

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

# **Racing to retirement: Understanding greyhounds' experiences of becoming pets**

A dissertation presented in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Masters of Arts  
in  
Social Anthropology

at Massey University, Manawatū, New Zealand

Hannah Paap

2017



# Abstract

This thesis is a multispecies ethnographic investigation of the transition of retired racing greyhounds to domestic pets. The key aim of this research was to understand the greyhounds' experiences of this transition. To achieve this aim, I sought to understand the relationships that greyhounds have with both human and non-human animals over the course of their transition and how these relationships influenced the pets they became. I use the concept of rite of passage to frame greyhounds' transition because they move from one societal role, working dogs, to another, pets, undergoing transformation in the process. My fieldwork involved a mixed methodological approach, combining participant-observation, interviews, and photography. In doing so, I gained insight into greyhounds' own experiences of their rite of passage and not just that of the humans involved in their lives. To help me do this, I combined ethnography with ethology, the science of animal behaviour. Using ethology allowed me to learn how greyhounds used their senses to investigate and make sense of the changes in their lives, which were brought about by their transition, and how they responded to and communicated about them. I did this by interpreting their body language, body carriage, and vocalisations. Thus, greyhounds play a central role in this thesis, whilst the human is decentred. The goal of this research was to centre greyhounds, even though it is challenging to do this in text: as such this thesis is an experiment in representation. My findings suggest that greyhounds can successfully transition into pets due to breed-specific traits, such as laziness; individual dog personalities like independence; and the constructive interactions they have with both human and non-human actors. This is even though some greyhounds may find their rite of passage more difficult than others.

**Keywords:** greyhound(s), racing dog, transition, retirement, adoption agency, (domestic) pet, multispecies ethnography, rite of passage, non-human animal, human companion, companion animal, companion species.

Approval for this research has been given by Massey University Human Ethics Committee, who have deemed this thesis to be low risk.

# Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of many people, whom I would like to thank in these acknowledgments.

I would first like to show my appreciation to my supervisors, Dr. Carolyn Morris and Dr. Peter Howland, for your valuable academic advice and guidance. I would also like to thank you both for your reassurance over the past two years, especially whenever I worried that I would not finish this thesis.

Next, I would like to thank my friends. Even though I may not have appreciated it at the time, I am grateful to those of you who dragged me away from the computer so I would not lose my mind. I would also like to thank Richard and Nina for proofreading this thesis. Without you both I am sure there would have been many spelling mistakes and grammatical errors.

In similar regards, I want to thank my own companion species, my pets Cookie and Piper. This is even though you both cannot communicate symbolically so will never be able to read these acknowledgments. I am forever grateful for your unconditional love and demanding my attention. Doing so gave me a much needed break.

I also want to show my gratitude to my parents for your support, both emotional and financial. Thank you for also allowing me to live at home rent free and driving me to anywhere I needed to conduct fieldwork since I could not do so myself.

I especially want to thank my partner, Dylan. Thank you very much for your love and reassurance. You always believed in me when I struggled to believe in myself. I am forever grateful for your encouraging words, especially whenever I was panicking about this thesis. You always know what to say. I am also grateful for you listening to my research ideas and offering me words of advice.

Finally, I want to thank everyone who contributed to this research. To all my human participants - trainers, owners, and adoption agency staff: this research would not have been possible without you. Thank you for allowing me to conduct participant-observation with you and the greyhounds in your lives and sparing time in your busy schedules to answer my questions. I am particularly grateful to adoption agency staff who allowed me to shadow you and volunteer for a month.

Lastly, to the greyhounds who I meet and worked with: without you there would be no thesis. I would not have a topic to write about. Every one of you welcomed me with your wagging tails and expressive eyes. You never minded that I, a strange human, was interacting with or following you around. You taught me so much about what it means to be a greyhound, which was extremely valuable.

# Table of Contents

<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>List of figures</b> .....	<b>ix</b>
<b>Chapter One: Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
The journey to studying greyhounds.....	4
Questions raised .....	6
How I conducted this research .....	8
Chapter outline.....	12
<b>Chapter two: Transitioning species – Theory and literature</b> .....	<b>15</b>
Multispecies ethnography .....	16
Companion species theory .....	19
Rite of passage .....	21
Racing animals in the social sciences .....	25
Working dogs.....	27
Greyhounds .....	28
Conclusion .....	32
<b>Chapter three: Finding and giving greyhounds an equal voice</b> .....	<b>35</b>
Attempting to understand and provide the greyhound voice .....	37
Semiosis .....	37
Participant-observation and establishing rapport with greyhounds .....	42
Silence.....	46
Photography .....	48
Greyhound perspective stories .....	51
Finding and providing the human voice .....	53
Participant-observation with humans.....	53
Establishing rapport .....	54
Interviewing .....	55
Diaries .....	58
Conclusion .....	59
<b>Chapter four: Greyhound ethology</b> .....	<b>63</b>
An introduction to greyhounds .....	66
Physical characteristics .....	68
Temperament and behaviour.....	72
Health.....	74
Greyhounds and their senses.....	75

Smell .....	76
Sound .....	78
Sight .....	79
Touch .....	81
Taste .....	82
Greyhound communication.....	83
Body language .....	84
Body carriage .....	95
Vocalisations.....	97
Conclusion .....	99
<b>Olive’s racing career.....</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>Joe’s racing career .....</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>Chapter five: The racing life.....</b>	<b>107</b>
Greyhounds’ relationships with humans.....	109
Relationships with trainers.....	109
Relationships with other humans .....	114
Greyhounds’ relationships with other greyhounds .....	116
Greyhounds’ relationships with other dog breeds.....	117
Greyhounds’ relationships with cats and other animals.....	118
Greyhounds’ relationships with the environment .....	119
Relationships with kennels.....	119
Relationships with paddocks.....	120
Relationships with race track .....	120
Conclusion .....	127
<b>Olive at the adoption agency.....</b>	<b>129</b>
<b>Joe at the adoption agency .....</b>	<b>131</b>
<b>Chapter six: Liminality at the adoption agency.....</b>	<b>133</b>
Greyhounds’ relationships with humans.....	135
Relationships with adoption agency staff .....	135
Relationships with other people.....	137
Greyhounds’ relationships with other greyhounds .....	145
Greyhounds’ relationships with other dog breeds.....	148
Greyhounds’ relationships with cats and other animals.....	152
Greyhounds’ relationships with their environment.....	154
Relationships with the kennels.....	154
Relationships with the dog paddock .....	158
Relationship with the office .....	165

Relationships with the vet room.....	166
Conclusion .....	167
<b>Olive in her new home .....</b>	<b>169</b>
<b>Joe in his new home .....</b>	<b>171</b>
<b>Chapter seven: Life as a pet .....</b>	<b>173</b>
Greyhounds' relationship with humans .....	174
Relationships with their human companions .....	174
Relationships with other humans .....	180
Greyhounds' relationships with other greyhounds .....	182
Greyhounds' relationships with other dogs .....	185
Greyhounds' relationships with cats and other animals.....	189
Relationships with cats.....	190
Relationships with other animals .....	193
Greyhounds' relationship with their environment .....	194
Relationships with their new home .....	194
Relationships outside of the house.....	201
Conclusion .....	204
<b>Chapter eight: Conclusion .....</b>	<b>207</b>
<b>Reference List.....</b>	<b>215</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>223</b>
Appendix 1.....	225
Cat Training Tips .....	225



# List of figures

Figure 1 .....	1
Figure 2 .....	4
Figure 3 .....	43
Figure 4 .....	69
Figure 5 .....	69
Figure 6 .....	85
Figure 7 .....	85
Figure 8 .....	87
Figure 9 .....	87
Figure 10 .....	87
Figure 11 .....	87
Figure 12 .....	88
Figure 13 .....	88
Figure 14 .....	90
Figure 15 .....	91
Figure 16 .....	92
Figure 17 .....	93
Figure 18 .....	93
Figure 19 .....	94
Figure 20 .....	110
Figure 21 .....	121
Figure 22 .....	125
Figure 23 .....	125
Figure 24 .....	125
Figure 25 .....	126
Figure 26 .....	126
Figure 27 .....	139
Figure 28 .....	141
Figure 29 .....	141
Figure 30 .....	141
Figure 31 .....	142

Figure 32 .....	143
Figure 33 .....	143
Figure 34 .....	144
Figure 35 .....	151
Figure 36 .....	151
Figure 37 .....	151
Figure 38 .....	152
Figure 39 .....	155
Figure 40 .....	155
Figure 41 .....	157
Figure 42 .....	158
Figure 43 .....	160
Figure 44 .....	161
Figure 45 .....	163
Figure 46 .....	163
Figure 47 .....	163
Figure 48 .....	163
Figure 49 .....	164
Figure 50 .....	164
Figure 51 .....	164
Figure 52 .....	164
Figure 53 .....	166
Figure 54 .....	178
Image 55 .....	181
Image 56 .....	184
Image 57 .....	186
Image 58 .....	191
Image 59 .....	191
Image 60 .....	195
Image 61 .....	195
Image 62 .....	195
Image 63 .....	196
Figure 64 .....	197
Figure 65 .....	197

Figure 66 .....	197
Figure 67 .....	197
Figure 68 .....	198
Figure 69 .....	198
Figure 70 .....	199
Figure 71 .....	202
Figure 72 .....	203
Figure 73 .....	203
Figure 74 .....	203
Figure 75 .....	203



# Chapter One: Introduction

This thesis explores the adoption and transition of retired racing greyhounds into life as domestic pets. It deploys a rite of passage framework to analyse how greyhounds, as non-human animals, understand, engage and interact with a variety of actors, including both humans and other non-human animals, within a range of transitional contexts, such as racing kennels, adoption agencies, and domestic homes.

Furthermore, this thesis uses an animal-centric perspective throughout. This has been primarily done by working to give greyhounds, like the one below (figure 1.), an ‘equal voice’ to humans, by decentring and removing most human vocal articulations and utterances. Instead, breed-specific and individualised agency as well as modes of communication, action, and interaction of transitioning greyhounds are foregrounded.



Figure 1: One of my retired racing greyhound participants (Source: Elizabeth, 2016).

Non-human animals have been present in many anthropological investigations since the discipline's conception. Anthropologists have used, and continue to use, non-human animals as instruments to better understand how people relate to the world around them; however, animals have historically been in the background of anthropology, whilst humans are the primary focus (Taylor & Hamilton, 2014, p.264). Kirksey and Helmreich (2010) state that all non-humans have appeared "on the margins of anthropology – as part of the landscape, as food for humans, as symbols" (p.545). Accordingly, within the anthropological cannon, non-humans have not been seen as equals, or partners of humans, with their own thoughts and emotions, but as tools to comprehend human culture.

However, in recent years, anthropologists have begun to see non-humans differently, moving them to the foreground of ethnographies. They have been viewed as not just tools to better understand humans, but as their own living entities. As a result, they "have started to appear alongside humans in the realm of bios with legibly biographical and political lives" (Kirksey & Helmreich, 2010, p.545). It is not just wild and domestic animals who have begun to be viewed this way, but microbes, fungi, insects, and plants as well. This area of research has become known as multispecies ethnography.

Multispecies ethnography deploys a post-humanist methodological approach. It is defined by Kohn (2007) as being "an anthropology that is not just confined to the human but is concerned with the effects of our entanglements with other kinds of living selves" (p.4). Defined by Kirksey and Helmreich in 2010, the aim of multispecies ethnography is to understand the relationships and interactions between humans and non-humans (p.550). This includes "how humans and other species come into ways of life through webs of social relations" and are connected to and

affect each other (Pacini-Ketchabaw, Taylor, & Blaise, forthcoming, p.1; Tsing, 2013, p.28). As a result, multispecies ethnography challenges human-centric assumptions, thus decentring the human (Pacini-Ketchabaw, Taylor, & Blaise, forthcoming, p.1).

Decentring the human allows for alternative ways of thinking about non-humans, people, and the environment. This includes acknowledging that humans and non-humans have never been disconnected from one another, but are entangled and mutually constitutive (Pacini-Ketchabaw, Taylor, & Blaise, forthcoming, p.1).

Moreover, how non-humans act, know, observe, affect, are affected by, and in these dynamics generate, the world in which they live is taken into account. Multispecies ethnography, thus, significantly highlights the agency, “or self-directed action,” of non-humans (Johnson, as cited in Pearson, 2017, p.241). This encompasses how they have their breed-specific and individual free will to think, plan, change and convey ideas, and act independently. Multispecies ethnographers, therefore, see agency as not just an “exclusive property of human beings” (de laet & Mol, 2000, p.226).

This has inspired me to conduct my own multispecies research. However, I wanted to go beyond just the human-animal relationships that multispecies ethnographers primarily focus on by also looking at greyhounds’ interactions with other non-human animals, in particular, greyhounds, other dog breeds, and other animals such as cats alongside humans. I also wanted to look at greyhounds’ relationship with their environment. By environment I am referring to the places greyhounds inhabit, including racing and rehoming agency kennels, dog parks, race tracks, and adoptive homes.

## The journey to studying greyhounds

Thinking of an idea for the multispecies research I wanted to discuss was difficult. The possibilities were endless. Since animals are one of my greatest joys in life, I knew that I wanted to investigate the relationship between humans and animals. Ever since I was a child, animals, especially dogs, have held a special place in my heart. When I was two years old my imaginary friend was Toto from the *Wizard of Oz*. I would feed and walk him on a leash. My parents often recall how I would stop walking in the middle of the footpath to put down a pretend bowl of food for him to eat and I would get annoyed if someone accidentally stepped on him.

If am visiting anywhere there is a dog, I can be found with them. I have been like this since I was young. The following photo (figure 2.) is of me at three years old with Patches and Toss, who were my Aunty and Uncle's dogs. Whenever I visited them in Taranaki, I would spend all day running around with the dogs. Another dog I spent a lot of time with was Kaiser, a Rottweiler, who belonged to other family members. I would spend a lot of time brushing, feeding, walking, and playing with him. One of my favourite things to do with Kaiser was to dress him up as a king with a blanket for a cape and a toy crown.



Figure 2: A young me in a wheelbarrow with Patches and Toss (Source: Paap, 1995/1996)

Whilst growing up I lucky to have the occasional pet, including budgies and fish. I loved watching my goldfish swim around their home and also talking to and playing with the birds every day. I did this by putting my finger into their cage so I could teach them how to bite softly. I even enjoyed feeding and cleaning their houses.

Whilst interacting with my pets, I would often wonder what they were thinking and in what ways did they see the world differently to me. I would try, as best as I could, to think like them and see the world through their eyes by carefully observing their behaviour every day. I was especially curious as to what they thought of me, a two-legged creature who would often watch and communicate with them in a foreign way. The fish did not seem to notice that I was watching. The budgies, on the other hand, would react to me by beginning to play with their bell and sing.

When the last pet, a budgie passed away I wanted to have another pet. I never felt whole without one. What I really wanted was a dog of my own to cuddle and take care of. But, this never happened. Whenever I begged Dad he would reply that “the city is no place for a dog.” To fill this void, whenever I am visiting anyone who had a dog I still overwhelm them with pats and attention. This is even though I today have pets of my own.

When discussing possible research topics for a Master of Arts dissertation with a fellow student, the idea of fostering an ex-racing greyhound was raised. Although, I had no experience with this breed of dog before, I jumped at this idea. I had heard in the media how a large number of perfectly healthy greyhounds were euthanized once their racing careers ended, while the lucky ones were adopted into domestic homes as pets. I wanted to help a greyhound on their journey to becoming a pet and to

document its progress. However, this idea did not last long since a greyhound could pose a danger to my pets.

After a meeting with one of my supervisors the idea of researching greyhounds was raised again. This time it was decided that instead of fostering a greyhound I could undertake participant-observation into the retirement, transitional training, adoption and re-homing processes of ex-racing greyhounds. Whilst doing this, I could investigate the relationships greyhounds have with humans, non-human animals, and the environments they inhabit as they learn how to be domestic pets.

## **Questions raised**

Adoption programmes have been developed across New Zealand to rehome greyhounds who either raced and were retired or, for one reason or another, did not race. In this country, there are many racing greyhounds. However, the exact number of greyhounds currently racing or retired is unknown because current figures have not been released. In 2012, it was revealed that, 1,386 greyhounds were racing (Colgan, Neil, & Foy, 2013). In 2015, 135 new litters were registered (Greyhounds Australasia, 2016). SAFE, a New Zealand animal rights organisation, estimates that 900 racing greyhound pups are born here annually (n.d). Furthermore, racing greyhounds are imported into New Zealand from Australia, with 300 arriving here annually between 2010-2013 (Greyhound Protection League of New Zealand, 2014). All greyhounds registered to race are given distinct names. In 2015, 608 dogs were named (Greyhounds Australasia, 2016). However, there are no records showing whether these dogs raced or not. Of the 35% of greyhounds not given a racing name, the Greyhound Protection League New Zealand (2014) estimates that over 1000 greyhounds' whereabouts are not accounted for annually.

Greyhounds also leave the racing industry. In 2011/12 racing year 676 dogs were documented as retiring. 127 went to an adoption agency; 17 were returned to Australia; 46 were kept for breeding; five were kept as pets; 11 were privately rehomed; 178 were deceased; 158 were deregistered, 139 were registered to race, but were not active; and one was returned to their owner (Colgan, et al., 2014). The rest were likely euthanized.

Greyhounds are culled for a variety of reasons, including injuries, over saturation of greyhounds bred, and unsuitability for racing. In order to reduce this number, greyhound adoption agencies have been established across New Zealand. These adoption agencies aim to rehome as many retired racing greyhounds as possible. I conducted participant-observation at a small, North Island town adoption agency. This adoption agency endeavours to ensure that every greyhound adoption is successful by finding them a loving home. Since their launch in 2006, the rehoming agency has almost adopted over 2000 greyhounds, with 283 dogs being rehomed in March 2017 year alone (Greyhounds as Pets, 2015; Greyhound Racing New Zealand, 2017; Telfer, 2017). This made me wonder what leads to a successful adoption. It cannot be easy for a greyhound whose entire life revolved around training for racing to suddenly be removed from everything they have ever known. How easy exactly is it for them to become a pet? They have after all been trained or socialised to be a working dog and not a pet. So, I asked myself the following questions:

- What do they have to learn? What do they have to forget or suppress?
- Who re-trains them, how, and in what contexts?
- What rules are they required to follow in their new homes? How does this differ from their racing career?

- What actors contribute to greyhounds becoming a pet including humans, other greyhounds, other dog breeds, other animals, and the environment?
- How different is their racing career from being at an adoption agency and then their new life as a pet, including their relationships?
- How long does it take for greyhounds to settle in and fully assume their new role as a pet?
- Do behaviour and personality traits remain from their racing life or do they change? Why or why not?
- What signifies that a greyhound has accepted their role as a pet?
- How is a successful transition from racing greyhound to domestic pet assessed and who is responsible for this?
- What happens if the transition from racing greyhound to domestic pet is not successful?

## **How I conducted this research**

To undertake this investigation, I used a variety of methodologies. I researched greyhound species' origins and traits, I conducted participant-observation with greyhounds and the humans in their lives, I interviewed people who regularly interacted with greyhounds, I took photographs of my greyhound participants, and I wrote stories from greyhounds' perspective.

In this thesis, I liken the transition that ex-racing greyhounds go through from racing dogs to retirement and retraining as domestic pets to a rite of passage. Usually associated with humans, a rite of passage is defined by Van Gennep "as a rite which accompanies any change in social state, age, place, or life cycle stages, such as birth, puberty, marriage, or death" (as cited in Bell, 2003, p.41). By this definition, retired

racing greyhounds, like humans, go through a rite of passage. They leave one social role and status, racer, for another, pet.

Van Gennep (1960) identified three stages of social transformation that initiands, or actors, go through during a rite of passage. These were additionally developed by Turner in 1981 and then by Bloch in 1992. The first phase is separation, which is when greyhounds are separated from their role as a racer. Next, greyhounds go through a transition into a new life stage. They are no longer racing dogs, but are not yet pets. Due to this, they are liminal and do not have a fixed identity until they enter the last phase of their rite of passage, which is reincorporation. This is when they re-enter society as a pet. Throughout this process, some greyhound attributes, particularly species traits, such as being built for speed and laziness and individual personality traits, including independence, remain the same. Other traits, particularly chasing after small fluffy animals, were modified due to pre-adoption training and the greyhound's responses to new environments and actors.

Greyhounds are central to this thesis. For this reason, I wanted to make sure that they had an equal voice to the humans active in their lives. This led to more questions.

How could I show greyhounds' perceptions of and reaction to their transition and how could I make sure they were not pushed to the margins of my research?

Additionally, how could I communicate with and come to understand greyhounds to the best of my ability? I am, after all, human. As much as I try, I can never become a greyhound. Nor was it possible for me to interview them like I would human participants

Despite this, I knew there must be a way for me to communicate with my greyhound participants. Humans and dogs co-evolved together. We have shaped and moulded

each other into the species we are today by working together for centuries. Dogs have helped humans to guard and herd livestock, hunt, and pull sleds, for instance. Humans have also welcomed dogs into our homes as pets (Csányi, 2005; Haraway, 2006, 2009; Horowitz, 2009). None of this could have happened without a way for us to communicate with and understand each other.

For this reason, I took a multidisciplinary approach so I could gain an appreciation of greyhounds' experience of their rite of passage. Doing so is recommended by multispecies ethnographers, such as Taylor and Hamilton (2014). To do this, I combined ethnology with ethology, which is the science of animal behaviour. "Ethology is a way for us to engage animals on their own terms in addition to interpreting their experiences through documents and other accounts from humans" (Seymour & Wolch, 2010, p.313). Using ethology allowed me to learn how greyhounds make meaning, communicate, act, and interact by observing their body language and listening to their vocalisations. This led me to the theory of semiosis. Semiosis provided me with a way to comprehend how greyhounds come to understand and learn about the world around them. Semiosis is "the production and interpretation of signs" (Macini, van der Linden, Bryan & Stuart, 2012, p.145), through which both humans and non-humans can interact, have relationships with, and come to understand one another. Kohn (2013), following Pierce, identifies three types of signs – icons, indices, and symbols (pp.31-32). Only humans communicate through symbols, including language. However, both humans and non-humans, including greyhounds, communicate through icons and indices. Icons are "signs that share likeness with things they represent," such as a photograph of a greyhound (Kohn, 2013, p.8). They, therefore, physically resemble what they stand for.

Indices, on the other hand, are “signs that are in some way affected by or otherwise correlated with those things they represent” (Kohn, 2013, p.8). They provide information about what is absent and imply that something of interest may occur. Indices are what greyhound mainly use to understand the world and communicate with. For example, wire muzzles<sup>1</sup>, signify to greyhounds they are about to race.

These techniques are in some way nothing new to anthropology. Historically, anthropologists have travelled to a culture different to their own. These anthropologists, like in my research with greyhounds, had to find a way to communicate with and understand their participants despite not necessarily having a shared language. Instead, anthropologists looked at the shared capacities they had with their participants for learning, deploying, and acting in response to language. Due to this, they, as with my study on ex-racing greyhounds, never truly became a part of the culture they were studying. Traces of their own culture remained throughout their fieldwork no matter how fully they immersed themselves.

In a way, ex-racing greyhounds, are, therefore, like anthropologists. They have left one culture, racing, which is all they know, behind to become part of and immerse themselves in a new culture, pet life. They observe and participate in activities to learn what is required of them and how they should behave in their new role. Retired greyhounds also learn how to communicate with entirely new people, and despite having experiences with humans during their racing career, they do not share the same language or view of the world.

---

<sup>1</sup> “A device that is fitted over an animal’s snout, often used to prevent biting or eating” (The Free Dictionary, 2017). Whilst racing, greyhounds were a wire muzzle and after retirement, a plastic muzzle. Greyhounds were muzzles because they are bred and trained to chase after small fluffy animals.

Through their transition to domestic pets, greyhounds find that they need to adjust their behaviour and learn a new way of life. This is because some of the ways they behaved whilst racing are no longer acceptable as a pet, such as chasing small fluffy animals. Greyhounds' learn what it means to be a pet through communication, such as indexical and body language, through relationships they have with different actors, including humans, other greyhounds, other dog breeds, other animals like cats, and the different environments they encounter and in part, generate. Their previous experience of racing life affects their transition to life as pets. Greyhounds are also not bystanders in this process because they have the ability to communicate with and through their various breed-specific, individual traits, and context-responsive behaviours, influence human actors.

## **Chapter outline**

I begin this thesis by introducing multispecies ethnography. I explain that the purpose of multispecies ethnography is to decentre the human so that non-humans can play a central role in the narratives and analyses. I also outline the theories that I employed in order to take this approach. These theories are companion species (Haraway, 2003, 2008) and rite of passage (Bloch, 1992; Turner, 1981; Van Gennep, 1960), which allowed me to understand the transition that retired racing greyhounds go through and what contributes to their experiences. Additionally, in Chapter Two I review the social science literature associated with transitioning animals, including that on dogs and greyhound specifically. In doing so, I identify the gaps in this field that I aim to address with this thesis by foregrounding the non-human experiences of my greyhound subjects.

One of the key critiques of a multispecies ethnology approach is that social scientists do not discuss the methodologies they used in order to conduct their research. Thus, in Chapter Two I discuss the methodologies that I employed, including semiosis, participant-observation with both greyhounds and humans, interviewing, photography, and writing fictional stories from an experience-based greyhound perspective. I chose these methodologies specifically because they allowed me to study greyhounds' rite of passage through a more greyhound-centric point of view. In addition, this chapter also highlights the difficulties associated with researching non-human animals and de-centring the human.

Chapter Four centres around greyhound ethology. I introduce greyhounds, their breed history, physical characteristics, breed-specific temperament, and health. This chapter additionally focuses on how greyhounds use their senses, smell, sound, sight, touch, taste, to understand changes brought about by their rite of passage. I end this chapter by discussing how I came to understand greyhounds and their transition experiences in the absence of a shared language by interpreting their body language, body carriage, and vocalisations.

The next three chapters, five to seven, are ethnographic. In these, I discuss my research findings. Each chapter focuses on one stage of greyhounds' transition from racing dog to domestic pet. The first discusses what greyhounds experience during their racing life before being taken to an adoption agency. Chapter Six focuses on greyhounds at the rehoming agency who have been separated from their previous societal role. Lastly, Chapter Seven looks at greyhounds in their new domestic homes, in which they have transitioned to a pet. In all of these chapters, I focus on the relationships that greyhounds form with humans, other greyhounds, different breeds of dogs, other species of animals like cats, and their environment. I examine

how each of these actors contribute to and influence the changes that greyhounds go through over the course of their rite of passage.

Before each of these chapter are fictional greyhound narratives. These stories are about two fictional greyhounds, Olive and Joe, and their experiences of retiring from racing and transitioning into pet life. In total, there are six stories, three for each greyhound. The first set covers their experience of a race day. The second set looks at Joe and Olive arriving at the adoption agency. The last two stories focus on the greyhounds in their new home. These stories are based on an amalgamation of the different greyhounds and their experiences that I encountered in the field as well as what I read in ethologies. My aim for these stories was to try capture and convey greyhounds experience. Thus, they are new modes of representation that I decided to try in order to give greyhounds a voice in this research.

Chapter Eight concludes this thesis by bringing together the main points from each chapter. It provides a summary of my key findings into greyhounds' transition from racing dog to domestic pet. This chapter additionally reflects on the experiment that is this thesis, discussing how it is possible to decentre the human in multispecies ethnography and begin to think like a greyhound.

## Chapter two: Transitioning species – Theory and literature

Theory provides a framework for anthropologists to make sense of the world.

Mostly, anthropologists use theory to analyse how humans relate to other people as well as their surroundings. However, theory can also be used when researching non-human animals. The multispecies ethnography approach is one such way that this can be done. Multispecies ethnography provides a way for anthropologists and other social scientists to analyse how non-human animals interact with not only people, but with other animals and the environment as well. This is the approach that I took for this research.

In this chapter, I detail how I took a multispecies ethnography approach to investigating retired racing greyhounds' transition into domestic pets. I also discuss the theories that I used, including Haraway's (2003, 2008) companion species theory, which provided me with a means of examining which actors contribute to or hinder greyhounds' transition. I also used rite of passage theory, which allowed me to analyse the changes and transitions greyhounds experience (Turner, 1967, 1969; Van Gennep, 1960). These theories helped me to fill gaps within social science literature on transitioning dogs, working animals, and greyhounds. The most pressing of these is that the articles are very human-centric as they do not investigate, nor foreground, the animal perspective. I contribute to filling this gap by attempting to understand and convey the first-hand experience of greyhounds I researched and not just that of humans.

I begin this chapter by discussing multispecies ethnography. I then review companion species and rite of passage theories and discuss what they contribute to my research. This is before describing what is missing from the social science literature on working animals, transitioning dogs, and greyhound.

## **Multispecies ethnography**

Multispecies ethnography is an ethnographic approach that seeks to understand the relationships between humans and non-human animals. Kohn (2007) refers to multispecies ethnography as “an anthropology that is not just confined to the human but is concerned with the effects of our entanglements with other kinds of living selves” (p.4). More specifically, this approach aims to comprehend the interactions between members of different species, including what impacts these encounters. In the words of Tsing (2013), multispecies ethnography investigates “how humans and other species come into ways of life through webs of social relations” (p.28).

Within multispecies ethnography the human is ideally decentred. Since the human is no longer the most central actor in discussions about non-human animals, human assumptions are challenged. Attention is not only paid to human interests or concerns, but to how non-humans act, observe, affect, and can be affected by the world in which they live (Pacini-Ketchabaw, Taylor, & Blaise, forthcoming, p.1). Decentring the human allows for alternative ways of thinking about people, the environment, and non-humans. One of these is the realisation that humans and non-humans have never been disconnected from each other, but are entangled together in a web of relations (Pacini-Ketchabaw, Taylor, & Blaise, forthcoming, p.1).

In multispecies ethnography, non-humans are also acknowledged as having agency. Johnson (as cited in Pearson, 2017) states that agency is “self-directed action” and in this ethnographic approach, it is not just viewed as an “exclusive property of human beings (p.241; de Laet & Mol, 2000, p.226). Multispecies ethnographers posit that non-humans can think for themselves, exhibit free will, and act independently. In addition, non-human animals can form, change and convey ideas, which is shown by how they interact with the environment and other living beings. Moreover, multispecies ethnography takes into account that besides breed-specific traits or agencies, there are also differences in agency between members of the same species since each individual is potentially different. However, as Kohn argues

the goal in multi-species ethnography should not just be to give voice, agency or subjectivity to the non-human- to recognize them as others, visible in their difference- but to force us to radically rethink these categories of our analysis as they pertain to all beings (personal communication as cited in Kirsey & Helmrich, 2010, p.562).

There are many difficulties in undertaking multispecies ethnography. Multispecies ethnographers are aware of these and acknowledge them in their discussions (see for example Kirksey & Helmreich, 2010; Lorimer, 2010; Pacini-Ketchabaw, Taylor, & Blaise, forthcoming; Taylor & Hamilton, 2014). The most pressing challenge is that it is easier to theorise multispecies ethnography than to apply it in the field (Pacini-Ketchabaw, Taylor, & Blaise, forthcoming, p.1). Understanding non-humans is difficult. Multispecies ethnographers cannot and will never become the non-human animals they are researching. As a result, there are limits as to how far multispecies

ethnographers can perceive, think like, and understand what non-humans animals are communicating to them.

Similarly, there are critiques of multispecies ethnography. As with the challenges, multispecies ethnographers also admit these. One of the critiques is that many multispecies ethnographers do not acknowledge or discuss what methods they use, including how they came to understand their non-human participants (Madden, 2014, p.287). This, Madden (2014) states, makes it difficult to grasp animals as being ethnographic subjects; however, he argues that interdisciplinary approaches can combat this (p.287). It is for this reason that I used interdisciplinary methods for this research; more specifically I used ethology, which I discuss in Chapter Three. In addition, through reading many multispecies ethnographies I came to find that the human actually is very rarely decentred and is still central to the majority of multispecies discussions. Non-human motivations and how they benefit from cross-species relationships are rarely discussed.

As Latour and Woolgar (1988) state, academics have a choice to ‘edit out’ and overlook actors or entire species from our research. This is something that often happens within multispecies ethnography because only the entanglements between animals and humans are acknowledged. I did not want to do this with my research because greyhounds’ interactions with a variety of living beings, not just humans, influence their transition from racer to pet. Furthermore, I felt that this would not be a multispecies thesis if I only focused on human-greyhound interaction. Thus, for this research I not only look at the relationship between greyhounds and humans, including their interactions with trainers, staff at the adoption agency, adoptive parents, and myself. I go beyond this to look at the relationships greyhounds have

with other living species, such as cats, other greyhounds, and other breeds of dogs. I also go further to investigate the relationship greyhounds have with the environment, which has not been discussed before, as this also impacts the pets they become.

## **Companion species theory**

Companion species theory is a subset of multispecies ethnography. This theory, developed by Donna Haraway, uses cultural studies in conjunction with science to investigate relationships between humans and non-human animals (2003). Before I go further, it is important to differentiate the concepts of companion species from companion animals (Haraway, 2003, p.14; 2004, p.301). On one hand, companion animals are species, such as dogs, cats, horses, fish, and rabbits whom are either pets, working, or lab animals as well as “service dogs, family members, or team members in cross-species sports” (Haraway, 2003, p.14). Companion species, by contrast are living beings, including non-animals, who have co-evolved alongside humans (Haraway, 2003, p.14).

Within companion species theory, non-human animals are not easily categorised. Animals can occupy more than one cultural category at the same time, making this theory complex. For instance, dogs can be pets at the same time as being friends, helpers, and workers (Haraway, 2003, pp.12-13; 2004, p.330). In greyhounds’ case, they are not just workers before their transition or pets after, they are also athletes, racers, entertainers, companions, and retirees at the same time. This is further complicated by the fact that greyhounds transition from one life stage to another. What happens before their transition begins potentially remains with and impacts greyhounds throughout their life. Once retired, greyhounds still have racing characteristics, for example some still want to chase after small, fluffy animals.

According to Haraway (2004), the different categories which animals belong and move into, are the result of interactions with different people (p.315). These encounters cause non-humans to change (Haraway, 2008, p.1). There are many people who influence transitioning greyhounds including staff at the adoption agency, veterinarians, and new owners. However, multiple actors can influence greyhounds to change, not just humans, which she does not discuss. This includes greyhounds themselves, other dog breeds, cats, and other species of animals. Moreover, greyhounds can also cause other actors, including humans, non-humans, and the environments to change.

Haraway (2006) posits that companion species can provide humans with insight into themselves, making companion species reciprocal. This is because how we view and treat companion species reflects back on us. Haraway identifies the concept of “respecere,” which she defines as “to hold in regard, to respond, to look back reciprocally, to notice, to pay attention, to have courteous regard for, to esteem” (Haraway, 2006, p.102). She states that if humans show “respecere,” which is the act of respect towards companion species, then we can learn a lot about ourselves (Haraway, 2006, p.102).

However, Haraway has a very human-centric way of thinking. Even though Haraway (2003; 2006) claims she takes a multispecies approach, I do not think she really does. Haraway does not discuss how companion species theory can give insight into companion species themselves. For instance, in her work on dog agility, Haraway (2003) does not look at how her dogs view her. She could have done this by combining science with cultural studies as she claims she does to in order to learn what her dogs were communicating (Haraway, 2013, p. 18). How her dogs acted

would have reflected on and given insight into their experiences of the sport as well as her own. Thus, the human in her research is not actually decentred. Exploring how to decentre the human is one of my key goals of this research.

Furthermore, Haraway does not consider how non-human animals can also co-shape each other. This is even though she claims that “there cannot be just one companion species: there have to be at least two to make one” in co-constructive and co-habitable relationships where they are “bonded in significant otherness” (Haraway, 2003, pp.12-16). Although, she does admit that other non-human actors can have relationships with dogs, she gives no detail about this. Her primary focus is dogs and humans, not dogs and other animals, such as cats and sheep. For this research, I extend from Haraway’s work by looking at the interactions between greyhounds and other non-human animals as well as the environment. This is in addition to the relationship between greyhounds and humans because these actors are also involved in greyhounds’ transition and, therefore, their rite of passage. Nevertheless, Haraway’s (2003) companion species was useful for this research because it reminded me to take note of the different actors who may help or hinder greyhounds’ transition.

## **Rite of passage**

Every retired greyhound has been through a transition. They have gone from being an athlete, a working dog who races around an oval track to being a domestic pet. This is not often an easy transition for greyhounds; although, some dogs do cope with the change in their lives better than others. It is not as simple as automatically becoming a pet as soon as they retire, since they are moved to the adoption where they are subjected to re-training before going to their new forever homes.

Transitioning is a long process. It takes time for a greyhound to get used to being a pet since all they know is how to be a racing dog. Greyhounds must learn what is now required of them. They must learn what it means to be a pet, including new house rules, which they have never needed to know since most greyhounds, who are typically kennelled throughout their racing career and, therefore, have never been inside a house before. Subsequently, when greyhounds stop racing, they are in a sort of liminal space where they are no longer a sporting or working dog, but they are also not quite a pet. It is for this reason that I have turned to the theory of rite of passage to explain this journey. I have borrowed this idea from Locke (2011, 2012, 2013, 2015), another multispecies ethnographer, who used the idea of rite of passage to analyse the transition of elephants who were separated from their mothers and trained to become tourist attractions for humans in Nepal.

The concept of rite of passage is usually used to describe life-altering rituals that signify a person's admission into adulthood. It provides a way to analyse how humans leave their old state of being to enter a new one. The term rite of passage was coined by Van Gennep (Morris, 2012, p.219) He defined it "as a rite which accompanies any change in social state, age, place, or life cycle stages, such as birth, puberty, marriage, or death" (Van Gennep as cited in Bell, 2003, p.41). Even though greyhounds are not human, they still go through a rite of passage. I will explain why using the different stages of a rite of passage.

Van Gennep (1960) identified three stages of social transformation that occur during a rite of passage. These stages have been further developed by Turner (1981) and Bloch (1992). The first stage is separation. This involves a subject being separated from their previous role and status in the community. Separation "comprises

symbolic behaviour signifying the detachment of the individual or group from an earlier fixed point in the social structure” (Turner, 1967, p.94). This separation can be physical, emotional, or symbolic. In greyhounds’ case, they have been physically separated from their former trainer, kennels, and life as a racer by being taken to the adoption agency.

The second stage of rite of passage is transition. This stage is when “all notions of social “structure” are undone through the symbolic separation of certain individuals from society” (Erikson & Murphy, 2017, p.130). A greyhound’s transition starts when they arrive at the adoption agency. During this stage, subjects are liminal since they have discarded their old societal position to enter another. Subsequently, their role is ambiguous, undecided, and undeterminable (Turner, 1969, pp.94, 96). Turner (1969) writes

liminal entities are neither here nor there, they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial... It is as though they are being ... fashioned anew and endowed with additional powers to enable them to cope with their new station in life (p.95).

This is true for ex-racing greyhounds at the adoption agency because they are no longer a racing dog, but they are also not yet a pet. However, retired racing greyhounds do not choose to go through this status change. They have no choice about moving to the adoption agency as it is decided for them by their trainers and rehoming agency staff. Though this forced transition, greyhounds are deconditioned and reconditioned as they are trained to forget what they learned during their racing career in order to learn new house appropriate behaviours.

The last phase of a rite of passage is reincorporation. During this stage, the subject returns to society ready to take up their new roles. Turner (1969) writes

The ritual subject ... is in a stable state once more and, by virtue of this, has rights and obligations of a clearly defined and “structural” type; he is expected to behave in accordance with certain customary norms and ethical standards (p.94).

Bloch (1992) posits that “the third state is not seen as a return to the condition left behind in the first stage” (p.6). He writes further that “in the case of initiation, the initiate does not merely return to the world he has left behind. He is a changed person, a permanently transcendental person who can therefore dominate the here and now of which he previously was a part” (Bloch, 1992, p.5). Greyhounds’ do not return to being a racer, but enter a new role as a pet when they are adopted. In saying this, what greyhounds experienced and encountered during their time racing still impacts them when they have fully transitioned to being a pet. They do not forget their past and it remains with them for life.

Actors going through a rite of passage are referred to as “initiators” (Turner, 1981, p.154). Initiators, like greyhounds, must learn new skills, which will help them in their new role (Bell, 2003, p.43). As they go through their rite of passage, initiators may feel scared since have left all they know behind to face unknown challenges (Turner, 1969, p.96). Greyhounds are no exception to this. Their transition can cause greyhounds distress. Depending on their personality, shy greyhounds may be anxious and distressed in their new environment for weeks, if not months.

In my research, greyhounds are not the only actors who go through a rite of passage. Their new owners go through one too along with their greyhound. All my greyhound owner participants needed to learn how to be a greyhound owner. They, too, can be scared about owning a dog who knows nothing about being a pet.

## **Racing animals in the social sciences**

I spent hours trawling through journal article databases looking for literature on racing animals. I searched specifically for social science sources about both racing dogs, racing horses, and racing pigeons to illuminate greyhound experiences. This was in the hopes that I would find literature discussing any transition that these animals go through, whether this was through training for their roles or retiring. Finding any social science literature on racing animals was very difficult even without looking for transition information.

When I did find literature on racing animals, it was very human-centric, because the horses or pigeons themselves were not the main focus; the humans were. Many of these articles only look at the human perspective and not the experience of non-human animals. The authors gained data by interviewing or conducting participant-observation with humans. Due to this, the literature only discusses why humans have become involved in the pigeon or horsing racing industry and what it entails for them (Cassidy, 2002; Jerolmack, 2008; McManus, Albrecht, & Graham, 2013).

What the non-human racers face in their industry and their contributions are either ignored or glossed over (see for example Graham, 2013). This is despite the fact that the racing industry would not exist without these animals, which some of these academics, like Davis, Maurstad, and Dean (2014) acknowledge (p.307). Therefore,

the animals' point of view, which they could have gained by observing their body language, for example, is not considered.

Additionally, some authors make claims that they do not follow through. One of these assertions is that they investigate the relationship between humans and racing animals; another is that they look at the roles that racing animals play in their area of research. Graham (2013) is one such academic. She states she looks at how humans and horses have together created distinctive place identities at horse festivals (Graham, 2013, p.1). However, she does not do this, rather focusing extensively on the contributions all human actors involved in the festivals have made, but not on the horses.

In terms of transitioning racing animals, I found no articles specifically investigating any changes they go through. Even in each individual source of literature, there are only very few mentions of what is involved in the transition of racing animals. For example, in McManus, Albrecht and Graham (2013) there is only one small section discussing what happens to horses once they retire from racing (pp.153-154). They state that some ex-racing horses become involved in show jumping or eventing, whilst others are euthanized due to having low economic value (McManus, Albrecht & Graham, 2013, pp.153-154). This is only mentioned in passing and horses' experience of retiring is not discussed.

## Working dogs

Since there is very little social science research about greyhounds, I turned to literature on working dogs who were either being trained for their roles or entering retirement, since greyhounds fit this category. In these articles, I looked for any information about how working dogs change over the course of their transition, what they were like before and after this, and what influenced these changes.

Just like racing animals, finding literature on working dogs was difficult. Yet, I did find more articles on this subject than on racing animals. Working dogs researched include police dogs, guide dogs, and drug detecting dogs (Cobb, Branson, McGreevy, Lill, Bennett, 2015; Braverman, 2013; Sanders, 2006). More research has been done on dogs entering a working role than on those entering retirement.

Dogs who begin working have been through a transition since they have gone from one life stage to another though learning new skills. The articles I found investigate this by looking at how humans train dogs. For instance, Braverman (2013) discusses how police dogs' basic behaviour and natural instincts are shaped through training so they can help to assist the police (p.146). Additionally, Sanders (2006) states that police should train service dogs through a deep voice and learning to read their body language (pp. 157; 167). However, these articles do not go into any more detail about how dogs have been trained than this. These articles, therefore, are from a human-centric perspective since they rarely focus on the dogs themselves. If they do look at the dog, they mostly focus on what they have been trained to do and not how they change over time. How they experience being in a partnership with humans is also not discussed (Braverman, 2013, p.146; Sanders, 2006, p.148).

Dogs entering retirement also go through a transition between life stages. A few articles state what happens to dogs when they retire. For instance, Cobb et al. (2015) notes that guide dogs either remain with their handler or move to a new environment (p.101). Instead of looking at the impacts the transition into retirement had on the dogs, they mainly discuss the impacts they have on humans, for instance the affects guide dogs retiring have on their owners (Allen, 2006, p.7; Sanders, 2000, p.136).

Articles on working dogs are very human-centric. They focus on what dogs contribute to human society through their specific roles. But, they do not look at how dogs understand or benefit from these relationships. Furthermore, the ways in which dogs change as they transition to one life stage to another is only glossed over. For instance, how a dogs' behaviour is altered through training to become a working dog, what happens to a dog once they are no longer needed for their specific role, or any changes they go through after retirement is not discussed.

## **Greyhounds**

As with racing animals and working dogs, I had trouble finding greyhound literature. This is because little social science research has been done on this breed. There are very few articles about either racing greyhounds or those who have retired from racing. In saying this, I found more than I had expected. In total, I found seven articles: half of these looked at the history of greyhound racing and why the sport became popular and two articles look at how humans view greyhound racing; only two look at greyhound adoption.

Three articles on greyhound racing investigate why people became involved with this sport. Huggins (2007), for instance, looks at why the middle class in Britain

became interested in what is predominantly a working class sport, concluding that “greyhound racing offered a new legal, regular, and convenient form of betting” as well as “an evening’s excitement for their money” (p.106). By comparison, Leeworthy (2012) and Laybourn (2014) look at working class involvement in greyhound racing. Both Leeworthy (2012, pp.53, 61) and Laybourn (2014, p.618) posit that greyhound racing gained in popularity because it offered the working class an accessible and relatively cheap distraction from day-to-day hardships, including unemployment.

None of these articles, however, focus on greyhounds themselves. Discussions were only about human involvement in greyhound racing and what it has provided them throughout history. What greyhounds’ participation in racing has been like for the dog is not mentioned. Thus, these articles are very human-centric. Greyhounds are pushed to the margins of these social science articles, even though they claim to be about animals.

Two articles discuss how greyhounds have been represented and viewed by society. Atkinson and Young (2005), who are sociologists, take a negative approach to the industry writing that greyhound racing is a “blood sport” since the dogs “suffer neglect and abuse” (p.335). The opposing view of greyhound racing is not taken into consideration as they did not talk to trainers or owners of racing greyhounds. On the other hand, Madden (2010), an anthropologist, takes a neutral view of greyhound racing by looking at both sides of the greyhound racing debate. On one side is support for greyhound racing, which he states is mainly held by trainers and breeders (Madden, 2010); on the other are individuals against greyhound racing, such as ex-

racing greyhound adoptees or members of the anti-greyhound racing movement (Madden, 2010, p.503).

Both articles are very human-centric, Atkinson and Young (2005) more so than Madden (2010). Like the history based articles, the authors do not consider how greyhounds experience racing. They could have done so by observing greyhounds' body language or carriage, which would have informed the academics whether greyhounds enjoy racing or not. Instead, they undertook their research by only talking to human participants. In addition, they do not look at the relationships between greyhounds and humans. Madden (2010) claims that he looks at the relationship between dogs and humans (p.208) but he does not actually do this. He instead only focuses on the human and how they view greyhound racing.

The only social science literature I found that discusses greyhound adoption was Zimmerman's (2013) master's thesis. Still, she only looks at why people adopt greyhounds, not what happens when they arrive home. Zimmerman (2013) uses qualitative methods in order to analyse and compare the characteristics and attitudes of people whom have ex-racing greyhounds and other dog breeds. Zimmerman (2013) discovered that females and Caucasians are more likely to rescue greyhounds. She also found that personality is the most important characteristic that prospective greyhound owners look for; though, she does not discuss what an average greyhound's personality is like (Zimmerman, 2013, p.206). She also states that people who have adopted greyhounds feel a great attachment to the dogs (Zimmerman, 2013, p.208).

As with the other articles I mentioned here, Zimmerman (2013) takes a human-centric approach since she does not look at the greyhound side of the adoption. For

starters, Zimmerman (2013) does not look at how greyhounds behave when they meet their new owners. In addition, even though she notes that greyhound owners care a lot about their dogs, Zimmerman (2013) does not go into detail about how they do this or interact with them (p.208). Furthermore, Zimmerman (2013) does not discuss how being adopted benefits greyhounds.

Lastly, I only found one article that focuses on the owners' experiences of having retired greyhounds as pets. This article was not written by social scientists, but is still very relevant for my thesis (Elliot, Toribio, & Wigney, 2010). This is because it looks at how greyhounds change one month after they have been adopted. In this article, the authors investigate how owners respond to the behaviour of their recently adopted ex-racing greyhounds (Elliot et al., 2010, p.121). To undertake their research, owners of 245 ex-racing greyhounds within Australia and New Zealand were surveyed one-month post adoption (Elliot et al., 2010, p.123). They asked questions about different greyhound behaviours they had seen, including aggression, fearfulness, destructiveness, separation anxiety, inappropriate toileting, hyperactivity, and nipping (Elliot et al., 2010, p.123). Participants were also asked what behaviour concerned them the most (Elliot et al, p.123). They discovered that even though ex-racing greyhounds have higher adoptive success rates than rescue dogs, some greyhounds are returned. The most common reason given for this was their greyhounds had behavioural issues (Elliot et al. p. 121).

Yet, this article does have its flaws. Firstly, even though this article briefly looks at what an ex-racing greyhound's life is like post adoption, they do not provide a lot of detail. The authors give no specific information about circumstances in which greyhounds exhibited their different behaviours or how the owners coped with this.

Each owners' individual house rules they want their dogs to learn is also not discussed. In addition, this article only looks at greyhounds one month after they have been adopted, which is when they would still be getting used to their new environment. This means how greyhounds behave after this month is not investigated. Next, as a survey was the only research method deployed, Elliot et al. (2010), do not research how the actions and views of each individual owner could have influenced the personality and behaviour of their dogs. Lastly, how a greyhounds' life pre-adoption can impact them once adopted is not looked at.

Therefore, there is a significant gap in social science literature about transitioning animals. All of the articles are very human-centric and only the human side and how they benefit from relationships with animals is considered. Animals experience and what they gain from their relationships with humans is never explored. Non-human animals are, therefore, seen as objects who do not have agency. Furthermore, no other relationships, such as the relationship between different species of animals or with their environment are discussed. My research aims to contribute to filling this gap by looking more at the greyhound side of their relationships with humans and non-human animals.

## **Conclusion**

To help me understand the transition that retired greyhounds go through I deployed a multispecies ethnography approach. Doing so has allowed me to attempt to understand and make sense of greyhounds' relationships and interactions with not only the humans in their lives, but also non-humans and the environment around them. Through the companion species branch of multispecies ethnography, I was able to investigate how greyhounds are entangled together with these actors, which

influence the pets they become. This occurs through a rite of passage. Greyhounds are separated from their previous life as a working dog. They then go through a state of liminality before being reincorporated back into society in their new role as a pet. However, what they have previously experienced during their racing career still impacts them, as does their breed-specific traits, because their racing traits and species characteristics remain with greyhounds for life. This is despite the fact that their racing behaviours may be diminished and happen less frequently as they learn what it means to be a pet. Moreover, individual personality traits may be retained as they transition into pet life.

With my research, I worked to look beyond the human-centric perspective by observing greyhounds and their body language so that I could gain insight into their rite of passage. Thus, I attempt to take a more animal-centric approach. Additionally, I observed how greyhounds also interact with other non-humans, like other greyhounds, dog breeds, and cats as well as their environment. This provides a greater understanding of how and why ex-racing greyhounds change as they transition into retirement since these actors also influence the pet that they will become. In the next chapter I describe the methodologies I used to research how greyhounds transform throughout their rite of passage from racer to domestic pet.



## Chapter three: Finding and giving greyhounds an equal voice

Before starting this research, I was worried about how I could attempt to gain and share greyhounds' experience of their rite of passage from racing animal to domestic pet. Greyhounds do not communicate through language so I could not directly interview them like I would human participants. Even though I knew I could interview people who interact with greyhounds on a regular basis, I thought that by doing this alone I would not be doing multispecies ethnography justice, and would by default be giving humans the primary voice in this thesis, thus overshadowing greyhounds and their agency in the process. I did not want human participants to speak for greyhounds. I also wanted to ideally minimize the degree to which greyhounds would be anthropomorphised when I recorded and interpreted their communication.

Anthropomorphism refers to attributing human qualities and characteristics to animals; thus, projecting assumptions on to them. These assumptions all involve the belief that non-human animals think, feel, and desire in similar ways that we, as humans, do. This, however, does not take into account the many differences between how humans and non-humans potentially experience and communicate ideas, emotions, desires, and so forth. As Jickling and Paquet (2005) state, humans anthropomorphise animals to make sense of their behaviour and actions because

we are constantly imagining the world through the eyes of others – our friends, our family, our lover. This is one way that we come to understand

them. It then seems a short empathetic step to imagine the world through the eyes of more-than-humans (pp.129-130).

Ethologists and multispecies ethnographers argue that anthropomorphising non-human species, including dogs, is problematic because it assumes that they interpret the world in the same way we do. Humans observe non-human animals body language and we often interpret this incorrectly using our own species' parameters. This results in behaviour being read incorrectly. Often humans do this without realising or meaning to. For example, it is not unusual for dog owners to believe that their pet is feeling guilty when they are admonished for doing something they are not supposed to. However, a number of ethologists, such as Csányi (2005), state there is no evidence that dogs feel guilt. Instead, they assert that the 'guilty look' a dog's owner sees is a fear response to being disciplined (Bradshaw, 2011 pp.211-212, 216-217; Csányi, 2005, pp.59-60; Horowitz, 2009; pp.228, 232-233;). Similarly, a dog's upturned mouth is often thought to be a smile (Horowitz, 2009, pp.17-19). But, this is not the case. An unturned mouth is a sign a dog is aggressive.

Haraway (2003) argues that using human characteristics to understand dogs' behaviour not only demeans them, but also can hinder people from learning how to interpret their behaviour, body language, and vocalisations correctly (p.37). A dog may look like it is smiling and happy when interpreted using human communication, but may be snarling and, therefore, showing it is aggressive. This can lead to children approaching a dog with an upturned mouth, thinking they are being friendly, which may result in them being bitten and the dog euthanized (Haraway, 2003, p.37). Lastly, attributing human characteristics to dogs holds the assumption "that 'humanness' is the primary point of reference for understanding non-human things"

(Milton, 2005, p.255). Thus, people are less likely to observe dogs' behaviour from their perspective and in doing so, misinterpret or misunderstand dog-human relationship dynamics in the process.

Taking note of this, I turned to methodologies that would allow me to learn about greyhounds' experience of their transition from racing dog to pet that would also reduce the risk of anthropomorphism. These methodologies are semiosis, which I address in the next section; participant-observation with both greyhounds and humans who routinely interact with greyhounds; working in silence; photography; interviewing; and writing greyhound-perceptive narratives. This chapter is divided into two sections – the first attempting to understand and provide the greyhound voice and the next understanding and providing human voices.

## **Attempting to understand and provide the greyhound voice**

### **Semiosis**

Multispecies ethnographers acknowledge that it is difficult to communicate with non-human animals. Unlike humans, non-human animals, including greyhounds, are incapable of communicating symbolically through language as we typically understand and practice it. They do use sound to communicate; however, they do not do this symbolically. Communicating symbolically is “distinctively human” (Kohn, 2013, p.133). The brains of non-human animals do not have language centres that would allow them to understand sentences, including lengthy conversations that we often have with them (Dodman, 2008, pp.28, 38). Some non-human animals, like greyhounds, can, however, understand a few sounds like “car” and “walk” through

association and repeated experiences. Despite all this, it is still possible for humans to communicate with non-human animals through body language and vocalisations.

Non-human animals do not need to interpret the symbolic to communicate and understand the world around them. Kohn's (2007) work, which he calls the "anthropology of life," focuses on this (p.5). "The anthropology of life" is not "an anthropology that is just confined to the human but is concerned with the effects of our entanglements with other kinds of living selves" (Kohn, 2007, p.4). This allows "for thinking anthropologically beyond the human," including how humans and non-humans relate to one another (Kohn, 2013, p.7). This conceptual framework acknowledges that animals need to be seen as selves, who have characteristics that enable them to communicate, think, know, make sense of the world, imagine their futures, and achieve what they desire (Kohn, 2007, p.4; Kohn, 2013, p.1), without symbolic communication.

Kohn (2013) proposes that to understand non-humans human centric ideas and concepts must first be decolonised. This means humans should not assume all living beings think symbolically through language like we do (Kohn, 2013). "Thinking," Kohn (2013) states, "is not necessarily circumscribed by language, the symbolic, or the human" (p.41). Nor is thinking an exclusive trait of humans. He argues humans should learn how non-humans can communicate and interpret their surroundings. To do this, human-centric assumptions about semiosis must be rethought as we move beyond the human (Kohn, 2013, pp.8, 91).

Semiosis is a theory developed by Pierce (as cited in Mancini, van der Linden, Bryan & Stuart, 2012) which investigates "the production and interpretation of signs" (p.145). Semiosis, according to Kohn (2013)

is a living sign process through which one thought gives rise to another, which in turn gives rise to another, and so on, into the potential future. It captures the ways in which living signs are not just on the here and now but also in the realm of the possible (p.33).

Signs are “something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity” (Pierce, 1985, p.5). They are also “an ongoing relational process,” through which humans and non-humans can interact, have relationships with, and come to understand one another through provided information (Kohn, 2013, p.33). Signs conceptually construct and communicate all life, including that of non-humans, making all life semiotic (Kohn, 2013, p.9). All living beings, who learn and communicate through signs, are “interpretants” because they can interpret how a prior sign relates to objects, making them the outcome of a sign process (Kohn, 2013, p.33).

There are three types of signs: icon, indices, and symbols. Only humans interpret, communicate, and interact using symbols. However, not all signs, including icons and indices, have language-like properties. This means that both humans and non-human animals can communicate and learn through icons and indices (Deacon, 1997 as cited in Kohn, 2013, p.8). Thus, humans are not the only living beings able to create and to be created by signs.

Icons are the first and most basic sign. They are “signs that share likenesses with the things they represent” (Kohn, 2013, p.8). Icons, therefore, and the things they signify cannot be distinguished since they are very much like the things they represent.

Thus, icons indicate that similarities exist between things, which are not inherently the same (Kohn, 2013, p.52). For instance, a dog picture on a sign at a park is an

icon that shows dogs are allowed there. “All semiosis ultimately relies on the transformation of more complex signs into icons” (Kohn, 2013, p.52). This means that coming to understand something must involve an icon because they provide the thought, which is like the object being interpreted.

Next, indices are “signs that are in some way affected by or otherwise correlated with those things they represent” (Kohn, 2013, p.8.). Unlike icons, indices are not similar to what they represent. Instead, they are connected and point to something else. In other words, they link one icon to another and, as a result, they focus attention. It is through these connections that indices represent and provide information on what Kohn (2013) calls “absent future” (p.33). He writes, indices “encourage us to make a connection between what is happening and what might happen” (Kohn, 2013, p.33). This is interpreted through the interpretant’s senses, which informs them that something of interest, that is not immediately present, may occur. Barking, for example, is a form of indexical communication, which may be referencing danger or fear.

By contrast, symbols, including language and writing, are “based on signs that are conventional, systematically related to one another, and “arbitrarily” related to their objects of reference” (Rentería-Valencia, 2015, p.96). In other words, symbols are the product of complex interactions between indices, which in turn are the outcome of relations between icons (Kohn, 2013, p.53, 56). Symbols point to words, or other symbols, that have not been spoken, or are absent. This is because they provide the “context for the meaning of any given word’s utterance” (Kohn, 2013, p.37).

Non-human animals, including greyhounds, mainly use indices to communicate and interpret the world around them. Greyhounds are surrounded by indices, which they

use to understand what is happening throughout their rite of passage from racer to pet. For example, when a greyhound has a wire muzzle put on their face, they can interpret this to mean that they are about to race. Here, the icon, muzzle, is indexically connected to another icon, a race track. Moreover, the sound of a clicker<sup>2</sup>, can inform a greyhound that they are about to get a treat for a recent behaviour. In this case, an action a greyhound undertakes, is connected to the noise the clicker makes, an icon, that is indexically linked to another icon, food. Words, to greyhounds, are also indexical. Greyhounds can learn commands, like stay and sit, the sound of which they associate with the corresponding behaviours. Greyhounds do not have to understand words symbolically to know what they are being asked to do. Therefore, greyhounds routinely respond to indexical communication.

During fieldwork, I endeavoured to understand icons and indices from the greyhounds' perspective. To do this, I followed advice given by Kohn (2013), which is to be present in the world around me. This also involves asking yourself what is "out there beyond the symbolic?" and what happens past this? (Kohn, 2013, p.57). I did this by attempting, as to the best of my human abilities, to understand what greyhounds may be learning about their surroundings through their senses and what this communicates to them. I also tried to think through images and not through words since greyhounds cannot do this. For instance, I thought about what the different smells in the grass, including spraying by other dogs, signified to them or what the rain felt like on the backs. Whilst doing this, however, I constantly questioned myself as to whether I was anthropomorphising greyhounds?

---

<sup>2</sup> Dodman (2008) describes a clicker as a "hand-held, lightweight noisemaker, often in the form of a plastic box containing a deformable strip of sprung steel that, when pressed, clicks back into position, making a metallic clicking sound" (p,45). Clickers are used in dog training.

interpretation of signs. I strenuously attempted to ensure, as much as humanly possible, that I was not relying on the constraints of my own senses. Doing so would have caused me to not consider how greyhounds interpret the world. Instead, I thought about how greyhounds use their senses and how this was different to what I do. I discuss this in detail in Chapter Four.

### **Participant-observation and establishing rapport with greyhounds**

Participant-observation, according to DeWalt and DeWalt (2011), is the defining methodology of cultural anthropology (p.1) This methodology involves “a researcher take[ing] part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture” (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011, p.1). Long term participant-observation provides opportunities for anthropologists to become involved in the lives of their participants, including what they are doing on a daily and periodic basis. Comprised of several methods at once, such as analysing documents, self-analysis, life-histories, direct observation, and participation in group life. Participant-observation, as the above quote suggests, is primarily concerned with studying humans. However, I did not see any reason why I could not use this methodology to research greyhounds.

Since greyhounds were my primary participants for this research, I thought that it was imperative for me to conduct participant-observation with them. I did this on and off for a period of six months. At the race course, for example, I observed greyhounds race, taking note of their posture and body language so I could learn and interpret how they responded to, and potentially felt about, racing.

When volunteering at the adoption agency I again immersed myself into their world. I walked greyhounds on a leash, accompanied with them to the vet, washed greyhounds in the bath shown below (figure 3.), visited them in their kennels, watched how they behaved with a cat and small dogs, observed them play in the dog paddock both alone and with other greyhounds, and saw them interacting with human staff and adoptive families. I also took note of how individual greyhounds interacted with me since every dog would try and get my attention in different ways. Some tried to get my attention quietly whilst others would whine.

Lastly, I visited greyhounds who had been adopted. I observed how these dogs behaved in their home, watched how they interacted with their owners, joined them on walks, watched them with other greyhounds and other dog breeds, and took note of how they learnt about the changes in the world around them. By doing all of this, I gained insight into how greyhounds think and change throughout their rite of passage.



Figure 3: The tub greyhounds are bathed in, which I used during fieldwork (Source: Paap, 2016).

My participant-observation showed me that assumptions I had before starting fieldwork were unfounded. According to Becker (1970 as cited in DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011), this is not an uncommon occurrence. He states that participant-observation methodology allows for researchers' expectations to be resisted and tested, by the words and actions of those in the field (Becker, 1970 as cited in DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011, p.10). One assumption that I had before starting fieldwork was that most ex-racing greyhounds would struggle with stairs and slippery floors when entering a house for the first time. This assumption was based upon what I had heard from other people and in turn, what they had heard. I came to find that this was not always the case and depended on the personality of each individual greyhound.

To conduct participant-observation with greyhounds, I had to establish rapport, just like I would with any human participants. To help me do this I took in to account bioanthropologist, Barbara Smuts (2001), research into baboons. Not long after entering the field Smuts (2001) noticed that baboons would look at her. She ignored this on advice from previous baboon researchers. However, after some time observing baboons, she discovered that they acknowledge each other's presence by giving and sharing brief eye contact. In turn, Smuts (2001) found that baboons do not see being ignored as a neutral act, but as offensive. Because of what she discovered through participant-observation, Smuts (2001) began to greet baboons in the same way they acknowledged each other. She did this by making brief eye contact or grunting. When she behaved this way, the baboons paid less attention to her. Smuts, therefore, argues that her baboon participants read her signals to learn that she had benign intentions. She writes

the baboons treated me as a social being, and to gain their trust I had to learn the troop's social conventions and behave in accordance with them. This process gave me a feeling for what it means to be a baboon. Over time, I developed a sense of belonging to their community, and my subjective identity seemed to merge with theirs (Smuts, 2001, p.1).

Smuts' work inspired me to observe my greyhound participants to understand how they greeted and behaved around each other. I wanted to learn what they found offensive as well as socially constructive. This was so I could learn what it means to be, how to approach, and interact with greyhounds in a manner they saw as sociable, which would aid me in establishing rapport with them. For instance, dogs do not like direct eye contact. They find this to be a threat so I knew not to look greyhounds in the eyes in case this aggravated or scared them.

In saying this, unlike with Smuts (2001) research with baboons, I found establishing rapport with greyhounds to not be very difficult. This I attribute to greyhounds having being around many different humans during their racing career and also due to my previous, although limited, experience with dogs before starting fieldwork. In addition, dogs are ingrained into our western culture, more so than baboons. We keep them as pets, call them "man's best friend," and see them every day even if we do not own them ourselves. Therefore, even though I had not had much experience connecting with dogs, I had an idea of how it could be done.

## Silence

Silence is a useful tool for any anthropological investigation that involves non-human animals. It provides a way to gather information when language is absent. Within silence, multispecies ethnographers must use and rely upon their senses other than hearing and in turn language, to learn about their participants, like sight and smell. They must find a way to communicate without words, such as through body language. As Glenn (2004) writes, in silence there is a manner of knowing, a way to engage, and an approach to understand what is happening when there are no verbal languages (p.xi). This was how I approached my research with my greyhound participants as I could not communicate with them symbolically through language. Apart from me saying the occasional “no” or calling a greyhound’s name, there was no other symbolic vocalisations.

Just like Glenn (2004) notes, I discovered that the absence of words was just as powerful as the spoken word (p.xi). I was initially concerned about how I could gain insight into the ways greyhounds viewed their transition from racing dog to pet, including the changes in their surroundings. I did not have to be worried, however, because during my silent interactions with greyhounds I could holistically look at greyhounds lives no matter what stage of their rite of passage they were in. This was by looking at and taking note of everything that was happening in different situations, including how a greyhound was presenting their body language, which could give insight into what they were thinking and feeling in the present moment. I

could also think about how the grass might feel under their feet or how a pee spot<sup>3</sup> smelt to them and what it might communicate to them.

Through this, I could learn a lot about how greyhounds were dealing with their transition. If I interpreted greyhounds behaviour, without overly anthropomorphising them, I could potentially learn how they were feeling and seeing the world around them. This is by observing their body language and how they were acting in different situations and around people. For instance, I came to understand that a greyhound was anxious about arriving at the adoption agency if they were keeping to themselves or close to their trainer, shaking, and not making any vocalisations.

Silence was also a valuable tool for understanding what my human participants and I were communicating to greyhounds through our own body language. As Hall and Hall (1971) state, “humans also send and receive an enormous number of messages without even uttering words” (p.16). This is through “gestures, facial expressions, posture, gait, body movement, and eye contact” that greyhounds can use to learn about the humans they interact with (Hall & Hall, 1971, p.16). Greyhounds observed and reacted to me using their own body language, making an ongoing silent conversation. The silence, thus, provided a way for me to take note of and understand what I and other humans, including trainers, rehoming agency staff, and new owners, may have been communicating through our body language and the subsequent responses from greyhounds, which I interpreted using ethology. I discuss this more in Chapter Four.

---

<sup>3</sup> The pee spot was an area of grass that all male greyhounds sprayed.

I did find that I needed patience when working in the quiet between greyhounds and I. Due to being around few dogs growing up, I did not have much experience reading their language. Additionally, I had no experience with greyhounds so I had to learn about their specific breed. Nevertheless, I found the silence with greyhounds to be a powerful site and mode of inquiry after I gained confidence around them.

Furthermore, I found the working in silence heightened my own reflexivity and enhanced my other senses since I was no longer relying entirely on language to understand what was happening. I, subsequently, became more self-conscious of my body language and what this not only communicated to greyhounds, but my human participants as well.

### **Photography**

Photography has a long and varied history in ethnography. Many anthropologists have used photography to record and highlight information about events, people, and locations that they encountered (Gold, 2007, p.144). Moreover, photographs also provide a way for researchers to code their data and analyse their field notes since they capture whatever the anthropologist was focusing on at that moments; thus, allowing for reflection after fieldwork has ended (Gold, 2007, p.144). Multispecies ethnographers are no exception to this as they too have turned to photography to convey human-animal entanglements. Doing so, they argue, shows how complex these relationships can be (Taylor & Hamilton, 2014, p.264). It is for these reasons that I also decided to use photography.

I discovered that by taking photographs I could, in part, visually show greyhounds experience on their transition, without relying on symbolic language, through my own lens. The photographs I took depict greyhounds' body language, indicating how

they were potentially feeling at that point of time. For instance, I could show how they were interacting with other dog breeds or what they liked to do when exploring. In addition, these photographs, especially in Chapter Seven, show how greyhounds' behaviour and body language change as they settle into their new environment and become reincorporated back into society as a pet. Thus, the photographs I use aid in my discussion of how greyhounds were finding their rite of passage because they are icons, which show how greyhounds were holding their body or what they were doing at that moment. Even though photography shows bias of the photographer, it, nevertheless, limited the risk that I anthropomorphise them because they were not posed and show greyhounds acting naturally. The photographs, thus, show how greyhounds, like humans, have agency. Therefore, the use of photography in part decentres the human by disturbing the symbolic nature of a thesis, allowing greyhounds to have more of an equal voice.

To take the photos of greyhounds' candid moments, I used the camera on my phone. Doing so meant I did not have to take extra equipment whilst undertaking fieldwork. Also, using a camera to take photos would have been inconvenient when dog walking because the size and the bulkiness would have gotten in the way. If I saw something I wanted to take a photo of all I needed to do was take my phone out of my pocket, take a photo, and put it back. I believe that my phone was less distracting to the greyhounds than a camera would have been since they are bigger and, therefore, more noticeable. As a result, the potential to capture them behaving naturally was enhanced.

Before starting fieldwork, I planned to take hundreds of photographs. Though I did take plenty, I found that I did not take as many as I wanted. There were many

reasons for this. At the adoption agency, for instance, it was difficult to take my phone out of my pocket when walking a greyhound on a leash to take a photograph. Because I was not confident walking dogs I used both hands to hold the leash. Secondly, the weather played a part. If it was raining I did not want to use my phone in case it got damaged. At the race track, meanwhile, photography is not allowed. For this reason, I use photographs that I have found on the internet of greyhounds racing. Lastly, when conducting participant-observation with greyhounds and their families there was not enough time to take photos. Nevertheless, I found using this methodology to be useful.

Not all the photographs I use in this thesis are my own. I also use photographs from my human participants, for instance. Photos taken by greyhound owners show what greyhounds were like in their home environment without me, a strange human, watching them. They were also taken when I was not able to be there. For instance, one of my human participants took photos throughout the first six months of having her greyhound.

Even though I found using photography to be useful for multispecies ethnography, it was important for me to be involved in the present moment without a camera. I took this advice from Pink (2015) and Pacini-Ketchabaw, Taylor, and Blaise (forthcoming). They advocate that cameras and pens should occasionally be left behind (Pacini-Ketchabaw, Taylor, and Blaise, 2016, p.1). Pink (forthcoming) refers to this as sensory ethnography in which fieldwork is conducted on the participants' terms (p.117). She argues that using sensory ethnography requires investigators to be engaged with the environment and the activities taking place during fieldwork, not just standing idly by (Pink, 2015, p.130). Whilst walking the greyhounds with their

owners, for example, I would keep my phone in my pocket as this was one of the only times I could see the relationship between human and greyhound with my own eyes.

By doing this, I found that I could fully engage with the dogs and, to the best of my human ability, immerse myself with what they were seeing and doing without constantly thinking about what I should take a photograph of, or distancing myself from their relationships by looking through a lens. Due to this, I gained a better idea of how my greyhound participants experienced the world through their senses, which I cover in the next chapter, instead of relying on my sense of sight, which humans, unlike greyhounds, predominantly use to make sense of their surroundings.

### **Greyhound perspective stories**

Because humans often speak on the behalf of animals, I wanted to find a way to give greyhounds their own voice in this research. Anthropologists regularly discuss how both human and non-human animal perspectives should be featured in ethnographic discussions about human-animal interactions (Ghiringhelli, 2016, p.463). Despite this widely shared belief, anthropological investigations into these relationships rarely discuss or acknowledge the non-human perspective. Multispecies ethnographers argue that social scientists need to take risks and experiment with new methods that will allow them to extend their research to non-humans in a way that will also share their voices (Tsing, 2011, p.19; Whatmore, 2006, p.605). Whilst doing this, they argue, it is also important to consider individual variations in behaviour within the same species.

A risk I have taken with this thesis is including stories about two different greyhounds. These stories are written from the greyhounds' perspective. They are works of fiction based on an amalgamation of the greyhounds I encountered throughout fieldwork. These stories are my attempt to understand and convey their experiences in a way that I find familiar. Thus, I speak for greyhounds, turning their indexical communication into a symbolic form, since they cannot write for themselves. However, conveying their transition through text is difficult since the written word only provides a small snapshot of everything that occurs and loses the impact of their body language.

One greyhound is withdrawn, anxious, and subsequently took a while to settle in, both at the adoption agency and her new home. This dog I have called Olive. The other greyhound, whom I have named Joe, is outgoing and boisterous. He settled into both of his new environments quickly. The stories illustrate all stages of ex-racing greyhounds' transition from racing dog, to rehoming agency, to domestic pets. They also acknowledge how greyhounds interpret the world using their senses and the impact this has on their behaviour. All three ethnography chapters start with a story from each greyhound that relate to the part of the transition under discussion.

I have incorporated these stories into my thesis to give the reader an idea of what the rite of passage is like from a greyhound's perspective. The stories show the struggle transitioning greyhounds endure to learn what is required of them as they are moved from racing kennels, to adoption agency, to a home environment. Because we humans cannot get into the minds of another living being, my stories are informed speculation on what the greyhounds' experiences are like. They also illustrate the agency greyhounds have. If greyhounds do not want to do something, then they will

not do it. Additionally, they show that the past experiences greyhounds have during their racing career contributes to the pets they will become, just like having a different owner will.

In saying this, my stories are slightly anthropomorphic. This is because in them I use words that greyhounds may not associate with things themselves, such as car. I did originally try and limit anthropomorphism in these narratives by describing every human actor and item they encountered. However, this was very confusing and hard to follow so in order for the stories to make sense I removed these descriptions. In saying this, I do still use some descriptions instead of words, such as lure, which I refer to as a fluffy, since this is most likely how greyhounds see them.

Nevertheless, like the photographs, these stories help me to emphasise how important it is for non-human animals to have their voices heard within multispecies ethnography. They also show the importance of acknowledging how greyhounds experience the world compared to humans so that greyhounds are not anthropomorphised and have an equal voice to humans.

## **Finding and providing the human voice**

### **Participant-observation with humans**

In addition to conducting participant-observation with greyhounds, I also engaged in this method with the humans in their lives. How I conducted participant-observation with the humans depended on who I was researching. If I was researching trainers, I would watch what they did with their greyhounds at the race track since I could not participate, for instance. At the adoption agency, I followed two staff members to observe how they interacted with greyhounds and vice versa. I also observed what

happened during greyhound adoptions. This was so I could gain an understanding of how the adopting humans communicated and interacted with their potential greyhounds.

I also became a volunteer at the adoption agency for about a month. I walked and bathed the dogs, went with them to the vet, and cleaned their kennels so I could experience the daily routines of adoption agency staff. Thus, I became an insider in the adoption agency and learnt the ins and outs of their practice.

Furthermore, I conducted participant-observation with greyhounds and their owners. I watched how greyhounds interacted with their owners and vice versa. To participate, I went on walks and played with greyhounds alongside their humans, whom I also interviewed. This was so I could gain insight into their relationship through their body language and how they communicated with each other.

### **Establishing rapport**

Entering the field to conduct participant-observation filled me with anxiety. I was worried about what I would encounter and that fieldwork would go terribly. Due to this, it took me longer than I intended to contact my participants at the adoption agency. Once I contacted them I found that I did not need to have worried because they were more than willing to help with my fieldwork in any way I needed. This made it easier for me to gain the courage I needed to contact both greyhound trainers and owners later on.

Establishing rapport with my human participants was easier than I expected. Nader (1986) says that “rapport pure and simple, consists of establishing lines of communication between the anthropologist and his [sic] informants in order for the

former to collect data that then allows him [sic] to understand the culture under study” (p.112). I believe that rapport was easily established with my all participants due to their willingness to participate in my research as well as their appreciation of my love for animals. Greyhound owners were especially open to my research and sharing information with me because they loved to talk about their dogs and raise awareness for the breed which, they felt, would led to more adoptions. Similarly, I believe that rapport was easily and quickly established at the adoption agency due to my willingness to volunteer, allowing for trust and cooperation to be established early on during fieldwork. Lastly, trainers wanted to use my research to spread awareness and change the industry by showing the benefits of owning a small number of greyhounds, such as better racing performance.

### **Interviewing**

Finding participants was more difficult than I expected. I knew that I wanted to interview rehoming agency staff, greyhound racing trainers, and people who have adopted greyhounds. I originally contacted the head of the adoption agency I volunteered at firstly by email and later calling because I wanted their permission to conduct this research. However, I never heard back from him so after a month and a half of waiting I reached out to the kennel manager to see if I could have an interview and conduct participant-observation with her, which she agreed to. This led to me being able to volunteer at the adoption agency and interview one of four staff members.

Contacting trainers, I also found to be problematic. I met a few trainers whilst at the adoption agency who said they were willing to participate in this research; but, they never replied or they said they would get back to me later, which they never did.

Eventually, I found two trainers, who are in a partnership, that happen to take retired dogs to the same adoption agency I volunteered at.

Finding greyhound owner participants was also harder than expected. I contacted a few people who, like the trainers, never got back to me. In the end, I did hear back from someone who adopted a greyhound during my time at the adoption agency. She, and her greyhound, became my participants. I found other owners through mutual friends or a ‘meet greyhounds day<sup>4</sup>’ at a local pet shop.

Interviewing is a valuable research technique that is used to gain insight into participants’ lives. For my study, I wanted to gain insight into how my human participants viewed their relationships with greyhounds. I also sought to discover how they thought the greyhounds they interacted with, during the life stage they saw them, were finding the transition stage. This was so I could compare greyhounds behaviour during each part of their rite of passage by using my human participants’ first-hand experiences since I could not do this all by myself. For example, I could not take a greyhound to the starting boxes before a race. I also wanted to learn how my human participants found communicating with greyhounds and how they interacted back, including any difficulties they had and if this got easier with experience or time.

All my interviews were conducted in person and in an environment familiar to each interviewee. I interviewed my greyhound trainer participant at a race track; adoption agency staff at their work place; and greyhound owners either in their homes, at a greyhound day at a pet store, or at a dog park they frequented regularly. This was so

---

<sup>4</sup> ‘Meet greyhound days’ are held to raise awareness for the breed and, in turn increase the number of retired racing greyhounds being adopted.

they felt comfortable talking to me. Furthermore, I could see how they interacted with their dogs, and vice versa, in a familiar setting, which I could then talk to my human participants about.

My interviews were semi-structured. Semi-structured interviews, Longhurst (2016) states, are very useful when investigating “complex behaviours, opinions, and emotions” (p.152). I came prepared to each interview with prompts and questions I wanted answered. The interviews lasted between one hour and one hour forty minutes. However, during the interviews I did not always follow my prepared questions. I followed where the interviews naturally progressed or I formulated questions depending on what I saw during participant-observation.

I had three sets of questions depending on whom I interviewed about ex-racing greyhounds’ transition to domestic pets. When talking to greyhound racing trainers, I asked questions, such as how do you know that a greyhound is not suitable for racing or is ready to retire? How do you train your dogs? Do your greyhounds have contact with other breeds of dogs and animals? How do your greyhounds communicate with you and can you understand this?

Questions I asked a staff member at the adoption agency included: why did you get involved with the organisation? What is the process like for greyhounds arriving? What are greyhounds like when they first arrive and how does this change during their stay? How are adoptive families chosen? What are dogs like when they go to live in their new homes?

Lastly, I asked greyhound owners how were the first few months with your greyhound? How have they changed? How long did it take for your greyhound to

settle in? What did your dog struggle with? What have you found the most difficult with adopting a greyhound? How would you describe your relationship with your greyhound? Thus, these questions provided a way for me to gain insight into ex-racing greyhounds' rite of passage.

In this thesis, I have used the information I gathered during interviews in an atypical way for anthropology. I do not use quotes from my human participants. Instead, I paraphrase what was discussed with me. Occasionally, I do use quotation marks around terms that my participants used to communicate with their dogs as I, myself, do not want to use anthropomorphising terms. In addition, I do not quote my participants apart from this because I did not want to decentre my greyhound participants by overriding their voice with the human perspective, which would have been the easy way out. This is something that multispecies ethnographers can be critiqued for as the aim of this methodological approach is to move non-humans away from the background of anthropological investigations into the foreground. By not using articulations and utterances from my human participants I am, therefore, giving greyhounds more of an equal voice to the humans in their lives.

### **Diaries**

Throughout fieldwork I kept a field diary. In it I documented what happened each day during participant-observation. I took note of what I saw, including any greyhound behaviours or encounters they had. For instance, I noted how they behaved during an adoption or how they played with another greyhound. I also wrote in the diary what I did that day and any interactions I had with greyhounds. I described, for example, how I bathed a greyhound or that I went on a walk with them and their owner. This was so I could easily recall and reflect upon what happened

during my time in the field. I wrote in the diary as soon as I got home since I could not easily carry it around with me. This was especially the case when walking greyhounds.

I also had access to the diary belonging to one of my greyhound owner participants. This was a diary that she had kept for the first six months of having her greyhound home. In it, this participant documented what happened during every day she had owned her greyhound. She noted how her greyhound behaved that day and if she had any problems with her transition, such as shaking when walking on the street. The diary also gave insight into how she found owning a greyhound for the first time in her life, including what was difficult and caused her to feel overwhelmed. Overtime, the diary shows how this greyhound settled into home life and became less scared of her new environment.

## **Conclusion**

The methodologies I used for this thesis were chosen in order to reduce the risk of anthropomorphism and also to move greyhounds to the forefront of this research. These methodologies are semiosis, participant-observation, intervening human participants, photography, and writing greyhound stories. Specifically, I chose data gathering techniques that would allow me to understand ex-racing greyhounds' rite of passage from racing dog to domestic pet. This is primarily from their perspective by interpreting and foregrounding their body language and vocalisations. I, additionally, attempted to minimise the attribution and projection of human characteristics on to greyhounds and their behaviour by both my human participants and myself. This was to disrupt and decentre the human.

All methodologies I used were beneficial to this thesis and, in turn, a success. I found myself becoming more and more in tune with greyhounds as time went on. By conducting participant-observation, I could observe greyhounds' behaviour and compare this to what was happening around them. This allowed me to learn what specific body language and vocalisations meant. Next, interviewing human companions also deepened my understanding of greyhounds and how they change over the course of the rite of passage since I could not always experience things first hand. In addition, the photographs and greyhound stories provided me with a way to make sense of what I was seeing and hearing whilst in the field.

Moreover, I found the methodologies to be self-transformative. Not only did I gain a heightened awareness to greyhounds and other animals, I became more sensitive towards people. I have always struggled to read and understand humans' body language. However, by closely observing greyhounds and their behaviour I discovered that reading human body language became easier to do. I became more aware of what people were communicating through their movements and body language. I also began to connect more their observed body language to what was happening in the environment.

If I had more time I would have spent more time in the field. For instance, I would spend more time with trainers, observing their relationship with their dogs and also how they train their greyhounds. I would also visit my greyhound participants and their owners on multiple occasions over a longer period of time so I could see first-hand how they change. This is instead of relying solely on interviews with greyhounds' human companions and photographs that they have taken. Doing so would have further deepened my understanding of greyhound's rite of passage.

Moreover, if money was not a factor I would have purchased and used a go-pro. I would have put the go-pro on the backs of my greyhound participants so they can record what they were seeing. Doing this would allow me to observe what indices greyhounds could see from their height and perspective. For instance, I could see what it is like for greyhounds to run around the race track or arriving at their new home for the first time. However, this also would not have fully provided their perspective as sight is not greyhounds primary sense and they do not see colours in the same way that I do.

Nevertheless, semiosis, participant-observation, intervening human participants, photography, and writing greyhound stories were all beneficial methodologies. To understand the greyhounds' body language and vocalisations I encountered using these methodologies, I turned to ethology, which is the science of animal behaviour. I discuss greyhound ethology in the next chapter.



## Chapter four: Greyhound ethology

What do you think about when you hear the word greyhound? Do you think about how greyhounds are as a breed of dog? Do you picture what they look like - tall and slim with a long face? Do you think about their temperament? Do you imagine how fast greyhounds can run? Greyhounds are, after all, the fastest breed of dog on flat land. Similarly, does your mind wander to greyhound racing? Do you imagine greyhounds running around an oval track after a mechanical lure<sup>5</sup>? Or do you realise how little you know about greyhounds?

Greyhounds, at least in New Zealand, are only bred to race. They are not bred to be pets; due to this, it is not uncommon for the general population to know little about the breed. Before I started this research, I lacked knowledge about greyhounds. What I knew about greyhounds did not extend past their appearance or the fact that they are racing dogs. I knew nothing about what their temperament is like or the breed's history. I also knew very little about how greyhounds communicate or learn about the world around them.

Due to this, I knew that a multi-disciplinary approach could give me more insight into greyhound's breed than what anthropology alone would provide. Multispecies ethnographers recommend a multi-disciplinary approach when studying non-human animals since how they communicate is not covered in anthropology (see for example, Taylor & Hamilton, 2014). Ethnographers note that crossing the species boundary to communicate with and understand non-human animals is difficult

---

<sup>5</sup> A lure is a fluffy, artificial hare used to entice greyhounds out of the starting boxes and around the track. They are powered by electronic motors.

(Taylor and Hamilton, 2014, p.252). As I noted in my previous chapter, greyhounds are unable to communicate symbolically through language, thus, I could not interview them like I would my human participants. Further, I knew that as much as I wanted to, I could not become a greyhound to experience the world through their senses. This meant I needed to find other ways to gain insight into their rite of passage experiences without relying only on interviews with the people in their lives.

Participant-observation, I thought, would aid in this. But, how could I make sense of what I encountered in respect of greyhounds without turning to another discipline? How would I know what greyhounds were communicating, both consciously and unconsciously, to me as a response to the indices they encountered throughout their transition? What do their particular sounds and body language mean? How would I use participant-observation to build a relationship with my non-human participants without communicating with them symbolically through language? It is for this reason I took Taylor and Hamilton's (2014) advice by combining ethnography with ethology.

Ethology is the science of animal behaviour. This discipline promotes research practices whereby animals engage with human researchers on their own terms. If animals do not want to be observed, then they are left alone. They are also approached by human researchers in the same way as they would be by members of their own species. What ethologists observe during their encounters with non-human animals they document and interpret through comparison with the relevant experiences of other ethologists' (Seymour & Wolch, 2010, p.313). Subsequently, ethologists develop new ways of thinking about non-humans. It is these new ideas

that social scientists can borrow in order to help them conduct meaningful research into the lives of their non-human participants.

One of these ideas is that people should not just try to understand the minds of non-human animals (Horowitz, 2009). As such, we must try not to anthropomorphise non-human animals, but instead we should look at and explore the capacity they have to feel, know, and understand the world around them as well as how they do this differently to humans (Bekoff, 2002, p.142). Ethologists maintain that humans should ask themselves what they believe animals want and learn to translate their answers by observing their body language and behaviour, and then learn to translate their answers according to this criteria. This is what I attempted to do in the field. Thus, ethology provides a process by which I could attempt to routinely decolonise or de-anthropomorphise my thoughts to potentially learn what greyhounds' specific tail wags and barks meant. It allowed me to be "an anthropologist in a foreign land – one peopled entirely by dogs" (Horowitz, 2009, p.162).

In this chapter, I discuss the traits and characteristics that make greyhounds 'greyhounds,' which I learnt by both reading relevant ethologies and through being, and reflecting on my experiences, in the field. I focus on characteristics that allow, or in some cases hinder, greyhounds' transition between their two significantly different roles - racing dog and domestic pet. This chapter is divided into three sections: an introduction to greyhounds, which gives an overview of the breed's family group, history, physical characteristics, temperament, and health; greyhounds' senses, which discusses how they use their senses to interpret and understand indices in their surroundings; and lastly greyhound communication, which looks at the verbal and non-verbal ways in which greyhounds communicate. This provides a basis for my interpretation of greyhound behaviour that follows.

## **An introduction to greyhounds**

All dog breeds belong to one of six groups. These are gundogs, herding, working, non-sporting, terriers, toy, and hounds (Coile, 2015). Like the name suggests, greyhounds belong to the hound family. Hounds are the oldest breeds of dogs (Coile, 2015, p.62). For centuries, hounds have been bred to assist humans hunt, pursue, and catch game.

There are two different types of hounds: scent and sight, with greyhounds belonging to the sighthound sub-group. Scent hounds, such as beagles and bloodhounds, use their long noses to follow scent trails (Smyth, Bergh-Roose, Taylor, Killick, & Henderson, 2014, p.44). Sighthounds, on the other hand, rely on their vision to pursue prey. They survey and spot movement instead of exploring with their noses to the ground. Sighthounds were also bred to be fast to chase the game they were hunting (Coile, 2015, p.88). These characteristics have been selectively bred for by humans for around 5,000 years (Fogle, 2010, p.66).

All sighthounds, including greyhounds, are bred to have common characteristics. Physically, they are slightly built with long legs and strong muscles that allow them to run fast. Usually, they have long heads and deep chests in comparison to other dog groups. Most sighthounds enjoy running, but they tire quickly since they are built to sprint and not for endurance. In terms of temperament, sighthounds are usually quiet and seek comfort.

Greyhounds were used in many historical cultures, including Ancient Egypt and early Christian England, for hunting after mammals, especially hares (Victor, 2010, p.6). Nobility regularly held royal greyhound hunts, for which they reserved forests

for their exclusive use, and gave greyhounds preferential treatment over other dog breeds (American Kennel Club, 2006, p.177; Finch, 1997, p.7; Victor, 2010, p.6). For instance, they kept their greyhounds in large kennels far away from other dog breeds (American Kennel Club, 2006, p.177; Hajeski, 2016, p.27). Commoners also used greyhounds to hunt, even though there were Forest Laws forbidding them from owning greyhounds, as they helped to put food on their table (Coile, 2015, p.88; Finch, 1999, p.7; Victor, pp.7,11).

Both the Upper and Lower class bred and taught greyhounds to hunt independently by sight without following instructions from their masters. This was because they were to run ahead of their owners in order to catch their prey. Thus, traits that were desired in greyhounds include excellent eyesight to see and track game, speed, agility, and endurance (Sullivan, 2012, p.35).

Later, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, greyhounds were used for coursing (Sullivan, 2012, p.42). Coursing involved two greyhounds racing against each other after a hare. Hares were realised 50 to 100 yards in front of the dogs so they needed to work in order to catch them (Sullivan, 2012, p.43). For this, greyhounds, therefore, needed to be fast, agile, and have high endurance in an open field. (American Kennel Club, 2006, p.177; Branigan, 1998, p.10; Finch, 199, p.7). Good eyesight to see and chase after hares was also selectively bred for (Coile, 2015, p.88; Finch, 1999, p.7). In turn, greyhounds were admired as a source of sport and recreation for the Upper Class (Guccioe, 1998, p.3).

The greyhound racing that we know today owes its beginning to Owen Patrick Smith. Smith is credited with invention of the artificial mechanical lure in 1912. This invention meant that live rabbits no longer needed to be used and, therefore, killed.

In turn, greyhound racing began to occur on an oval race track, which still happens to this day. As a result, greyhounds are now bred specifically for short bursts of speed, giving rise to the physical characteristics that we see in the breed today, which we use to race and keep as pets (Coile, 2015, p.29). These traits may also allow greyhounds to fulfil the role of pet since they rarely shed.

### **Physical characteristics**

The physical characteristics of greyhounds make them an easily recognisable breed. They also contribute to what greyhounds are and are not physically capable of. For instance, many of their traits allow greyhounds to be the fastest dog breed in the world who can run speeds of 67 kilometres per hour (Branigan 2002, p.12). Using the photograph of one of my greyhound participants, Luna, over the page (figure 4.), I will describe these characteristics.

To start, greyhounds have long and narrow heads. As the photo (figure 4.) of Luna shows, the widest part of their head is between their ears (Branigan, 2002, p. 120; Victor, 2010, p.19). Their heads then taper into a pointed muzzle and a long nose. Due to this, greyhounds' eyes are set nearer to the sides of their heads than the centre. This is depicted in the other photo (figure 5.) on page 69, which is of Ella, another of my greyhound participants (Sullivan, 2012, p.24).



Figure 4: Photograph of Luna, showing the physical characteristics of greyhounds (Source: Elizabeth, 2016)



Figure 5: Photograph of Ella showing the facial and physical characteristics of greyhounds, including eyes on the side of her face. Ella's ears, however, are different to normal greyhounds since they are folded inwards (Source: Sophia, 2016).

Greyhounds have soft, small, rose-shaped ears (Branigan, 2002, p. 120; Victor, 2010, p.19). Their ears are also usually thrown back and folded. However, when greyhounds are excited or alert their ears will be semi-pricked (American Kennel Club, 2006, p.178). As with anything there are exceptions. For example, Ella has ears that fold inwards as her photograph (figure 5.) above shows.

As the photograph (figure 4.) of Luna on page 69 indicates, greyhounds' bodies are long, slightly built, and lean (Davis, 2004, p.15). They are perfectly built for racing. Firstly, their necks are long and muscular. The widest part of a greyhounds' body is towards the shoulder, making them slightly arched. Next, greyhounds have a narrow waist and a deep, wide chest to accommodate their large heart (Sullivan, 2012, p.11). Greyhounds have the largest heart of any dog breed, which allows them to run fast for short distances. As with the rest of a greyhound's body, their backs are long, broad, flexible, and muscular, which helps them to arch their backs both convexly (when front and back legs pushed apart from other another) and concavely (when front and back legs pulled in toward each other) to reach their fast speeds; thus, greyhounds are built like a cheetah (Sullivan, 2012, p. 11; Victor, 2010, p.19). Greyhounds' hips are also highly muscular, which can result in them being unable to sit down comfortable like other dog breeds. Instead, they lie flat or on their side. Lastly, their tails are long and tapering with a slight upward curve, which helps with balance at high speeds (American Kennel Club, 2006, p.188).

Greyhounds' legs also contribute to their ability to run fast. Their forelegs are long and straight. Their hindquarters, as I have indicated on Luna's photograph, are long, muscular, and powerful. They allow greyhounds to take long strides whilst running. Greyhound's feet are arched and thickly padded like a hare's, with two middle toes

longer than their two outside toes. Having longer middle toes allow greyhounds to grab the ground whilst running, making them more stable (Victor, 2010, p.19).

Greyhounds are tall dogs. To their shoulder, greyhounds on average measure between 61-72 centimetres (Victor, 2010, p.5). Male greyhounds are taller than their female counterparts. At the shoulder, male greyhounds measure between 66 to 76 centimetres (Victor, 2010, p.15). Female greyhounds, on the other hand, stand at 58.5 to 66 centimetres (Victor, 2010, p.16).

This breed has very little body fat, making them light dogs. They also have a very fast metabolism. Generally, racing greyhounds weigh between 25 to 38 kilograms. Male greyhounds are usually heavier at 29.5 to 38.5 kilograms, compared to females 22.5 to 29.5 kilograms (Coile, 2015, p. 88; Victor, 2010, p.15). Retired greyhounds weigh more than those who race as they no longer need to be lean and light in order to run fast. Since greyhounds have very little body fat they are likely to feel the cold during winter.

All greyhounds have a short, but smooth, coat, which offers little wind resistance when they are running (Rice, 2001). Greyhounds' coats also lack oil, making them smell clean (Davis, 2004, p.16; Victor, 2010, p.6). They are, therefore, easy to groom and generally rarely shed, making them desirable pets. Greyhounds come in a wide variety of colours. This ranges from black, black and white, white, fawn, brindle<sup>6</sup>, to blue (Victor, 2010, p.16). The most common colour of greyhounds is black.

Bred to be racing dogs, every part a greyhound's body contributes to their ability to run fast. However, some of these traits also assist them to successfully transition to

---

<sup>6</sup> Brindle is a brownish colour with tiger stripes.

life as domestic pets. For instance, since greyhounds are built for speed and not for endurance, they generally are lazy, have low energy, like to relax, and therefore need little space. These are traits that a potential dog owners may desire in their pets, especially if they do not have any or much land. Similarly, because they rarely shed, they are low maintenance pets. Greyhounds are further quiet dogs who rarely bark.

However, greyhounds do have some traits that could be problematic or less desirable for someone wanting a pet dog. For instance, greyhounds have a natural desire to chase and kill small and fluffy animals, which was reinforced during their racing career. This may be an issue if potential owners have pets fitting this description, such as rabbits or cats. Greyhounds are also a large breed, which may be problematic if they jump up or became excited in a confined space, especially as they like to run fast in circles.

### **Temperament and behaviour**

Greyhounds' temperament makes greyhounds 'greyhounds,' just as much as their physical characteristics. As with their physical traits, there are differences in temperament between individual greyhounds within the breed; however, there are personality characteristics that most greyhounds share, which can allow them to be pets. Firstly, greyhounds are affectionate and friendly dogs who crave attention and cuddles. Secondly, greyhounds are very intelligent and easy to train. Next, they are quiet, non-aggressive, and gentle dogs so they can be good pets for someone who desires a companion. Additionally, they are not only good with people they are familiar with, but they are also typically good with strangers due to being around a wide variety of people throughout their racing career. This characteristic remains

with greyhounds throughout their transition. Yet, it is not uncommon for some greyhounds to be reserved or suspicious around strangers.

In terms of behaviour, greyhounds can be contradictory. For starters, greyhounds are typically willing to please their owners. On the other hand, they are also independent and stubborn. This is because they prefer to do things that are beneficial to them, such as lying around (Boneham, 2008, p.27; Victor, 2010, p.6). Moreover, greyhounds are unlikely to listen to their owners once they have begun chasing after something. Another reason for this is that greyhounds were bred and trained to hunt game independently without having to follow instructions. Independence is also desired by racing trainers since greyhounds need to think about how they are going to reach the lure first themselves without any directions.

Additionally, greyhounds are playful and love to run (Boneham, 2008, p.27; Victor, 2010, p.6). But, they are also calm and relaxed dogs. Greyhounds like to be comfortable and prefer to lay on the couch all day if possible; though, some prefer to do this more than others. This has earned them the nickname “the world’s fastest couch potato” (Coile, 2014, p.89).

How energetic or lazy a greyhound is influences their performance when racing and also what they will be like once they become a pet. When they retire, a greyhound who enjoyed racing may have more energy requirements than a greyhound who was lazier during their career. However, this does generally diminish with age and the routines of being a domestic pet. Meanwhile, a greyhound who is very playful may want to play with the other greyhounds instead of race and, thus, may still be vary playful as a pet. However, whether individual greyhounds make good racers or pets is more complicated than what I have described here since no greyhound is the same

and other factors, such as their individual personalities and relationships with owners, will also play a part.

## **Health**

Greyhounds are a healthy breed with a life expectancy of 12 years, allowing them to be both suitable dogs for both racing and pet lives (Victor, 2010, p.25). Nevertheless, like any other breed of dog, greyhounds are susceptible to hereditary illnesses. These can prematurely end their racing career and affect their retirement journey. One of these is corns. Corns may seem unproblematic; however, they can extend deep into a greyhound's pad, causing them pain, which can affect their running. Greyhounds are prone to lumbosacral stenosis as they age so this mostly impacts them once they have transitioned to life as a pet. This is a hereditary condition that causes the end of the spinal cord to become narrowed, which compresses their nerves. Lumbosacral stenosis affects greyhounds by making their back legs weak and wobbly and they may drag one leg along the ground (Victor, 2010, p.109-110).

Greyhounds can suffer from the same conditions as other dog breeds. These conditions include allergies, heatstroke, kennel cough, and they can also be overworked (Sullivan, 2012, p.127; Victor, 2010, p.121-126). These can stop greyhounds performing well and may also end their racing career. For example, heat stroke, depending on the severity, could cause a greyhound to collapse whilst racing. Similarly, greyhounds who have been overworked can suffer from pain and injury, including torn ligaments and muscles as well as broken bones (Atkinson & Young, 2011, p.349). Depending on the severity, some greyhounds may never race again. Health issues like these that that greyhounds have had during their racing career does not necessarily dictate their health as a pet. If they had an injury that caused them to

retire from racing, their owners may need to keep an eye on them to see if their previous injury is bothering their pet.

## **Greyhounds and their senses**

As Fudge (2017) states, “there is yet another difficulty: even when documents do exist they do not record the animal’s distinct experiences of the world, and understanding an animal’s sensory capacities is vital when thinking about what it was like to be that animal” (p.267). She writes further, “it is not just a problem of language; it is a problem of comprehending other modes of being in the world” (Fudge, 2017, p.267). It is for this reason that I sought to address and understand the difference between how I and my greyhound participants sense and engage with the world around us, including the limits of our capabilities to do so.

Additionally, like humans and other animals, greyhounds experience the world through their senses – smell, hearing, sight, touch, and taste. It is greyhounds’ senses that alert them to, and frame their awareness, of routine indices, or of changes happening in their environment that occur due to any humans and non-humans they encounter. Greyhounds’ senses are also tools that are also deployed in communication. It is through the development of their senses that greyhounds become aware that someone is communicating with them, both non-verbally and verbally, and how they will interpret and respond to these communications. This is the case even if only a few spoken words are indices that mean something to greyhounds. Thus, by looking at greyhounds senses I could understand how greyhounds learnt about their transition from racing dog to domestic pets, which I discuss here in order of their most developed sense to their least.

## Smell

When in the field, I observed greyhounds exploring their environment through their sense of smell. They would mainly do this to the long grass in the periphery of a field. Some greyhounds, especially the males, would walk around with their noses to the ground. This was especially the case if they were in a new area. They would mainly explore the long grass on the periphery of a field.

My greyhound participants constantly amazed me with how strong their sense of smell was. They would smell things that were completely impossible for my human nose to detect. For example, I occasionally saw greyhounds walk up to people to nudge their pockets without otherwise knowing that treats had previously been put there.

Smell is greyhounds' most developed sense, which they use to learn about their surroundings (Bradshaw, 2011, p.xxiv). Whilst greyhounds have more than 200 million scent-detecting cells in their nose, humans have a comparatively measly five million (Bush & Hessayon, 2010, p.36; Fogle, 2006, p.98). My greyhound participants could also smell more complex odours than myself due to their scent receptors being nearly 37 times larger than those in humans. They can also smell more than one scent at a time and prioritise one odour over another (Fogle, 2010, p.112).

To comprehend what they are smelling, scent is transmitted to greyhounds' olfactory bulbs, located in the forebrain. The olfactory bulb's purpose is to process odours (Bush & Hessayon, 2010, p.36). In greyhounds, the olfactory bulb is around 4 times larger than it is in humans and composes one-third of their cerebrum, which is the

part of the brain that is involved in emotions, behaviour, and memory (Bush & Hessayon, 2010, p.36; McConnell, 2002, p.72). Thus, it is the olfactory bulb that greyhounds use to respond to indices as this organ processes what a smell is and any potential outcomes.

Greyhounds have a vomeronasal organ. This organ allows them to taste certain smells that are one-million times stronger than other odours (Fogle, 2006, p.98). The vomeronasal organ is located on the roof, or hard palate, of dogs' mouths and runs along the floor of their nose (Horowitz, 2009, p.74). Connecting the nasal cavity with the upper part of the mouth, the vomeronasal organ's primary function is to detect pheromones, the body's natural chemical substances (Abrantes, 2007, p. 148). By sniffing urine, greyhounds can detect pheromones, which provides them with a bounty of information about who has peed there previously. Urine carries many different scents that informs greyhounds what dog peed there previously, their sex, and if a female dog is in heat. Pheromones detected using the vomeronasal organ are, therefore, indices as they play an important role in how greyhounds communicate with one another, influencing their potential behaviours.

Knowing this allowed me to make sense of a common greyhound behaviour I observed during fieldwork. I saw many greyhounds, mostly male, sniffing the grass, after which they would raise one of their back legs to pee. I would wonder why they would do this. What are they smelling that I cannot? What is it about that location and what is it telling them? One spot of grass at the rehoming agency was of particular interest to me because it was very fascinating to my greyhound participants. As soon as male greyhounds were taken into this dog field for their daily exercise, they would walk straight to this spot, sniff, lift their leg, pee, sniff

again to, I assume make sure that their scent was the most prominent, dig over the scent to spread it, and they would then run off. According to a staff member there, the first dog to urinate on this spot was most likely an unsprayed female, making it attractive to male greyhounds.

## **Sound**

As with their sense of smell, greyhounds' ability to hear surprised me. During my first day of fieldwork at the rehoming agency, I noticed that greyhounds would start to whine because they could hear people walking outside the kennel block. It did not matter how close a person was to the entrance. I would test this by walking past as quietly as possible and without fail, the nosier greyhounds would begin to whine. Furthermore, when entering the kennels, the closer I got, the louder the whining become. I realised after a few days there that the greyhounds were not surprised that it was me who had come to take them on their daily exercise. It was as if they could tell it was me approaching by the sound of my footsteps.

To make sense of this I turned to ethology. I also endeavoured to comprehend what certain noises sounded like to my participants in order to gain more of a greyhound-centred view of sounds that are involved in their transition, such as a lure going around the race track or a washing machine in their new home.

Dogs have better and more sensitive hearing than humans. Greyhounds can hear noises at a higher frequency than humans (Davis, 2004, p.138; Bush & Hessayon, 2010, p.37). Whilst my human ears are only capable of hearing between 20Hz and 20,000hz, greyhounds can detect sounds between frequencies of 40hz and 60,000hz (Fogle, 2010, p.113). Greyhounds are also able to hear sounds at a greater distance than humans can. Whilst I cannot hear anything further than 20 metres away,

greyhounds can hear sounds that are about 80 metres away; thus, explaining why my greyhound participants could hear me walking quietly past their kennels (Bush & Hessayon, 2010, p. 37). Next, greyhounds can tell the difference between similar noises by approximately one eighth of a tone. This gives them the ability to discern between different people's footsteps, like my own and staff at the adoption agency (Bush & Hessayon, 2010, p.37). This is something that humans struggle to do. Lastly, since greyhounds have mobile ears, they can move them towards sounds, allowing them to detect where sounds are coming from (Wells, 2009, p.199).

### **Sight**

Unlike humans, greyhounds do not rely entirely upon their sense of sight to learn about indices in their surroundings. Instead, they mainly use this sense to detect movement. Due to this, I wanted to know the difference between how I use my sense of sight compared to greyhounds. I also wanted to know the difference in our eye structure and how this influenced our vision. I, in turn, hoped to learn how dissimilar our ability to see was and what effect this had on how we saw our surroundings. For example, I desired to have a better idea of how greyhounds saw the lure as it moved around the race track, how they saw grass, and what I would look like to them. This was so I would not assume that greyhounds see like I do and be aware if I was doing so.

In some regards, I found that greyhounds' vision is inferior to my own. Greyhounds cannot see as well as humans during the day. They also cannot see a wide a variety of colours as I can since greyhounds are red-green colour blind (Bradshaw, 2011, p.229). This means they cannot distinguish red from orange or orange from yellow, but they can see shades of yellow, grey, and blue (Bradshaw, 2011, p.229; Bush &

Hessayon, 2010, p.39). Also, unlike humans, greyhounds recognise things by shape rather than by detail and texture since their lenses are too large and inflexible to see features clearly (Fogle, 2006, p.94).

Greyhounds' depth perception is not as good as humans. They cannot see stationary or close objects as well as we can. Greyhounds cannot focus on anything that is closer than 12-20 inches from their noses (Bradshaw, 2011, p.229). This is a result of their eyes being widely set apart (Bradshaw, 2011, p.228). In order to see clearly, greyhounds need to be about 6 metres away from an object (Bush & Hessayon, 2010, p.39).

However, in other regards, greyhounds do have better vision than humans. Firstly, they can see better in low and dim lights than us (Bradshaw, 2011, p.227). This is because they have more light-sensitive rods than colour cones (Bush & Hessayon, 2010, p.39; Davis, 2004, p.136). Secondly, since greyhounds are sighthounds they are better at detecting movement. Greyhounds have many retinal ganglion cells in their eyes, which gives them a heightened sensitivity to objects and movement, more so than any other dog breed. Thirdly, greyhounds also have superior peripheral vision. Whilst humans average field of view is 180 degrees, greyhounds with their narrow, tapering heads and long noses have a peripheral vision of 270 degree (Bradshaw, 2011, p.228; Coren, 2005, p.37). Yet, because greyhounds have a long nose, they are unable to detect what is right in front of them.

Our differences in eyesight became very clear to me during my first few days of fieldwork. Whilst watching a greyhound in the dog field one day, I noticed him take off like he was after something. It was not until a human participant pointed out that there was a bird did I notice what the greyhound was after. The differences in our

sense of sight was also clear when I went to see greyhounds race. Some greyhounds kept their eyes on the lure for the entire race. They did not lose sight of the lure or look elsewhere until the race was done. Meanwhile, I found it hard to keep focused on the lure as it whizzed around the track.

## **Touch**

Before I started fieldwork, I knew that one of the ways I wanted to communicate with my greyhound participants was through touch. From my previous experience with other dog breeds, I knew that this species generally like to be patted and doing so builds a bond between human and dog. Therefore, it was important for me to know how greyhounds experience touch. I also wanted to know how greyhounds use this sense to tell them about changes in their surroundings as they go through their transition from racing dog to pet.

Although not greyhounds' most well developed sense, touch is one of their most vital. Greyhounds use their sense of touch as an index to learn about their environment. What they touch becomes an index, which they then interpret to make sense of their world and changes happening in it. Furthermore, being the first sense that they develop after birth, touch is important for bonding as they help greyhounds to learn how to socialise and play with other dogs.

Greyhounds use receptors in their skin to tell the difference between the indices they touch. This includes indices, such as body movements, temperature, and pressure that can influence how they behave. Forty per cent of greyhounds' touch receptors are located in their heads (Fogle, 2010, p.11). Their upper face, jaw, nose, lips, tongue, and whiskers all have touch receptors (Fogle, 2010, p.110). The most

sensitive area of a greyhound's body are their whiskers above their eyes, below their jaw, and on their muzzle (Bush & Hessayon, 2010, p.50; Fogle. 2010, p.111).

Greyhounds use their whiskers to detect air current changes. Due to this information, I knew where greyhounds may and may not enjoy being patted.

I communicated with greyhounds a lot through their sense of touch. I did this through patting them, scratching behind their ears or their lower backs. They would let me know they liked this through chattering their teeth, and if they wanted another part of their body touched, they would move until the right spot was being scratched. Greyhounds also communicated to me using their sense of touch. They would bat my hand with their snouts or lean into me if they wanted something. For instance, if a greyhound wanted their muzzle taken off they would communicate this by rubbing their face against me.

## **Taste**

Taste is greyhounds' least developed sense. They cannot taste as well as you or I. Whilst humans have around 9,000 taste buds, greyhounds only have 1,700 (Bush & Hessayon, 2010, p.35; Coren, 2005, p.103-104). Consequently, they only have a small range of taste. They can, however, taste if something is sweet, bitter, salty, and sour. Greyhounds, like other dogs, prefer the taste of sweet over salty foods (Coren, 2005, pp.106, 109).

To taste, greyhounds rely on their sense of smell. Without their noses, greyhounds cannot tell the difference between foods. This reliance on smell to taste can be used by humans to train greyhounds. Some greyhounds are motivated by food and will do anything they can to eat what they can smell. During participant-observation I saw

many greyhound owners train their dogs using their love of food. For example, one of my human participants, Elizabeth, would use cheese, one of her greyhound, Luna's, favourite foods, to help with their recall practice. Elizabeth would walk away from Luna and would call her name. Luna would then smell the cheese and go to Elizabeth. Elizabeth would subsequently reward Luna with the cheese.

Thus, it is their senses that greyhound use to interpret indices, which they interpret to learn what might occur. Additionally, it is senses that give greyhounds their capacity to not only understand what is being communicated to them, but also communicate what they are thinking and feeling about the changes brought about by their rite of passage, such as barking through sound and body posture through sight.

## **Greyhound communication**

Greyhounds have the ability to feel many emotions, from fear anxiety and anger to happiness, excitement, and joy (Bradshaw, 2011, pp.162-168, 212; Csányi, 2005, p.69). These emotions can be the result of an internal desire or a response to indices in their environment. In turn, greyhounds alter their behaviour accordingly to their emotional state. Any changes in greyhound's behaviour can be a mode of communication that reveals their emotions. More often than not, these are nonverbal signs, including body language and body carriage; however, greyhounds can also communicate through vocalisations.

Thus, by listening to and observing a greyhound's behaviour one can potentially gain insight into what is going through their mind. It is for this reason that whilst conducting participant-observation I paid particular attention to the noises greyhounds made as well as their body movements. I also wanted to make sure I was

not misinterpreting their behaviour or overtly anthropomorphising them using my own human characteristics. In this section, I document the ways I came to discover greyhounds communicate, both from reading ethologies and being in the field. This will be divided into sections on body language, body carriage, and vocalisations. What I write here is what I used to make sense of greyhound behaviour and underlying emotions.

### **Body language**

Greyhounds' main mode of communication is body language. Body language is "all the signals that one animal transmits to another by means of one or several specific parts of the body, or its entire appearance" (Abrantes, 1997, p.56). Greyhounds will use, that is move in some way, all of their body parts to communicate, including their eyes, teeth, ears, and tail. How they move their specific body parts provides insight into what they are feeling, what they want, and what their intentions were throughout their rite of passage. To understand what greyhounds are communicating through body language, all their body movements must be read as a totalizing narrative. The following are specific greyhound body parts that I paid specific attention to whilst in the field because of what I read. These are head, ears, eyes, mouth, and tail.

#### ***Head***

Facial expressions are a major part of a dog's body language. A greyhound who is holding their head high, is typically excited, confident, and focused. On the other hand, if their head is held low, as shown by the dog over the page (figure 6.), greyhounds are usually signalling defeat or diffidence. Greyhounds may also be showing their vulnerability to a more dominant dog, or human, since they are

exposing their neck, which is their most susceptible body part. However, depending on the situation, a dog, like the other greyhound below (figure 7.), who is tilting their head may also be listening to something that has caught their interest (Bush & Hessayon, 2010, p.42). Lastly, a greyhound who is furrowing its forehead may be anxious, puzzled, or concentrating (Bush & Hessayon, 2010, p.42).



Figure 6: A greyhound with their head low, communicating defeat and diffidence (Adopt a Greyhound, 2009).



Figure 7: A greyhound who is tilting their head, which communicates that he something has caught his interest (Greyhound Crossroads, 2017).

## *Ears*

Greyhounds also use their ears to communicate. However, their ears being bent in a rose-shape impacts the degree to which they can move them. Thus, their ears are not as expressive as those of other breeds. Nevertheless, I learnt a lot about each of my greyhound participants and their emotions by watching their ear movements. Firstly, if their ears are in a relaxed and neutral position a greyhound is calm (Neilson, 2014, p.9). Next, I found that if their ears are pricked and forward, it is likely a greyhound is alert, interested, and attentive, as Luna and other greyhounds depict on the next page (figures 8-11) (Bush & Hessayon, 2010, p.42; Dodman, 2008, p.51). However, I found that greyhounds' ears must be read in conjunction with the rest of the body. This is because pricked and forward ears may also mean a greyhound is aggressive or uneasy. An uneasy greyhound will lift its ears so it can listen for sounds that can indicate what may happen next (Davis, 2004, p.61).

On the other hand, if greyhounds' ears are pinned back they are showing submission and defensiveness (Dodman, 2008, p.51; Neilson, 2014, p.9). Drawn back ears may also indicate a greyhound is uncertain, fearful, and apprehensive, as shown by the greyhounds on page 87 (figures 12-13). However, this depends on the degree to which their ears are flattened as a greyhound may also be showing they are friendly. If a greyhounds' ears are fully flattened it is likely they feel threatened or fearful (Bush & Hessayon, 2010, p.42).



Figures 8, 9, 10, 11: Greyhounds showing that they are alert by their pricked and forward ears (Sources: Brown, 2012; Elizabeth, 2016; Greyhound Crossroads, 2017).



Figures 12, 13: Luna and another greyhound with their ears pinned backing and flattened, showing they are fearful and apprehensive. Luna's ears remained like this during her first days in her new home (Sources: Elizabeth, 2016; Greyhound Crossroads, 2017).

## *Eyes*

A greyhound's eyes can communicate a lot about how they are feeling. Occasionally, I found it difficult to read their eyes because they are generally dark. However, this differed from greyhound to greyhound. Nevertheless, greyhounds' eyes provided a wealth of information into their world. This is through where they looked, whether they made eye contact, how wide they opened their eyes, and blinking. Half-closed eyes show a greyhound is appeasing, tired, or submissive (Bush & Hessayon, 2010, p.42). Soft eyes may also indicate a dog is content and relaxed (Bush, & Hessayon 2010, p.42). Next, blinking usually indicates submission or friendliness (Abrantes, 1997, p.52). If a greyhound is blinking a lot, they may be showing that they thinking hard and are confused. On the other hand, if a greyhound is holding an unblinking stare they are illustrating that they want attention (Fogle, 2006, p.133).

Following this, if a dog's eyes are darting back and forth, they are likely nervous and are trying not to look at what is unsettling them, something I saw often during fieldwork, especially after a greyhound has been taken to a new and unfamiliar environment. Similarly, if a greyhound's eyes are rotated sideways they are trying to avoid eye contact because they are feeling somewhat insecure (Dodman, 2008, p.51). This is because greyhounds, like other dogs, see direct eye contact as a challenge. Conversely, if they look directly into someone's eyes they may be issuing a threat (Dodman, 2008, p.49).

I found that it was easiest to tell if a greyhound was frightened by their eyes. Usually, a frightened greyhound's eyes were big and wide, as shown by Luna over the page (figure 14.) (Neilson, 2014, p.9). The whites of their eyes were often showing and their pupils dilated (Dodman, 2008, p.51). However, like with other

body parts, eyes cannot be read individually. All a greyhound's body must be taken into consideration because dilated pupils can also indicate a greyhound is excited and aroused.



Figure 14: Luna with big, wide eyes communicating that she was frightened during one of her first days in her new home (Source: Elizabeth, 2016).

### ***Mouth***

Greyhounds also communicate using their mouths. How a greyhound moves and holds their mouth provides a lot of insight into how they are feeling as well as their motivations. Like their other body parts, to understand what a greyhound's mouth is communicating, attention needs to be given to what the rest of their body is doing. Each individual mouth movement can indicate more than one emotion so their other body parts will confirm what they are thinking.

Like other dog breeds, greyhounds growl and bare their teeth, as shown in the picture on the next page (figure 15.). While I prepared to understand this action, I never actually saw a greyhound do this during fieldwork. The most common reason a dog

will growl is frustration. Thus, it was very important to know this so if I observed a greyhound bare their teeth I would know to leave it alone (Dodman, 2008, p.48).



Figure 15: A greyhound growling, who is baring their teeth (Source: Pinterest, n.d).

Another action I was prepared for but never encountered was snarling. A snarl is when a dog draws back its lips to show their teeth with or without a deep sound, as the following greyhound demonstrates (figure 16.) (Abrantes, 1997, p.230). Whilst doing this, their nose will also wrinkle. Depending on how a snarling greyhound is holding their mouth, they will either be showing that they are dominant or submissive. If their lips are drawn forward or vertical, or curled, then a greyhound is self-confident and dominant. They are also aggressive and are giving a warning that they may attack (Dodman, 2008, p.51; Neilson, 2014, p.9). On the other hand, if a greyhound snarls with their lips drawn back, or horizontally retracted, they are showing that they see themselves as inferior or submissive (Abrantes, 1997, p.158).



Figure 16: A snarling greyhound who has their lips curled and baring their teeth, which can indicate aggression (Source: Greytalk, 2013).

Greyhounds will show stress and anxiety in a variety of ways. They will firstly show this by yawning. Though, yawning can also indicate that a dog is tired or confused. An anxious dog may also salivate or pant (Neilson, 2014, p.9). If I saw a dog panting, I paid attention paid to their entire body because they could have also been excited or hot (Neilson, 2014, p.9). I also made sure to take into consideration what was happening in the environment, including if they had just arrived somewhere new and unfamiliar.

A greyhound can also communicate their emotions through how they move their tongue. Lip-smacking, for starters, is a pacifying gesture, which they do to appease other dogs when anxious or stressed. This is when a greyhound flicks their tongue in and out of their mouth in small licking movements, which makes a smacking noise (Abrantes, 1997, p.157; Bush & Hessayon, 2010, p.42). Secondly, a dog who has their mouth slightly open with their tongue hanging to one side is communicating

that they are relaxed, just like the greyhounds are doing on the below (figures 17-18). Anxious greyhounds are also known to lick their lips. Next, to show deference or submission, greyhounds will lick the lips of other dogs or even people. Before I knew this, I experienced a greyhound bound up to me to lick my face. I did not know why he was licking my face and I wondered what he was communicating to me.



Figures 17, 18: Relaxed greyhound with their tongue hanging to the side (Sources: Greyhound Crossroads, 2017).

### ***Tail***

Greyhounds' long tails have a language of their own. Each individual tail movement provides a wealth of information into their inner mind. I found that by paying close attention to what greyhounds' tails were doing, along with the rest of their body, I could instantly learn how they were feeling. For instance, I could tell if they were playful or relaxed by what their tail was doing. Their tails would also communicate

whether they were interested or unsure about something in their surroundings.

Greyhounds' tails never lied about what they were thinking.

In the field, I observed greyhounds hold their tails in a variety of ways. I often saw greyhounds with their tails upright. A greyhound who was doing this was usually confident or alert about an index in their environment. Aggressive greyhounds will also have their tail in the air.

Conversely, I saw greyhounds with their tails low. These greyhounds were uncomfortable, uncertain, and scared. Sometimes a greyhound with a low tail was communicating submission towards another dog. Often, a greyhound whose tail was low also had it tucked between their back legs, just like the greyhound in the picture below (figure 19.). Doing so indicated they were fearful, uncomfortable, and anxious. Therefore, it was important to be aware of what in the environment was causing them to feel this way and why.



Figure 19: A greyhound with their tail tucked between their legs. This indicates that the greyhound is feeling anxious, uncomfortable and scared. Further communicating this is the greyhound's eyes, which are wide (Greyhound Rescue, 2012).

Not long after starting fieldwork, I quickly realised that a greyhound who is wagging their tail is not necessarily happy or friendly. I found that how they hold their tail whilst wagging must be taken into consideration. There were so many ways a greyhound could do this. They could be holding their tail high as they wagged it, or it could be low towards the ground. There were more types of tail wags than just left to right and all had to be taken into account with the rest of the body.

Here are a few tail wag examples and what I came to find they mean: a still tail with only the tip wagging either means that a greyhound was agitated or exited.

Contrariwise, if a greyhound's tail was only slightly wagging and low to the ground, then they were indicating that they may be preparing to attack. Thirdly, if a greyhound's tail was straight out and wagging slowly, then something was mildly interesting them. Fourthly, if they were wagging their tail fast they were usually excited and had lots of energy. Next, loose, wide wags usually indicates that greyhounds were pleased, happy, and excited. Lastly, if the tail was in a relaxed, neutral position then greyhounds were calm (Bush & Hessayon, 2010, p.43; Neilson, 2014, p.9).

### **Body carriage**

Body carriage involves looking at how a greyhound is holding their entire body, not just one individual body part. Every day in the field I would observe how greyhounds held their bodies. By looking at all body parts together, I learnt a lot about how greyhounds were feeling and what was motivating them. Most often, the way a greyhound carried their body depends on the situation they were in. This is because their body carriage was a reaction to what they were encountering and how they had interpreted indices in their surroundings.

If a greyhound had recently arrived at the adoption agency, I noticed their bodies would be low and stiff. Their head would also be down and their tail between their legs. Photographs given to me by my human participants of their greyhounds during their first few days in their new home depict this. These are in Chapter Seven. On the other hand, I also saw greyhounds lounging upside down on their backs with their front legs bent in the air. These greyhounds had settled into their new home.

Occasionally, their tongues were hanging out whilst doing this.

A greyhound who was fearful or submissive would also carry their body differently to a dominant dog. Typically, a submissive greyhound tried to make themselves look smaller. This was by lowering their body to the ground, flattening their ears, putting their tail between their legs, breaking eye contact or having their eyes wide open to better view what is threatening them, fur on edge, and moving most of their weight onto their hind legs (Davis, 2004, p.61; Dodman, 2008, p.54; Wells, 2009, p.197; Yin, 2010, p.1). A submissive dog would also back away or roll over, exposing their belly (Davis, 2004, p.61; Neilson, 2014, p.9). They would also paw, that is lifting a paw and ‘dig’ in mid-air, which was a pacifying gesture (Wells, 2009, p.193).

Alternatively, a dominant greyhound would be upright, their ears erect and their tail up. A dominant greyhound would also make eye contact (Wells, 2009, p.197).

There were also many differences in how a calm greyhound carried their body compared to a dog who was aggressive. Firstly, a calm greyhound’s body looked soft and relaxed. On the other hand, if a greyhound was tense with stiff, straight legs, they were most likely alert or feeling aggressive; though, I only ever saw alert and no aggressive greyhounds. If a greyhound was aggressive it would have bared their

teeth and raised the hairs on their necks in order to make themselves look bigger (Abrantes, 1997, p.130).

## Vocalisations

All dogs communicate through vocal expressions. Even though they do not talk symbolically like you or I, greyhounds use vocalisations to provide basic information (Abrantes, 1997, p.49). They can be communicating about indices in their surroundings, which are bothering them, or if they want something. There are six main types of vocalisations that greyhounds use: barking, whining, howling, growling, whimpering, and teeth chattering.

Like other dogs, greyhounds bark. There are a variety of reasons why they may do so. Greyhounds bark as a defence warning, threat, or as a greeting. They may also be communicating they are excited, bored, want attention, or signalling the arrival of strangers. Moreover, a greyhound who is barking may be anxious, aggressive, or fearful (Neilson, 2014, p.9). For instance, greyhounds with separation anxiety<sup>7</sup> are likely to bark. Some greyhounds also bark whilst playing or as a way to invite others to play (Fogle, 2006, p.96). The reason why a greyhound is barking influences their pitch. Play barks, as an example, are high pitched and monotonous.

In saying this, greyhounds are generally quiet dogs who rarely bark. When I was in the field, I only heard greyhounds bark on a couple of occasions. Some of my human participants noted how surprised they were when they heard their greyhounds bark; barking was so out of character for their dogs that it took them a few minutes to

---

<sup>7</sup> Separation anxiety is when a dog is afraid of being separated from their owner.

realise that it was their greyhound making the sound. The most common reason greyhound owners gave for their dogs barking were cats by their property.

Greyhounds also howl. Howling is a long and high-pitched sound that can carry over long distances. As with other dogs, greyhounds mostly howl at night. This vocalisation most commonly signifies loneliness (Abrantes, 1997, p.76). A howling greyhound may be home by themselves or they may be trying to call another dog that is far away. It can also be a response to certain sounds, such as music. Howling is contagious. If one dog starts, others will likely join in. Adoption agency staff noted how one greyhound would start howling during the night and others would join in. When a howling greyhound left the agency, a different dog would start the evening song.

Thirdly, greyhounds communicate by whining. Based on what I heard during fieldwork, whining is the most common vocalisation greyhounds use. The main reason greyhounds whine is to gain attention (Fogle, 2006, p.132). Greyhounds may also whine if they want to play. For instance, at the rehoming agency, if I walked near the kennel block, some greyhounds would start to whine. Their whining would get louder and more consistent if I walked through the gate into the kennels. One greyhound in particular was very vocal. She would continue to whine until I either left the kennel block or I visited her.

Greyhounds also growl. Growling is a deep sound, which gives a warning to anyone who is wanting to come closer (Dodman, 2008, p.47). A growling dog can be either aggressive or playful depending on their tone and body language. Whilst watching two greyhounds at the adoption agency, I heard one greyhound growl at the other.

This greyhound growled because his companion was not behaving in a way he saw as civil so he made a noise to warn her to stop.

Greyhounds will also whimper or yelp. This may be an indication that a greyhound is in pain (Bush & Hessayon, 2010, p.41). My human participants mentioned that their greyhounds would yelp if their foot was accidentally stepped on.

Lastly, unlike other dog breeds, greyhounds will chatter their teeth. This sounds as if they are rubbing their teeth together. The best comparison to this that I can give is a rabbit clicking their teeth when they are happy if you have heard this before. Here is a video I found of a greyhound chattering <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hpv0eArZ9Hk> (fbodyforever, 2012). I came to learn that a greyhound is not in pain if they chatter their teeth, nor are they upset. A greyhound who is chattering their teeth is happy. They may be happy because their ears are being scratched or they are about to go for a walk. The first time I heard a greyhound make this noise it took me a while to realise what they were doing. I had talked to people who had experiences with greyhounds chattering their teeth, but hearing it for the first time was a completely different experience.

## **Conclusion**

For this thesis, I took a multi-disciplinary approach by combining ethnography with ethology, the science of animal behaviour. Ethology provided me with a way to cross the species boundary so I could understand and communicate with my greyhound participants despite not having a shared symbolic language. Through reading ethology literature and by being in the field, I came to learn the capacity greyhounds have to communicate about their transition from racing dog to pet and how they know and come to understand the changes happening in their life. This

includes understanding why and how they were reacting to the different indices they encountered. The knowledge I gained, therefore, provided me with insight into greyhounds' experience of their rite of passage; thus, reducing the degree of anthropomorphism.

As they are sighthounds, greyhounds naturally have physical traits and characteristics that are beneficial for a career in racing. Their long, lean, and muscular bodies are built for speed. They also have eyesight that can easily spot movement. Throughout history, these traits have been favoured and selectively bred for by both nobility and members of the lower class.

Due to the respect and preferential treatment greyhounds have received historically, certain characteristics have been embedded in the breed today. The most common of these is that today's greyhounds enjoy being comfortable. They will go out of their way to find a comfortable spot to sleep, a characteristic that helps to facilitate greyhounds' transition from a racing career into life as a domestic pet.

The physical characteristics that allow greyhounds to run fast also make it possible for them to become pets. Although greyhounds are built for speed, they are not built for endurance. This has resulted in a breed of dog who needs little exercise or space to move, even though they are big dogs. Additionally, their fur which offers no wind resistance, is low maintenance and rarely shed. Thus, they can make suitable pets.

Furthermore, their temperament contributes to racing greyhounds being able to transition into a pet life. They are easy to train so can learn new household rules quickly and easily. They are independent and think for themselves, which may also aid in house training. Next, they are affectionate, gentle, non-aggressive, and friendly

dogs. These are traits that many possible dog owners look for in a companion and therefore they aid in greyhounds being accepted into a family.

Nevertheless, the rite of passage from racing dog to pet is not necessarily easy for greyhounds. They encounter many new environments that they learn about through their senses. Greyhounds use their senses differently to you or I. Instead of learning about their surroundings using predominately their sense of sight, greyhounds use their sense of hearing and smell. These senses instantly inform them of any changes, or indices, in their environment, which indicate that something may happen.

What they encounter during the transition can influence greyhounds' behaviour. Any change in behaviour can be a form of communication to anyone who is around to receive and interpret it. Their communication can be either non-verbal through body language and body carriage or vocalisations like barking or whining. By listening to and observing greyhound behaviour, insight can be gained into how they are coping with the changes in their life, brought about by their rite of passage which is what I did during participant-observation. I could also find what traits and characteristics help or hinder greyhounds transition into becoming a pet. In the next chapter I detail what I came to discover using participant-observation during greyhounds' racing careers.



## Olive's racing career

Footsteps are approaching the kennels. I could recognise them anywhere. They belong to my human. I get off my bed of clouds (well, I heard my human referring to it as this once) and I move to the front of my safe space. It is the day that some of us will go and run with others like us. I know this because we have not been given our dinner. I hope one will be me. I want it to be.

As he gets nearer, I poke my nose through one of the wire crosses on the gate that separates us. I stare at him hoping that he will feel me doing so. I wish he will notice me. I want him to decide that today I will come with him.

It must have worked! The metal gate scrapes across the ground as he opens it. The lead, which connects me to him, makes a metallic click as it is joined to the collar around my neck. "Come on then," he says as he starts to lead me towards the trailer. I put my front paws on the side of the trailer, waiting to lift me up. He unclips me and closes another door that separates me from him before going back to where we just came from to get another one.

We are crawling to a stop. We are there. I stand from where I was lying and once again put my nose between the wire crosses on the gate. I hear the door of the car in front close. Once again, I hear the footsteps I recognise. He opens the trailer door and scratches my nose through the wires. My human opens the gate, clips me to the leash, and lifts me down. I wait for him to do the same to the other one before we are taken to the kennels. There we wait until it is our turn to run. There are others here. I can smell them. They do not smell familiar.

The time is finally here. He puts my neck and legs through the holes of my racing shirt. Next, the muzzle is put over my mouth. It feels like the wire crosses I put my nose through this morning. It is hard and not very comfortable, but my human makes it so it isn't too bad. He leads me to where I will soon start to run. He does not talk to me. He knows that I need to focus. That I need silence. I want to beat the others! My human puts me into the starting box and separates us again with another door. I can hear others moving around next to me. The whirring sounds starts. We are about to go! The wooden door that separates me from winning opens up. I sprint out.

I can feel the muscles in my legs burn as I gallop around the bends. The sand flicks backwards from under my feet. There are others in front. This cannot be! My legs move faster. I take bigger leap. I go past one. Then another. Then another. I am flying! I am first past the fluffy, which has now gone quiet. I run a little further before turning around to watch the others. Some are leaping over the fluffy. I do not know why they do this. So I stand watching them, waiting for my human to come and get me.

## Joe's racing career

We are on the way to the race track. I cannot wait to chase after the fluffy thing. I do not rest at all during our journey. I cannot wait. I am just too excited. I am in the trailer with a few others. Some of them are relaxing. How can they be relaxed? We are about to chase the fluffy. I want to get the fluffy.

We are here! We are here! The humans have come to get me and the others from the trailer. They lead us to the kennels. I leap. I jump. I tug on the leash! I just want to race. Is it my turn yet? When will it be my turn? The trainer shuts the kennel gate behind her and I eagerly await her return.

She has come! She is back! It is time! I want to get the fluffy thing! She takes me to the side of the race track where there are some others. They will try and get the fluffy. I want it. The noise has started up! The fluffy thing starts going around the track! I want it! I am not there to get it! I tug and tug and tug even more on the leash, but the trainers is holding tight. I guess I will just have to wait until the race starts.

Finally! I am in the starting box! The fluffy will soon be mine. The whirring noise starts up. The gate opens. And I am off! I stay back for a bit. Watching the others try and get it! But, they won't. Some are running very fast and in front. They go around the outside. Now that I am near the final bend I push through. I stay close to the side of the race track. I push past one after the other. The fluffy stops. I was not there first, but another ran passed so I jump on the fluffy. If I wasn't wearing the muzzle, I would be able to get it. Others join me in getting the prize.



## Chapter five: The racing life

Greyhounds are anthropologists. “They are students of behaviour, observing us in the way the science of anthropology teaches its practitioners to look at humans” (Horowitz, 2009, p.163). Throughout their rite of passage, greyhounds conduct participant-observation. For instance, during their racing career greyhounds learn how to race by both observing not only their trainers, but other greyhounds as well. They also learn about racing through participation both before their career begins and during. Participant-observation, additionally, helps greyhounds to make sense of the changes that occur in their life as they move from one life stage to the next. In the following ethnography chapters I detail greyhounds and their participant-observation during each stage of their transition, from their time racing, at the adoption agency, to their life as a domestic pet.

For each of my three ethnography chapters I have attempted to capture greyhounds’ own experience of their rite of passage. There is one chapter for each stage of their transition. In these chapters, I use a combination of ethnography, ethology, and photography. In addition, I describe the behaviour of different greyhounds I met during fieldwork to demonstrate a variety of experiences. This is so I could provide a greater understanding of what it means to be a retired racing greyhound.

Both Olive’s and Joe’s stories that begin this chapter describe what greyhounds may experience during their racing career. They detail what can happen during an average race day, including stirring greyhounds to get them excited and the race itself. They depict the strong relationship that most greyhounds have with their trainers.

Furthermore, these stories highlight that there are differences amongst greyhounds.

Some dogs, like Olive, are more interested in other greyhounds than the lure, whilst for greyhounds like Joe, the opposite is true. These are traits that I detail in this chapter.

All racing greyhounds share one common characteristic: they are working dogs whose job, between the ages of two and five, is to provide humans with entertainment by running around a race track. During their racing careers, greyhounds' lives are limited since they are shaped entirely by racing. Most greyhounds do not leave their kennels unless they are going to the race track. Thus, they do not know anything about a life without racing. Nevertheless, the interactions, or lack thereof, that each greyhound experiences during this stage of their life contributes to the pets they will become.

The aim of this chapter is to detail what greyhounds' lives are like as working and racing dogs. What we see in this chapter is that first part of greyhounds' rite of passage before they are separated and taken to the adoption agency. This is from a dog-centred perspective and examines the mutual entanglement of greyhounds with their trainers.

To do this, I detail the actors that racing greyhounds interact or do not interact with during their career. I begin by describing their relationship with trainers and other humans before discussing their relationships with greyhounds, other dog breeds, and other animals. In each of these sections I examine how these actors make greyhounds who they are and contribute to all they know, which stays with greyhounds throughout the entirety of their transition.

In this chapter, I predominately discuss what one of my trainer participants, Nigel, called “boutique trainers”. These are smaller trainers who only have a few greyhounds. Nigel, for instance, only has eight racing greyhounds, three bitches whom he breeds with, and 15 puppies. “Boutique trainers” see greyhounds as a hobby and do not race them to earn money. Thus, they only race their greyhounds once or twice a week. By comparison, larger kennels may have 50 or even hundreds of greyhounds.

## **Greyhounds’ relationships with humans**

### **Relationships with trainers**

Trainers I talked to over the course of my research have a strong bond with their greyhounds. Since these trainers only have a small number of greyhounds, they are able to spend time getting to know each of the dogs individually. This has allowed them to learn what the personality of each individual dog is like, including their likes and dislikes, what types of racers they are, and what motivates them. They also become aware whether greyhounds will make good pets and what type of pets they will be.

Their greyhounds, in return, develop a strong bond with their trainers. This is because they spend the majority of every day with their trainers, allowing greyhounds to get to know them through their daily routines. Greyhounds are with their trainers at the kennels, when they clean their enclosures, are being fed, if they are out running in a field, or are being trained. At the race track, they also spend a lot of time with their trainers. This is both before the races when they are walked to the kennels, being lead to the starting boxes, and after a race.

Because they bred their own dogs, some trainers know their greyhounds from the moment they are born. Nigel, for instance, does this. When his greyhounds reach three weeks old he begins to interact and socialise with them every day, so he can learn what each individual greyhound's personality is like. As the puppies get older, he spends more and more time interacting with and observing his dogs at both the kennels and at the race track, which is where he takes them so they can learn what the lure is. A lure is shown in the photograph below (figure 20.). If the puppies misbehave, he will give them a firm word, such as "Eh" or "hey." He will also turn on the hose to separate the dogs if they fight; from this they learn quickly how to behave and socialise as a racing dog. This additionally allows Nigel to learn which greyhounds he will need to be stricter with and softer on when he starts training them. In this way, he gains insight into what their personality is like.

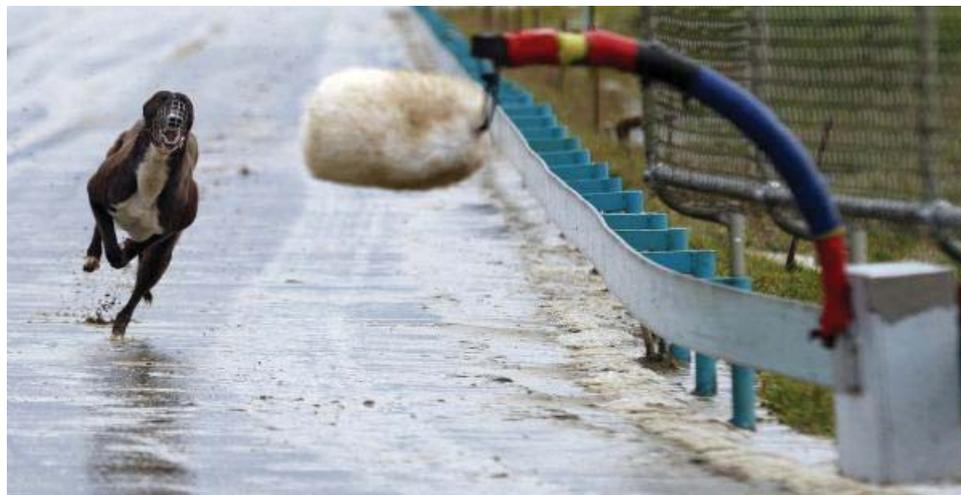


Figure 20: A greyhound chasing after a lure (Source: Field, 2012).

Nigel identifies greyhounds as having one of three different personality types. The first of these is “racers.” These greyhounds do not care about the lure at all. They just want to run with the other dogs and be in the front. “Racers” wait until they get around the corner of the track then they try and pass every other greyhound because they want to be the fastest. They are very competitive dogs.

The second type of greyhounds are “chasers.” “Chasers” are also competitive. They want to chase after anything and everything, including the lure. These greyhounds will leave the racing box the fastest and will try and push the other greyhounds away from the lure. This is so they have a better chance of getting it. They stay close to the inner-side of the race track.

Lastly, there are the greyhounds “who are born to be pets”. These greyhounds are very human focused. They will show this early on during training because they are easily excited. They are likely to bounce around and will try to get everyone’s attention. These greyhounds will lean on whichever human is around and are not picky who they do this to. The greyhounds “who are born to be pets” are, therefore, not good at racing. Nigel recalled one greyhound in particular who during a training session ran around the track before he stopped, turned around, and waited for the other greyhound to catch up.

A few trainers also teach their dogs lead manners. In other words, they teach greyhounds how to behave when being walked on a leash. Nigel starts doing this when his greyhounds are puppies. He keeps the greyhound he is walking close to his side so they do not learn how to pull on the leash. This is so greyhounds get used to walking nicely before they retire and are adopted. Nigel notes that he does not always walk greyhounds on the lead when they are out of the kennels. Nigel does

this because he does not want his greyhounds to feel insecure if they are not walked on a leash. Additionally, Nigel wants his dogs to be able to think for themselves.

“Boutique greyhound” trainers care a lot for their dogs. The trainers I talked to look after their dogs well. They are very focused on their greyhounds’ health and welfare. For instance, they do not race their dogs until they know they are ready. This not only makes them able to race for a longer period of time, but means the greyhounds are healthier and happier. In addition, these trainers are less likely to employ kennel hands because they worry about how they will treat their greyhounds. They do not want to risk a kennel hand getting angry at a greyhound if, for one reason or another, it has a bad day racing. This could traumatise greyhounds and may stop them from performing well in the future.

Since smaller trainers develop a deep relationship with their greyhounds, they are able to tell when their greyhounds want, or are ready, to retire from racing.

Generally, greyhounds are past their racing best at five years old. This is the age when most trainers will finish racing their dogs. Signs that indicate that a dog does not want to race anymore include refusing to get in the trailer and digging their feet into the ground so they do not have to move. If a greyhound is racing, they may also show this by seeing a gap between greyhounds and not diving at it. After looking for any injuries, trainers know that this is the case. Trainers will also retire their greyhounds if they have a serious injury. Nigel, on the other hand, will retire any greyhound who gets injured because he does not want to risk the injury getting worse, which will increase their suffering.

Some smaller trainers not only care about their greyhounds, but those belonging to other trainers’ as well. For example, if a greyhound has been treated badly Nigel will

take it in and look after it. He will work with the greyhound for three months until he feels they have recovered enough to be reconsidered for racing. Nigel sees no point in racing a dog who is scared and does not want to be there, despite other trainers asking when he will race these dogs. He replies that he will not do so until they are ready.

Trainers care about their greyhounds even when they no longer racing. Some trainers worry about whether their greyhounds will be accepted into the adoption agency. Furthermore, once a greyhound is made available for adoption they still worry about their former dog. Isabel, a staff member at the adoption agency I volunteered at, said she has trainers occasionally calling her to see how their dogs are doing. These trainers also worry about what kind of family their dogs will live with and sometimes they will contact their new owners to check on them. Nigel, for instance, likes to know where all his greyhounds go. Moreover, if a greyhound is not suitable for the rehoming agency, they will either keep or adopt them out themselves. This is because they do not want to euthanize their dogs. Before rehoming their greyhounds, most trainers will pay for them to be spayed or neutered.

The situation is different amongst the bigger trainers. According to the New Zealand greyhound racing website, larger trainers can have over 400 greyhounds (the Dogs, 2009). Having this many greyhounds means there will be less time for trainers to form a strong relationship with some, let alone all of their dogs. Thus, they are unlikely to learn the personality and likes and dislikes of each greyhound. The greyhounds who will see their trainers regularly are the smarter dogs who look for opportunities in a race, which makes them the better racers and, therefore, more likely to win. The trainers, in turn, spend more time training these dogs. According

to Nigel, these greyhounds will form a stronger bond with the trainers and are better looked after than the dogs who are not in the top 10 winners at the kennel. This implies that the trainers are involved in greyhound racing more for the money than for the joy of it.

The greyhounds who are not as good at racing will spend most of their time locked in their kennels. They do not get a lot of exercise. Nigel says that you can tell this easily. The greyhounds who have not been given much attention are not as well educated, they pull on their lead, and jump up on people. However, this is not always the case and does not mean that some of the larger trainers do not care about their greyhounds. All trainers who take their dogs to adoption agencies, including bigger trainers, potentially show that they care about their greyhounds by wanting them to have a life after racing.

### **Relationships with other humans**

Greyhounds frequently see humans who are not their trainer. For instance, they meet veterinarians on a regular basis. Before every race, greyhounds encounter veterinarians as they are checked for anything that could hinder them from racing, such as injuries, or anything that could enhance their racing ability, like signs of doping. Veterinarians also check if the female greyhounds are in heat because they may be distracting to the male greyhounds. If they are, they are not allowed to race. Greyhounds also see veterinarians when they go to the vet clinic. There veterinarians examine the dogs and check for any injuries or signs of illness. Due to this, greyhounds become used to being poked and prodded by people that they do not know very well or at all.

During fieldwork, I went with a trainer and one of his greyhounds to a vet clinic. He took his greyhound in for a health check because he had a lump on his ear, which he wanted investigated. The greyhound walked into the vet clinic with no signs of distress. He also did not show he was stressed or anxious whilst being examined by the vet. He did not shake, make any distress noises, or hold his tail low. When the vet examined his ear, he stood still and remained calm. He continued to stand still and show no signs of distress even when the vet took a tissue sample from the lump to examine under a microscope. This informed me that greyhounds are adaptable and are not afraid of strangers.

If greyhounds live at a large kennel where there are many dogs, trainers will employ kennel hands. This is to help look after their greyhounds because they cannot do this by themselves. Greyhounds will most likely see the kennel hands more than they do their trainer. Depending on how the kennel routines and number of greyhounds, some greyhounds will see multiple kennel hands during their career. This means that they may not see the same kennel hand again for a week. Other greyhounds at their kennels will see the same kennel hand daily.

Greyhounds are not always owned by their trainers. Their owners send them to a trainer to be trained and cared for. Some greyhound owners have a relationship with their greyhounds, whilst others do not. The owners who do not see their greyhounds own them only for the money that can be earned from greyhound racing. Nigel, on the other hand, encourages all co-owners, who have paid him to train their dog, to come and visit their dogs at his kennels. This is so that owners will form a relationship with their greyhound and, in turn, makes them more likely to keep them once they retire from racing. To further the owners' relationships with their

greyhound, Nigel lets the co-owners choose the name of their greyhound since this makes them feel more responsible for their dogs.

## **Greyhounds' relationships with other greyhounds**

It is not uncommon for racing greyhounds, apart from during races, to never interact or socialise with other greyhounds. This is because trainers keep their dogs separate from one another, and the primary forms of interaction are via smelling the, and vocalisations with, dogs in adjacent kennels. As a result, these greyhounds do not have an opportunity to communicate with and, therefore, know how to behave around other dogs. For instance, they do not learn that other dogs, including greyhounds, dislike direct eye contact, which they see as a threat. This lack of socialisation occasionally becomes apparent during and after a race because they are not used to being touched by another dog. Nigel has seen many greyhounds who show signs of anxiety and submission by making themselves appear smaller, by lowering themselves to the ground, having their tail low, or snarling.

There are some trainers, however, who let their racing greyhounds interact with each other. Nigel, for instance, does this from the moment his dogs are puppies. He keeps all of his current 15 puppies in a paddock together until they are approximately twelve months old so they can play with one another. They chase after each other and play fight. Doing so teaches them how to socialise with and behave around other dogs. If a puppy does something that one of their playmates dislikes, then they learn this through communication. One of the ways they do this is through whining when they get hurt, such as when they get nipped too hard by another puppy.

Although it is uncommon, Nigel has his young dogs interact with his adult racing greyhounds. This occurs once they reach twelve months of age by moving them from the paddock into the kennels permanently. Every morning when he cleans the kennel block, he releases every greyhound at once. This is so they can learn from one another not only how to socialise, but what is like to race. Nigel's greyhounds spend their morning chasing after, trying to get in front of, and leaping on each other. From watching and physically interacting with one another, they learn racing techniques with one another. For example, they learn how to corner while chasing each other around the paddock, which reduces the risk they will injure themselves during a race since the corner is where most injuries occur.

Many of the "boutique trainers" keep at least one retired greyhound. These dogs teach the racing greyhounds socialisation skills. Nigel has two of his own retired racing greyhounds, one male and one female. Both greyhounds, Nigel says, are the bosses of the place. The male greyhound especially is in charge. He growls at the other dogs if they do something he does not like. This greyhound, Nigel told me, is bolshie and very bossy, which made him unsuitable for the adoption agency. These greyhounds have free roam of Nigel's property and sleep around the kennel block. Thus, they socialise with the racing greyhounds and teach them dog behaviour.

## **Greyhounds' relationships with other dog breeds**

Most racing greyhounds have never seen or interacted with another dog breed before retirement, unless their trainers own one. Nigel, however, also has a pet Fox Terrier/ Jack Russell cross named Possum. Nigel owns him because he wants his greyhounds to learn how to socialise and interact with other dogs, especially small dogs.

Possum, according to Nigel, is in the boss of the greyhound puppies. Possum lets them know this by snarling and growling at them when they misbehave, such as when they run and charge at him or look him in the eyes. The greyhounds react to this communication by leaving him alone; although some greyhounds learn this faster than others. Interacting with Possum, therefore, teaches the greyhound puppies how to socialise. These are skills that will remain with them throughout their transition and mean they will have less difficult moving on to the next stage of life.

## **Greyhounds' relationships with cats and other animals**

Many greyhounds have also never seen a cat or any other animal before their retirement unless their trainers have them. Nigel, however, has many animals on his property, such as lambs, cows, and chickens. The greyhounds, he states, do not like the cows and avoid them as much as possible because they find them scary. Some greyhounds, however, also have limited contact with the other animals.

How these interactions between greyhounds and other animals work out depends on the personality of each individual greyhound. Generally, greyhounds that can interact safely with other animals do not chase after the lure whilst racing. These are the “racers”, who are more interested in beating the other greyhounds and not interested in chasing animals. Nigel's retired female greyhound is a racer in this sense. As such, she can be around his daughter's nine pet Flemish giant rabbits and many guinea pigs. The dog will peak into their hutch, but she does not find them interesting, and will quickly leave them alone and go to sleep.

# **Greyhounds' relationships with the environment**

## **Relationships with kennels**

Racing greyhounds spend the majority of each day in their own kennel. Whilst in there, greyhounds have very little human contact. Trainers or kennel hands rarely enter their enclosures if the greyhound is in there unless absolutely necessary. They will only clean a greyhound's kennel if the dog is outside. Trainers want greyhounds to know that their own kennel is their safe space, something that they quickly learn. Greyhounds, therefore, know that when they are in the kennel, they will never be bothered. In saying this, racing greyhounds, like their ancestors and retired counterparts, love comfort. Sometimes the kennels do not fulfil this need. Nigel notes that occasionally some of his greyhounds will escape from the kennel block to be later found sleeping on a couch.

Because greyhounds spend a lot of time in their kennels, greyhounds quickly learn the routine of the place. They learn what time that every daily activity occurs. Greyhounds know when they are going to have their daily exercise, when their kennel will be cleaned, and when they will be fed. Nigel notes that if he is twenty minutes late to feed his greyhounds they will howl until they are fed.

Some trainers will bring their greyhound puppies into the kennels so they can learn the daily routine. Nigel does this when he considers his puppies are ready. He brings two puppies into the kennels at a time. Whilst in the kennels, the puppies watch the older greyhounds, observing what they are doing and when. This gets them used to what happens at the kennels so when they move there permanently it is less of a shock. Nigel keeps the puppies at the kennels for about a month before returning

them to the paddock where their litter mates are. After this, Nigel will bring another two greyhound puppies to the kennel block so they too can learn the routine.

### **Relationships with paddocks**

Greyhounds do not always spend all day in their kennels. They also have time in a dog paddock where they have their daily exercise. How often and long they spend in the paddock depends on each individual trainer. Time in the paddock can also be a training exercise so greyhounds learn to run together like they would during a race.

Nigel gives his greyhounds daily exercise in a dog paddock, two dogs at a time.

What each greyhound does there depends on their own individual personality. Some of his greyhounds will run up and down the paddock constantly until they are returned to their kennel. These greyhounds tend to over work themselves until they are exhausted. Other greyhounds will only run around the paddock a couple of times before either walking or exploring the area. Some of Nigel's other greyhounds do not like to run when in the dog paddock. Instead, they spend most of the time lying in the grass because they do not like to work. One greyhound will only walk if Nigel walks around with him.

### **Relationships with race track**

Most trainers will take their young greyhounds to visit a race track before they begin their racing career. Trainers do this because they want to expose their greyhounds to the racing environment. This is so that their first-time racing is not such a shock.

Some trainers will bring their greyhounds to a race track two or three times during

training; however, Nigel does not do this because he does not want to overwhelm his greyhounds before they begin their racing career.

Each trainer has their own methods as to how they will expose their greyhounds to the race track. Some trainers, for example, will put their dogs in the pens so they get used to what they are like. Other trainers, however, find that this only causes their greyhounds to become bored. Instead, they prefer their dogs watch the lure go around the track once. After this, they get their dogs to put their paws on the lure so they know what it feels like.

Some trainers will also have their greyhounds run around the track. This is so they not only get used to the feel of the sand loam race track, but also learn how to corner. To teach his greyhounds how to corner, Nigel stops the lure before the corner. As they get better and better at hitting the corner, he will increase the speed of the lure. Doing this teaches the dogs how to run around the corner safely, for instance they learn not to run around it at full speed. The corners of race tracks, like the one in the photograph (figure 21.) below, are where most injuries happen so teaching them how to corner reduces the risk of this happening during a race.



Figure 21: The corner of a race track, which is where most injuries happen (Source: Formproratings, 2017).

To get to the race track greyhounds either travel in a car or a trailer. All racing greyhounds become used to travelling in a vehicle because they travel to race tracks all around the country. Their first time in a trailer is not always easy for a greyhound. Some greyhounds may vomit or defecate. They quickly learn not to do this again because they have to sit in it for the rest of their journey.

How greyhounds get in the vehicle depends on each individual dog and their trainer. Some greyhounds will jump into vehicles themselves. Conversely, some greyhounds have been taught by their trainers not to jump into a car or trailer themselves. This is to prevent any injuries. Instead, these greyhounds will put their front paws onto the vehicle and their trainers will then lift their rear end.

According to Nigel, greyhounds love going to the races. They know when they are going to race and become excited. The greyhounds show this by jumping around and running to the car before Nigel can get there. Greyhounds become more excited when they get close to the race track; thus, showing they know where they are. They communicate this by whining and beginning to move around. If greyhounds do not like racing or do not want to do so then they will not race. They may not leave the starting box, for instance. They may also show this by running through the middle of the track or in the opposite direction they are supposed to.

Every racing greyhound knows their race day routine. It is repetitive and happens, depending on how often their trainer decides to race them, once or more a week. As soon as they arrive at the race track, trainers take their dogs straight to their kennels. There greyhounds are given water. Some trainers try to force their greyhounds to drink, whilst others let them decide if they want to. Each greyhound is weighed and also checked by a vet to see if they are fit to race. After this, greyhounds stay in the

kennel for a few hours before their race begins. Before each race begins, greyhounds also know that they need to be dressed. They wear a racing vest, which has their race number on it, and a wire muzzle is put over their mouth and nose. This is in case a greyhound decides to attack another dog in the competitive racing environment.

Right before a race, some greyhounds need to be stirred up. These greyhounds are the “chasers”. “Chasers” are taken to the side of the track where they watch the lure go around once and become excited. They will jump around and bark loudly.

Trainers hold on tight to their greyhound’s leash because if they do not, the greyhounds will run off to catch the lure.

Other greyhounds do not need to be teased. Thus, they stay in the kennel until their race is about to begin. These greyhounds tend to be “racers”. They do not like to be bothered before a race. One of Nigel’s greyhounds, for example, dislikes being talked to before a race. She shows this by staring ahead and ignoring everything that is happening, including her trainer, until a race is over.

Whilst racing, not all greyhounds show interest in the lure. At the end of each race, the “chasers” will leap on the lure. The “racers” do the opposite. They are more interested in what the other greyhounds are doing and beating them. At the end of the race these greyhounds run past the lure. They stand and watch their running mates play with it.

However, no matter whether a greyhound is a chaser or a racer, each dog gives everything they have whilst racing. They use their muscular legs to take long strides around the track as sand flies out from under their feet, which is shown in this YouTube video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nW4MceFOFkQ&t=79s>

(Greyhound Racing, 2013). It looks as if they are flying. The photographs on page below (figure, 22-24.) show their power. After the race, all greyhounds are tired and puffing. However, some still want to race again. They try and pull back to the starting boxes, which the photographs on page 126 display (figure 25-26.).

After the race, trainers will go and get their greyhounds, hook them to the leash, and take them back to the kennels. Once there, trainers take off their muzzles and let them drink water. They also hose the sand of their feet to prevent infection occurring. At the end of the racing day, most trainers drive straight home. Nigel gives them their dinner when they return. Some trainers stop at McDonalds on the way home after a race to get their greyhounds a soft serve ice cream. One of Nigel's pervious greyhounds was once given an ice cream on the way back from a race, since he would always whine when near McDonalds, or if he did not get, a soft serve ice cream on their return home.



Figure 22, 23, 24: Greyhounds run around an oval sand loam track. These photographs show the power they have whilst racing (Sources: Google Images, n.d; Mercer, 2016; Wilson, 2016)



Figures 25, 26: Greyhounds start racing from starting boxes like these ones (Sources: Google Images, n.d; Palmerston North Greyhound Racing Club, n,d)

## Conclusion

Racing greyhounds have a structured and mostly sheltered life. They go from the kennels to the race track and back again. Most racing greyhounds have never visited anywhere else before, including a house. Furthermore, racing greyhounds know what happens when as their routines have been the same since they were puppies due to indices that occur. This is because even before they start racing at two years old, greyhounds have been prepared for the racing life. They eat at the same time every day. They exercise at the same time each day. Additionally, almost every week greyhounds race with other greyhounds.

Greyhounds are shaped through the relationships that they have. These relationships, or lack thereof, are with their trainers, other humans, other greyhounds, different dog breeds, and other animals such as cats. The strongest of these relationships are with their trainers. Their trainers are the people with whom they have the most contact, seeing them every day. Since most trainers breed their own dogs, greyhounds have seen trainers from birth. Apart from their trainers, the only other living beings that most racing greyhounds know are other greyhounds. Few greyhounds have encountered other breeds of dogs or other animals before their rite of passage begins.

Most greyhounds enjoy their time racing. If they do not want to race, greyhounds will not do so. Every dog approaches races in different ways. Some greyhounds, “chasers”, are interested in the lure and want to catch it. Other greyhounds, “racers”, are more focused on the greyhounds they are racing against and they try to beat them. These are characteristics that will remain with greyhounds throughout their transition and are likely to influence the encounters they have in the proceeding life stages.

When greyhounds retire at around five years old many are physically separated from racing life, which is the only life that they know, by being taken to the adoption agency. They will never see a race track or race again. They will never see their trainers again. Thus, begins their rite of passage into life as a domestic pet. In the next chapter, I discuss what happens at an adoption agency and the subsequent changes that occur in their life.

## Olive at the adoption agency

My human has taken me somewhere strange. It smells different. The sounds are different. It is all unrecognisable. Even the others like me smell different. I do not know who they belong to. I should have known something was up when he went to get me this morning. I knew it was not race day, but I wanted attention from him. I think about my bed of clouds where I will sleep when we get back

The humans here are unfamiliar. Their scent is like nothing I have ever sniffed before. They are not so bad. But, I prefer how my human smells. I stay close to him. Or I was until one of the strangers takes my leash. Another human is holding the lead, connecting them to a small one. It is the size of the little one my human has, but is more fluffy. I am walked alongside it. I look at the new humans. I wonder what they are doing. What they are thinking. It is not long until I see my human again. He had been waiting near where there are others. I heard barking, but I cannot see them. They smell similar, but different.

I have been taken into a strange, enclosed room. It is bigger than my safe space and also has no wire. It is slippery under my feet. My human is here with me, but my leash is being held by one of the new humans. I want my human to hold my leash. Instead, he sits in the weird way he sits and he watches me. So I look at him back. I am shaking. My tail is between my legs. I look down. I have something different over my nose and mouth. It fits just

like the old wire one, but it is not as hard or scratchy. I do not know why I am wearing it. There is no other one around.

The human that is not holding me has let out a small, fluffy thing. So that is why I am wearing this thing. It has four legs like the small one I saw earlier. But, it makes a meow sound and jumps on to the table. It smells different too. I cannot describe it. It is unlike any smell I have sniffed before. I look at it once, trying to understand what it is. But, a spray of water hits my face so I turn away. I do not look at the strange, meowy, something the humans call a cat again. My human says “goodbye” and pats me before walking away. I continue shaking.

## Joe at the adoption agency

I have been taken to a new place. The trainer brought me here along with a couple others. There are new humans here. I want their attention. I jump around. I leap around some more. I stare. Instead of noticing me, they have gotten a small one and are walking me with it. It is so unfamiliar. It is littler than me. Why is it so small? It has more fur than me. It smells odd. I look at and try and sniff it. I get pulled away. I keep walking. I do not stare at it again.

I have now been taken to a place where the floor is weird under my feet. It is slippery. But, I do not mind. One of the new people has let out a four-legged fluffy. It meows. I want to look at it. I keep trying to look at it. Every time I look at it, I get sprayed with water. Why do they do this?

I am taken to the kennel. There are others like me here. But, they smell different. The kennels are different too. They smell different. But, yet they are familiar so I drink from the bucket, walk onto the bed, and curl up. It feels soft under me.

It is the next day. I am in a big grassy area. I tugged on the leash on the way here. I was pulled back each time! Hurry up human! I want to run! I want to enter through the wire thing so I can run! Why won't you let me in first!

I enter through the gate after them and they unclip me. I walk with my nose to the ground. There is one spot in the grass. I sniff it. It smells wrong. So I spray it. I sniff again. I dig the ground. Now it smells right. There is another like me here too. I run at it and we chase each other around. Back and forth. Back and forth.



## Chapter six: Liminality at the adoption agency

In Olive's and Joe's stories I describe what greyhounds may experience whilst at the adoption agency. Here, greyhounds see a small dog and a cat for the first time in their lives. Additionally, even though greyhounds have the same experiences during their stay, the stories indicate that each greyhound is an individual with their own personality so they will react differently to the new situations. Whilst Joe, an extraverted greyhound, coped well with the changes in his life, Olive, who is more introverted, was overwhelmed and anxious with being separated from her owner and her racing life.

Leaving the racing kennels and arriving at the adoption agency signifies the next stage of a greyhound's rite of passage. They are physically separated from their previous role as a racing dog. This means that they have left all they have ever known behind. They will not see the kennels, the race track, or their trainers again. They will also never race again. This makes them individuals who are experiencing a transition.

Since greyhounds have been separated from their racing life by arriving at the adoption agency, they are no longer racing dogs; however, they are also not yet a pet. Their role is, therefore, ambiguous and undeterminable. Thus, during their stay at the adoption agency greyhounds are in a state of liminality. Whilst liminal, they are deconditioned and reconditioned in order to prepare them for their future life as a pet. Greyhounds remain in this state until they are adopted, which marks their next stage of their rite of passage.

A greyhound's transition into becoming a pet begins as soon as they arrive, even before their trainer leaves. During their first hour, greyhounds are exposed to many new actors that they have never encountered before. This occurs during the temperament tests and signify to greyhounds that their world is changing.

The first of these temperament tests is designed to assess whether a greyhound will be accepted into the adopted agency and can, therefore, begin their transition. This temperament test involves investigating how a greyhound behaves around small dogs. Most retired greyhounds have never encountered another breed of dog before so this is a completely new experience for them.

Temperament testing, thus, involves walking muzzled greyhounds alongside a small dog. During these walks of about six minutes, greyhounds' reaction to and behaviour around these dogs are assessed by adoption agency staff. This helps the staff to decide whether greyhounds would be suitable for life as a pet. If a greyhound can walk on a leash alongside a small dog without paying too much attention to or attacking it, then they pass the temperament test and will be able to move onto this stage of their rite of passage.

On the other hand, if a greyhound shows they are very interested in a small dog by trying to get at it or staring intently at it, then they fail. If this happens, the greyhound will not be accepted into the programme and is not made available for adoption. It is, thus, up to the trainer to decide what to do next with their dog - whether they will keep the greyhound as a pet, adopt the dog out themselves, or euthanize it. Advice is given to trainers about how to train their dog so that it may pass a temperament test at a later date. These dogs, therefore, do not go through the

same rite of passage as greyhounds who are accepted immediately to the adoption agency.

As with the small dogs, most greyhounds have never seen a cat before. Thus, there is no telling what a greyhound would do if they are adopted into a home with a pet cat as they can resemble the lure greyhounds are trained to chase after so they may try chase and kill them as well. It is for this reason that during the first day at the adoption agency greyhounds are introduced to the resident cat, Bee, in a cat temperament test. How greyhounds behave around Bee during this test help adoption agency staff to decide whether they could live with a cat.

In this chapter I will discuss the different actors retired racing greyhounds encounter and have a relationship with whilst at the adoption agency. I will discuss how they influence greyhounds' behaviour to change over the course of their stay. The chapter will be divided into the following sections: greyhounds' relationships with humans, greyhounds' relationships with other greyhounds, greyhounds' relationships with other dog breeds, greyhounds' relationships with cats and other animals, and greyhounds' relationships with the environment.

## **Greyhounds' relationships with humans**

### **Relationships with adoption agency staff**

The primary role of adoption agency staff is to rehome as many greyhounds as possible, not to rehabilitate the dogs to adapt to pet life. This does not mean that staff do nothing to prepare greyhounds for living in a home. They do what they can to teach greyhounds some rules that they may need to know once they are adopted. For instance, staff teach the dogs in their care that they should wait for people to walk

through a gate or door first. Staff do this by pulling their leash back if greyhounds try and enter before them, then walk in first. Greyhounds do not always understand this. Some dogs will keep trying to push past the staff to go through the entrance first. Staff, though, will not let them do this.

Staff will communicate to greyhounds if their behaviour is unacceptable. For instance, if a greyhound is intensely staring at something, like the resident cat, they are sprayed with water. This is to teach them that this sort of behaviour is not appropriate as a pet, since a cat is not a lure or a toy. Greyhounds respond to this by learning to ignore whatever they had been looking at. Some greyhounds learn from this faster than others. Whilst one greyhound will only need to be sprayed once, others may need to be sprayed with water two or three times.

Staff will also communicate to greyhounds when their behaviour is acceptable. If a greyhound is well behaved and does something that was asked from them, such as coming when called, then they are given a treat. Thus, good behaviour is rewarded and reinforced. This teaches greyhounds that if they were to behave this way again, they are also likely to be rewarded again. Over time, when greyhounds do something staff see as good, treats will be rewarded less and less as the behaviour becomes embodied.

During their stay, which can last for a few weeks, greyhounds form relationships with adoption agency staff. They see each other every day and spend time together. If greyhounds are in the kennels, staff will occasionally visit them, but not often. This is because this may teach greyhounds that they can get whatever they want when they communicate for it by using certain behaviours, such as whining. Staff also spend time with greyhounds in the paddock, where they are taken every day for

their daily exercise. In the paddock, staff and greyhounds play with each other. Staff run and call the greyhounds to follow them. Greyhounds will similarly entice play by bounding up to staff members, running past, and walking back around. They also lean on or nudge staff to receive pats.

The relationships formed between staff and greyhounds is clear to see. Some greyhounds have bonded with certain staff members more than others. When in the paddock, they will go to their favourite staff member the most for attention and lean into them. Occasionally, greyhounds will closely follow around the field since they do not want to leave their side. If this person is lying in the grass, they will lie down and cuddle in with them.

### **Relationships with other people**

As I had never been around a greyhound before starting this research, I was worried that I would struggle to form relationships with any of my potential greyhound participants. I was also nervous that I would not be able to show a greyhound dominance if I needed to control a dog's behaviour when looking after them. This fear was exacerbated because I have never owned a dog before or walked one on a leash.

On my first day at the adoption agency I was put straight to work as I was asked to walk a greyhound. I was shown how to prepare a greyhound for their walk. I had to put on their martingale collar<sup>8</sup>, leash, and muzzle. To do this, I was instructed to

---

<sup>8</sup> A martingale collar is used on greyhounds because they get tighter when pulled. This makes them less likely to fall off a greyhound's long and narrow head than normal collars. These collars are also known as limited slip collars (Gaskins, 2014, p.86).

straddle Eros, one of the male greyhounds, and slip the martingale collar over his head. Next, I clipped the leash to the ring that is on the loop part of the collar. Lastly, I put on his muzzle. I adjusted the strap so it would have a gap of two centimetres between the muzzle and Eros' nose so he could be comfortable.

I was nervous whilst doing this because I did not know what I was doing. This caused me to fumble with the muzzle and took a while to get Eros ready for his walk. However, Eros did not respond or seem to mind that I did not know what I was doing and stood there patiently. He was also not worried that I was a stranger. The only problem I believe that Eros had was I was taking too long because as soon as I started leading him to the paddock, he pulled on his leash and would not stop doing this until he had been released.

When I started walking Eros, I was not doing it in a way that would communicate to him I was in charge. I was holding the leash tightly in one hand. Eros' response to this was to sniff and pull me to wherever he wanted to go. Isobel, the staff member I was with, noticed what was happening. She said that I lacked confidence in my dog walking ability and I was communicating this to Eros. She stopped walking her greyhound and demonstrated the best way to walk dogs. She noted that I should hold the top of the leash in my right hand, have the leash go over my body, and hold the bottom of the leash in my left hand. This would mean I would walk Eros on my left side. Isobel also said that my hand should be more relaxed and firm, not stiff like it was. This, she explained, would help me to gain more control of Eros. As I adjusted myself I found that she was right. Eros stopped pulling on the leash and he walked closer to my side. Thus, I appropriately communicated to him that he should not pull on his leash, which would have helped him with his rite of passage to life as a pet.

I spent most of my time at the adoption agency in the dog paddock with the greyhounds, interacting and playing with them. Greyhounds love to play, but not all of the dogs knew how to do this because they had not been taught to do so during their career. I, therefore, had to teach or entice these dogs to plays. One of the ways I did this was running around the dog paddock whilst calling the name of the greyhound I was with. The greyhounds seemed to love that I played with them this way since it was like how they played with other greyhounds. They would sprint or bound at me with their tail wagging and we would then chase each other around the paddock (actually, mostly they chased after me). Greyhounds would later begin to entice me to play in a similar way by running straight for me as shown in the picture (figure 27.) below.



Figure 27: Greyhounds would entice me to play by running at me just as this greyhound is doing (Source: Isabel, 2016).

I would also start playing with the greyhounds by throwing a soft toy, which they would chase after. Though, this game always quickly became individual play as they would not bring the toy back to me. They would, instead, start to fling the soft toy around and play fetch by themselves. One dog, Kanye, however, had been taught to play fetch so he would bring it back for me to throw again.

Even though greyhounds would mostly play with a soft toy by themselves, I found that they would occasionally entice me with the soft toy as I would do to them. Kai was one greyhound who would do this. One day after his turn in the dog paddock Kai was given a soft toy pig. He noticed that I was watching him in his kennel so he walked up to the gate with the pig in his mouth. He then turned around, walked to his bed, and laid down. Seconds later he was up again walking back to the gate with the pig still in his mouth. The photograph series (figures 28-30.) over the page shows Kai doing this. Kai repeated his loops about five times before I left to go walk another greyhound.

The longer I spent volunteering at the adoption agency, the more confident I became around greyhounds. As my confidence in myself grew, so did the greyhounds' confidence in me. Greyhounds started to behave themselves around me more. For instance, Eros pulled on the leash less and less each time I walked him. Other greyhounds started to let me walk through a door or gate before them. This was because I always stopped greyhounds from entering in front of me by pulling them back with their leash so I could walk through first. Subsequently, greyhounds and I formed a relationship. From this, they learned how to best communicate with me in order to get my attention or whatever else they wanted. I also learnt how to communicate with them.



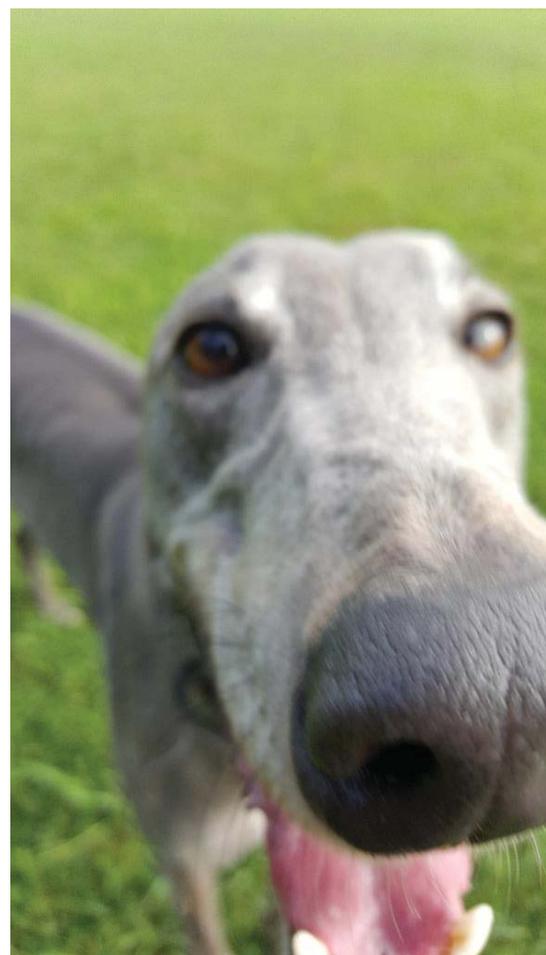
Figures 28, 29, 30: Kai enticed me to play with a pig in a similar way I did to him in the dog paddock  
He continued to walk around his kennel with the pig in his mouth (Source: Paap, 2016).

As each greyhound had their own personality, they would all communicate with me in different ways. Extraverted greyhounds would jump around and whine until I noticed them. One of the more extraverted dogs I meet whilst volunteering at the adoption agency was Flick. Whenever someone entered the kennels, Flick would start whining and she would get louder and louder the longer it took for people to pay attention to her. Flick whined so much that during the first week of fieldwork I quickly learnt how to distinguish her whine from the other greyhounds. As she did this, Flick would jump around her kennel and put her front paws as high as she could on the gate wires. Occasionally, she would stop and tilt her head to see if I, or any other human, had heard her cries for attention. I caught her doing this one day and managed to take the following photograph (figure 31.). Even though the photograph does not show this well, Flick's pupils were dilated, which indicated that she was excited to see me.



Figure 31: Flick trying to get my attention by putting her paws on the kennel wires (Source: Paap, 2016)

Flick would also try and get my attention when in the dog field, showing that she had formed a relationship with me. Every time I took Flick there for her daily exercise, as shown by the photographs (figure 32, 33.) below, she would come towards me with her mouth relaxed and open as well as her eyes wide, which stared right at me. This communicated to me that she was happy and wanted my attention. Even though Flick had the choice to run anywhere and do whatever she wanted, she would always look back at me as if she was checking that I was still around. Moreover, every couple of minutes, Flick would bound straight at me, turn around at the last minute, then walk back to my side where she nuzzled into me. She also sometimes nudged my hand to communicate with me that she wanted pats before trotting off again.



Figures 32, 33: Flick would try and get my attention in the dog paddock by standing in front of and staring at me (Source: Paap, 2016).

Shy greyhounds, conversely, would try and get my attention in a different way. If in the paddock, they would quietly come up next to or nuzzle me with their noses if they wanted me to pat them. They would also never go far away from me, which showed that they were most likely anxious about the changes in their lives and not being with their trainer anymore; thus, they were using as a sense of security. In the kennels, these greyhounds would not whine or bark like the extraverted greyhounds if they wanted something. Instead, they would silently walk up to the bars and put their noses through as in the photograph (figure 34.) below.



Figure 34: One of the quieter greyhounds who would try and get attention from me by quietly putting their nose through the bars (Source: Paap, 2016).

Before being adopted, all greyhounds had the opportunity to meet their new family. To do this, greyhounds are taken to the dog field by adoption agency staff along with their prospective adoptees. There greyhounds run around so owners can get a feel for what the dog is like. After this, greyhounds are taken to the office. During these situations, greyhounds can interact with their new family members. How greyhounds react to these strangers depends on their personality. The quiet dogs are likely to stay next to the staff members, whom they have come to know. On the other hand, the more extraverted greyhounds try and get the new human's attention by walking up to and nudging them.

Greyhounds do have a say into who adopts them and, thus, show their agency. One greyhound, for instance, refused to be adopted by a few people. This was occurred mainly with males. She also did not like any family whom had children. She showed this by avoiding and refusing to go near them when they came to see if she was the right dog for them to adopt. Staffs recommendation for this was for them to see what another greyhound was like. Thus, they repeated the adoption process with another dog.

### **Greyhounds' relationships with other greyhounds**

During their racing career, most greyhounds were interacted exclusively with their own breed of dog. As a result, they have only been socialised and, in turn, are only familiar with their own kind. This familiarity is clear from the moment greyhounds arrive at the adoption agency. They do not show any signs of being stressed around each other, such as having their tails between their legs.

This was the most noticeable when two greyhounds would exercise together in the same paddock. Greyhounds would mostly play with each other instead of by themselves. When greyhounds play, they stay in an upright position. They also do not lower themselves or play-bow<sup>9</sup> to initiate play. Instead, to get another greyhound to play they charge straight at each other. Greyhounds then pressure their playmate by running into and nipping them. After this, greyhounds will chase one another around the field. They do this by running in circles and back and forth, up and down the field. Greyhounds will play like this for approximately five minutes until they get tired. Signs of this include greyhounds running slowly or they stop playing altogether. Occasionally, greyhounds will have a sudden burst of energy and begin to play again. However, this only occurs for another five minutes before they become tired for a second time. Whilst watching them, nevertheless, I could tell that greyhounds enjoyed playing this way by their wagging tails and pricked ears.

If greyhounds are put in separate paddocks they also play with each other. They run straight to the conjoining fence. They then run up and down the fence alongside each other. If one greyhound turns around and goes back in the opposite direction, the other greyhound will do the same. They will run the full length of the fence for only a few seconds before becoming tired. This was noticeable because greyhounds would start to take short cuts by turning around early to go back in the other direction. The distances run would get shorter and shorter with each lap. Whilst doing this, greyhounds would be very happy. They communicated this to me by

---

<sup>9</sup> This is when a greyhound's head is lower than their rear end so it is almost at ground level. This makes greyhounds appear to be sloping down from back to front. A bowing dog's paws and ears are extended forward whilst their tail is upright and wagging slowly (Dodman, 2008, 53, 54).

showing the white rims of their eyes and they wagging their tails in a wide and loose manner.

However, not all greyhounds get along with one another. One dog I encountered, Iris, during fieldwork struggled to communicate and get along with the other greyhounds. Iris would charge at any greyhound she was sharing a field with in a way that I, and the staff at the adoption agency, viewed as unplayful. Iris would nudge at the other greyhound aggressively. She would also snarl and occasionally bark, which indicated to me that she was attempting to establish dominance over the other greyhound. Her aim for this behaviour was most likely to try and get the other greyhound to race with her. Iris would most likely have used their behaviours during her racing career. It was as if she was refusing to eliminate this behaviour now she was transitioning into pet life, which informed me that she may have be struggling with her rite of passage.

Due to her behaviour, there were only a few greyhounds that Iris could run with in the same paddock. These were greyhounds who would not stand for Iris' behaviour. One of these greyhounds was Scotty. Scotty was always more interested in rolling around in the grass on his back or running around by himself than playing chase with Iris. If Iris approached Scotty by charging aggressively at him, he would respond by nipping and growling at her. After this, Scotty would continue with whatever he was doing. In doing this, Scotty was teaching Iris how to behave around other greyhounds as well as other dog breeds; thus, potentially helping Iris with her transition into becoming a pet.

Iris was also fostered for six months. She went to stay with a family who had two greyhounds of their own. The hope for this was that Iris would learn what it is like to

be a pet. This included getting her used to being inside a house, house rules, and helping her to learn how to behave around other dogs. Living with this family helped Iris since she was later adopted by another family and, therefore, moved onto the next stage of her rite of passage.

Sometimes greyhounds did not want to play with one another. This usually occurs if they have a soft toy. Whilst in the field with another dog, I found that if a greyhound had a soft toy they would not share it. Instead, they would run around the paddock, throwing the soft toy in the air. If the other greyhound went near them, they would run off in the opposite direction to communicate that they did not want to play.

An exception to this was Kanye. Kanye was overly protective of the duck he was throwing around. However, instead of keeping the duck away from the other greyhound, he would run near him as if he was showing it off. Usually, his playmate was not interested in Kanye and his duck, which they showed by running off in the opposite direction.

## **Greyhounds' relationships with other dog breeds**

At the adoption agency, there is more than one breed of temperament tester dog. These dogs range in size and include a Dalmatian, a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, and a three-legged Papillion. For the initial temperament tests, smaller dogs are used because they resemble the lure that greyhounds have been bred and trained to chase after. As such, it is important to see if greyhounds arriving at the adoption agency will do this to tiny dogs. This, in turn, dictates whether small dog breeds will be safe around them.

During participant-observation at the adoption agency, I was unable to participate in any temperament tests with newly arrived greyhounds. This was because the staff thought that the greyhounds would be stressed enough as it is so the fewer people around, the better. The staff also wanted to gain an accurate assessment of how greyhounds behaved around the temperament testers so having me there as well may have been distracting to the dog.

I was, however, able to watch the new greyhounds go to and come back from their temperament tests. From where I stood, I could see that greyhounds were usually somewhat curious about the small dog walking alongside them, shown by glancing sideways at it. I never saw greyhounds show more interest in other dogs than this.

Maisie was one greyhound who did this. Near the end of her temperament test, I saw that Maisie glanced occasionally at Grace, the spaniel. This showed she was somewhat interested in Grace. However, she also had her tail between her legs and her head close to the ground. This made me think that Maisie was either anxious about being around a strange looking dog or because she was unsure about being in a new and strange environment. Either way, this showed that she did not have much interest in Grace and she certainly did not want to attack her. Therefore, Maisie passed her temperament test.

During my time volunteering at the adoption agency, no dog was rejected for failing a temperament test. In fact, no greyhound had done so in a long time. However, greyhounds do occasionally tentatively pass. This would occur if a greyhound was scared and withdrawn, making it hard to get a clear reading. Thus, they tentatively pass greyhounds to be assessed at a later date. The same process occurs for greyhounds who show a medium amount of interest in the small dogs.

If greyhounds tentatively pass the temperament test for this reason, they need to be trained how to behave with other dog breeds. The Dalmatian, Luke, is primarily used for. His role is to teach greyhounds what other dogs see as appropriate behaviour before they are tested again with a small dog. He does this by running around and playing with the greyhounds in the dog paddock almost every day. If the greyhound Luke is with behaves in a way he does not like, he will teach them the appropriate dog etiquette. For instance, he does this by putting his paw on their back to show that he is dominant.

One greyhound Luke taught dog etiquette to was Iris. Iris' lack of social skills extended to all dogs. She would try and chase small dogs as if they were a lure going around a race track; but, she never tried to attack them so she tentatively passed the temperament test. Iris would also try and chase bigger dogs, including Luke. She would do this by running at Luke, after which she would try and nip at him like she was trying to get him to chase after her. Iris would continue to follow Luke around until she got bored. Iris following Luke is shown in the photographs (figures 35-37.) on the following page, illustrating that that their relationship was not always volatile.

Luke would respond to any unwanted behaviour in a variety of ways. He would either growl or put his front paws on Iris' back when they were playing together. This was to show that he was dominant over her (Dodman, 2008, p.54). Iris never showed any signs of submissive behaviour, such as rolling over or making herself look smaller, back to Luke. Therefore, it was unclear whether Iris would pass a later temperament test. However, she was retested alongside Blue, the three-legged Papillion. I participated in her temperament test and she only looked at him once, so it seemed that playing with Luke helped her to pass the temperament test.



Figures 35, 36, 37: Iris following Luke, the Dalmatian around the dog paddock (Source: Paap, 2016).

## Greyhounds' relationships with cats and other animals

As I mentioned in the introduction of this section, all greyhounds entering the rehoming agency are cat temperament tested. This is to assess how they might behave around cats once they have been homed. To undertake the test, a greyhound is brought into the adoption agency office on a leash, which is held throughout the five-minute test. The greyhound is also muzzled in case they decide to leap at and attack the cat. Once the greyhound enters the office, Bee is let out from her enclosure. She can walk around the office wherever she wants as shown by the photograph (figure 38.) below. Whilst she explores, the staff observe the greyhound's behaviour and what they are communicating through their body language. Dogs reacts to Bee differently because they do not interpret her in the same way.



Figure 38: Bee, the resident temperament tester cat, whose role is to assess if greyhounds are cat trainable (Source: Paap, 2016)

If greyhounds are interested in Bee, they will communicate this in a variety of ways. One such way is watching Bee intently. Wherever Bee goes, they will follow her with their eyes. They usually tilt their heads whilst doing this. A few greyhounds will try to follow Bee, but their leash stops them from doing so. These greyhounds fail this temperament test, which means they are not be deemed cat trainable.

During his cat test, Kai, for example, was constantly focused on Bee. Wherever Bee went, his eyes followed her. Kai's ears were also held high, showing that he was very alert and curious. He was sprayed a few times with water. However, Kai did not learn from this as he still watched Bee intently. Thus, he was not marked as cat trainable and, therefore, was not made available to anyone with a cat.

Other greyhounds are not as interested in the cat. They only display these behaviours a few times until staff communicate to them that what they were doing is unacceptable by squirting them with a water bottle. This is done whilst saying "uhah." However, if they show some interest in the cat by only sometimes intensely looking at her, they are deemed neither cat trainable or unsafe around cats. This means they will need to be re-tested later.

To pass the cat test and, therefore, be deemed cat trainable, a greyhound needs to show little to no interest in Bee, by either never looking at her or only looking at her a couple of times without intensity. Sometimes these greyhounds will show signs of fear, such as tail between their legs and showing the whites of their eyes, and, therefore, want to keep a close eye on her. If adoption agency staff are unsure about a greyhound for this reason, then they tentatively pass the cat test and be re-assessed later.

Jane was one greyhound who passed a cat test. Her trainer took her to the adoption agency so he could see if Jane could be moved up the waiting list<sup>10</sup>. During her temperament test Jane looked at Bee once and never again. This was because she was squirted with water a couple minutes into the test. Therefore, Jane learnt that staring at Bee meant that a negative consequence would happen.

It is important for me to note here that being assessed as cat trainable does not mean that a greyhound will be safe around cats. Staff at the rehoming agency stress this to anyone who adopts one of these greyhounds. They state that their owners must spend time training their new dog and provide them with an information sheet that details this (see appendix 1.). The staff do this because they do not want to be responsible if something happens to a cat and also so that the greyhound will not be returned.

## **Greyhounds' relationships with their environment**

### **Relationships with the kennels**

During their stay at the rehoming agency, greyhounds spend most of their time in the kennels. The kennels consist of two rows of six individual cages. On one side of the kennels live the female greyhounds and on the other side, the males. Each kennel has a water bucket, raised dog bed, and blankets. Outside of each kennel is a whiteboard on which the greyhound's name and any medication they are on are documented.

Separating the two rows is a building in which a washing machine, dryer, sink, food,

---

<sup>10</sup> Due to a large waiting list of people who want to adopt a cat trainable greyhound, trainers can arrange a time with adoption agency staff for their greyhounds to be cat temperament tested. If a greyhound passes, then they will move up the waiting list of greyhounds waiting to move to the adoption agency and, thus, be made available for adoption.

and a dog bath are kept. The photographs (figure 39-40.) below show what the kennels are like



Figures 39, 40: The kennels at the adoption agency where greyhounds spend most of their time (Source: Paap, 2016)

Even though many have never been to these kennels before<sup>11</sup>, they still provide greyhounds with a sense of security because kennels are a familiar place to greyhounds. During their time racing, greyhounds are kept in kennels that are not too dissimilar from the ones at the adoption agency. The kennels at their adoption agency are treated by staff as if they are racing kennels. This means that staff do not enter the kennels unless necessary. This is especially the case when greyhounds are sleeping since during their racing career they are never approached when they are asleep. Thus, at the adoption agency the kennels are a safe place for greyhounds.

After greyhounds have been temperament tested, they are brought to their kennels to settle in, just like the dog on the following page (figure 41.). There they remain until the next day when they are taken to the dog paddock for the first time for exercise. During this time, they are left alone so they can get used to their new surroundings. Once greyhounds are in their kennels their demeanour changes. They gradually stop shaking, their tail no longer goes between their legs, and their head no longer remains low towards the ground. They also settle down and get comfortable on their bed, which quickly becomes their most occupied kennel space since they love to be comfortable.

---

<sup>11</sup> Greyhounds may have been to the adoption agency before it they had previously been brought there to be cat temperament tested. Whilst there, they stay in the kennels alongside the other greyhounds.



Figure 41: A closer view of a greyhound in his kennel in which he had settled in to (Source: Paap, 2016)

Rosie was the only greyhound who did not like being at the kennels. She had previously been adopted twice and, as a result, was used to the comforts that a home provides. Rosie was returned through no fault of her own because her owner had moved to Australia. Rosie would not have understood why she was no longer in the homes she had become used to since all communication would have been conducted symbolically. Therefore, being returned was a confusing experience for Rosie. She showed this by holding her head low. When in her kennel, she would lay on her bed all day as she is doing in the photograph (figure 42.) below.



Figure 42: Rosie on her pink blanket a day before her adoption (Source: Paap, 2016).

So that her anxiety could be reduced, staff at the adoption agency decided that Rosie needed to be adopted as soon as possible. Rosie's mood changed as soon as her new family came to adopt her. She perked up and her head was no longer low. Waiting to leave, Rosie jumped straight into the back of the car with her head held high as if she could not wait to leave.

### **Relationships with the dog paddock**

During their stay at the rehoming agency, retired racing greyhounds have daily off-leash time. There are two dog paddocks, which are separated by a fence. If a greyhound exercises with another dog, then they wear a muzzle. The muzzle is in case a greyhound decides to attack their play mate. This is put on greyhounds before they leave the kennel block to be walked on a leash to the dog paddock.

To greyhounds, the leash and muzzle indicate that they are about to run, even though the muzzle used at the adoption agency is made of plastic and not wire. A wire muzzle is not used since they communicate to greyhounds that they are about to race and, in turn, this may make them more aggressive. Greyhounds become excited when they see the leash and muzzle.

Greyhounds communicate their excitement in many ways. Most leap around their kennel. Greyhounds who have not yet learnt lead manners will tug on their leashes so they can reach the paddock faster. Once at the dog field, greyhounds try and push past whoever is taking them there so they can get through the gate first. As soon as their leashes are unclipped, greyhounds quickly run off and start to play.

What they do during their off-leash time depends on whether another dog is around. If they are sharing the dog field or there was a greyhound next door, then they spend most their run playing with each other. If they are alone, however, greyhounds will explore the field. Each greyhound has their own activity that they like to do in the paddock first. Female greyhounds, for instance, usually begin by running around the dog paddock to burn off their energy or they will sniff the grass to investigate who has been there before them. Male greyhounds, on the other hand, go straight to what has affectionally become known as the pee spot.

Staff believe that the first greyhound to pee here was an unspayed female<sup>12</sup>. Since then, all male greyhounds, whether they have been neutered or not, will sniff the pee spot. They will then lift one of their back legs to pee, sniff the spot again to make sure their smell was the most prominent, and then dig over where they just peed in

---

<sup>12</sup> All greyhounds before being adopted are de-sexed

order to spread their scent. This is to communicate to the other greyhounds that they have been there and when. Having scented, greyhounds will then do whatever they please until they become tired.

Some male greyhounds will continue to scent after this. They will then start by walking towards the perimeter of the dog paddock, where there is long grass containing more smells they needed to investigate. Once there, male greyhounds will sniff, as the greyhound is doing in the below photograph (figure, 43.), and then lift their legs to spray at nose height. They then repeat this a few times in different spots around the fence.



Figure 43: A greyhound sniffing the grass around the paddock's periphery (Source: Paap, 2016).

Scotty, however, would spend most of his time in the field playing with a soft toy. Occasionally, greyhounds were given a soft toy from a bucket by the gate. Scotty loved playing with a soft toy and he would only run if he had one. To play, Scotty would carry the soft toy in his mouth then throw it into the air. He would then run after the toy and repeat. If Scotty was not doing this, he searched for the perfect spot to roll in. Once he had found it, Scotty would lie down and roll on to his back, as he demonstrates in the photograph (figure .) below. He would then start moving around in the grass still on his back as if he was satisfying an itch. Whilst doing this, his legs would be peddling in the air and his head would go from side-to-side. He very much looked like he was enjoying himself.



Figure 44: Scotty rolling in the grass (Source: Paap, 2016)

The female greyhounds, on the other hand, would either walk or jog around the dog field or stay close to whatever human is in the paddock with them. For example, Flick would walk and bounce back and forth as the photographs (figures 45-48.) on the next page indicate. When not doing this, Flick would stop and sniff the ground. She would hold her right paw in the air whilst doing this.

Another way dogs would interact with their environment was with the child's paddling pool. This pool is in the shape of a shell. Isabel, a staff member, brought the paddling pool because greyhounds would climb into the water trough. However, since the paddling pool arrived, very few greyhounds would use it. One greyhound who did use it was Simon.

Another way dogs would interact with their environment was with the child's paddling pool. This pool is in the shape of a shell, shown in the photographs on the next page. Isabel, a staff member, brought the paddling pool because greyhounds would climb into the water trough. However, since the paddling pool arrived, very few greyhounds would use it. One greyhound who did use it was Simon.

Simon was one of the more curious greyhounds. One day I watched Simon interact with the pool. I took photographs (figures 49-52.) of this encounter. These are on page 164. Simon cautiously approached the paddling pool. He sniffed and put one of his front paws in it. Shortly after, Simon was standing entirely in the paddling pool. It was then he noticed the trough full of water so he attempted to climb from one water source to another. This did not seem to go entirely as Simon planned because he tripped. After tripping, Simon decided he had finished exploring the water and he started walking around the paddock.



Figures 45, 46, 47, 48: Flick running around and exploring the dog field (Source: Paap, 2016).





Figures 49, 50, 51, 52: Simon playing in the paddling pool before walking into the water trough where he tripped (Source: Paap, 2016).

Jack was an exception to greyhounds enjoying off-leash time in the dog paddock. Any time he was taken to the dog field and was unclipped from the leash he would head to the gate after approximately two minutes. There Jack would start to shake with his tail between his legs, indicating that he was extremely anxious. It appeared that for Jack being off leash and choosing what to do was stressful. He seemed to like having a human in charge of what he was doing and when. It was as if Jack had a very structured racing career, in which he did not have a chance to think for himself. Instead of running around in the dog paddock, Jack was walked around the property on a leash. Jack was always happy during his daily on-leash walks. He would wag his tail and hold his head high.

### **Relationship with the office**

Greyhounds are taken into the rehoming agency office on several different occasions. The office has a wooden floor, which can be slippery. A slippery surface is something many greyhounds have never experienced since during their career they would not have been inside. Due to this, greyhounds may react negatively to the floor by standing still and shaking, which is a sign a dog is anxious. Staff at the adoption agency say that this is a very rare occurrence. If they observe a greyhound showing signs of distress, then they have the greyhound take one step at a time until they are inside where they can be distracted. The office had a soft bed to make the room more appealing to greyhounds. If this fails, they will pick them up and move them inside. Grace, the temperament tester spaniel is always in the office so she can show the greyhounds that the floor is nothing to be afraid of.

## Relationships with the vet room

At the adoption agency, there is a room that staff call the vet room. Greyhounds have no problem being taken there. This room is where greyhounds are taken for their nails to be trimmed or stitches from being de-sexed removed. Once in the room, the door is shut in case a greyhound tries to escape. If a female greyhound needs their stitches removed, they are lifted on to a table. One of their back legs is held as their stitches are removed with a small blade, as the photograph (figure 53.) below demonstrates. If greyhounds are taken into the vet room for their nails to be trimmed, they stand on the floor. One leg at a time is lifted by staff, and their nails are filed back with an electric filing machine called a dremel machine.

Greyhounds do not struggle during these procedures since they became used to being handled and prodded during their racing career by their trainers or veterinarians. In addition, during the removal of stitches greyhounds do not show any signs of distress. They do, however, occasionally show stress during their nail filing since the dermal machine is very noisy. They communicate this by having their tail low or between their legs and head down.



Figure 53: A female greyhound getting her stitches removed (Source: Paap, 2016)

## Conclusion

Arriving at the adoption agency marks the beginning of a greyhound's rite of passage into pet life. Greyhounds' are physically separated from their past as a racing dog, which is all they have ever known. This separation results in greyhounds leaving their trainer, kennels, and racing career behind. Thus, during their time at the rehoming agency, greyhounds are in a state of liminality.

Greyhounds' experiences during this stage of liminality can be understood through observing and interpreting their body language, body carriage, and vocalisations. If a greyhound was anxious, for instance, upon meeting Bee, the cat, they showed this through shaking, holding their tail in between their legs, and showing the whites of their eyes. On the other hand, if a greyhound was extraverted and wanted attention they communicated this by whining and approaching me.

Every greyhound I encountered reacted to the experiences they had and actors they meet in different ways. This is because greyhounds are all individual personalities. Some greyhounds were introverted and shy. As a result, they were more likely to find their transition overwhelming, which would be shown through shaking or holding their tail between their legs. Other greyhounds, who were extraverted, were more likely to approach new situations without any signs of fear.

Whilst at the adoption agency retired racing greyhounds had many different experiences. They are temperament tested and explored the dog paddock.

Greyhounds were also exposed to and had relationships with a wide variety of actors, including rehoming agency staff, other greyhounds, and the environment.

Greyhounds had never encountered many of these actors, such as cats and small

dogs, during their racing career. Nevertheless, every actor that greyhounds encountered and had relationships with during this stage of their rite of passage influenced the pet they would become.

Moreover, the different experiences greyhounds had during their racing career also influenced their behaviour at the adoption agency. For example, if greyhounds saw small dogs during this time they were less likely to be scared and curious about the temperament tester dogs. In addition, if greyhounds were “racers” and, therefore, were more interested in racing greyhounds than the lure, then they were more likely to be uninterested in the resident cat. On the other hand, greyhounds who were “chasers” failed the cat temperament test since they wanted to chase after her.

The experiences greyhounds have at the adoption agency, therefore, remain with them throughout the rest of their rite of passage. In the next chapter, I cover greyhounds’ reincorporation into society as a domestic pet, which is the last stage of their rite of passage.

## Olive in her new home

I am elsewhere. Somewhere entirely new. Again. I arrived yesterday. Just when I was starting to get used to the other humans and not having my old human around, I came here. It is so completely different. There are so many new sounds. There is a square box that talks. Many whirls and beeps. And don't get me started on the thing that sucks the floors! So, I just hide in my new safe space and sleep.

My safe space is a lot smaller than what I am used to. But, it too has metal. Only thicker so when I stick my nose through it does not move. It is also has many blankets, which I snuggle into. I haven't left here yet, except to go toilet. I tried to go just outside here, but one of the new humans took me swiftly outside and I was not allowed to come back till I had gone. My tummy rumbles and gurgles. I do not want to leave. Especially since there is another one of those fluffy meowy things.

I was introduced to it almost as soon as I was taken inside the house. One of the humans had my leash. The other held one of those squirty water bottles things. They didn't fool me! I will not look at that fluffy meower! I know what happens when you do! The slippery floors are back as well. They are not as bad as they were before.

After a few days here the fluffy is not so bad. He does his thing. I do mine. We are not friends. But we are not enemies either. We respect and give each other our space. My new humans are not so bad either. I like to come up to them and put my head to their chest for cuddles. I do not like it when they leave me alone, though. One is here most of the time, but she has the

indecently to shut the door between her and myself when she does her business. Inside the house! On a chair thing! If I am quick enough when leaving my safe space, I will be able to go in there with her. I do not like being alone.

The humans keep trying to take me on a walk outside their property. I do not like it out here. There are too many different sounds. Too many cars. Too many fluffy meowers. The smells are overwhelming. So, I just stop. I do not move. And I shake. My humans pull on my leash, but I keep standing in the same spot. Not moving. I want to move less when they pull. They lean on me. I decide to move. They better take me to where my safe space is.

The park, though, is not so bad. It is bigger and better than the ones I used to run where my old human lives and also the ones where I was before.

There is so many different smells and places to explore! Many places to explore means many places to sniff! Sometimes I see another one! None have been like me. But, they are not a fluffy meower! And they are a one! So I leap around on my leash. I want their attention.

## Joe in his new home

I have a new place. I arrived here only a few days ago so it is still new. It is not quite home yet. But, I have a warm and cozy crate. Inside. And soft toys. I have a new human too. She arrived on my last day at the other place. I was taken to the paddock where I met her. Once let off my leash I jogged up to this new person to nudge her before running around and around.

I like my new human. When I want attention, I walk up to and nudge her like at the old place. Or I stare. I watch her. I like to see what she does. I show my new human how I play with soft toys. And run round and round in circles and round in more circles, inside then outside before going back to sleep.

My new human is teaching me new things too. There are rules. I have never had them before. "Out of the kitchen," "Stay off the couch". I got sprayed with water when I crept into the kitchen for the third time. But, she was getting my dinner and I was hungry. So I went to get it.

What I don't like is the next door neighbour's fluffy meower. It keeps on staring at me. I go and bark and bark at it. It just sits there staring at me. I jump and bark and jump and bark until it walks away. I scared it away! I won!

I enjoy going on walks with my new human. I sometime pull on my leash, which she doesn't like. I get yanked back. I just want to go and check out that area of grass, and that bush, and that tree. I like to sniff. If things smell wrong, I scent. It should smell like me. Not like some other ones. I pee until it smells right. Until It smells like me.



## Chapter seven: Life as a pet

As Joe's and Olive's stories show, greyhounds react to becoming a pet differently. This is due to greyhounds' individual personality. Extraverted greyhounds, like Joe, settle into their new home with relative ease. These dogs are more likely to face new situations. On the other hand, Olive struggled with settling in to pet life. This includes both in and outside the new environment. New appliances to dogs, like Olive, can be terrifying, which can cause them to freeze.

Being adopted marks the end of a greyhound's rite of passage. As soon as they leave the adoption agency and arrive at their new home, greyhounds are no longer liminal. Greyhounds are no longer in between roles or in an ambiguous state. They are now reincorporated back into society. However, instead of returning to their career racing, retired racing greyhounds have transitioned into being domestic pets.

Not only are greyhounds figuring out what it means to become pets, but their human companions are also ideally learning how to become the best greyhound owners that they possibly can be. Thus, they too are going through a rite of passage. This is complicated by the fact that most human companions are first time greyhound owners who rarely interacted with greyhounds before adopting their own. Due to this, they have not experienced greyhound communication before, which can be different from that of other dog breeds.

Throughout their transition, greyhound owners need to learn not only how to communicate with their dog, but also how to understand their new pets. This includes interpreting what each particular body movement, body carriage, and vocalisation means. Therefore, human companions and their greyhounds are

continually co-constructing each other into the pet and owners they become through their mutual experiences.

Greyhounds have many different experiences after arriving at the new home. Many of these are new since greyhounds had a sheltered life during their racing career. At the adoption agency greyhounds were opened up to many new situations; however, they were still sheltered since staff wanted to ease them into their transition.

Greyhounds only had limited experiences with new actors, such as Bee the temperament tester cat who many greyhounds only saw once.

During the different situations that home life brings, greyhounds form relationships with a wide variety of actors. The most important of these relationships is with their new owners. However, they can also interact with other actors, such as other humans, different greyhounds, other dog breeds, cats and other animals, and also their environment. In this chapter I discuss the relationships that greyhounds form with these different actors and how these contribute to the pet that greyhounds become.

## **Greyhounds' relationship with humans**

### **Relationships with their human companions**

Greyhounds are very people-orientated. Throughout their time racing, greyhounds had frequent and habitual human contact, whether this is with trainers, veterinarians, or other people at the race tracks. Greyhounds can, and often do, form strong relationships with humans who they see regularly. Thus, greyhounds have the capability to do the same with the people who adopt them from the agency.

A strong bond between owner and greyhound does not happen instantaneously, it takes time. How long it takes depends on each individual greyhound's personality and their owner's personality. If a greyhound is anxious or introverted, then it can take them weeks or even months to settle in. Extraverted and boisterous greyhounds, on the other hand, may take a few days to weeks to be at home. This is because introverted greyhounds take longer to face new situations, such as approaching their new owner for attention, than those who are extraverted.

An owner's personality and actions can also affect how long a relationship takes to form. As with greyhounds, if an owner is anxious and worried about how they can best care for their new greyhound, their relationship may take a while to develop. This is because their anxiety may interfere with them spending time with or doing things for their greyhound. Their anxiety can also hinder a bond from forming since greyhounds can pick up on this by observing humans' body language and by smelling the pheromones they produce.

When a greyhound feels more comfortable around their owners, there are signs that will indicate this. One of the most prominent of these is that they will look towards their human companions for reassurance. This generally happens when greyhounds are unsure or anxious over something they encounter. Next, greyhounds will track their owners and what they are doing by following them with their eyes. If their human companions leave the room, greyhounds will turn their heads and stare at where they left.

As greyhounds begin to settle in and feel more at home, they will begin to look less to their owners. This does not mean the bond between greyhound and human companion has diminished. It does, however, indicate that they are more comfortable

in their surroundings and are not as reliant on their human companions for security than they were during the first few days in their new home. Thus, they are getting closer to accepting their rite of passage into domestic pet life.

Ella, for example, no longer follows Sophia, her owner, everywhere. Nor does she care when Sophia leaves the room. However, if Sophia is wearing her work uniform Ella will glare at her intensely because Ella knows that Sophia is about to leave. Ella also walks to the gate a few times during the day to check if Sophia is coming home.

If the relationship between greyhound and their human companion is very strong separation anxiety may occur. Separation anxiety can also occur if a greyhound was always around humans during their racing career since they are not used to being left alone throughout the day. Separation anxiety is when a dog is very distressed at being away from their human companion. Signs of separation anxiety include toileting inside the house, destructiveness, and barking. Usually, these behaviours start shortly after their human companions have left and can continue until they return. Greyhounds do not do these things to annoy their owners, but instead to try to reduce their high stress levels.

Separation anxiety can also occur when a greyhound's owner is still at home.

Greyhounds who do this are struggling with their transition into life as a pet. These greyhounds are not confident by themselves so they follow their owners around the house. With most greyhounds, this will only occur during the first few weeks after adoption. Other greyhounds may have separation anxiety for a few months post adoption. During fieldwork, I observed separation anxiety first hand. Elizabeth took a break from our interview to go to the bathroom. As soon as Elizabeth stood up to leave, Luna, whom she had owned for six months, woke up from her sleep and

walked straight towards the bathroom. She did not get there before Elizabeth closed the door so she waited outside until her human companion had returned. Luna did not settle down until Elizabeth had sat down again. Elizabeth noted that this was a regular occurrence. Elizabeth is Luna's source of comfort with whom she has developed a deep relationship so without Elizabeth, Luna does not feel safe.

Retired racing greyhounds have learnt how to communicate with and understand humans and these skills are transferable to their life as a pet. However, what a greyhound has learnt does not always help them once adopted. They need to learn how best to interact and communicate with the new human companion in their lives in a way they understand. This may be in a completely different manner to how they communicated with their trainers.

My human participants noted that during the first few weeks of owning their greyhound they often wondered what their pet wanted from them. This was because they were struggling to understand what their dog was communicating to them.

Miscommunication mostly occurred when their greyhounds had settled into pet life enough to begin chattering their teeth when happy. They remarked how, even if they knew greyhounds did this, hearing it for the first time was worrying. It sounded like their dog was in pain and took them a while to realise that this was not the case.

As the companionship between greyhound and human grows so does their ability to communicate in ways that each can understand. Greyhounds learn that the best way to communicate what they want is to stare. If a greyhound is hungry, for instance, and it is past their dinner time they will stand in front of their food bowl and stare at it until they have been fed. Furthermore, if a greyhound wants to go outside to relieve themselves they will stand in front of and stare at the door until they are let

outside. However, sometimes this does not go how they plan because greyhounds do this quietly. This may result in their human companion not noticing them until it is too late.

Not all greyhound communication is done through staring. If a greyhound wants to play with their owner, then they will stand in front of them and play-bow<sup>13</sup>. This is demonstrated by the greyhound below (figure 54.). Greyhounds I encountered only do this to people and not to other dogs. Moreover, if a greyhound wants to be patted, they will put their head onto their owner's stomach if they are sitting or will nudge into them if they are standing. Greyhounds will also do this if they want their muzzles taken off, which they often find uncomfortable.



Figure 54: A greyhound play-bowing (Source: Snavelly, 2010). Their front is lower than their rear end.

---

<sup>13</sup> A play-bow is when their head is lower than their rump at almost at ground level, making them appear to be sloping down from back to front, whilst their tail is upright and wagging slowly.

The first few weeks of owning a greyhound are not easy and my human participants faced many struggles during this time. Bridget, for example, found it difficult to eat hot food during this time when fostering her first greyhound. Any time this greyhound smelt her hot food he would pressure her to give her some. He would glare at her, follow her into the kitchen, and sit right next to her. Bridget often wondered what she had gotten herself into because she found that she could not eat a hot meal. Another challenge Bridget faced was trying to think, and be aware of, the many things that greyhounds had never experienced before, since her home was the first one they had been inside. One such household item she had never thought of being an issue was her sliding glass door. A greyhound ran into it a few times since he did not understand what it was.

Elizabeth also felt like she had made a mistake by adopting Luna during the first couple of weeks of having her home. She struggled to know how to help Luna settle into her new home or what to do if Luna froze and shook, terrified, when out in public. Elizabeth read many dog training books, none of which gave her any advice as to what she should do in this situation. It took a lot of patience and trial and error for Elizabeth to realise that pulling Luna to make her move was not the right action to take, but pushing into her was. To help herself cope in these situations, Elizabeth would constantly remind herself that the world is new to Luna and there were lots of things she had never seen before. She would remember that Luna had never stepped into a home before meeting Elizabeth and, thus, did not know how to behave as a pet.

Greyhounds are not very good at recall. Recall involves coming back to their owners when they are called. Greyhounds are used to running off, but not coming back due

to their racing career. Subsequently, greyhounds can struggle with learning this command. Both Bridget and Elizabeth discussed the problems they had with teaching their greyhounds recall. Bridget reported that her greyhound Sammy would sometimes come when called, but other times she was too interested with exploring the environment. Luna, likewise, will occasionally come when called. To practice recall Elizabeth made a long leash. Whilst using it, she would call Luna and entice her with cheese. Luna, however, did not like the leash so she instead gets Luna to walk by her side. Luna will only do this if she has tired herself out.

### **Relationships with other humans**

Since greyhounds had a lot of human contact during their racing careers they are used to being around strangers. No matter who a person is, most greyhounds want attention from them. This is either for pats or if they want something, such as wanting their muzzle removed. Bridget, who is a dog trainer, explained that during her classes she gets owners to swap dogs, and she finds that greyhounds will listen to and obey whoever they are put with. Other dog breeds, such as border collies, will look at who they are with and will not follow instructions given to them by strangers.

I experienced how greyhounds interact with strangers first hand during fieldwork. The only greyhound I had meet before was Luna at the adoption agency. Every pet greyhound I encountered demanded attention from me. This occurred both at their homes or out in public places. At their house, greyhounds would excitedly greet me at the door with their tails wagging. Once inside, they would communicate that they wanted attention by coming up to me. Arthur, for example, did this by bounding up to me to lick my face before running off again. He did this numerous times. In

public places, greyhounds would behave similarly if they wanted my attention.

Sammy, for instance, bounded up and leaned on me when she wanted me to pat her.

Bridget, her human companion, noted that this is something Sammy would do to any adult she came into contact with if given the opportunity.

Luna, whom I had meet before, showed interest in me in a similar way to these greyhounds. She greeted me excitedly at the door with her tail wagging. It was as if she remembered me from when I met her six months prior. Whilst visiting her she tried to initiate play by trying to take my hat off me. She also did this by taking my gumboot, which she carried around the house in her mouth. This was before settling down with it, which I captured in the photograph (figure 55.) below. Additionally, if I stopped patting her, Luna would bat me with her paw until I started again.



Figure 55: Luna with my gumboot (Source: Paap, 2016)

During their racing career, some greyhounds have interacted with children. Most of the children they would have encountered were trainers' children and, therefore, knew how to behave around dogs. Subsequently, greyhounds are only used to children who are themselves used to being around dogs. One of my greyhound participants, on the other hand, does not like being around children at all. She shows signs of fear if they are around her by either freezing still on the spot or retreating to her crate.

### **Greyhounds' relationships with other greyhounds**

Once adopted from the adoption agency, it is not uncommon for greyhounds to still see and connect with each other. This is because their owners have formed a community, which is active across the country. The community frequently get together for walks and 'meet greyhound days' for the public. They bring their greyhounds along to these events, which allows their dogs to interact and play with one another. For example, in the Manawatu region there are monthly greyhound walks. To communicate to their owner that they had enough of walking, a greyhound will start to walk slowly behind everybody.

Each walk starts with the greyhounds running off-leash in a dog field. During these periods, greyhounds can do whatever they want. Some greyhounds are very independent and prefer to keep to themselves. These dogs like to explore their environment without the other dogs following them around. Occasionally, independent greyhounds, such as Molly, do not mind that there are greyhounds following her. She just ignores them. At other times, she will turn around and run

away to another part of the dog paddock, which she investigates. If other dogs follow her again she repeats this behaviour.

Other greyhounds love to play chase and run around with each other. They do this for approximately five minutes before returning to their owners when they are tired and want to go home. They then run off again and repeat after having rested. These greyhounds will also run over and try to interact with the independent dogs. They try to follow these greyhounds around and check out whatever the other dog is looking at. Some greyhounds learn that their companion wants to be left alone when they leave, others do not and will try and follow. After this greyhounds go on an hour-long walk on-leash with their owners.

Even though there are monthly runs, some owners also like to arrange play dates for their greyhounds. Doing this helps greyhounds throughout their transition because they teach each other about life as a pet. Elizabeth organises greyhound play dates for her greyhound, Luna, with Arthur. Luna is a very anxious greyhound so Elizabeth thought that having a regular playdate would help Luna to settle into her life as a pet since she loves being around other dogs. Elizabeth got this idea because she did not see Luna being truly happy until the fourth day in her new home when Arthur visited for the first time. She ran straight to him, started wagging her tail, tried to lick him, and jumped all over him. It was a great relief to Elizabeth to see Luna content. A photograph (figure 56.) of Luna and Arthur is at the end of this section.

Luna and Arthur still see each other every Sunday as she will visit him with Elizabeth. When they arrive at Arthur's soft house, he will greet Luna at the door. They do this by nudging each other, after which they jump around. Usually, they

then play together with Arthur's toys. They do this by walking in circles around the house with the toys in their mouths and by trying to get them off one another.

Sometimes Luna would not like Arthur doing this so she would communicate this to him by growling as if she was telling him off. They also run around the house and backyard in circles to release energy.

However, when I visited Arthur with Luna, he was not very interested in playing.

Luna tried everything to change this. I observed her walking around the house multiple times with soft toys in her mouth. Every now and then she would stop in the hallway and squeak a toy as if she was trying to show Arthur that she was having a great time so that he would come and play with her. At other times, she would come and get another toy after putting the one she was no longer interested in playing with on his bed. Arthur was more interested in lying on the ground in front of the fire or bounding up to me to lick my face.



Figure 56: Luna sleeping next to a greyhound friend (Source: Elizabeth, 2016)

## **Greyhounds' relationships with other dogs**

Retired greyhounds are capable of successfully interacting and also living with other dog breeds, despite only having limited contact with them before they are adopted. Once adopted, greyhounds are exposed to the big wide world where there are many other dog breeds. Thus, retired greyhounds have no choice, but to interact with other dog breeds since they either live with or encounter them in public places.

During these encounters breed miscommunication can occur. This mostly occurs during the beginning of their rite of passage as most greyhounds do not know how to socialise with other dog breeds as they have never had the opportunity to do so. If they do know basic socialisation skills, then this is usually only with other greyhounds. A lot of the misinterpretation between breeds occurs when greyhounds greet other dogs.

Greyhounds and other dog breeds like to greet each other differently. Most greyhounds prefer to start the greeting ritual by first sniffing the other dog's backside. Other dog breeds, alternatively, prefer to sniff the face first. Due to this, dogs will walk around in circles, trying to sniff the body part that they are the most interested in. Nonetheless, this does not always occur and some greyhounds manage to greet other dogs without difficulty, including Luna in the following photograph (figure 57.).



Figure 57: Luna greeting a German Sheppard by sniffing each other's heads (Source: Elizabeth, 2016).

Another way misinterpretation between greyhounds and other dog breeds can occur is through play. Whilst most dog breeds prefer to play low to the ground, greyhounds play upright. This can cause smaller breeds to show signs of fear, such as whining and running away, because they find greyhound behaviour threatening. Moreover, greyhounds' natural instinct to chase, which is reinforced during their career, is the only way many of them know how to play. Therefore, it is highly likely that they will chase after smaller dogs. Nevertheless, greyhounds can get along well with other dog breeds.

Luna is one greyhound who gets along well with other dogs. She loves other dogs and being around them, no matter how big, small, or what breed they are. Any time Luna sees another dog she becomes excited and is unable to hide her joy from

anyone around her. If she is still on her leash, Luna will jump around and drag whoever is holding her towards the other dog. Whilst doing this, she also whines with excitement and wags her tail in big and wide movements. If Luna's excitement does not scare away the other she will lick their face in a greeting.

Greyhounds can learn a lot from being around other dog breeds. Most importantly, they can teach greyhounds what it means to be a pet. Since greyhounds have never been a pet before, they do not know how to behave in a home environment, household rules, or what humans require from them. Other breeds of dogs who are also pets, however, do know this. Therefore, by watching other dogs, greyhounds can learn a lot.

Sammy, for example, is one greyhound who learnt how to be a pet from living with another dog, a blue heeler called Max. Once arriving at home, Sammy would bark constantly since she did not know that pet dogs should not do this. From observing Max and also listening to his lack of noise, Sammy learnt to be quiet whilst inside. Additionally, Sammy did not know how to play with toys, but by observing Max pick up and play with tennis balls Sammy realised that she could do this too.

Other dog breeds can also help greyhounds to develop confidence and settle into their new life as a domestic pet. This is the case with Luna. Whilst most greyhounds are food motivated, Luna is motivated by other dogs. Thus, the only way Elizabeth, her human companion, could get Luna to do something during her first few months home was if another dog was around. This was because Luna was scared and anxious; she would hide and shake especially if she was not inside her house. For example, when at a dog park Luna would hide in the car and not come out. Elizabeth would try and drag her out, but Luna would not move. The only way Elizabeth could

get Luna out of the car was to wait for someone to walk past with their dog.

Elizabeth would call them over so their dog could entice her out, something she found embarrassing. Moreover, Luna would not leave the house or walk to the front gate unless a dog was walking past. She would then sprint to the gate and start barking to get their attention.

However, not all greyhounds get along with other dog breeds. Little interaction with dogs before being adopted can result in them not knowing how to communicate or what is being communicated to them. Ella is one greyhound who dislikes other dog breeds; in fact, she fears them. If she comes into proximity with another breed she starts to shake and puts her tail between her legs. She also tries to flee from them.

During a walk with Ella and her human companion I observed this first hand. A young puppy escaped from its property and ran straight at Ella, before proceeding to loop around Ella with her tail wagging, indicating that she wanted to play. Ella's response to this was to panic. She jumped around in circles, trying to get away from the puppy. The puppy saw this as Ella playing with her so continued to run around her, making Ella even more anxious. If Sophia, Ella's human companion, had not been holding tightly onto Ella's leash she would have run away.

The only time Ella is comfortable with being around other dog breeds is if there is a physical barrier separating them. A physical barrier, such as a fence, makes Ella feel secure and safe. She shows no signs of fear or anxiety, such as trembling, when she and another dog are on separate sides. Instead, Ella will occasionally try and tease a dog when they are physically separated from her because she knows that they cannot get to her. She does this by barking and jumping around. The dog she does this to the most is her next door neighbour dog.

Another greyhound who does not get along well with other dogs is Molly. Unlike Ella, Molly does know how to socialise with other dogs since she lives with another greyhound and a dog belonging to another breed. Her issue with them is that she does not like how they behave around her. Molly sees herself as the most dominant dog, so she likes other dogs to behave in a submissive way around her. If they do something that annoys her, such as trying to make her play by charging or nipping at her, then she will snarl at them as if she is telling them off.

During fieldwork, I also saw Molly walk away from a small puppy. This puppy was very excited to see Molly, wagging her tail and doing a little dance with her front paws. Molly slowly and cautiously walked over to the puppy and sniffed her as a greeting. After doing this, Molly decided that the puppy was too energetic so she did not want anything more to do with her. Any time the puppy would try and reach Molly again she would pull her head away and look in a different direction. If Molly decided to walk around, then she would make a wide berth around the puppy so she would not have to interact with her again.

## **Greyhounds' relationships with cats and other animals**

Greyhounds have an inborn instinct to chase, and this trait has been desired and bred for over centuries for a variety of reasons, most recently for greyhound racing. Thus, once adopted it is only natural for greyhounds to want to chase after small animals. However, not all greyhounds will want to do this. Some greyhounds can even successfully live with other animals. How a greyhound will behave around another animal depends on their individual personality.

In Chapter Five, I discussed the three different personality types of racing greyhounds. These traits remain with greyhounds throughout their lives and, therefore, affect how they will behave around other animals. If a greyhound was a chaser, who preferred to chase after the lure than pay attention to the other dogs, then they are more likely to do the same with other animals. These greyhounds have a high prey-drive. On the other hand, a racer, who was more interested in running and keeping up with the other greyhounds, can interact and live with other types of animals successfully. This is because they have a low-prey drive. Lastly, if a greyhound was not a good racer, or did not race at all, then they may also be safe around other animals since their chasing instinct was not reinforced.

### **Relationships with cats**

Some greyhounds can live in the same home as cats, just like the greyhound in the photograph (figures. 58-59.) over the page. Greyhounds who pass cat temperament tests are more likely to be able to live successfully with a cat than those who do not. It is important to note that being cat trainable does not mean that a greyhound is cat safe. New greyhound owners need to train their dogs to make sure that their pet cat will not be harmed. All cat trainable greyhounds are sent home with a sheet of cat training tips (see appendix 1.) for their new human companions that contains detailed steps to ensure that their cat is likely to be safe.



Figure 58, 59: Greyhounds cuddling up next to cats (Source: borysandwalter, 2013; Dumfriesshire & Cumbria Greyhound Rescue, n.d).

The information sheet contains advice as to how the first meeting between greyhound and cat should take place. Before the introduction greyhounds should be walked around the garden and have gone to the toilet so that they are tired, reducing the likelihood that a chase will occur. It also states that owners must be calm during the first introduction so their dog does not become excited. They should also have the greyhound and cat inside the same room with the door closed. This is so the cat is less likely to run, which would make it look like prey to the dog. Moreover, owners must know where their cat is at all times and the greyhound should be on a leash and muzzled in case they decide to attack the cat. It is also suggested that the human companions should be equipped with a squirty water bottle or water pistol as well as some treats. This is to either award the dog for not showing interest in the cat, or to distract them from it if they are showing signs of being overly interested, such as staring intently. However, it will take more time than this to make sure a greyhound is completely cat safe.

Only one of my greyhounds had a cat as a housemate. This cat and Arthur, the greyhound, give each other space and rarely interact. They acknowledge that certain rooms are out of bounds for one another. Arthur was trained by his owner, Laura, to not enter her bedroom even if the door is wide open using a squirty bottle and repetition. This was so her cat would have a safe space away from Arthur. Due to this, Arthur quickly learnt to never enter the bedroom. Occasionally, if he wants Laura's attention, Arthur will slowly put his two front paws into the room only to be told off. Arthur's space, on the other hand, is the spare bedroom where he sleeps on the bottom bunk. The cat could enter this room, but never will.

No other greyhound participant was cat trainable. Each of these greyhounds get excited by, and in turn bark at, their neighbourhood cats. They show this by jumping around and putting their front paws on the gate. If there was no gate it is highly likely the greyhounds would chase these cats. The cats usually respond to the barking greyhound by sitting and staring at them like as if they were teasing them. If cats enter their property, on the other hand, greyhounds will bark at and chase them. However, cats rarely do this since they know that the houses with greyhounds are not a safe place to visit.

### **Relationships with other animals**

Greyhounds can also be around other animals. This includes horses, cattle, pigs, ducks, and chickens. One of my greyhound participants, for example, sees livestock, such as sheep and cattle, through a fence on a daily basis. However, owners need to be cautious and not have their greyhounds around when their small animal, like rabbits and birds, are running free. Greyhounds from the adoption agency I volunteered at will not be homed to any household that has a pet rabbit since they resemble the lures that greyhounds chased during their career.

One of my human participants, who has fostered nine greyhounds and adopted one, lives on a lifestyle block. Thus, she has had a lot of experience with how greyhounds can behave around other animals. Most of these greyhounds were fine with the sheep she has in her paddock. However, one greyhound would try and approach them because he was very prey-orientated. This greyhound also cleared her backyard of any birds during his stay. He had also behaved in this way during his career, which resulted in him not being a good racer. If a bird flew past, he would become

distracted and forget about the race. Due to this, she realised that this greyhound should not live on a lifestyle block with any livestock, something she informed the staff at the adoption agency about.

## **Greyhounds' relationship with their environment**

### **Relationships with their new home**

Before arriving at their new home very few greyhounds have been inside a house. As a result, walking on slippery surfaces such as lino, climbing stairs, and learning household rules are all new experiences for greyhounds. They have also not heard any household appliance before except for a washing machine and drier at the adoption agency. However, due to their racing career greyhounds are very adaptable dogs that are used to encountering new situations. This helps them with their many new experiences that becoming a domestic pet brings.

Sometimes being adaptable can help greyhounds to feel at home quickly and to not worry when encountering new things. Most of my greyhound participants showed this adaptability by settling in to their new home in a couple of days with no signs of anxiety, such as trembling or wide eyes. One of my participants knew her greyhound had settled in because she started to live up to what retired racing greyhounds are known for – being a couch potato as Ella demonstrates in the photographs (figures 60, 61, 62.) over the page.

Some greyhounds, on the other hand, may take months to get used to being a pet. These greyhounds are usually introverted and quiet. Others may become withdrawn and anxious. Signs of this include panting, refusing to walk or eat, and toileting

inside. If this is the case, adoption agency staff recommend crate training<sup>14</sup> as this provides greyhounds with a safe space. Therefore, the time a greyhound takes to become reincorporated into society as a pet varies for each individual dog.



Figures 60, 61, 62: Ella relaxing on her favourite couch (Sources: Sophia, 2016; Paap, 2016).

---

<sup>14</sup> Crates are an indoor kennel, which are used to help house train greyhounds. As most greyhounds have never been inside a house before, it is not uncommon for them to have accidents inside. Dogs sleep in the crate overnight. First thing in the morning, greyhounds are taken outside so they can go to the toilet. Crates recommended by the adoption agency are collapsible wire crates.

Luna did not settle into her new home easily. As soon as she arrived, Luna tore the leash out of Elizabeth's hand and ran off down the road. She was then dragged back four blocks by Elizabeth. For the first few days in the new environment, Luna spent most of her time in her crate and did not want to leave the bedroom due to feeling anxious. Sometimes Luna would go to the edge of the bedroom, but she was not brave enough to walk outside the room as the photographs (figures 64-67.) on the next page show. During this time, Luna communicated how anxious she was not only by these actions, but through a still body, her tail low or between her legs, and by showing the whites of her eyes.

It was a great relief to Elizabeth that on day five Luna felt comfortable enough to join her in the living room. Luna also started sleeping elsewhere, including cuddling up with a giant caterpillar like she is doing below (Figure 63.). But, she still spent most of her time in the bedroom, especially if she was overwhelmed or scared about something, such as a visitor in a wheelchair.

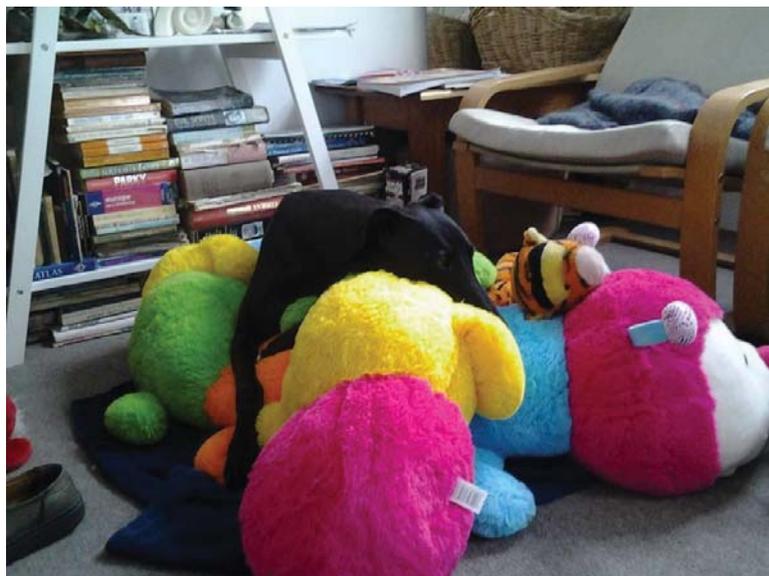


Figure 63: Luna cuddling up with a caterpillar in the lounge (Source: Elizabeth, 2016).



Figures 64, 65: Luna hiding in her crate (Source: Elizabeth, 2016)



Figures 66, 67: Luna standing at the edge of the bedroom, which she was too afraid to leave (Source: Elizabeth, 2016)

However, it was not until a couple of weeks later that Elizabeth felt that Luna was starting to consider her new house as a home. Little behaviours gave Elizabeth this impression, such as Luna wagging her tail when coming back home from a walk. Luna chose to not use her crate anymore, showing she felt safe and secure without it. Instead, Luna began sleeping in the corner on the pile of duvets where the crate used to be. Luna also started to look more calm. Her eyes were no longer as wide and she walked around the house doing what she pleased. Additionally, she started to relax and would sleep anywhere around the house, not just in the bedroom, in the position she found most comfortable, which is upside down as she demonstrates in the photographs below (figures 68-69.).



Figure 68, 69: Luna sleeping upside down in the lounge, showing she now felt comfortable in her new home. She shows a very different body language in these photographs than the ones on the previous page (Source: Elizabeth, 2016).

As she settled in, Luna's personality started to change and come out. During the first few days in her new home, Luna was very withdrawn and would keep to herself. However, over time, Luna became more and more playful. She started to play with soft toys by walking around the house with them in her mouth, as she is doing with the duck below (figure 70.). In addition, she started to show her natural greyhound characteristic by getting a burst of energy and not being afraid to run around the house for thirty seconds. In saying this, Luna was still afraid to be in the back garden by herself.



Figure 70: Luna with her favourite toy duck, which she likes to carry around the house in her mouth (Source: Elizabeth, 2016).

Greyhounds can take longer to settle in if their owners do not implement a set routine. This includes a set time for feeding, going to the toilet, or taking a walk. Racing greyhounds are used to having a set routine where tasks happen at the same time each day. These routines were continued at the adoption agency to ease them into their state of liminality. Thus, if they do not have a similar routine in their new home their transition may not be an easy process. Some greyhounds may become stressed, because they are not used to thinking of what to do themselves or when to do it. They show their stress by shaking and may also refuse to eat. Isabel noted that when she adopted her first pet greyhound she did not implement a set daily routine, causing her dog to not want to come inside, and he also would not eat for about three days because of his anxiety.

Since most greyhounds have not been in a house before, they are not used to having to obey many rules. Common rules for greyhounds are stay out of the kitchen, wait until their owner has walked through the door first, sit and wait for food, and stay off the bed. Some greyhound households do not allow greyhounds to sit on the couch whilst others have a separate couch for their greyhound. This can be confusing for greyhounds and they may take a while to learn what is required of them if they go from place to place.

During the settling in process, greyhounds like to test their owner's rules. This shows that they are starting to feel safe and secure in their new home. A few weeks after being in their new homes both Luna and Sammy tried to do this. Luna did this cuddling up with Elizabeth's brown dressing gown on her bed. Luna further tested Elizabeth by not getting off when asked so she had to be rolled off the bed. Luna never went on the bed again and this was the only time she tested a rule. Sammy, meanwhile,

occasionally tested Bridget by sneaking into the kitchen when her food was being prepared. Bridget described how she would hear Sammy creeping into the kitchen before she was told to get out or sprayed with a water bottle. This was to reinforce that this behaviour was not acceptable.

### **Relationships outside of the house**

Some greyhounds when first adopted do not struggle with going outside the house. However, this is not always the case. This is because most greyhounds have never been beyond their kennels and race track whilst racing or out of the adoption agency grounds. Once outside their home, some greyhounds may become overwhelmed at all the new things in the outside world. For example, Luna does not like walking around her neighbourhood, especially during daylight. When walking outside her home environment it was not uncommon for Luna to freeze. She would stop moving and remain where she was. Whilst she was frozen her tail would be between her legs and she would shake, showing she was extremely scared and overwhelmed. If Luna froze Elizabeth had to improvise in order to get her to move. If she did this after visiting someone, for instance, Elizabeth shoved Luna onto a blanket and dragged her to the car, which Luna would get straight into since this meant she was going home where she felt safe.

On one particular occasion Luna froze for about 15 minutes after a walk and there was nothing Elizabeth could do to get her to move. This occurred only a few metres away from Elizabeth's car, which she found very frustrating. A woman ended up offering to hold Luna's leash whilst Elizabeth went and got the car. On other occasions, Luna would stop walking in the middle of the road, which would cause Elizabeth to panic and she said she would find herself getting cross with Luna.

Luna, however, is fine walking around a local dog park. The dog park is enclosed and, therefore, has a similar feel to her racing kennels and the adoption agency. Luna loves to explore and to dig holes there. If she encounters a ready-made hole, Luna will start leaping around, go to the hole, and dig it. Luna is also able to walk off-leash at the dog park and she never goes far from her owner, showing she has formed a relationship with her. Luna exploring is documented in the photographs (figure 72-75.) on the following page. Whilst exploring, Luna's body language shows that she is calm and happy with her surroundings. For instance, she either holds her tail high or wags it.

Owners like to take their greyhounds to the river as part of their pet experience. Greyhounds come to find that they love being in the water. Originally Luna was cautious about the river, most likely because she had never see it before. However, it did not take her long to get used to it. Whilst in the water Luna does not swim since she does not know how, but she wades, which she is doing in the photographs (figure 71.) below. Sammy also likes going to the river. Like Luna she was originally nervous of it and would only go in if Bridget went in as well. Now she will go in, but does not like to go too far.



Figures 71: Luna wading in a stream (Source: Elizabeth, 2016).



Figures 72, 73, 74, 75: Luna exploring in the dog park (Source: Elizabeth, 2016).

## Conclusion

The adoption of retired racing greyhound signifies the end of their rite of passage. Since they are no longer at the rehoming agencies, greyhounds are no longer liminal. Moreover, they were no longer in an undeterminable role. Instead, they have been reincorporated back into society not as a racing dog, but as a pet.

Nevertheless, during their reincorporation stage of their transition, greyhound still need to learn a new way of life. Being a pet is completely different to what they experienced before at both the adoption agency and with their trainers; thus, greyhounds need to know what it means to be a pet and how to behave in a home environment. This is because during the previous stages of their rite of passage, greyhounds were sheltered and only had limited experiences. Additionally, greyhounds also encounter many new experiences after their arrived at their new home, such as climbing stairs, hearing household appliances, and learning new household roles. Throughout this, greyhounds' natural instincts, such as to chase after small and fluffy animals, have been suppressed.

As they are reincorporated into pet life, greyhounds also learn how to communicate with a variety of different actors in a way that they understand. The most important actors that greyhounds learn to communicate with, who themselves need to learn how to recognise and interpret greyhound communication, are their new owners. This is so they can know how greyhounds are coping with their transition or if they want something. The modes of communications greyhounds use to do so are body language, body carriage, and vocalisations.

Over time, greyhounds form a strong bond with their owners. It does not happen instantaneously. During the different situations and encounters that home life brings, greyhounds turn towards their owners for comfort and support, something they will do less and less; thus, showing that they have accepted their role as a domestic pet.

Each greyhound's individual personality also influences how they experience this stage of their rite of passage. If greyhounds are introverted and quiet, they cautiously approach new situations. They are also likely to become anxious and overwhelmed with each new experience that they encounter. For instance, if they were unsure of other dog breeds, they will try and flee and shake. On the other hand, extraverted greyhounds settle into their new societal role with relative ease. They are less likely to become stressed. This is because they are more adaptable than introverted dogs and, therefore, they are also more likely to approach new situations.

Greyhounds' personality can also influence what situations they may face during their reincorporation into society as a domestic pet. If greyhounds, for example, were "racers" during their racing career, which means they were more interested in other greyhounds than the lure, then they were more likely to pass the cat temperament test. Being cat trainable meant that they were rehomed into a household with a pet cat. Alternatively, if greyhounds were "chasers" who showed a lot of interest in the lure by trying to catch it, then they were more likely to fail and, subsequently, not adopted into families with an existing pet cat.

Lastly, what greyhounds experienced previously during their life as a racer impacts how they coped with the end of their rite of passage. During their time in both their previous societal roles, greyhounds had a routine. Activities, such as feeding, happened at the same time each day. However, once adopted, their new owners do

not always establish a schedule, which causes their greyhounds to become anxious. It is common for these dogs to refuse to eat and shake. This is because they are not used to thinking for themselves, which can affect the time it takes for greyhounds to settle into their new life as a domestic pet.

## Chapter eight: Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to explore the adoption and transition of retired racing greyhounds into life as domestic pets. I aimed to analyse how greyhounds come to understand, engage, and in turn, interact with a variety of actors, including both human and other non-human animals, over the course of their transition. Further, I wanted to learn how interactions with these actors influence greyhounds to change in a variety of different transitional contexts, such as at a greyhound adoption agency and their new homes. This involved exploring a variety of topics, such as what greyhounds have to learn and unlearn in different life stages, and whether their behaviour and personality traits remain throughout the transition.

I chose to undertake this research due to a lack of transitioning animal literature, not only for greyhounds, but for other animals, like horses, as well. All of the transitioning animal articles that I found were very human focussed. They discussed how humans benefit from interacting and having relationships with non-humans. How humans are affected by animals retiring, such as guide dogs, is also discussed. However, the non-human experience is not considered. Neither is how they transition into their specific roles or into retirement.

To analyse greyhounds' transition I turned to rite of passage theory. Rite of passage is a theory coined by Van Gennep that is defined "as a rite which accompanies any change in social state age, place, or life cycle stages" (as cited in Bell, 2003, p.41). A rite of passage occurs in three stages. The first of these is separation, which involves an initiand being separated from their previous role. Following this, initiands go through a transition, making them liminal since they have discarded their old societal

position, but have not entered another. As Turner (1969) writes, subjects are thus “neither here nor there, they are betwixt and between” (p.95). The final stage of rite of passage is reincorporation in which subjects return to society in a new role. Rite of passage is usually used to describe life-altering rituals that signify a person’s admission into adulthood.

In this thesis, I have argued that greyhounds go through a rite of passage, even though they are not human. Greyhounds are physically separated from their previous racing life when they retire at around five years of age. As a result, they leave behind all they have ever known, including their trainers and their social status as a working dog whose job was to run around a race track for humans’ entertainment. Next, they enter a state of liminality. This stage begins when greyhounds arrive at the adoption agency. There greyhounds’ status and identity is unfixed, ambiguous and undetermined since they are no longer a racing dog, but they are also not a pet. Greyhounds remain liminal until they are adopted. Their adoption marks their reincorporation back into society as a pet, with a changed status. Rite of passage allowed me to understand greyhounds’ transition as a process, through which they become, in some senses, new dogs.

In this thesis, I attempted to take an animal-centric perspective to greyhounds’ rite of passage. To do this, I use a multispecies ethnography, which is defined as “an anthropology that is not just confined to the human but is concerned with the effects of our entanglements with other kinds of living selves” (Kohn, 2007, p.4). I chose to use a multispecies approach because I believed that it would allow me to gain an understanding of how greyhounds themselves experience their rite of passage. I did not want to rely on solely on interviewing humans because I wanted greyhounds to be the centre of this research. In saying this, I was sceptical about my ability to

achieve this because all multispecies ethnographies I read had the human at the centre of the research, even though the purpose of multispecies ethnography is to decentre the human.

I found that by taking a multispecies ethnography approach, I go some way to achieving what I set out to do. This approach allowed me to move greyhounds to the forefront of this research, giving them an equal voice to humans about their lives. Multispecies ethnography provided me with a way to pay attention to the interests and concerns of non-human animals, including how they act, observe, affect, and can be influenced by the world in which they live (Pacini-Ketchabaw, Taylor, & Blaise, forthcoming, p.1). More specifically, it led me to see how greyhounds transition can be affected by different actors, including companion species, such as other greyhounds, cats, and different dog breeds. These non-human actors are not usually considered within multispecies ethnography despite the fact that they, like humans, shape greyhounds. In order to carry out a multispecies ethnography approach, I specifically chose methods that would allow me to gain an understanding of how greyhounds experience different encounters throughout their rite of passage.

The primary methodology I used to research greyhounds' transition to retirement was participant-observation. I conducted this with both greyhounds individually and when they were with other actors, such as humans and cats. I undertook participant-observation in many different locations, including at the race track, an adoption agency, and in their homes. Whilst using this methodology, I was often working in silence since greyhounds do not speak. As such, I had to rely on all my senses and not just my hearing. This meant I had to find a way to understand how greyhounds communicate.

To help me with this I turned to the theory of semiosis (Kohn, 2013). Semiosis is “the production and interpretation of signs,” through which both humans and non-humans can interact, have relationships with, and come to understand one another (Macini, van der Linden, Bryan & Stuart, 2012, p.145). According to Kohn (2013), there are three different types of signs, icons, indices, and symbols (pp.31-32). Only humans communicate through symbols, including language. However, both humans and non-humans, including greyhounds, have the ability to communicate through icons and indices. In particular, I communicated with greyhounds through indices, which are signs that provide information as to what is absent and which imply that changes or something of interest may occur. It was indices that my greyhound participants used to understand that they were no longer “racers” since they stopped encountering some indices and also learned new ones in order to communicate how they were finding this. Thus, I knew that I could use indices to communicate with greyhounds and they could do the same to me. For example, I could let greyhounds know that they were going on a walk by clipping a leash onto their collar and they could let me know that they were excited about this by tugging on the lead.

Taking a multidisciplinary approach is recommended by multispecies ethnographers, such as Taylor and Hamilton (2014), because anthropology by itself does not deal with how non-human animals communicate. By using ethology, I was able to cross the species boundary in order to learn how greyhounds use their senses, including smell, sound, sight, touch, and taste, to learn about and interpret their world.

Moreover, ethology provided me with a way to have some understanding of how my greyhound participants were experiencing their rite of passage through what they were communicating with their body language, body carriage, and vocalisations.

This meant that had some insight into greyhounds' capacity to feel, know, and understand the world around them (Bekoff, 2002, p.142).

In saying this, I did not always find ethology easy to use. I was constantly worrying whether I was interpreting my greyhound participants' behaviour correctly. I wondered if a particular howl or look meant what I thought it did. Additionally, I often asked myself whether I was anthropomorphising the greyhounds and attributing things to them that they did not experience.

Nevertheless, using both semiosis and ethology was a very useful combination. It allowed me to open my eyes to what was happening in my greyhound participants' world. I could then get into their minds, as much as being human allowed me to, in order to understand how the changes in their life were impacting them and, in turn, the course of their transition. I could interpret how they were interacting with different actors, including myself, without needing a symbolic language, since we both could think and interpret body language with indices. Thus, I became closer to understanding what it means to be a greyhound who is going through a rite of passage than I thought I could at the beginning of this project.

To deepen my understanding of greyhounds during fieldwork, and to convey my findings in this thesis, I used photography. Photography allowed me to visually show greyhounds own experience of their rite of passage without relying solely on the symbolic word when greyhounds themselves do not communicate this way. This is because photographs depict greyhounds' body language, which is a key mode of communication for them.

In addition to photography, I interviewed people who have regular contact with greyhounds. This was a useful methodology because it allowed me to learn about

elements of a greyhound's transition that I could not observe myself. I could not be there for the entirety of a greyhound's transition, especially if they had been adopted months before I started fieldwork. A diary belonging to one of my participants also assisted with this since in it she documented how her greyhound had changed over the six months she had her.

I also used a methodology that is not typical for anthropology, fictional stories. I based the stories upon greyhounds whom I met during fieldwork. These stories explore from an imagined greyhound point of view what typically happens at the race track, adoption agency, and in a home environment, which are all places in which greyhounds' transition occurs.

In writing fictional accounts, I took advice given by multispecies ethnographers like Tsing (2011) who argue that social scientists need to take risks with new methods that can potentially allow them to extend their research with non-human animals (p.19). Thus, these stories were my risk, which I believe paid off. I found that by writing the stories I was able to translate greyhounds' indexical communication into a symbolic form, which helped me to deepen my understanding of their journey into becoming a domestic pet, and hopefully convey something about these experiences to the reader.

However, writing these stories was difficult. I constantly questioned whether I was anthropomorphising the greyhounds when writing them. In total, I wrote the stories about four times until I settled on the ones I use in this thesis. These stories probably do anthropomorphise greyhounds because I use words that greyhounds themselves may not have concepts for, such as car. To address this, I do try to use some less specific words like lure, as this may not be how greyhounds conceptualise the white

fluffy thing they chase around a race track (greyhounds may also view fluffy cats as the same thing).

Despite the challenges and inevitable limitations of multispecies ethnography approach, using the methodologies I chose allowed me to gain insight into greyhounds' rite of passage, including how their behaviour changed between their racing career and life as a domestic pet. For starters, as greyhounds adjusted to their new way of life, they came to find that how they were expected to behave whilst racing was no longer acceptable as a pet; thus, they had had to suppress racing behaviours like chasing after small fluffy animals. They also discovered that being a pet required them to follow household rules so they needed to adjust their behaviour to suit.

Greyhounds are shaped through the relationships that they have had throughout their life. Human and non-human actors teach greyhounds what it means to be a racer or pet through communicating what behaviour is and is not acceptable. However, greyhounds also shape their own rite of passage, they are not just bystanders.

Greyhounds can, in fact, can initiate their rite of passage by communicating to their trainers that they no longer want to race by refusing to get into the car. Moreover, their personality impacts the families they will be adopted into. For instance, if a dog was a "chaser" during their racing career, which means that they were focused on chasing the lure, then they will not be homed in a house with an existing pet cat.

This research is important because it shows that it is possible to undertake multispecies ethnography that significantly centres the perspective of non-human animals. This can be done by carefully selecting methodologies that will allow the reader to access the dogs' experiences, despite not being the same species or having a shared language with them. Thus, my research demonstrates that the human can be

decentred in investigations of human-animal relationships so that non-humans can play an equal role.

# Reference List

- Abrantes, R. (1997). *Dog language: An encyclopedia of canine behaviour*. Wenatchee, WA: Wakan Tanka Publishers.
- Adapt a Greyhound (2009). *The story of Bess and Bran..... 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009*. Retrieved from <http://www.adoptagreyhound.co.uk/bessandbran.htm>.
- Allen, D. M. (2006). Letting go of the harness for the last time: A descriptive realism approach to exploring the ending of working relationships with guide dog. *McNair Scholars Research Journal*, 2(5), 7-13.
- American Kennel Club. (2006). *The complete dog book: Official publication of the American Kennel Club* (20<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Ballantine Books.
- Atkinson, M., & Young, K. (2005). Reservoir dogs: Greyhound racing, mimesis and sports-related violence. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 40(3), 335-356.
- Bekoff, M. (2002). *Minding animals: Awareness, emotions, and heart*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Bell, B. (2003). The rites of passage and outdoor education: Critical concerns for effective programming. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 26(1), 41-49.
- Bloch, M. (1992). *Prey into hunter: The politics of religious experience* (Vol. 1987). Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Boneham, S.W. (2008). *The dog training handbook: The complete guide to a well-behaved dog*. Neptune City, NJ: Central Garden & Pet.
- Borysandwalter. (2013). *It's time for some major cuddling this morning!!!*. Retrieved from <https://www.instagram.com/p/WsOY10kh6h/>.
- Bradshaw, J. (2011). *In defence of dogs: Why dogs need our understanding*. London, United Kingdom: Allen Lane.
- Branigan, C. (2002). *Living with a greyhound*. Gloucestershire, United Kingdom: Ringpress.
- Branigan, C.A. (1998). *Adopting the racing greyhound* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Wiley Publishing
- Braverman, I. (2013). Passing the sniff test: Police dogs as surveillance technology. *Buff. L. Rev*, 61, 81-167.
- Brown, N. (2012, February 5). *Fulfilling you dog's greatest needs* [web log message]. Retrieved from <http://nikki-brown.com/>.
- Bush, K., & Hessayon, D.G. (2010). *The dog expert*. London, United Kingdom: Expert Books.
- Cassidy, R. (2002). *The sport of kings: Kinship, class and thoroughbred breeding in Newmarket*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

- Cobb, M., Branson, N., McGeevy, P., McGreevy, P., Lill, A., & Bennett, P. (2015). The advent of canine performance science: Offering a sustainable future for working dogs. *Behavioural Processes, 110*, 94-104.
- Coile, D.C. (2015). *Encyclopedia of dog breeds* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Hauppauge, NY: Barron's.
- Colgan, B., Neil, C., & For, L. (2013). *New Zealand Greyhound Racing Association: Independent welfare review*. New Zealand: WHK.
- Coren, S. (2005). *How dogs think: Understanding the canine mind*. London, United Kingdom: Pocket Books.
- Csányi, V. (2005). *If dog's could talk: Exploring the canine mind*. New York, NY: North Point Press.
- Davis, C. (2004). *Essential dog: The ultimate owner's guide to caring for your dog*. London, United Kingdom: Hamlyn.
- Davis, D. L., Maurstad, A., & Dean, S. (2014). My horse is my therapist: The mediatization of pleasure among women equestrians. *Medical Anthropology, 29*(3), 298-315.
- De Laet, M., & Mol, A. (2000). The Zimbabwe bush pump mechanics of a fluid bush pump: Mechanics of a fluid technology. *Social Studies of Science, 30*(2), 225-263.
- DeWalt, K. M., & DeWalt, B. R. (2011). *Participant observation: A guide for fieldworkers* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.
- Dodman, N.H. (2008). *The well-adjusted dog: Dr. Dodman's 7 steps to life long health and happiness for your best friend*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Dumfriesshire & Cumbria Greyhound Rescue. (n.d). *The cat test*. Retrieved from <http://www.dgrescue.org.uk/the-cat-test>.
- Elliott, R., Toribio, J. A. L., & Wigney, D. (2010). The Greyhound Adoption Program (GAP) in Australia and New Zealand: A survey of owners' experiences with their greyhounds one month after adoption. *Applied Animal Behaviour Science, 124*(3), 121-135.
- Erikson, P. A., & Murphy, L. D. (2017). *A history of anthropological inquiry*. Toronto, Canada: Toronto University Press.
- Fbodyforever. (2012). *Chattering greyhound*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hpv0eArZ9Hk>.
- Field, D. (2012). *Chasing: shiraz rose trialling at Ascot Park today*. Retrieved from <http://www.stuff.co.nz/business/industries/83731636/greyhound-racing-faces-uncertain-future-in-nz-following-damning-nsw-report>.
- Finch, A. (1997). *Pet owner's guide to the greyhound*. Dorking, United Kingdom: Ringpress.
- Fogle, B. (2006). *If you dog could talk: A training guide for humans*. London, United Kingdom: Dorling Kindersley.

- Fogle, B. (2010). *Dog: The definitive guide for dog owners*. Buffalo, NY: Firefly Books.
- FormProRatings. *June 4 Auckland sprint sectionals*. Retrieved from <http://formproratings.co.nz/>.
- Fudge, E. (2017). What was it like to be a cow: History and animal studies. In L. Kalof (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of animal studies* (pp. 240-257). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Gaskins, L. (2014). Tools of the trade: Humane and safe training tools. In D. F. Horowitz, J. Ciribassi, S. Dale (Eds.), *Decoding your dog: The ultimate experts explain common dog behaviours and reveal how to prevent or change unwanted ones* (pp.83-90). New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Ghiringhelli, B. (2016). The “first” horse. *Sociology and Anthropology*, 4(6), 459-465.
- Glenn, C. (2004). *Unspoken: A rhetoric of silence*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Graham, R. (2013). ‘Eque-cultural identity’: A case study of the Scone and Upper Hunter Horse Festival and the Georgetown Festival of the Horse (unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia.
- Gold, S. J. (2007). Using photography in studies of immigrant communities: Reflecting across projects and populations. In G. C. Stanczak (Ed.), *Visual research methods: Image, Society, and representation* (pp. 141-166). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Google Images. *Sports betting strategies*. Retrieved from [https://www.google.co.nz/search?q=greyhound+starting+boxes&sa=X&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&ved=0ahUKEWjtxoLON\\_UAhWMjZQKHSifDCIQsAQIIg&biw=1280&bih=724&dpr=1.5#tbm=i.sch&q=greyhounds+leaving+starting+boxes&imgc=Fu\\_\\_-AY1uhJUMM:](https://www.google.co.nz/search?q=greyhound+starting+boxes&sa=X&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&ved=0ahUKEWjtxoLON_UAhWMjZQKHSifDCIQsAQIIg&biw=1280&bih=724&dpr=1.5#tbm=i.sch&q=greyhounds+leaving+starting+boxes&imgc=Fu__-AY1uhJUMM:)
- Greyhounds as Pets. (2015). *Greyhounds as Pets annual report 2015*. New Zealand: Greyhounds as Pets.
- Greyhounds Crossroads. (2017). *Take greyt photos of your greyhound*. Retrieved from <http://www.greyhoundcrossroads.com/index.php?page=take-greyt-photos>.
- Greyhound Protection League of New Zealand. (2014). *Frequently asked questions*. Retrieved from <http://gplnz.org/FAQ.html>.
- Greyhounds Australasia. (2016). *Australasian statistics*. Retrieved from <http://www.galtd.org.au/industry/australasian-statistics>.
- Greyhound Racing (2013). *Waikato GRC NZ Racing Series non-tote heat 1 – 26 September 2016*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nW4MceFOFkQ>.
- Greyhound Racing New Zealand. (2017). *Greyhounds as Pets*. <https://www.grnz.co.nz/greyhounds/greyhound-adoption-programme.aspx>.
- Greyhound Rescue (2012). *Mal (now called Mo)*. Retrieved from [http://www.ourgreyhounds.co.uk/foster\\_dogs\\_2012/mal.html](http://www.ourgreyhounds.co.uk/foster_dogs_2012/mal.html).

- Greytalk. (2013, January 8). *Difference between a greyhound 'smiling' and 'snarling.'*  
Retrieved from  
<http://forum.greytalk.com/index.php/topic/294243-difference-between-a-greyhound-smiling-and-snarling/>.
- Guccione, G. (1998). Origin and history of the racing greyhound and coursing dog. In M. S. Bloomberg, J. F. Dee & R. A Taylor (Eds.), *Canine Sports Medicine and Surgery* (pp.1-4). Philadelphia, PA: W. B. Saunders.
- Hajeski, N. J. (2016). *Every dog: The ultimate guide to over 450 dog breeds*. Buffalo, NY: Firefly books.
- Hall, E. T., & Hall, M. R. (1987). The sounds of silence. *Anthropology*, 87, 88.
- Haraway, D. (2003). *The companion species manifesto: Dogs, people, and significant otherness*. Chicago, IL: Prickly Paradigm Press.
- Haraway, D. (2004). *The Haraway reader*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Haraway, D. (2006). Encounters with companion species: entangling dogs, baboons, philosophers, and biologists. *Configurations*, 14(1), 97-114.
- Haraway, D. (2008). *When Species Meet*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Horowitz, A. (2009). *Inside of a dog: What dogs see, smell and know*. London, United Kingdom: Simon & Schuster.
- Huggins, M. (2007). "Everybody's going to the dogs"? The middle classes and greyhound racing in Britain between the wars. *Journal of Sport History*, 34(1), 96.
- Kirksey, S., & Helmreich, S. (2010). The emergence of multispecies ethnography. *Cultural Anthropology*, 25(4), 545-576.
- Kohn, E. (2007). How dogs dream: Amazonian natures and the politics of transspecies engagement. *American Ethnologist*, 34(1), 3-24.
- Kohn, E. (2013). *How forests think: Toward an anthropology beyond the human*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Jerolmack, C. (2008). How pigeons became rats: The cultural-spatial logic of problem animals. *Social*, 51(1), 72-94.
- Jickling, B., & Paquet, P. C. (2005). Wolf Stories. *Environmental Ethics*, 27(2), 115-134.
- Latour, B., & Wooglar, S. (1988). *La vie de laboratoire [The life of the laboratory]*. Paris, France: La Découverte.
- Laybourn, K. (2014). 'King Solomon's mines cannot compare with the money that has been raked in by greyhound racing': greyhound racing, its critics and the working class, c. 1926–1951. *Labor History*, 55(5), 607-621.
- Leeworthy, D. (2012). A diversion from the new leisure: Greyhound racing, working-class culture, and the politics of unemployment in inter-war South Wales. *Sport in History*, 32(1), 53-73.

- Locke, P. (2011). The ethnography of captive elephant management in Nepal: A synopsis. *Gajah*, 34(1), 32-40.
- Locke, P. (2012). *Elephant Training in Nepal: Multispecies Ethnography and Rites of Passage*. Retrieved from [https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10092/9993/12641102\\_Elephant%20Training%20in%20Nepal-%20Multispecies%20Ethnography%20and%20Rites%20of%20Passage.pdf;sequence=2](https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10092/9993/12641102_Elephant%20Training%20in%20Nepal-%20Multispecies%20Ethnography%20and%20Rites%20of%20Passage.pdf;sequence=2).
- Locke, P. (2013). Food, ritual and interspecies intimacy in the Chitwan elephant stables: A photo essay. *South Asianist*, 2(2), 71-86.
- Locke, P. (2015, November). *Multispecies methodology, transdisciplinary collaboration, and human-elephant relations*. Paper presented at the New Zealand Centre for Human-Animal Studies (NZCHAS) Conference, Christchurch, New Zealand.
- Longhurst, R. (2016). Chapter 8: Semi-structured interviews and focus groups. In N. Clifford, M. Cope, T. Gillespie, & S. French (Eds.), *Key methods in geography* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., pp. 143-157). Glasgow: United Kingdom: SAGE.
- Lorimer, J. (2010). Elephants as companion species: The lively biogeographies of Asian elephant conservation in Sri Lanka. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 35(4), 491-506.
- Madden, R. (2010). Imagining the greyhound: 'Racing' and 'rescue' narratives in a human and dog relationship. *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 24(4), 503-515.
- Madden, R. (2014). Animals and the Limits of Ethnography. *Anthrozoös*, 27(2), 279-293.
- Mancini, C., van der Linden, J., Bryan, J., & Stuart, A. (2012, September). Exploring interspecies sensemaking: Dog tracking semiotics and multispecies ethnography. In *Proceedings of the 2012 ACM conference on ubiquitous computing* (pp. 143-152). ACM.
- McConnell, P.B. (2002). *The other end of the leash: Why we do what we do around dogs*. New York: NY: Ballantine Books.
- McManus, P., Albrecht, G., & Graham, R. (2013). *The global horseracing industry: Social, economic, environmental and ethical perspectives*. Milton Park, United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Mercer, B. (2016). *Champion dogs have the potential to win upwards of \$100,000 for their owners but if they do not perform the outcomes can be grim*. Retrieved from <http://www.stuff.co.nz/business/industries/83731636/greyhound-racing-faces-uncertain-future-in-nz-following-damning-nsw-report>.
- Milton, K. (2005). Anthropomorphism or egomorphism? The perception of non-human persons by human ones. In J. Knight (Eds.), *Animals in person: cultural perspectives on human-animal intimacy* (pp. 255-271). New York, NY: Berg.
- Morris, M. (2012). *Concise dictionary of social and cultural anthropology*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

- Nader, L. (1986). From anguish to exultation. In P. Golde (Ed.), *Women in the field: anthropological Experiences* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp.97-116). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Neilson, J.C. (2014). Can't we just talk?: Learning to "speak dog". In *Decoding your dog: The ultimate experts explain common dog behaviors and reveal how to prevent or change unwanted ones* (pp. 1-15). New York, NY: Houghton Mufflin Harcourt.
- Pacini-Ketchabaw, V., Taylor, A., & Blaise, M. (forthcoming). Decentring the human in multispecies ethnographies. In C. Taylor & C. Hughes (Eds.), *Posthuman research practices in education* (pp. 149-167). Hampshire, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Pearson, C. (2017). History and animal agencies. In L. Kalof (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of animal studies* (pp. 240-257). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Pierce, C. S. (1985). Logic as Semiotic: The theory of signs. In R. E. Innis (Ed.), *Semiotics: An introductory anthology*. Indiana, USA: Indiana University Press.
- Pink, S. (2015). *Doing sensory ethnography* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). London, United Kingdom: Sage publications.
- Pintrest. (n.d). lovemydogtraining.com. Retrieved from <https://nz.pinterest.com/pin/382594930816097523/>.
- Palmerston North Greyhound Racing Club. (n.d). *Home page*. Retrieved from <http://pngreyhounds.kiwi/>.
- Rentería-Valencia, R. F. (2015). Ethics, hunting tales, and the multispecies debate: The entextualization of nonhuman narratives. *Visual Anthropology Review*, 31(1), 94-103.
- Rice, D. M. (2001). *Big dog breeds*. Hauppauge, NY: Barron's.
- SAFE (n.d). *Greyhound quick facts*. Retrieved from <https://safe.org.nz/greyhound-quick-facts>.
- Sanders, C. R. (2006). "The dog you deserve: Ambivalence in the K-9 officer/patrol dog relationship. *Journal of contemporary ethnography*, 35(2), 148-172.
- Seymour, M., Wolch, J., Reynolds, K. D., & Bradbury, H. (2010). Resident perceptions of urban alleys and alley greening. *Applied Geography*, 30(3), 380-393.
- Smyth, S., Bergh-Roose, S., Taylor, D., Killick, R., & Henderson, N. (2014). *Collins complete dog manual: An owners guide to caring for your dog*. London, United Kingdom: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Smuts, B. (2001). Encounters with animal minds. *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 8(5-6), 293-309.
- Snavelly, S. R. (2010, December 7). *A break in the weather* [web log message]. Retrieved from <http://greyhoundsculptor.com/2010/12/07/a-break-in-the-weather/>.

- Sullivan, M. (2012). *The greyhound*. Chepstow, United Kingdom: The Pet Books Publishing Company.
- Taylor, N., & Hamilton, L. (2014). Investigating the other: considerations on multi-species research. In M. Hand & S. Hillyard (Eds.), *Big data?: Qualitative approaches to digital research: Studies in qualitative methodology* (pp. 251-27). Bingley, United Kingdom: Emerald Group Publishing.
- Telfer, J. (2017, May). Hello from John Telfer. *Fast friends and hounding around*. Retrieved from <http://email.mailshot.co.nz/t/ViewEmail/r/AECA7CC0E3B6B9A22540EF23F30FEDED>.
- The Dogs. (2009). *Career opportunities*. Retrieved from <https://www.thedogs.co.nz/getting-involved/career-opportunities.aspx>.
- The Free Dictionary. (2017). *Muzzle*. Retrieved from <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/muzzle>.
- Tsing, A. (2011). Arts of inclusion, or, how to love a mushroom. *Australian Humanities Review*, 50, 5-21.
- Tsing, A. (2013). More-than-human sociality: A call for critical description. In K. Hastrup (Ed.), *Anthropology and nature* (pp.27-42.) New York, NY: Routledge.
- Turner V. (1967) *Betwixt and between: The liminal period in rites de passage. The forest of symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell.
- Turner, V. (1969). *The ritual process: Structure and anti-structure*. London, Great Britain: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Turner, V. (1981). Social dramas and stories about them. In W. J. T. Mitchell (Ed.), *On Narrative* (pp. 137- 164). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Wells, D. L. (2007). Domestic dogs and human health: An overview. *British Journal of Health Psychology*, 12(1), 145-156.
- Wells, D.L. (2009). Behaviour of dogs. In P. Jenson (Ed.), *The Ethnology of domestic animals* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp.192-203). Oxfordshire, United Kingdom: CABI.
- Whatmore, S. (2006). Materialist returns: Practising cultural geography in and for a more-than-human world. *Cultural Geographies*, 13(4), 600-609.
- Wilson, M. (2016). *There are about 2200 dogs in New Zealand's registered racing population at any one time*. Retrieved from <http://www.stuff.co.nz/business/industries/83731636/greyhound-racing-faces-uncertain-future-in-nz-following-damning-nsw-report>.
- Van Gennep A. (1960) *The rites of passage*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge and Paul.
- Victor, C. (2010). *Greyhound: A practical guide for the greyhound lover*. Neptune City, NJ: Central Garden & Pet.
- Yin, S. (2010). *How to behave so your dog behaves* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Neptune City, NJ: Central Garden & Pet.

Zimmerman, Z. L. (2013). *Comparison of the characteristics and attitudes of dog adopters from three dog rescue groups* (Unpublished master's dissertation). Oregon State University. Oregon, United States of America.

# Appendices



# Appendix 1

## Cat Training Tips

Your hound has been assessed as ‘cat trainable’ it is not cat trained! There is some training that needs to take place in your home once you get your hound arrives. Below are some pointers and a ‘how to’ to get your hounds cat training off to a great and safe start.

You must be **CALM** never scream, yell or panic. It is also best to keep children out of the way with first introduction

1. Make sure your cat is inside and you know exactly where it is when your new dog arrives. **DO NOT BRING YOUR NEW DOG HOME AND LET IT OFFLEASH IN YOUR GARDEN RIGHT AWAY.** Make sure its muzzle is on and fitted correctly and keep it on a lead. Walk your hound around your garden and when it stops for a pee reward it with a treat or praise. Let your hound know it has done the right thing in peeing outside and set yourself up with a win to start. If you do just let your hound off immediately in the garden odds are the cat will be there too, see the ground and run away and your new hound will chase the cat – chasing fast running things is fun! The dog doesn’t know yet that the cat is part of his new family it is not on.
2. **FIRST INTRODUCTION** this should be done in a single largish room (lounge is good) all doors must be shut. Ideally after your hound has been for a walk and is a bit tired. This is to stop cat from running away as this could stress out your new dog. Your dog **MUST** be on lead and muzzled or in its crate. You need to be armed with some awesome teats and a squirty water pistol.

Your hound will look at your cat, as it does ask him for attention on you (happy excited voice calling him, rattle the lead (do not pull it) as soon as he does look at you praise your hound and give it a treat.

If your hound makes any move towards the cat this is when the water comes in, do not say anything just squirt. Right afterwards call the dog to you and when it turns to look at you lots of praise or treats. You **MUST** praise him/her every time he looks at you and not the cat.

In the first few days five minutes twice a day is enough but gauge your own hound, they are all different and move at different speeds with accepting new things. Over the next week or so you can build up your dog being on a lead while you hang out with the cat. Watching TV together can be a good bonding experience time for your hound and your cat.

Over the next few days move closer and closer to the cat while asking for your hound to pat your attention. Do not rush the process.

It is very important for the first few weeks that you know where the dog and cat are. If at any time you don't know where your cat is do not let your dog off lead – inside or out. Crates when used correctly are a wonderful training tool and give you and your husband peace of mind with them being in their safe place and you knowing exactly where they are. They can be especially beneficial if you have small children.

3. **NEVER** in the first few very important weeks pick up the cat and carry it around in front of the dog. This confuses the dog and makes the cat far more interesting.
4. Be aware your cat may pack a sad and disappear for a bit, though most cats learn to accept a new dog very quickly.
5. Once both cat and dog are doing a good job of being inside together move your training to outside. Do the same routine you have learned with a lead and muzzle on your dog and treats and a water sprayer on your person. By this stage most dogs and cats are fine but it is always better to be safe than sorry.

