

Domestic Animals and Leisure

Leisure Studies in a Global Era

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In this book series, we defend leisure as a meaningful, theoretical, framing concept; and critical studies of leisure as a worthwhile intellectual and pedagogical activity. This is what makes this book series distinctive: we want to enhance the discipline of leisure studies and open it up to a richer range of ideas; and, conversely, we want sociology, cultural geographies, and other social sciences and humanities to open up to engaging with critical and rigorous arguments from leisure studies. Getting beyond concerns about the grand project of leisure, we will use the series to demonstrate that leisure theory is central to understanding wider debates about identity, postmodernity, and globalization in contemporary societies across the world. The series combines the search for local, qualitatively rich accounts of everyday leisure with the international reach of debates in politics, leisure, and social and cultural theory. In doing this, we will show that critical studies of leisure can and should continue to play a central role in understanding society. The scope will be global, striving to be truly international and truly diverse in the range of authors and topics.

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DOMESTIC ANIMALS AND LEISURE

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Series Standing Order ISBN 978-1-137-31032-3 hardback

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Domestic Animals and Leisure

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Selection and editorial matter © Neil Carr 2015

Individual chapters © Respective authors 2015

Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 2015 978-1-137-41553-0

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First published 2015 by
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN

Palgrave Macmillan in the UK is an imprint of Macmillan Publishers Limited, registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Palgrave Macmillan in the US is a division of St Martin's Press LLC, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

Palgrave Macmillan is the global academic imprint of the above companies and has companies and representatives throughout the world.

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ISBN 978-1-349-55900-8 ISBN 978-1-137-41554-7 (eBook)
DOI 10.1057/9781137415547

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and made from fully managed and sustained forest sources. Logging, pulping and manufacturing processes are expected to conform to the environmental regulations of the country of origin.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

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Acknowledgements

This book had its inception at the tenth biannual Australian and New Zealand Association for Leisure Studies (ANZALS) conference held in Dunedin, New Zealand, in December 2011 when I convened two sessions entitled *Animals in the Leisure Experience*. Many, though not all, of the contributors to those sessions have gone on to contribute chapters to this book. It is therefore right that ANZALS in general and the organizers of the 2011 conference in particular be acknowledged for their assistance in making possible the first tentative step towards the construction of this book. Other thanks are due, of course, to all of the ANZALS conference delegates who contributed to the sessions, either in the presentation of their work or by commenting on and constructively critiquing the materials presented.

A huge acknowledgement is due to all the contributors to the book who have dedicated their time and energies to making it a reality, even in the face of pressures that are increasingly being brought to bear on academics that often give primacy to peer-review journals with high Impact Factors or similar ratings. The pressures driving institutions in this direction lie beyond the boundaries of the tertiary education landscape. In the same way a detailed discussion of this issue is beyond the focus of this book, but it is nevertheless an important one that needs to be had.

As the editor of this book and contributor of several chapters I would like to, as always, acknowledge my long-suffering wife (Sarah) and children (Ben, Tat, and Gus) for helping with the development of my ideas and for putting up with me while I have written chapters and done all the editorial work associated with a book of this type. They really are all wonderful, and Gus in particular has been great at ensuring that I have never focused for too long on the book to the detriment of my knowledge of Chuggington and Paw Patrol.

Finally, and by no means least, the animals that have contributed to this book, both directly and indirectly, must be acknowledged. Without them there would be no book. In my own case this has included my dogs Snuffie and Gypsy, my cat Catkin, and the family flock of ducks and chickens. If this book has an agenda beyond academics simply producing wordage and hopefully knowledge, and it does, it is to try and raise awareness of the sentience, rights, and welfare of animals,

and to make people think about current situations where welfare needs improvement. In other words, this book is about trying to make people think about animal suffering, to question whether it is right, and to think about how it should be stopped. It is therefore fitting, I think, that I can trace the origin of this book back to Snuffie, my first dog, who came into my life as an abandoned pup from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) centre in Brisbane, Australia. Without her entry into my life my interest in studying animals in leisure would arguably have never occurred. Therefore, when organizing this book I asked all the contributors if they would be happy for any royalties generated by its sales to be donated to the Queensland RSPCA. I am happy to say the response was uniformly positive, and therefore that is what will happen.

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encourage critical reflection about exclusive practices or policies that privilege certain groups over others. His approach often favours a social ethic, whereby community members are knowers of their own lived experiences with capabilities and entitlements to forward their own visions of a healthy community. Thus, his research is also aimed at engaging community members directly in dialogue to envision their aspirations for the future of their community.

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