Social & Cultural Geography

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The last fifty years have seen dogs increasingly drawn into the home as family members. While the health and social implications of these relatings have been the focus of much research, the everyday practices by which more-than-human families are constituted have received little attention. The paper draws on interviews with, and diaries recorded by, new dog owners in 2006–2007. It highlights three ways that dogs became family in and through the home. First, describing dogs as 'furry children', participants emphasised the time spent caring for dogs. Second, engaging with dogs as 'pack animals', participants discussed an inherent 'otherness' that shaped family relations, and reconceptualised the human-family as a pack relation. Third, the individual agency of dogs was recognised as shaping family and home. However, these familial relatings were often tenuous as humans were faced with the particular character and 'otherness' of dogs. While the majority experienced a strengthening of family ties following the introduction of a dog, a number of individuals discussed the divisive impact of this experience. The paper extends debates about family and home, broadening family beyond biological relations to include more-than-human relationships forged through cohabitation and interaction.

Key words: family, kinship, home, human–animal relations, non-human agency.

Introduction

These days Paddy and I fit seamlessly into each others lives, there's the occasional hiccup—days when I am sick and can't manage a walk, afternoons when the wind blows the wrong way and stirs him into a harried frenzy of barking, but on the whole we've integrated into each others lives and routines. The first weeks and months were not so happy. I was lucky to get two hours of sleep any night that first week. The dog, a two-year-old, whom we had met at the local pound, was afraid of people, bus stops and motorbikes. When left by himself he toileted behind the door and set up a droning sort of howl that continued for hours, and visitors, passers-by and neighbours were greeted with torrents of unstoppable barks. There were

moments when I wondered what I had done. Who was this dog I'd brought into the family, had I made a mistake, would it ever calm down? But gradually it did, *we* did. The passage of time, long walks, training (for all of us) and the experience of co-residence saw the tumultuous initial period settle and we now all enjoy full nights of sleep, Paddy can be left on his own and the neighbours are free to enter their yards.

These experiences are by no means universal. Indeed, for many people the introduction of a new dog into the family is comparatively straightforward—gardens are not dug up, neighbours are not terrorised and house-training passes almost unnoticed. My early experiences do, however, highlight the question of *how* non-human animals come to be recognised as family, and how recognition of companion animals as family shapes the practices of family and home-making. These questions remain under-considered within animal geography, which has predominately emphasised non-pet-related contexts (Fox 2006; Nast 2006: 897). Through the accounts of twenty-two dog owners I explore the everyday practices and routines centred around home that produce and hold more-than-human families together. More-than-human family is shown to be a tenuous and contingent relation that is made, negotiated and sometimes falls apart as a result of the interactions that take place between people and the particular animals that they live with. I particularly examine how these families live within the house-as-home, exploring the ways that home shapes and is shaped by the making of more-than-human families.

Making family, making home: a space for animals?

Pet animals are frequently described and encountered as family; 88 per cent of pet owners in Australia (Franklin 2006), 83 per cent in Canada (Ipsos-Reid 2001) and 49 per cent in the USA (American Veterinary Medical Association 2007) describe their pets this way (see also Cain 1985; Fox 2006; Hirschman 1994; Howell 2000). The intimacy suggested in these descriptions is performed through a growing spatial proximity between people and their companion animals in the home. In Australia animals recognised as family are afforded increased access to 'those parts of the home historically reserved for humans', including family rooms (76 per cent of households), bedrooms (52 per cent), and furniture (48 per cent) (Franklin 2006: 144). Similarly in Canada 90 per cent of pet owners report that their companion animals primarily live inside the home, while 69 per cent additionally allow them to sleep on beds (Ipsos-Reid 2001: 4, 24). The emotional and spatial intimacy of these relations has grown since the 1950s, when suburban animals were predominately kept outside (Franklin 2006; Grier 2006). These changes are paralleled by the growing commodification of companion animals and investment in pet-related industries and services (Nast 2006). However little research has examined the everyday practices that underpin these new and changing family arrangements, or the active role that companion animals play in the formation of these relations. Studies of human–animal family also do not attend to the spaces and places through which these relations are played out. In attending to these practices this paper questions how companion animals are conceptually and materially placed within family and home.

When human–animal families have been examined they have predominately been viewed through humanist frameworks that accord animals' family status to the extent that they perform normative (human) family roles such as 'child' or 'sibling' (e.g. Arluke and Sanders 1996; Hirschman 1994; Hickrod and

Schmitt 1982). In this view animals are brought within existing understandings of family, but the family itself remains relatively unchanged (research about home similarly depicts animals as passive bodies that are shaped (domesticated) to fit within home but rarely attends to the ways that animals live within or shape home, see for example Tuan 1984; Franklin 2006 and Smith 2003 are key exceptions). This reflects Western notions of family as a structure underpinned by biology and draws on nature–culture dualisms that construct non-human animals as passive objects. It is limiting to dogs and children (Haraway 2003) and often results in animals being constrained to the role of quasi-family members (Hickrod and Schmitt 1982). Nast (2006) offers an alternate view. Comparing dogs and children in a post-industrial context she argues that dogs supersede children, rather than act as child substitutes, due to their greater mobility, their role as social facilitators and because they are more disposable (2006: 900). Other studies of human–animal families emphasise the social and psychological benefits that people gain from these relations (Bonas, McNicholas and Collins 2000; Cain 1985; Soares 1985) and suggest that family relations involving animals may differ from those involving only people, but do not examine the practices that support these beneficial effects.

Human-centred approaches to studies of family and home are challenged by research foregrounding the active role that non-humans play in their relations with people and in place-making (e.g. Hinchliffe and Whatmore 2006; Hitchings 2003; Philo and Wilbert 2000; Power 2005, 2007; Smith 2003), and by research showing that people encounter their companion animals as active, minded individuals (e.g. Fox 2006; Irvine 2001; Laurier, Maze and Lundin 2006; Sanders 1993, 2003; Smith 2003). Fox (2006), for example, shows that people negotiate human–animal divides in their

everyday pet-keeping, juggling notions of animal difference with recognition of their individual subjectivity and 'personhood'. Haraway (2003) similarly explores the ways that people and dogs have become increasingly integrated and implicated into the others being through love, work, breeding and other forms of close relation. These studies speak of more-than-human kinship where dogs and people are mutually entwined in unique, open-ended encounters. They urge a re-thinking of human–animal family relations that is attentive to the everyday, embodied encounters between people and animals and suggest that animals may actively shape the ways that family and home are lived in the everyday.

Recognition of more-than-human family relations requires a broadened approach that moves beyond biological, human-centred narratives of familial belonging to consider who (and what) is experienced as family, and how these relations are lived through everyday, routine activity in and through the home. As a key site of human–companion animal cohabitation (Franklin 2006; Smith 2003) and family-making (see Blunt and Dowling 2006: 110–116, and below), the house-as-home is central to this analysis. A focus on the practices of family-making underpins this approach, facilitating recognition of family as a fluid, contingent arrangement that can involve elements of choice (see Carsten 2000; Finch 2007; Franklin and McKinnon 2001; Nash 2005; Silva and Smart 2001). In this view biology can be mobilised to substantiate family belonging, but it is just one way of relating. This framework opens a space for engaging with more-than-human families like those formed through contemporary shifts in pet-keeping cultures. It also facilitates recognition of an active non-human presence in family, allowing non-human agency to emerge as an outcome of everyday interactions and

encounters between family members(Hitchings 2003, 2004; Lorimer 2005; Whatmore 2006). Rather than encountering animals within human notions of family, this framework is suggestive of familial arrangements and practices that reflect more-than-human ways of relating.

John Grogan (2005) powerfully explores the dynamic of more-than-human family in *Marley & Me*, a world-wide bestseller that chronicles his real-life relationship with the boisterous, troublesome and (mostly) loveable labrador, Marley. Like most relationships this one is not always smooth, but Marley becomes part of Grogan's family and makes unique contributions to it that reflect both his particular character and preferences, and his otherness, his 'dogginess'. Significantly, these interactions shape not only Grogan's relationship with his partner, children, neighbours and broader friendship network, but also profoundly alter his experience of home and home-making through an array of new rules, routines and an introduction to 'doggie' ways of living. The home is more than a backdrop for these relations, but is a key space through which they are negotiated. Geographies of (human) family and home tell a similar story, showing that home is a complex space that both shapes and is shaped by its inhabitants (Blunt 2005; Dowling forthcoming; Miller 2001, 2002; Rose 2003; Watkins 2006). Showing that practices of family and home are co-constitutive these geographies of family prompt this paper's concerns with home as a key space through which more-than-human family relations are negotiated.

Methodologies

This paper draws on the accounts of twenty-two dog owners who took part in a broader project about how animals shape home-making practices. The research occurred in 2006–2007 as participants took part in an initial interview, a two-part diary process and follow-up interview over an average nine-month period. Thirteen participants completed both interviews and diaries, six participated in only one interview, and three completed an interview and one diary activity.

Eighteen participants were recruited through three Sydney-based puppy/dog training schools run by volunteers; the remaining four were identified through advertisements at a dog rescue shelter. Twenty-one participants lived in urban locations, one lived in a semi-rural area. Franklin (2006) shows that in Australia urban and rural residents encounter their companion animals in similar ways. People who had acquired a new dog within the twelve months prior to the commencement of the research were prioritised, although some participants already had one or more dogs. This group were selected to provide perspective on the ways that dogs affected family and home-making practices. The recent introduction of a dog into the home allowed this group to reflect on the initial stages of human–dog cohabitation. Though encounters between people and dogs are likely to change throughout the life of the relationship, the early period is characterised by change as humans and dogs learn to cohabit (see Franklin 2006 and Grogan 2005 for accounts of this period).

Only women responded to the advertisements, and therefore only women were interviewed. In one instance the participant's male partner observed and occasionally participated. However, men frequently collaborated in the diary activities as these took place at home, independent of the researcher. This statistic reflects other research which finds that women are typically the primary carers of dogs (Fifield and Forsyth 1999).

Nine participants lived with children at home (seven young children, two teenagers). Thirteen lived in households with only adults, however three of these people had regular visits from grandchildren. As the discussion will highlight, the presence of children often impacts significantly on how dogs are treated and expected to behave. The locations participants were sourced from, alongside the self-selecting nature of participation, mean that the sample is unique in some ways. However, participants experienced diverse familial relationships with their dogs. While for some families the introduction of a dog was overwhelmingly positive, other participants discussed the downfalls of living with dogs and in some cases described how they had considered giving the dog away.

The focus on dogs, rather than other types of pet or companion animal, is significant due to the long-standing relation between people and dogs, and the increased acceptance of intimate relations between people and dogs in Western society. Dogs are also more frequently encountered as family members (e.g. Ipsos-Reid 2001; Nast 2006). As Fox (2006: 533) observes, relations with other types of animals, such as reptiles, often 'challenge traditional ideas of what a pet should be (furry, cuddly, emotionally responsive) and call for a different type of relationship to that enjoyed with larger mammals'. Similarly, compared to dogs, cats are popularly viewed as more independent and less reliant on human affection and provision (Griffiths, Poulter and Sibley 2000). This suggests that this paper's discussion of family-making practices may be specific to relations between people and dogs.

The first interview explored participants' experience of introducing a new dog into the family and home, and provided a basis for the two diary activities. The first diary activity asked for rules/guidelines for home and family living from the perspective of both human and canine household members. The second asked for a photographic and written diary of participants' interactions with their dogs.[1] These diaries informed the final interview, where people re-lived and reflected on their interactions with their dog throughout the period of the research. The independent, home-based nature of the diaries allowed participants to reflect on their interactions with dogs through the course of everyday living. Interviews and diary methods are common in research into the human–companion animal bond (e.g. Fox 2006; Hirschman 1994; Irvine 2001; Sanders 1993, 2003), and are valuable as a way of exploring everyday practices (e.g. Fox 2006; Latham 2003). In this research the emphasis on everyday practices allowed non-human agency to emerge as dogs interacted with people in the home (see also Hitchings 2003 and Power 2005 on garden plants).

Interviews and diaries were coded to reflect the ways that people classified the position of dogs within the family relation. They were subsequently analysed to foreground the practices and interactions underpinning both successful and unsuccessful human–dog relations and to show how these relations were performed through the home. The analysis also attended to how these interactions impacted on relations occurring between human family members.

Furry families: holding together, falling apart

Twenty-one of the twenty-two participants described their dogs as 'family members'. This term was mobilised to indicate the close nature of the bond that participants' experienced with their dog(s). Dogs that were described as family were recognised as being emotionally

close to human family members and were included in 'family' activities. These relations were based around the cohabitation of a family home, although dogs were not always allowed free access to the house. They also extended into spaces like parks, training clubs, the Internet and grooming salons. These locations played an important role in structuring the ways that people encountered dogs as family in the home. However, participants unanimously expressed frustration at the ways that dogs' presence and movements were limited outside of home. In Sydney dogs are restricted from accessing private shopping centres, public transport (see Fife-Yeomans 2008 for one woman's experience of arrest following her use of public transport with a registered assistance dog), most schools (which meant some parents found it difficult to walk their dog to meet their child at school) and the majority of beaches. In the localities

participants lived in only a handful of parks were designated as 'leash-free', and the majority of these at set times. These limitations underpinned the centrality of home as a site where more-than-human families had greater freedom to define their own presence and practices. Participants further explained that cohabitation was essential because it facilitated close relations between people and dogs. By contrast, they felt that people who did not allow their dogs into the home saw their dogs as 'pets' rather than family. Participants illustrated this difference by describing their own childhood experiences of pet-keeping, as well as current friends who did not allow their dogs inside.

Although the majority of participants described their dogs as 'family', this was not a homogenous term, but served as an umbrella term capturing a diverse range of human–dog relations, as summarised in Table 1. These

Table 1 Describing dogs: a summary of all interviews

		Family	My child	Similar to child	Dogs as siblings	Unique/minded being	Pack animal
1	Maggie	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
2	Andy	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes
3	Beth	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes
4	Heidi	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
5	Sam	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes
6	Amy	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
7	Jenny	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
8	Rachel	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
9	Lucy	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	
10	Jayde	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
11	Miff	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
12	Kelly	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes
13	Lydia	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes
14	Kim	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	
15	Tess	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
16	Sadie	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
17	Lana	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
18	Julie	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes
19	Sandy					Yes	Yes
20	Elle	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes
21	Cate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
22	Danielle	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes

relations saw dogs placed in family in three main ways. Each of these was lived through the home in different ways. First, family was conceived through a parent–child model. Dogs were placed 'as' or 'similar to' children, while the human role was one of parenting and care. Second, families were made through relations of dominance and submission. People and dogs entered a pack relation, with humans assuming a leadership role which they enforced through training, rules and behavioural guidelines. Third, family was shaped by the agency and activity of individual dogs. Over time dogs were recognised as active in family-making as they formed routines with and around existing family members. In practice these roles were complex, entangled and gave shape to particular familial relations that were distinct from those involving only people. Drawn together they point to two conflicting, yet simultaneous trends within family. The first reflecting humanist models of family, where dogs were shaped and moulded so that they could be placed within pre-existing, human-centred notions of family, while the second represented an extension of family to engage with the dogginess of canine companions. These apparently conflicting ideas could often be identified within the same practices.

The discussion is divided into two sections. In the first I attend to the three dominant relations, highlighting the caring activities, rules, behaviours, guidelines and canine agency centred around home that participants believed underpinned successful human–dog families. I particularly reflect on how these encounters placed dogs within family, whether as 'furry people' or independent and distinct beings. In the second section I focus on difficulties and failures in the human–dog relation and reflect on the often tenuous and contingent nature of these bonds.

Making family with dogs: holding together

Dogs-as-children: relations of care. Dogs were often placed as or similar to children, while humans assumed a parental role. Fourteen participants described dogs 'as' children, while fifteen described them as 'similar to' children (see Table 1). The description indicated the close nature of the bond that participants experienced with their dog(s) and highlighted the significance of these animals within their day-to-day lives. This description was performed through relations of care. Women predominately provided this care, and highlighted similarities in the care needs of human children. Dogs additionally performed a sibling role for children, offering them a form of non-parental, non-judgemental companionship and care, as well as a play-mate (see Table 1). When this relation is viewed discreetly these families initially appear as typical nuclear families in structure and practice, and support research about the child-like role of dogs (e.g. Hickrod and Schmitt 1982; Hirschmann 1994). However, comparisons between children and dogs were not necessarily naïve anthropomorphisms. Instead, they frequently functioned to emphasise the intensive nature of the relationship that people experienced with their dogs, and to highlight the love, and ongoing emotional and time commitment engendered by these relations.

As part of this description participants' emphasised dogs' unique needs, and recounted their efforts to meet these requirements. These activities, which included grooming, walking and playing, increasingly became part of family and home life as participants balanced the needs of diverse family members. These activities saw participants responding to the perceived care needs of dogs as a species (e.g.

regular walking, flea removal), dog-breeds (e.g. active versus quiet breeds) and particular, individual dogs (e.g. the need for company, the preference for walking in a particular location, for playing particular games). Although these descriptions operated through an often essentialised construction of dogs as beings defined through their biological inheritance, they are significant because they represent an intent to extend family belonging beyond people. As participants sought to incorporate these activities into family activity, and view them as equal to specifically human-oriented activities, they participated in a 'being-for-the-other' at a species, breed and individual level. Drawing from Cloke and Jones (2003) this term captures the ways that participants practically and emotionally extended themselves to dogs as they attempted to meet the needs and wants of their companions. These experiences suggest that while Haraway's (2003) warnings against depictions of dogs as 'fur-kids' are certainly warranted, the term is also used to communicate closeness and openness to an 'other'. Observing that dogs need regular walking, Maggie explained that this activity had become an important and routine part of her day. She regularly took her dogs to a park that she perceived was their favourite, and ensured that they walked even when she was exhausted after work, or would have preferred a weekend inside. Tess similarly described her efforts at dog grooming, observing that the activity maintained the health of Teddy's coat, and fostered the development of a close, relaxed relationship between human and dog.

However, while care-based relations reflected an effort to extend to dogs' unique physical and mental/emotional requirements, these activities were also designed to shape and mould dog bodies so that they comfortably fitted within participants' expectations

of appropriate home and family behaviour. For example, dogs were believed to enjoy walking, but the activity was also performed as a means of moderating dogs' energy levels. Dogs that had been exercised were described as less destructive and calmer in the home and in their interactions with human family members. Grooming similarly soothed dogs *and* ensured that they did not contribute moulted hair or unpleasant doggie-odours to the home environment. In this way while care-based encounters point to participants' efforts to extend family-belonging to dogs-*as-dogs*, where encounters were framed by an understanding of dogs as animals operating at a species, breed and individual level, they also represented a simultaneous 'drawing-in' of doggie activity and bodily expressions. These practices were designed to shape dogs so that they fit within dominant values associated with family and home, including views of home as a safe, clean, ordered space. In the exclusion of excess dog hair, smells and energy these practices further assisted home's appearance as a 'human' space.

Pack relations: hierarchy and the making of family-packs. Twenty of the twenty-two participants additionally described their familial relation as being pack-like. This description reflected participants' ideas about dogs' wolf/pack ancestry and the importance of human leadership over dogs. This information was predominately gained through formal dog training classes, training manuals and Internet research, advice from friends and experience. It draws on a limited and essentialised view of dog behaviour as defined through a biological inheritance. When participants described their interactions this way they depicted dogs as 'pack animals' (see Table 1) and emphasised an inherent otherness or 'dogginess' that shaped

family relations. They also reconceptualised the human-family as a pack relation, and some validated their interactions with their dogs through reference to the hierarchical nature of parent–child relations. The emphasis on hierarchy makes this description distinct from care-based relations, but it was similarly mobilised to highlight the close relationships between participants and their dogs. Participants' performed pack relations through the spaces of home and its furnishings. They became increasingly aware of the spatial dimensions of their interactions with their dog(s) and hierarchically coded the home to reflect this order.

When describing dogs as 'pack animals' participants asserted the importance of interacting with dogs-*as-dogs*. Although this emphasis on animal relations conflicts with traditional notions of familial belonging, participants explained that this designation *complemented* dogs' family status because as pack animals it was important for dogs to be part of and live close to the family. Access to the home (regardless of whether dogs were allowed free access, or had their access moderated by humans) was an important way that participants indicated the significance of dogs within family. Rachel explained that her dogs lived inside and 'I wouldn't have it any other way because they're part of the family, they're a pack animal, they *need* to be with you'. Lydia observed: 'I think well they're pack animals, your family is their *pack*'. Similarly Maggie stated that she allowed her dogs' access to the inside of the house, both because of their child-like status *and* because dogs are 'pack animals'. Maggie's comments show how ideas about dogs as children were often entwined with understandings about dogs as pack animals. These roles did not conflict, but instead the dual descriptions affirmed the close relationship that participants experienced with their dog(s) and

substantiated the appropriateness of this particular familial arrangement. The negotiation of these roles points to a more hybrid model of the traditional Western family, and signifies participants' willingness to extend family-belonging beyond people.

Participants further de-centred 'family' by reconceptualising it as a pack, and highlighting the pack-like nature of human familial and social relations. Viewed this way human-family relations paralleled those occurring within dog-only groupings. Participants firstly described the family as a pack, arguing that dogs were also pack animals and therefore belonged *within* and *close to* the human-pack. Secondly, they affirmed this description through reference to the hierarchical nature of the human family-pack. Well-functioning dog-packs were seen to exhibit a strong leader–pack relation, with human-packs reflecting this hierarchy in the relation between parents (as leaders) and children (bottom of pack). Thirdly, participants emphasised the significance of behavioural rules and guidelines in ensuring and maintaining patterns of leadership and dominance within both human-only and human–dog family-packs. Rules were said to help parents, children and dogs understand their roles as family members and ensure the ongoing stability and happiness of families. These discussions showed participants validating their interactions with their dogs through reference to child-rearing, as they sought to naturalise and famil(y)iarise the hierarchical structure of human–dog interactions. They also understood and described their familial relations, and the needs and development of their human children, through their engagements with their dogs.

Detailing her house-rules Cate explained:

These rules are very important, just as we have rules for our daughter our dog also have [*sic*] to obey her own set of rules. These rules make living together a

pleasure rather than a problem. Any social group has to have rules which all the members know and keep.

Jayde used the analogy of a ladder to outline her dog, Millie's, position in the family:

in the rung of the family she is the bottom of the pack … I think they need to know where they are in society, whether it be a mum or a dad or a child, but this is your niche and you do the best you can, but these are the parameters that a dog lives in. Like the dog doesn't sleep on your bed, the dog doesn't sleep in the bedroom.

Sadie similarly commented: 'we have rules and behaviours of what the animals are and aren't allowed to do …, I think it's just like children really you know'. Jenny felt that a dog-dominated family would be chaotic and could not imagine why people would allow dogs to be in this position. She surmised though, 'maybe it's to do with spoiling it, some people spoil children and some people discipline them properly. It's a way of having a controllable pet, a pet that's happy, that knows its boundaries'. As these examples begin to show, family/pack hierarchy was performed through house-rules which defined appropriate behaviour. These rules were set by adults and defined the behaviour of children and dogs.

Rules and behavioural guidelines spoke to the subordinate place of dogs and children within the family and home. Participants' explained that it was important for families to be led firstly by adult humans and then by humans as a general group. Children were therefore always positioned above dogs. This ordering reflected an understanding about the role of parents in socialising children, and contiguously about the role of people in ensuring that dogs behaved appropriately within a human-dominated society. Figure 1 shows some strategies that participants

believed communicated their leadership to dogs. Drawing on understandings about dogs' wolf ancestry these techniques referenced ideas about leadership within canine packs, and were focused around dog-training and the ordering of everyday activities. As Figure 1 shows, routines surrounding food and access to the house and its furnishings were the most frequently identified grounds for asserting leadership. These practices highlight the rescripting of the house/home and the objects within it, which were increasingly viewed as key sites for maintaining and acceding leadership. In this way the spatiality of home became an important way that participants structured and moderated their familial interactions with dogs.

Issues of discipline, obedience and training were particularly important in families that included young children, as dominant dogs were believed to represent a hazard to them. Figure 1 outlines three factors believed to foster the development of successful child–dog relations. Participants also ordered their interactions with children and dogs so that (they perceived that) dogs would intuit their lower standing. Jayde always ensured that the dog was last to do any activity:

There's this line from me to my husband to the girls to her and she knows she's at the end of the pecking order, she knows she's last into the house, she knows she's last into the car when we go somewhere. The kids get in and she gets in and up on her seat now, she knows she's last … to get out of the car so she knows she sits and waits. Just things like that, and even swimming in the pool, she knows she's last to get in and she has to be the first one out.

She explained that this ordering was important as dogs 'are a pack animal [and] really do need to know that they come in *last*'. I witnessed a second example while interviewing Lydia,

Feeding dogs

- Humans should always control food provision (all but one participant).

- Dogs should only be fed after people have eaten because canine leaders always eat before the rest of the pack (ten participants).

- Food as a reward (twelve participants): Dog must perform a desired action before being fed, usually 'sit' followed by an extended 'stay' command.

Coco is sitting and waiting until she is allowed to eat. Describing this picture Cate said: 'She's waiting for her dinner there and looking up. That's how she does it, have a look at, every muscle in her body is ready to … she's so just *full* of attention and her nerves, everything ready to jump.'

Access to the house and furnishings

- Only humans should be allowed on beds and lounges because canine leaders always assume the highest ground (ten participants).

- Dogs should only be allowed into the house when invited by people (nine participants).

Mitch was only allowed into the house when invited, however a lack of fly-screens in an Australian climate meant this door frequently remained open. A chair placed in the opening was employed as a symbolic barrier to indicate that Mitch was not welcome inside. The participant viewed the pictured activity as Mitch's attempt to assert his leadership by crossing the threshold into what she felt should be a human-only space.

Children and Dogs

- Age and size of child: Older and larger children believed to be more able to interact safely with dogs and maintain leadership over them (all participants with children).

- Children should be involved in dog training activities and/ or children should be monitored when interacting with dogs (ten participants).

- Children were taught how to approach unfamiliar dogs and told not to tease dogs, take their toys or food, or be cruel to them).

Figure 1 Pack hierarchy: assuring leadership in the family pack.

when the dog, Tim, nipped her young son. This type of interaction had occurred since Lydia bought the dog from a rescue shelter, and meant that she never left the child alone with Tim. She responded by putting Tim on a lead and asking her son to slowly walk him up and down the veranda, explaining that this showed the dog that the boy was dominant and in charge. Lydia said that another common response involved the child standing in the dog's bed. She noted that when they did this the dog typically 'just rolled over, so submissive, belly bared'. In these examples the spatiality of home and human–dog interactions were again significant. They illustrate some ways that home spaces and furnishings were hierarchically coded to reflect the ordering of family relations, and show how these orderings were performed through everyday encounters.

When family was produced through pack relations participants emphasised the importance of rules, guidelines and a firm, human-dominated hierarchy in holding the human–dog family together. The spatial dynamics of these encounters were particularly important, with leadership symbolised through free and prioritised access to the home, while submission was indicated by a lack of access to the home and to physically high places including beds and furniture. Leadership was also coded through the ordering of social activities, where leaders (humans) would ideally participate in a given activity before dogs. This approach was most strongly expressed by participants with children or grandchildren and was believed to be effective because of dogs' apparent sensitivity to the symbolics of social actions. Participants cast these activities as an effort to engage with dogs on their own terms, and discussed the importance of acting towards dogs in the same way that canine leaders would act towards their pack. In pursuit of

leadership participants thus made efforts to 'think like a dog', to communicate with dogs and view family relationships and the spaces and furnishings of the home in ways that they perceived a dog would.

Participants' efforts to think and communicate with dogs as 'pack animals' can be read as examples of them 'becoming animal' (Smith 2003). They are significant because they point to a willingness to not just recognise, but to engage with and incorporate non-human others into family, and to explore other ways of 'being' within family (see Irvine 2004 for a discussion of pack relations and training). However descriptions of dogs as pack animals often drew on essentialised and limited views of dog behaviour. Dogs were cast as friendly wolves, while their behaviour was *selectively* depicted as an expression of this biological inheritance. Undesirable pack behaviours, particularly those like territory marking that challenged home values of cleanliness, were thus discouraged and seen as unnecessary and contaminating. As later sections explore, these behaviours could also destabilise dogs' position within family. At the same time chance, choice and individual agency were ignored or down-played in these discussions. The power relations embedded in these interactions are significant and can be interpreted as manipulating or limiting dog behaviour to expressions that fit within human ideals of family and home (as Tuan 1984 argues), as opposed to representing a broadening of family and home practices. Yet the practices through which pack relations were performed were not as limited or restrictive as participants' descriptions of ideal pack behaviour suggested. As the following section explores, frequent slippages and ruptures to these hierarchical relations saw the individual character and agency of dogs asserted within everyday family relations.

Dog-agency and the routines of family life. Although participants emphasised the importance of human-provided care and hierarchical relations, these ideas were regularly challenged and disrupted as dogs' (perceived) needs and preferences were incorporated into the routines of family life, and as dogs asserted their own presence within family activity. These engagements with dog-agency destabilised essentialised discussions of pack relations in favour of more individual encounters between humans and dogs. Discipline and training continued to be of importance, and hierarchy and dominance persisted, but these relationships grew from everyday encounters and knowledge of the other.

Encounters between people and dogs frequently exceeded the rules of pack behaviour. This came to the fore when participants discussed and wrote about the routines of daily life. Amy, whose pack rules stipulated that dogs should always follow human activity, detailed a variety of routines surrounding her dog, Jack. These were not simply routines of necessity, but indicated an engagement with Jack the individual. Figures 2 and 3 capture one example. The pictures, drawn from Amy's diary, show Jack interrupting Sunday afternoon tea. Jumping up against the participants' husband with the full force of both his feet, toy in mouth, he requests a game of 'throw and wrestle'. Although sometimes encountered as 'pestering', this activity was fun, often prompted or invented by Jack and pulled the humans out of their own activities to engage in a relation that they did not initiate, define or rule, but that instead occurred as a relation between the two actors. Miff similarly explained how many of her family's interactions with Lily disregarded the rules of pack hierarchy that had been provided in their dog training class. Although she asserted that dogs should not be allowed on couches and beds, or be allowed to sleep in bedrooms, Miff explained that she and her husband allowed these activities to occur as they were evidently enjoyable both to the dog and human family members.

Dogs also made their 'mark' on routines that pre-existed their presence in the house. Cate explained how Coco, the dog, had become part of the nightly 'stacking the dishwasher' ritual. Cate felt that Coco enjoyed this activity, probably as she was allowed to clean the plates before they were put into the dishwasher, and often hurried the activity if

Figure 2 Jack interrupting Sunday afternoon tea for a game of 'throw and wrestle'.

Figure 3 Game on! Jack wrestling for the rope.

Cate looked like she was going to relax instead of stacking the dishwasher immediately after dinner. Cate explained:

when we just sit down after dinner sometimes and have a glass of wine she comes and she's talking to you 'come on, lets do the dishes', she knows exactly that after each meal we will do the dishes and that's her duty.

So what does she do?

She comes here and she starts, it's not barking it's just snapping her jaws together and doing all these things with her head and just really trying to get your attention that you have a job to do.

What does she do when you get up?

Oh she's straight away heads to the dishwasher, she's got a palate now we developed her, all the food we eat she always gets to lick.

Coco also had the job of pushing the bottom drawer of the dishwasher in, and completed this task after all the dishes were stacked (see Figure 4, from Cate's diary). Whereas pack relations were understood as an inter-action between humans and dogs-as-species, these increasingly routine engagements were understood to develop between people and particular, individual dogs.

Figure 4 Coco pushing in the bottom drawer of the stacked dishwasher (Cate's diary).

As dogs became part of the routines of daily family life in the home, and as they developed their own routines with and around these activities and spaces, they were increasingly recognised as family members. Miff felt that Lily had become an irreplaceable part of the family as she learned the routines. Although she had initially believed that dogs should live in spaces separate from those occupied by people, she explained that she and her children had gradually bonded with Lily through regular, fun interactions in the home. Sadie explained that dogs became family as they formed their *own* routines around family members. She felt this was beginning to happen with her dog, Lulu, but was easily observed in the way that her cat, who had been part of the family for a number of years, sat on her son's bed every evening during story time before going to her own sleeping space. In the development of these more interactive and dynamic relations the spatiality of home again became significant. While pack relations were performed through the shutting-out of dogs, and the restriction of dog activity to specific spaces in the home, these more individual engagements saw an expansion and freeing up of doggie access to the house. This expanded access responded to the activity and mobility of canine family members and reflected human understandings of dogs' desires and preferences for companionship. Co-habitation of the home was essential to the development of these more individual relations. Dogs living outside the house typically have less contact with family members and may be less able to enter into these more intimate relations. These relations involved an engagement between active partners, where both dogs and people shaped the ways that family and home were 'done' in the everyday. In this recognition of canine independence they go beyond Tuan's (1984) emphasis on the centrality and dom-inance of people in human–animal encounters

(though this did not mean that these relations did not involve dominance or were not at times uncomfortable, it simply meant that the independent agency and autonomy of dogs became part of these encounters). Here dogs were not just 'little hairy people' that needed to fit within existing routines, but instead participants' plans and activities were altered and extended to incorporate the needs, preferences and pleasures of dogs. In these ways dogs began defining their own role within the family and shaped the rules and practices of family living. These interactions were rarely overt or planned, but instead emerged from close interaction and co-habitation.

Families falling apart: the limits of belonging

However, family relations were not always enjoyable or unconditional. Instead a large number of participants described frustrations and difficulties in their relations with their dogs. In most cases these difficulties were relatively minor, translating only into everyday tensions and challenges within the family. However, six participants described more prolonged or problematic relationships and had considered getting rid of their dog(s). These relations sometimes impacted on the interactions between human family members. Issues of dog aggression were a concern for two participants. However, the most common concerns surrounded toilet-training and destructive behaviours like chewing, which were a problem even when they were recognised as 'typical dog behaviour'. These behaviours were undesirable because they challenged home's appearance as a safe, clean and orderly space. They resulted in stress for the primary dog carer who felt responsible for cleaning, repairs and the continuous monitoring of the dog(s) activity while it was inside the

home. It is important to recognise however that while these behaviours were experienced by the majority of participants, and resulted in some form of stress or frustration in most households, only a minority of relationships were threatened by this.

Participants lamented the extensive amount of time consumed by dogs' care requirements and sometimes complained about the amount of attention that dogs required. Miff explained:

I think the ... first month or two I felt very stressed, I felt like I had just given birth to a baby, this was a baby [laughs] um, and I was restricted about being able to go out places ... I couldn't go, move in the house without this thing following me the whole time, like I couldn't *go* places I wanted to, or shut her away because she was always wanting to be with me, that was frustrating. And the fact that she wasn't toilet trained properly, it was just a nightmare and it was becoming a very stressful situation, in fact I threatened to sell her, about three weeks ago I said to the kids I'm getting rid of this dog.

When coupled with the fact that Lily would not sleep in her designated space this situation escalated. Participants like Miff, Danielle and Jenny described these behaviours as 'typical puppy behaviour', but explained that because these were the first young dogs they had lived with they felt unprepared and frustrated. These experiences point to an initial expectation that dogs should fit *within* human families and norms of behaviour in the home. Dogs that acted in unexpected ways, or that deviated from these to a large extent, for example by repeatedly soiling the house, were more likely to have their family membership questioned. Dogs were particularly vulnerable to rejection in the early stages of these relations as human families were less bonded to them, and were still adapting their lifestyle and home routines to the presence and activity of the dog(s).

Difficulties in human–dog relationships sometimes translated into tensions between human members of the family. Danielle discussed the impact of a new puppy, explaining that it had chewed everything and toileted all over the house, 'which is the puppy thing but we'd never had a puppy before'. This experience introduced conflict into family life:

[My husband] was ready to take her back and I wasn't happy with her either, like everything about her was just very bad, and I'm feeling guilty even thinking that and I know he was too, but it actually increased the stress in the family I'd say 80 per cent.

Sam also experienced difficulties in her relationship with her son after their dog became increasingly aggressive. They particularly conflicted about how the dog should be managed, regularly changing the rules after each incidence of aggression. When I visited Sam seven months later her relationship with her son had re-stabilised, but a report from a dog behaviourist was advising that the dog should either be euthanised or would need to be carefully managed for the rest of its life. Hoping to avoid the former outcome Sam explained that she was becoming increasingly mindful of the dog throughout the day, and needed to plan and manage every interaction ahead of time.

Strategies for managing and minimising negative relationships varied, but were typically highly spatialised. As participants also explained when describing pack relations, in managing 'difficult' dogs they became increasingly aware of the spatial symbolics of their interactions with their dog(s) in the home, restricting dogs from some areas of the house, while allowing increased access to others. The specifics of these rules differed according to the spatial arrangement of the home (e.g. whether it was open planned or had more than one level), and the types of furnishings (e.g. casual versus formal living rooms; carpeted versus hard floorings). Miff found that allowing Lily access to spaces previously designated as human-only (e.g. bedrooms) helped her to settle into the family. However when going out Miff, like Danielle and Sam, demarcated specific 'dog' spaces. Carpeted areas, which were difficult to clean after toileting accidents, were frequently restricted, as were formal living rooms (see Figure 5). Dogs were also often restricted to the ground level of larger homes. Sam explained that this allowed her to constantly monitor her dog and limited his opportunities for getting into trouble upstairs, when he would be out of view. This approach has parallels with the parental supervision practised by some parents in Dowling (forthcoming). These

Figure 5 Miff built this barrier to prevent Lily accessing the 'good' room.

parents explained that by keeping their children in open-planned spaces they could be with their child while also doing other home activities.

Some participants additionally used the idea of 'own time', where dogs were confined to spaces where people were not co-present. Sam and Jenny put their dogs outside, while Kelly placed her dog in a playpen. These spaces were selected because they were hardier or more sparsely furnished and therefore less vulnerable to destructive behaviours. 'Own time' was designed to allow the dogs to rest and learn to be independent of humans, while also allowing people to have dog-free time. It also proved critical in assisting participants to moderate their response to undesirable dog behaviours and was instrumental in reducing the amount of stress experienced within family relations. However, while Kelly and Jenny's dogs appeared to accept this time for independent rest and play, Sam's dog became extremely anxious and distressed by his apparent exile and barked continuously. This noise was a particular concern as Sam lived in a new housing development where the houses had been built close together. When I visited Sam for the final interview she was no longer using 'own time', but instead preferred to remain constantly co-present with Sammy and monitor his activities. The six participants who had considered giving their dog(s) away also took part in formal training designed to teach the dog to be calmer, and so that they could learn how to manage undesirable behaviours. Kelly and Sam additionally tried to avoid situations likely to trigger their dog's aggression.

Participants experienced a variety of challenges that disrupted their familial relations with dogs. These relations highlight a level of disposability that is perhaps unique to the human–dog bond, and point to the often tenuous nature of these relations. While participants often recognised their role in prompting these problems, they also highlighted the particular character of dogs—some dogs were believed to be more aggressive or dominant than others. These relations do not challenge recognition of dogs as family members, but they do highlight the uneven distribution of power in these relationships. While dogs added a 'dogginess' to family and home life (see previous sections), there were limitations to this that depended as much on the character of the dog as the person. Alterations to the spatial dimensions of family life in the home were key to the management of problematic human–dog relations, and were also highly symbolic. Initially dogs perceived as disrupting family were likely to have their access to the house restricted, in situations where this behaviour was perceived to continue or escalate participants contemplated the complete removal of the dog from the family home.

Conclusions

The experiences outlined in this paper point to the making of more-than-human families that are distinct, but no less significant, than those involving only people. The idea of 'family' was central to the ways that participants related to their dogs. It described a close relationship made through cohabitation in a family home, and was sustained by rules and routines that drew people and dogs into familiar and intimate relations. People related to dogs in multiple ways. Encountering dogs as children they described their efforts to meet the care needs of individual dogs, as well as dog-breeds and dogs-as-species. They also discussed the role of dogs

as carers, particularly to children. Relations of dominance and submission were also important and lent an often essentialised historically/biologically rooted, hierarchical structure to interactions between participants, their children and dogs-as-species. Cutting through these relations were the particular preferences, behaviours and activities of dogs, which became part of everyday family life and saw dogs increasingly recognised as independent family members. However, family was also a tenuous and contingent relation. Dogs that acted too far outside of 'normal' family or home behaviour, for example through displays of aggression or over-dependence, or who performed destructive behaviours, sometimes had their family membership - questioned.

Two trends underpinned the human–dog families described in this paper. The first saw dogs shaped and brought 'within' human expectations of appropriate family and home behaviour. In the second, family was broadened by participants' efforts to include dogs-*as-dogs* within everyday family routines and practices, and by the unique character and agency of dogs, which shaped the ways that family was done in the everyday. This second trend is significant and extends literature concerned with family by highlighting more-than-human families where belonging is not definitively contingent on human status, or on similarity to people, but is instead forged through close interaction, cohabitation and engagement with another. These relations challenge popular depictions of dogs as child substitutes (e.g. Hickrod and Schmitt 1982; Hirschman 1994; and see Haraway 2003: 33–39). Rather, descriptions of dogs as children were defined by care and a desire to engage dogs-*as-dogs*, rather than by efforts to confine dogs to specifically child-like roles. In this way these relations speak more to Nast's (2006)

assertion that dogs supersede children in a post-industrial context, but with some cautions. These dogs were not experienced as being as mobile, or as malleable as Nast suggests. Rather both people and dogs were altered by the experience of cohabitation. In their ongoing encounters with dogs people found themselves, their routines and homes shaped and pulled by the particular preferences, behaviours and activities of the dog(s) with whom they lived. Limitations placed on dog bodies outside of home further restricted their sense of dogs' mobility.

The relations outlined in this paper show that the house-as-home is an important site for more-than-human family. In comparison to their experiences outside of home, within home humans and dogs experienced a greater freedom to define their own relations and presences. The house-as-home was more than a simple container for these encounters; rather family relations were performed through the home. House structures and home values (e.g. view of home as a clean, ordered, 'human' space) facilitated, shaped and mediated the relations that occurred between people and dogs. In turn these encounters shaped home and how it was experienced by people. For example, positive relations between people and dogs made the home a more homely and welcoming space, whereas less harmonious relations contributed stress and anxiety and made home less welcoming. These experiences point to the significance of house design in more-than-human family relations. Houses that included spaces with hard floor surfaces, such as wood or tiles, were valued for their greater resistance to dog hair and toileting habits. The ability to close off spaces in the house so that dogs could be contained within preferred spaces was similarly important, particularly in families that experienced tensions in the

human–dog relation. Yard size and access to off-leash areas for exercise and play outside of home were of further concern. These design features allowed dogs to be more readily accommodated within home and were often critical to the success of these family relationships. These findings suggest an interrelationship between house design and the success of human–dog relations that deserves further exploration. This research might also extend outside of home to explore the ways that restrictions placed on animal bodies impact on the types of relationships possible between people and their companion animals.

Acknowledgements

Note

1 Participants were provided with disposable cameras to photograph their day, some of the images are therefore of a lower quality. Some images have been adjusted to aid clarity.

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Abstract translations

Les familles à fourrure: la fondation d'un foyer humain-chien

Au cours des cinquante dernières années, les chiens sont considérés de plus en plus comme des membres de la famille à part entière. Jusqu'à présent, les recherches ont été axées sur les conséquences de ces rapports sur la santé et la société, mais les pratiques quotidiennes à travers lesquelles les familles plus qu'humaines se constituent ont suscité peu d'attention. Cet article s'appuie sur les résultats d'entrevues menées en 2006–2007 auprès de nouveaux propriétaires de chien et sur des données issues des journaux

de bord. Il met en évidence trois voies possibles d'intégration des chiens au sein du foyer familial. D'abord, en référant aux chiens comme des «enfants à fourrure», les participants ont fait ressortir l'importance du temps qu'ils consacrent aux soins des chiens. En second lieu, se nouant aux chiens comme des «animaux de meute», les participants ont évoqué une «altérité» inhérente qui définit ce que sont les relations familiales, et ont modifié la notion de la famille humaine en s'y référant comme une relation de meute. Troisièmement, les chiens sont traités comme des acteurs individuels qui structurent la famille et le foyer. Cependant, ces rapports familiaux souvent ténus découlent du fait que les humains étaient confrontés au caractère particulier et à «l'altérité» des chiens. Si la majorité a profité d'un resserrement des liens familiaux suivant l'accueil du chien, certains estiment que cette expérience a entraîné des divisions. Cet article prolonge les débats sur la famille et le foyer en plaidant pour un élargissement de la définition de la famille au-delà des relations biologiques en y incluant les relations plus qu'humaines qui se nouent par la cohabitation et l'interaction.

Mots-clefs: famille, parenté, foyer, relations humains-animaux, acteur non-humain.

Familias peludas: haciendo una familia perro-humana en casa

En los últimos cincuenta años ha ido aumentando el número de perros que viven en el hogar como miembros de la familia. Las consecuencias sanitarias y sociales de esta situación han sido el tema de varias investigaciones mientras que las prácticas cotidianas de estas familias más-que-humanas no han recibido mucha atención. Este papel hace uso de entrevistas con, y diarios escritos por, nuevos dueños de perro en 2006–2007. Pone de relieve tres modos en que los perros se convierten en miembros de la familia en, y mediante, el hogar. En primer lugar, al referirse a los perros como 'niños peludos', los participantes pusieron énfasis en el tiempo dedicado al cuidado de los perros. En segundo lugar, al relacionarse con los perros como aniamles de manada, los participantes hablaron de la inherente 'otredad' que influenciaba las relaciones familiares y reconceptualizaron la familia-humana como una manada. En tercer lugar, se reconocieron que la agencia individual de perros le daba forma a la familia y al hogar. Sin embargo, estas relaciones familiares eran muchas veces endebles porque los humanos se enfrentaban al carácter particular y la otredad de los perros. Aunque la mayor parte de ellos experimentaron un fortalecimiento de los vínculos afectivos al introducir a un perro en la familia, varios indivíduos comentaron sobre el impacto divisivo de esta experiencia. El papel extiende los debates sobre la familia y el hogar, ampliando la familia más allá de las relaciones biológicas para incluir relaciones más-que-humanas forjadas por cohabitación e interacción.

Palabras claves: familia, similitud, hogar, relaciones animal-humana, agencia no humana.