

Breeding Frankenstein's
Bulldog: Reimagining the
Pedigree in Nineteenth Century
England

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Abstract

This project draws on trans-disciplinary work to understand how bulldogs have been appropriated by different social groups in England. Initially bred for bull-baiting, then reimagined as a result of a wider reformist atmosphere, the bulldog is a complex and misused pedigree. The majority of the information required for this analysis was obtained online, at the Kennel Club in London, and at the British Library- situating this study within a contemporary movement in geography to find the animal in the archive. The main conclusion drawn is that the bulldog embodies post-structural ambitions to blur the nature-culture binary.

Preface

I would like to thank the staff at the Kennel Club for their generous offering of books, David Hancock who helped me without knowing, and most of all Steve Legg for his consistent enthusiasm, encouragement and advice.

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List of Abbreviations

SPCA- Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

BSE - bovine spongiform encephalopathy

BNP - British National Party

BBC - British Broadcasting Corporation

1.0 Introduction

The bulldog: “a manufactured breed of dog, evolved gradually from the nameless and breedless curs who far back in history made sport for their masters – who were themselves of the lower possible type – by fighting, and by bull and bear-baiting. Gradually, as the sport increased in favour, these dogs were bred expressly for the purpose, and in the course of time became known as ‘Bulldogs’” (Cooper, 1905: 9).

It is the word “manufactured” that this project draws attention to. The manufacturing of species is not part of some dystopian future- it is something very real, normalised, and most importantly, it is something that has been happening to bulldogs in England since the beginning of recorded history (Ritvo, 1987). This project pivots on the 1835 Cruelty to Animals Act, which banned, amongst other sports, bull-baiting. Either side of this moment, the bulldog’s history has been dominated by two prevailing human recreations; blood-sport and dog-fancying. Paradoxical in nature, and not without internal conflicts, the social groups which mobilised these pastimes (mis)used and (re)imagined the dog repeatedly, creating a complex and dynamic amalgamation of transspecies experiences. These human and more-than-human relationships, often conceptualised in human geography products of the nature-culture interface (Whatmore, 2005), are a rich source of academic inquiry. The bulldog is a highly appropriate more-than-human to use to unpack this relationship as it has been mobilised in a vast array of cultural practices; from its medieval origins as a bull-baiter and bear-baiter, to exotic lion-baiter and redundant fighter, to pedigree art form, satirical symbol and prized pet, the bulldog embodies dynamic components of English history. Of course, this embodiment has a very literal dimension as the dog has been breed selectively for its given purpose to create a distinct and exaggerated creature. The bulldog was created for the fighting ring, and recreated for the show ring. The breed owes its existence to an unlikely concoction of the English love for violent sport (Rogers, 2004) and the Victorian penchant for pedigree extremes (Ritvo, 1986).

The overall aim of the project is to understand the bulldog as a “cultural product” (Nash, 1989: 357). Playing on the notions of Frankenstein’s monster (Shelley, 1818), the bulldog is seen as monstrous amalgamation of socio-economic and political influences which has been created by humans, for humans. Darwin (1868: 413 [online]) writes of these artificial creatures: “they frequently have an unnatural appearance, and are especially liable to loss of excellence”. By doing this, the project hopes to reveal the past every day geographies of the bulldog, and show that they are truly a “synthesized conception of society and nature” (Nash: 1989: 358).

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This project sits within a contemporary poststructuralist movement in cultural geography that aims to decentralise the human by emphasising that social categories are simply cultural constructions (Crang, 2009). Within the wider “cultural turn”, the concern for the Other is paramount- and, as Emel and Wolch (1995: 362) have argued, “Animals are the ultimate Other”. Drawing on Said (1978), geographers have conceptualised the othering of species in physical terms (Wolch, 1998; Davies, 2000), and metaphysical terms (Serpell, 2000). Thus animal geography, having been informed by “a range of conceptual notions derived from political economy, social theory, cultural studies, feminism, post-colonial critique, psychoanalysis, and anthropology” (Philo and Wolch, 1998: 107) rejects the typical Western mode of “human chauvinism” (Philo, 1995: 659) to centralise more-than-humanity as a subject of examination in its own right. Although animal geography can be traced to the late nineteenth century as the study of the spatiality of animals (Guppy, 1893; Eagle Clarke, 1896; Sclater, 1894), its existence diminished until extinction in the 1970s (Philo and Wolch, 1998). The animal geography that re-emerged in the 1990s was twofold; zoogeography, and cultural animal geography. The latter subsection, popularised by Wolch and Emel’s (1995) call for “bringing the animals back in”, looked at animals “as something other than natural and unproblematic”, i.e. not passive entities (Philo and Wolch, 1998: 107). The bulldog requires exactly these types of probing attitudes to unpack its geography because, principally, the bulldog is not “natural”. It is a highly manufactured breed, and on top of this, its history is indeed problematic, brimming with conflicts of interest in violence, (im)morality, recreation, and aesthetics. These conflicts operate from either side of the nature-culture binary and are what has defined the bulldog’s complicated heritage. Studying this type of intricate interface between nature and culture is precisely, as Whatmore (2005) explains, the unique interest of (more-than-) human geography.

2.2 More-than-human Geography

At best, Philo (1995) claims, geographers have written incomplete accounts of more-than-humans, and at worst, they have excluded them altogether. Philo and Wilbert’s (2000: 5) study suggests that animal geography has progressed a great deal since Philo’s (1995) analysis. The value in using the phrase “more-than-human” in this project (as opposed to animal) is twofold. Firstly, the term “animal” lacks distinct borders (does it include humans?), and secondly, “more-than-human” disregards humans whilst embracing “boundary creatures” (Haraway, 1991: 2), i.e. cyborgs and monsters- notably, for this

project, Frankenstein's monster (Shelley, 1818). Darwin (1868: 38[online]) recognises the "monstrosities" of the "under-hanging jaw in the bull and pug-dog", positioning them within "a complex cultural framework that includes... a fascination with monsters" (Beirne, 2000: 318). This perpetually evolving relationship with "boundary creatures" in England is contextualised by Thomas's (1983) formative study, which brings to light the extent to which more-than-humans have been reimagined in line with a "civilising" society.

The few more-than-humans who have made it into *human* geography are those that have been of use to humans as commodities, such as for milk and meat (Philo, 1995). Pedigree dogs, whilst they have long been capitalised (homogenised by pedigree specifications, sold at prices based on their appearance or utility), are recognised by Donkin (1985, 1991) for their companionship value. Dogs are more-than-commodities; the study of them facilitates a holistic, socio-economic understanding of the nature-culture binary (Serpell, 1986, 1991, 1995). Whatmore (2002) coined the term "hybrid geographies" to encompass this type of deconstructive work on simultaneously cultural and natural spaces. Under this approach, bulldogs themselves can be seen as having their own hybrid geographies, being their own hybrid space. This binary is called into question on a larger scale, too: the city, where humans and more-than-humans cohabit en masse, is full of transspecies experiences. Philo (1995: 664) considers urban more-than-humans "as a social group caught up in the maelstrom of city life"; some have found themselves inside the home as familial pets, others, exiled to not just the outdoors, but to the countryside. And yet, as Ritvo (1987) recognises, keeping domestic animals in this period was a practice of middle class "respectable" society. The binaries driven up between more-than-humans are, in Singer's (1977) seminal terms, and developed by Steinbock (1978), founded in speciesism. However, whilst Singer's analysis has been taken seriously by academics, his theory can be pushed even further: within the human-bulldog world, some specimens are deemed unimpressive or imperfect, others are pedigree champions.

Those more-than-humans cherished as pets have warranted a dynamic body of research. Hickrod and Schmitt (1982) explore the normalised juxtaposition between "family member" and "pet" (notably- in a journal about urban life; more-than-humans are not the reserve of the rural/natural), whilst Tuan (1984) makes influential claims that dominance and affection are mutually inclusive. Smith (2003) challenges Tuan's assertion, claiming that when opportunities for more-than-human agency are provided, then "animals actively utilize these to perform their own natures" (2003: 182). As such it is possible to simultaneously "celebrate the human desire to dismantle the boundary between humans and companion animals and acknowledge its difficulty" (Smith, 2003: 183). Haraway (2003: 14) defines these "companion animals" as any species "willing to make the leap to

the biosociality... family members". Haraway's posthumanist arguments echo the subaltern concern of cultural geographers: "contrary to lots of dangerous and unethical projection in the Western world that makes domestic canines into furry children, dogs are not about oneself" (2003: 11). Despite this, Baker (1993: 4) explains that as "animals can apparently be used to mean anything and everything", and indeed they are. Nast (2006) explores the anthropomorphism of dogs in contemporary society, claiming that "dogs are for the first time being formally and regularly accommodated in doggie beaches, parks, high-class hotels, cafes and restaurants" (2006: 894).

2.3 Cultural and Historical Geography

Nast's (2006) assertion of this transspecies social amalgamation as something novel, however, is misleading. Historical animal studies (Flores, 2000, Menache, 2000) have shown that the English medieval population honoured a particularly strong devotion to their companion dogs (paradoxically, their non-companion dogs, bulldogs, seem to have been treated with much indifference). Howell (2000; 2002) explores the complexity of human/more-than-human relationships in the Victorian period, whilst Fudge (2002: 8) explains that animal history is intrinsically "humane history", an approach that rings true with the bulldog's creation and use by humans.

Rogers' (2004) work on beef, bulldogs, liberty and Englishness was inspired, he claims, after witnessing the damage that BSE did to English pride. Whilst questions about beef may seem separate from those surrounding bulldogs, Rogers (2004: 110) verifies that "By 1750, beef and bulldogs... had become inextricably linked symbols of masculine, meaty English virtue" as butchers were legally obliged to bait the bull with dogs before selling the meat. The bulldog's role in this process has been underrepresented; Rogers (2004: 5) notes that "historians and sociologists have not taken much interest in nationalism of the culinary kind", suggesting that the "mainly male... academics who study nationalism think food is trivial". Whilst it may seem absurd to regard bulldogs in the light of culinary studies, the breed is a fundamental component to this performance of national identity. Griffin's (2001; 2002a; 2002b;) studies of bull-baiting offer the most detailed accounts of the game-although her hope that "the study of their sports may further our understanding of social relations and local politics" (2001: 19) aligns her focus with the human audience, leaving scope for an animal geographical study of the matter.

Within the area of Victorian cultural studies, Lightman (1997) and Huff (2002) highlight the lack of academic appreciation for the various social networks through which scientific knowledge was disseminated and popularised. Bulldogs themselves are intrinsically scientific entities, their bodies a product of ceaseless biological experiment, manipulation

and reform. The eugenics which mobilise this science were, as Huff (2002) explains, popularised by the quintessentially Victorian concept of the dog exhibition, and before this, in bull-baitings. In this way, studying the dissemination of this biological knowledge in these cultural events contributes to an area that Lightman (1997: 206) claims “Scholars have barely scratched the surface” of. In addition to this, Lightman points out the necessity of considering the subjectivities of different audiences. This, he concludes, “would lead us to examine the relationship between the popularization of science and elite and popular science”. In the light of this statement the bulldog is interesting; its roots are paradoxically tied to the blood-sport of the uppermost echelons of regal society and simultaneously the recreations of the working classes, and thus, until the latter half of the nineteenth century, the knowledge of the breed’s science exists in parallel but opposing domains. During and after the Victorian canine reimagination, the bulldog’s science became very much a middle class matter (Ritvo, 1987).

2.4 My Niche: Historical Cultural Animal Geography

Seymour and Wolch (2010: 314) specify that whilst “examinations of the forms and practices of culture are far from new to discipline of geography as a whole”, they have been “uncommon in animal geographic studies”, highlighting the need for “popular culture studies, whose subjects are practices, processes, and broader trends in society”. The project fills this gap as it is grounded in two very specific examples of cultural practice for which the bulldog’s physique was created and re-created; firstly, for bull-baiting, and later, for pedigree dog-showing. Animal geographic accounts of bulldogs specifically do not exist; Nash’s (1989) sociological study examines the breed closely, but with primary reference to the human experience of bulldogs, rather than to bulldogs of humans. The project’s niche, then, lies its poststructuralist ambition to unite interdisciplinary ideas to tell this complex and fascinating story of the Other.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

“To attempt to describe the origin and evolution of the Bulldog, and to give his history from his earliest days, is a task which the author at once candidly admits he is quite unable to perform... for the earliest history of the Bulldog is shrouded in mystery so deep and so complete that all efforts to bring it to light must prove abortive” (Cooper, 1905: 9).

Whilst Cooper's claim may seem apocalyptic, any researcher interested in historical animal geography will be able to sympathise. Of all creatures, Cooper implies that the bulldog is amongst the hardest to research. In some ways this seems to be the case; the bulldog is a truly paradoxical figure whose tracks lead the researcher at one moment into the elite depths of the Kennel Club, and at the next into the gruesome baiting pits of Tudor London. Equally, the intrinsic historical diversity of the breed works in the researcher's favour; whilst the distinct lack of more-than-human archives colours any historical animal geography research, at least the bulldog's story *can* be gleaned from a diverse array of places. Therefore, the research programme has not attempted a total history, rather, a critical engagement with what history there is.

3.2 Philosophical Underpinning

The information used in this project is entirely qualitative, and obtained from an array of sources requiring different research methods. This sort of amalgamating of “a plethora of methods and approaches”, Graham (2005: 8) claims, is characteristic of postmodern cultural geographical research, where researchers speak of “the ‘Other’ or ‘subaltern geographies’”. Such linguistic differences are... part and parcel of particular ways of doing human geography research” Graham (2005: 8). Ultimately, these dialectal choices represent a research design that aims to move the labels closer towards redundancy as they are appropriated and normalised in geographical discourse. Postmodernism takes shape in geography as a rejection of a “single general theory of society” (Graham, 2005: 28), which entails the shift from “geography” to “geographies”. In Lorimer's (2005: 83) terms, we live in “self-evidently more-than-human, more-than-textual worlds”... attending to just one anthropocentric version of life, then, is critically reductive. Applying this sort of deconstructive approach to more-than-humans is ideal yet problematic: to animal geography, the more-than-human story matters... yet to truly unpack *their* geography would presumably require *their* evidence. The obvious linguistic barriers with this trail of thought do not, however, completely disarm the postmodern method: more-than-human archives linger inside human archives- it is just a matter making do (Lorimer, 2006). Baker and Garlick (2014 [online]) explain that “animal evidence is often scarce and indelibly

marked by anthropomorphism". In terms of the archive, then, more-than-humans are the ultimate subaltern (the only museum dedicated to dogs in the United Kingdom is The Dog Collar Museum in Leeds which was unfortunately of little relevance to this project).

Therefore, it was necessary to design a research programme that would incorporate a variety of "stored materials" (i.e. data which has already been interpreted by others), with the ultimate aim of extracting "'new' information by purposefully reorganizing selected facts from a large complex of data" (Stoddard, 1982: 183).

3. 3 The Internet Archive

In this study, the internet has been invaluable for finding out what sources are available in physical archives- in Sentilles' (2005: 136) terms; it is "an archive of archives". For the British Library, this process of searching using key words was undertaken through their online catalogue, after which point the relevant books were pre-ordered so that upon arrival a great deal of time was saved. However, the downside to the "search engine" method is that "key word searches are not exactly subtle", relevant documents may have been missed "simply because I could not think of the correct terminology" (Sentilles, 2005: 149). Within the British Library there was another archive; the intranet, which provided access to numerous digitised nineteenth century newspapers, including *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle* and *The Lady's Monthly Museum*. The key words used to search the intranet database were: Ben White, Bill George (notable breeders, learnt of from a *Country Life* article from 1899, kindly sent on request by the magazine's archivist (see Fig. 1)), bulldog, bull-bait, dog fight, and animal cruelty. In addition, the internet provided public access to old newspapers such as *The Spectator*, from 1712, and Parliamentary debates from the nineteenth century via Hansard online.



Fig. 1. The scanned copy of a *Country Life* article from April 29th 1899, posted to the researcher by the magazine's archivist.

3.4 Archival Research

Archival research provided a great deal of the information used in the project. After a preliminary research trip to the National Archives, which contained little material of direct relevance, the British Library proved more fruitful. The analysis undertaken here was of a literary nature, involving Jaquet (1905), Cooper (1905), Bowers and Jackson (1897), and the anonymous Member of the Pugilistic Club (1822). The latter book has been useful as the overwhelming majority of literature preserved in archives is distinctly “pro-ban”, i.e. the writers belonged to a certain (usually middle) class of people who protested against blood-sport. Rose (2001: 165) explains that it is important not to treat archives “as transparent windows on to source materials”. In other words, in their very content archives encapsulate the notion of human power relations.

Online preparation was not applicable to the research undertaken at The Kennel Club as their collections are not digitised, and access to their library and museum is through private appointment only. After making the appointment, staff members kindly assisted the process by getting out documents they believed would be of interest to the project.

Research in the Kennel Club consisted of Aldrovandus (1637), Edwards (1800), Shaw (c.1881) and Sturgeon (1920). Interestingly, Sturgeon’s book came with a photograph of a hand-drawn “family tree” of a prized bulldog, which had been partially destroyed by mice – a rare, physical trace of animals in the archive.

3.5 Literary analysis

The research process also involved the literary analysis of Shelley’s (1818) horror (from which this project takes its name), and Woolf’s (1933) “autobiography” of a spaniel. The first of these two books was read for a comparison between the monster and bulldogs; as emphasised by Haraway’s (1991) posthumanist analysis of the nature of non-humans, and the latter for its evocations of dog-fancying. The main theme explored in the light of Shelley’s text was the (im)morality of human interference in nature. These ideas were supported by the content of a rare book from the British Library: Peel’s (1899) “autobiography” of a bulldog. These more-than-anthropocentric texts epitomise the animal geography research process as they refocus our attention on non-humans. Conan Doyle’s (1927) *The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger* has also been of literary interest, as the text mentions George Wombell (a menagerie exhibitor who baited his lion against bulldogs).

3.6 Visual analysis

Of images, Aitken and Craine (2005: 251) explain that “more often than not, these are not simple representations of a lived reality” – and as such, images have been understood in

postmodern terms which appreciate the context of the makers' subjectivity. This sort of analysis refocuses the visual lens onto the subaltern canine, thereby unsettling the imbedded anthropocentric power relation; something that has been argued for since the 1990s (Aitken and Craine, 2005). Importantly, the use of visual methodologies in animal geography has been very little, despite the common embodiment of more-than-human subjects into visual data (Seymour and Wolch, 2010). The types of visual data assessed in the research process included conventional imagery such as artists' depictions of bull-baitings from Bowers and Jackson (1897), to an advertisement found inside Jaquet's (1905) book from the British Library. Indeed Aitken and Craine (2005: 258) explain that "one of the most influential forms of imaging to emerge in modern times is advertising", and Seymour and Wolch (2010) emphasise the value of studying the popular consumption of more-than-human products.

In early 2014, a piece of research material of this nature landed on the researcher's doorstep; it was a BNP leaflet, featuring a bulldog "biting back" (see Fig. 2). That the bulldog's image was mobilised by far-right politics is described by Hunt (2003: 2) as a precious research opportunity: "Caricatures figure as the primary- and in many cases, the only- contemporary visual record of events... while their purpose was not to provide the most factually accurate history of the times, they reflected and comment upon public attitudes and values". Thus, as political images are commissioned to appeal to the largest possible audience, they reflect on a broader scale the human/more-than-human relationship.



Fig. 2. "BNP biting back".

Photographs, Rose (2000: 556) explains, can be understood as “cultural documents offering evidence of historically, culturally and socially specific ways of seeing the world”. In a very literal sense, photographs of bulldogs are useful because they illustrate how humans wanted the dog to be framed. A variety of useful photographs were found by chance in the Kennel Club library; the items were yet to have been catalogued and as such were sat in an unlabelled box. From this box – known to the researcher as the “David Hancock Collection”- sat information that had been collected by the aforementioned man for a project of his own, before being sold to the Kennel Club. All information known about the images is from Hancock’s own notes, and whilst this is a potentially limiting factor, Hancock’s dates have been cross-checked with other sources, and in most cases the visual material “speaks for itself”. It is interesting to reflect that had all the research been done online, such images would not have been found. And yet, the digitisation of archival records has aided visual analysis in that it saved a trip to The Natural History Museum at Tring to look at taxidermy, and also a trip to The Grant Museum of Zoology for a bulldog’s skull. These physical traces of bulldogs themselves in the archives are rare and unquestionably valuable as the information stored in the dog’s physiology depicts how humans have transferred their imagined ideals into reality via selective breeding. The skull of a bulldog, then, illustrates research question point neatly.

The taxidermy collection at Tring, however, consisting of two champion bulldogs, provides the ultimate visual source. Walley (1997) validates the use of taxidermy as a time-capsule: examining their physical appearance lends us a very real “freeze-frame” of their biological makeup. These specimens are valuable to this project as they force any onlooker to remember that bulldogs are a nature-culture hybrid; in their non-humanity they are exempt from the exclusive cultural realm, yet in their manufactured biology they are more-than-nature. Thus these items convey a great deal of information... the very fact they are preserved reinstates their claim of being prized pedigrees.

3. 7 Conclusion

Philo (1995: 677) recognises that his historical account of more-than-humans is inevitably told “through the distorting lenses of historical documents written by humans”. This aspect of historical animal geographical research is simply inescapable, although, even if just the smallest part of the bulldog’s experience is revealed in this project then it is a successful step towards decentralising the human in human geography.

4.0 Breeding the Old Bulldog: Bull-baiting in England

4.1 Introduction

Bulldog: "From bull and dog. A dog of a particular form, remarkable for his courage, and the savage pertinacity with which he provokes and continues the fight. When he has once fastened his bite on his antagonist, he cannot be taken off without much difficulty... He is used in baiting the bull; and this species is so peculiar to Britain, that they are said to degenerate when they are carried to other countries" (Curtis, 1829: 666).

The English have a long and colourful transspecies history; Ritvo (1987: 85) explains that they have owned dogs since "the beginning of recorded history". However, whilst this may imply a perpetual national culture of dog-loving, exactly what the dogs were owned for has changed dramatically. In the case of the bulldog, this transformation in their assumed purpose for humankind is especially exaggerated. To understand this reimagination of the breed, it is necessary to examine its initial conceptualisation in English society.

4.2 The Origins of Bull-Baiting

Bull-baiting can be traced to Roman times, although the exact origin is unknown and potentially pagan (Rogers, 2004; Edwards, 1800). Though the game's early popularity is shrouded in mystery, there is a recognisable medieval revival. Richard III established the office of "Royal Bearward" in c. 1483- a role extended to "Keeper of the Bandoogs and Mastiffs" in 1598 (Rogers, 2004: 117), which involved ensuring the permanent provision of the early ancestors of bulldogs (Griffin, 2007). Henry VII dismissed bulldogs after watching a lion bait; according to Caius (1576: 26) he ordered that:

all such dogges (how many soeuer they were in number) should be hanged, beyng deeply displeased... that an yll fauoured rascall curre should with such violent villany, assault the valiaunt Lyon king of beastes.

That the King awarded the lion with his own almighty title and yet condemned the dogs to death seems highly absurd- both species, of course, would have been under confinement and instruction, and yet it is the dog that is punished. This speciesism towards the bulldog is something that marks its entire early history, and a theme revisited throughout the project.

The sport soon regained royal approval under Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth (Rogers, 2004). In Elizabethan England, “Many great households and civic corporations maintained their own bear and bearward, both to entertain visitors and to demonstrate their wealth and sophistication” (Griffin, 2007: 86). The bulldogs, supposedly, were easier to come by than bears and thus were not kept as personal possessions; Rogers (2004: 117) verifies of Tudor England that bulldogs were “reared and trained all over the country”, suggesting that their breeding was not an art exclusive to the elite. Bull-baiting, equally, was not spatially contained to elite premises. The bulls, bears and dogs were physically othered; living outside royal space in Bankside, and shipped along the Thames to the courts when required. This simple exclusionary dwelling practice normalised by humans speaks volumes of the binaries driven up between them and more-than-humans, and sits in stark opposition to the practices of bulldog pet-keeping known later. The royal bearward was permitted to stage non-royal baitings at the Bear Garden (also known as the Paris Garden) in Southwark- home to one hundred and twenty bulldogs (Platter, 1599: 2 [online]). Rogers (2004: 111) claims it was an “insalubrious area famous for its taverns, brothels and theatres, as well as its baiting rings”. That an area associated with immorality was home to these more-than-humans is no coincidence; these baitings happened thrice weekly, and were a manifestation of “a characteristically English love of physical exertion and cruel games” (Rogers, 2004: 111), and “crowds that gathered... were overwhelmingly composed of men of more humble means” (Griffin, 2007: 86). Hutton (1994: 122) reinforces this lack of sentient regard for the creatures: “the only concern taken by the corporation... was to double the watch during the most popular in order to avoid disturbances”. These disturbances came in the form of Puritanical reformers. “As Elizabeth’s reign wore on, Puritan writers and preachers thundered with increasing ferocity against what remained of the ‘heathenish’ and popish revellings” (Underdown, 1985: 47) until Elizabeth put an end to the Sunday fights, making “plain the hostility the ancient game now aroused” (Griffin, 2007: 87).

4.3 The Bandoogge

Caius’ description of the early bulldog is monstrous. He refers to it as a “bandogge”, although it is certain that he is referring the ancestors of the bulldog as he describes them as “dogges to baite the Beare, to baite the Bull” (Caius, 1576: 25). The mythologizing of the creature is rife in Caius’ literature: the bulldog is a “vaste, huge, stubborne, ougly, and eager, of a heuy and burthenous body, and therefore but of litle swfitnesse, terrible, and frightfull to beholde”. Such is the power of the creature that:

“One dogge or two at the vttermost, sufficient for that purpose be the bull neuer so monsterous, neuer so fearce, neuer so furious, neuer so strearne, neuer so

vntameable... For it is a kinde of dogge capeable of courage, violent and valiaunt, striking could feare into the harts of men, ut standing in feare of no man, in so much that no weapons will make him shrincke, nor abridge his boldness" (Caius, 1576: 25).

In many ways it seems Caius attempts to "other" the bulldog from the animal kingdom itself- in Haraway's (1991: 2) terms, he is imagining a "boundary creature". The dog is described as being mythically strong, with fantastical offspring "of a beare and a bandogge" (Caius, 1576: 35). Indeed the bandogge is so "feareful and terrible", that a person attempting to remove the creature from "wheresoeuer he setteth his tenterhooke teeth" would sooner tear the beast in half, than "separate his chappes" (Caius, 1576: 37). And yet paradoxically, "Our Englishe men... assist nature with arte" (Caius, 1576: 25) – in other words, they interfere with the creature with training and breeding (trainers are equipped with "eyther a Pikestaffe, a clubbe, or a sworde" "for the safegarde of his lyfe" (Caius, 1576: 26)). That the "bandogge" is simultaneously otherworldly *and* cultivated epitomises its role as a true "boundary creature", spanning both the (super)natural and the cultural to inhabit its own hybrid geography (Whatmore, 2002).

A sense of juxtaposition also prevails in the legal status of animals. In *The Merchant of Venice*, there is "a wolf... hang'd for human slaughter", implying that a Shakespearian audience were acquainted with the concept of more-than-humans as appropriate judicial subjects (Shakespeare, c.1597: Act IV, Scene I). Evans lists (1906: vi-vii) numerous accounts of more-than-humans executed for their "crimes"; a "Trial of a sow and six sucklings [sic] for murder- Bull sent to the gallows for killing a lad- A horse condemned to death for homicide- A cock burned at the stake for the unnatural crime of laying an egg". Considering that bull-baiting was completely legal, if not encouraged, illustrates the internal paradox in the treatment of bulldogs: they could be punished by the state, but not protected.

4.4 Bulldogs, War and Englishness

The breed's history is heavily shaped by patriotism and war, as bull-baiting took on great nationalistic importance beyond its raw entertainment value. In 1604, for instance, a bull-baiting was held to celebrate the end of hostilities between England and Spain (Rogers, 2004). Shaw (c. 1881: 89) too claims bulldogs have national value: "the animals best suited for the purpose of bull-baiting were fostered in these islands, which now claim them as indigenous" (see Fig. 3).



Fig. 3. *A seventeenth-century bulldog.*
Aldrovandus (1637: 559). Note the long limbs,
lean physique and extended snout- far cry from

However, after the outbreak of war, in 1643 bull-baiting was banned because of its tendency to attract large crowds and encourage disorder (see Fig. 4) (rather than because of any concern for the more-than-humans involved) (Griffin, 2002b; Hotson, 1925).



Fig. 4. *Bull Broke Loose.* Source: Bowers and Jackson (1897: no pagination). Note the extent of the disorder ensuing; a woman is trampled beneath the bull's feet, a cart is upturned on the far left, a dog is tossed into the air, and a man rides a donkey through the scene. All the while the bulldogs continue to bait the bull, and the crowds clamber onto a carriage to escape the carnage and enjoy a better view. A clear depiction of the ease at which a bull-bait can descend into commotion.

When Cromwell came to power as Lord Protector in 1653, he claimed bull-baiting was to be banned on the grounds that "Treason and Rebellion is usually hatched and contrived against the State upon such occasions, and much Evil and Wickedness committed" (Cromwell, 1655, in Coward, 2002: 209). Predictably, the suppression was not smooth. In 1656 "a large crowd attended a bull-baiting at Stoke Trister, near Wincanton, and defied orders to disperse" (Underdown, 1985: 264). Bull-baiting and bulldogs were cemented in the symbolism of a national identity that cherished liberty and strength, things that were enjoyed for another three years whereupon "an exasperated Colonel Pride, weary of the disobedience of the bear garden, sent in the troops. On his orders, they shot all the bears to death... The dogs were sent to Jamaica" (Griffin, 2007: 98). The success of this militarised action is again questionable; Griffin (2007: 98) claims that "smaller private bear gardens soon cropped up elsewhere".

Within a few years of the Restoration, however, Charles II reopened the Bear Garden to mass public celebration (Rogers, 2004; Griffin; 2002b). The Puritanical progress towards eliminating blood-sport was undone (Underdown, 1985). Moreover, bull-baiting was legally sanctioned into English life; local authorities paid for the upkeep of the bull ring, collar and rope thereby not only permitted blood-sport, but actively facilitating it (Griffin, 2002b). The sport was considered to have culinary benefits to the extent that a butcher could not sell beef unless the bull had been baited to death by dogs (Griffin, 2002b). From these anecdotes, it is possible to see bulldogs being repeatedly reworked into the fabric of English life. From its earliest roots, the breed's history is dictated by power-charged struggles between the people and the authorities- with little regard for the dogs' welfare.

4.5 The Georgian Bulldog

By the eighteenth century the breed was certainly notorious: Creech (1712: 527), for instance, writes of a man: "All the harmless part of him is no more than that of a bull-dog, they are tame no longer than they are not offended". De Muralt (1726: 41) wrote of the English:

Their Dogs are, I believe, the boldest in the World, and... the least bragging. They neither bark nor bite; they fight to Death without any Noise. One may see some of these Creatures dragging along a broken Leg, and returning to the Charge... there's a strong Resemblance in many things between the *English* and their Dogs.

By this time, the bulldog was "a familiar icon in anti-court, anti-French propaganda" (Rogers, 2004: 118). Simultaneously, those dogs that baited bulls were bred for physical success, rather than appearance, and thus underwent an enhanced "survival of the fittest"

system (see Fig.5). Notably, the bulldog's value did not seem to stem beyond the symbolic and economic. In 1825, for example, George Wombell arranged for Nero, a lion known for his tameness, to be baited by bulldogs (see Fig.6). The event, according to Ritvo (1978) was notorious and caused public uproar (a detail reinforced by Conan Doyle's (1927) mention of the famed Wombell). Hone [online] (1868) explains that *The Times* published as its leading article a condemnation of the event. What is important in this anecdote is the sympathy invested in the lion- and the total disregard for the dogs. Ritvo (1987) explains that the lion has historically been seen as the noblest creature, an echo of Henry VII's order four centuries earlier for the mass bulldog execution.



Fig.5. *Fine Bulldog Specimens*. Source: Edwards, T. S. (1800: no pagination). Note how drastically the breed's appearance has changed since Fig. 3; in particular, "the most striking character is the under-jaw almost uniformly projecting beyond the upper; for if the mouth is even they become shark headed, which is considered a bad point" (Edwards, 1800: no pagination). The beginnings of a new age of dog fancying are tangible in this description.

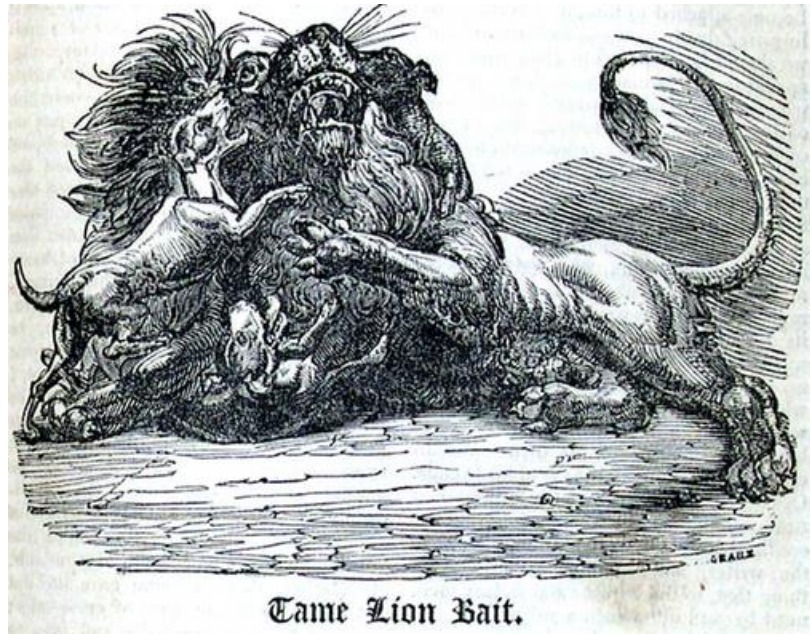


Fig.6. *Tame Lion Bait.* Source: Hone, W. (1868: 493) [online]. It is interesting to consider that the bulldog, long a proud British symbol of strength, is so readily usurped in importance by the lion. Hone (1868: 489- 490) describes the event as “extremely gratuitous, as well as disgusting, exhibition of brutality”.

4.6 Conclusion

Bulldogs have long been marginalised in English society; in bull-baiting they were described in gruesome terms as if they are beyond considerable empathy. Emotionally, the bulldogs were othered from the animal kingdom, whilst still being mobilised as a national symbol (see Fig. 7) (the bulldog is mythologised as demising abroad and only thriving on English terrain, thereby reclaiming the creature for patriotic exclusivity. Jardine and Smith (1840: 204) describe that in India “when the bull-dog pauses, British terriers never hesitate”). Supposedly, the bulldog is so superiorly *English*, that when in the space of the (especially “oriental”) Other, it cannot flourish (Said, 1978)). However, in an age of reform, these complexities began to change (Woodward, 1962). In Hone’s [online] (1868: 190) account of the lion bait, he describes how the Mayor could not legally intervene “on the ground that, under Mr. Martin’s present act, no steps could be taken before the act constituting ‘cruelty’ had been committed”. What is evident here is that cruelty against more-than-humans was being taken seriously by authorities- although it would take a long and arduous battle to finally eliminate blood-sport altogether.

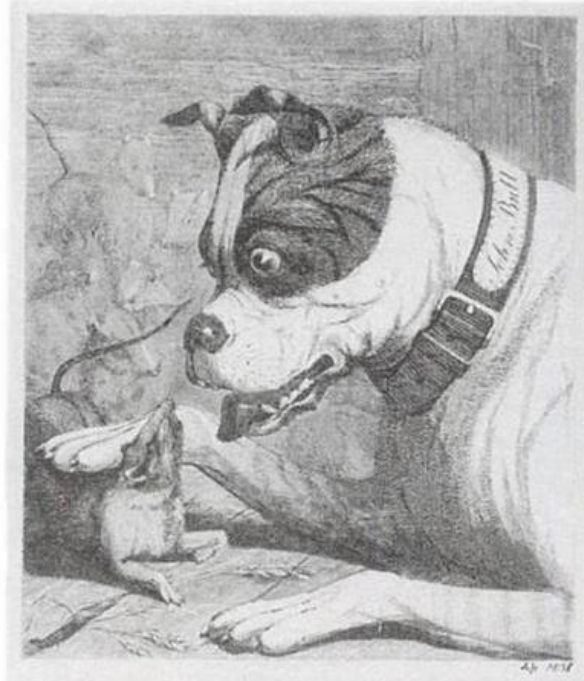


Fig. 7. *The people as a bulldog*, 1831. Source: Colley (2005: 340). Colley has noted this image reflects “The patriotism of parliamentary reform”. The bulldog has often been used to represent “the people”, indeed in this case it is under the personified title of John Bull (note the name on the collar) - himself regularly mobilised to embody the masses.

5.0 Reimagining Blood-sport

5.1 Introduction

“The Bulldog of a hundred years ago was a sporting dog pure and simple; appearance counted for little, and all that was asked of him was that he should be active, determined, courageous, and powerful. Nowadays the Bulldog is not a sporting dog, for the simple reason that his field of sport no longer exists, bull-baiting having been suppressed by Act of Parliament... It would be useless, therefore, to breed a dog possessing qualities that can never be called into use” (Cooper, 1905: 10).

The Act of Parliament described here, that legislative marker of increased civilisation, quite literally changed the face of the breed forever. Suddenly bulldogs had lost their cultural anchor; they were sporting dogs with no sport. Subsequently, the bulldog was reimagined as a pedigree, an opportunity that emerged out simultaneous socio-economic shifts which created space for a redrawing of the nature-culture binary. This can be traced back to the Enlightenment and its nature-controlling innovations. Ritvo (1987: 3) explains that “Once nature ceased to be a constant antagonist, it could be viewed with affection”. As such, the nature-culture division which for so long had justified the abuse of more-than-humans was distorted just enough to allow certain and modified creatures into the precious human domain. Through careful and painstaking breeding practices, the bulldog was “bred out” of its aggressive tendencies, and bred into the home. “In many ways, the development of the Victorian dog fancy... epitomized middle-class leisure activities” (Ritvo, 1986: 229): canines (underdogs...) appealed to the wider reformist activity, whilst satisfying recreational needs.

5.2 Reimagining Bull-baiting

The reimagination of bull-baiting as something to be eliminated rather than enjoyed did not happen in any uniform manner. Ritvo (1986: 226) claims that for the working class, the sport “maintained a sense of group solidarity” as defined against the middle class Other. Attempts to suppress the sport were seen as unfair interventions in the amusements of the poor (see Fig.8). Indeed, A Member of the Pugilistic Club (1822: 199) argued “there can be no occasion for a new law to protect brute animals, because they are all private property... the owners must know how to take care of them better than short sighted members of Parliament”. Similarly, the first bill against blood-sport, introduced in 1800, lost to the fear that “by interfering in men’s private pleasures, Parliament was stepping into new and dangerous waters” (Griffin, 2007: 146). Despite these arguments, anti-blood-sport campaigns gained momentum as “the boundaries between public and private worlds

merged and overlapped” and women rose to prominence in politics (Gleadle and Richardson, 2000: 9). As early as 1814, the Somerset town of Taunton featured Mrs Bull alongside John Bull in their peace festival (Colley, 2005). This apparently small detail signifies much wider changes- women could not only be associated with the traditionally highly masculinised bull(dog), but that they were also more than anonymous abstractions in the form of Liberty or Britannia- they had national agency. *The Lady’s Monthly Museum* (1805: 155) proclaimed that “The creatures were undoubtedly made for the use of man; but temperance must teach him to partake of them so as to make them a blessing”. With focus on oppressed minorities, female education, and “vivisection, vegetarianism and homeopathy”, anti-cruelty campaigns found increasing cultural legitimisation through women (Richardson, 2000: 65).



Fig.8. *Westminster Pit*. Source: Bowers and Jackson (1897: no pagination). The painting has no given artist or date, although the authors reflect that it is likely that the sport of dog fighting (which is being practiced with bulldogs) has been illegalised by this point as the figure on the right is either keeping watch, or selectively admitting participants through a hole in the door.

The increasing prominence of Christian denominations also played a role in centralising the concern for more-than-humans. Kean (1998: 20) explains that “Being seen publicly to practice compassion- even towards animals – was a distinctive element of Methodism”. In addition to these humanitarian concerns, Griffin (2002b: 200) acknowledges “the

beginning of a cultural redefinition of the legitimate uses of the market place". From this point, a paradox arises: the idea of the city as a space of human exclusivity takes on increasing importance (Philo, 1995), whilst the SPCA popularised the image of England as a nation of dog-lovers, which would entail co-habitation (Ritvo, 1986; Golby and Purdue, 1999). The domesticated creature that is the pedigree dog complied with both these requirements.

5.3 The Ban

Griffin (2007) argues that earlier descriptions of bull and bear-baitings describe the tethered beast as a powerful competitor. Victorian opponents to the sport, however, saw the bull or bear as victimised and persecuted, no match for ferocious dogs. As bulldogs were consistently conceptualised as wilful attackers, early attempts to illegalise blood-sport were argued for in favour of cattle, but with no reference to the canine counterparts. When the ban was framed in the context of public nuisance (as opposed to animal welfare) bull-baiting was taken seriously by magistrates (Golby and Purdue, 1999). Thus in 1823 an act was passed banning the ill treatment of cattle and horses, thereby indirectly protecting bulldogs by illegalising bullbaiting (Woodward, 1962). The bill was passed thanks to the aforementioned Richard Martin, who, despite popular ridicule, in 1833 succeeded in banning bull-baiting specifically within a five miles radius of Temple Bar. In 1835, with a majority vote of fourteen, and the conclusion that the bill was "a further step in civilisation" the ban was extended across the entire country (HC Deb 14 July 1835, c 538). For more-than-humans, of course the ban was a triumph. For humans, too, such a moment is remarkable. It is interesting to reflect that bull-baiting was a source of national pride for so many and for so many centuries and yet its very extermination was also harnessed as mark of civilised superiority. The UK government was the first in the world to pass protective legislation for more-than-humans (BBC, 2014 [online]).

5.4 The Pedigree Cult

Ritvo (1987: 87) conceptualises the phenomenon of pedigree pet-keeping amongst the emergent middle classes as "The incorporation of dogs into the rhetoric of social aspiration". Pet-keeping was more than a trans-species venture in companionship; it was an investment in an art with numerous socio-economic benefits for people that had become "enamoured with the new, biologically dubious notion of 'breeds'" (Rogers, 2004: 180). Whilst the emotional aspect of pet-keeping generally grounded the relationship, the rigorous administrative network surrounding pedigrees belonged to a more self-serving culture of the urban business and professional classes, who diverted the need of

impressive lineage onto canines (Ritvo, 1987). Pedigree dogs then, were not just for pedigree people.

The organisation of pedigrees also served to sever the canine ties with bull-baiting, a keen wish of the rising respectable Victorians with their “new moral order” (Huff, 2002: 6). In many ways the reimagined bulldog served as a metaphor of the wider Victorian reform as dog fanciers looked back with repulsion at the breed’s uncouth history. Shaw (c. 1881: 83), for instance, claims the bulldog has “its proper place in the kennels of a superior class of breeders and exhibitors”, rather than “Chained up for weeks and months in damp cellars or dark confined hutches in miserable alleys... of a low scoundrel... who only notices his wretched companion when desirous of participating with him in some revolting piece of cruelty”. The first formal dog show was in 1859 in Newcastle (Huff, 2002), which, according to Tuan (1984: 107) demonstrates “openly and to public applause the power to dominate and humble another being”. He describes animal fancying as the epitome of domination as it entails, as Smith (2003: 184) lists, “forced mating, breeding, exhibiting, and judging”. Nevertheless, the winners of this arguably sinister conception appeared fourteen years later in the Kennel Club’s first “Stud Book” – a book of monumental significance “for institutionalising and professionalising the exhibition and breeding” (Huff, 2002: 7; Jaquet, 1905) (see Fig.9). Smith (2003: 183) argues that gratification gleaned from dog-showing lies within the human psyche, as “Breeding satisfies human aesthetic whim at the expense of animal health”. The pedigree cult swept the nation; it became a “sub-culture.... [in] a society which increasingly consumed entertainment and information as well as goods” (Huff, 2002: 7). Purebreds satisfied the new consumption patterns; they were commodities, exhibitions, works of art and, after all, works of science. To not have a pedigree dog, Ritvo (1987: 91) claims, was to reveal “latent commonness”. She goes on to reflect that those dogs covered by Caius (1576: 25), including the fierce “bandogge” celebrated for “striking could feare into the harts of men” would “have been lumped together by Victorian fanciers in the catch-all class of mongrels” (Ritvo, 1987: 81). The bar was set high.

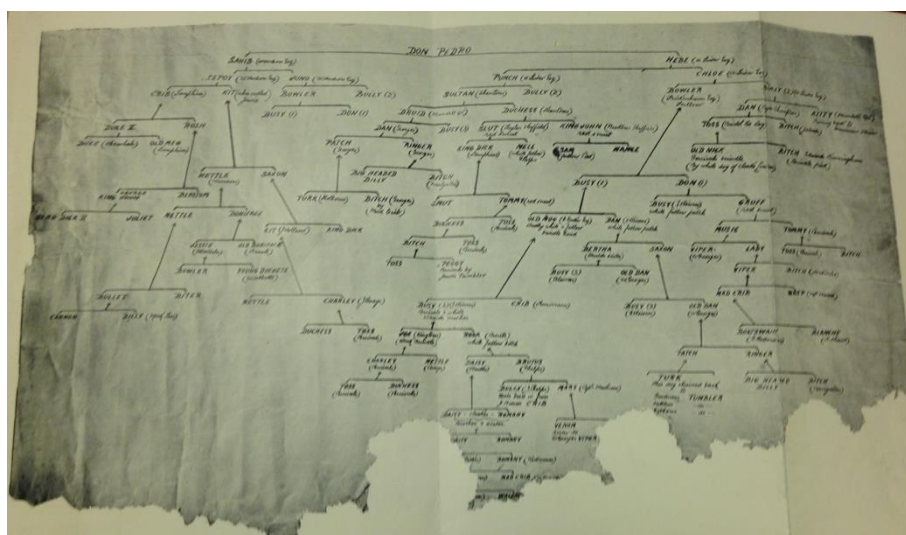


Fig.9. *The Pedigree of Don Pedro*. Source: Sturgeon (1920: no pagination). The state of pedigree before the Kennel Club's intervention. A mouse-eaten handwritten pedigree of a bulldog "given to the writer by a fancier many years ago"... Don Pedro "was an under 45lbs dog, and sired many winners, including five champions" (Sturgeon, 1920: no pagination).

Tuan (1984) argues that when humans display power through these pathways, they are subliminally finding an outlet for primordial instincts. After the ban of bull-baiting, humans simply refined their cruelty. Dogs provided the perfect site for this outlet as "Even the dog's body proclaimed its profound subservience to human will. It was the most physically malleable of animals, the one whose shape and size changed most readily in response to the whims of breeders" Ritvo (1987: 21). Despite this, or more likely, because of this, those who owned pedigrees were characterised as adoring them above humans, whilst those "typified by owners of draught dogs... treated their animals as mere economic assets" (Pemberton and Worboys, 2007: 7). The bulldogs place in this oppositional relationship is complex. They were brought to polite popularity by breeders Ben White (see Fig.10) and his apprentice Bill George at "Canine Castle". The former, referred to in Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle (1826, 1833, 1840), and the latter, described Country Life Illustrated (1899: 526- 527) as the "celebrated Bill George, of Canine Castle, Kensal New Town, the most eminent dog dealer of his or any day", are credited with bringing the breed back from extinction. Between them they traversed the wider more-than-human reimagination and made it applicable to the unlikely specimen of the bulldog by offering bulldogs in three sizes, and thus appealing to a wider (female) audience (Country Life Illustrated,1899).



Fig.10. *Ben White and his bulldogs*. Source: Bowers and Jackson (1897: no pagination).

However, Hibbert et al. (2008: 449) claim that “Canine Castle was a notorious 19th-century establishment here for ‘lost’ dogs, similar to the one vividly described in Virginia Woolf’s *Flush*”. The novel certainly lets light in on the pedigree cult, and the very fact that Woolf’s (1933) text has been generally marginalised as one of her weakest illustrates the consistent manner with which canines have been othered (as a commodity in her text and as a trivial matter by her audience). It is hard to draw the line between crookery and validity in the economy of Canine Castle. Certainly, a network of dog-stealing gangs operated below the lawful pedigree system (Howell, 2000). It is very likely that bulldogs would have been targeted by these thieves; Peel’s (1899: 7) “autobiography” illustrates the extent to which bulldogs had entered the realms of the enviable elite:

My mother was a great lady in her way, and moved quite in the upper circles... [we] were never permitted to speak to any of the common dogs we met in our walks abroad. There were very few bow-wows as well born as my father and mother, and we were much drilled, and taught a dignity of demeanour.

5.5 Conclusion

Within half a century, human attitudes to more-than-humans had undergone serious transformation. Importantly, considering that “purebred” dogs were products of “will and imagination” (Ritvo, 1987: 93), the bulldog with its proud patriotic associations flourished in the pedigree imagination. Evans (1906: 256) expresses that England had evolved “from

gross and brutal mediaeval conceptions of justice to refined and humanitarian modern conceptions of justice". This is best exemplified by the 1835 Cruelty to Animals Act; having been brewing for centuries, finally, it had arrived. All the while, bulldogs were still being used as vehicles of patriot expression (see Fig.11) After being taken up by the pedigree cult, it could be assumed that the breed was in a favourable position of companion animal. The idea that bulldogs were now to leave a painless life was, however, far from reality.

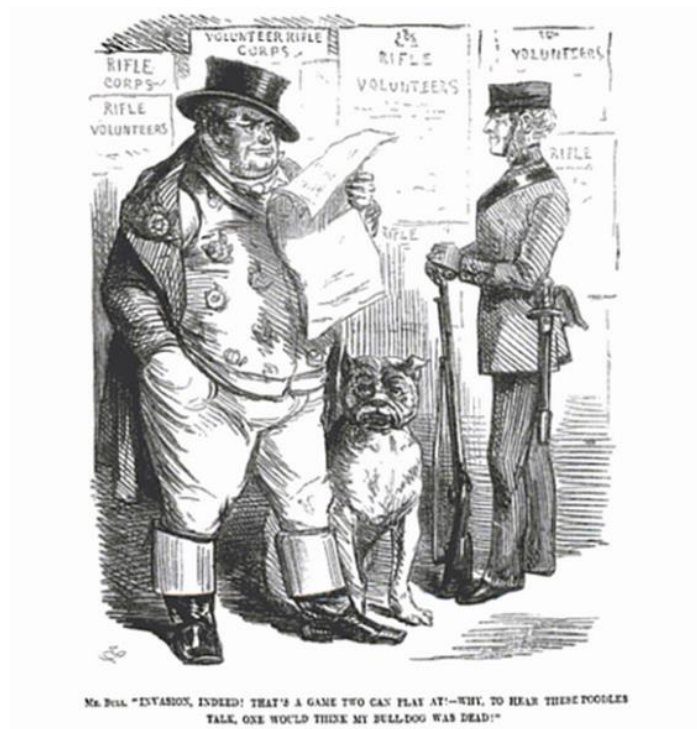


Fig.11. *The English Bulldog vs the French Poodle*. Source: *Punch*, 12 Nov 1859, in Mandler, P. (2006: 63). The text reads: "Mr Bull: 'Invasion, Indeed! That's a game two can play at!- Why, to hear these poodles talk, one would think my bulldog was dead!'"

6.0 The Modern Bulldog: Evolution's Antithesis

6.1 Introduction

“a Bulldog should look like a Bulldog and nothing else. It is not sufficient that a dog answers to the description laid down by the standard... If he lacks character he is marred! He is not a true Bulldog if he has a soft and benign expression of countenance; he is not a true Bulldog if he betrays any weakness of character. Physically and mentally he must be strong” (Cooper, 1905: 12).

Although it has been made clear that the bulldog's story enters the unlikely realm of the “Victorian cult of pets” (Ritvo, 1987: 86), its conceptualisation by humans continued to encounter complex problems- this time, not recreational but biological as the new Bulldog Club publicised exact and extreme aesthetic ideals (see Fig.12)

Points.	Details for consideration of Judge.	Distribution of 100 marks for total individual points.
General appearance } ...	Symmetrical formation ; shape, make, style, action, and finish	10
Skull ...	Size, height, breadth, and squareness of skull ; shape, flatness, and wrinkles of forehead ...	15
Stop ...	Depth, breadth, and extent... ..	5
Eyes ...	Position, shape, size, and colour	5
Ears ...	Position, size, shape, carriage, thinness	5
Face ...	{ Shortness, breadth, and wrinkles of face ; breadth, bluntness, squareness, and upward turn of muzzle ; position, breadth, size, and backward inclination of top of nose ; size, width, blackness of, and cleft between, nostrils }	5
Chop ...	Size and complete covering of front teeth	5
Mouth ...	{ Width and squareness of jaws, projection and upward turn of lower jaw ; size and condition of teeth, and if the six lower front teeth are in an even row }	5
Chest & neck ...	Length, thickness, arching, and dewlap of neck ; width, depth, and roundness of chest ...	5
Shoulders ...	Size, breadth, and muscle	5
Body ...	Capacity, depth, and thickness of brisket ; roundness of ribs... ..	5
Back roach ...	Shortness, width at shoulders ; and height, strength and arch at loins	5
Tail ...	Fineness, shortness, shape, position, and carriage	5
Fore legs and feet ...	{ Stoutness, shortness, and straightness of legs, development of calves and outward turn of elbows ; straightness and strength of ankles, roundness, size, and position of feet, compactness of toes, height and prominence of knuckles }	5
Hind legs and feet ...	{ Stoutness, length, and size of legs, development of muscles, strength, shape, and position of hocks and stifles, formation of feet and toes as in fore legs and feet }	5
Size ...	Approaching 50lb.	5
Coat... ..	{ Fineness, shortness, evenness, and closeness of coat ; uniformity, purity, and brilliancy of colour }	5
Total for perfection in all points		100
JUDGE'S NET TOTALS		

Fig.12. *Details for the consideration of the judge.* Source: Shaw, c.1881: 93. Shaw's summary of the points drawn up by the New Bull-Dog Club in 1875.

6.2 The Emergent Pedigree

Rogers (2004) highlights that the bulldog's lower-class associations rendered it slow on the pedigree up take. For instance, despite Dickens' 1838 *Bull's Eye* being "so utterly without breeding" (Gray, 2014: 101) the dog is depicted by George Cruikshank as a bulldog (see Figs. 13 and 14). That Cruikshank imagines "a dog abused by his master... and condemned by canine nature to adhere to, and therefore die with, his master" as a bulldog speaks illustrates the working-class stereotype surrounding the breed at that time. (Gray, 2014: 101)



Fig.13. *Oliver's reception by Fagin and the boys*. Source: Dickens, C (1838: 101). Illustration by George Cruikshank. Again, *Bull's Eye* is at the centre of the trouble.

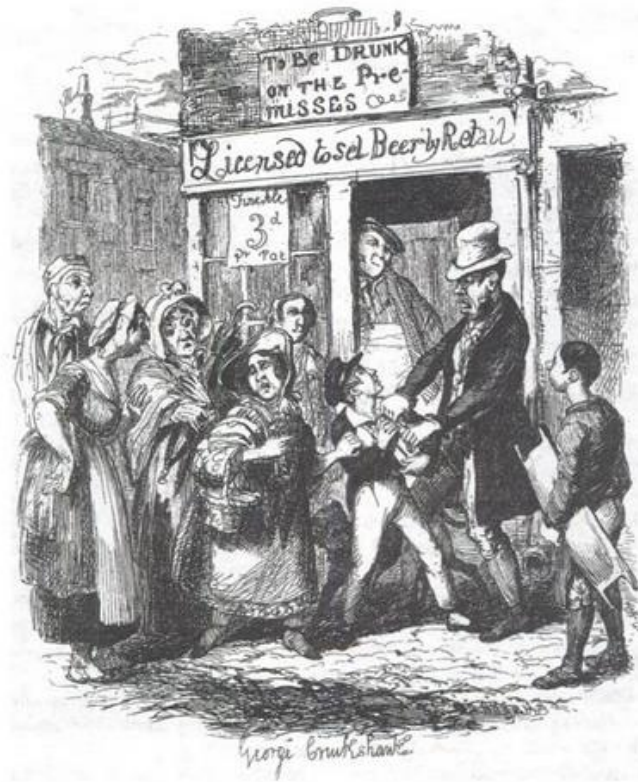


Fig.14. *Oliver claimed by his affectionate friends.* Source: Dickens, C (1838: 98). Illustration by George Cruikshank. Note the dog peering out from behind Oliver's legs.

Indeed Mayhew's (1861 [online]) describes how a rat-catcher/bulldog-breeder/pickled-eel-seller had in his shed a male and female bull-dog and a litter of puppies. Though the confinement of dogs to the shed may suggest more utility-based breeding, the pedigree cult is tangible inside the man's house. On the mantelpiece there is "a model of a bull-dog's head, cut out of sandstone... 'He was the best dog I ever see'" said the host, "and when I parted with him for a ten-pound note, a man... made this model- he was a real beauty, was that dog" (Mayhew, 1861: IV [online]) (see fig.15.). That same proud man showed the author his current prized bulldog costing five pounds, whose puppy had fetched five pounds itself, thereby returning his losses quickly (Mayhew, 1861: 2 [online]). The economic appeal of pedigree bulldogs to a working class dog-owner was two-fold; a less impressive dog in appearance terms could sell their service in rat-killing, whilst a finer pedigree could produce profitable offspring.

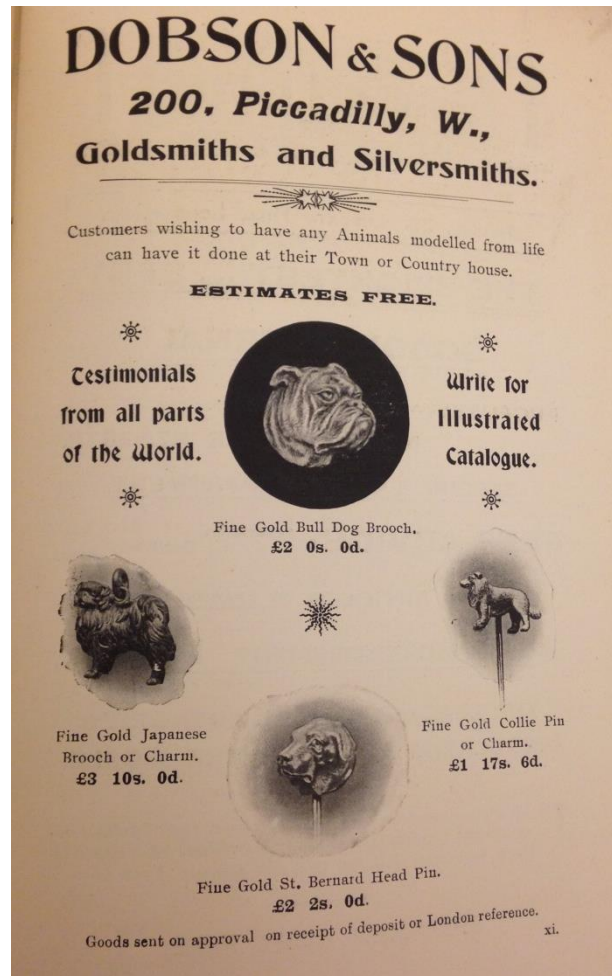


Fig.15. *Advertisement for canine models.* Source: Jaquet, 1905: xi. Note how bulldog holds centre stage, suggesting that the company entrusted the bulldog with some capitalist sway (Aitken and Craine, 2005). Indeed they were right: Rogers (2004: 181) outlines that “John Bull and his bulldog were used to sell Worcester sauce, baking powder, Beechams pills, light bulbs, ginger beer, cocoa powder, bicycles, mustard, lung tonic, Sunlight soap, tobacco, metal polish, beer, croquet, cotton wool, dog cakes and aerated table water, among other things”.

With the establishment of the Bulldog Club in 1874, bulldogs “underwent a rapid rehabilitation, and by 1885 were second only to collies in popularity, as measured by dog show entries” (Rogers, 2004: 181). The effects of the Bulldog Club’s specifications cannot be underestimated; indeed it is that dog with “it shortened muzzle, receding jaw and miniature legs” which we still have today (Rogers, 2004: 181) (see Fig.16). Darwin (1868: 211 [online]) recognises this; “Our bulldogs differ from those which were formerly used for

baiting bulls". Interestingly, when explaining that "Domestic breeds often have an abnormal or semi-monstrous character", Darwin (1868: 413 [online]) gives the example of the bulldog.



Fig.16. *Taxidermy champions from the early 1900s.*

Source: The Natural History Museum at Tring [online].

Available at: <http://nhm.ac.uk/tring/galleries/gallery-6/index.html>. [Accessed 2nd March 2015].

Behind the scenes of the fashionable pedigree world was a gruesome reality. Shaw (c. 1881: 86) describes:

"the abominable mutilation resorted to by some breeders in order to shorten the length of the upper jaw, and turn the nose well up... the operators in the first instance sever the middle and two side lip-strings which connect the upper lip of the dog with the gum... a sort of small wooden block, hollowed so as to fit the face, is applied to the outside of the upper jaw in front, and being smartly hit with a mallet, has the effect of compressing the bone and cartilage of the nose as desired... An instrument technically term the "Jacks" is then applied, and has the effect of causing the mutilated parts to remain in their new and abnormal position" (Shaw, c.1881: 86).

Interestingly, Shaw does not place any blame with the middle class for their glamorisation of extreme eugenics (see Fig.17) - only the lower class for their biological failures and

subsequent violent “necessity”. That post-birth interference seems truly abhorrent echoes the root of the repulsion with creating Frankenstein’s monster- who is himself described as “the animal” (Shelley, 1818: 74, 97 [online]). (The boundaries between these more-than-humans are frequently blurred in the human imagination. The bulldog is repeatedly framed in monstrous terms; “the forehead sinks between the eyes... the lower jaw projects beyond the upper, often showing the teeth... [which] produces a most forbidding aspect” (Jardine and Smith, 1840: 228)). By contrast, dubious pre-birth tactics are normalised:

“Most of our specimens are undoubtedly inbred... the celebrated dog King Dick... shows close in-breeding...I am certainly an advocate for judicious in-breeding” (Raper, quoted in Shaw, c.1881: 89)



Fig.17. *The Undershot Jaw*. Source: The Grant Museum of Zoology, University College London [online]. Available at: <http://gmzcat.museums.ucl.ac.uk/photo.aspx?maxphotos=5>. [Accessed 3rd March 2015].

6.3 Survival of the weakest

Ritvo (1987: 39) explains that Darwin’s (1859 [online]) theory “eliminated the deity who had created the world for human convenience”. The acceptance (by those who believed Darwin’s claims) of this assertion produced, it seems, a power vacuum, where humans took on extreme levels of dictating the course of the bulldog. However, the implications of a world where humans themselves are descended from more-than-human apes rendered

them with no particular superiority over the rest of the animal kingdom (be that divine superiority which sanctioned their “dominion... over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth” (The Holy Bible [online], Genesis, 1: 26), or, superiority delineated by some alternative human intelligence). It seems that in the face of these disconcerting arguments, in a bid to protect the nature-culture binary from crashing down completely, the Victorians latched on to what subjects they could make and keep inferior- dogs. Indeed, Ritvo (1987: 83) asserts that “Any breeder with even a smattering of Darwin would have agreed that art should follow nature in preferring the strong and beautiful to the weak and grotesque” (see Fig.18), and yet, as Nash (1989: 360) expands:

The Bulldog is biologically tenuous, since most of its distinguishing traits are genetically recessive. What is generally true of dogs, is especially so in Bulldogs.... The dominant Bulldog traits are all recessive: large head, short legs, mis-shapened [sic] tails, variety of colors [sic] and sizes, bowed legs, excessive skin

Nash (1989: 360) claims that within breeding circles, the expression is “a mongrel never looks like a bulldog”. Indeed, the level of management of the bulldogs’ appearance and wellbeing is astonishing: some necessities include daily eye-cleaning to prevent infection due to excessive skin around eyes, daily wrinkle cleaning to prevent infection in skin folds, cold-bathing on warm days, avoiding hot pavements due to the dog’s inability to self-regulate its temperature, and avoiding running due to the aforementioned temperature and breathing problems.



Fig.18. *Basford Revival* 1922. Source: David Hancock Collection.

6.4 Conclusion

Nash's description of the various ailments and complication bred into the bulldog serves to "unglamorise" their pedigree process. Indeed, Tuan's (1984) claim that humans love their companion animals because they are needed by them is especially true in the light of these medical restrictions. The bulldog is so extremely dominated, so biologically modified that the bond between "us" and "them", or culture and nature, is eternalised in necessity. Luke (1997: 1367) recognises this cyborgic hybridity of nature and culture as the "end of Nature", whilst Nash (1989: 369) certifies that the bulldog's existence "a constant opportunity to deal with nature". The endless paradoxes surrounded the breed and its relationship with humans has been traced back centuries. At the same time, it is arguable that this affectionate love for the breed is clouded an anthropocentric assertion of aesthetic desire over physiological health.

7.0 Conclusion

This project has contributed to the discipline of animal geography an understanding of a more-than-human creature that in itself can be seen as a deconstruction of the nature/culture binary. Through this analysis of the canine Other, it has been shown that overt abuse in the form of blood-sport was replaced by hidden misuse, embedded into the genetic makeup of the creature.

The research process has been limited by a lack of animal archives; what bulldog history there is incomplete and sporadic, and often coloured by bias. In addition, any attempt to write a non-anthropocentric account is flawed from the outset by the intrinsic humanity of the researcher. That there is a lack of animal geographical work on other breeds of dog means that the bulldog's account cannot be set in a wider disciplinary inquiry into pedigrees. There is scope for not only a more detailed study of the bulldog (especially in the light of breeding), but for other breeds of dog as well.

Despite these limitations, one of the key finding in this study is that bulldog's famed tenacity is tangible in the tale of its very existence; from being "the most ancient variety of British dog" (Shaw, c. 1881: 83), to teetering on the brink of extinction, "it re-emerged the object of a very different sort of pastime: dog breeding and dog showing" (Rogers, 2004: 180). However more than this, the bulldog stands as a physical manifestation of the ability of humans to dominate more-than-humans. Breed ideals were not just imagined by Victorian dog-fanciers, they were applied and inflicted to create an entity that was more-than-nature enough to be appropriated into domestic life. Equally, the breed's history of being recognised as a mirror to Englishness (it is "quintessentially English"- "brave, stubborn and carnivorous" (Rogers, 2004: 181)) can be dated back to De Mural's (1726) descriptive account of man and dog. Cooper (1905: 15-16) claims that a successful breeder must possess "something of the Bulldog pertinacity and tenacity in his own composition"... whilst Shaw (c. 1881: 83) asserts that the breed holds "the honour of being considered our *national dog*... Bull-dog pluck and endurance are qualifications eagerly cherished by Englishmen of all classes". Whether it has truly been an "honour" for the breed to have been so embedded in this national case of extreme eugenics is debateable. Critically, these associations projected onto the bulldog can be understood as a manifestation of the anthropocentric desire that "dogs look like their owners"; in creating hybrid nature/culture "monster" in our image, we attempt to replicate divine skills.

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9.0 Appendix

The Standard of Points issued by the Bulldog Club, as explained by Cooper (1905):

1. General appearance; he is a “smooth-coated, thick-set dog, low in stature, particularly in front” (Cooper, 1905: 28)
2. Skull: “the larger the better... the temples broad and prominent, causing a deep indentation, called “the stop,” between the eyes” (Cooper, 1905: 28).
3. Eyes: “situated low down in the skull... far apart but yet situated quite in the front of the face... in shape they should be round, and very dark in colour, shewing no white when the dog is looking directly in front of him” (Cooper, 1905: 28).
4. Ears: “The correct form of ear is that known as “rose” ears, they should be set high on the head, and should be very small and thin; Bat, Tulip, and Button ears are all serious defects” (Cooper, 1905: 28-29).
5. Face; “short as possible and closely wrinkled, the nose must be large and jet black, set well back almost between the eyes. The “chop” should be thick and pendulous, hanging well down over the underjaw on each side, but not in front. There should be an abundance of loose skin about the throat and neck” (Cooper, 1905: 29).
6. Underjaw: “must be square and strong, and should project considerably beyond the upper jaw and turn upwards, with large and strong and even teeth” (Cooper, 1905: 29).
7. Chest: “very wide, round, prominent and deep, with slanting, deep, and very muscular shoulders” (Cooper, 1905: 29)
8. Body: “short and very strong, broad across the shoulders, but narrowing towards the loins; the back should have a distinct upward arch from behind the shoulders to the loins, which is very characteristic of the breed, and is called “Roach” back, or “Wheel” back (Cooper, 1905: 29).
9. Tail: “must be set on low and carried straight down, never gaily; it should be rather short, thick at the root and tapering to a fine point. Screw tails are deformities, but are very common, are are not serious defects” (Cooper, 1905: 29-30).
10. Forelegs: “stout, strong, and straight... set wide apart... The well-developed calves give the legs the appearance of being slightly bowed, but the bone should be perfectly straight; bandy or bent legs are defects” (Cooper, 1905: 30).

11. Colour: "There is a greater variety in the colouring of a Bulldog than in almost any other breed, viz., brindle, fawn or red, white, and the varieties or mixtures of any two colours, such as brindle and white, fawn and white, etc. The following colours are objectionable, though very rare:- black, slate, or blue, dark brown. The coat should be fine in texture, short and smooth" (Cooper, 1905: 30).
12. Feet: "very slightly turned out, the toes well split up and arched; splay or flat feet are serious objections" (Cooper, 1905: 30).
13. Weight: "the most desirable weight of a Bulldog is about forty-five pounds" (Cooper, 1905: 30).

Defects;

1. The Dudley nose; liver-coloured and objectionable. "By careful breeding experiments, continued over a period of some thirty years, the Dudley nose has almost been bred out of existence, but not quite, however. It will often make an appearance when least expected, one puppy, for instance, being thus marked while all the others in the litter have noses of the correct colour. Dogs so mismarked are entirely valueless from a show point of view". Such dogs may well breed black-nosed pups though; "many a dog that has won honours on the show bench is the offspring of a Dudley dam. Still, if breeders have the good of the breed constantly in mind, they will not breed from Dudley-nosed dogs and bitches, and in the course of time, it is possible that the objectionable colour may entirely disappear" (Cooper, 1905: 30). A sense of mythology seems to surround the Dudley nose; "popular belief that all Dudley dogs are particularly good in all other properties. The idea is, however, quite erroneous, the fact being that unless a Dudley dog is unusually good in other properties, his earthly career terminates at an early age... [he is] destroyed in his puppyhood" (Cooper, 1905: 31). In 1884, Bulldog Club Incorporated passed a "law" stating that "Dudley-nosed dogs and bitches were excluded from competition at all shows". The extreme measure passed in the hope that it would discourage the defect. The author reflects, however, that "it is breeding and not showing that is responsible for points good and bad; and so long as Dudleys are bred from, so long will the colour crop up, to the disgust of the breeder" (Cooper, 1905: 31).
2. Pinched nostrils; "a serious defect... It is a fault of the worst kind, for a dog with such a nose is unable to breathe properly, and would be quite incapable of performing the work that was once his reason for existence. Unfortunately there are far too many dogs with small, pinched noses and inadequate nostrils" (Cooper, 1905: 31).

3. Ears: tulip ears are very rare (although common in toy varieties), whilst button ears are common, and fall forward meaning that when the dog is viewed from the front, none of the inner ear can be seen.
4. Eyes; none of the whites of the dog's eyes should be seen when viewed from the front.
5. Skull; a round skull is defective.
6. Face; "down-faced", when the nose is too far down the face. In contrast, "An up-faced dog is a dog which has its nose set well back, and has a strong, upward sweep of underjaw" (Cooper, 1905: 33)
7. Underjaw; "frog-face... a dog deficient in underjaw, and who also possesses a pair of goggling eyes... needless to say this is a defect of the worst kind" (Cooper, 1905: 33- 35).
8. Tight-skin; lack of wrinkle.
9. Skull size; too small... 17 to 20 inches measuring above the temples is considered average. Champion Boomerang, "the best dog of modern times", measured 19 inches (Cooper, 1905: 35).
10. Tail; the screwed tail liked by American breeders but objected to by older English fanciers was caused by cross breeding with the Pug.
11. Although "almost indescribable", the biggest defect a dog can have is in its expression, and "no dog of modern times possessed it in such a marked degree as did Champion Boomerang" (Cooper, 1905: 36). The qualities necessary in a winning countenance are courage, ferocity, intelligence and honesty. "Sourness is perhaps the word that best describes the expression, yet it is the sourness of aloofness rather than the sourness of ill-temper, a sourness that in a human being would probably be described as haughtiness" (Cooper, 1905: 36).