More-than-human emotions: Multispecies emotional labour in the tourism industry

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Abstract

The concept of emotional labour has been subject to critique, evaluation, development and extension over the last 35 years, but it remains firmly anthropocentric. This article begins to address this shortcoming by illustrating some of the productive potential of extending the concept of emotional labour to include more-than-human and multispecies perspectives. Organisations are not solely human phenomena, but research usually fails to consider the role of nonhumans in work in contemporary capitalism. Using the example of trail horses in tourism, I argue that some nonhuman animals should be considered workers, and that they do perform emotional labour in service to commercial organisations. More-than-human and multispecies perspectives capture some of the complexities of everyday organisational practices, and can inform feminist research attuned to the experiences of marginalised others, human and nonhuman.

Keywords: nonhuman animals; emotional labour; horses; multispecies; service work; tourism

Introduction

It is 35 years since Arlie Hochschild's (1983/2012) seminal work, *The Managed Heart,* introduced the concept of emotional labour to the sociology of work, drawing attention to the commercial 'management of feeling' in service interactions, and associated costs and benefits to employees. In the intervening period the concepts of emotional labour and emotion work have been drawn upon extensively to understand aspects of work in such diverse settings as retail and climate science (Ikeler, 2016; Head, & Harada, 2017). Subject to critique and counter-critique (Bolton, 2009; Brook, 2009), testing and development (Bolton, 2005; Gabriel et al., 2015), emotional labour and emotion work remain core concepts in the study of work and organisations. This special issue aims to (re)assess these ideas, considering how alternative theoretical approaches may develop the conceptual apparatus and open up different ways of thinking about gender, emotional labour and emotion work. This paper addresses one specific critique that can be levelled at both the sociology of work generally, and emotional labour specifically: the anthropocentric focus of such fields. What can more-than-human[i] perspectives add to understandings of gender, emotions and experiences in the workplace?

Despite the so-called 'animal turn' in the social sciences, nonhuman animals remain noticeable by their absence from theoretical, conceptual and empirical studies in sociology, gender studies and organisation studies (Tovey, 2003; Peggs, 2013; Wilkie, 2015, Sage et al., 2016). However, growth in popularity of actor network theory (ANT) approaches has brought about greater acceptance of human social worlds as enmeshed with nonhuman others, from creatures to objects and artefacts (van der Duim et al., 2013). The relational ontology of ANT poses a radical challenge to anthropocentric social science, but its focus is not on specific

relationships and interactions, but more the networks and processes that bring those relationships into being (van der Duim et al., 2017). Consequently, animals, including humans, in their fleshy, furry, feathery and scaly realities can become lost in analysis. More-than-human frameworks challenge anthropocentrism from a different starting point than ANT: (nonhuman) animals are taken to matter *for themselves*, and to have important roles to play in multispecies worlds. Organisations are not solely human domains, and more-than-human, multispecies perspectives have much to add to understandings of gender, emotions and work.

Critical theorists point out that the implicit, but rarely acknowledged, standardised norm of the ideal worker is usually a white, middle class, able-bodied, heterosexual (human) male (Acker, 1990; Billing, 2011). Categories of gender, race, sexuality etc. are drawn upon to explore and try and explain differences, discrimination and inequality in organisations (Acker, 2006). However, as Ogden et al. (2013) argue, although these categories are often understood as fluid and variable, they are firmly anthropocentric: positioning humans as 'untethered' from other beings. This is contrary to people's everyday experiences which involve routine, complex and often meaningful interactions with nonhuman others (Dashper, 2017a). Organisational theory, including that of emotional labour, is thus poorer for focusing solely on humans and human-centric relationships and practices.

When nonhuman animals are included in sociological and feminist research, they are often relegated to symbolic status, metaphors for human experiences rather than beings in their own right (Bradshaw, 2010). Birke (2010) argues that our understanding of nonhuman animals is limited by our perception of them as thoroughly other, and as fixed and somehow beyond the social, which is cast as a solely human domain. However, systems of domination intersect and reinforce each other, and the othering of nonhuman animals is connected with the othering of groups of people, such as women, ethnic minorities and contingent workers

(Birke, 2007). Bringing nonhuman animals in to feminist and organisational theory can help deepen understandings of human experiences and practices.Limited previous research has investigated nonhuman animals and work, and some associated emotional undercurrents (Coulter, 2016a). This has been confined largely to therapy animals, or contexts in which humans care for animals, such as veterinary clinics and animal shelters, and has concentrated mainly on the emotion work and emotional labour of the humans in these settings (Sanders, 2010; Taylor, 2010; Coulter, 2016b; Charles & Wolkowitz, 2018; Clarke & Knights, 2018). In this article I propose extending these concepts beyond the human, to include consideration of nonhuman animals as emotional labourers. I move beyond discussion of human-animal relationships in caring contexts to suggest that nonhuman animals can also be 'employed' in capitalist conditions that require emotion management, alignment with feeling rules and surface (even, potentially, deep) acting. Through consideration of nonhuman animals involved in the tourism industry, I illustrate how more-than-human perspectives can open up avenues for theoretical and conceptual development about gender, emotions and work in multispecies organisations.

The paper begins with a brief introduction to the conceptual bases for this argument: emotion work and emotional labour. I then discuss existing research in the wider human-animal studies field which has relevance to organisation studies, before using the specific example of nonhuman animals (in this case horses) deployed in the tourism industry in order to challenge the anthropocentrism of current approaches to emotions in work, and suggest some potential opportunities that multispecies analysis can open up.

Emotion work and emotional labour

The purpose of this article is to propose ways in which more-than-human perspectives can advance current theoretical and conceptual apparatus, and so my discussion of emotional labour and emotion work in this section is brief and incomplete, to allow more space for later discussions. Here I set out a few key aspects that are directly relevant to my argument.

Hochschild's (2012) original conceptualisation distinguished between emotion work – the management of emotions in a private context – and emotional labour – "the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display" (p.7) that is sold for a wage in commercial settings. For Hochschild, the presence (or absence) of a financial obligation that places the employee in a relatively subordinate position to the employer (and the customer) is integral to understanding the potentially alienating and disempowering aspects of emotional labour. While we may all (to different degrees) be required to perform emotion work in our personal relationships and often in our jobs, it is the commercial imperative to accomplish this in line with corporate 'feeling rules' within emotional labour that distinguishes the two concepts. Management dictate what the appropriate 'feeling rules' are in a given organisation and context, and employees are expected to embody these norms, regardless of their own personal feelings, through surface or deep acting (see Grandey, 2003).

Hamilton and McCabe (2016) stress the importance of organisational context for understanding emotion work, and studies of this and emotional labour in different settings have shed light on the role of workplace norms and culture, technology and employment status in understanding how emotions are performed and experienced in employment (McCabe & Hamilton, 2015; Rivera, 2015; Godfrey & Brewis, 2018). Hochschild (2012) pointed to some gendered aspects of emotion work and emotional labour, as she argued that women's lower social status means their feelings are considered to be less important than men's. Women are assumed to be 'naturally' better at emotion work and are expected to expertly perform emotional labour, whereas men's emotional labour is differently valued and

rewarded (Taylor & Tyler, 2000; Arcy, 2016; Brescoll, 2016). Men may benefit from what Hochschild (2012) described as a 'status shield' that protects members of privileged groups from many of the negative aspects of other people's emotional performances and reduces pressure on men to enact emotional labour in the workplace (Cottingham et al., 2014). However, in some contexts men may find performing emotional labour particularly challenging, especially in masculine settings where emotion is devalued (Rivera, 2015).

Hochschild's concepts have been subject to much critique, refinement and challenge in relation to, amongst other things, her focus on the negative more than positive potential of emotional labour (Humphrey et al., 2015), the limited scope and absolutist tendencies of her interpretations (Bolton & Boyd, 2000), and the inseparability of emotion work and emotional labour in many contexts (Head et al., 2017). The study of emotions, emotion work and emotional labour has been critiqued by some for reinforcing Cartesian mind-body dualisms: in foregrounding emotion and cognitive experiences, embodied practices and encounters are rendered invisible (Knights & Thanem, 2005; Mears, 2014). This critique has informed research based on the concept of aesthetic labour, which brings focus on the body and physical appearance to the fore (Witz et al., 2003; Warhurst & Nickson, 2009). However, while increased attention to the embodied aspects of work and organisational labour challenges one entrenched dualism, that between body and mind, it leaves another unchallenged, that between human and nonhuman animal. In the next section I begin to consider what a more-than-human perspective on emotion work and emotional labour can bring to understandings of gender, work and organisations.

More-than-human perspectives on work and organisations

Coulter (2017) argues that work is a crucial political terrain in human-animal relationships, yet nonhuman animals are usually left out of empirical and theoretical considerations of work and organisations (Labatut et al., 2016). For Sanders (2006) this is largely the result of a general ambivalence and ambiguity that characterises human-animal relationships: animals are regarded as both 'subjects', with individual characters and personalities, and 'objects', to be used in the service of humans. This reflects a general anthropocentrism that characterises much social science research: humans are the sole legitimate focus for organisational research, and nonhuman animals should only be considered when they have a direct role to play in human affairs. However, nonhuman animals are not so easily dismissed and compartmentalised and exert influence and make their presence known in often surprising ways, from disrupting plans for construction (Sage et al., 2016) to moving into organisational headquarters and shaping workplace culture (O'Doherty, 2016).

There is growing acceptance that nonhuman animals play an important role in some people's personal lives, as companion animals (pets) with whom people can form close emotional bonds (Charles & Davies, 2008; Haraway, 2008). Pets, and particularly dogs and cats, are understood by their owner/caretakers to be individuals, with their own characters, moods, likes and dislikes (Sanders, 1990). Human-pet relationships are increasingly recognised as complex interspecies encounters, fraught with ambiguity and unequal power relations, but often rewarding for those involved (Irvine, 2004; Dashper, 2017a). The same level of interest has not been paid to working animals and their roles within organisations.

Nonhuman animals have long been 'put to work' in the service of humans, in agriculture and food production, transport and warfare (Greene, 2008). However, these animals are rarely considered to be 'workers' in the way that humans are, and their contributions to interspecies work and living are often marginalised, made invisible and to 'not matter' (Evans & Miele, 2012). Nonhuman animals are routinely exploited and subjected to normalised and

institutionalised violence, especially in food production, although not all work by, with and for animals is harmful. Animal suffering and human suffering in organisations often go together, with people employed in low-paid, low status positions in direct contact with nonhuman animals also often experiencing marginalisation and poor conditions (Hamilton & McCabe, 2016; Coulter, 2017; Mitchell & Hamilton, 2018). Coulter (2016) suggests a continuum between enjoyment and suffering in work, calling for more 'humane jobs' that are good for both people and animals, and this involves recognising nonhuman animals as workers within organisations.

Recognising nonhuman animals as workers implies that they have some degree of agency, raising complex and long-debated practical and philosophical questions. Many of these issues are beyond the scope of this paper, and I have discussed them elsewhere (see Dashper, 2017b). However, for the purposes of my argument here, a few points about nonhuman animal agency need to be made. The continued marginalisation of nonhuman animals within organisation studies can be traced back to Cartesian dualism and believed distinctions between body and mind, human and animal. One distinguishing feature of humans was believed to be agency, however agency may be better thought of as a continuum along which all animals – human and nonhuman – can be located (Shaw, 2013). Agency is not a solely human phenomenon, although the capacity for agency is unevenly spread between human and nonhuman animals, and nonhuman animals may exercise agency in different ways (Pearson, 2013). Although nonhuman animals may be capable of exercising some degree of agency, this is always within the context of human-centric power relations, where humans have the resources and capacity to exert considerable influence over nonhumans, affecting their ability to act in different situations (Carter & Charles, 2013). Therefore, if nonhuman animals are to be recognised as workers in some contexts it is likely that their status as

workers will be low and marginal, and they will be subject to considerable control and supervision by their human managers.

A growing body of literature is beginning to explore some of the possibilities that more-than-human and posthuman perspectives open up for understanding organisations and organising. Theories are broadly posthuman where they "challenge human exceptionalism, posit that human-nonhuman relations/relationships emerge temporally, and/or demonstrate how what we ontologically understand as 'human' is really a complex relation with other species" (Lloro-Bodart, 2017: 113). From Clarke and Knights' (2018) consideration of how 'anthropocentric masculinities', performed within the context of veterinary practice, marginalise both nonhumans and female humans, to Sage et al.'s (2016) consideration of human-animal boundary work and organising, to Mitchell and Hamilton's (2018) consideration of the roles that sheep play in actor-networks in the English Lake District, organizational researchers are becoming alert to the possibilities and opportunities that more-than-human perspectives can open up for understanding organisational lives, processes and practices.

O'Doherty's (2016) study of Manchester Airport Group illustrates how remaining open to multispecies possibilities – ontologically, theoretically and methodologically – can have surprising benefits. Initially researching (human) organisational practices, his ethnographic approach enabled him to follow the unexpected, but culturally important, role of Olly the Cat, opening up new ideas and insights on the organisation that would not have been apparent had the cat not been brought in as a subject in the research. Charles and Wolkowitz's (2018) research on therapy dogs enlisted to engage students on a British university campus also illustrates the utility of ethnography in more-than-human organisational research. Their study explored how both humans and dogs are closely constrained by organisational norms that dictate what is deemed to be 'appropriate behaviour' in specific spaces and contexts, framed

within the context of marketised higher education in contemporary western capitalism. Only certain types of dogs, and certain types of doggy-behaviour, are deemed acceptable within the organisation, and only within narrow confines of space, time and interaction. In this case dogs are brought into the organisation for a specific purpose, and aspects of 'dogginess' are valorised, such as apparent friendliness and accepting human touch, whilst other, equally 'doggy' behaviours (like barking, jumping, urinating) are unacceptable. In much the same way as the trail horses in tourism discussed below, therapy dogs are valued by the organisation and its clients (students, or tourists) for their novelty and animal Otherness, whilst also disciplined and constrained within human-centric power networks that place boundaries on the extent and type of otherness deemed acceptable within these organisational contexts. Organisations are multispecies spaces, even if most research focuses exclusively on human experiences and practices. Posthuman perspectives on work and organisations attempt to disrupt the unacknowledged but deep-rooted acceptance of human exceptionalism which characterises the field, and positions humans as the only legitimate focus of research (Bryant & Wolfram Cox, 2014; Dowling et al., 2017; Clarke & Knights, 2018). Nonhuman animals play important roles in a variety of organisations, and often work in the service of people and human-defined organisational goals. Nonhuman animals are routinely involved in the tourism industry, and in the next section I turn to this sector to consider if and how we can extend human organisational concepts, such as emotional labour, to nonhuman animals, and what this might contribute to theoretical development.

Animals in tourism: Attractions, symbols and workers

Travel and tourism is one of the largest industries in the world, with a direct global economic impact of circa US$2.3 trillion in 2016 (Statista, 2016). Approximately 12 million people are

employed in the travel and tourism industry in the EU, but this work is characterised by relatively poor working conditions (EuroStat, 2015). Tourism work is performed mainly by young, often female, employees, working in predominantly low-skilled, low-paid and contingent positions (CEBR, 2014). Tourism work is often highly seasonal, unstable and has low levels of worker protection. Tourism workers are expected to perform high levels of emotional labour, and research suggests that employees in the sector are subject to strict managerial control over 'feeling rules', and regular evaluation of their performances (Guerrier & Adib, 2003; Baum, 2007; van Dijk & Kirk, 2007; van Dijk et al., 2011). Tourism thus provides a context in which (human) workers are required to perform regular emotional labour, but are often in precarious, low status and vulnerable employment situations.

Nonhuman animals feature in many different roles in tourism: as attractions (e.g. in zoos and on safari), as forms of transportation, as symbolic destination icons, as food and suppliers of other local produce, as travel companions, and as 'locals' with whom tourists interact during their stay (Curtin, 2005; Markwell, 2015). Wildlife tourism, ecotourism and environmental tourism all engage nonhuman animals in various ways in the tourism experience and entail some degree of human-nonhuman interaction as part of their core proposition (Reynolds & Braithwaite, 2001; Ballantyne et al., 2011; Fennell, 2013). Research has questioned the ethics of animal-related tourism, if and how tourism can be 'staged' to the benefit of both parties during interspecies encounters, and the extent to which nonhuman animals are able to exercise agency in interactions with tourists (Fennell & Nowaczek, 2010; Fennell & Sheppard, 2011; Warkentin, 2011; Taylor & Carter, 2013).

Tourism research has highlighted the exploitation of nonhuman animals, and the environmental impacts of wildlife tourism (Roe et al., 1997; Cohen, 2012). Yet within these studies nonhuman animals are usually present only in abstract form, still more objects than subjects of research, and with more focus on species than individual animals (Caitlin et al.,

2013). Kontogeorgopoulos' (2009) study of elephant tourism in Thailand, while still focused predominantly on tourist views and experiences, is unusual in conceptualising the elephants as workers in the tourism industry. He argues that "Aside from work in tourism, domesticated elephants in Thailand possess few legal options for earning a living", concluding that, despite "negative trade-offs", tourism-related work offers "the most optimal solution" for the welfare of the elephants (p.445). Elephants are thus identified as tourism workers, working for their living, and positioned in low status and vulnerable positions similar to many human workers in tourism.

Conceptualising nonhuman animals as workers within tourism has important implications. It highlights their material contributions to the production of the tourism 'product' – be that giving rides to tourists, or performing in shows. Animals are 'employed' within tourism organisations, receiving food, shelter and – hopefully – care, in return for their contribution to the work of the organisation. This work has economic consequences, as the animals are a key part of the attraction for tourists, and thus an important aspect of the product being bought and sold. Although nonhuman animals in tourism may not fully understand this wage-effort bargain into which they are entered, they are engaged in capitalist processes in a service-oriented sector. As front-line service workers in many tourism organisations, nonhuman animals are expected to behave in certain ways to satisfy the needs and expectations of tourists, regardless of how tourists behave to and around the animals. This constitutes feeling rules, and may necessitate some degree of 'acting' on behalf of the animals. Animals in tourism are thus engaged in emotional labour, and in the next sections I use the example of trail-riding horses to illustrate this argument further.

Multispecies emotional labour: Horses in tourism

Not all nonhuman animals involved in tourism can be usefully described as 'workers', and this classification should be limited to those who actively perform a role in tourism encounters, such as the elephants in Kontogeorgopoulos' (2009) study. Horses are perhaps the most prevalent nonhuman animal workers in the global tourism industry, performing a variety of roles such as taking humans on trail rides (from less than an hour, to many days), performing in sport, cultural and entertainment shows, acting as an attraction in interspecies encounters on farms, and taking tourists for carriage trips around city centres (see Pickel-Chevalier & Evans, 2015). Horses in these and other roles are performing explicit tasks, as directed by their human managers, and so actively 'working', as opposed to the more passive roles of many other nonhuman animals in tourism, such as lions in a zoo.

Limited research has been carried out into horse-related tourism, focusing on trail management, business development, and tourist expectations (Helgadóttir, & Sigurðardóttir, 2008; Gilbert & Gillet, 2014; Buchmann, 2017). Horses in trial-riding tourism provide a good example for considering if and how nonhuman animals can be engaged in emotional labour in the context of commercial organisations. Trail-riding entails close interaction between horse and tourist (rider) as they spend time together traversing varied terrain, in close body-to-body contact. Trail-riding organisations are usually privately owned, for-profit companies, offering tourists the opportunity to hire a horse, and probably a guide, to take them on a tour of an area. Customers can be general tourists, with little or no horse-riding experience looking for a pleasant and easy trip of short duration, up to highly experienced riders on a targeted riding holiday, usually lasting numerous days and involving several hours of daily riding, at all speeds. The horses therefore can be considered frontline service providers, along with the human guides, interacting directly with customers and helping to provide positive experiences for the guests (Notzke, 2017).

In trail-riding tourism, horses are a central part of the product being bought, featuring in online and other forms of marketing, and their behaviours and attitudes can be considered integral to the customers' experience and satisfaction with the service. Tourists will select trail-riding stables based on a number of factors, including location, scenery, and cost, but the type of horses offered (in terms of breed and looks, size, temperament and ability) will also inform the decision to choose one riding stable over another.

Horses are often described in promotional materials, such as websites, as 'well-schooled', 'calm and willing', 'friendly', and 'happy', giving an indication of the kind of 'feeling rules' that shape the working lives of trail horses. One UK-based trekking centre describes their horses on their website as follows:

> Our horses are all cob types who have been chosen carefully for their calmness, patience, friendly nature and their willingness to happily spend hours with us exploring tracks and trails and munching grass whilst we sit and eat our lunch and admire the views. Our horses have been well trained and have gained a fabulous reputation at being experts at their job. (Stonetrail, 2018).

Such descriptions, aimed at potential customers, create expectations about the kind of experiences to be anticipated as well as appropriate behaviour from service workers – including horses. A trail horse is expected to be calm at all times, friendly to strange people who may have little or no riding experience, and endlessly patient and willing regardless of guest behaviour and actions, and in response to guest whims. These are the feeling rules that trail horses are expected to abide by, in return for the apparent "best standard of care" provided by human staff. This is a big ask of the horses, who are flight animals, naturally inclined to flee danger or uncertain circumstances (Keaveney, 2008). The act of riding entails close and intimate interspecies body-to-body communication, based on trust and mutual

understanding (Dashper, 2017b). If one member of the conversation (in this case the inexperienced tourist) has no knowledge of that language, and so communicates in erratic, unpredictable, incomprehensible and maybe even painful terms (due to poor balance and body coordination on horseback), the other participant (the horse) may be forgiven for becoming confused, uncertain and maybe even annoyed. However, as with other frontline service workers who must control their outward display to remain in line with organisationally-prescribed feeling rules, the horse must quash these inner feelings/instinctual behaviours and present a calm, happy front to the paying customer. Trail horses are thus expected to perform some degree of 'acting' in their interactions with tourists (whether this can be classed as surface or deep acting is difficult to say as we cannot know the horse's inner feelings, just observe his or her outward display and compare that to 'normal' behaviour in his or her species).

Hochschild (2012) argues that "When competition in price is out, competition in service is in" (p.92), and a key part of this service in the trail-riding experience is the horse. Horses need to be able to abide by the feeling rules of the organisation if they are to be useful to their human managers/owners, as a horse that 'spooks' and scares a paying customer is unlikely to result in good feedback and repeat custom. Although the horses cannot understand the nature of the commercial relationship they are engaged in, it is clear that they are a part of the transaction between customer/tourist and organisation. Customers expect a safe, fun and enjoyable experience on their holiday or short trip, and the horse, along with human guides, is responsible for delivering that service. Trail horses are trained to become accustomed to these expectations, and those who do not prove calm and friendly enough will not stay at the stables, and will likely be sold to a different home. This exposes the vulnerability of the trail horse in the context of capitalist tourism businesses. They are represented to customers as "wonderful companions and friends" (Stonetrail, 2018), and their human co-workers may

well think of them in this way. However, they have a job to do, and that is to deliver a satisfying experience to the customer. If they prove unable to do this in the expected way, or to cope with the unpredictability of frontline service encounters, then they will have to be sold and another more suitable horse found to take their place. Horses have a commodity value, whether they are top-level competition animals or steady trail ride ponies, and are bought and sold subject to human needs (Dashper, 2014). Horses employed in commercial trail-riding organisations are thus subject to strict managerial supervision in relation to their ability to perform emotional labour, and may suffer sanction for poor performance in ways similar to human service workers.

The trail ride horse has to perform complex emotion work with customers/tourists. The growth in popularity of online review platforms, like TripAdvisor, has had profound effects on the tourism industry, providing customers with opportunities to share experiences, offer advice and provide feedback (positive and negative) (Leung et al., 2013). Tourism and hospitality organisations are thus exposed to regular, and sometimes abusive, public appraisal of everything from the cleanliness of facilities to the level of service provided by staff. In the case of trail-riding organisations, these staff include the horses who are also subject to public appraisal, and online reviews reveal some of the emotion management and emotional labour performed by the horses in their interactions with customers. Many positive reviews of stables and ranches around the world focus on "well-behaved ponies", suggesting that the horses are successfully embodying the feeling rules of the trail-riding industry. Some clients are more effusive in their appraisals, for example:

> And her [company owner] horses are absolutely wonderful. I really enjoyed Teeny, who is super smart and wanted to canter up every hill just as I did… at the end of the ride, I was tired but Teeny still had miles and miles left in her. (TripAdvisor, 2017).

Here Teeny is identified as providing an exceptional level of service. She appears to have accomplished high levels of emotional labour in convincing the customer that enjoyment of the experience was mutual (which it may or may not have been). The post sounds like it is describing a fun outing between friends rather than a commercial arrangement, and so Teeny's enactment of emotional labour has been extremely successful in this case.

As in all service encounters, customers are not always happy with the experience and their perception of the service offered, as this example illustrates:

> [You] will fear for your life as these nutty horses do as they please… My wife's horse took off prior to us entering the trial [sic] and she was terrified… the horses went into nose to tail mode, but you could not get the horse to do anything but follow the horse in front of it. The guide moved to the other side of the dirt road. My wife's horse did not follow. My right leg was being pressed against the fence, so I wanted to move to the side the guide was on. Since the horse in front didn't move, mine would not move. He shook his head as if to say, this is not the plan buddy. (TripAdvisor, 2015).

This reviewer, a self-confessed 'inexperienced rider', described being both 'terrified' and 'bored' by his trail-riding experience. The horses failed to deliver on his expectations, which seemingly centre on being able to actively control and direct an unknown animal, despite his own lack of knowledge and experience of horses and riding. The horses appear to have performed their job as required, keeping novice riders safe on a trip, but this did not meet the expectations of the customer, who wanted to feel in control and competent, despite his lack of skills. In this case the service encounter broke down, despite a safe trail ride, and the horses did not meet the customer's expectations in terms of outward display of compliance.

The trail ride horse is thus expected to comply with feeling rules and customer expectations in much the same way as human service workers. Customers expect the animals to conform to their expectations, which are shaped by the organisation promising willing, safe and friendly horses, even to customers with little/no knowledge or experience in the complex act of interspecies communication that is riding. Customers expect a standardised service, and appear to make no concessions to species differences. Although horses know nothing about TripAdvisor, or other workings of contemporary tourism businesses, they are actors within this complex and expected by customers to comply with often unrealistic expectations of service quality. In such circumstances it seems entirely appropriate to position nonhuman animals as service workers engaged in emotional labour: this is essentially what customers are doing.

Is this harmful for trail horses? Do they experience the alienating effects of emotional labour, performed within a context where they have little control over feeling rules and how to embody them (Hochschild, 2012)? There are certainly examples of horses being exploited and subject to harm in the tourism industry, and some horses may suffer burnout, becoming grumpy and more difficult to manage, but trail horses may also receive payoffs for their service work, in ways comparable to Kontogeorgopoulos' (2009) elephants. Many will receive good quality care, regular food, and positive human-animal interactions (occasionally with tourists, and more often with their routine carers). These issues certainly warrant further consideration, as the ethics of engaging nonhuman animals in commercial tourism work need careful deliberation, but are beyond the scope of my discussion here.

The example of trail ride horses illustrates that it may be appropriate to apply concepts like emotional labour to nonhuman animals in some circumstances, extending reach to more-than-human dimensions. Trail-riding also illustrates how these processes can at times be multispecies performances, in which humans and nonhumans are involved together in the

delivery of service to expected organisational standards. Following Haraway (2008), 'multispecies' implies a working together, a co-mingling of human and nonhuman "in mutually constituting, intra-active touch" (p.6). In the commercial delivery of a service in trail-riding organisations, horses and humans (e.g. guides) work together to produce and deliver the product. Emotional labour is performed by the guide in explaining the landscape and local history to tourists in a fun and interesting way, and by the horse in remaining calm and relaxed despite an unbalanced, heavy human on his or her back. Each is important to the service encounter and the satisfaction or otherwise of the customer. But something else is also happening in constituting this service encounter. Guide and horse are working together, across species boundaries, to engage and delight the customer. The guide selects a suitable horse for a client to ride, and the horse responds to the cues (verbal and non-verbal) of the guide in her or his demeanour and behaviours. Each is working independently but also together, in a collective performance to enact the feeling rules of the organisation in interaction with the customer. This collective action may not always be successful, and may not be visible to the customer, but it is the two together – human and horse – that produce and deliver the service through effective emotional labour. The guide can tell the tourists about the local area without the horse, and the horse could probably take the tourists on a short walking tour without the guide, but it is the combination of the two, working together through subtle, usually non-verbal communication, that make up the encounter. I return to the possibilities that such multispecies emotional labour may open up in the next section.

Discussion: More-than-human and multispecies emotional labour

The example of trail horses in tourism, introduced in this paper, begins to extend debates around animals, work and organisations beyond the contexts of caring (of or by nonhuman

animals, of or by humans) or production (usually food, but also many other products) represented within most previous organizational research in this area. Trail horses are workers in the service of capitalist organisations; they are not valued for their therapeutic qualities, but rather are expected to help produce and deliver a service for paying customers, in much the same way as human frontline service workers. They are subject to strict managerial control, and are integral to the customer's evaluation of the service/product purchased. Horses utilised in the tourism industry labour for and with their human managers in the context of capitalist organisations, interacting with paying customers to help deliver a service which is sold for a profit. Further consideration of if and how they are subject to managerial control, if and how they comply with or resist these demands, and the consequences of this for the organisation and the workers – human and nonhuman – may open up debate about some of the ethical undercurrents of involving nonhuman animals in organisational practices, enacted within human-centric power structures.

The example of trail horses in commercial tourism organisations illustrates that, in some circumstances, animals can and do perform emotional labour. Hochschild (2012) argues that emotional labour involves "the trained management of feeling" (p.14), which certainly applies to the experiences of these horses. They are selected, trained and managed for their ability to embody the feeling rules of the organisation – built around being friendly, calm and kind – and suffer sanction (such as being told off, or ultimately replaced) for poor performance. Operating within a commercial setting, these feeling rules are established and reinforced by human managers, and the horses themselves have little freedom to deviate from expected norms. That it is not to say that trail horses, like service workers more broadly, have no agency to act as they wish in certain situations, and the TripAdvisor review comment offered above illustrates that horses will sometimes act in ways deemed awkward or stubborn by customers but which are easier or more appealing to the horse. However, opportunities for

such displays of resistance are restricted by the close supervision exercised by the human managers, who work to try to ensure that human and equine workers in the organisation remain focused on delivering high quality service to the customer. In such ways, the emotional outward displays of trail horses become commodities, sold to tourists to attract them to spend their money on a fun, relaxing ride at this particular ranch/stables. In return, the horses get fed, looked after and possibly even loved by their human caretakers.

This indicates that organisations are not human-only zones, and nonhuman animals play a variety of roles from co-workers, to companions, to pests. Nonhuman animal co-workers are involved, to varying degrees, in the routine practices of the organisation, and so concepts such as emotional labour should be applied to animal workers whose practices fit with what the concept describes. Acknowledging animals as worthy of consideration, and recognising that their actions can have effects, positive and negative, is to accept that nonhuman animals matter in organisations. Birke et al. (2004) argue that that the discourses that produce 'animal' in opposition to 'human' work in pejorative ways. The animal becomes that which is not human, without subjectivity or intentionality. My brief discussion of trail-riding horses illustrates that horses/animals are subjects within organisations, and need to be recognised as such. This then opens up possibilities for considering how humans and nonhumans work together, separately, and sometimes in opposition in organisations, broadening empirical and conceptual foci to include examination of different kinds of relationships, interactions and practices.

Bringing nonhuman animals into organisational research has important theoretical implications, particularly for feminist research. Donovan (2006) argues that feminism has a sensibility towards recognising that marginalised groups have trouble getting their voices heard. While most feminist research has focused on marginalised humans, all nonhumans are marginalised in a human-centric world, and some more than others. Feminist organisational

researchers can thus try to incorporate the 'voices' of nonhuman animals in their research and challenge the human/animal binary that excludes whole species from being considered worthy subjects in organisational research. Feminist researchers have often been reluctant to consider nonhuman animals explicitly within research, perhaps in part due to the historic links that have been made between women and animals, in derogatory ways. This is precisely why thinking with and through nonhuman animals is so important for feminist research, and for better understanding of gender in organisations. Animalising pejoratives provide the very language of gender stereotypes: women become fox, chick, bitch, mouse; men become pig, dog, tiger, wolf. Ideas about gender are infused with ideas about nonhuman animals, often in ways that devalue both animals and women (see Dashper and others, 2018). As Birke (2010: 344) argues, "feminist theory needs urgently to bring animals in, to recognise that how we think about them is deeply intertwined with prevailing orthodoxies about gender and nature."

This can be seen through including nonhuman animals in theorising through organisational concepts such as emotional labour. Nonhuman animals engaged in frontline interactive service work, like the trail horses discussed above, are subject to close managerial control and supervision, as are many human service-sector workers. Their status within the organisation is precarious: if they fail to behave as required, or if they become injured, sick or too old to perform the tasks, they will be discarded in much the same way as contingent human workers. However, nonhuman animals are even more vulnerable due to their status as human 'property', to be bought and sold according to human whim (Dashper, 2014). Although they are core workers within the organisation, integral to the 'product' and experience sought by customers, they are expendable and replaceable. Hochschild (2012) argued that due to women's lower social status, women's emotions are considered less important than men's, in both public and private life. The lower status of nonhuman animals in the human/animal dichotomy reinforces this: the emotions and personal feelings of nonhuman animals are rarely

considered, and often not even acknowledged to exist. Denying that nonhuman animals have inner lives and feelings enables humans to disregard animal emotions as irrelevant in the service encounter: what matters is how the paying customer feels about his/her interactions with the trail horse, and the horse just has to accept the customer's presence and actions as they are. Emotional responses from the horse that are not in line with the organisation's feeling rules – such as signs of annoyance, like pinning ears back and baring teeth – are unacceptable in a 'friendly, calm and patient' trail horse and not tolerated. In such ways the horse's feelings are subordinated to the commercial needs of the organisation. Low status – whether that be animal compared to human; woman compared to man; migrant worker compared to domestic worker – results in devaluation of emotions, requiring extensive emotion work and emotional labour on behalf of the subordinate group/individual.

Applying the concept of emotional labour to nonhuman animals exposes many of the vulnerabilities of frontline service workers in the context of commercial organisations. Low status workers have limited autonomy in relation to how and when emotional labour is performed, resulting in higher levels of stress and alienation (Kruml & Geddes, 2000). The low status of nonhuman animals is broadly accepted across human society – in work and organisations as much as in social science research. Human needs are deemed more important than animal ones, and humans are believed to be the only species with deep and meaningful emotional selves. The othering of nonhuman animals is a political act, with consequences for how we behave to other creatures, helping us to rationalise poor treatment, and even abuse. However, the othering of nonhuman animals is also intimately connected with the othering of certain groups of humans, as Birke (2007) explains:

> Each of the ways in which 'othering' appears in our culture is mutually reinforcing. Sexism, racism, imperialism, and our treatment of nonhuman animals

> are all interrelated and deeply entwined… Our ideas of gender, race or animality thus depend upon and recreate each other." (p.307)

Extending the theoretical reach of organisational concepts like emotional labour to nonhuman animals exposes the vulnerability of all creatures of low status – human and nonhuman – within organisations generally, and in interactive service work particularly.

The value of bringing nonhuman animals into theorising about emotional labour goes further than this. Multispecies perspectives enable and encourage us to think about our multispecies entanglements, our messy comingling with other animals in all aspects of our lives, including work. As explained briefly above, service work and performances of emotional labour can be multispecies enactments. Humans do not operate in a vacuum: we live and work with nonhuman others, animals and 'things', and how we all interact is worthy of further investigation and will enhance our understandings of work and organisations. To do this requires methodological flexibility in order to become more aware of nonhuman beings; what they do, when, where, how and who with; what they feel and how they respond; what they mean to us and how we respond to them; and, importantly, how our human experiences are enriched through our multispecies entanglements. Ethnography is well-suited to such flexibility, and the sub-practice of multispecies ethnography encourages researchers to be attuned to the 'contact zones' between humans and other species (Haraway, 2008, Kirksey & Helmreich, 2010).

Multispecies ethnography is a promising approach for more-than-human explorations of organisations and emotional labour, as it encourages researchers to decentre humans and focus instead on the contact zones and messy entanglements between humans and nonhumans in a variety of settings. In this article I have only briefly introduced the context of trail horses in tourism organisations as a relevant multispecies context through which to explore

emotional labour from a more-than-human perspective, and my focus here has been on ways in which humans represent and respond to the emotional labour of these nonhuman workers. Further empirical investigation of horses, tourists, guides and other actors would yield greater insight into the embodied, lived experiences of emotional labour by adopting different methods to try to capture more of the messy multispecies perspectives within these organisational contexts. However, as numerous researchers have acknowledged, to really try and consider multispecies perspectives within our research practices is extremely challenging. The dominance of humanist traditions in social science research heavily constrains our understandings of what 'data' and 'evidence' are and can be, and how we can know, or claim to know, anything. We are tied to the spoken/written word as the dominant form of knowledge creation and dissemination, and consequently our inability to converse with nonhuman animals and ask them what they think and feel in different circumstances is often taken as an excuse to exclude nonhuman perspectives from research. However, as Clarke and Knights (2018, p.5) argue, "*our* inability to directly access the inner worlds of non-human animals is not an excuse for erasing their 'voice'".

Interdisciplinary research, drawing on ethology as well as social science, can begin to bridge this gap. We *can* know things about other species, about how they feel and how they respond to different situations, even if we cannot always be sure that our interpretations are accurate and appropriately nuanced. People who spend time with nonhuman animals – from dogs, to horses, to elephants – communicate with those nonhuman animals, who in turn communicate back with them (Sanders, 1999; Dashper, 2017b; Locke, 2017). Again the dominance of humanist ways of thinking about knowing and knowledge encourages researchers to distrust this type of embodied, relational, interspecies knowing. Charges of anthropomorphism have long been used to discredit such forms of interspecies communication as unprovable and untrustworthy, resulting in the silencing of nonhuman voices and experiences. However, from

a posthuman perspective, anthropomorphism does not need to be seen as a bad thing to be avoided at all costs in the pursuit of masculine, disembodied research findings and may rather be seen as a useful heuristic device to aid interspecies understanding, whilst acknowledging the limitations of our human perspectives and sensory apparatus (Dashper, 2017b, 2018). Ethologist Marc Bekoff (2006) encourages researchers not to "discount or dismiss the abundant evidence of our own senses" (p.125) and argues that data suggest that "what people sense is likely what animals are feeling" (p.123). We should trust that, as long as we take time to try to understand them, much of what we think nonhuman animals feel in their interactions with us and the wider world, is a fair representation of what they do feel. Consequently organisational researchers may need to engage more with ethological insights to try to understand the actions, reactions and inner lives of nonhuman animals, and to enlist multisensory and creative methodologies to try to decentre humans in our attempts to understand multispecies practices and contexts (Pacini-Ketchabaw et al., 2016). As human geographers Dowling et al. (2017, p.827) argue, "research needs to move beyond only incorporating the 'voice' of 'the more-than-human' in the methodological *doings* and toward the implications of decentring human agency for *thinking*... This entails challenging, and moving away from, the privileging of the speaking, rationally reflective human agent/research that continues, implicitly at least, to frame knowledge production in the social sciences and humanities.*"* This is difficult, and requires radical rethinking of not only theoretical and methodological underpinnings of research, but also representation of research findings (not to mention our actions and interactions in relation to nonhuman animals). However, as Lloro-Bidart (2017, p.113) argues, "what we ontologically understand as 'human' is really a complex relation with other species" and all human life is multispecies – including work and organisations. Therefore, the need to challenge ourselves as researchers to respond to the many questions raised by multispecies perspectives cannot be ignored.

Conclusions

In this paper I have responded to the calls of the editors of this special issue to develop new theoretical directions and approaches to the analysis of emotional labour by illustrating the productive potential of more-than-human and multispecies perspectives. Organisational research is firmly anthropocentric, despite organisations and work being more-than-human experiences. Research on emotional labour has been dominated by labour process theory and organisational sociology, and this has obscured the multispecies aspects of emotions in the workplace.

Through the example of trail-riding horses I have shown that nonhuman animals can and do perform emotional labour, and that this can be integral to the production of service encounters and customer satisfaction. Including nonhuman animals in theorising also exposes the vulnerability of human frontline service workers, and provides important insights for feminist organisational research. However, although nonhuman animals can be good to 'think with', drawing attention to issues in the human world, they are much more than that. Haraway's (2008) comments about dogs are relevant for considering the emotional labour of all nonhuman animals and the important roles they play in multispecies organisations. She argues:

> Dogs, in their historical complexity, matter here. Dogs are not an alibi for another theme… Dogs are not surrogates for theory, they are not here just to think with. They are here to live with. (p.5)

More-than-human perspectives can expand and develop organisational research, including that around emotional labour, by providing theoretical clarity and novel insights, and challenging researchers to expand and reimagine our theoretical and methodological apparatus. Yet nonhuman animals are more than symbols or metaphors for human experiences. They are active players within organisations, enlisted by humans in the service of human-defined commercial goals, and thus are worthy of recognition as important workers in their own right.

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[i] The terminology surrounding human-animal studies is complex and detailed, and discussion of it is beyond the scope of this article. I position my understanding of 'multispecies' and 'more-than-human' perspectives within posthumanist traditions that seek to decentre humans and human experiences, through recognising that those experiences are always enmeshed in complex and messy entanglements with various human and nonhuman actors.