog around in a stroller (Westminster Dog Show, 7 Days Out, 2018, 39:03). The dog is dressed up as a cowboy and the stroller is dressed up to look like the dog is sitting on a horse - resembling a cowboy riding a horse (Westminster Dog Show, 7 Days Out, 2018, 39:03). The dog's outfit is covered in rhinestones and his owner calls him the *Rhinestone Cowboy*. The owner is also dressed up in costume as a cowboy to match her dog (Westminster Dog Show, 7 Days Out, 2018, 31:30 - 31:21). Another dog owner is featured holding two Yorkshire Terriers. She explains that her dogs' outfits were designed to match a certain design by high-end designer brand name *Dolce and Gabbana* (Westminster Dog Show, 7 Days Out, 2018, 38:57 - 38:48). These examples provide insight towards the dog culture that surrounds the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. I suggest that the examples provided above showcase how some of these human-dog relationships are examples of anthro-zoo-genesis because affect is produced through the way that humans show off their dogs for others to see. This event creates a space for humans to come together to show off their dogs and by doing so, they are promoting the breeds and the dogs that they care for. I suggest that this is an opportunity for other humans so that they can learn to appreciate different breeds of dogs and how to properly take care of dogs, just as the handlers and breeders do. This is an opportunity to share peoples' love for dogs. The dog fashion show is a way for dogs to gain popularity. The dogs in the examples above were also dressed up in extravagant human-like clothing fashioned to resemble designer brandnames or are covered in rhinestones. I suggest that these dog owners are dressing their dogs up in ways that are seen as desirable to other humans, which makes their dogs look more appealing to other people. By dressing dogs up and showing them off at the fashion show, dog handlers are able to promote their dog and the breed. I suggest that this act is an example of love of the breed and the dog through promoting other people's adoration and liking for their dog and the dog's breed. Affect is produced through the dogs' actions to willingly dress up in the outfits that humans dress them in. The affect produced by the humans and dogs forms the anthro-zoo-genesis. I suggest that in this situation, the anthro-zoo-genesis is the coming together of humans and dogs dressing up together into a new identity that is based on the affect that they produce towards one another. In the examples above, the human and dog duos have become the embodiment of the globalized human-dog relationship in the way that their relationship contributes to a joined human-dog culture surrounding the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*.

At the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* each year there is a *Meet the Breeds Day* that is hosted by the *American Kennel Club*. This is an event provides an opportunity for competitors of the tournament and breeders to educate others about specific dog breeds and meet the dogs who are competing at the *Westminster Kennel Club dog Show* that year (Westminster Dog Show, 7 Days Out, 2018, 31:20 - 31:00). Exhibits are constructed in a large auditorium where visitors of the show are able to walk around and meet the breeds competing at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* (Westminster Dog Show, 7 Days Out, 2018, 31:30 - 31:21). Dog breeders dress up alongside their dogs in different costumes so that they can showcase the culture and history of

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the different breeds (Barcroftmedia, 2015, 1:11 - 1:34). This event allows for a more interactive and immersive experience for exhibit visitors who are looking to educate themselves about different dog breeds. In the video, *Meet The Breeds: Owners And Their Dogs Dress Up For Dog Show*, dog breeders and handlers are shown at the *Westminster Kennel Club's Meet the Breed Day*. In this video, a breeder is shown dressed up in traditional attire from Mexico alongside her Xoloitzcuintli - a breed native to Mexico (Barcroftmedia, 2015, 1:30 - 1:34). A Duck Toller Retriever is featured with it's breeders who are dressed up in camouflage, standing in front of a background display of ducks flying through the air to symbolize Duck Toller's history as hunting dogs (Barcroftmedia, 2015, 1:23 - 1:24). A woman is shown dressed up in a medieval outfit alongside her Bullmastiff to help illustrate where this dog originated from (Barcroftmedia, 2015, 1:44 - 1:58). One of the breeders interviewed with her Saluki explains that part of the *Meet the Breeds Day* is that there is a competition for the best booth (Barcroftmedia, 2015, 2:31 - 2:36). The breeder explains how each year she tries to 'up the ante' and do something different to attract the attention of the public (Barcroftmedia, 2015, 2:37 - 2:44).



Meet the Breeds Day: Breeder Bobbie Lord dresses up as the Queen of England alongside her Pembroke Welsh Corgi to symbolize the Queen and her dogs (Barcroftmedia, 2015,

Meet the Breeds Day can be used to showcase the collective culture caused by the affect produced through human-dog relationships. I suggest that when the dog breeders and handlers dress up with their dogs in attire that is resemblant to the culture of the breed that they are doing so to get the attention of visitors of the exhibit. This creates the opportunity to teach visitors about the breeds that they, as breeders and handlers, are passionate about. I suggest that the affect that is produced in this scenario is based on the love of the breed. Affect is produced through humans willingly participating in this event to show their appreciation for certain breeds. The dog breeders and handlers can share their love for their breed through passing on their knowledge about the breed to the visitors of the exhibit. By passing on breed information to visitors, those visitors can learn if a specific breed is right for them as well as how to properly care for that breed - should they be interested in owning a specific type of dog. When visitors are educated on how to take care of dogs, it can help teach people how to take better care of dogs. This can help ensure that dogs are properly cared for. Therefore, I suggest that at an event like

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Meet the Breeds Day at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* provides insight on a dog culture that is representative of the affect produced between human-dog relationships on a global level. Breeders and dog handlers willingness to educate others about their breeds and the promotion of the breed indirectly helps to ensure that dogs are properly cared for by future dog owners.

However, the dog culture that surrounds the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* is not strictly limited to human-dog relationships. I suggest that the local, singular companionship relationships formed between humans and dogs influence relationships between humans based on their shared love for dogs which helps form this dog culture. At the end of *Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* a closing comment is made by the narrator to close on the experiences of dogs and their handlers during the 2018 *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. She states:

Twenty-eight-hundred contestants, 201 breed winners, 7 finalists, one Best in Show. Winning Westminster is a reality realized by few, desired by many. But, felt by all. We watch as companionship, connection, love and trust blend together to awaken the dog lover in all of us. For a few nights in February it's easy for this unfamiliar competition to feel familiar. A latent rooting interest for our favourite dogs bursting from within. Only one dog can be crowned but win or lose, true camaraderie is its own treasure. (Crowned: Inside the 2018 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, 2018, 42:40 - 43:22).

These closing comments to the documentary showcase how humans come together at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* each year because of their love for dogs. The dog culture surrounding the show is based on humans' mutual interests in their companionship with dogs. The *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* creates a space where affect can be produced through the interactions of humans and their dogs. Affect can also be produced through the interactions of humans coming together for their shared interest in dogs. In the previous paragraphs I have explained how the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* is encompassed by a dog culture that is produced through the affect of human-dog companionship relationships. In the paragraphs below I use examples from dog handler interviews to describe how the dog culture surrounding the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* is shaped by relationships between humans based on their mutual interest in dogs.

In *Crowned: Inside the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*, I use the example of dog handler Cheslie Smithy and her husband. Cheslie explains that she was born into showing Papillons and married into showing Whippets. Her comments suggest that her personal experiences with dogs have a certain historical and familial significance that can be influenced by the groups she chooses to interact with (parents vs. husband). Her comments also suggest that human-dog relationships can be global in the sense that relationships with certain breeds extend to groups of people (families, breed clubs, competition clubs).

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The *American Kennel Club*, which is associated with the *Westminster Kennel Club* has a variety of different dog related clubs that can be located on the official *American Kennel Club* website. There are clubs dedicated to preserving breed standards and there are clubs for various human-dog competitions like agility and tracking (American Kennel Club). I suggest that the variety of clubs listed on the *American Kennel Club* website can indicate that human-dog relationships are globalized through groups of people coming together and producing affect towards dogs through breed preservation and health maintenance that is promoted in different breed clubs. For example, the mission of one of these breed clubs, the *French Bulldog Club of America* is:

Founded in 1897, the French Bulldog Club of America (FBDC) is the oldest club in the world dedicated to this wonderful breed. The club was created to encourage and promote quality in the breeding of purebred French Bulldogs and to do all possible to bring their natural qualities to perfection, and to promote the proper care of the breed. We want to help those people who are interested in all aspects of Frenchies: competing in conformation and performance events, breeding, judging, and just owning and loving their dogs. (French Bulldog Club of America)

Breed clubs like the *French Bulldog Club of America* provide spaces for humans to work together to promote and support the breed standards of specific breeds. These clubs provide examples of affect being produced through interactions between people that are done for the love of the breed. These clubs are part of a global dog culture which impacts the individual relationships at the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* because the breeds being shown at the competition are Kennel Club registered dogs that have come from a kennel club dedicated to the well-being of a particular breed.

Gail Miller Bishop, Director of Communications at the *Westminster Kennel Club* (also known as the voice of *Westminster*), speaks about the dog culture that surrounds the dog show in the Netflix documentary, *7 Days Out*. She says “*The common thread is that it's about community. It is a good feeling to know that other dog people are there to help. That's something our sport can be very proud of, is that we do help each other. We're a family, definitely. Might be a little quirky, we're a quirky family.*” (Westminster Dog Show, *7 Days Out*, 2018, 02:29 - 02:03). Her statements highlights the fact that this dog culture is shaped by humans bonding over their shared interest in dogs. She compares the tight knit culture of dog showing to a familial bond - people bonding over their love for dogs. This leads me to suggest that the companion species relationship between humans and dogs is shaped by the relationships that humans form with one another. Love for dogs brings people closer to one another and this creates opportunities for them to work together for the benefits of dogs.

Based on the paragraphs above, I suggest that the human-dog relationships explored exhibit the production of affect between humans and dogs which shapes their anthropo-zoo-genesis. Unlike the characteristics described by Parreñas (2012) pertaining to human-orangutang

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relationships, this anthropo-zoo-genesis can be described as an equal risk relationship because of the equal exchange of efforts exerted as part of this relationship. As I have previously suggested through the opinions of dog handler's, and through the examples of dogs willingness to choose which handlers to work with and when, the human-dog relationship is that of mutual cooperation and companionship. Some of the dog handlers I relied on in the previous paragraphs identified the importance of treating dogs well as a way of thanking them for all they do. Human-dog relationships also extend from local to global levels. The affect produced in these relationships has helped shape a larger 'dog culture' that surrounds the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. Humans have come together for their mutual interest in the wellbeing of dogs and have created kennel club groups that work towards breeding healthy dogs that meet breed standards. I suggest that this is the expression of affect on a global level. Humans' connectedness to dogs has created companionship style relationships between species as well as between humans who share interests in dogs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I have explored human-dog relationships as they are acted out during and around the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. Through this probe, I have suggested that the human-dog relationships within the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* can be described as non-hierarchical, companionship relationships. I have explored various videos and web pages pertaining to the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. I have suggested that the human-dog relationship within the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* are more complex than a relationship based on domestication of the dog species. Further, I have suggested that the human-dog relationship within the context of *Westminster* is a relationship containing autonomous actors who willingly come together to form a companionship style relationship. The human-dog relationships portrayed at *Westminster* have showcased emotional complexity and connectedness. I have suggested that the human-dog relationship within the context of *Westminster* can be considered an anthropo-zoo-genesis because humans and dogs have come together to create a new identity centred around competing.

I have explored the human-dog relationship through Haraway's (2003) concept of cohistories. The sport of dog showing has evolved through the way humans and dogs interacted with one another overtime. I used the example of the human-Bulldog relationship to suggest that the relationships between humans and dogs are shaped overtime by different imposing factors such as social class norms, sports, and ideas of nationalism. For example, prior to bullbaiting becoming prohibited in England, humans often interacted with Bulldogs through engaging in this sport. Once bullbaiting had become prohibited and animal welfare became increasingly important, humans began to appreciate the bulldog as a national symbol of English history (Ritvo, 1986, p. 250).

I have also unpacked the idea of dog breeding as it relates to domestication. I have suggested that although dog breeding involves control over a dog's genetics, the biopower that is exerted through rules and regulations over human-dog relationships in the context of the

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Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show has helped encourage breeders to produce high-quality and healthy dogs. Through the examples provided, I suggest that dog breeders who are members of the *Westminster Kennel Club* breed dogs because of their love for the breed and the desire to produce healthy dogs. Despite a certain level of control over dogs through breeding, I suggest that the breeder-breed relationship may be that of love and companionship.

Lastly, through the work of Parréas (2012) I have identified how affect can be used to describe human-dog relationships. I suggest that the affect produced as part of this relationship indicates an anthro-zoo-genesis between humans and dogs that can be exemplified on a local and global level. At the local level, I suggest that this relationship is a mutual cooperation and companionship that contains equal risk for stakeholders. The global level encompasses relationships between groups of people and dogs. *Westminster* is a space for humans and dogs to come together and engage in sport with one another. People also come together for their love of dogs, as in the case of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*.

This research paper has explored human-dog relationships in the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. There are several limitations of this research paper. Firstly, the understanding of the human-dog relationship that was explored as part of this probe is limited because I am limited to observations of interactions between humans and dogs and interviews by humans. Also, due to the amount of *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show* competitors each year (thousands) I can only suggest that the thoughts and opinions expressed by interviewees provide insight on to some of the relationships between humans and dogs within the *Westminster* context. Further research on this topic should consider longitudinal studies of specific human-dog relationships over the span of a dog's lifetime in order to better understand the co-evolutions of human-dog relationships within the context of the *Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show*. Also, future research should consider comparing human-dog relationships across other dog shows to see if these relationships are acted out differently across dog show competitions. This comparison can also include comparing relationships at local dog shows versus relationships of humans and dogs competing at national and international dog shows to determine if these relationships vary in traits when comparing amateur human-dog duos to professionals.

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