

might also cover the desire that drove the first Chinese to leave their homeland for the gold fields of Australia and New Zealand. The name 'new gold mountain' applied to Dunedin and its hinterland, as to other places in the British colonial world, pinpoints the motive that drove them here, the desire for prosperity.

A private Chinese garden, such as the one which became the model for Lan Yuan, the Garden of the Master of the Fishing Nets, functioned as a repository of cultural and literary allusion and was itself expected to generate those products of high culture, occasional poems, prose accounts and painted representations. It was those responses that would serve to keep the original garden alive when it became subject to change and decay. It is poignant to reflect that such a garden could hardly have been an ideal to which the original miners aspired. On the other hand, it does not seem fanciful to see in the work of the garden's excavation and planting a connection with the occupation into which many of the miners, and subsequent generations of Chinese settlers, next moved: that of market gardening.

The existence of a Chinese garden set on New Zealand soil, comprised of materials sourced from Jiangnan and containing many of the same plants that grow in Suzhou gardens, represents a piece of China in New Zealand. In the twenty-first century the descendants of the Otago settlers are encouraged to regard the Garden as a place that acknowledges their history as it anchors them to this country. One needs little encouragement to view the beautiful, tranquil, inspiring, social space represented here as a site that might, in the way of the old gardens on which it is modelled, spur both Chinese and non-Chinese visitors to fresh responses. This finely thought out and beautifully executed introduction might stand as the first of them.

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Creature Comforts: New Zealanders and Their Pets: An Illustrated History. By Nancy Swarbrick. Otago University Press, Dunedin, 2013. 292pp. NZ Price: \$55. ISBN: 9781877578618.

A New Zealand Book of Beasts: Animals in Our Culture, History and Everyday Life. By Annie Potts, Philip Armstrong, Deidre Brown. Auckland University Press, Auckland, 2013. 288pp. NZ price: \$49.99. ISBN: 9781869407728.

It is odd how things have their moment. Both of these books claim a novel field, but they approach it in very different ways and from different theoretical and methodological standpoints. Nancy Swarbrick's illustrated history is focused on the history of pets, and *A Book of New Zealand Beasts* engages with a spectrum of animals, from farmed, pet, wild and 'pest' animals to symbolic and imagined beasts in art. Each caters to a rather different readership, and perhaps a different kind of history.

Swarbrick begins her history of pets with Georg Forster's description of kurī, coming across the water in waka, 'kept tied with a string round their middle' and sporting a variety of colours, spotted, black and white. Treated both as pets and as a food source, kurī had a long history of intimacy with Māori, recorded in place names, rock art and accounts of particular dogs. Kurī were prized for their coats, particularly white-haired kurī who were given mats to keep them clean, and their bones were used for tools and adornments. Māori had long and complex interactions with tui and kākā, keeping them tethered with leg rings and teaching them to speak, in the case of tui, at length. Huia were kept in cages for their feathers. After Philip Gidley King gave Teina a gift of kune kune pigs and sent more to the chiefs of the Bay of Islands, pigs entered domestic and culinary life, and as encounters with Europeans increased so did the presence of European animals: horses, sheep, cats, chickens, goats.

Part of the broader set of points made by Potts, Armstrong and Brown is that since our attitudes towards animals are shaped by culture they are inevitably tied up with cultural difference and cultural politics. Swarbrick's more descriptive account of humans and animals in Aotearoa, encompassed by the category 'pets', also makes this point. Rich in research detail and images, *Creature Comforts* offers the reader a broad general history of pets in New Zealand. Swarbrick traverses the cultural complexity of the field via examples and a thorough consideration of the contextual history of pet owning – the highly contested dog tax for example, which sparked the Dog Tax Rebellion in Hokianga in 1898 and was resisted by Māori up and down the country. Or the rise and fall of Calf Clubs, which occupied the blurry area between pet-keeping and farming and made the contradictions of animal ownership very clear. What happens to the pet lamb or calf once it has become an adult? Swarbrick also illustrates the changing tides of public opinion about animals and their care by showing how attitudes changed, to cats for example. The cats resident in Post Offices whose care was provided for at a weekly rate were finally struck off the payroll in 1953, and more recently environmental concerns sharply reflect changed attitudes towards a number of animals: cats but also ferrets. Swarbrick's book has a great deal of interesting material, and it overlaps with *A Book of New Zealand Beasts* in a variety of ways – as in the debate over possums as pets or pests or the plangent stories of celebrity animals, such as Pelorus Jack or Opo or Shrek, which reflect our cultural fantasies back to us. She ends with a discussion of the animal rights debate led most prominently by Peter Singer, whose influential views on animal liberation have resulted in political and social action as well as an amplification of the philosophical and cultural discourse surrounding humans and animals, the point at which *A Book of New Zealand Beasts* begins. I read these books in the order in which I listed them, and while Swarbrick tackles many of the same issues as Potts, Armstrong and Brown – including exploitation, commodification and hypocrisy towards animals – the difference between these two books resides in the level of analysis each brings to the field. *Creature Comforts* is a book which tells a story, indeed many stories, and those stories are well told and full of detail that catches your attention, but it is a form of history designed for

readers who are interested in history but not adept at cultural analysis. *A Book of New Zealand Beasts* is also full of detail, and has many stories embedded in it, but descriptive history is not its aim. It is a work which tackles the cultural discourse in which animals and humans are embedded, and demands that its reader spends some intellectual effort on understanding them.

A Book of New Zealand Beasts has four sections: Animal Icons, Companion Animals (also a term used by Swarbrick to illustrate how people are reconsidering 'pet'), Art Animals and Controversial Animals. It is an elegant structure that broadly identifies the major categories in which people think of animals. 'Art Animals', by Deidre Brown, which may seem the least obvious, is partly about symbolic Māori animals – the taniwha and the manaia – as well as the place of animals in contemporary art, such as that of Michael Parekowhai, Michel Tuffery or Bill Hammond. This term indicates the complexities of indigenous and postcolonized culture as represented by images of animals. 'Animal Icons', by Philip Armstrong, focuses on moa ('Moa Ghosts'), sheep, whales and dolphins. Each species has a rich history of representation and cultural formation surrounding it. Moa seem perhaps a bit left field, but Armstrong mounts a fascinating account of moa myth-making, especially in the project of 'redefining what it means to be *people of the land*' (p.19). He writes that 'all the large histories discussed here project back in prehistory an exaggerated appetite for animal protein. In doing so they naturalise the dominance of meat and dairy products in the diet, taste and economy of contemporary New Zealand' (p.21).

Dissecting the 'real' agendas that underlie shifting discourses about animals offers some real insights into the muddled contradictions we presently inhabit and also the history of our response to animals. Discussing the enormous interest in Opo, the dolphin who attracted huge crowds to Opononi and whose story has been told and retold, Armstrong notes that the story became the harbinger of a New Age, a 'powerful challenge to modernity's mastery over nature' which we now see embodied in Greenpeace and other environmental activism.

Annie Potts's chapter on Ngā Mokai, or companion animals, begins, like Swarbrick, with a discussion of kuri, tui, huia and kākā, and situates these creatures in the context of Māori myth-making and storytelling about them as well as their actual behaviours. Practices with non-indigenous animals differed between cultures. Potts describes how Māori broke in young horses by attracting them into a swamp, and then getting the animals used to human contact while they couldn't move. The daily and often loosely controlled contacts between introduced animals like dogs, horses and chickens in early contact New Zealand are sharply contrasted with the next chapter, in which Potts unlocks the contradictions of our high rate of pet ownership and the animal and domestic violence that is rife in our society. Making the point that farming heritage inclined many New Zealanders to the view that animals had functional or practical roles and tended therefore not to live in the house gave a 'peculiarly New Zealand force' to the tendency to pathologize or trivialize pets, which in turn allows ambivalence and antipathy towards animals to flourish. Both of these books offer a rich view of a complex cultural history. The strength of *Creature Comforts* is in its detailed narrative history and readability. *A Book of New Zealand Beasts* is a more

challenging, wide-ranging and often brilliant account of our human–animal culture and aims at a more specialized academic readership.

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How We Remember: New Zealanders and the First World War. Edited by Charles Ferrall and Harry Ricketts. Victoria University Press, Wellington, 2014. 296pp. NZ Price: \$40.00. ISBN: 9780864739353.

The renewed public and academic attention the centenary of the First World War has brought to the subject should come as a welcome opportunity for scholars of New Zealand's domestic war effort to expand the very limited scholarship on the topic. Amid a flurry of publications already emerging from the centenary, promising to flesh out this literature, comes Charles Ferrall and Harry Ricketts's *How We Remember: New Zealanders and the First World War*. It is an eclectic collection of 20 short essays addressing how the First World War has been remembered – or, perhaps more to the point, how it has been misremembered and reimagined in New Zealand popular memory.

As Ferrall and Ricketts note in their introduction, the cycles of revision of the war in British historiography are well known. New Zealand's First World War scholarship has been subject to much less sustained attention, being centred almost exclusively on the front-line soldier experience. However, recent years have seen a slow emergence of some excellent re-evaluations of New Zealand's broader response to and experience of the war, particularly on the home front. Notably, John Crawford and Ian McGibbon's *New Zealand's Great War: New Zealand, the Allies, and the First World War* sought to kick-start renewed discussion of the domestic experience of the war in New Zealand. In its wake, recent works by Steven Loveridge, Gwen Parsons and Graham Hucker have skilfully questioned accepted myths of New Zealand's cultural and psychological responses to the war, war enthusiasm, the nature of dissent, and the treatment of returned soldiers, taking approaches similar to the British First World War scholarship, such as those of Adrian Gregory, John Horne and Catriona Pennell. *How We Remember* therefore emerges as part of this growing re-evaluation of New Zealand's First World War experience, seeking to 'demonstrate just how diversely we actually remember the First World War' (p.13), while also challenging accepted myths surrounding New Zealand's war effort. Each of the 20 chapters is a short study, framed by reflections on personal connections to the war by the authors. While several contributions integrate this personal reflection and scholarly revision effectively, elsewhere the balance between the two is less successful.

Many essays in the collection offer genuinely fresh and timely re-evaluations of New Zealand's war effort. Notably, Christopher Pugsley's chapter on the changing