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RECREATING NATURE: AN INVESTIGATION OF HOW WILD ANIMAL CARETAKERS SIMULATE NATURE WITHIN CAPTIVITY

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Deciding to change my career path by studying this master's had been a leap of faith for me, and a decision I doubt if I could ever regret.

This year has been anything but mundane with fieldwork being the highlight as a roller-coaster of tensions and excitements.

Henceforth, I want to extend my sincere thanks to all the anonymous participants who took the time out of their busy schedules to have an interview with this random student, especially the ones who went out of their way to refer me to more people.

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INTRODUCTION

As Socio-cultural anthropologists we are inclined to understand human culture and society through tools like language, politics, economy and history. Although we adopt such an approach to understand humans, it simultaneously separates them from the grander network of life that we are interconnected with. We are part of a vast interwoven system consisting of not only humans but also other than humans - animals, microbes, plants and more -, which affect and are affected by human culture and society (Kohn 2007: 5; Kirksey and Helmreich 545).

As such, if we aim to understand humanity we shouldn't study it, as separate from the rest of that network, rather we should become aware of how we are constantly interacting with non-humans, influencing them and being influenced by them. As many of these interactions fall into the scope of care, whether it is caring for an animal, a plant, or something else, I will be exploring "What constitutes good care for wild animal care workers". The forefront will be human-nonhuman interactions through care between wild animal caretakers and wild mammals and large birds in captivity. I chose to focus on captive wild animals since plenty of anthropological research on animal care has been conducted with domestic animals and livestock. Meanwhile, research on wild animals tends to concentrate on conservation.

Humans and non-humans are also ecologically codependent, meaning they can affect each other's course of evolution by defining who lives and how they live (Van Doreen 2014: 4). Human activity has been responsible for the death of the members of various species, driving them extinct. Hence, it's not a coincidence that conservation has drawn the interest of many anthropologists from the field of multi-specie relationships. While I was still conceptualising my research topic, I was able to find a variety of anthropological literature on wild animal conservation and extinction, but very little that focused on wild animal care outside those two. However, even animal care outside the scope of environmental preservation is still a product of human relationships with the rest of nature. Wild animals have ended up in captivity because we chose to imprison them in zoos a hundred of years ago and now are dependent on us. Or because we want to preserve their population, to compensate for endangering them in the first place. Or worse, they were saved from wild animal trafficking and can no longer learn to survive in the wild. Animal conservation doesn't stop in nature reserves but is also in part embedded within the care that sanctuaries and zoos provide. That being so, I centred my research not on animal population preservation, but on how captive wild animal care is practised in zoos and sanctuaries. Hereby, I hope to

provide a bit of a different viewpoint on wild animal-human relationships, which can also contribute to animal conservation as it's interrelated with captive wild animals.

Care in its essence refers to looking after the needs of another being (Abrell 2021: Care and Rescue para.1). Whether that is cooking for them or providing medical assistance; thus, care is an integral part of our lives. Care also consists of feeding a stray, cleaning a monkey enclosure or even putting a suffering animal down. Nevertheless, care hasn't gotten the attention it deserves in Academia (Mol et al. 2010: 7). Care is concerned with the intricacies of the body rather than the mind, which has come to be celebrated by scholars. Such a standpoint is a product of the Enlightenment's principles of rationality and objectivity, which have been reinforced through the years. These principles are only interested in a body that can be objectified and studied in a laboratory, but not in its everyday active subjective state. As a consequence, care was hidden in the private sphere not drawing any academic attention up to recently (Mol et al. 2010: 7,8).

To develop a greater apprehension of care, akin with the other aspects of humanity, as culture and society, we must expand our analytical efforts to the nonhuman-human network that interconnects us. To do so, I've endeavoured through my thesis to explore the research question, "What constitutes good care for wild animal care workers". While undertaking to answer this question, I hope to avoid presenting "good care" as a principle encompassing objective parameters of what accomplishes good care. Rather, I set out to demonstrate how the conception of "good care" is a product of a specific context and time, a context which determines what my population of wild animal care workers perform as "good" or "bad care" (Mol et al. 2010: 11-12). Thus, care and caring are active, and performative dictated by what caretakers classify as valuable but also what they can do to make care more valuable. It's an ongoing process of constantly adapting to limitations (Heuts and Mol 2013: 129-130). "Good Care" is a set of practices performed as "good", chosen according to what caretakers hoped for and valued during the time of my research.

Specifically, I aim to demonstrate how, what is performed as "good care" by wild animal caretakers, is the product of specific Western ideas and historical influences that conceptualise Nature as separate to humans. Caretakers will do their best to replicate this conception while being hindered by the limitations of captivity and the status of wildlife organisations as institutions. Wild animal care workers provide care within the context of Zoos and sanctuaries which are part of a broader economic and political network. As such, they face certain limitations that stop them from providing their idea of ideal care towards the animals, consequently they adapt care in various ways to work around the limitations and still manage to

provide “good care”. What constitutes good care starts taking shape, based on a compromise between those aims and their limitations.

Throughout my thesis I will further develop and explicate the earlier arguments, which I came to discover by separating my main research question into three sub-questions. In answering all three of them, over the length and breadth of my ethnographic analysis, I unravel what constitutes “good care” for wild animal care workers.

The first sub-question “How is animal care put into practice?”, dives into the practical aspect of care. During my fieldwork I endeavoured to understand how care workers tend to the animals on an everyday basis, what items do they use, or what skills do they need, and what are the reasons behind the practices they adopt. As a result, I was able to apprehend how captive wild animal care is put into practice, identifying five aspects within it that stood out. Enrichment, Contact, Diet, Housing and Death. Respectively, caretakers were trying to provide “good enrichment”, “good diet”, “good housing” and so on. What makes each one of them “good” for caretakers can ultimately direct us into what constitutes “good care” altogether.

To answer the second sub-question “What are the care workers’ concerns in enacting animal care” I had to go a step further and understand why things were done that particular way. I investigated what care workers were concerned about, what kind of tensions would arise within animal care and what limitations did those brought. Basically, what did caretakers have to overcome to provide care and how was care affected by it. For my analysis, I classified the different concerns into two registers of valuing according to common relevance. Where one register strives to enact naturalness and the other hinders that effort, ultimately shaping what constitutes “good care”.

My last sub-question “How does the wildlife organisations’ network influence how care is practised” addresses the institutional status of wildlife organisations’. As zoos and sanctuaries are institutions, they are part of a broader economic-political network. Thus, they are dependent on the world's economic system and need an income to stay open, which conclusively affects how care is enacted. What’s more, the sanctuary network expands from the caregivers of each institution to the institution as an entity, to their paying guests and ultimately to the border politics and economy. All of which influence how care is enacted and subsequently what constitutes “good care”.

Through my research I was able to observe that what constitutes “good care” is directed by the value of naturalness. The care, caretakers provided was structures around replicating natural conditions for the animals, as it promoted good animal welfare. Good or Positive animal welfare is a term animal caretakers use that parallels good care, without being a synonym to it. Eventually what constitutes “good care” is shaped by the way caretakers are able to replicate naturalness, which is a product of various compromises between tensions created between the different concerns caretakers face. Particularly the conflicting interests of the institutional status of wildlife organisations and the objective of replicating naturalness the best way possible. Further the way they enact naturalness is informed by the Western conception of the nature/culture divide, in which humans and nature are opposites. Thereupon, to constitute “good care” by simulating naturalness, it must be replicated in line with the nature/culture divide.

To investigate how all the previous determinants collaborate to constitute “good care” for wild animal caretakers my thesis is structured as follows. I start by providing the theoretical framework which will serve as a foundation for my thesis. The framework consists of the three concepts on which the analysis of my data and insights are going to be based on. The concepts are “Good Care”, “Natural” and “Institutions”. I will be providing the theoretical foundation for each one of them. The next chapter will be dedicated to Methodology. I will elaborate and reflect on which methods I used to gather the data I incorporate in my analysis, problems with gaining access, and what is my population and field. The next three chapters are my ethnographic chapters. In the first two chapters, I grouped the concerns caretakers’ face in animal care in two registers. The first ethnographic chapter and register is the “Natural register of valuing”. Where I demonstrate how caregivers aspire to provide “good” animal care by aspiring to replicate a western understanding of naturalness within the limitations of confinement. The fifth chapter and second register, encompasses the caretakers’ concerns that manifest while they are practising care, due to the organisations’ position as institutions and their connection to a broader political-economic network. Eventually, in the sixth thesis chapter “care in practice: juggling concerns-in-tension”, I will demonstrate how the two concerns come in conflict. With institutional concerns constricting the caretakers’ efforts to reproduce naturalness the best way they can in confinement. The resulting compromises between the registers constructs how caretakers replicate naturalness and ultimately what constitutes good care. The last chapter is a discussion on all the different components that work together and against each other to constitute good care for wild animal care workers.

1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are three main concepts that come across throughout my thesis. These concepts are used as tools to help answer my sub-questions and main questions. As such, I need to first establish their theoretical significance. First, I will discuss what exactly is a western perception of the “Natural” and how it’s related to the enlightenment's nature/culture divide. The second concept explains what exactly “good care” is, what determines whether care is “good” or “bad”. The third “Institutions”, sets the ground in understanding how zoos and sanctuaries affect and are affected by a global network.

1.1 NATURAL:

Throughout my research, whether I was talking with my interlocutors about what is a good animal diet or good animal housing their answers would always revolve around the concept of naturalness and how they could mimic the animals’ natural behaviours and environments to provide “good care”. The natural was highly valued and the closer they could mimic it, the better the care was considered. When I asked my participants how they define “natural" or “the wild”, various answers were given but the core was the same and it entailed the lack of human intervention. Thus, this subchapter will explore the Western conception of the nature-culture divide and how it influences the caretakers’ perception of the natural. I will be using wild and natural interchangeably as my interlocutors also correlated one with another.

Nature is commonly conceived, especially in Western societies, as static, an element with no past and future that exists around us, separate from humans (Murphy: 1992: 311). We often perceive wilderness as a place outside civilization, a sacred place that remains uncontaminated from the faults of urban-industrial modernity, an antidote to the humanness that’s threatening the planet. In other words, we use it as an antithetical measure to civilization (Cronon 1995: 1,3). Nevertheless, that conception is nothing more than a product of a particular culture at a particular point in history emerging from the very same civilization it’s critiquing (Cronon 1995: 1).

To justify the new economic order brought about by industrialisation in the eighteenth century, new "rational" philosophies had to surface. These philosophies regarded nature as a source of raw materials to be managed for production, in contrast to culture which was a final and reified product ready for public consumption (Murphy 1992: 312). Although the nature-culture separation emerged with the new economy, nature and the wilderness were not yet seen as a sanctuary but as unorderly, savage and a

waste invoking feelings of terror (Cronon 1995: 2). Nature was perceived opposing the order of civilisation, but it was not yet a criticism towards it.

It was by the end of the nineteenth century that this perception started to change and the wild would start being compared to an Eden (Cronon 1995: 2). Romantic writers and artists would start writing about their wild excursions, turning natural elements like mountains into sublime icons representing God's presence on earth. The emotions recounted in their narratives resembled those evoked in the Old Testament. These emotions were not of joy but of awe which brought a sense of relief upon leaving the scenery. It was in sublime landscapes that you were more likely to connect with God. At first, it was only grand landscapes that made one feel insignificant, like mountaintops, waterfalls and thunderclouds that led to a greater chance of experiencing God's presence. Eventually less imposing landscapes also took on the same significance. Thus, as religious notions held great value at that time, the conception of wilderness was able to transform from a wasteland to a sublime sacred setting. Starting with Niagara Falls, more and more places in the American map would be declared settings of spectacular wild beauty that were worth visiting (Cronon 1995: 2-5). However, by the second half of the twentieth century, wildness was domesticated as more and more tourists would seek and visit those sublime landscapes. Even so, wilderness remained sacred, but it no longer evoked religious sentiments of awe but of pleasantness. Artists would now use different emotions to describe their experiences and yet they all contributed to the same story, the wild was epitomised as a cathedral (Cronon 1995: 5-6).

As a result, the idea of wilderness was romanticised and conceptualised not only as an antithesis to the soulless, unnatural civilization, but also as a measure to judge it (Cronon 1995: 6,7). But it is that frame of mind that reproduces the nature-culture distinction, as the two are seen as opposites and used to contrast each other. Wilderness is a pure sanctuary uncontaminated by the corrupted human civilization. However, if nature is the absence of human involvement and influence isn't our presence in that nature a contradiction?

Regardless of this paradox, this constructed separation of nature and culture has been reproduced and remained static since the eighteenth century (Cronon 1995: 2; Murphy 1992: 311), turning into the core element of various claims that assert human uniqueness (Derrida in Murphy 1992: 311). Naturalising this distinction, however, obscures and compromises our understanding of human history and origins but also of our ongoing interrelationships with the rest of the natural world whose ecological system sustains our lives. Hence, when humans study nature, its nature studying itself (Cronon 1995: 7; Murphy 1992: 311,312). Unlikely, we don't perceive the world like that.

It is no coincidence that when my interlocutors talked about imitating the natural, they described it as the lack of human influence. Most if not all of them came from the fields of natural sciences, like biology, animal management, animal behaviour, zoology, veterinary practices and more. Along with the rest of the developments associated with the Nature/culture distinction, it also morphed how we conceptualise academic principles and the domain belonging to each. Social sciences study culture and humans whereas the natural sciences study nature and animals.

Up to the 1880s, anthropology was a discipline associated with examining human divergence based on race, and race was anchored in biology (Carrithers 2010: 500). Franz Boas eventually demonstrated that human culture and diversity is not a product of biology. On the contrary, it's the product of the distinct histories of each setting, and people of the same biological background can develop different cultures. Boas's ascertainment led to the development of the anthropological field as one that unquestionably studies culture alone, separating from the domain of biology. Eventually the two sides started growing further apart, each developing a different set of expertise and aspirations. Anthropology was growing by studying cultural variation, and biology expanding in its professionalisation and authority by studying biological variation (Carrithers 2010: 499-501). This distinction is not only limited between anthropology and biology but amongst the separation between the social and natural sciences, where one is concerned with humans and the latter with what's left of nature. Latour (in De La Cadena 2010: 342), illustrates how politics is a field concerned with the representation of citizens and science with the representation of non-humans, but one is not supposed to appeal to the other. Moreover, for any academic work to hold value it must fall within its own spheres of expertise which can be quite limiting (Escobar 220: 86). The manner in which, academia operates remains anchored in the roots of the dominant eighteenth-century episteme. Although efforts have been made to break away from those ideologies and their imposed limitations not a lot has changed (Escobar 220: 86-88). I interviewed European wild animal caretakers from wildlife organisations all around the world, yet they all carried the same understanding of nature, that humans were separate from it. In the chapter "Natural register of valuing" I will unpack the care workers' understanding of the terms "natural" and "wild" through the way it manifests in how care is practised.

1.2 GOOD CARE:

My research question explores **"**What constitutes good care for wild animal care workers?". Thereupon, I'm investigating the concept of "good care" and what fabricates care as "good". Care is constituted by a set of practiced which informed by the values of a specific context and point in time are performed as "good", whereas practices that are avoided are labelled "bad" (Mol et al. 2010: 12-13). "Good care" is a set of practiced which are performed as "good" in an explicit context. "Good" thus is performative, it's a matter of adapting to see what works and doesn't, managing and balancing the different goods that reflect the values of a specific context. Additionally, by changing our perspective we realise that a practice performed as good in one context might be viewed as bad in another (Mol et al. 2010: 12-14). Performing care is selective, we choose certain practices while we dismiss others (Martin et al. in Joks and Law

2017: 152). A biologist can disregard the classification locals or indigenous peoples use to care for a species, whilst only choosing biological taxonomies to enact care (Joks and Law 2017: 161 -163). What's more, it's likely that a person with a background in the natural sciences will perceive naturalness through the lens of the nature/culture divide and select practices that epitomise that world interpretation. For instance, that scientist might argue that humans as opposed to animals, shouldn't participate in caregiving by taking out predators as they aren't part of the natural ecosystem. Alternatively, an indigenous or local individual whose conception of nature isn't founded on the nature/culture dichotomy, will select to partake in predator control to care for a chosen species (Joks and Law 2017: 161-163). Care is informed by who does the caring, whom do they care for and how do they enact care (Joks and Law 2017: 151) and it all comes to what values are present in each.

Values can inform both which practices we choose to adopt but also on which organisms we utilise them on. In the context of conservation as illustrated by Van Dooren (2014: 7,10), the values that emerge are in favour of diversity. Consequently, animals that are rare and/or native must be protected. Organisms are then placed in relation to each other based on these two criteria and life and death decisions are made according to where an organism stands in that constructed hierarchy. An animal that isn't rare or native will be killed to provide "good care" for another that is. The practice of killing that animal is thus performed as good. Animals can be killed because they are regarded as predators, competitors, as negative influences on the ecosystem, or as expandable and a good nutritional source for the more "favourable" species (Van Doren 2014: 7,10). Like so, it's fathomable how "good care" is contextual but also selective. As, on top of choosing care practices we also select which animals to provide "good care" for by sacrificing others. Care is "good" within the standpoint of the valued individual but not from the perspective of the sacrificed ones.

Even if my research does not specifically focus on conservation, I observed similar practices in wild animal care on the basis of the value of naturalness. Certain individuals had to be sacrificed in order to provide "good care" for others, either as part of providing them with a natural diet, or to maintain a controlled ecosystem. To examine how values affect and form wild animal care, I will follow the example of Heuts and Mol (2013) and develop two registers of valuing. Heuts and Mol (2013: 126,129), grouped their interlocutors' concern about tomatoes into separate registers based on common relevance, contributing to the theoretical works within the field of valuation studies. Like care, valuing is also performative, and it's also an integral part of the various activities' caretakers engage in to provide care. Caretakers not only know what makes animal care good, bad or mediocre, but they also emphasise on what they have to do to make care better (Heuts and Mol 2013: 129,130). Throughout my interviews, my interlocutors talked about what makes a good animal enclosure, diet, enrichment, death and more, but at the end of the day it was all about performing naturalness, and who manages to perform it "well".

However, the natural, no matter how highly is appreciated and valued, there are too many limitations to fully mimic it in confinement. Thus, caretakers by tinkering with the care they provide, they work around these limitations accomplishing not their “ideal care” but “good care”. Valuing is about finding ways to improve things, a constant tinkering with care practices to see what works and doesn't, while trying to adapt to limitations (Heuts and Mol 2013: 130,137,141). It’s also important to recognise that there isn’t one golden standard about what is good or “good care” in every context. What is good and valued can vary between people and situations. For example, a species can be endangered in some regions but simultaneously be overpopulating others, damaging the environment (Heuts and Mol 2013: 140; Van Doren 2014: 11).

To communicate my findings and answer my question about “what constitutes good care for wild animal care workers”, I have identified two registers of valuing, encompassing the caretakers' concerns that emerged through my research. The natural register of valuing and the institutional register of valuing. The first register encompasses concerns regarding how to best simulate natural conditions for the animals, within confinement. The second register contains all the different concerns emerging from wildlife organisations’ status as institutions, which limit the best simulation of naturalness within confinement. Animal caretakers endeavour to replicate naturalness the best way possible and will adopt care practices that contribute to overcoming the limitations of confinement. However, their organisation’s position as an institution acts as an obstacle in enacting these practices the ideal way. Consequently, the two registers come in conflict, as one strives to enact naturalness to the highest standard and the other obstructs that effort. The product of those conflicts are compromises on how care shall be enacted, which ultimately shapes what is “good care” for wild animal care workers

1.3 INSTITUTIONS:

To operate a sanctuary or a zoo, you need to first establish it as an institutional entity (Abrell 2021: Administration para.1). This necessitates two things. First, the organisation becomes part of a larger political-economic network interconnecting the majority if not all, animal rescue organisations. Secondly, you become incorporated within the state and must accordingly follow certain regulations (Abrell 2021: Funding para.1,5, Administration para.2). Because zoos and sanctuaries are established as institutions, the care they offer becomes institutionalised as well, thereby shaping the lives of the actors within it, non-human and human (Parreñas 2018: 108, 159). Parreñas (2018: 157-159) draws a parallel between the institutionalised care provided by sanctuaries or zoos and hospice centres. Like hospice, wildlife organisations provide an end-of-life care. In Both settings, care and treatment is provided, in exchange for money, either towards a cure or to the end of an individual's life. Individuals who are incapable of surviving by themselves are led to live in such organisations where confinement is institutionalised, compromising their independence regarding their care needs (Parreñas 2018: 158-159). That is to say,

the same way care is institutionalised to shape the lives of individuals in a hospice home, so is in a wildlife organisation.

While caregivers want to provide the best for their animals, they face certain limitations as the zoos/sanctuaries they work for are established institutions, which ties them within a broader economic-political network (Abrell 2021: Funding para.5). Whether they are private or non-profit the organisations and their animals are bound to the circulation of capital within the larger economy. Being so, the will to help and provide for the animals alone is not enough to stay afloat (Abrell 2021: Funding para.5; Parreñas 2018: 159). Organisations need to calculate in advance the lifetime care expenses of the animals they plan to take in. This includes aspects such as feeding, housing, medical care and even heating and water costs. A larger organisation can support more animals, but that also means higher maintenance costs. If a zoo/sanctuary opts to take in more animals that it can financially support, they then run the risk of bankruptcy (Abrell 2021: Administration para.8-9). Each setting might want to save all the animals that come their way, but as they are bound to an economic system, they must compromise. Each place faces distinct financial shortcomings, the way they resolve them determines how care will be enacted, who is being cared for and what is "good care". Part of how care is enacted is who implements the care, which is also determined by finances. Sanctuaries/Zoos need to employ permanent professional staff to operate, whom they need to provide with at least a minimum wage (Abrell 2021: Administration para.10-11). As finances are tight organisations might not be able to hire enough caretakers to meet the desired skills and experience standards they hope for. Thereupon, they will attempt to compensate by recruiting unpaid volunteers and interns. Volunteers and interns, however, don't possess the same experience and skills as professional caregivers and their schedules fluctuate, so organisations can't depend on them to operate successfully. That being so, it's not uncommon for sanctuaries and zoos to face the dilemma of whether to invest money on professional staff or on increasing the number of rescued animals (Abrell 2021: Administration para.10-11). Regardless of what decision they make, care in practice will be shaped by the financial limitations institutions face as part of the broader economic system.

As organisations can't help but depend on the universal circulation of capital, they also need to find ways to make money. Unlike hospice institutions which generate earnings from the people receiving the care, as they are paying customers, animals aren't clients. Instead, the humans paying to visit the wildlife sites are. As a result, no matter if the organisation is or isn't profitable, the animals are turned into commodities (Abrell 2021: Funding para.5; Parreñas 2018: 168). Many wildlife institutions depend on donations and state funding, but as that's not always enough, they must find other ways to raise funds, which can result in animal commodification. Based on examples given by my interlocutors, the most common way to earn an income is by charging people to enter and see the animals, which is done by both sanctuaries and zoos. Other examples include, paying extra to feed certain animals, paying to volunteer, paying for

educational tours or shows, and there are more. To be more precise, animals aren't commodified because their caretaker's labour turns them into products, but because they are the subjects that produce a sensory experience between them and the visitors or paying volunteers. That sensory experience is what is sold and bought by the public, not the animals (Parreñas 2018: 171). Yet, all this is not to say that earning a revenue is diametric to providing animal care (Lien 2022: 459), instead it's just another factor within care that shapes and influences how it is implemented. Because organisations adapt their care practices to comply with both the animals' necessities and the financial demands of the institution, some of the needs of the former must be sacrificed, in order to cope with financial adversities.

So far, the discussion has focused on how care is affected by the economic side of the political-economic network institutions are part of. Nevertheless, the political side also plays a role on how care is shaped. As part of a broader political network, organisations are obliged to follow certain regulations (Abrell 2021: Administration para.3). Zoos and Sanctuaries can be either private or non-for-profit organisations. Non-profit organisations must incorporate within the state by following certain regulations, which they need to continue adhering to unremittingly. For instance, they can't stray away from their approved mission statement (Abrell 2021: Administration para.3). For profit institutions, even if they are not part of the state, they are still subjected to government regulations. Some of my interlocutors briefed me on how the government imposing new regulations on the private organisation they worked at, affected how animal care was conducted. Moreover, zoos which are predominantly private, in most cases belong to the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA), for which membership is granted only if they meet the required animal welfare standards. Hence zoos might change the way they operate to adhere to the WAZA guidelines, to be granted membership.

In any case, the political-economic system in which wildlife organisations are embedded in, influences how care is put in practice, which also includes the caregiver's ability to replicate the natural. For the animal care workers replicating naturalness equivalences to "good care" but a complete reproduction is impossible due to these economic-political limitations. Caregivers must work within a limited budget and follow regulations which can either promote greater or poorer animal care. Therefore, caretakers must work with what they are given to mimic naturalness as closely as possible.

2 METHODOLOGY:

During the design phase of my research, I initially planned to explore the concept of good animal care, and how it's put into practice by focusing on one specific physical location. The plan was to investigate what constitutes "good care" for a specific wild animal sanctuary and its care workers. I would adopt methodologies like overt participant observation (Bryman 2021: 400). Where I would disclose my status as a researcher and volunteer as a way to participate in the sanctuary's main activities, but without being a full member, like a paid employee. As a participant observer I would be able to reflect on my experience in animal care and build rapport with the caretakers. Other methodologies would include interviews and a combination of recordings and drawings from the animals. The interviews would act as complementary to my observations and the drawings/recordings would be adopted as an attempt to get the animals' perspective.

Before starting my fieldwork, I had quite a few email back-and-froths with the sanctuary's gatekeepers, explaining to them that I plan to volunteer to observe them and write my master thesis on good care. Up to that point, they all agreed with my agenda and even offered to help me out. Eventually, one month into fieldwork, as I was informing the caretakers I worked with about my research, when one of them asked if I had gone through the ethical committee, which I hadn't. Although I had mentioned many times to my gatekeepers my agenda for volunteering, they didn't direct me towards the ethical processes required to conduct research for a thesis in the sanctuary. As that ethical process was lengthy and I was already one month into my research, I ended up losing access from the site.

Various factors could have caused this miscommunication. Firstly, the sanctuary had many students doing research for their schools (not necessarily for a thesis), but they were all interns from various animal science fields. As I had no reason to do an internship there, I presented myself as an anthropology student who was volunteering full-time with the purpose of conducting research for my master thesis by observing how they take care of animals. This was an uncommon request for them, so it might have caused some confusion resulting in misinforming me about the proper processes needed to gain access. Another possible reason would be that the gatekeepers I was in contact with, weren't informed about the mandatory ethical processes needed for conducting independent research in the sanctuary. During the end of my fieldwork, I got the opportunity to conduct participant observation again in another setting. But that time, when negotiating for access I request to also be in contact with higher positioned people to make sure I undergo the proper ethical procedures. Nevertheless, As the initial sanctuary didn't consent

to using any data I gathered from there, I will mention nothing else of them, and pretend I wasn't there during fieldwork time.

In any case, one month into my research I had lost access, and had to re-conceptualise my field and population. From that point on my research started taking the form it has now. My plan remained to explore what constitutes good care within the field of wild animal care. As I no longer had a predetermined physical field site to explore the idea of "good care" through its people and their practices, I changed my main methodology to online interviews with wild animal caretakers. Which also affected my field which had now moved online.

My population also changed, I no longer focused on the animal caretakers of a specific institution, but on experienced actors within the field of captive wild animal care. My research population includes people within the field of captive wild animal care, who are practising or have practised the professions of animal keepers or carers, veterinarians, animal biologists, animal behaviourist, or have experience in wild animal care as interns and volunteers. Through my research I will refer to all the prior as animal care workers, caretakers, caregivers and carers. Without a physical location to approach care workers, it was necessary to pursue them online disregarding their physical locations. Thus, my interlocutors worked in various settings around the world, from Italy to Costa Rica, to Borneo and the Netherlands. Nonetheless, they were all European or had a European higher education. The organisations they worked at, those that were disclosed to me at least, were also based in Europe or founded by Europeans.

I identify my research population as captive wild animal caretakers, and I identify wild animals as animals whose behaviour has not been influenced and changed by human interference largely like with domesticated animals. I chose this classification as it adheres to my interlocutor's conception of what are the wild animals they care for. The wild animals I've chosen to focus on are mammals like big cats, primates and more, but also large birds, like birds of prey. Moreover, they are captive wild animals, which means they live in captive environments managed by humans, like zoos and animal sanctuaries. Hench, zoos and sanctuaries are part of my field. I chose to focus on both organisations as during the past years the line differentiating the two has become almost non-existence. Both types of institutions keep the same species of wild animals in captivity and consequently the care processes are identical. Both organisations keep animals in captivity either for the rest of their lives or (re)release them in the wild after a while. Sometimes according to one of my interlocutors' sanctuaries in the UK operate under zoo licence. Lastly, both can be profit or non-profit and are open to the public for visits. Of course, all the priors will vary based on the organisation, they are not one size fits all.

I will refer throughout my research to both zoos and sanctuaries as wildlife organisations or institutions.

At first my new field was constructed through different online platforms, like Facebook, Messenger and Ms Teams. These weren't settings that I could physically immerse myself in and be in the co-presence of my interlocutor for a prolonged period of time. But Immersion doesn't necessarily imply co-presence in a physical geographic space (Hine 2015: 55, 56). Co-presence is built by requesting online access or actively accepting friend requests (Hine 2015: 57). Even though my field was no longer physically, I had to be in the constant co-presence of my interlocutors, through negotiations of access and scheduling. I first had to gain access from the administrators of two Facebook groups for wild animal caretakers. I filled out a form explaining my objective of gaining research participants and when that was accepted, I posted in the groups about my research, in the hopes of finding participants. From that point my field moved to other platforms like messenger and WhatsApp where I was trying to schedule online interviews with those wishing to participate. Eventually that progressed to meeting my interlocutors through online interviews in Zoom and MS Teams. The whole process was an immersive experience, by first having to negotiate access and interviews with my interlocutors but also through the interviews themselves. By conducting interviews even though I wasn't participating myself in animal care I started learning of all the different care practices within sanctuaries and zoos, from various locations. Hence my field expanded into multisited praxiography.

A praxiography is the research of different practices. It allows us to understand the world through what is enacted, what objects are used, and what kind of activities take place (Mol 2002: 31,33,158). My research is a praxiography of the different practices within the field of wild animal care. Since my interlocutors weren't all associated with a single sanctuary or zoo but worked in wildlife from various wildlife organisations from all around the world, my praxiographical research extends to multiple sites.

When I first entered the field of animal care, I was a total outsider to it and the only things I knew about how wild animal care is practised was from literature. The leading methodology used to learn about how "good" animal care was enacted was online semi-structured interviews. The same way as Heuts and Mol (2013: 128) invited their interlocutors to become their own praxiographers by conversing about tomato valuing practices, without themselves participating, so did I but with wild animal care practices. As mentioned, I adopted a semi-structured approach for my interviews. Hence, I had a few questions prepared for the interviews to act as guidelines, but I wasn't necessarily following them. Instead, I was trying to start a conversation, I would go with the flow of what the participant would share and come up with questions along the way. My interviews were mostly organised into topics which I aimed to go over by the end of each interview, but the questions would fluctuate. rather than following a strict question-

answer format. During my initial interviews my topics were organised over general everyday animal care routines and regulations. After I interviewed more people and started getting the gist of animal care, I was able to identify five main topics that constituted care in practice. Enrichment, Contact, Enclosures, Diet and Euthanasia. Asking questions about what is wild and natural, also became a part of my interviews as people kept on using these concepts. Using semi-structured interviews as a central methodology, really allows you to listen to your population's perspectives, as they become the principal focus rather than the researcher's experience. However, conducting online interview-based research also has limitations to which I had to adapt. Interviews don't allow time to build rapport with your interlocutors, you lack a clear image of the setting they talk about, and I wouldn't be able to see or observe the animals. The first two I was able to resolve by learning how to manage interview time. At first, because I notified my participants that the interviews will last from forty minutes to an hour, I would strive to ask them everything within that time frame. A few interviews in, I realised that many participants didn't mind talking for longer. From the point I stopped worrying about the timeframe (given the participant was not busy), I started having data rich interviews that could last up to 3:30 hours. What's more, as people start talking, they realise you are there to hear them, and the longer the conversation lasts the more accustomed you get to each other, building rapport and opening up about their experiences. Moreover, another method I used to get participants was snowball sampling. I would always ask my interlocutors at the end of my interviews if they could refer me to other animal caretakers. I came to realise that the more rapport I would build with someone during our interview the more inclined they were to help out with snowball sampling by referring you to other possible participants. In a similar manner, instead of rushing through all my topics before running out of time, I realised it's better to start with each topic, cover it in depth and only then move to the next one. This meant that I wouldn't go over each topic in every interview, but it produced an in-depth analysis, and a better understanding of the setting the participants' experiences were based on. Moreover, I would choose which topics to focus on according to what I thought to be my participants expertise. Either based on what they shared before the interview, or from what I heard during the first few minutes of the interview.

I managed to interview various caretakers from many different positions within the field. Still, most of them were animal keepers as it's the most common profession for animal caretakers. I also interviewed a fair number of volunteers and interns. Volunteers/Interns might not be as experienced as professionals, but what they lack in experience they give in passion and eagerness. They were all quite open to talk about the organisations they work and weren't afraid to be critical about it. Professional caretakers, on the other hand, were more calculated on what they shared, but they had much more meaningful and deep insights emerging from years of experience within wild animal care. Further, At the beginning of all my interviews I made sure to inform my participants about certain ethical concerns and get their consent. I would first aske of their permission to record the interview and make a transcript. Then I would inform them of the

following: I was going to use their insights to develop my thesis, so I might also quote them directly. The interviews were to be anonymous and if I had to use a name in my thesis it would be a pseudonym. They could stop the interview at any time for any reason. If they didn't want to answer any of the questions, they didn't have to. If they regretted their participation in the research, they could send me an email and I would delete their data. I would also ask them if they have any further questions and then get their consent.

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Towards the end of the three-month research period, I also got the chance to conduct participant observation in a zoo for a week. I will refer to the zoo as European Zoological Education Park, EZEP for short, to maintain anonymity. As I mentioned before, this time instead of only talking to the gatekeepers responsible for interns and volunteers I also requested to talk to the zoo director. Eventually after I presented myself as a student researcher wanting to use their organisation as a source of data for my thesis, they were quite open in granting me access. Unlike my initial plan, participant observation wasn't my main methodology and source of data but acted complimentary to my interviews. During my time there, I was a minimally participating observer (Bryman 2021: 400), as time didn't allow me to be trained to engage in most activities, thus, I had to mostly observe the keepers and only partially participate. Nonetheless, even minimal participant observation allowed me to experience and reflect on the aspects of care my interviewees had talked about. I witnessed the everyday routine of working in animal care and saw how care practices like, enrichment, feeding and caregiver-animal contact are put into practice. I experienced the demands of such a physical job but also got the opportunity to get closer to the caretakers and listen to their struggles and despondencies. At the end of every day, I would transfer the notes I've taken during my time at the park, into a diary which I later used for my thesis analysis.

Further, I also got the chance to use drawing as a methodology towards a group of capuchin monkeys in the zoo. Since they moved quickly, each drawing I produced represents not one individual but the sum of many adopting a similar behaviour (scavenging, playing, eating, relaxing). All the small capuchin pen drawings together, provide a composition that communicates the group's main activities and character (Figure 1 to 3). Drawing was a great way to observe and understand the group and its individuals, but also to generate something that can showcase the animals' standpoint as receivers of the keeper's care. Most of my sketches are of capuchins scavenging the food the keepers spread to elicit this exact behaviour. Other sketches show how they use the environmental enrichment in their enclosure, for playing, or sitting. They also demonstrate how they interact with each other as part of an enclosed group. I ended up with three notebook pages full of these small monkey pen drawings, which I have edited and placed in my thesis as a point of reference.

Overall, at the end of my research I had managed to conduct twenty-six online or offline interviews with care workers about enacting "good" animal care. I was also lucky enough to be able to enrich the data gained from the interviews, with the observations I made while being a participant observer at EZEP. All the caretakers I interviewed and talked to were of European background but working in zoos and sanctuaries from all different parts of the world.

That multi-sited aspect of my ethnography, rather than utilising space as an organisation principle, which is denounced for creating a "collection of countries" that disregards the historical interconnections of space (Gupta and Ferguson 2021: 374-375), allowed me to focalise on the flow and interrelation of ideas and modes of thinking, enabling me to compose unsought connections between sites. That aspect is what allowed me to understand how my Western- European interlocutors reified the western founded notion of a nature-culture in animal care regardless of location.

3 NATURAL REGISTER OF VALUING

I was in the middle of one of my first interviews, still oblivious about the bearings of animal care, I was trying to better understand the reasons behind certain practices. I turned to the Italian zoo intern on the screen of my laptop, and asked why do they implement practices like enrichment in animal care? What is the goal? After she spoke around the question for a bit, she answered.

"[...] trying to make them (animals) as natural as possible."

Even though this was probably my third interview at the time, the concept of "natural" had already come up a few times, and by the end of my fieldwork it would turn into a mantra.

Words like "nature", "natural" and "the wild " would always emerge when caretakers described how animal care was enacted. How care is practised is dictated by the values held in each context (Van Doreen 2015: 6, 10, 20 21). Care workers value naturalness, consequently naturalness directs how animal care is practised. More specifically as I will unveil in this chapter, it's a Westernised understanding of naturalness that separates humans from nature, that's enacted. The following, is one of the most characteristic quotes given by an interlocutor, which I believe effectively sums up the goals on replicating the natural in animal care:

"When we say as natural as possible…Basically, to replicate what they (animals) would do if humans weren't involved [...] Natural is just, kind of replicating as close as possible what they would do and live like, if humans were removed from … you know from the equation."

To imitate nature, is to imitate what the animals would do and live like if they were situated in an environment that lacks human influence. Mimicking the natural was the main goal for all the animal caretakers I interviewed and is a parallel to "good care". Yet, as replicating every aspect of nature within confinement is impossible, care workers need to adapt how they enact care to overcome the limitations captivity imposes in reproducing naturalness. How they eventually manage to replicate nature fabricates what constitutes "good care". As such, caretakers are faced with three main concerns when simulating naturalness in captivity. The First concern involves how to replicate what animals would do in nature, particularly how to replicate their natural behaviours. The second concern is about avoiding unnatural

behaviours, behaviours that aren't seen in nature and can be harmful. Last, caregivers strive to minimise human influence and presence in a context where animal survival depends on it.

Grouping all the three concerns together I construct the first register of valuing, the natural register of valuing. How care is practised is motivated and informed by the values held in each context. Still, it's not only about what is valued but also the activity to make something more valuable (Van Doreen 2015: 6,10: Vatin in Heuts and Mol 2013: 129). Valuing is about finding ways to improve things, a constant tinkering with care practices to adapt to limitations, it is the activities care workers employ to take care of the animals (Heuts and Mol 2013: 130,136,137). Caretakers engage in activities that respond to concerns that bring limitations on how they can enact care. Each register of valuing, groups the Caregivers' activities based on the shared relevance of the concerns they face.

The register of naturalness groups the care workers' concerns on replicating naturalness in confinement. Care Workers are aware that the limitations of captivity won't allow them to provide an exact replication of nature. Hence, they adopt activities that help them mimic naturalness to the best standard possible. What constitutes "good care" will already start taking shape by the way, caretakers overcome the limitations of captivity to replicate naturalness. This will vary in each setting, but it's "good care" as long as it's natural. Replicating naturalness is "good care", but how it's replicated is what constitutes "good care", and that is in the long run a product of a compromise between the activities of this register and the next one's.

3.1 NATURAL BEHAVIOURS

One of the major concerns animal caregivers faces when they aim to replicate naturalness is how to elicit the animals' natural behavioural repertoire within captivity. Natural behaviours are a set of behaviours exhibited by animals living in the wild, outside captivity. The way Caretakers perceived and talked to me about "the wild" adhered to the naturalised 18th century worldview of a nature/culture divide. The natural wilderness is recognised as an antithesis to the unnatural human civilization (Cronon 1995: 6), which in turn, affected what kind of "natural behaviours" caretakers aim to elicit. When asked about natural behaviours, an animal keeper gave the following explanation:

"A natural behaviour, obviously are instincts that they (animals) would do in the world without human interference"

The definition they offer is representative of how most, if not all, animal caretakers would classify natural behaviours. A natural behaviour is what the species of a captive animal acts like in their wild native habitat, outside of human influence. Caregivers are concerned with inducing these behaviours as they closely relate it to good animal welfare. According to a vet:

"Animal welfare is, for me, very closely linked to, (the animal) being able to exhibit its natural behaviour [...] whether that relates to food, whether that relates to reproduction or grooming, or social bonds between animals."

Practices that elucidate natural behaviours from animals in captivity, are performed as "good" in animal care and contribute to providing "good care" for the captive animals. Yet replicating these exact behaviours in confinement is impossible as they include migration, hunting live prey, or roaming over huge territories, whereas captive animals are limited to two-hundred square metres at best. Moreover, natural behaviours emerge as a mechanism for wild non-captive animals to survive and reproduce their species. Within an environment like a wildlife organisation where all the animals' needs are met and provided by humans, caretakers must find other ways to encourage these behaviours. Hence, animal care workers must work around the limitations of captivity to encourage natural behaviours to provide "good care".

When I was at EZEP I spent an afternoon helping one of the keepers to cut small pieces of fish and fruit, which we then mixed with water and fish blood, placing everything in a few small containers. The containers with their ingredients would then be placed in the freezer for a day, slowly turning into popsicles. The purpose of this creation was to elicit natural behaviours from the bears. These popsicles would be later thrown to the pond of the bear enclosure where they would dissolve, thereby, the bears would smell the fish, fruit and blood, encouraging them to try and find the food pieces using their sense of smell.

Objects like the popsicles, are called enrichment as they enrich an animal's day and encourage them to exhibit their natural behaviours. In the case above, the bears were encouraged to use their nose and sense of smell to scavenge for food like they would in the wild. When the caretakers provide enrichment for the animals', they need to consider what kind of behaviours are seen from the same species in the wild and how they can replicate these behaviours in captivity. Hence, when constructing enrichment, they need to think how to trigger these behaviours for each distinct animal species. As a head-keeper explained:

“(When making enrichment) I tried to tap into a species behavioural repertoire, so if they had long fingers that they were quite often used for probing, I would try to make things that they had to, you know, pick and poke and all that sort of thing [...] “

Animals as spider monkeys that eat in the wild in a suspended manner, need enrichment that the caretakers can hang, and the animals will climb to find. Animals like chimps and capuchins who use tools, need devices or simple items like sticks which allows them to use their hands and fingers. At the bottom of figure 1, you can see two capuchin monkeys using a stick as a tool to get to a food scrap that had fallen outside their enclosure. They were engaged in this activity for about forty minutes, and it was a form of enrichment for them. Enrichment must be specifically built for each species to correspond to and trigger their natural behavioural repertoires. Yet, that is easier said than done. Animal care work demands a constant running around tending to various labours like cleaning and feeding, as a result in many organisations especially those with a lower hiring budget, enrichment becomes an afterthought. As a keeper expressed:

“Between us, we complain, in the sense that a lot of us so would like to do it (enrichment) more, but we are totally aware of the fact that, we are also constantly full, and tired, even if we like to do it more, it means, we're running more [...]”

As the bear popsicles needed someone to invest their time cutting and freezing fruit and fish, so does any other kind of enrichment. Maybe not by cutting fish, but by placing hay in envelopes, hanging containers with seeds in enclosures, creating puzzles, and so on. Providing enrichment requires caretakers to invest additional time from their already busy schedules in making it. Care workers in some wildlife organisations are fortunate enough to be able and afford that extra time, in others, enrichment has to become an afterthought for the caretakers, and they have to find ways to fit it within their already crammed schedules. In both cases the aim is to replicate naturalness through the manner in which animals act, while dealing with a limited time frame. The caretakers of each organisation will do their best to achieve that, some might just achieve it more than others.

Other than simply eliciting the animals’ natural behaviours caregivers are also concerned with replicating the appropriate time proportions the animals would be performing these behaviours. Animals in the wild would spend most of their day roaming around scavenging for food, within a captive setting where

humans provide the food, animals don’t necessarily need to scavenge for it. Thus, caregivers need to find ways to lengthen the time it takes for animals to find and eat the resources they provide. By doing so, they also manage to elicit the animals’ natural behaviours associated with eating times in the wild. This again is very species specific, for animals that would forage around the ground eating bits of food, you can scatter their feeds over a period of time during the day and that, as a caretaker explained “encourages exactly the same sorts of behaviours as to what they would naturally be doing in the wild". With other species like giraffes and elephants who eat constantly while they are walking around, caregivers need to find other ways to lengthen their feeding period. In figure 1,2 and 3, many of the capuchins are either eating or involved in scavenging behaviours by searching the ground for food. As scavenging and eating is a behaviour that they would do most of the time in they wild, the caretakers were replicating it in captivity, accordingly I would often see them scavenging, ending up with many drawings depicting that behaviour.

While working at EZEP, every morning we would get into the giraffe enclosure bringing with us two metal cages full of hay, which we would place on a very high (around seven metres) umbrella like construction. This construction allowed the giraffes to have a constant source of food they could turn to while roaming in the enclosure. That way, Giraffes could be constantly feeding themselves like they would in the wild, enacting their natural behaviours for the right amount of time. For natural behaviours to be effectively replicated, care workers must devise ways to both elicit them and trigger them for the right duration of time.

Animal caregivers always take into consideration what animals do in the wild and for how long they are doing it, or as an interlocutor framed it, they need to look at the animals’ “natural way of life”. Even so, an exact replication of the animals’ natural behaviours is never possible, especially when it comes to animals who hunt. For animals like big cats or wolves, there is nothing more natural than being able to hunt their prey, as it’s exactly what they would be doing in the wild. However, providing the animals live prey is unethical, as the prey in a confined environment is devoid of the chance to escape. What’s more, it’s also illegal so even if the caretakers wanted to offer live prey, they probably couldn’t. One animal keeper expressed:

“Yeah, On the one hand, it's not ethical to feed live prey, but you will support the natural way of behaviour again.”

Confinement acts as a limitation to the extent caregivers can replicate naturalness. The second-best thing they can do for animals who hunt, is provide them with a whole carcass of an animal they would chase and eat in the wild. But as I'm to demonstrate later, carcass feeding can also be controversial. As such, caregivers must think of other ways to elicit behaviours within confinement that resemble hunting. As a head-keeper explained:

"We don't present their food in bowls, either we give it as natural as possible, so we throw it over the fence, you know, and it hits the ground, and then they eat it, they drag it away into the bushes and do whatever they want with it."

Feeding an animal by simply giving its food in a bowl is a practice to be avoided, as it does not occur in the wild and thereupon doesn't resemble a natural behaviour. Instead, it's better to adopt feeding practices that coincide with the way animals would feed in the wild. Regardless of the limitations that confinement imposes on replicating naturalness, care workers must refrain from adopting care practices that don't resemble the animals' natural way of life, and rather enact nature the best way possible.

Wild animal caregivers endeavour to recreate naturalness within confinement, which includes encouraging natural animal behaviours observed in the wild outside of human influence. Managing to re-create these behaviours in captivity is also regarded as good animal welfare and "good care". But since these behaviours have developed as a survival mechanism for non-captive animals, animal caretakers are concerned with how to elicit them in captivity where humans warrant the animals' viability. Natural behaviours are encouraged by providing animals with enriching items and presenting their food in a close to natural manner. Still, the limitations of captivity make it impossible to fully re-create natural behaviours, and each setting will face different restrictions. The way caregivers will work around these issues to imitate naturalness will eventually construct how care is put into practice and what is "good care" for each setting

Figure 1: Capuchin Monkeys at EZEP. Drawing and editing by the author. 2024

3.2 UNNATURAL BEHAVIOURS AND ANIMAL STRESS

In the previous chapter I mentioned how caretakers adopted practices that imitated animals' natural eating habits, while avoiding practices such as bowl feeding, which wouldn't occur in nature. Mol et al (2010: 12), discuss how we can learn about "good care" by observing which practices are informed by what is hoped for and thus performed as "good", and which practices are excluded and thus performed as "bad". In the case of animal care, caregivers chose practices that reproduced the natural and excluded practices that reproduced what they label as unnatural. One of my interlocutors clearly explicated the difference between the two:

"Yeah, you have abnormal behaviour which is behaviour that for example in the wild does not really occur, or not in that frequency. So, the natural behaviour would be all kinds of behaviours that animals display in the wild of course."

Most of the caretakers would answer in a similar manner. Behaviours that are found in the wild are natural, whereas those not usually observed in the wild are labelled as unnatural, abnormal or stereotypical. Carers are concerned with animals showcasing unnatural behaviours, as they are frequently associated with stress and bad welfare. The most common unnatural behaviours include, animals pulling their hairs, pacing around their enclosures, slapping themselves and eating inedible articles they find. These behaviours also fall under the abnormal or stereotypical characterisation, and they indicate that the animals embodying these habits are experiencing stress. As these behaviours can be harmful to the animals, caretakers endeavour to prevent them.

The major factor that amounts to unnatural behaviours is environmental staticity. In nature animals would live in an ever-changing dynamic environment where they would constantly be expressing their natural behaviours to survive. Captivity by itself is static, since animals have limited space, and all their needs are provided for by humans. In a static environment, animals get bored and stressed, adopting stereotypical habits to cope. Caretakers to prevent atypical behaviours need to ensure that they are providing animals with variety throughout their day and a dynamic environment. Engaging the animals with enriching activities that promote their natural behaviours is one way to avoid stativity. On top of that, carers need to ensure that the environment within the animals' enclosures is also dynamic and motivates the animals to use their natural behaviours. The enclosures' environment needs to mimic the species native terrain allowing them to exhibit the same behaviours as they would in the wild. For instance, for animals like primates, they can replicate their natural habitat by providing trees, branches and swings which will encourage climbing. In addition, according to a big cat sanctuary head-keeper replicating the animals'

natural habitat is not enough to ensure stimulation, you need to put more effort in maintaining the animals' day, by giving them a variety of options. In his words:

"You need to give them choices, and so the one platform to lay on is not enough. You need to have several platforms in several positions where they can lay on. Do they want to lay in the sun, or in the shade? Do they want to play with something? [...]"

To avoid stereotypical behaviours and stress, caretakers need to ensure that their animals live in an environment that both looks like their natural habitat and provides them with a variety of activities to choose for. Enriching activities combined with a dynamic environment provides a variation in the animals' day, which lowers the probabilities of stress and boredom and in consequence stereotypic behaviours. To provide "good care", caretakers need to work within the staticity of captivity, and manage to ensure a natural dynamic environment for their animals, to the best of their ability.

Up to this point, the concern of exhibiting natural behaviours and avoiding stress or unnatural behaviours have been working together. Animals having the freedom to enact their natural behaviours (climbing, swimming, foraging), reduces the probability of them being stressed and in consequence adopting unnatural stereotypical behaviours (hair-pulling, self-slapping, pacing). When discussing positive animal welfare with a sanctuary intern, she clearly pointed out how the two concerns collude.

"I think lack of stereotypic behaviours is one way to measure good welfare, but it has to be in line with, like any behavioural indicators, the ability to express natural behaviours, because not having negative does not equate to positive"

As such, "good care" entails the lack of unnatural behaviours and the encouragement of natural ones. However, not all sources of stress are directly related to stativity and the suppression of natural behaviours. Care workers are many times forced to sedate an animal to provide medical care, as the animal is too dangerous to approach otherwise. Sedation can be very stressful for the animal, but failing to provide adequate medical care could prove more dire in the long run. Interlocutors shared various examples that can cause animal stress and produce stereotypical behaviours. Most of them could be resolved by providing a dynamic environment which allows animals to express their natural behaviours. Yet, there are always elements outside the caregivers' control, like having to sedate an animal, that cause stress and are not connected to stativity and expressing natural behaviours.

Nevertheless, as stereotypical behaviours and stress are not always interrelated as indicated, they also stand as separate concerns. Stress doesn't always lead to stereotypical behaviours but it's still harmful to the animals. Unnatural behaviours are not always damaging stereotypical behaviours, they can also be normal behaviours but still unnatural ones. To better demonstrate what I mean, I'll turn to a quote from an interlocutor who clarified the difference between normal and unnatural behaviours.

"Suppose the terms natural and normal behaviour are battered around quite interchangeably within a zoo environment but are actually very different. So, a normal behaviour doesn't have to be a natural behaviour, [...] and it's not necessarily seen in the wild, whereas a natural behaviour is seen in the wild."

Normal behaviours can also be unnatural behaviours if they are not seen in the wild. Akin to stereotypical behaviours they also developed to help the animals cope with captivity, but unlike stereotypical behaviours they are not harmful. To put it another way, Normal behaviours are innocuous habits, which are unnatural if developed in captivity but natural if observed in the wild. One of my interlocutors spoke of a leopard who loved swinging in tyres since they were young. On account of that behaviour, the carers placed a tyre swing in the leopard's enclosure. This behaviour was labelled as unnatural since it's not something leopards would be found doing in the wild, nonetheless the carers supported it since it was harmless and provided enrichment for the leopard. Although in that case the unnatural behaviour was encouraged, in others, like with the bowl feeding, they are avoided as they can countervail natural behaviours. Regardless of, if a behaviour is beneficial to the animal or not, caretakers will differentiate between natural and unnatural and adopt care practices that favour natural animal behaviours.

Behaviours that are not found in the wild and developed in captivity to help an animal adapt, are labelled unnatural. Some of these behaviours are caused by animal stress and are abnormal and harmful to the animals. Abnormal behaviours can be avoided to an extent if animals have the freedom to express their natural behaviours. Thus, choosing care practices that promote the natural over the unnatural it's "good care". The natural and unnatural come in opposition, and caretakers classify the two based on the nature/culture division. Natural behaviours are what animals do in the wild where humans are outside the equation. Whereas unnatural behaviours emerge due to human influence, like adapting to captivity. Classifying behaviours along those lines, places them in antithetical positions, where one is promoted as "good" and the other excluded as "bad", substantiating the western nature/culture division, where nature is the untainted antithesis of a tainted human civilisation (Cronon 1995: 6)

3.3 REDUCING THE HUMAN FACTOR

While participating at EZEP, I started conversing with two keepers about how poachers can use photo geotags to hunt wild animals released from sanctuaries. Finishing the conversation one of the two keepers concluded with the following statement on photographing wild captive animals:

"Also, it's sort of like defeats the object. It's a wild animal, it's not meant to have contact with humans."

Up to now, it's been demonstrated how caretakers replicate naturalness by encouraging natural animal behaviours and discouraging unnatural ones. Yet, as naturalness entails the lack of human presence, a key concern for animal caretakers becomes how to remove the human aspect, in a captive environment where animals depend on human care to survive. According to carers, a non-captive wild animal in nature, wouldn't be influenced by humans in any way, thence they seek to replicate that aspect of naturalness in captivity. For caretakers replicating naturalness is "good care", however, it has also started to become apparent, how their approach to enacting naturalness is influenced by the western nature/culture divide. Wilderness and humanity are put in an antithetical position, in which human unnaturalness corrupts the animals' natural way of life (Cronon 1995: 6).

Considering these, caretakers are concerned with removing their influence and presence from the care they provide. The best way to do so is by minimising animal-human contact as much as possible. Contact doesn't always refer to touch, it involves any form of animal-human habituation, like feeding and sharing space. Depending on the context and the species, carers will practise different levels of animal-caretaker contact. On some occasions they will only keep it to the absolute essential, like feeding. In others, they will share the animals' space but adopt an apathetic demeanour to avoid familiarisation. Asking a EZEP keeper about the benefits of limited animal-caregiver contact, I was given the following answer:

"[..] and you also don't intervene too much on the behaviour of the animal and it stays more natural, doesn't get so imprinted on the human, as it would if you have direct contact constantly."

Humans act as an impediment to naturalness; their presence can influence the animal's behaviour and disturb it from staying natural. And changing the animal's natural behaviour can prompt adverse outcomes to their care. One participant discussed the case of a penguin that had to be hand raised by the keepers due to medical issues. When it was time to re-join the penguin group, he was too accustomed to

humans and didn't know how to interact with the other penguins. Consequently, the rest of the group bullied him. Human habituation changed the penguin's behaviour bringing about a negative outcome in his caregiving. Therefore, for better care it's important that caretakers and animals stay as separated as possible. What's more, it's also noticeable how the three concerns within the register of naturalness work together, reinforcing one another. By reducing human influence, you encourage natural behaviours and prevent the manifestation of unnatural ones. However, preventing human familiarisation can also lead to drawbacks.

Firstly, it's infeasible to completely nullify human presence in animal care, and the more caretakers remove their presence the harder their job becomes. Secondly, thwarting human familiarisation within environments like sanctuaries/zoos that have a constant flow of visitors, can result in animal stress. Take the words of a wildlife sanctuary intern as a case in point:

"So, I do think a level of contact is positive, especially with the human presence being all around. They're never gonna be able to be away from people, that's not something that exists in a captive environment. [...]"

Captive animals need to be accustomed to people to some degree. If they are afraid and hostile towards them as they would in the wild, it could lead to stress and stereotypical behaviours. Caregivers must be able to strike a balance between the concerns of animal stress and reducing human influence. The balance practised in each setting will be different and will determine what "good care" is. The aim of "good care" remains replicating the naturalness by removing humanness, what changes is the extent to which they are replicating it.

Reducing human influence gets even more complicated when it comes to releasable animals. Which are animals that will be released in the wild after being born in captivity or after being rehabilitated from an injury. Animal stress from human presence is not that big of a concern in those cases, as animals need to learn to be afraid of humans. Still, caretakers remain concerned that any form of human habituation will ruin the animals' chance of survival in nature. As one of my participants explained:

"They don't want (animals) to rely on people, as they're like, as giving them food. So, you want them to be able to hunt without, the reliability on humans, so yeah"

If animals learn to rely on humans, then they won't develop the ability to survive by themselves in nature. Thus, caregivers endeavour to be as hands-off as possible, moderating any form of contact even below minimum. They're obviously various obstacles involved with that, as avoiding contact makes the caregiver's job harder and slower. For instance, a volunteer from a wild bird sanctuary, recounted how to avoid imprinting, the keepers would feed cranes by dressing up like them. Which demanded a great deal of preparation and patience. Whatsoever, the concern of reducing the human aspect to replicate naturalness is more crucial than the carers inconvenience. Even though it's never completely possible, caretakers will go to great lengths to conceal their own presence. The more they conceal their presence, the better they replicate naturalness and the greater the care is.

I started this chapter by addressing how the caretakers' goal is to provide care that is as natural as possible. I referred to a characteristic quote from an interlocutor which illustrated that caretakers define "the natural" as, what animals would do and be like, if humans were outside the equation. A belief emerging from the Western Enlightenment perception of the nature/culture divide, where nature and the wilderness exist around us, separate from humans (Murphy 1992: 311). Wild animal caretakers construct the terms "wild" and "natural "according to their understanding of human interference as an adverse force that removes the natural from the wild or vice versa. Consequently, they turn "wild" and "natural" into emic terms whose denotation disclaims the human factor from nature.

By investigating the three concerns within the naturalness register, it was unravelled how that conception manifests in practice. To start with, animal carers would commonly speak about eliciting, encouraging or exhibiting the animals' natural behaviours, which are classified as species specific behaviours found in the wild, unaffected by humans. To replicate naturalness and provide good care workers must trigger these behaviours from the animals. Even though they face many limitations in replicating them in confinement, caretakers will still provide "good care", as long as they are eliciting natural behaviours over unnatural ones. Unnatural habits develop within human influence, outside of nature, and In most cases, caretakers strive to discourage them as they can prove harmful for the animals. Even so, the natural/unnatural classification reinforces the Western nature/culture separation especially as the natural is promoted and regarded as "good" whereas the unnatural is avoided and deemed "bad". A distinction aligning with Cronon's (1995: 1) exemplification of the wild and the natural as an untouched pristine sanctuary, opposed to the tainted civilisation. Further, caretakers attempt to conceal their own presence from the animals, as to avoid tainting naturalness with their human influence. Even though removing their presence fully is impossible, by doing so caretakers accomplish to promote natural behaviours, and avoid triggering unnatural ones. In other words, they simulate naturalness.

How care is practised is motivated by our values, and in wild animal care, workers value a western conception of naturalness. Hence, they need to devise ways to replicate it as authentically as they can within confinement. This register was about adapting to limitations to provide the best standards of care. The next register is about the institutional limitations that manifest when enacting care, which ultimately hinder the efforts of the first. What constitutes "good care", will eventually be constructed by a compromise between the two registers on how to enact naturalness.

4 INSTITUTIONAL REGISTER OF VALUING

In the last chapter I unpacked the concerns that compose the naturalness register of valuing. The concerns were centred on how caretakers can provide good animal care by replicating a western understanding of naturalness within confinement. During my fieldwork, I also came across certain concerns caretakers face, that emerge from the status of wildlife organisations as institutional entities. Wildlife organisations need to establish themselves as institutions in order to operate, which incorporates them within a border political-economic network (Abrell 2021: Administration para.1, Funding para.1,5). Incorporation to that network creates certain concerns in implementing care. Caregivers will need to abide by the limitations these concerns bring about, compromising the care they can provide consequently. Clustering together the concerns emerging from the institutional status of wildlife organisations, composes the institutional register of valuing. The last registered covered activities caretakers adopted to manage and replicate naturalness in confinement. This register encompasses activities caretakers execute to address concerns emerging from the wildlife organisations' status as institutions.

Unlike the concerns within the naturalness register who dealt with the limitations of recreating an idea within confinement, institutional concerns are more about limitations on what caretakers can accomplish and how they can accomplish it. The sixth chapter will demonstrate how, Institutional limitations imped the caretakers' efforts to enact naturalness within captivity which creates tensions between the registers. The way these tensions are resolves shapes how naturalness is enacted and thereupon what constitutes "good care".

Nonetheless, my focus on this chapter will be on demonstrating how these institutional concerns create limitations that manifest as caretakers attempt to provide care, which aspects of care they affect, and how caretakers and organisations respond to them in practice. Even though I won't be focusing on naturalness in this chapter, as naturalness and institutional limitations are interwoven, a few references will still be made on how the way caretakers deal with institutional concerns impacts the reproduction of naturalness and in consequence "good care". But that is mainly a matter discussed in the next chapter.

Like with the naturalness register, there are three concerns animal care workers need to face to provide good care. First in the concern of safety. Most Wild Animals are dangerous to work with, so caretakers need to adjust how they care for them to protect themselves. Next, as wildlife institutions are part of a broader network, they are part of the global economy so to provide care they need to first afford it. Last,

wildlife organisations are a subject to public opinion which can influence how they practise care. Institutional concern will obstruct what caretakers can and can't accomplish, and caretakers will have to adapt accordingly to provide care.

4.1 Wet Nasty Chickens

I was sitting with a head-keeper talking about an enclosure remodelling project her organisation was planning. While she was hopeful about the improvements this project would bring, before we ended the discussion, she wearily mentioned… "There is also the part of money, of course. Is there money to make this? Because it's not a small thing…" At that point, hearing an animal care-worker voicing concerns over finances was nothing new. My participants would often express discontent and exasperation over the financial limitation they had to continuously face when providing care. Whether we like it or not, animal care is part of the animal industry which belongs to the world's economic system (Abrell 2021: Funding para. 5). So regardless if you are rehabilitating a wild animal or buying food for your dog, you are part of that system. Which means, that whether an organisation can take care of animals, is highly dependent on a flow of income. As another one of my interlocutors nicely put it "You need money to stay open, if you don't have money, how are you going to feed the animals?". Sanctuaries and Zoos earn their income mainly through paying visitors, tours and donations. But wild animal care is demanding and expensive so it's to no surprise that income is never enough for the caretakers to provide the care they hope for. Instead, they have to find ways to alternate and adapt how they enact care, to be able to perform it within these financial restrictions. Every setting will adjust care practices to monetary limitations according to where they are located and what they have access to. Zoos/sanctuaries to overcome financial problems rely on donations. Donations can come in the shape of both money and material goods like food. This however means that they must work with what they are given, which can be far from ideal.

In a conversation with one of my interlocutors, a keeper from a South African sanctuary, we spoke about the compromises they must make on food quality due to their reliance on donations. She visually described how the chickens they provide to the carnivores, is the product of a compromise between money and good nutrition. She started by explaining the following:

"[...] but these animals are eating like, nasty chicken, like the kind that humans can't eat. Because the donations that we get are like, say, KFC [...]"

The donations the sanctuary would get were KFC chickens that had been trampled to death by other chickens making them unsuitable for human consumption. They would donate these chickens to the

sanctuary and would further compromise their quality through their transport process. As the keeper illustrated:

“[...] and then these chickens would be like, in a hot van travelling here, so the smell, Ughh…!!! And then, they like freeze them. Because you obviously wanna make them last as long as possible, but then, you defrost them and so it's like a wet nasty chicken.”

I continued by asking her if they have a way to balance or deal with the nastiness of the chickens. She mentioned that she had confronted her head-keeper about it, since she was also worried about the animals’ welfare. The head-keeper expressed she would also like to do better for the animals, and if she had the ability she would, but she also didn’t know how to implement that without a lot more funds.

When it comes to nutrition, “good care” for animal caretakers is to replicate the animals’ natural diet as closely as possible. As caretakers are aware that finances don’t allow for an exact replication, they have to work with what they are given, and keep on adjusting their practices to provide “good care”. In the last case, the caretakers were trying to replicate the natural diet of the carnivores. In an ideal scenario they would provide them with live prey, but that’s illegal and unethical. A second-best option would be giving them wild antelope meat, but that is highly expensive as you have to pay someone to hunt them. Thusly, they had to adapt to the financial limitations of their organisation to replicate a natural diet and implement “good care”, which meant finding the next best available meat. This is already an example of how the institutional register hinders the efforts of the natural register, but that won’t be my focus here.

Finances affect all aspects of care, not just diet, they even affect who does the caring. Because of underfunding, zoos and sanctuaries heavily rely on volunteers, and in some sanctuaries, volunteers even have to pay to be there. Volunteering can be both free-labour and a source of income for the wild animal care industry. Organisations are dependent on volunteers as they can't afford to have a full team of experienced caretakers, so they must invent other ways to compensate. However, that manifests as a limitation on the care caregivers provide and entails a compromise towards animal welfare. First up, deploying volunteers can cause animal stress. Talking to a biologist who conducted research in Borneo, she explained that animals get much more stressed around short-term volunteers compared to permanent workers. Volunteer faces keep on changing and animals don’t have the time to get accustomed to them, so they are always surrounded by strangers and that induces stress. Secondly, they make volunteers a crucial part of animal-care. They hastily train them and then entrust them with a great amount of responsibility. Yet, volunteers are neither qualified nor experienced like the keepers, so they

run the risk of making mistakes and endangering the animals. What's more, what will happen if no volunteer shows up? Who is going to do the work? One of my interviewees talked about how the sanctuary he worked at, faced a difficult time when volunteers stopped coming

“While I worked for Cameroon, you can imagine it was just in the period that the war broke out, no tourists came there. So, there was nothing there for them to (make) money on. So, it was just a very dire, dire, bad time.”

In that instance, volunteers were crucial not only as a source of workforce but also as a source of income, and when the sanctuary could no longer depend on them, they had to face a dire situation. In a perfect world, sanctuaries/zoos would be able to employ a full team of professional caretakers, but as finances don’t allow it, they must rely on volunteers which means compromising some parts of animal welfare. Care workers aim to provide the best for the animals but as they are understaffed, they can’t cope with all the necessary demands to achieve that.

Zoos and Sanctuaries adjust their care practices in accordance with their financial limitations. In addition, they also modify care to overcome financial limitations. Organisations use people as a source of income, and to get the constant flow of income required to stay open, they need a constant flow of people. On that account, the animals they take care of have to be commodified. Visitors seek to see, hear and come close to animals they wouldn’t normally witness, herby, the animals themselves don’t become the commodity but the sensory experience they produce for the visitors does (Abrell 2021: Funding para.5; Parreñas 2018: 171, 168). Thus, organisations will use that as a means to produce the funds they need to operate. To do so, they turn to crowd pulling techniques. Crowd pulling techniques as an interlocutor explained, determine where resources are allocated, which care practices are chosen over others, as well as which individual receives more care. According to her:

“[...] you know the cute and the fluffies to bring in the crowds [...] You might have those particular species because they're crowd pullers, nobody might care about this really critically endangered insect that you've got over here, but they'll be interested in the fact that you've got a meerkat.”

Organisations will choose to allocate more resources to the animals’ whose sensory experience the public is most likely to seek. Subsequently, Financial limitations determine the space and resources allocated to each species. Wildlife Institutions are tight within the global economy, so to make the money

needed to care for all the animals, some animals must be cared for more than others. As such, finances limit caretakers in providing equally good care for everyone, which can cause frustration amongst them.

Crowd pulling techniques are not limited to choosing the cutes and the fluffies over other animals. Other examples I heard included, choosing to stay open longer to arrange special events, permitting free-contact with specific animals, and allowing people to feed the animals. All of which, in some cases and if not done right can cause animal stress. Care workers aspire to provide the best they can, but institutional limitations like finances force them to downgrade the care they provide. Despite this, "good care" can still be provided by recreating naturalness, but not in the best possible way, as finances require sacrificing certain parts of it. Conflicts don't arise only between the two registers but also within them (Heuts and Mol 2015: 129) and that further influences how care is practised. To address monetary concerns each setting must find a middle ground between what the people want, which is beneficial for the business side of things, and what is good for animal care. As each setting finds its own middle ground, care will be shaped in different ways accordingly.

Financial concerns are a good example of how care can be shaped by who does the caring, who do they care for, and how do they enact care (Joks and Law 2017: 151,161-163), as they affect all three. First, it was demonstrated how the care you provide is a product of how you adapt to financial limitations. In the KFC example, care was enacted by giving animals not an optimal diet, but the best diet they could with their available resources. Finances also affect who does the caring, as organisations must rely on volunteers who don't have the same skill set as adept caretakers. So, care is shaped accordingly. Lastly, who is cared for depends on where resources are allocated in accordance with what will bring in money from quests, so they can be invested back to animal care.

4.2 Safety and Contact

In 2017 Rosa King was attacked and killed by one of the tigers she cared for. Rosa entered the tigers' paddock while the slides separating the tiger den from the paddock were open (Moss: 2019: 2). Working with Wild animals is unpredictable and dangerous, if they get upset while near you, they won't give you a simple scratch, but the injuries can be lethal or cost you a hand and leg. Herby, visitors and keepers' safety is a major concern for institutions like zoos and sanctuaries.

The following description is from Alia, one of my interlocutors who volunteered at a wild animal rehabilitation centre in Central America. The volunteer recounts her experience of being grabbed and

bitten by a macaque monkey while working near his enclosure. I draw upon her experience as to bring alive the dangers of wild animal care-work and highlight the importance of safety.

"I was terrified…they tell us 'If you get grabbed make sure you don't injure the monkey' but at that moment it's not what you think about. Especially when they are that strong, and they are pulling. He was pulling my arm, and all I could see in that moment, was these massive canines. Then it hit me, 'Oh, shit, this is it, I'm gonna lose my arm, this doesn't look good…' and he bit. He was pulling me, and I…I can't…what was I supposed to do? My arm is giving up, he is so strong. And so…I just, like, pulled my arm back really quickly, which I know they said not to do! But in that moment, it's me or him, you know?"

Luckily The macaque's canines didn't manage to get through her second shirt to cause her an injury. Alia was following and working under strict safety guidelines that prohibited caretakers to have any contact with the animals. Nonetheless the accident still managed to occur. Without these safety protocols caretakers would have the liberty to hand feed animals and enter their enclosures, which in cases of dangerous animals like the macaque would entail much more severe outcomes than a bite. It is then important for the organisations to ensure the safety of both the keepers and the visitors. Depending on the setting and the animals' danger levels, different policies exist. And the safety regulations that exist affect how care is practised.

In the register of naturalness, I discussed caregivers limit animal-carer contact to overcome the concern of human influence. Nevertheless, limiting contact is also crucial to addressing the concern of visitor and caretaker safety. Through my research I identified three main contact policies that dictated the interactions between animals and caretakers. Each organisation may adopt any of the three policies. The policies can be practised on different levels and more than one type of contact can exist within a setting depending on the animals they host. It's also important to note that, I classify contact policies based on my experience and observations, different settings and people might classify types of contact in different ways.

The first type is free-contact. With free-contact the carer is allowed to enter and share the same space with the animals but also interact with them freely (e.g. petting). Full-contact, it's mostly avoided as it comes with many safety risks. When an organisation follows this policy there are many guidelines to avoid dangerous situations. To start with, contact is allowed with specific animals that pose less danger. The volunteers, interns and new staff must first go through a training process to be allowed to enter animal enclosures. Through that induction process you learn what might agitate each individual and how

to interact with animals on their terms. If the animal looks upset or there is a change in their behaviour, contact will be withdrawn temporarily. There are some animals that only the head-keepers are allowed to have full contact with as they have built a bond with them. That bond allows keepers to handle animals and read their behaviours to predict any changes that might cause safety concerns. As one head-keeper put it

"I... You know, only interact with the animals, Full contact that I raised! that I know! that I really can trust! I'm not going to go into a leopard enclosure with a leopard that I did not raise, because then the risk is high [...]"

In addition to illustrating the importance of knowing the animal you interact with, her words also indicate how full-contact can be dangerous if not done right. According to her, animals get a lot from contact through the smells and behaviours people bring in the enclosures. At the same time, if an animal is accustomed to humans, it's also easier to conduct medical checks and administer medicine. If the animal is not benefitting from contact, then there's no need for it. Thereby, Free-contact enables care takers to provide care without many limitations, while benefiting the animal. Still, it can be dangerous and entails constant attention to safety protocols.

A second kind of contact is no-contact, and it falls on the opposite side of the spectrum from free-contact. No-contact protocols, try to utterly minimise care worker-animal interactions.

Although it's the safest way to conduct animal care, it's also the most inconvenient. As one keeper puts it "Basically, you wouldn't be able to do any jobs if you had no contact." Even though it's the safest form of contact, not having any form of interaction with the animal is impossible and creates a lot of limitations in caring for them. Hence, it's usually preferred for animals that are to be released back into the wild as it also encourages naturalness. I will expand more on no-contact protocols in the final chapter to illustrate how naturalness concerns and institutional concerns conflict one another. Still, regulations put in place to manage safety concerns can act as a burden to care as they limit what the caretakers can do, even if they are for their own safety.

The last form of contact is protected contact and is the middle ground between free and no-contact. Protected contact involves caretaker-animal interactions through barriers only. As it is a midpoint between the other two policies, it comes in a spectrum that can lean towards either way. But I will divide that spectrum into two categories of protected contact. Contact through physical barriers, like bars, and

contact through behavioural barriers, that the keeper retains when sharing the same space with the animal. The latter is also referred to as close-contact. In both cases, interaction must be limited to training and feeding. As EZEP practised protected contact, I got to experience both of these levels.

On my third day of being there, I joined the zookeepers towards the bears enclosure for the morning feeding. The first thing we had to do was to enter the inside enclosure and check whether all the bears were there and secured. We had to make sure we wouldn't share the same space with the bears, otherwise we would be dead, but there was a corridor that allowed us to move and work next to the inside enclosures. The keepers showed me how to make sure the hatches between the inside and outside enclosure were locked and functioning. When that was done and we ensured that we wouldn't run the risk of meeting a bear in the outside enclosure, we could go there to spread their food. This is an example of the first form of protected-contact that leans closer to no-contact policies. Protected contact through barriers allows the keepers to safely clean and feed without worrying about being attacked. However, moving animals from inside to outside enclosure and vice versa can be time consuming and sometimes the enclosure inhabitants take their time to cooperate. My first morning at EZEP I was shadowing one of the keepers in the ostrich enclosure. The first thing she had to do was call the two of them inside so she could clean the outside. As they work through protected contact with them, keeper-ostrich can't share the same space. That morning however, the male ostrich found himself especially confused and had a hard time understanding the keeper was calling him. The keeper would keep on yelling his name while waving her hands, but to no avail. Eventually, after a record time of forty minutes late, with a lot of patience and determination the ostrich took the hint and made his way inside. But other than being time-consuming, protected-contact predominantly relies on human accuracy. Rosa King was killed because even with thirteen years of experience she didn't close the padlock separating her from the tiger (Moss: 2019: 2). The method of protected-contact allows the caretakers to efficiently provide care without risking their safety, as long as they practise it accurately.

Animals that don't pose immediate threat like sitatungas and antelopes, keepers are allowed to clean the enclosure and feed them while they are both inside. They don't have to separate them with padlocks or hatches. Instead, they must use their bodies to set boundaries. Caretakers enter an enclosure, feed, clean and leave, they keep a distance from the animals and refrain from touching or petting them. In that manner their bodies and behaviour act as a barrier. This form of interaction is referred to as close-contact and remains within the spectrum of protected contact. Moreover, as the animals are aware that the keeper enters to spread their food and leave, they are not threatened by them and let them enter safely. Close-contact is a favourable option as it's efficient and human error does not necessarily lead to lethality. but it's impossible to do for animals that could prove a possible threat to the carers. I was talking with a head-keeper from EZEP, and she explained how they changed their contact policy with the zebras from

close-contact to protected-contact, due to how hard they can kick. Even though no one had ever been hurt, there were some close calls.

Although keepers are the ones who are directly affected by the dangers of their profession, the concern of safety also expands to the zoo/sanctuary's visitors. When Rosa was attacked and felt unconscious, the gate to the paddock had remained open from fifteen minutes to an hour; the tiger could have walked outside the enclosure if it decided to do so (Moss 2019: 4,7). By caretakers adhering to contact safety protocols, like making sure hatches are closed or the electric wires around the enclosure are turned back on when they finish cleaning, they also ensure the animals can't escape. Thus, avoiding a massive health hazard. Organisations are dependent on peoples' support and visits so they must retain a safe environment. Moreover, as I will demonstrate in the next chapter it is important that they keep a favourable public image. Nevertheless, safety regulations can hinder the caretakers' job.

Which contact practices are going to be adopted and how they will be performed depends on various factors. First, it depends on how far the institution will go to ensure care worker and visitor safety. Adopting no-contact regulations ensures safety but is quite limiting. Then the closer you get to free-contact the more effective the care becomes, but safety wanes. It depends on what balance each organisation will strike between these aspects as they come in opposition with each other. Which safety to contact ratio they will decide to adopt shapes how care is practiced.

It also depends on how confident the head-keeper is in reading animal behaviours to avoid risk. One of my interlocutors mentioned that even though the sanctuary worked under a no-contact policy, there is some leniency to it and keepers practised full-contact with some animals they trusted. Lastly, it also depends on the animal itself. There is a great difference between the danger levels of a hedgehog and a lion. Both are wild animals but if a lion escapes it would wreak havoc, if a hedgehog does, you put on gloves, grab it and put it back. Context also matters when applying safety policies. My interlocutor Alia was following no-contact protocols when she had a terrifying experience with a macaque that grabbed and bit her. When I was at EZEP, I joined one of the keepers inside the macaque enclosure to feed them following close-contact protocols. The macaques seem to barely notice our presence. Alia's macaque was rescued from the wild into a rehabilitation sanctuary and saw humans as a threat. The macaques in EZEP, on the other hand, were born there and had grown accustomed to human presence.

Wildlife institutions must keep their employees and visitors out of harm's way, like so, they use contact policies to address the concern of safekeeping. Contact regulations are about managing to care for the

animals, while working around the concern of safety, and it's enacted differently in every location based on disparate factors. Depending on how it's performed it will define the limitations caretakers have to face when providing care. Or as we are going to see in the next chapter, the limitations no-contact creates affect how naturalness is enacted and in consequence "good care".

4.3 Public Image and influence

We were in the middle of an interview with one of my interlocutors, when she declared "That's the thing, and…and nobody else can back us…and we just have to do what people say." The conversation went on, but that phrase had already left its footprint on my mind. Up to that point, I had heard before how the way the public perceives a care practice can lead to boycotting it. But it was then when everything started clicking. I started to comprehend the impact peoples' perceptions and understanding of a care practice can have on how "good care" is enacted. Particularly, the importance of the concern of public image in how care is put into practice.

Wildlife organisations that are part of the state are bound by its regulations (Abrell 2021: Administration para.3). Moreover, as wildlife institutions are also embedded in a vast socio-economic and political system, they are a subject to public opinion and political decisions. How the Public perceives the organisation can limit how care is performed. The public's negative opinion can lead to campaigns that change political regulations and, consequently, care taking. For the better in the activist's eyes, but for the worse in the caretaker's opinion. That is why, Zoos and sanctuaries also adjust the care they provide to ensure they are favourably perceived by the public. Yet, no matter what organisations do to promote a positive image, things can arise outside of their control and will attract public attention.

I had entered the hippo enclosure with one of the keepers, Troi, to carry out the morning cleaning. The male hippo had just woken up and had to do his morning business. We were patiently waiting for him to finish, sitting as far away as possible, given that hippos use their tails as propellers to spread their business far and wide. After he was done and gone outside, Troi would look at the mess on the walls and around the enclosure, pick up the equipment and while shovelling a pile of his faeces would mutter a phrase I often heard her say "Well! And then they say we are the ones that are torturing the animals". Many of the caretakers I interviewed, especially zookeepers seem to share the same bitterness about the public's negative perception of what they do. I later asked Troi whether they often have people complaining about EZEP torturing the animals. She brought to my attention an incident that had occurred a few years ago when a chimpanzee had escaped his enclosure. The chimp managed to reach the parking lot and was then put down since sedating him wouldn't have worked due to high adrenaline levels. This event brought a lot of public attention and clamour with activists protesting outside EZEP park

calling for its closure, reason being that it's a place of torture and exploitation. Troi commented that "some activists don't know what they are talking about, they sit in their couches watching the news making all sorts of assumptions". Like Troi, many of the research participants expressed dissatisfaction with how people perceive their jobs and organisations, especially zoos. The majority of people think of zoos as they were a hundred years ago, denying seeing the change that has taken place. What's more, a common argument my zookeeper interlocutors' have to deal with, is that they should let the animals go free. What this argument fails to consider is that these animals are captive bred for tens or a hundred of years. If these animals were to be released back in the wild, they couldn't survive, as they have learned to be completely dependent on humans. Caretakers from both sanctuaries and zoos seem to put the blame for these tensions on the visitors' lack of knowledge and understanding on animal needs. But as organisations are dependent on the public, visitors have the power to influence animal care even if they don't know a great deal about it. So, it's important that they don't get controversial exposure.

Organisations change how they perform care to win the visitor's approval, but public opinion can also change animal care. In the case of the Chimpanzee escape there were no consequences towards the care practices, as far as I know. Only threats and demands to shut EZEP down. Nonetheless, one of my participants working in wildlife conservation provided me with a case where public image, activism, and political decisions all collaborated to influence and limit how care is put into practice. Elephants as a species tend to draw a lot of public attention due to their extinct status. Hence people place a lot of personal interest in them. Nevertheless, what is not commonly recognised by most of the public, is that elephants are going extinct only in specific parts of the world like East Africa. Whereas my interlocutor was working in a conservation park in South Africa, where elephants had started overpopulating the park damaging the environment. Hence, the park management had to start calling them. As he explained:

"They made a calculation and decided that a population of 7.000 is healthy. If you go over that, the area will start to suffer. so, they would shoot the animals. But people documented that. And they brought it internationally on the news"

Calling the elephants was a form of care, as it would allow both the area and the elephant population to continue existing in a healthy manner. Unlikely, it drew the public's attention and since the majority of people believe elephants are under extinction, they couldn't comprehend the reasoning behind such an action and viewed it as highly controversial. That being so, the matter got international exposure presented as animal caretakers killing an endangered species. In countries like Tanzania and Kenya that would be true, but not in South Africa. As my interlocutor continued describing, the public took the issue to the South African government.

“And they show the dropping numbers and elephant populationship of Eastern Africa. And they went to the governments of South Africa, and they say, ‘Listen, you know, this is going to be bad for your tourism. This is going to be destroying you, blah, blah.’ [...]”

Regardless of the inaccurate statistics, the government conceded to the peoples demand to stop the shootings to avoid negative sanctions. Hence, the government put up laws prohibiting elephant shootings. That had greatly negative consequences to the park’s environment as it could not support that many elephants and many plants and animals’ species started dying.

Even though the example came from conservation and not captive wild animal care, I thought it’s important to include, as it demonstrates how public opinion can be authoritative enough to change governmental regulations, imposing limitations on wild animal care. It’s understandable how shooting elephants might seem controversial when you aren’t aware of the mechanisms behind it. If a care practice like calling animals gets exposure, it can provoke negative reactions, establishing negative connotations towards the organisation's image. Then care can be affected in two ways. Firstly, as wildlife organisations are dependent on public visits, tours and donations, the organisation itself might put a stop to a controversial care practice to avoid repelling their main source of income. Secondly, people who don’t agree with a care practice can push the government to ban it and wildlife institutions will comply to avoid negative sanctions. In both cases the concern of public image brings limitations to how care workers hope to enact care.

The way the public image of an institution is perceived, can affect what care workers can and can’t do when providing care. So far, I only mentioned how the concern of public image can sabotage the caretakers’ preferred way of providing animal care. Even so, sometimes it can also have positive effects towards animal care. Quoting an animal welfare consultant with zookeeping experience.

“Those sorts of activists do play a role. I'm not saying it's necessarily a bad role, because, I think sometimes [...] It also gives a bit more push towards you know, Zoo directors, board of trustees, those sorts of groups to be able to push for more finances around welfare.”

Organisations being concerned with their public also pushes them to keep good standards of care, to be in the public's favour. But also, the power the public has in changing regulations can be used to ensure those appropriate standards are met. In this case the concern of public image doesn't act as a limitation to the caretaker's endeavours but works together with them.

An adverse organisation image can drive away the people that the organisation is dependent on, as well as instigate negative sanctions. As such, organisations aim to promote a positive repute to attract the public. To ensure the prior, the organisation itself can stop or alternate certain care practices. For instance, carcass feeding is one of the most beneficial practices an organisation can offer to the animals. Yet, they refrain from performing it as the sight of an animal eating another full animal tends to upset the visitors. In some cases, it's conducted but hidden from guests. Zoos and sanctuaries will hide certain practices and realities to be on the public's good side. But that could also be the problem. Most of my participants expressed how non-caretakers interfered with animal care while lacking any knowledge around it, but that's also the causality of keeping so many things behind the scenes. Continuing my conversation with the associate professor she mentioned how zoos are afraid of the public misunderstanding what the keepers do and why they do it, so they keep many things hidden. She added:

"[...] zoos are already opening their doors physically to let the public in. If you're not allowing the public to understand the decisions that you make and why you're making them with, you know, evidence and for knowledge, then that for me is the biggest area that we're struggling with."

On the one hand, lack of knowledge is creating tensions between activists' and organisations. On the other, being transparent and trying to educate people can be risky. Whether an organisation decides to be more open or private, it will affect which care practices you perform and how you perform them, either by limiting care workers or by supporting them.

All in all, Institutions must promote an image favourable to the public, as they are dependent on them. This gives outsiders the power to affect how care is performed. As the "good" and the "bad" in care are not objective but interwind and informed by context, it's easy for someone to not understand how a practice appearing "bad" to them, holds something "good" from another perspective (Mol et al. 2010: 12,13). Outsiders will perceive care practises in a different way to the caretakers as they can lack context about them. That can lead to tensions between the organisation and the public, the public can then bring the issue to government bodies which will put laws in place that limit how care is performed. In any case,

the concern of public image will bring about limitations to animal care either through the institution itself or through the public.

In all the sub-chapters we saw how institutional concerns manifest in practice, limiting and shaping how caretakers could perform care. Either by having to follow safety policies that inconveniencies the care they can provide, or by having to sacrifice parts of care to increase funding, or by care being dictated by outsiders' perceptions. How each organisation will deal with these institutional concerns, will affect the care, caregivers can provide.

I demonstrated how caretakers engage in certain activities that respond to the concerns created by the institutional status of wildlife organisations, which in most cases limits care giving. As carers' main goal is to replicate the best possible natural conditions through care, the limitations in care resulting from the institutional register, affects the enactment of naturalness as well. As such the activities caretakers adopt to replicate naturalness and face institutional concerns come in conflict.

5 CARE IN PRACTICE: JUGGLING CONCERNS-IN-TENSION

In the previous chapters I grouped into two registers the concerns care workers face when enacting care. The registers included how care workers respond to limitations on how they enact care. The natural register demonstrated how caretakers overcome the limitations of confinement to replicate a Western understanding of naturalness. The institutional register addressed how institutional limitations manifest as caretakers attempt to provide care and impede their efforts. “Good care” entails the replication of naturalness in the best possible way in confinement, but that gets limited by institutional concerns. Within both register caregivers provided care by adopting certain practices and engaging in certain activities that responded to concerns they faced. The activities caretakers engage in, within the natural register, try to replicate naturalness the best way possible, but the activities of the institutional register hinder how care is practiced. Consequently, the two sets of activities will come in conflict when caretakers enact animal care.

For caretakers replicating nature is “good care”. Yet, as mimicking nature is confinement is hindered by institutional limitations, what constitutes “good care” will be moulded according to how the conflict between the two registers is resolved in practice. Namely, what constitutes “good care” for care workers is a product of the compromises between the tensions created within and chiefly between the registers. These compromises reflect how far they can replicate naturalness.

In this chapter, I will demonstrate how the replication of naturalness comes in conflict with institutional concerns, and the way these conflicts are resolved in practice ultimately shapes what constitutes “good care”. To do so, I will further delve into how wild animal care is put into practice. Throughout my fieldwork I got the chance to talk to people about their experiences and work in wild animal care, slowly drawing a mental picture of what a job like that could look like in its day-to-day practice. At the end of my research period, I was fortunate enough to also experience first-hand what working in animal care really is like. Through my experience I was able to identify five central care practices that constitute how wild animal care is encted, Enrichment, Diet, Housing, Death and Contact. For each one of them, care workers try to enact it in a manner that provides “good” animal care. As such they practice “good enrichment”, “good diet”, “good housing” and so on. What makes each one of them “good” when put in practiced it’s fabricated by the balance stricken in practice between the clashing concerns of the two registers. To explore what makes each of these practices “good” through this chapter, I will illustrate how they are put in practice on a day-to-day basis, and how caretakers resolve the conflicts that arise when they enact each practice to provide care. By understanding what is “good” for each one of them, I can draw a conclusion on what constitutes “good care” for wild animal care workers. The chapter is divided into five

sub-chapters each exploring one of the five care practises, starting with enrichment and concluding with contact.

Figure 2: Capuchin Monkeys at EZEP. Drawing and editing by the author. 2024

5.1 ENRICHMENT:

There is not much to say about the practice of enrichment by itself, However, its significance lies when it's integrated within other care practices, especially diet and housing. Therefore, I have decided to start with the role of enrichment in care, so its meaning is apparent when it comes up as a facet within another aspect or practice.

In contrast to the constantly changing environment animals would experience in the wild, captive habitats can be quite static. To compensate and emulate the dynamic aspect found in the wild, caretakers compose various enriching activities for the animals. Enrichment are components that help elucidate the animals' natural repertoire of behaviours. It also makes their day much more interesting and helps releasable animals learn how to survive in the wild.

Enrichment comes in many different forms. It can be items like envelopes with hidden food, that encourage the animals' scavenging behaviours. It can be sensory like adding smells to their enclosure to help them use their nose. In a similar manner it can also be auditory. There is also environmental enrichment. Environmental enrichment are features within an enclosure to make it more stimulating and evoke behaviours like climbing for the monkeys or swimming for the penguins. Keeping animals busy with enrichment also ensures they don't show any stereotypical behaviours which is a sign of negative welfare. You can see different forms of environmental enrichment in figures 1 and 3. The Capuchin enclosure included all sorts of furniture they could engage with to enrich their day, from branches to ropes and platforms.

Like with most things in animal care, enrichment's purpose is to elicit natural behaviours and avoid animal stress. But also, as many things in animal care they face certain institutional limitations. It was my last day at the EZEP, and I was at the shed shoving alfalfa at the giraffe enrichment cages. Two of the keepers were with me, one helping me out and the other concerned with something different. As we were already chatting about unrelated staff, I asked them if they would be open to an interview for my research. They were happy to help, so I started recording. It was during the topic of contact that led us to talking about tensions between them and the visitors, and then the following conversation unfolded. The caretakers protested over people complaining about stopping some of the shows the zoo held with the animals. The shows were a way to allow the animals to showcase their natural behaviours and enrich their day. As the first keeper described:

“See that’s the thing, that's why we don't do the Dolphins show anymore. We don't do the flight, the Bird flights, hardly ever, because they think of it as like a circus, whereas they don't know […] how good it is for the Animals as well…”

The caretakers also mention how the government also perceived these shows as a circus act. Being so, the organisation to avoid being associated with the negative connotations the label circus carries and due to activists’ demands, they stopped the shows. Eventually, the second keeper exclaimed in a tone of exhaustion and defeat that “[…] we just have to do what people say”. Through my interviews I heard many caretakers getting indignant about the public affecting how they wished to enact care, but it was the first time I realised how disheartening this can be for them. This became a key moment in my fieldwork and allowed me to understand the strength public opinion had over animal care. I didn’t provide the prior conversation to only talk about my interlocutor's quote, but also to demonstrate how the two registers of valuing clash, as public image obstructs the implementation of certain enrichment practices. How they resolve these tensions in practice, shapes what eventually constitutes “good enrichment”.

Caretakers use enriching practices to allow animals to showcase their natural behaviours like flying. Sometimes these practices can be in the form of a show to act as a crowd puller and help with the income flow needed to support the organisations. But as that is an open show it also becomes part of the organisation’s public image. Therefore, a subject to public perception. If the public perceives it as “bad” whether the caretakers perform it as “good” this will affect how and whether an enriching practice is enacted. Afterall, “Good and bad may be intertwined” (Mol et al. 2010: 12-13). The activists' good intentions might result in a bad outcome for the caretakers.

First, the two registers can work together by using enrichment to re-enforce naturalness and address financial concerns. But in the case of the dolphin show and bird flight, it adversely affected the organisation's image. Consequently, to avoid negative sanctions, a compromise between the register of naturalness and the institutional register had to be made. More specifically they choose to sacrifice the enrichment the shows provided for the animals to address the concern of public image. Caretakers had to adapt how they practiced enrichment to comply with public image limitations. As they continued practicing enrichment to elicit natural behaviours, they provided “good enrichment” and “good care”. It is only practiced in an alternate way to what they hoped for.

5.2 Diet:

I had a few interlocutors expressing how new volunteers or interns often carry the misconception that feeding time is simply about throwing animals their food and leaving. Whereas, On the contrary, there is a much more carefully structured process within animal diet. From their nutrition to food presentation, they all have been thoughtfully engineered to resemble naturalness. To provide a good Diet carers must practise it in a manner that allows animals to eat like they would in nature, while working around the concerns of finances and public image.

When constructing an animal's diet, caretakers must look at what animals would eat in the wild and mimic it as closely as possible. However, caretakers are aware that to exactly reproduce an animal's natural diet is impossible. As not only do they lack the data, but most importantly the food they have access to has been processed for human consumption changing the nutritional values. As a head-keeper explained:

"[...] nutritionally the value of fruits in the wild, massively differs from our cultivated fruits. So, our fruit has been cultivated to be sweeter, so the nutritional value there has changed. So, we just feed fruit, and then you've got all these digestive issues, or issues within the group, they're all Pepped up on sugars [...]"

The main concern in providing a "good diet", is removing the human influence from it to better mimic a natural animal diet. Unlikely, due to tight finances, organisations usually depend on food donations, so they have to provide a natural diet with what they are given. How they replicate naturalness while working around monetary concerns shapes how a "good diet" is enacted. Caretakers described how they would handle financial limitations by sending interns to forage for wild fruits. Or how themselves would go into the wild to find crickets for the primates that need extra protein. Not all organisations are fortunate enough to be placed in a setting where caregivers can forage extra food. In those cases, caregivers expressed how they would have to work with what they are given. It's easy for organisations to get cow meat donations from companies within the meat industry. Yet, industrial cow meat is high in cholesterol compared to other prey, like antelope, the carnivores would normally eat in the wild. Getting antelope meat is hard and expensive so keepers must provide something affordable but that is also close to the animal's natural diet. At the end of the day as one of the keepers exclaimed:

"[…] as long as their body condition is OK, as long as they're getting the nutrients they need, as long as there's no negative effects then, Cheapest diet has to work, because funding is just not there."

To enact “good care" carers must provide a “good diet” for the animals, and a “good diet” is a natural one. To get a natural diet caretakers must remove the human factor from the food, but that comes in conflict with the concern of finances. Because of limited finances caretakers can’t have food that lacks human influence to provide animals with the diet they would hope to. Caretakers resolve the conflict of concerns, by working with what is available to them and create a close to natural diet. Caretakers enact “good care” by replicating a natural diet to the best of their abilities. This will be implemented differently in each setting, according to the finances and resources they have access to. But, as long as it works towards replicating a diet close to what the animals would eat in the wild then it’s a “good diet”. Still the closer the diet resembles the natural, the better the diet and the care is considered.

While participating at EZEP, In the mornings I would often follow the members of the Savanna team. Our first stop would usually be the antelope enclosure. The enclosure was an open area, consisting of dirt, mud and some greenery. We would get the hay from the cart's cargo bed and start spreading in various places within the enclosures, so the antelopes could take their time grazing for food. Carers, other than looking at what an animal would eat in the wild, they should also take into consideration how they would eat it. Many animals in the wild spent eighty percent of their days either grazing or foraging for food. Caretakers strive to replicate these behaviours in captivity as they are both natural and abstract the manifestation of unnatural habits. Even though, sometimes the concerns for natural/unnatural behaviours conflicts with the concern of public image, when it comes to feeding the carnivores naturally.

A few times during my interviews my interlocutors referred me to the case of Marius the giraffe. Marius was a young Giraffe living in a Denmark zoo, but the zoo decided to put him down, due to concerns for inbreeding. Later the organisation decided to host a public educational dissection with his carcass, which was eventually fed to the lions. Those actions created a huge backlash towards the zoo, with the public protesting about their decision. I took an excerpt from an interview between a British reporter (R) and Mariu’s head-keeper (K), to demonstrate the tensions between public opinion and the caretakers' work.

“R: The whole thing is cruel I mean the dismemberment of this animal and then seeing the Lions feasting on it I mean clearly freaked out some of the children that were watching

K: It no, t's not cruel it's natural, I mean carnivores live from meat and the meat comes from other animals so that's not cruel, that's just natural [...]” (Channel 4 News 2014: 0.34-1.00)

Carcass feeding is one of the most natural things you can give to an animal in confinement. It contains all the beneficial nutrients found in skin, hair and bone. Further, it also allows animals to showcase their natural behaviours, since you present their food the same way as they would eat their prey in the wild after they hunt it. Still, wildlife organisations tend to refrain from practising carcass feeding as it upsets the paying visitors their operation is dependent on. Subsequently, Institutions must negotiate between the concern of (un)natural behaviours and public image. One of my interlocutors mentioned they would resolve that by practising carcass feeding, but only after sanctuary tours were over, which could result in causing animal stress as they would have to eat later. In that case, the sanctuary has found a balance between the register of naturalness and institutional register. Even though, as the concern of avoiding animal stress had to be partially sacrificed, the institutional register outweighed the register of naturalness. Nonetheless, the caretakers were able to provide a “good diet” by reproducing naturalness. In other cases, carcass feeding is avoided altogether. This is another kind of resolution and balance between the registers as you completely surrender a part of naturalness to honour institutional concerns. Caretakers will still provide a “good diet” by ensuring animals receive the appropriate nutrition and by presenting their food in a natural way by scattering around instead of bowl feeding. Howbeit, an important part of mimicking naturalness is sacrificed so the care is “good”, but it could be better. Most of the caretaker expressed how they think carcass feeding is more important than the visitors’ discontent, but they didn't usually have a say about it.

A “good diet” must include “good nutrition” and a “good presentation” which must both resemble naturalness. The replication of a “good” natural diet will be limited to the compromises made to correspond to the concerns of finances and public image. Caretakers will still enact naturalness, but to what extent, depends on the balance they strike between the two registers. The balance struck will differ in each setting, but in all cases public image and finances will outweigh naturalness, not allowing caretakers to provide their preferred replication of a natural diet. Yet, as they are still addressing the concerns of naturalness and are enacting it in some way, it’s “good care”. They might have to surrender carcass feeding or the concern of animal stress, but as long as they present the food in a natural way, that constitutes a “good diet” for them.

5.3 HOUSING:

Akin to the other elements of care so far, “good housing” for animal care workers is natural housing. And akin to the other elements, how naturalness is replicated is limited by institutional concerns. Caretakers aim to provide animals with an environment that is most similar to their natural habitat. To do so, they must consider what species each enclosure is hosting, where do they come from, and what environmental aspects contribute to their natural behaviours. In the words of a head-keeper:

“So, it all depends on the animal species, So, you're thinking about temperature. You're thinking about lighting, flooring, walls, roof. Is this animal climbing, or is this an animal that stays on the ground? So, if an animal climbs, you put ropes, or woods, or shelves or something that it can go up.”

For an animal's enclosure to be “good", it has to try and mimic any possible element that could be found in the species natural habitat. The aim is to make it fully immersive, so if an animal comes from a tropical habitat, then the lighting, humidity, sounds, plants and trees should all resemble that environment. An enclosure should not only look natural but also sound and feel similar to the species’ natural environment. By managing to create an immersive environment, you also manage to ensure a dynamic environment that encourages animals to exhibit their natural behaviours. Static and barren enclosures on the other hand, according to my interlocutors lead to abnormal behaviours. Thus, it’s important that the enclosures’ environment is enriched with elements that allow the animals to both exhibit their natural behaviours and choose which behaviours to exhibit. As an interlocutor indicated:

“The furniture in an enclosure should promote the animals’ natural behaviours, that they would do in the wild. You should also allow them to have choice on what they want to do, do they want shade? Do they want light? Do they want heat? Do they want Wet? Or Dry? “

Other than an enclosure encouraging the animals’ natural behaviours, it should also provide them with choices. As in the wild the animals' natural territories would extend for several kilometres, but within these kilometres they would protect their space, hunt, raise their young and more. These elements can’t all be replicated in captivity. Even if the enclosure is huge, if it’s not enriching and immersive enough, the animals are only going to use a small part of it. Hence, they would also get bored and adopt stereotypic behaviours to cope. An animal in its natural environment would spend hours to find a pond to cool off. The only way to replicate such a habit in captivity is by offering the animals a dynamic environment that doesn't only mimic its natural area, but also provides various options on what they can do. Figure 3 and 1, include examples of the furniture from the capuchin enclosure at EZEP. There were trees, platforms, ropes and swings giving them quite a few options while replicating their natural environment. in the figures you can see how they engage with the furniture. They sit or eat; they use them to play or socialise (figure 1). Every sketch shows the capuchins engaging with a different type of platform or brunch, providing them with choice.

Yet, even if caretakers endeavour to provide good housing by replicating a fully natural, immersive, enriching, dynamic captive environment, they are still bound to institutional financial limitations. Wildlife

organisations, as institutions, can’t avoid being a part of the world's economic system (Abrell 2021: Funding para.5), so they need money to operate and enact good animal care, like building appropriate enclosures. As an interlocutor expressed when we were talking about enclosure design:

“I definitely think we should be improving the way that things are done, but again, with that comes cost. And that can be restrictive on any zoo, whether they be an NGO, private or maybe partly government run or whatever the situation might be.”

Caretakers want to improve and provide the best care possible by replicating the animals’ natural environment, but they also have to abide by financial limitations. This way, the two registers contravene, and carers must find ways to reproduce naturalness within their institutions’ financial limits. Most interlocutors expressed how if they had more funding they would absolutely update and structure better the enclosures, but they made do with what they had. They also mentioned that, just because you might not be able to afford the top of the range, state-of-the-art buy, it doesn't mean that you still can't structure a dynamic enclosure. As a head-keeper put it:

“And so, if you think of a more basic enclosure, it might just have a few ropes and a few branches or, or whatever. If they grip still, you know, it's quite dynamic.”

You can still create a good dynamic environment even if you only have the funds for a basic enclosure. If you make the effort to enrich the environment with natural elements, like branches or ponds, the enclosure becomes dynamic. One of my interlocutors recalled a time when they spent months having meetings with a design team, to rebuild the tiger enclosure. During the meetings they went through every single aspect they could rebuild and improve, even the material of a small fake hill. Eventually, the initial design they developed, had to be extensively downgraded as the organisation couldn’t afford it. The rebuilt enclosure had to surrender certain immersive elements, like a fake stone hill, but it was still a “good enclosure” as it resembled the tigers’ natural environment and encouraged their natural behaviours. A more complex and immersive design would be better, but caretakers had to strike a negotiation between a natural immersive enclosure and finances. An enclosure might be basic, but it should still be dynamic, since a static environment can cause the emergence of stereotypical behaviours. Accordingly, “Good animal housing” is natural and hence dynamic, allowing the species to exhibit natural behaviours. Contrarily, “bad” animal housing is barren and static, risking animals adopting abnormal, stereotypical behaviours.

The register of naturalness conflicts and is outweighed by the institutional register. Caretakers want to provide the most immersive, natural enclosure possible, but that is dependent on their organisation's finances. Some settings will be able to build fully immersive enclosures, while others will have to settle for a basic design. Regardless, if the enclosure isn't barren and allows animals to express their natural behaviours, the housing still provides "good care" but enacted differently than more complex enclosures.

I've argued thus far that the two registers work in opposition with each other. Yet, if an enclosure is barren, and the animal's depressed, it's going to unfavourably affect the organisation's public image. In that case, the concern of natural behaviours and the concern of public image, come together to promote better animal care, and shape how "good care" is enacted. According to a zookeeper:

"People, they want to see animals in spaces that are natural and, spaces they would normally be in, and they want to see them able to behave and, experience their life in a way that is as normal as it could, or reflect some sort of resemblance to the wild [...]"

Visitors want to see happy animals in big natural enclosures. So, by building appropriate animal housing, organisations also promote a positive public image. Funding is still going to be a limitation, but public image pushes the organisation to place it in the right place. After all, a good image brings more visitors and greater income. Financial concerns will still be prioritised over the concerns of natural/unnatural behaviours, but as they join forces with the concern of public image, they'll reach a more favourable compromise to allow enacting naturalness through animal behaviours.

How good an enclosure is, will depend on juggling the concerns of public image, finances and natural/stereotypic behaviours. They'll all be balanced differently in every setting depending on context, the balance struck will determine how naturalness will be enacted and reproduced constructing what is "good housing" for caretakers. Some enclosures will have simple designs and others will be highly immersive. Regardless, an enclosure will provide "good care" if it's natural and enriching enough to encourage animals' natural behaviours. Whereas settings implementing static enclosures are performing "bad care".

Figure 3: Capuchin Monkeys at EZEP. Drawing and editing by the author. 2024

5.4 DEATH:

Many times, during my interviews, prior to even questioning about it, the interviewees would bring up the practice of euthanasia. Putting an animal down is always a hard decision to make and can bring great emotional burden to the carers. Nevertheless, sometimes providing “good care” includes sacrifices. Caretakers make decisions on whether to let an individual go, according to two determinants, animal health and animal management. The concern of exhibiting natural behaviour underlies both determinants

Decisions of whether to euthanize an animal that are in line with animal health, are made in accordance with the animal’s ability to exhibit its natural behaviours. If an animal can’t exhibit natural behaviours like walking, eating or feeding then it can’t lead a normal life, and will be in constant stress and affliction. As my interlocutors revealed, euthanasia should be practised when an animal’s condition won’t allow it to live a normal life. One of the veterinarians I interviewed gave the following example to illustrate the importance of natural behaviours for the animal’s well-being.

“For example, an antelope, which relies on four of its legs, if you amputate one of its Legs, you will not give the best life for this animal, so in that, it's the best thing then to euthanize it.”

So, when an animal loses its ability to exhibit its natural behaviours, it also loses the ability to lead a normal happy life, the kindest thing you can do for that animal in that moment, is to put it down instead of letting it suffer. Replicating natural behaviours is a component in replicating naturalness, so the absence of it, hinders providing “good care”, as it also negatively affects the animals’ well-being. Still, exhibiting natural behaviours isn’t only an individual matter but animals should also be able to exhibit their natural behaviours as a group. This is where the managerial determinant comes into play in making life-and-death decisions and providing a “good death”.

I was in one of the EZEP golf carts with a keeper and an intern, when we saw two head-keepers grabbing two of the farm animals and putting them in a cart. I immediately started making funny remarks with the intern, that this would be the last we see of them and joking along those lines. I don’t actually know what the reason was for separating these individuals from their group but it’s not uncommon for wildlife organisations to adopt a breed to call policy.

Breeding is a behaviour that many organisations try to maintain in confinement, as it's a greatly significant natural behaviour. Although, maintaining this behaviour to its fullest clashes with the concern of finances. Allowing animals to breed and then take care of their offspring is a very natural thing to be able to do, but the available space for hosting the new group members is determined by the organisation's finances. Sometimes when the offspring is big enough it can be moved to another setting, but that can't always be the case. Eventually the enclosure will reach member capacity and finances won't allow for further expansion. It is then that caretakers must call some of the animals. A breed to call policy is a care practice which allows a compromise between the collisions arising from two registers of valuing, specifically between the concern of finances and natural behaviours. By adopting this practice, caretakers are able to provide "good care" by allowing animals to express their natural breeding behaviours, while resolving the concern of finances. Of course, this compromise involves sacrifices, but as the limitations of captivity don't allow for naturalness to be fully replicated, such actions can be necessary. "Good care" is provided for both the group who is allowed to continue naturally within the appropriate numbers, and to the sacrificed individuals who were able to express their natural behaviours. It's not ideal but it's good.

The practice of euthanasia is conducted by experienced veterinarians. Animals are first given a sedative and then get a pin through their brain. To make the process even faster for the animal, they can also slit their throat. The process doesn't cause any pain and as the sedative components will break down after two days, it allows them to be recycled. Which means the sacrificed individual's carcass can be fed to carnivores, allowing them to exhibit their natural behaviour while addressing institutional financial concerns. Although, like with carcass feeding, so with euthanasia, the concern of natural behaviours can come in conflict with the concern of public image. When asked about tensions regarding euthanizing animals, a head-keeper expressed:

"When it's an animal from outside the zoo, though, because there's a lot of publicity about this animal already, there's a lot of different opinions from people outside."

The caretaker was referring to a specific situation, where they had to euthanize an animal that already had a lot of public attention. Nevertheless, public attention can affect how care is practised. Euthanasia can trigger people's reactions, especially if the public doesn't understand the mechanisms behind it. Revisiting the example with the elephant population calling some elephants had to be sacrificed in order to reproduce naturalness. The calling drew public attention and people's reactions were able to change the regulations and in extent how care is practised. In that case, the concern of public image prevailed over the concern of natural behaviours, preventing the replication of naturalness and resulting in adverse consequences. According to my interlocutor:

“[...] and now there's an incredibly dense infestation. For example, aloes, that was natural there, it's completely disappeared. Grazers are dying, because there's not enough food for them, caracals are dying because the grazes are dying, and it's all because of the elephants and the bad management”

Caretakers aim to prevent overpopulation whether that is in an enclosure or a broader controlled space. If they can’t avert overpopulation, then they don’t enact naturalness nor “good care”.

Euthanasia turns into a care practice when used to help animals that can no longer exhibit their natural behaviours. It also turns into a care practice that allows groups of animals to showcase their natural behaviours within the limitations of captivity. Then, a “good death” for the animals means they don’t get to suffer, and their sacrifice also offers good care towards others. Whether a sacrifice classifies as “good care” it’s based on an animal hierarchy, constructed in accordance with the value of naturalness (Van Dooren 2014: 7,10). Only the death of animals that are deemed to be unnatural, or their ceasing promotes naturalness is performed as “good”.

Naturalness in captivity is greatly imitated by institutional financial concerns, but practices like call to breed and calling animals act as a compromise between the two. Subsequently shaping “good care” for care workers as they allow a degree of naturalness to be replicated. Sometimes, the institutional register completely overrules the natural register, preventing caretakers from putting animals to sleep. In that case, not practising euthanasia is labelled as “bad care” by caregivers as it disallows both the enactment of naturalness and a “good death” for the animals.

5.5 CONTACT AND CARE

I already talked about the importance contact policies play in ensuring keepers safety and avoiding human habituation. Within contact practises a negotiation of all three concerns from both registers contribute to how contact is practised in each setting. Depending on how each organisation will juggle the concerns from each register, will determine and construct what is “good contact” in each.

As all concerns contribute to how contact policies are practised, it’s of no coincidence there are three different animal-carer contact policies, and each policy can also be implemented differently in each setting. As mentioned, there is, Free - contact (you can be in the animals’ space and interact with them based on certain guidelines). No-contact (There is a complete separation between animals and

caretakers. (Only absolutely necessary contact is allowed). Last, Protected or close contact (Interaction is allowed through barriers separating the two parties. The barriers can be physical or behavioural). Every setting adopts a different contact policy depending on how they enact naturalness and how they respond to the various concerns.

When it comes to a no-contact approach, my interlocutors have agreed that it's best enforced for animals that will be released (back) into the wild. No-contact is preferred in these cases since it addresses the concerns of human habituation and natural behaviours. When humans interact with animals they interfere with the "natural process" and stop them from expressing their natural behaviours. In consequence, animals start getting habituated to humans and rely on them. Hence, if they are released in the wild, they have a hard time surviving. They don't know how to fend for themselves and will struggle to become part of another animal group. Some participants even voiced how no-contact policies must be even Stricker. Even though being completely hands off it's the ideal, it's not practically possible, further it classes with the concern of finances. As a caretaker declared:

"[...] in the countries that is financially not as strong, you know, South Africa, South America, Asia, if you have a beautiful big plan on hands off rehabilitation it's, very hard (to implement)"

The more hands-off you are, the more expensive the care is. For instance, contact is a necessity for infant animals in their nursery stage. While nursing, it's important infants feel cared for by a mother figure. That's impossible to replicate without some sort of contact. Some organisations allow each baby animal to be fed by only one caretaker, this way the infants only get habituated to one human, but that is very expensive. A less expensive solution is to use a fluffy teddy bear as an intermediate between the care worker and the baby, in the hopes that the infant identifies the teddy as its mother, instead of the human. Employing an utterly hands off approach would be ideal, as human presence would be completely removed allowing animals to be and act as they would in nature. However, It's impossible, it's not only impractical but also financially intensive. So, caretakers will have to compromise how hands-off they can be Depending on the resources available. According to the same caretaker, you can still do a good job by being hands-on.

"[...] People say, if you rehabilitate animals hands-on, they can never be released back into the wild. But it's definitely not true, like the wild dogs we rehabilitate, most of them are more hands-on than you wanted. And it's been very successful."

Even if you must rehabilitate animals hands-on, that doesn't mean they can never be released back into the wild. It is a matter of caregivers removing their presence as much as they can, maintaining an indifferent attitude towards the animals, if they must be hands-on. Provided caretakers work to maintain naturalness by avoiding animal habituation, to the extent that is feasible, they resolve the tension between the two concerns and create a compromise implements “good care”.

Protected and free-contact, are usually adopted for non-releasable animals, and each setting has a different approach on which to adopt and why. It’s usually a negotiation between all possible concerns. Moreover, Protected contact is one of the few instances the institutional and naturalness registers work together, instead of being in conflict. I already mentioned that EZEP operated under protected contact guidelines. During my time there, in the mornings, I often joined the keepers to the zebra/giraffe enclosure. Keepers worked with these animals under protected contact rather than close contact. So, they couldn’t be in the same space as them. When I asked the head-keeper why they implemented protected contact? she replied, “You can never trust them, they can just turn and start kicking you”. After we prepared the outside enclosure, we had to let the animals’ out. To do so, the doors of the indoor enclosure had to be opened simultaneously, so they could act as a barrier between animals and keepers, minimising contact. This way we stayed safe, but we also didn’t influence their behaviour or caused them any stress. Wildlife organisations that adopt protected contact procedures to address the concern of safety, they simultaneously attend to the concern of human influence and to extend the concern of (un)natural behaviours. It’s one of the few instances where the concerns of the two registers work in balance addressing institutional limitations and promoting naturalness in accordance the caretakers aim. Even so, the concern of human influence is still overweight by the concern of public image. Both sanctuaries and zoos accept public visitors, which means animals’ natural behaviours will be within and influenced by human presence one way or another. Being that "good care" is again shaped by a compromise between the registers, where naturalness is outweighed by the institutional register.

When it comes to free contact it’s a whole different negotiation between the registers and their concerns. Finances and public image come in conflict with human habituation. Free-contact can act as a crowd puller, attracting more paying volunteers. Thus, the organisation is also able to address their financial concerns. Moreover, it’s a way to make sure the animals are comfortable with the constant flow of humans and don't get stressed. As a sanctuary head-keeper explained:

“Contact causes the animals to be comfortable around people. So, in this kind of environment where there are a lot of different volunteers’ week by week, and tourists and different situations, If they didn't like people and they weren't comfortable around people, then they would cause them stress [...]”

Animals getting familiarised with humans resolves the concerns of animal stress. In that way, the concerns of animal stress and public image work together. Free-contact also addresses the concern of safety by only allowing animals that are deemed safe to be in contact with the caretakers. No matter what, care workers' aim remains to promote naturalness so, they use human contact as a form of social enrichment, where humans bring in smells and new behaviours that stimulate the animals allowing them to exhibit their natural habits.

But that still means they must risk human habituation. Even if free-contact sacrifices the concern of human habituation for the sake of institutional concerns, they still manage to keep the animals natural by using contact as enrichment, promoting their natural behaviours and avoiding stressing them out, consequently performing “good contact”.

I added contact for last as, “good contact” can take eminently different forms, depending on how each organisation juggles and balances all six different concerns. Yet, naturalness remains the core goal for the caretakers, and by replicating it they achieve to provide “good care”. For caretakers practising protected contact, achieving good care meant striking an equal balance between safety and human influence to replicate naturalness, while still being outweighed by public image. Whereas free-contact enacted naturalness by sacrificing the concern of human influence so the concerns public image and natural behaviours could work together. Both cases replicated naturalness and implement “good care” by facing and juggling institutional limitations in different ways. Predominantly, with other practices, the juggling isn’t as disparate. But like with no-contact it’s a matter of using available resources within each setting to overcome institutional limitations, to enact naturalness within captivity to the best of your ability. Every setting has different resources and will respond to limitations in different ways. What constitutes “good care” is eventually forged by the way caretakers are able to replicate naturalness in each setting, according to how they juggle and compromise the clashing concerns based on their resources. At the same time, the naturalness that is replicated to be “good care”, must correspond to a western conception that removes the human factor from nature. Humans and their influence are classified as unnatural, which for wild animal caretakers is avoided and perceived as “bad care” if performed or witnessed.

6 DISCUSSION

Care is a selective process; we choose which practices to adopt to care for someone according to the values of a specific time and context. The practices adopted are performed and perceived as "good" and put together they constitute "good care" (Mol et al. 2010: 12-13; Martin et al. in Joks and Law 2017: 152). Unmasking what constitutes "good care" for wild animal care workers is no different, from the begging of this thesis, I made apparent that naturalness is the leading value that dictates which care practices are adopted in wild animal care. Care takers endeavour to care for the animals by simulating natural conditions within confinement. As such, they choose practices that will help them execute that goal. Yet, the practices they select, replicate a particular interpretation of naturalness informed by the Western nature/culture distinction.

Fully replicating nature in a confined environment is impossible, thus caretakers are faced with many concerns on how to reproduce nature in captivity. I grouped all these concerns in the natural register of valuing. Within the register I present which practices caretakers adopted to replicate nature. Caretakers classify "natural" as what animals would do and be like without human influence. Whereas "unnatural" is a behaviour influenced by humans. Carers chose practices that replicated the natural and avoided practices that promoted the unnatural. In that way, they separated the unnatural human from the pristine nature actualising the nature/culture divide. They further re-impose the separation by replicating naturalness through care practices whose purpose is to remove human presence. In that way, naturalness is replicated in animal care based on the Western impression that nature is a static element existing all around us, untouched by the impure influence of humanity (Murphy: 1992: 311; Cronon 1995: 3).

"Good care" is ultimately constituted by how caretakers manage to replicate that eighteenth century conception of naturalness within confinement. The natural register of valuing examined the activities and practises care workers adopted to reproduce naturalness at the best of their ability. However, there are further concerns caretakers face when enacting care that hinder those efforts. These concerns are a product of the limitations that manifest in care because wildlife institutions are part of a broader political-economic network. I gathered and grouped these concerns into the Institutional register of valuing. The register showcases how caregivers enact care in response to the concerns emerging from the wildlife organisations' status as institutions. How animal care workers enact care is compromised by the financial limitations of their organisation, simultaneously they need to adapt care to promote a favourable public image, and all that, while providing animal care through limited to no-contact approaches.

Moreover, there are tensions within the register, that determine how care will be shaped and practiced differently in each setting. For example, negotiating between convenience and safety, or crowd pulling techniques and resource allocation. The institutional register generates certain limitations caretakers must handle while enacting care. As replicating naturalness is produced through the way care is put into practice, it is affected by the institutional limitations. Being so, they conflict, as the natural registers hopes to replicate naturalness through care to the highest standard possible, while the institutional register limits how care is put into practice.

Eventually what constitutes "good care" is shaped by the way caretakers can replicate naturalness, which is determined by how the tensions between the two concerns will be resolved in practice. Usually, the institutional concerns will overweight the natural concerns. That balance is a compromise on how care will be put into practice to address institutional concerns while replicating naturalness. These compromises eventually shape how naturalness is replicated and how caretakers end up replicating nature is what constitutes "good care".

Compromises shape "good care" by juggling concerns in tension, creating compromises between them. By exploring through five key care practices, how these conflicts are resolved in practice to provide "good care", it became clearer how these resolutions shaped naturalness in the following ways.

For each of the five care practices the two registers would come in conflict because institutional limitations prevented caretakers to replicate naturalness the way the hoped to. As such, care workers would have to juggle the conflicting concerns to find a balance amongst them which would shape how "good care" is practiced. Nonetheless, each setting would find a different balance between the conflicting concerns. For instance, one organisation, provided carcass feeding to elicit natural behaviours, but hid it from the public which meant risking animal stress. Whereas another setting by avoiding carcass feeding altogether sacrificed an aspect of encouraging natural behaviours but ensured a favourable public image.

Compromises between tensions also instruct who is going to be sacrifices for the others to live and be cared for. A death and life regime are constructed on the value of naturalness that determines who is going to be sacrificed (Van Dooren 2014: 7,10). The individual's sacrifice allows for a compromise between exhibiting natural behaviours and limited finances, enabling others to become the beneficiaries of "good care".

Furthermore, this juggling and balancing of concerns is a negotiation between the “good” and the “better”. Caretakers are aware that they can never fully replicate nature, so they overcome the limitations of captivity the best way they can. But the best way is downgraded by institutional limitations, from the “best” they can provide something “good” which could always be “better”. Take animal housing as case in point, even a basic enclosure can provide “good care”, but care workers would prefer to provide “better” care, by building a more immersive enclosure. Resulting in an mentality where the more natural something is the better the care is practiced.

Lastly, care is not only shaped by the registers working against each other, but also by concerns working together. The institutional register concerns don’t always act as a limitation to the natural register. Two concerns from different registers can work together to replicate naturalness and promote “good care” while addressing institutional limitations. To promote an advantageous public image, organisations, need to ensure that the animals look happy. For the animals to be happy management needs to invest on the concern of (un)natural behaviours by building better enclosures and providing enrichment items. Similarly, caretakers by limiting contact they manage to be safe themselves but also limit their influence on the animals.

All, the above are the products of the registers working with or against each other, shaping how care is enacted and determining how care workers can replicate naturalness, and how naturalness is replicated in each setting is what constitutes “good care”.

So, “What does constitute good care for wild animal care workers? “. To put everything into perspective, what constitutes “good care” is shaped by the way caretakers are able to replicate naturalness. Wild animal caretakers provide “Good Care” by replicating a Western perception of naturalness within captivity. How this replication is going to be enacted depends on the setting and the compromises stricken in practice, between the conflicting concerns of the two registers. What constitutes “good care” will vary in each setting accordingly to the prior. In some settings naturalness will be replicated “better” than others, but as long as caretakers choose practices that promote the natural over the unnatural, by removing humans from the equation as much as possible, then it remains “good care”. Nevertheless, such an approach to “good care”, reinforces the eighteenth century, nature/culture separation within captive animal care, which limits our understanding of the world and humanity.

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