

## 'From Here to Everywhere': Foucault, Fonterra and Richie McCaw (A Cow's Tale)\*

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**Abstract:** This research paper attempts to provide a Foucauldian analysis of Fonterra's television commercial 'From Here to Everywhere'. With the cooperation of former All Black captain, Richie McCaw, 'From Here to Everywhere' is a play of power to construct a certain truth, that the dairy industry is the beating heart (and deliberately not the bountiful udder) of Aotearoa New Zealand's economic and physical wellbeing. However, the Fonterra-McCaw narrative mystifies the often-violent realities of dairy farming while masquerading as natural certain ideologies, such as carnism, that perpetuate species and gender inequality. The recent *Mycoplasma bovis* outbreak in New Zealand inserts a measure of incoherence into the 'From Here to Everywhere' narrative, and reveals a profusion of nature-society, or hybrid, networks. It is through these hybrid networks, that can include the works of human agents such as artist-scholar Lynn Mowson, that cows' live can be revisibilised and a new truth created.

**Keywords:** Foucault, Fonterra, New Zealand dairy farming industry

## Prologue

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*'Fonterra is a great story. It's a great story that I think Kiwis should all be proud of.'*

*- Richie McCaw*

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In a way, this is a story about Richie and Jane. Richie and Jane both grew up on farms, Richie in the Hakataramea Valley and Jane in the Waikato, in Aotearoa New Zealand. When he was old enough, Richie's parents sent him to a private school where he learned to play a game so well that he became rich and famous, leaving the farm behind him as he chased his dreams. Jane was not so lucky; Jane was separated from her mother when she was very young. Though he never met her, Richie would say that Jane was taken away from her mother because her bones were so brittle, and her immune system so weak, that Jane's mother might have accidentally hurt her. Jane spent almost her whole life on the farm (though she might have dreamt otherwise), where she birthed many offspring of her own, who, like Jane, were snatched away within days of being born to the distress of both mother and calf. Richie would say it's only natural that cows have babies and that, by happy coincidence, the milk she produces for her (now absent) calf helps make healthy humans. Though Jane was the object of disciplines and regulations that she could not possibly fathom (to increase her productive capacities far beyond her natural limits), Richie would say that Jane was happy with her lot in life; happiness improves efficiency *ergo* it makes sense to keep Jane happy. Jane was slaughtered when her body ceased to operate efficiently enough for people like Richie. Richie never mourned Jane's death, but because he was famous the people who controlled Jane's life (and death) paid him to tell a story about the great things they were doing for New Zealand on the back of Jane's labours, and the labours of those like her. Curiously, Richie's story never mentions Jane, or those like her. In fact, Richie's story hides quite a lot about Jane (and her kind), Richie (and his kind), the relationship between them both, and about the relationship between truth and power. Although it is no consolation to Jane, a man named Michel and a woman named Lynn have each fashioned a set of tools with which to expose power and truth as a contingent on a network of shifting capacities which can assemble into forms of resistance that might help others of Jane's kind.

## Introduction

The people of Kurow, North Otago, are building a statue, a tribute to arguably the greatest rugby player to ever lace up a pair of boots and get amongst it: Richie McCaw. It is a great story of a farm boy made good. It might be argued, though, that the people of Kurow are erecting a statue that celebrates legitimised thuggery, neo-liberal values and a dubious belief in the wholesomeness of dairy products. It is an abject story of misplaced idealism. The truth of the Kurow statue depends on the stories we construct for it. Michel Foucault conceives of truth as resulting from power (*Discipline*). In Foucauldian thought, power is not an inherent quality but an emergent property of the relationships between individuals and groups. Foucault reveals that power manifests in the creation of domains of discourse; discourse through which truth is constructed. One such domain is the welfare of commercially farmed animals in New Zealand, and one such discourse is the story told by Fonterra and Richie McCaw to assert as 'true' the virtues of dairy farming. In their television commercial, 'From Here to Everywhere', McCaw and Fonterra depict the New Zealand dairy farming industry as the shepherd of the nation's wellbeing. However, 'From Here to Everywhere' is an exercise in what Deidre Wicks calls 'naturalistic mystification' (46): 'the presentation of an idealised and incomplete picture and selective view of reality' (47), through which New Zealand dairy farms are reimagined as a modern arcadia. This mystification has the dual effect of naturalising capitalist and carnist ideology while eliding the material reality of dairy farming: the non-stop cycle of forced pregnancy, traumatic separation and premature death that keeps Fonterra's milk tankers, and its coffers, full.

However, a Foucauldian analysis of the 'From Here to Everywhere' narrative, of a beatific relationship between humans and nature, reveals a 'play of power' (Thierman 91) through which ideology is disguised as natural, as common sense, and subsequently reveals how animal welfare issues entangle with issues of gender (in)equality. Following Foucault's methodology for unravelling these entanglements, the discursive construction of cows as a resource for anthropocentric gain is exposed as an issue of biopower, the prerogative of nation states to create docile and productive bodies. Stephen Thierman's deconstruction of the 'apparatus of animality' (92), the extant system of relationships between, for example,

legislative, regulatory and corporate bodies, reveals how dairy cows are rendered virtually incorporeal by human power and the limits of that power to achieve absolute domination. The recent outbreak of *Mycoplasma bovis* in New Zealand revisibilises the apparatus of animality, and thus the material effects (and limits) of power. While cows might have limited agency to resist on their own, Richie Nimmo's conception of 'societies-natures' (109) illustrates that cows and humans (and *Mycoplasma bovis*) are inextricably linked in an assemblage of actants that defies human-other or subject-object dualisms. Within an assemblage of actants that includes human advocacy for farmed animals, such as the work of artist and scholar Lynn Mowson, cows can become the subjects of their own stories.

### **The Power of a Good Story: How to Make Up the Truth**

In his *History of Sexuality*, Foucault proffers a counter narrative to what he calls the repressive hypothesis (Foucault 10) of sexual discourse, or the idea that '[s]exuality was carefully confined... On the subject of sex, silence became the rule' (Foucault 3). Foucault points to an intersection of religious discourse (including confession), emerging medical discourse (that categorised people by degrees of deviance from normal), and civil laws (requiring people to register births) that resulted in a *proliferation* of sexual discourse. Subject to these discourses, sex and sexuality became the object of individuals' regulation. For Foucault, therefore, power 'does not manifest itself in the form of repression or negation but as forming positives – domains of discourse' (Foucault qtd. in Flynn 340). Foucault argues that the ability of one individual or group to affect the actions of another individual or group is a manifestation of power, and he contends that power is not something that can be possessed, but rather something that is embodied and enacted. In Foucauldian thought, power is like gravity: not something we can point to, but something we all experience, and, because we all effect gravity in our own small way, our experience of it is always relative. In other words, power is nebulously embodied throughout society, though unevenly along class, gender and species lines. Thick discourses, such as those from the field of medicine, education and the state, for example, have greater mass and therefore greater power to create discourse. The relevance of this insight for a discussion on

human-animal intersections is apparent when we consider that the animals commonly objectified as 'resource units' (Armstrong 9) in contemporary Western society have had different relationships with humans at different times and places. Sheep are considered highly intelligent in China (Armstrong 46); chickens were primarily bred for exhibition in Victorian England (Potts, *Chicken* 18); and cows, until recently, were respected as 'the epitome of usefulness' (Velten 67) and treated with great care. In light of Foucault's insights in the *History of Sexuality*, we can see that the reason sheep, chickens and cows are treated so poorly in our society is because of the truth our discourses create for them.

Fonterra and Richie McCaw assert one such truth discourse to construct the New Zealand dairy industry as the beating heart (and deliberately not the bountiful udder) of the nation's economy. Fonterra Co-operative Group is New Zealand's largest corporation, recording \$19.2 billion in revenue for 2017 (up 12% from 2016) (Fonterra). Fonterra's then Chief Executive, Theo Spierings, attributed this growth to a combination of the Co-operative's V3 strategy, 'driving more Volume into higher Value at Velocity' and 'new product development and strong customer relations' (Fonterra). Fonterra's strong customer relations included a charm offensive featuring Richie McCaw in a promotional campaign called 'From Here to Everywhere'. McCaw captained the New Zealand men's rugby team to successive world cup titles and was twice voted the country's most trusted sportsperson (*New Zealand Herald*). In a rugby-obsessed country like New Zealand, in other words, McCaw carries a great deal of *mana*. 'We grew up on a farm', McCaw said by way of explaining his decision to promote the co-operative, 'so I understand farming and from what I've seen, Fonterra is a great story. It's a great story that I think Kiwis should all be proud of' (*New Zealand Herald*). In this way, Spiering and McCaw play complementary roles in constructing an identity for Fonterra as a successful, innovative and socially admirable enterprise, while the 'From Here to Everywhere' campaign taps into 'the cult of the farmer' (Potts, Armstrong and Brown 227), a kind of New Zealand grand narrative in which farmers are custodians of the land and the nation's wellbeing.

As an example of the McCaw-led narrative through which Fonterra constructs its identity, consider the regularly shown television advertisement 'Fonterra: From Here to

Everywhere (Compilation)' (Fonterra). As a campaign, 'From Here to Everywhere' includes sixteen short videos that focus on the restorative qualities of Fonterra's products ('From Milk to Medicine') and its global economic reach ('Anchor – One of Sri Lanka's Most Loved Brands'). The compilation video, narrated by the redoubtable McCaw, is a thirty second rhapsody of Fonterra's social, economic and environmental munificence. 'We're the first in the world to see the sunrise', intones McCaw over images of a farmer silhouetted against the rising sun, the 'first to get up and get amongst it... A co-operation of farming families', he continues as images of a couple following a docile herd linger on the screen. McCaw extols: 'I've seen what we can do on the world stage, from helping kids breathe, to helping people get back on their feet', as we watch a girl using an inhaler that Fonterra designed in partnership with a Dutch pharmaceutical company to treat asthma with lactose powder. As the commercial ends and we watch the sun set on another productive, healthy, picture perfect day on the farm, McCaw concludes: 'I've seen what we're capable of when we work together, from the paddocks of New Zealand to the world'.

'From Here to Everywhere' tells a great story of an arcadian environment enriched by farming values and cutting-edge technologies to foster healthy, strong New Zealanders. Yet a closer examination of the Fonterra-McCaw narrative reveals Wicks' notion of 'naturalistic mystification' in operation. The cows that we see in *From Here to Everywhere* are naturally social animals who form strong bonds (a mother and daughter will spend their lives together) in herds of up to twenty. On New Zealand dairy farms, however, two million male bobby calves every year are separated from their mothers within days of birth and (legally) denied food for up to thirty hours before being slaughtered: the living 'waste products' (Potts 7-8) of the lactation process. But on a dairy farm, no cow is truly safe. Hannah Velten reveals that the physical effort required by a dairy cow to produce her daily quota of milk is equivalent to a person running for six hours, a feat she is compelled to repeat nearly every day of her life until her productive capacity begins to diminish (Velten 160). Due to the free market dictate of (V-3) efficiency 'the farms supplying milk for breakfast cereal are likely to send most members of the herd off to the hamburger plant within three or four years of their first lactation' (Potts 9). In fact, 55% of beef consumed in New Zealand is born on dairy farms (Potts 8). Additionally, the lush green fields in

which the *From Here to Everywhere* compilation are shot were once covered with native flora (82% of native wetland in the Waikato has been transformed into pastures since European settlement (Jay 267)), which has been replaced by introduced grasses – grasses given their lustrous, picture perfect sheen through the zealous application of nitrogen and other eco-dangerous chemicals.

Another mystification in the *From Here to Everywhere* narrative is the benign relationship depicted between cow and farmer. In 'Practicing the Art of War', Melissa Boyde suggests that dairy cows are less like co-workers than they are like prisoners of a war they do not know they are fighting; removed from 'relations with their own world' (10) they are 'exploitable and destructible' (10). The violence wrought on dairy cows is the stuff of nightmares, and Boyde exposes the cow-farmer collaboration eulogized in *From Here to Everywhere* as an example of Dinesh Wadiwel's maxim that 'we must look for war precisely where it is discursively coded as peace' (18). Boyde notes, for example, that Vinciane Despret reviewed a study of a dairy herd's actions, reactions and interactions and found that 'everything has the look of something that functions or of a simple *mechanical* obedience' (180-1), an automation against which she reinterpreted docility as 'a total activity of pacification' (180-1). The docility that we witness in *From Here to Everywhere* is not a sign of cooperation but the pragmatic reaction to a situation in which collaboration is terminally enforced. While the truth that passes for natural in *From Here to Everywhere* of arcadian land under the benign stewardship of Fonterra is a mystical construction, that which *is* natural, the ruthless appropriation of cows' lives, is occluded, so that, as Wicks notes, 'the dairy consumer is never exposed to the harsh realities of milk production' (49). Put another way, the implicit truth expressed in *From Here to Everywhere* is Fonterra's assumption that New Zealanders accept that milk naturally comes in convenient one and two litre plastic bottles.

### **There's No Ideology Here, Mate: Home Grown Inequality Down of the Farm**

'From Here to Everywhere' is therefore an example of what Thierman calls a 'play of power' (91), a discourse through which Fonterra-McCaw attempt to affect the actions of others by naturalising dairy products as unspoiled by ideology. However, 'From Here to Everywhere' is suffused with ideology, from the capitalist ideal of bustling production and calculated efficiency

(*first to get amongst it*) to the ideology that Melanie Joy calls *carnism*. Joy identifies carnism as a set of assumptions whereby animal consumption is 'a given, the "natural" thing to do, the way things have always been done and the way things will always be' (29). We need only consider that a Northland (NZ) café was forced to close in 2018 for refusing to provide 'normal milk' – from a cow – to see that animal consumption is naturally assumed (Sargent). Consider also that New Zealanders annually spend \$1.8 billion to meet the 'physical, behavioural and emotional needs' (Shaw) of their companion animals. The reason we are deaf to the cries of bobby calves, while we let dogs sleep on our beds, is because they have become the 'absent referents' (Adams and Calarco 35) of milk production; bobby calves' deaths have been excoriated by discourses – *From Here to Everywhere* – through which milk is 'purified' (Michael 110) as the always-already product of Fonterra rather than the result of violence and death. While McCaw embodies a play of power (aligning his mana with Fonterra), it seems unlikely that he would countenance shipping two million puppies to the slaughterhouse. Knowingly or otherwise, McCaw is implicated in carnist ideology. Even as McCaw makes a play of power to normalise dairy consumption he is always-already implicated in Fonterra's play of power to have the general population acquiesce to an anthropocentric hierarchy whereby certain animals are objectified so that their physical, behavioural and emotional needs are hidden. McCaw is merely a capillary component in a network of relationships that invisibilises, and thus sustains, Fonterra's violent treatment of dairy cows.

By disguising the commodification of cows' biology as an absent referent, the *From Here to Everywhere* narrative also intersects with issues of gender (in)equality in that it sustains myths of biological essentialism. In a 2016 Fonterra promotion, McCaw recounts growing up on the farm and the role milk played in his rise to rugby immortality. 'When I was young, I probably didn't drink as much as I should have', McCaw suggests (Fonterra, 'Richie'). But professional sport demanded 'stronger and faster and fitter' bodies and McCaw credits dairy products with being 'a big part of the building blocks to that'. In the video we learn from (Fonterra) nutritionist Angela Rowan that dairy products supply the proteins, carbohydrates and amino acids that gave McCaw his edge on the rugby field. In this way, the McCaw-Fonterra narrative foregrounds a myth of masculinity, conflating the rugged individualism of farming men with



dairy products. However, historian Greg Ryan argues that the New Zealand rugby players have always been 'disproportionately urban, educated and employed in professional occupations' (Ryan 45). The Fonterra-McCaw narrative attempts to profit from the popular idea that farming is synonymous with traditional masculinity – *stronger, faster, fitter* – which Ryan demonstrates is imaginary, a simulacrum of a non-existent past.

While the *From Here to Everywhere* narrative sustains the myth of masculinity, the advertisement also betrays an insidious mystification of sexualised violence against females (Adams, 'Provocations'). In the animal welfare section of Fonterra's website there is a short video in which anonymous farmers share that they cuddle some cows and sing to others because 'ultimately, happy healthy cows produce good milk' (Fonterra, 'Animal Welfare'). In just seven words we are invited to see the farm as a safe, peaceful, home for cows. In those seven words Fonterra perpetuates the idea that cows are somehow happy with the common usage of artificial insemination ('the forced penetration by a foreign object of an immobilized female') (patrice jones qtd in Adams 5), recalling the pernicious defence of male sexual offenders who claim innocence on the grounds of consent, because *she liked it* (Adams 4). Artificial insemination products themselves, such as those offered by Select Sires, which promise to produce cows with 'youthful mammary systems that catch the eye and stand the test of time' (Gillespie 1329) betray a sexualised fetish for the female reproductive system. In the mutually constituting binary of Western assumptions, bulls and men are lauded as active subjects, while because females can produce offspring, production must be 'the inherent function and purpose of her life' (Gillespie 1329), an argument that is naturally extended to females in general. New Zealand, for example, has 'some of the highest reported rates of family violence in the developed world' (Kenny and Ensor), and, not coincidentally, the myth of masculinity – men win the bread so they call the shots – is believed to be a significant factor in domestic violence. In other words, the home is not always a safe place for women and children, let alone for cows. We see a similar manifestation of the myth of masculinity and femininity in the fact that New Zealand did not have an official women's rugby team until 1989, in part due to assumptions that strenuous physical activity was counterproductive to a woman's natural, but actually discursively constructed, role as a mother (Kirk 226).

## The Banality of (Bio)Power and the Ungovernable Becoming of Things

At the intersection of the human-cow relationship, therefore, we see multiple plays of power to invisibilise ideology and naturalise inequitable social treatment. As a result of discourses such as *From Here to Everywhere*, the anthropocentric (ab)use of cows has become a banal, taken-for-granted assumption. Although Foucault seems not to have directly addressed the issue of human-animal relations, his tools of inquiry are nevertheless germane to exploring how, through what mechanisms, power is enacted, sustained, and experienced in the human-cow relationship. For Foucault, banal assumptions are an important access point in the investigation of power:

'Everyone is aware of banal facts. But the fact that they're banal does not mean that they don't exist. What we have to do with banal facts is to discover – or try to discover – which specific ... problem is connected to them' (Foucault, *Power* 328). Broadly speaking, the specific problems connected to the treatment of dairy cows in New Zealand are historical and include governmental regulations to manage 'resources in a way that would sustain the potential of those resources to meet the foreseeable needs of future generations' (Jay 271). Resources, in this instance, includes both cows and humans: '[m]en multiply like yields from the ground and in proportion to the advantages and resources they find in their labours' (Foucault, *History* 25). In other words, the larger the population, and the greater the capacity of its individuals for labour, the greater the benefit to the nation. Foucault would likely consider the potentialising of resources as a manifestation of biopower, or the administration of a population (both cow and human) to make a certain kind of subject: docile and productive.

*From Here to Everywhere* is a biopower narrative that explicitly links milk and human health (the treatment of asthma patients), and since 2013 Fonterra has had governmental accreditation to deliver milk to schools. Thus, in *From Here to Everywhere* we see an intersection of discourses – civic, medical, economic, legal, educational – that designate cows as a supplementary resource of human prerogative. The material implication for cows is a 'flexible' (SAFE) set of laws and regulations in which their physical and emotional needs are obscured by the efficiency of their biological output. Consider: online auction site Trade Me, in accordance

with the Animal Welfare act of 1999, and in consultation with the SPCA and the New Zealand Veterinary Association, has a Code of Animal Welfare 'to promote a high standard of welfare for cats and dogs' that prohibits, for instance, the sale of kittens and puppies under eight weeks old. Meanwhile, down on the dairy farm, bobby calves 'are typically killed between 5-10 days old' (Boyde 21). Whereas domestic animals (cats and dogs) are protected by law, laws pertaining to 'commercial' animals *enable* exploitation for the sake of efficiency under the guise of creating healthy children, or, put another way, potentialising future producer-consumers.

Another fact excoriated by the *From Here to Everywhere* narrative is the reality that sometimes the human-cow relationship goes awry, a deviance that exposes the workings of what Thierman calls the 'apparatus of animality' (92). In this instance, 'apparatus' refers to any system of relations that constitutes a given 'environment', such as civil laws and regulatory decisions, and scientific and philosophical statements – 'the said as much as the unsaid' (Foucault 3) – which contour how humans and animals experience that environment. For example, in *From Here to Everywhere*, nutritionists and trusted sportspeople coalesce to resolve the dairy industry into the banal reality of The Great Story that McCaw enjoins all New Zealanders to celebrate. However, when Foucault reviewed the apparatus of Victorian sexual repression, he found a contradiction in the era's explosion of sexual discourse that led him to refute the repressive hypothesis; in other words, Foucault stood a banal assumption on its head. Thierman is similarly interested in juxtaposing elements of the apparatus of animality to create 'incoherence', to 'provide the occasion for disruptive thoughts that will allow us to think about our relations with nonhuman animals in different ways' (93).

Because power is nebulous, a product of the interactions between capillary parts of a network rather than a tangible force (like gravity, power is the force that exists between objects rather than an object itself), Thierman looks to the network's margins, where animal and human worlds collide, to locate instances of incoherence (97). For example, the New Zealand government passed a law in 2017 requiring dairy farmers to install loading pens for bobby calves, enforceable by fines of up to \$25,000 (Taunton), but an article in *Stuff* reported that '[a] minority of dairy farmers' chose instead to kill unwanted bobby calves 'rather than meet new rules to house and load them alive before their collection' (Piddock)<sup>1</sup>. Where 'From Here to

Everywhere' emphasises harmony, the *Stuff* article reveals discord between the 'centre' (government) and the 'periphery' (farmers) of the apparatus of animality and exposes the contingency of both truth and power. Between a government passing a law regarding animal abuse on farms, for instance, and a person breaking that law, are any number of institutions – police, legal, veterinary, SPCA, Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) – that may or may not choose to intervene. In other words, we see a noncoincidence in the apparatus of animality, a disruption of power relations that introduces a measure of incoherence into the metanarrative of a wholesome dairy industry.

Consider also, as the McCaw-Fonterra discourse does not, the *Mycoplasma bovis* (*M. bovis*) outbreak on New Zealand Dairy farms in 2015. *M. bovis* is a bacterial infection that causes mastitis and pneumonia. *M. bovis* is a painful day-to-day experience for infected cows, but eradication is costly – \$886 million by one estimate (Rural Life). *M. bovis* is experienced by farmers as a loss in productivity and revenue, resulting in increased disciplinary measures (segregated holding pens, for example). Vets experience *M. bovis* as a deviation from normal, meaning that cows become objects for improvement. The cow-farmer-vet relationship is subject to the regulatory power of the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) and subsequently cows become the target of sovereign power, the power to end life. The cow-farmer-vet-MPI relationship is subject to governmental imperatives that construct *M. bovis* as a human issue and therefore regulated relative to its effect on economic production; the lived experiences of cows are terminally erased. Here we see the intersection of discourses that constitute the apparatus of animality, yet despite the various regulations and disciplines emplaced to contain *M. bovis* (such as the MPI's National Animal Identification and Tracing scheme) the infection had spread nationwide within a year of being detected. In other words, despite a network of human relationships designed to create the docile, productive bodies of the 'From Here to Everywhere' narrative, power was variously applied, not applied or misapplied in ways that facilitated the escape of *M. bovis*. For example: did all farmers follow MPI guidelines? Did all vets? Were all MPI agents acting without favour? Was the government slow to react to an issue that threatened the interests of the nation's largest company, Fonterra? In any case, we can be certain that *M. bovis* did escape containment and that tens of thousands of cows were subsequently slaughtered.

### **In the Field of Opportunity/ It's Ploughing Time Again (Neil Young)**

We can begin to see, therefore, the limits of power that one individual or group in a relationship has to dominate the actions of other individuals or groups. For Foucault, a relationship 'can only be articulated on the basis of two elements which are each indispensable if it is really to be a power relationship: that the "other" (the one over whom power is exercised) be thoroughly recognized and maintained to the very end' (qtd in Palmer 347). Fonterra and McCaw might argue that there is no relationship because cows have succumbed to human dominion. From artificial insemination to fistulas, from dismemberment to consumption, a cow's most intimate secrets are ours to do with as we please: what agency can she truly possess? However, such a position is predicated on a false dichotomy of society and nature and the assumption that subject and object are inherent qualities. Consider, though, that *M. bovis* likely arrived in New Zealand through frozen semen (Conan) that was forcibly inseminated into a cow and subsequently transmitted to the herd through improperly sterilised milking equipment. In this instance, human agency, the response to *M. bovis*, is only understandable in relation to nonhuman agencies. In other words, there is a hybrid relationship between humans and nonhumans through which agency is nascent. The society-nature dualism, therefore, explodes into what Richie Nimmo calls a multiplicity of 'societies-natures ... a heterogeneous assemblage in which humans and non-humans are inextricably linked' (Nimmo 109-112). Jane the cow might not have much agency of her own, other than to bellow after her snatched away calves or succumb to illness and death before she has fulfilled her owner's productive goals, but in a network of hybrid relationships, she might yet be heard.

In the project I have outlined, I come uncomfortably close to self-contradiction. In answer to the question of what agency a cow like Jane can possess to resist human power, I have proposed an overwhelmingly anthropocentric vision of the human-cow relationship. But the bottom line is that cows suffer, and they are made to suffer for the bottom line, for human gain. However, it is because humans and human systems have so thoroughly invisibilised their suffering that cows' rescue lies in capitalising on opportunities to highlight societies-natures

assemblages, to expose cow-human entanglements within the apparatus of animality and assert new discourses. Consider, for example, the work of artist and scholar, Lynn Mowson. Mowson's *bloodlines* project is an inversion of 'From Here to Everywhere' in that her goal is to make 'animal bodies visible and visceral' (mowson 27), to highlight the hidden power relations that remove cows from relations with their own world. *Bloodlines* incorporates mowson's *boobscape*, a latex sculpture-diagram in which udders blur into breasts. *Boobscape* situates cows not in an environment of luscious Waikato farmland, but as 'bioreactors' (mowson 29) in a landscape of corporate interests and scientific experimentation. Where *From Here to Everywhere* asserts strong family and environmental values, mowson calls attention to the Doctor Moreau like work of scientists and dairy corporations to "humanise" ruminant milks' (29) by, for example, injecting cows with human specific lysozymes to help protect breastfeeding babies against pathogens. *Boobscape* is a graphic illustration of the societies-natures within which cows and humans are enmeshed – the intersection of frozen semen, milking equipment and *M. bovis* being just one example of the profusion of things (Palmer) that form networks that operate in unpredictable and untameable ways. There is also about *boobscape* an unsettling affective quality; a display of flesh – so very like our own – that has been flayed, separated and rendered in a way reminiscent of the fate awaiting bobby calves at the meat works. In this way, *boobscape* introduces more than incoherence into the truth discourse of 'From Here to Everywhere': it foregrounds empathy. Mowson's work not only reminds us of our shared mammalian heritage and our mutual susceptibility to pain and anguish, but of the quiet, day-to-day, joy of experiencing relations within our own worlds on our own terms.

## Conclusion

As the people of Kurow erect a statue for their champion, Richie McCaw, one wonders if the real champions of New Zealand, worthy at least of a statue, are the cows who labour in Fonterra's fields earning around \$20 billion every year. However, when we consider that cows and bobby calves hardly feature in 'From Here to Everywhere', Fonterra's rhapsody about the natural virtues of dairy production, a statue seems unlikely. In truth, cows are quite often

invisible. As Foucault argues, truth is sustained by discourse, and discourse results from power, and in the 'From Here to Everywhere' discourse we see the power applied in a way that constructs dairy products as the always-already product of Fonterra rather than the product of sustained violence. Using Foucault's theories to analyse the McCaw-Fonterra narrative we can see how power is embodied and enacted (and invisibilised) in a network of relationships that mystify certain ideologies as natural. The result for cows is that they have become the living engine of human progress. However, the outbreak of *M. bovis* inserts a measure of incoherence into the 'From Here to Everywhere' narrative by exposing the false dichotomy between humans and cows: *Bos taurus* and *Homo sapiens* exist within the untameably wild profusion of things in this world (Palmer). Lynn mowson's *bloodlines* situates humans and cows in a hybrid culture-nature network that reveals the power networks that effect the human-cow relationship. If we recall that Foucault contends that power creates truth and that power is distributed throughout society, then between academics, artists, activists and anyone who boycotts dairy products because the industry leaves a sour taste in their mouth, there is the power to make a new story and a new truth. It is a great story that all Kiwis can be proud of.

*\*This essay was developed from a conference paper given by Chevy Rendell at the Australasian Animal Studies Association Conference: 'Decolonizing Animals' hosted by the New Zealand Centre for Human Animal Studies, July 2019, entitled 'Foucault, Fonterra and Cows' Tales: From Mycoplasma bovis to Richie McCaw'. The conference paper was judged by members of the Executive of the Australasian Animal Studies Association and awarded: Winner of the 2019 Denise Russell Postgraduate Prize for Animal Ethics.*

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> In February of 2017, Taranaki Federated Farmers vice-chairwoman, Janet Schultz, claimed that there was 'a really positive indication that farmers are going to be ready when regulations come into effect' (Taunton, 'Taranaki Traders'), but by July she was arguing that many farmers did not know the changes would become law in August (Taunton, 'Hundreds'). Perhaps Schultz could commission McCaw to voice an advertisement reminding farmers of their duty of care.

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