



Critical Pet Studies?

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Something remarkable has been happening in post-industrial contexts across the world since the 1990s: a shift from considering pets (especially dogs) as a species apart, to a reconsideration of pets (especially dogs) as profoundly appropriate objects of human affection and love.¹ Simultaneously, there has been an elevation in our relationships with and to pets. It is now mainstream and apropos in many places to consider pets as subjects which are in many ways equal to humans. In this sense, the prototypical Fido who slept on the floor and ate scraps from the table has been replaced by Lucy, a companion with increasing legal rights who sleeps on a bed and eats upscale foods. In social theory circles, this re-valuation is epitomized in Donna Haraway's (2003), *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness*. Whereas her previous works questioned the epistemological and ontological assumptions behind categorically dividing the human from "nature" and/or the cyborgic, this book essay curiously sets self-critical capacities aside to argue that working dogs are so superior in intelligence ("other" dogs are mere pets) that they constitute a special category of "subject"; humans who successfully interact with such dogs (in her case, in the context of agility training), engage in a heightened form of intersubjectivity. Such dog subjects represent "significant otherness", the recognition of their difference providing a way forward in re-imagining and enacting intersubjectivity more generally.²

As pets, especially dogs, are re-imagined in a plethora of ways and increasingly and pervasively incorporated into human lives in post-industrial places everywhere—rural and urban, and as humans strive to invoke and demonstrate their newfound love through any number of social channels—scholarly, scientific, popular cultural, religious, or corporate, a dramatic shift in consumption patterns and human geographies is ensuing. In many post-industrial places across the world, dogs are for the first time being formally and regularly accommodated in doggie beaches, parks, high-class hotels, cafes and restaurants; department stores and mainstream retail catalogues feature substantial selections of

Table 1: Prominent non-specialty dog magazines sold in the US, showing central office location and inception dates^a

<i>Bark: Dog is my Co-Pilot</i>	Berkeley, CA	1997
<i>Chicagoland Tails: Celebrating the Relationship between Pets and their People^b</i>	Chicago, IL	2000
<i>Hollywood Dog: We ♥ your Dog; We're only Human</i>	New York, NY	2005
<i>Modern Dog: The Lifestyle Magazine for Urban Dogs and their Companions</i>	Vancouver, BC	2002
<i>The Las Vegas Dog</i>	Las Vegas, NV	1998
<i>New York Dog: We ♥ your Dog; We're only Human</i>	New York, NY	Fall 2004
<i>Urban Dog: Get in Touch with your Inner Dog</i>	New Orleans, LA	2002

^aI do not include popular specialty magazines featuring dogs, which are many, including *Dog World* (health, breeding, and genetics), *AKC Gazette*, *Dog Fancy*, *Fido Friendly* (features where to travel with your dog), *Gun Dog*. Note that this is only a sample of the dog magazines available.

^bSince 2000, Janice Brown, the independent publisher of *Chicagoland Tails*, has published four other state or city-specific dog publications, including *Indy Tails* (catering to metropolitan Indianapolis), started in 2004; *Michigan Tails* (for the state of Michigan), launched in October 2005; *St Louie Tails* (St Louis metropolitan area, November 2005); and *Ohio Valley Tails* (metropolitan Cincinnati, parts of Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana, March 2006). Two others are to be launched in 2006, in Denver and Washington DC. Thus far, only one publication has been suspended, *Twin City Tails* (launched in 2003; put on hold in 2005).

pet goodies; and new genres of boutiques and retail outlets for pets (many of them online) have emerged.³ Mainstream retail catalogues now feature substantial selections of pet-related commodities, while pet (especially dog) magazine venues have burgeoned (Table 1). At the same time, PetCo and PetSmart, Inc have become mega-purveyors of pet goods in the US, with many supermarkets for humans (especially those featuring organic products) entertaining bulletin boards for exchanging pet care information. Coincidentally, the number of services for pets (especially dogs) has skyrocketed, along with pet advocacy groups. It is now possible to find your dog or cat a herbal massage or pastries in Bangkok, Tokyo, Chicago, Paris, or London, with the number of private and public venues catering to dog sporting events and physical health increasing exponentially. And soon the US will have its first pet-oriented airline, Companion Air (<http://www.companionair.com>, accessed 14 April 2006). Growth in pet-oriented goods and services in the US alone has averaged 6–7% per year over the last several years, helping to explain the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association's findings that, "[p]et spending has more than doubled from \$17 billion in 1994 to an estimated \$38.4 billion in 2006".⁴ In July 2005, dog events at Disney's Great Outdoor Games (broadcast live on ESPN and ABC) were the highest ranked in terms

of television viewership, drawing in over 850,000 households. And in 2005 canine sports events were shown on at least five major cable and broadcast networks, the American Kennel Club's Eukanuba National Championship in January 2005 attracting more than 13 million viewers (Discovery Channel and Animal Planet), "about the same number that tuned in to the 2004 Emmy Awards" (Chozick 2005).

That the US is not alone in its spiraling pet-investments is evident in the marketing studies of Euromonitor International, an international company reporting on investment trends and opportunities worldwide. Data from a five-year (2000–2005) study of the pet industry in over fifty countries around the world (see www.euromonitor.com) show unsurprisingly that post-industrial places like France experienced 17% value growth in pet food and pet care products from 2000–2005, to reach 3.2 billion euros; and that in 2004 alone, Germans spent more than 3.8 billion. Pet investments are also on the rise in high growth economies in Asia, especially China and South Korea. Such growth is geared mostly towards dogs, in keeping with a burgeoning middle class that now sees dog-ownership as a sign of affluence, a westernization of sensibilities that is in stark contrast to the traditional butchering of dogs for meat (Nast, forthcoming).

Today, we read in popular magazines about how celebrities dress their pets up in haute couture and where we can buy similar, if less expensive, clothing. In the US and UK a variety of yoga has been invented that is done with one's dog (doga), while in these countries, along with Canada, ballroom dancing with dogs has become a popular dog training event. "Furry fandom" is also becoming mainstream, an international phenomenon wherein humans track the anthropomorphization of animals, some of them tracking this for intellectual reasons, while others do it for spiritual, moral, and even erotic ones. While many of these activities are urban-based, the corporatization of agriculture and access to web-based resources has meant that pet love has similarly permeated post-industrial rural settings.

For the most part, this groundswell of pet love has gone largely unremarked upon in social theory and social science circles.⁵ Most scholars writing about the animal-human divide do not address pets, focusing instead on animal rights issues or human abuses of animals. Where pet lives are addressed directly, most studies shun a critical international perspective, instead charting the cultural histories of pet-human relationships or, like Haraway, showing how true pet love might invoke a superior ethical stance.⁶ Accordingly, there has been little interest in exploring pet love's analytical "outside". Those with no affinity for pets or those who are afraid of them are today deemed social or psychological misfits and cranks, while those who love them are situated as morally or even spiritually superior, such judgments having become hegemonic in the last two decades (eg Stubbs 1999).

I argue that what is needed to address this phenomenon critically and radically is a scholarly geographical elaboration of what might be called critical pet studies (CPS). Here scholars across disciplines might unpack *where* popular pet love is evidenced and why and how this groundswell is occurring so decidedly in the twenty-first century, hence building up a variety of analytical and theoretical tools for questioning and framing this love's "outside". Integral to CPS would be a sensitivity to pet love's geographical foundations: where it is located and how it is territorialized, for instance, and where and how it has traveled. It would also be attentive to how pet-love's recent emergence has paralleled the growth of post-industrial service and consumption sectors under largely neoliberal regimes of accumulation, pets figuring as both commodities themselves and as sites of intensely commodified investment tied to global inequalities. In geography all such concerns could be situated in the nascent "new animal geographies" subfield that heretofore has dealt largely with theorizing animal-human relations in non-pet contexts (see Wolch and Emel 1998, Phio and Wilton 2000; but see Howell 2002 and 2000, Fox 2006).

I imagine accordingly that first and foremost CPS would depend on the extensive oeuvre of Michel Foucault which, however theoretically varied, has always been fascinated with documenting and analyzing how language and geography come together to create new social objects: for example, how "madness" was created through re-framing certain behaviors in terms of scientific language, whereas in the past these same actions were framed in terms of the divine. This language of science was bolstered by new social spaces, such as mental asylums, that helped materially prove and legitimate new scientific discourse. Foucault never treats language or "space" as innocent. They are always profoundly theoretically integrated into one another and into analyses of political economy. He continually asked questions like: What groups or institutions do these shifts in language and "space" benefit or distress? How are identities and power an effect of larger linguistic and spatial structures? How are new kinds of discursive formations and institutions integrated into other discursive formations, spaces, and powers? For him, pet love would be seen as an effect of larger social, political, economic, and material-geographical processes. He may point to and question the recent exponential rise in pet magazines, for example, asking from what regions these magazines derive and who invests in them as producers and consumers (Table 1). He might also interrogate their content: around what sorts of social objects and concerns are these magazines' discourses constructed and situated and are their discursive hierarchies within them? How are important questions constituted, framed and posed? Who and what is featured? What kinds of advertisements are present and who crafts them? What kinds of images, languages, and sensibilities are produced, and what kinds of work do these accomplish? How and where are

the magazines circulated, and what kinds of social and political imaginaries are constituted and reproduced? Such questions would help us to approach larger questions, such as what happened in the 1990s to make the surge in pet magazines possible, desired, and unique? How are the dense social networks shaping pet-magazine institutions carried into other pet-love and non-pet-love social networks? Addressing all such questions would produce critical insights into pet-related phenomena.

CPS must also intertwine analytically “race”, “class”, sexuality and gender in ways that allow for complementary questions to be raised, if not explicitly posed. Why, for example, are women and queers such central purveyors of the languages and institutions of pet love? And why are the most commodified forms of pet love and the most organized pets-rights movements emanating primarily out of elite (and in the US, Canada, and Europe) “white” contexts?⁷ How and where have the poor and “colored” been mobilized into the production of pet-related goods and services (for example, dog walking and dog care, producing labor-intensive “artisanal” dog products, and hawking upscale dog wear in the streets of Latin American metropolises)? How and where have similar kinds of dog-love emerged historically?

Such studies might draw additionally on the work of sociologist Viviana A. Zelizer, extending her ideas from the domains of industry and children into the post-industrial present and future worlds of pets. In 1985, Zelizer argued in the now classic work, *Pricing the Priceless Child*, that popular experiences and ideas about childhood changed dramatically with industrialization, beginning in the late 1800s. Whereas previously children were (like animals) vital contributors to the economic well being of households, mechanization meant that a significant portion of the labor force could be retired, especially women and children. The withdrawal of children was reckoned through the passing of various laws in tandem with a profound sentimentalization of child persons. Children were socially re-situated, re-framed, and re-valued in powerful ways that held economic, emotional, and psychical consequences. In particular, children became fetishized and idealized as non-working innocent creatures; repositories of dreams for a utopian future. Children’s non-economic worth, however, was contradictorily given even greater economic value in part through insurance policies that could be used as the basis for large awards in case of accidental death.

What does pet love in the twenty-first century have to do with the sentimentalization of children and insurance? To make this connection, we could extend Zelizer’s arguments into the future, asserting that the value of children has paradigmatically shifted again. In certain post-industrial contexts, family sizes have plummeted, with industrialization and less lucrative (ie non-unionized) employment opportunities re-located to the labor-rich, impoverished elsewhere of the world, including export-processing zones and protected enclaves within post-industrial

nation-states. In this sense, the sweatshops in LA and New York and the massively exploited undocumented labor force in US farm fields, restaurant kitchens, and elite homes, are certain replicas of the special economic zones of China or Latin American export-processing zones; in all these cases, working lives are situated far from the consciences, if not the persons, of national elites, which today include persons occupying a range of authority positions and income levels. To connect these demographic patterns to pets, it is necessary to link pet love at least in part to the shrinking of family size and an integral, globalized passion to consume. As Sontag (1990) declares in *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and its Metaphors*, “One set of messages of the [post-industrial] society we live in is: Consume. Grow. Do what you want. Amuse yourselves. The very working of this economic system, which has bestowed these unprecedented liberties, most cherished in the form of physical mobility and material prosperity, depends on encouraging people to defy limits. Appetite is *supposed* to be immoderate. The ideology of capitalism makes us all into connoisseurs of liberty—of the indefinite expansion of possibility” (see also McGowan 2003). Today, one’s degree of liberty is measured and felt in part by one’s ability to move at will and to buy all that which might be desired. Such desires for consumption at will are peculiarly narcissistic in the sense that they depend upon notions of, and consumption by, the “individual”.

As many have noted, not all mobility is the same. On the one hand is the mobility of hyper-exploitable workers and on the other hand, the privileged mobility of elites and consumers who travel for “individual fulfillment” through far-flung activities of work and leisure (Bauman 1998; Domosh and Seager 2001). The heightening of privileged, individualizing mobility through the internationalization of elite divisions of labor, in tandem with internationalized narcissistic desires to consume and be leisured has exerted a downward pressure on family formation and procreation. Divorce rates are high in part because procreational pressures to keep the family intact (that is, the need to bear children for factory or rural, nonmechanized, agricultural work) have been dramatically loosened at the same time that well-paid and highly mobile service sectors are being created. While many analysts have made it clear that the rich are becoming richer and the poor, poorer, what is less commonly noted is that in most narcissistic contexts, child-rearing is a drag on an individual’s freedom to move and consume, leading many persons to opt out; it is not easy to circulate freely through avenues of consumption and privileged work with children in tow. Today, therefore, ideas about the good life often do not involve family and children. Or if they do, one or two children are considered more than enough, these children in turn, being taught about and treated to intense levels of consumption.⁸ Moreover, many are choosing to be consuming free individuals early in life and raise children after that fact, often having for biological reasons

to engage in expensive high-tech pregnancies or to import progeny from impoverished child-surplus areas in and outside national boundaries—the children of those occupying the now hyper-exploited domains of agriculture, industry, and service work.

Pets have in many ways become more salient as love objects in post-industrial contexts where fewer children are available. Their bodies and lives have become major loci of investment in these settings, helping to sustain an increasingly inequitable global economy. In very practical ways, pets are easier to love and more suitable to transient lives than are children. They travel far easier, are not required by the state to make up for lost months of school; they can be given away if no longer wanted or if no longer in keeping with a particular lifestyle; they can be euthanized if they fall ill; and they are highly social, seeking one another out in cities and rural areas across the world, helping owners to become grounded and socialized in any one place. In this sense, pets (especially dogs) invoke and involve an entirely new kind of sociality and love, one more tailored to the mobility and narcissism of post-industrial lives than children. Thus, in contradistinction to Haraway's (2003) persistent claims in *The Companion Species Manifesto*, pets have not become substitutes for children; they supersede them.

In addition, CPS would also have to draw on ideas about critical consumption. In postindustrial contexts in Japan, Germany, the US, and in postindustrial enclaves of elites across the world, not much, other than services, is produced. Industry, we now recognize, has shifted offshore to countries where unions are discouraged, wages kept forcefully low, and poverty is rampant. In these postindustrial countries and enclaves, elite service providers (insurance, banking, law, realty, etc) are served by middle and lower end service providers (nurses, teachers, janitors, housekeepers). What this means is that consumption is increasingly riven by inequities and accordingly politicized, with questions about what constitutes ethical consumption emerging en force. Today, many persons are asking questions like: should we drill in the Alaska wilderness for a minor amount of oil to stave off major price fluctuations in only a near future? Should people of means consume more ethically, supporting technologies like hybrid cars that initially are expensive? Should everyone who is able, buy eggs harvested from cage-free chickens?

CPS could pose a series of related questions with respect to pets, for the main contradiction seems to be that while (through avenues of consumption) dogs and other pets are fulfilling important relationship functions in certain post-industrial contexts of the twenty-first century (Garber 1996; Katz 2003), the world generally is witnessing accelerating levels of alienation and inhumanity, as evidenced by the deepening chasm between rich and poor, increased violence, and erosions in access to affordable housing, healthcare, education, and basic services—key domains of consumption (Bauman 1998; Hewitt 2001; Murray 2006). In

light of this fact, is it coincidental that disparities and levels of violence are increasing at the same time that we are witnessing a groundswell of pet appreciation and love? Or is there some kind of connection? Thinking along these lines, is the intense lobbying for more and bigger doggie parks for a burgeoning urban dog population in post-industrial societies or enclaves something socially or politically useful, or is it a sign that political and economic wills to change social inequities have shifted away from the human and/or are weakening? Can pet-love societies both increase their spending of time and resources for pets *and* increase their spending of time and resources for humans? Are they?

How is it possible for this groundswell to take place in the US, for example, precisely when US immigration policy is meaner, US rates of racial segregation are high, 45 million US citizens are without healthcare, and 12.5% of the US population is classified as living in poverty? How are we to explain the contradictions between the astonishingly popular good will, organizational coordination, and political effectiveness of the “no-kill” movement for pet shelters in light of the US’s unleashing of untold violence on nations that never posed an immediate threat to its national security? How and why have there been such broad-based and well-coordinated attacks against injustice on behalf of pets across the country over the last two decades, resulting in the creation of felony-level animal anti-cruelty laws in 33 states and the District of Columbia, at the same time that increasing numbers of men of color are imprisoned on felony-level charges? Can we develop models of how pet love is invested in and sustained to re-create human communities in the twenty-first century?

Lastly, one may draw on the insights of psychoanalysis to understand how pets are drawn into various libidinal economies, especially that of the “family,” a structure contingent on and riven by glocal processes and desires. It would be analytically crucial in this context to consider the degree to which *ownership* of the beloved reshapes notions of family, community, intimacy, privacy, intersubjectivity, and love. Unlike a child who exerts agency through language and introspective thought and action, pets (and again I stress dogs) cannot. There is a decided difference between loving a pet whom you own and loving a child whom you do not. This, despite new rhetorics of pet guardianship and new technologies being set up to intuit pet agency, such as the Japanese-invented “Bowlingual” collar which purports to interpret a dog’s bark by processing it into a human voice that announces how the dog is feeling (“I’m angry!”). While children can reflect back to us our own neurotic and narcissistic investments, pets are a different sort of “owned” screen onto which much more can be projected—in part because they have more limited ways in which they might object. We alone interpret their eye and body movements, bark, and facial expressions as we will, there being few ways for them to contradict us. This kind of owner-owned love relationship carries

and is emblematic of new and heightened forms of privatizations. Here, we love through transferences largely structured materially through relations of ownership and commodity forms—buying your dog organic goodies, a nice service bowl, a jacket that “you know they’ll love”. Or agonizing over pet chemotherapy or orthodontistry. We express love both by choosing and purchasing the beloved and by choosing and purchasing the accoutrements and services we think best serve them, in this way engaging in nested levels of fetishization. Dogs, in particular, have thus become whatever the owner wants them to be: athlete, best friend, perennial child, constant or occasional companion, dancer, helper, yoga partner, or even lover; plus humans can make their utility or function change over time as human needs, investments, projects, and transferences change. A best friend, for example, is suddenly displaced upon the arrival of a human infant. In this sense, pet-commodity chains insistently feed “public” domains of consumption of both the beloved’s body and her/his body’s well being to “privatized” and libidinized domains of owned/social life. Psychoanalytic insights could thus allow us to ask how pet love registers “unconscious” familialized desires that involve all kinds of local and international repressions.⁹

CPS would *not* involve detailed ethnographies of human pet relations in and of themselves; nor would it involve documenting the importance of pets in contemporary societies. It would instead show how global inequalities are implicated in the geographical, discursive, economic, political, cultural and/or psychical ways that pet love is made meaningful. By drawing upon a number of theoretical perspectives and insights, then, CPS may help ground in place and time the etherealizing sentiments of those who claim pet love is emerging because we are becoming more civilized or because those who love pets particularly intensely have a spiritual or psychological leg-up on those who may eat or disdain them.¹⁰

We know from the work of Jon Katz (2003), Marjorie Garber and many others that pet love helps many persons (the aging, the childless, the sick, disabled or dying, those who are divorced, the highly mobile) mitigate the alienations of our age. The attendant question is whether or not the rampant consumerism and diversionary investments that inform main streams of pet love inure large segments of the populace to understanding and addressing the larger political and economic causes of contemporary alienation; pet love seductively leading many to feel empowered by placing much sociopolitical energy into attending to non-human animal concerns.

CPS would allow for many forays into pet love’s analytical outside. The aim would be neither to glorify or demonize pets, but to analyze the contradictions and complexities of reproduction and loving in the twenty-first century.

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Endnotes

¹ The intense ways in which pets have been treated to high levels of consumption is not new. As Phillip Howell (2000, 2002) documents in the case of Victorian London, and as Derr ([1997] 2004) records in the context of nineteenth century Paris, and eleventh century China (see also Tuan 1984), for example, persons from a variety of elite backgrounds have pampered their dogs. What is unique here is the pervasive degree to which this pampering has entered the mainstream and its circulation through late capitalistic forms of consumption. Why dogs have experienced the most investment rather than, for example, cats, is an interesting question that needs to be explored. It may be argued that dogs are highly social creatures open to all sorts of human investments and interventions. It is accordingly easier to project onto them and to use them to forge social interactions with others, something especially useful given the many sociospatial alienations of today.

² Her argument is predicated on the special historical material relationship between dogs and humans: dogs in many ways sought humans out and have an interdependent relationship with them. I am struck by the fact that such a prominent social theorist at this particular time in history has chosen dogs as the primary lens to think through the conundrums of the intersubjective. I find it problematic, moreover, that her predilections is for a particular kind of working dog used in agility training, an elitist exercise that trains independence out of the animal and that depends on eugenics.

³ The number of online services related to pet goods and services has mushroomed and needs to be documented. Second tier websites have evolved to help persons navigate both the consumption of goods and services, and how to get involved in businesses related to them. See, for example, <http://www.bestdoglovergifts.com/> and http://www.mysitespace.com/franchise_opportunities/pet_franchises.asp (both accessed 7 April 2006).

⁴ http://www.appma.org/press_releasedetail.asp?id=84 (accessed 7 April 2006). They also note that “[n]ew and expanded veterinary services such as joint replacement surgeries, delicate eye procedures, and senior health care helped increase total spending by almost 8% over 2004. Other innovative new services continue to increase market penetration with pet spas and hotels, grooming, pet therapy and related services”.

⁵ There are exceptions. In March 2005, M. Shahid Alam, professor of economics at Northeastern University, Boston, wrote a satirical web-based essay comparing US expenditures on dogs and cats, which he estimated in 2003 to have been US\$360.1 billion (this includes the value added by owners’ in-kind services), to the economies of poor countries. He argues that this comparison is much more useful since the “disparities between the rich and poor . . . are now so large, one has to ask if these comparisons make sense any more. When 25 million of the richest people living in the United

States enjoy nearly as much income as 2 billion of the world's poorest people, one begins to wonder if the 'people' in the two groups are the same. It is likely that if knowledge of these comparisons became common, they could lead to the revival of old despair among the world's 2 billion poorest people. And this could turn them into recruits for al-Qaida". At the same time, there is a rich online, trade, and trade book literature that examines the growing phenomenon of pet love. On 23 March 2006, for instance, the American Pet Products Manufacturing Association released a fascinating report on trends in the consumption of pet product and services with analyses of who is consuming and why (see http://www.appma.org/press_releasedetail.asp?id=84; see also http://www.drgingerblume.com/scripts_pets_lovers.htm, both accessed 4 April 2006). Similarly, the marketing research firm, Euromonitor International, analyzes pet industry trends in 52 countries. Moreover Mark Derr (2004) has written a lengthy and detailed history of dog breeds around the world and human cultural relations with them that is packed with facts and critical insights, including a scathing assessment of the American Kennel Club. In addition, Jon Katz (2003) has written a poignant assessment of how dogs are filling important human needs in an increasingly alienating world. But few academic scholars have engaged in any sustained or critical way with pet love.

⁶ Here, I deem at least a significant portion of the working dogs to which Haraway alludes (those involved in agility training) to be "pets", despite her protestations. I do so because much of her argument about trans-species intersubjectivity comes from her engagement with a highly elitist dog sporting culture wherein, according to Mark Derr ([1997] 2004:176–177), much of the working dog's independent spirit is trained out of him, the dog instead being taught to be highly dependent on its owner for commands. Thus while dogs used in herding are indeed not pets, per se, the kind of interaction with these dogs that Haraway espouses is not at all in line with the place or kind of "work" that actual working dogs do. The cultural history and biographical literature on pets is enormous. A nonrepresentative sampling of just a few of these include Derr ([1997] 2004), Grier (2006) (her book accompanies the museum exhibit, "Pets in America", which opened at the McKissick Museum in Columbia, South Carolina, in 2005 and was set up to travel to five other cities from May 2006 through May 2008; see <http://www.petsinamerica.org/pressrelease.htm>), Grogan (2005) (a story about his 13 years with a yellow lab, a story that shot to the top of the *New York Times* bestseller list for hardcover nonfiction in April 2006, much to his surprise), and Thomas ([1993] 1996). Grogan's success has led to the creation of a website devoted entirely to the book. See <http://marleyandme.com/> (last accessed 7 April 2006).

⁷ Here one might question if there are similarities between pet-love concerns and the largely "white" and elitist concerns of mainstream environmentalisms, an elitism noted by many, including Pulido (1998) and Hughes (forthcoming). The anthropologist, Yuka Suzuki at Bard College, New York, has also begun a study on the SPCA-led efforts of whites in Zimbabwe to rescue their domestic animals and pets.

⁸ Nonetheless the rise of conservatism in the US has meant that in many places large family sizes are cultivated for ideological purposes. Philip Longman (2006) writes that, "In Seattle, there are nearly 45% more dogs than children. In Salt Lake City, there are nearly 19% more kids than dogs". For him, this pattern reflects a conundrum: "It's not that people in a progressive city such as Seattle are so much fonder of dogs than are people in a conservative city such as Salt Lake City. It's that progressives are so much less likely to have children . . . Today, fertility correlates strongly with a wide range of political, cultural and religious attitudes. In the USA, for example, 47% of people who attend church weekly say their ideal family size is three or more children. By contrast, 27% of those who seldom attend church want that many kids".

⁹ I personally would be more interested in understanding how dog-human relations involve unconscious repressions, projections, incorporations, transferences, and so on.

But see Shell (1986) for a more traditional psychoanalytical approach to understanding how pets may be libidized in the family.

¹⁰ There has been a fascinating recent surge in psychologizing studies proving that persons who do not like animals are peculiarly maladjusted. See, for example, Stubbs (1999).

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