

Cover Page

TITLE: Subcultures in the online wilderness

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Abstract

Social media data is an abundant source of insight into subcultures, however traditional approaches to classifying subcultures (such as class and demographics) are limited in their applicability online. This study uses appraisal to analyse Facebook comments in public discussions to identify and understand subcultures. It focuses on a contentious issue in Australian society, the culling of kangaroos. The findings are consistent with existing theories about wildlife attitudes and subcultures, two main groups were identified, referred to here as *Cullers*, who favour culling, and *Guardians*, who oppose culling. It supports previous research assertions that attitudes and values are central to the development of subcultures. Appraisal adds insight into complexity and contradictions within the two main groups, revealing various emphasis on economic, environmental, and rights positions, and points to future research using appraisal on ‘*sub-subcultures*’.

Introduction

Social media is firmly ingrained in many aspects of communication. Social media communication allows for a mixture of content, extending from organisations' communication composed for strategic purposes, to user generated material, which expresses attitudes, shares experiences and ideas (Mehmet, 2014). As material may be more prevalent in brand-specific contexts, scholars argue that natural language associated with user-generated material dominates the expression of attitudes in broader social media exchanges (Murphy et al., 2014; Toepfl & Piwoni, 2015). Scholars argue that there is a real need for frameworks that assess attitude in order to identify sub-cultural groups (see refs Anetter; Murphy et al., 2014).

One key feature of social media is that it offers unlimited prospects for online community members to express attitudes. This represents both an opportunity and a risk for those conducting operations in a social media environment. The shift in control represents another key factor that also needs to be reconciled (Mehmet, 2014). Groups are free to navigate anywhere at any time, unrestricted by geographical spaces, or any other socio-cultural restriction. This freedom and the ability for users to control their movements in social media presents people with opportunity to find groups that they share values and attitudes (ref).

This factor increases the importance of effectively investigating, understanding and categorising expressions of attitudes (Murphy et al., 2014; Toepfl & Piwoni, 2015) and how those attitudes help form subcultures. People use attitudes as a frame with which to judge new information and ideas (Anilkumar & Joseph, 2012). Macnamara (2013) succinctly notes that social media communicators are deficient in skill and technique in determining a deeper understandings of attitudes in social media and how those attitudes form and shape subcultures spaces. The notion of subcultures is contested, class having been considered too simplistic, underestimating other structural divisions, potentially including values and attitudes (Cheung & Liu, 2015). One key points needs to be raised, that users of social media can be part of multiple subcultures, in effect aligning themselves with which ever group matches their worldview (Cheung & Liu, 2015).

In this paper, 'subculture' refers to attitudinally aligned groupings. The paper uses the appraisal method with social media comments to identify attitudes, which are then thematised. The focus of the attitudes studied here is the culling of kangaroos, a contentious issue in Australian society.

Attitudes to wildlife

Plumwood (2003) said western culture has a deeply-entrenched 'mastery' view over animals, and described a 'human/nature dualism' where humans see themselves as inside culture but outside nature, and conceive 'non-humans as outside ethics and culture' (Plumwood, 2003, p. 3). She said that this dualism has been useful for western culture because it has enabled humans to 'exploit nature with less constraint' (p. 4), but that this has left humans facing challenges to better conceptualise humans in ecological terms and animals in ethical terms (Plumwood, 2003, p. 4). Ontological vegans reject as taboo the instrumental use of animals for food or furs or anything. Ecological animalists believe that humans and animals share a

somewhat equal level of being, that we are all more than simply food, but accept respectful use of animals, including some hunting and eating, while rejecting animal misery and cruelty in all forms (Plumwood, 2003). A framework resembling Plumwood's (2003) has been proposed by Manfredi et al. (2009). They report two fundamentally different ideologies relating to wildlife - 'dominance' where humans master and prioritise their own needs over wildlife, and 'mutualism' where humans and animals are more equal, each having rights and 'deserving of care and compassion' (p. 412).

Recent examination of public attitudes to environmental issue, e.g. climate change, suggest that different attitudes stem not from incomprehension of issues but more from conflicts of interest among sub-cultural world views, people forming attitudes that are consistent with 'those held by others with whom they share close ties' (Kahan et al., 2012, p. 732). In both indigenous and western societies, wildlife values tend to be passed on through interest groups and significant childhood influences and experiences. Indigenous Australians identify with particular areas they refer to as 'country', and accept customs and responsibilities to totems, animals and plants. 'To Aboriginal people living in their country, the "wild" is the "tame and familiar" – essentially nothing in country is wild as it is all the result of continuing Aboriginal practices' (p. 28). However, many urban Australians identify predominantly with the nation-state, and grow up with little contact with wildlife. The micro-fragmentation of western sub-cultures by demography, psychography and socio-economics further complicates social research on wildlife attitudes and values (Aslin & Bennett, 2000). Aslin and Bennett (2000) point out that European settlers in Australia judged unfamiliar Aboriginal people and indigenous animals as wild, and people and animals from Europe as friendly. However a new and dominant social attitude today refers to introduced species as 'exotic' and unwanted in the wild, and that which properly belongs in Australia as 'native'.

Holm (2015) has described a deep and widespread contempt among New Zealanders for the introduced possum that manifests in cruelty and killing. He refers to possums as "'anti-animal", animals that need to be destroyed, not protected in order to conserve nature' (Holm, 2015, p. 32). He argues that the contempt felt and acted out by non-indigenous New Zealander conservationists for the relatively environmentally insignificant possum distracts from and masks the reality that human settlement and predation is overwhelmingly the major cause of environmental destruction. Holm (2015) also discusses the concept of 'non-animals' – 'animals that have lost the right to live and thrive normally guaranteed by the logics of environmentalism and conservationism and can therefore be curtailed, persecuted and even killed without repercussion or guilt' (2015, p. 38-39). Non-animals such as hedgehogs, squirrels and pigeons void their right to protection by being where they should not be. However Holm (2015) argues that hate is more intense and treatment much worse for anti-animals because their 'flourishing is understood in direct opposition to that of a correct and proper environmental arrangement – and is such that the animal needs to be utterly eradicated in order to return to a sense of purity and correctness' (2015, p. 39).

In stark contrast, Wallach (under review) says that one of the most densely populated countries, India, in the main, values all life, and manages cohabitation with animals with kindness. She refers to an Indian acceptance of periodic inconvenience, or even tragedy, arising from the inevitable human-animal conflicts. When problems occur, she says, Indians typically say 'sometimes it happens'. Although far from perfect, '...India has some of the oldest known conservation and animal rights laws, and proves that it is possible for high human density to coexist with other species' (Wallach, under review).

Research aim and question

The aim of this study is to identify subcultures using attitudes expressed in social media through a semantic lens.

The research question is as follows: What do comments expressed in social media tell us about subculture attitudes to culling of kangaroos?

There are many actual and potential conflicts of interest between wildlife and humans. This paper explores the public and contentious case of 'culling' kangaroos. The kangaroo is simultaneously a high profile iconic national symbol on coins and crests, and a target for recreational shooting. Conflicting attitudes frequently play out in public forums and thus provide insight into community attitudes for those with responsibility for kangaroo management and protection strategies. This paper analyses social media comments to improve understanding of subculture expression of attitudes.

Data collection

We sought a range of attitudes towards kangaroos and culling. This was achieved by selecting three Facebook case discussions from different sources, each with substantial levels of engagement from people with different views. The first two focused on culling and exporting of Kangaroo meat:

- a post by *Greens MP Lee Rhiannon* (Table 1).
- a wildlife support group, *Voiceless: The animal protection institute* (Table 2).

The third source is based on announcement of a plan for culling kangaroos in Canberra over a two (2) year period.

- *Canberra Times* (Table 3).

Case 1 received the highest level of interaction, with 1895 comments documents. Case 2 achieved 68 comments, with Case 3 achieving similar numbers to Case 2.

The data was collected between March 3rd and April 30th 2015. Each comment was reviewed, classified to determine if it related to our research aim, and then analysed in accordance with appraisal detailed in the following section.

The image displays three screenshots of Facebook posts. The first post is from Lee Rhiannon, a Greens MP, dated March 3 at 4:15pm. It discusses a second motion by coalition Senator Barry O'Sullivan supporting the commercial kangaroo industry, stating that the industry continues to destroy kangaroo populations for profit. It includes a video thumbnail with the text 'STOP KILLING KANGAROOS FOR PROFIT' and 'THE GREENS' logo. The second post is from Voiceless: the animal protection institute, dated March 24 at 1:18pm. It reports that Ag Minister Barnaby Joyce has announced plans to begin exporting kangaroo meat to Peru, despite concerns about inhumane killing and lack of evidence for population control. It includes a map of Australia and South America with the text 'KANGAROOS BELONG HERE NOT THERE'. The third post is from The Canberra Times, dated April 14 at 12:32pm. It reports that more than 2400 kangaroos will be killed in the ACT Government's controversial cull, with trained shooters on site from the end of the month. It includes a photo of kangaroos in a field.

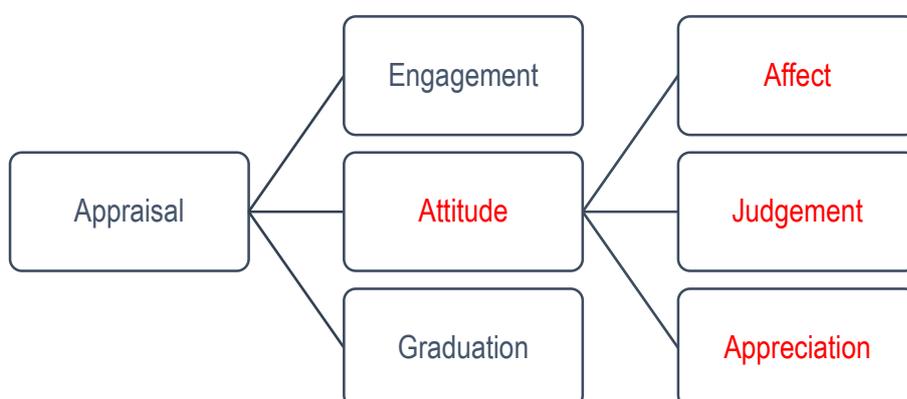
Table 1: Lee Rhiannon Post	Table 2: Voiceless Post	Table 3: Canberra Times Post
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Method

Systemic functional linguistics has explored the notion of *mood* since the early 1980s (see Halliday, 1994; Eggins & Slade, 2005) and has developed a stratified approach to determine attitude through appraisal. It extends Halliday's (1978) metafunctional frame to simultaneously explore what is being discussed (experiential meaning), the producers of the text, who is doing the discussing, their role, the role of those central to the text (interpersonal meanings), and the medium used to express themselves (textual meaning).

Appraisal is understood as part of the interpersonal metafunction and attempts to reveal how a text's producers view the world, their feelings towards a particular issue, and how a maker of a text constructs an ideal audience (Martin & White, 2005). Appraisal, as detailed in Figure 1, is constructed using three key elements, engagement, attitude and graduation. *Engagement* "deals with sourcing attitudes and the play of voices around opinions in discourse" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 35). *Graduation* attempts to grade particular phenomena based on feelings and emotions (Martin & White, 2005). *Attitude* "is concerned with our feelings, including emotional reactions, judgements of behaviour and evaluation of things" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 35). This study is only interested in attitude, which can be further segment into effect, judgement and appreciation.

Affect examines positive and negative stances: do we feel happy or sad, confident or anxious, interested or bored? (Martin & White, 2005, p.42). Affect is particularly interested in emotions, reaction to behaviours, texts and phenomena. *Judgement* deals with attitudes towards behaviour, which we admire or criticise, praise or condemn (Martin & White, 2005, p. 42). Judgement is interested in ethics, evaluating behaviours and focuses on the meanings "construing our attitudes to people and the way they behave – their character" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 52), basically how they measure up. *Appreciation* involves evaluations of semiotic and natural phenomena, according to the ways in which they are valued or not in a given field. (Martin & White, 2005, p. 43). Appreciation is concerned with aesthetics and natural phenomena.



The study is particularly interested in identifying and analysing attitudes among various stakeholders concerning kangaroos.

Coding attitude and thematising subculture

The following is an example of the coding of a comment as attitude:

Attitude: ‘I **shake my head**, what is **wrong with this world**?’
 Affect (emotion reacting to behaviour) and Judgement (ethics; evaluating behaviour)
 Analysis: ‘I **shake my head** (Affect), what is **wrong with this world**? (Judgement)’
 Attitude: They are **lovely animals** to admire when walking to the bus stop.
 Appreciation (aesthetics and natural appreciation)
 Analysis: ‘**lovely animals**’ (Appreciation)

Attitudes were then grouped into themes, which are discussed below as three main subcultures of attitude concerning the culling of kangaroos.

Findings

This study revealed multiple dimensions in attitudes towards kangaroos and culling. Even the most simple and direct expression of attitude could involve a combination of values, influence and context. For example the following quote, “always about the mighty dollar isn’t it. Makes me sick.” (KS, Voiceless, 2015) suggests general opposition to what might be called neoliberalism, prioritising profit over sentient life, and human dominance over animals. Attitudes may also be complicated by contradiction and equivocality. Attitudes expressed in a single post frequently included three or more complementary or conflicting influences. For example, a post published on the Canberra Times Facebook page opposes animal cruelty, favours culling and supports science (which is contested in other posts), whilst expressing a deep appreciation for the aesthetics of Kangaroos.

There's a lot of roo's out in Umagong District Park which encompasses Ginninderra Creek in fact more than I have ever seen. They are lovely animals to admire when walking to the bus stop. I am against Animal Cruelty and I am a vegetarian but I am a strong supporter of science and if it's going to help the population, so be it. (J.P: Canberra Times, 2015)

Another aspect of context that emerged as important is the identity of the producer of the text that is the stimulus for discussion. Table 4, summarises aspects considered pertinent to the producers of the texts under review.

Table 4: Facebook data sources and text producers

Subject:	Lee Rhiannon	Barnaby Joyce/Barry O'Sullivan	Voiceless	Canberra Times (Kirsten Lawson and Tom Macilory)
Role:	Federal Green Party Senator	Federal National Party Members	A non-profit advocate group in favour of compassionate treatment of animals	Media Journalist/reporters
Position:	In favour of Kangaroo rights (explicitly expressed through opposition to cull/export industry)	Favours culling kangaroos for export (explicit) and land management.	Opposed to culling and exporting of Kangaroos (explicit)	Scientific justification for culling of Kangaroos in the ACT (explicit).
Text:	Facebook post (Image/text)	Voiceless's Facebook post: Originally a parliamentary debate (Language) and Lee	Facebook Post: Image/Text	Canberra Times Facebook page

		Rhiannon Facebook Post		
Values:	Values scientific evidence supporting kangaroo conservation (explicit) Believes in kangaroo rights (implicit)	Values animals as economic resources (explicit).	Believe kangaroos have the right to be treated with respect and compassion (explicit)	Balanced reporting (implicit)

The strength of contextual influences was often evidenced by justification and emotions volunteered through language, and arrangement of textual components of Facebook posts.

This section reports the two main subcultures revealed by appraisal analysis, summarised as *Cullers*, and *Guardians*. It articulates different reasons offered for attitudes held and reports that there are many differences among these two main subcultures.

Cullers

This subculture expressed a variety of justifications for killing kangaroos that range from viewing kangaroos as fun to kill, a pest that needs to be eradicated, a micro and macro-economic resource to be exploited, and as a species that is over abundant and unsustainable in present numbers. They tended to focus on uses of kangaroos and their by-products, or benefits arising from their eradication. Many in favour of culling linked their support for killing to patriotism. Most common were claims to the effect that ‘city’ people had little understanding of the needs of rural people, often attacking city-dwellers without direct reference to kangaroos. Although arguments were frequently multiple and sometimes complex, cull proponents did not address the reasons offered by opponents. Proponents did not acknowledge kangaroos as sentient, familial, as desiring of their own self-preservation, as having rights to live, or as significant to Indigenous people (Boom et al , 2012). Nor did they make reference to kangaroos being native (Aslin & Bennett, 2000).

This study found considerable evidence supporting Aslin and Bennet’s (2000) reference to a fragmentation and proliferation of subcultures relating to wildlife beliefs. At one extreme it is clear that there is a sub-community of people who take pleasure in killing kangaroos, simply for the enjoyment of it;

“I don’t kill them for profit. I kill them for fun ... there’s a difference you know.”
(R.D: Lee Rhiannon, 2015).

[referring to cull shooters] *“how good of a job would this be”* (M.C: Canberra Times, 2015).

These attitudes evoke Holm’s (2015) the guiltless killing of animals that unbalance the proper order of the environment (anti-animal). The perception of kangaroos as pest remains strong (Boom et al, 2012), particularly in rural areas and among those speaking on behalf of rural people. Kangaroos were associated with several forms of harm, as causes of car crashes, and destroyers of crops and the natural environment. Many who referred to car crashes argued that human lives are more important than kangaroo lives, while some focused disgust on the cost of fixing cars damaged in collisions with kangaroos. There were more expressions of sympathy for human victims of crashes, but also some for kangaroos as victims, and some for humans who had to witness the suffering of kangaroo victims.

“Tell that to the families of people killed on our roads by hitting roo’s I say cull and eat, they taste good” (D.T: Lee Rhiannon, 2015).

In several ways culls were justified as being in the interests of kangaroos. For the species, culling was justified as a way of managing numbers at levels that meant there would be enough food for all, and as a way of enhancing evolution.

“...maybe not just kill every roo seen, maybe cull of the older bucks and females that don’t have babies in the pouch and the sick looking so that the younger ones can grow and stop being so inbred” (C.R: Canberra Times, 2015).

For individual kangaroos a cull was frequently described as a way to protect kangaroos from suffering in car accidents.

“About time, way better than them being hit by a car causing an accident and then suffer on the side of the road” (N.S.P: Canberra Times, 2015).
“I rather they be culled than keep seeing them killed on the road and left to die slowly in pain” (J.K: Canberra Times, 2015).

Those in favour of culling overwhelmingly reflect beliefs in human mastery (Plumwood, 2003) and dominance (Manfredo et al., 2009) in relation to kangaroos. Attitudes of dominance were most strident among critics of Lee Rhiannon’s call to “stop killing kangaroos for profit”. One important theme was a utilitarian attitude (Manfredo et al., 2009) towards kangaroos expressed in macro and micro economic terms.

“Guess they want us to import pet food from china instead of making it here.” (K.B: Lee Rhiannon, 2015).

“What a load of bullshit maybe they should get off their shiny arses and head bush for a look around. We have a natural resource here that is not being used because bone headed politicians would rather import hep A laced berries ...” (J.H: Lee Rhiannon, 2015).

“These Greens will kill Farming and won’t stop until they are all starving to death! Please everyone support rural industries” (K.C: Lee Rhiannon, 2015).

Economic arguments are used to justify killing kangaroos in several ways. Some want them killed as pests that damage the profitability of farming, some because they cost drivers money when they collide with vehicles, some because they are a valuable food source for humans and their pets, and some in turn because killing them provides work for those in the kangaroo industry.

Relatedly, there was a strong rejection of culls that waste the kangaroo resource. This conditional acceptance of killing is suggestive of ecological animalism (Plumwood, 2003), in expressing opposition to killing where the meat is not eaten, or the hides not used.

“I agree with the cull. There are too many.... What makes me angry is that the meat is wasted. I would never eat kangaroo meat, however many do. Could also be sold as dog food. Its just a waste.” (S.E: Canberra Times, 2015).

“I hope that the meat will be butchered for consumption ... and the hide is also used” (J.W: Canberra Times, 2015).

Many contributors said it was better to use the meat than disrespect it by simply discarding it. Curiously, some did not see themselves or their peers as the beneficiaries, but rather, those less fortunate, such as animals, the homeless, poor or those suffering from starvation in other countries. They were ecological animalists insofar as they resisted ecological waste, yet dominant insofar as they were personally outside the ecology. As Plumwood (2003) said, a “mastery” view of animals has served western cultures well because it allows people to take positions that exploit animals.

Economic justifications were also countered with attitudes of disgust. Some expressed disgust at the notion of economics transcending the rights of animals.

“Barnaby is all about helping farmers make profits – at all cost including animal. This guy has no moral compass.” (P.B: Voiceless FB, 2015).
“it’s always just about the MONEY” (K.H.P: Voiceless FB, 2015).

Typically, these attitudes of disgust seemed founded on belief that kangaroos have rights appropriate to sentient beings, and belong to the Australian land. These expressions of disgust were in turn countered often with expressions of negative attitudes toward kangaroos and toward the ‘greenies’ expressing sympathy for kangaroos. Attitudes towards kangaroo sentience and natural belonging to the land were not mentioned by supporters of culling. According to Boom et al. (2012), this absence of acknowledgement is consistent with Australia’s history of attitudes to kangaroos.

Guardians

Guardians are those who opposed culling and exporting. Frequently they positioned themselves as speakers for animals without a voice, and stridently opposed culling and exporting. There was a tendency among this group to express emotions of frustration or exasperation with cullers and values that diminished the lives of wildlife, relative to human interests. Some were general expressions of disappointment concerning coexistence with other species:

“I shake my head, what is wrong with this world?” (D.D: Voiceless, 2015).
“They belong ALIVE here not dead there!!!” (C.K: Voiceless, 2015).

Others referred disdainfully and more specifically to human interests, most commonly money and profiting from the death of native animals.

“No animal is safe around mankind! Money is all people care about! These kangaroos will be farmed soon in horrible conditions/” (D.S: Voiceless, 2015).
“Humanity is sacrificed for financial gain.” (S.H: Voiceless, 2015).

Opponents of culling questioned the legitimacy of ‘scientific’ claims made by proponents of culling. Similar questions were raised about the science of interfering with wildlife in Canada (Dubois and Harshaw, 2013).

“There is NO evidence kangaroo numbers are out of control!!!!!! Find an alternative to get money – not by using other lives.” (G.C: Voiceless, 2015).

A patriotic dimension was also evident among *Guardians* insofar as some expressed an attitude that Australia has a special responsibility for animals native to Australia. There were many comments demanding protection of kangaroos and preserving their place in the Australian ecosystem. Some also referred to the need to protect koalas, and sarcastically asked if koalas might be next to be culled for food.

“what’s next koala burger!” (D.D: Voiceless, 2015).

“This like a bad joke. A new pitiful low. Where is the pride in our native Fauna? Where are the ethics and moral standards? Live Export not cruel enough? Factory Farms not horrific enough? No Moral compass what-so-ever.” (T.B: Voiceless, 2015).

In the ACT a person questioned the meaning of ‘nature reserve’. If animals in nature reserves were not protected from culling, then why have nature ‘reserves’? There was only one statement expressing a clearly Indigenous Australian point of view (Aslin and Bennett, 2000).

“This new ‘country’ ‘Australia’ kills it’s natural emblem...strange strange mob – we look after Our Country by hunting & eating them sensibly to sustain & keep all things in harmony – we must have a Wildlife (Kangaroo/native animal) Sanctuary...” (T.G.G: Canberra Times, 2015).

The attitudes expressed in favour of kangaroo conservation indicated subcultures who prioritise care and compassion for animals, resistance to actions that cause harm or death, and thus align generally with Manfredo’s et al. (2009) mutualism. They rejected the human-animal dualism and utilitarian attitudes to animals articulated by Plumwood (2003) and Manfredo et al. (2009). Many challenged the ethics and morality of culling, indicated preference for the rights of kangaroos over human convenience or advantage. But few indicated whether the hunting or culling would ever be acceptable. So it is not clear whether these subgroups aligned more closely with ontological veganism or ecological animalism (Plumwood, 2003). Dubois and Harshaw (2013) reported causes, contexts and alternatives are important when judging the appropriateness of different approaches to wildlife management.

Discussion and conclusions

This study provides new insights into the subcultures concerned about culling of kangaroos. The findings identified *Cullers* and *Guardians*, who exhibited attitudes reminiscent of Manferedo et al.’s, (2009) ‘dominant’ and ‘mutual’ descriptors, but importantly the study reports a large number of sub-subcultures within each of these two main subcultural groups. Plumwood’s (2003) human/animal dualists, ecological animalists and ontological vegans provide further, useful distinction, but this project reports a further range of different positions and characteristics within each of the main subcultures.

In the absence of behavioural data, the study focused on attitude as defining characteristic of the subcultural groups. Within the Culler group, with regard to kangaroos, the comments reveal subcultures that emphasise economics as well as the promotion of the good of kangaroo species. There was a salient subcultural group in favour of culling, but who strongly oppose waste of the meat and kangaroo by-products. This is consistent with Sharp (2013) who found that people were three times as likely to indicate some acceptance of killing kangaroos for commercial harvesting as for killing and leaving the carcass on the ground (Sharp, 2013), and, to an extent, Plumwood’s (2003) notion of ecological animalists.

Some *Cullers* also expressed attitudes to kangaroos consistent with Holm's (2015) notion of anti-animals. The findings here indicate that some subcultures take pleasure in killing kangaroos, while others kill without guilt (Holm, 2015). Kangaroos were understood to be in opposition to correct and proper environments, and in need of eradication. Native kangaroos, for some, are as undesirable and in need of eradication as imported possums are in New Zealand (Holm, 2015).

Among the *Guardians* opposed to culling there were several identifiable subcultures emphasising different positions. Some focused on the rights of kangaroos to live in a natural peace, while others focused on their disappointment with humans and authorities who encroach on and violate the natural habitats of kangaroos. Some asserted that Australians should do more to protect the rights of kangaroos as an indigenous species (as opposed to introduced species).

For those interested in broadening the scope of sub-culture identification and definition, appraisal shows promise as a tool for thematically grouping individuals into groups. Appraisal provides a window into the values of participants, which often form the foundation for decision-making and behaviour and groups. It is these salient indicators and the close analysis of justifications for positions which revealed reasoning and associations that allowed grouping to be semantically driven. Appraisal also revealed the impact of language used in a discussion, which identified the complex nature of attitude and subculture formations. These gave deeper insight into the strength with which an attitude and subgroup were bound. It also allowed us to determine the roles assigned and adopted by individuals within each group. Finally, appraisal also assisted in identifying words, phrases and language structures prominent with groups, and that connected group members.

Appraisal adds insight into complexity and contradictions within the two main groups, revealing various emphasis on economic, environmental, and rights positions, and points to future research using appraisal on 'sub-subcultures'. If explored through intertextuality this would assist in tracking the sources of influence, and provide even greater insight into ideological constructions that influence the formation and reshaping of subculture groups online and offline.

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