ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly I would like to thank my primary supervisor, Dr. Anne Galloway. She taught me to be a considerate and inquisitive researcher and inspired me to pursue this project. Her continuous support kept me enthused for research and her feedback was integral in shaping this thesis.

I am grateful to Tonya Sweet for stepping in during the last few months and providing additional support. She gave me valuable feedback on my design work and kept me on track during the final stages of this thesis.

Jeremy and Naya of Longbush Pork acted as my research participants and eventual co-designers of this project. My time with them and their pigs at the farm was rewarding, insightful and fun. I am incredibly thankful that they shared their stories with me.

Thank you to the Mañetto Quick familia. They are the first people I rely on at every obstacle and their support is integral to all of my endeavours. Special thanks to my mum, Hil, and my brother, Salvy, for their roles as thorough and diligent proofreaders.

Final thanks go to the staff at VUW and to my peers in the MDI studio.
PIGS IN CYBERSPACE
ABSTRACT

Public concern surrounding agriculture has been growing in the past decade with the rise of factory farming and the decline of independent family farms. Producers have reacted to this concern and desire to learn more about farming practices in various ways. This thesis focuses on understanding how one New Zealand pig farm has taken to social media to present stories of sustainable and ethical farming and uses design research to explore and present alternative narratives.

Using Wairarapa-based Longbush Pork as a case study, the first part of this project includes a narrative and visual analysis of popular social media posts, an online survey of social media followers, and an in-depth interview with the farm owners and operators to understand the stories being presented and how they engage with specific publics. Concentrating on the kind of human-animal relationships that emerge in these narratives and online discussions, the second part of this project uses co-design methods to create new narratives that can be exhibited and shared online for public feedback.

Ultimately, this thesis aims to critically reflect on the way stories of farming are told and understood, and how they can serve to creatively explore public concerns surrounding livestock farming practices.
CHAPTER FOUR: NEW NARRATIVES 159
  4.1 INTRODUCTION 160
  4.2 SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION 162
  4.3 STORYTELLING AT LONGBUSH PORK 166
  4.4 CRITICAL REFLECTIONS 170
  4.5 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT 178

REFERENCES 183

FIGURE LIST 193

APPENDIX 201
  A.1 HUMAN ETHICS - INTERVIEW 202
  A.2 HUMAN ETHICS - FIRST SURVEY 210
  A.3 HUMAN ETHICS - SECOND SURVEY 212
  A.4 EXPERIENCE MAP ITERATIONS 214
  A.5 LONGBUSH PORK’S WEEK ON FARMS OF THE WORLD 218
1.1 RESEARCH INTEREST

I have always been interested in nonhuman animals. Animals are in our stories, their likenesses are reflected in our toys, and some of us grow up in close contact with them as family pets. We develop a kinship with animals through narratives that allow us to see through their eyes and dwell in their earthy, wild and foreign places. Over time the presence of animals in our lives persists and morphs. Real animals take the place of fictional representations, and we are confronted with the ways in which animals serve us in our daily lives. The most contact many of us have with animals is in their deceased form, as meat. Livestock influences our lives more than any other animal group, yet their physical and tangible lives are removed from most of our daily realities. This thesis focuses on the stories told about these real animals, which are represented by those who raise them on a day-to-day basis. It is important to understand these stories and how they are told to highlight the relationships we currently have with livestock and what these could become.

This thesis looks at how narratives are constructed around livestock animals by those who are surrounded by them daily. It is valuable to explore the way that those who interact with these animals every day convey this human-nonhuman relationship to a wider audience. How these stories are engaged with and understood warrants exploration. This thesis serves as an in-depth case study into how one farm tells stories about pigs and explores new ways for these narratives to be captured.

The aims of this thesis are to understand the way stories about animals are told by farmers and to analyse the responses to these narratives. Relationships between human and nonhuman animals are revealed by how people relate to the stories told through pictures and written captions online. Another aim is to creatively explore new ways of telling stories online and to prompt online interaction and audience engagement. The methods by which this research project achieves these aims are described in Chapter One, and the relevant literature is also reviewed in the first chapter. The methods include a narrative summary of the content of one farm’s social media account: Wairarapa-based Longbush Pork.
Longbush Pork serves as the case study, inspiration and eventual co-designers of the thesis. Their daily posts are the material for understanding how farmers tell stories online, and their followers’ responses to these narratives are integral to the final design work of the thesis. The context of farming and the use of social media by farmers is explored in Chapter One. This includes the rising public concern about farming, the resulting emergence of ‘agvocacy’ and how farmers make things public. The first chapter also presents the theoretical framework for the thesis project.

This thesis focuses on people and animals through ethnographic research methods. One of the primary research methods is a content analysis of Longbush Pork’s social media posts. This analysis is described in Chapter Two and revealed the narrative themes present in the stories told about animals by Longbush Pork. The subsequent online survey with the followers of the Longbush Pork social media accounts was analysed and discussed in Chapter Two. The in-depth qualitative interview with Longbush Pork will be discussed subsequent to the survey analysis. The responses acted as the beginning of the exploratory phase of the co-design.

The final sections of the thesis follow the co-design process with the farmers at Longbush Pork. Chapter Three describes the first phases of the co-design process with the owners and operators of Longbush Pork. The methods that were carried out in order to better understand the cultural context of farming and social media were experience mapping, participatory observation and storyboarding. This ethnographic research resulted in the preliminary video edits of stories of pigs at Longbush Pork. This chapter presents final narratives that seek to explore new notions of human-animal relationships and the kinds of discussions that can form online. The online survey that corresponds to the video outputs is analysed and discussed to understand the ways in which the online audience relates to the new narratives.

Chapter Four summarises and discusses what was learned in this thesis project. It highlights the ways Longbush Pork continues to tell stories online. Critical reflections about the final videos and their online reception are offered in the last sections of this thesis. Finally, areas for future development of video ethnography that focuses on farming are presented.
1.2 METHODOLOGY

Approaching design research through ethnographic methods is a way of understanding a specific cultural context. Ethnography is a field in which a culture-sharing group can be examined and explored firsthand. Combining this with designerly methods results in a project which seeks to create visual outputs which are the result of the ethnographic research. My project took me out into the field of farming to understand a specific cultural context which culminate in designed videos that have been created with my research participants.

My research project has two primary aims: 1) to critically assess the role of social media use relating to contemporary agriculture in the UK, US and New Zealand; and 2) to create complementary narratives for public engagement. Through a combination of ethnographic and design research, my project’s objectives involve the identification of stakeholders and analysis of wider public concerns surrounding contemporary agriculture, followed by an in-depth analysis of the way Wairarapa-based pig farm Longbush Pork uses social media.

How these stories are conveyed through an online medium are explored and form the basis for the design of new narratives for public feedback.

The core of my project is an in-depth case study of Longbush Pork and how they use social media. In order to understand the way stories of farming are told online, I conducted literature reviews of relevant publications, narrative and content analysis of Longbush Pork’s social media posts, an online survey and participatory design methods. Ethnographic research was integral to the project, as it allowed me to describe and interpret “the shared and learned patterns of values, behaviours and beliefs of a culture-sharing group” (Creswell, 2012, p.68). I will describe the ethnographic methods involving Longbush Pork later in this chapter, subsequent to briefly presenting the areas of background research that are relevant to the research project.
1.2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to understand and explore the relationship between social media and agriculture, the first step was to analyse stakeholder interests in the promotion of social media for farming. The first group of stakeholders arises from public concerns about animal welfare, as seen in the writings of Imhoff (2010) and Kirby (2010). This perspective is explored through a literature review and helped identify contemporary concerns surrounding livestock agriculture. These are centred around the environment, human health and animal welfare. The literature review involves the inclusion of relevant publications to these issues and analyses the various perspectives on the rise of factory farming.

The second group of stakeholders for analysis is communities of online ‘agvocacy’. Agvocacy stands for agricultural advocacy and promotes the idea of a connected community of farmers that can help to inform others about farming practices. It was created in response to public concerns surrounding farming. The strengths and limitations of online activism and how they might be applied to agvocacy are assessed (McCaughey & Ayers, 2004). Discourse analysis (Wodak & Meyer, 2009) into the promotion of social media for farming was conducted. Examples of agvocacy groups such as the AgChat Foundation (2011) and articles about ‘AgChat’ and other forms of agvocacy are explored as representative of the emphasis on farmers’ adoption of social media (Amelinck, 2015; Mead, 2012). News articles provide further evidence of the ways farmers are currently using social media in New Zealand, the UK and the US. Farmers are being encouraged to use social media that can create “the opportunity to bring the world to our farm gate and connect to our consumers with authenticity and transparency” (Stanley, 2013, p.4).

The term ‘concerns’ will be identified in the literature review through Latour’s definition of “matters of concern” (2014, p.122). The act of ‘making things public’ is explored to define what a public is and why it is important in the distribution and sharing of ideas. These theoretical publications informed the manner in which concerns about contemporary agriculture are understood and provided an avenue to explore ways to allay and address these concerns.
The literature review provided the background information necessary to carry out an investigation into social media and its relationship to public concerns surrounding livestock agriculture. The next section of the chapter describes how this information aided the narrative and content analysis of Longbush Pork’s social media accounts. The focus will be on discourses within digital practices as this directly applies to the use of social media by farmers to connect with consumers and others working in agriculture (Jones, Chick & Hafney, 2015).

1.2.2 NARRATIVE SUMMARY OF SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

The next stage of my thesis focused on the social media content posted by Longbush Pork, primarily on their Twitter and Instagram accounts. In order to conduct this analysis, cultural research into social media was reviewed to understand the value and meaning inherent in online networks (Baym, 2010; Fuchs, 2013; Jenkins, Ford & Green, 2013; Weller et al., 2014). How Longbush Pork’s online accounts are used “as a set of tools people use to connect” with “meaning that depends on the others and which can only be understood as deeply embedded in and influenced by the daily realities of embodied life” (Baym, 2010, p.176) are examined.

In order to understand how Longbush Pork tells stories online through Twitter and Instagram, a narrative analysis of their accounts was implemented (Wells, 2011). Narrative analysis is the study of how words and images interact to convey stories and make things public. In this case it involved gathering the top ten posts from each of the social media platforms and analysing their visual and textual content. These posts were examined as they garnered the most attention and provided an apt summary of the way Longbush Pork conveys a picture of the farming experience. The followers’ reactions to the posts are investigated to understand “how it is received and the cultural and other resources upon which it draws” (Wells, 2011, p.4). The way visual and textual language is used in the photos or videos and their corresponding captions allowed me to uncover and convey an array of narrative themes.
1.2.3 ONLINE SURVEY AND QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW

The online survey is an important phase in the ethnographic research. The online questionnaire (Schensul, Schendul & LeCompte, 1999) was carried out with the Twitter and Instagram followers of Longbush Pork. This is an example of online ethnography being used to “study virtual worlds as valid venues for cultural practice, seeking to understand how they resemble and how they differ from other forms of culture” (Boellstorf, Nardi, Pearce & Taylor, 2012, p.1). The narrative analysis of Longbush Pork’s online accounts informed the questions posed to the followers in the survey. The survey was anonymous and ran for approximately a fortnight. The questions were be open-ended, allowing the followers to answer with their own stories of farming and human-animal relationships.

The responses to the online survey provided material to discuss with the owners and operators of Longbush Pork, Jeremy and Naya, during our in-depth and qualitative interview. The qualitative interview with Longbush Pork focused on “how people perceive their worlds and how they interpret their experiences” (Rubin & Rubin, 2012, p.3). The interview was structured as an informal discussion to enable a fuller understanding of the experiences of the respondents (Weiss, 1994). The interview attempted to gauge the farmers’ attitudes towards Twitter and Instagram and the perceived value of social media communication and storytelling. This was an integral phase of the ethnographic case study of Longbush Pork. The online survey and qualitative interview served as the beginning of the exploratory stage in the participatory design phase of the project.

1.2.4 PARTICIPATORY DESIGN

Participatory design, or co-design, is a method which fosters creative input from research participants. This is the primary ethnographic design method (Creswell, 2012) in this thesis. I worked with the farmers at Longbush Pork and carried out experience mapping, participatory observation and the co-creation of narrative scenarios. Participatory design is done to “ensure the participants’ interpretations are taken into account in the research” (Spinuzzi, 2005, p.164). The culmination of these co-design efforts are videos conveying new narratives.
of farming. Participatory design has limitations; for example, as it is based in traditional craft skills to empower research participants, “some argue that participatory design does not lend itself to radical change of the sort that sometimes must characterise new systems” (Spinuzzi, 2005, p.168). This thesis serves as an exploration of a specific culture within New Zealand farming. Therefore, it presents new ways of thinking about and presenting stories of animals rather than creating new systems of online engagement or farming practices.

The first stage of participatory design is exploratory and enables an understanding of the context. Before beginning creative work, I ensured I had a solid understanding of Longbush Pork by creating an experience map of pig farming and social media. The terms used within the map were gathered from the social media narrative analysis, the online survey and the interview transcript. The map was created with Longbush Pork, who were shown iterations of the map and identified the most important terms. This practice of participatory design enables the “generation of new theories grounded in participants’ knowledge” (Wheeldon & Faubert, 2009, p.72).

The creative work was conducted during fieldwork at Longbush Pork and encapsulated the discovery stage of co-design. The video and photographic footage gathered during participatory observation over multiple days was used to construct iterations of narrative scenarios. These scenarios were formulated with the input of the research participants who were shown storyboards to ensure their understanding and assistance in the creation of the new narratives. The videos were captured with GoPro cameras and a bridge camera, and the most compelling narratives were decided upon with input from the farmers at Longbush Pork.

The final stage of co-design is the creation of new narratives. The final videos taken at the Longbush Pork farm were edited in consideration of input from my research supervisors as well as my research participants. These videos were conveyed to an online audience. The scenarios provided a “resource for the analysis and presentation of cultural practices” (Heath, Hindmarsh & Luff, 2010, p.2) that were presented online so that conversations are able to form around new stories. This provided an interactive element to the final design and served to “promote learning experiences that are unique and specific
to the two-way nature of the design” (Simon, 2010, p.5). An online survey was posted in conjunction with the videos in order to garner online engagement. The responses to the survey that are prompted by the final videos were documented and analysed in order to understand perspectives and attitudes towards farming. This provided material for the final reflection on the project and enabled exploration of future possibilities and extensions of the research.
1.3 FARMING CONCERNS AND MAKING THINGS PUBLIC

This section of Chapter One presents existing research regarding public concerns surrounding agriculture, farmers’ responses and the notion of mobilising publics. My thesis aims to address how farmers currently use social media and the way this relates to contemporary concerns surrounding agriculture. Throughout the section I will define the terms that occur in the corresponding public discourse in order to understand how these issues can be addressed and reflected upon. Social media is proposed as a means to allay the concerns that surround livestock agriculture by providing an avenue for farmers to tell their own stories. I will investigate the way that farmers currently do this by looking at existing literature. The use of social media can be a way to mobilise publics and address matters of concern. These ideas will be explored and defined in the final part of this section and serve as the theoretical background for my thesis.

1.3.1 PUBLIC CONCERNS ABOUT INTENSIVE AGRICULTURE

There has been an increasing public awareness of the implications of intensive agriculture, including impacts on the environment, human health and animal welfare. The issues mainly relate to factory farming, which is the “confinement-based industrialised agriculture” (Rollin, 2010, p.7) that has become the dominant method of farming in the last century. Factory farming results in the mass production of food by “raising vast numbers of animals, limiting the space needed to raise these animals, moving them indoors” (Rollin, 2010, p.8). I will henceforth use the term ‘factory farming’ to describe these intensive livestock farming operations. This method of farming has engendered widespread concern as more of the internal practices have become common knowledge. I will explore these concerns and whether there is a need for alternative farming practices or new ways for consumers to learn about farming. I will also focus on the potential solutions that authors pose for the issues surrounding factory farming.
1.3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

There have been numerous reports of the negative environmental impacts of factory farms. Concern tends to be centred on global pollution caused by farming operations or on localised impacts on those living near the farms. Many authors provide potential solutions for the environmental issues arising from these farms.

Wender (2011) focuses on the “severe environmental impacts on water, land, wildlife, and air” (p.142) as a result of current factory farming practices. This is a widespread concern about factory farming, and Wender believes that one of the solutions to the environmental issue is an increase in family farming. The author writes that “farming is a way of life for them rather than just a way of making money, so family farmers are motivated to raise their crops and animals in the most environmentally sound and healthy way” (Wender, 2011, p.143). The increasing number of factory farms has led to a decreasing number of family farms, and this has had negative consequences for the environment. Ilea (2009) focuses on the same environmental issue but poses a different solution. The author writes that “the livestock sector is now one of the top two or three most significant contributors to environmental problems” (2009, p.154). Factory farms bear a significant responsibility for the increase in greenhouse gas emissions. Ilea’s solution is to “engage with questions of an individual’s moral responsibility” (2009, p.155) and for consumers to decrease their demand for animal products.

The impact of factory farms on those living near them is another facet of factory farming’s environmental impact. In Abdalla’s article (2002) the burden placed on environments located near large-scale livestock operations caused by the amount of animal waste is described. This results in the degradation of land and water near the factory farm which negatively impacts the local population. A solution posed is for firmer boundaries by public policy-makers about water quality, nutrient management and nuisance issues.

1.3.3 HUMAN HEALTH

A second significant concern surrounding factory farming is its impact on human health. The conditions within factory
farms have a negative impact on human health through the consumption of animal products and from the pollution and waste created by the operations (Abdalla, 2002; Ilea, 2009). The pollution emitted from factory farming has adverse effects on public health, and it is often recommended that meat consumption be decreased as this can have positive health benefits as well as lessening the environmental impact of meat production (Ilea, 2009). There are also reports of health risks to workers within factory farms. The solutions to such issues are similar to those that address the environmental impact of factory farming as these concerns are closely related. Another solution is for consumers to learn more about where their food comes from, which will allow them to know “what impact its production has on the environment and public health” (Kirby, 2011, p.xvii).

1.3.4 ANIMAL WELFARE

The final main issue concerns the welfare of animals which are raised in factory farms. Rollin (2010) writes about the conditions of livestock in factory farms and focuses on pigs and that their “natural behaviour is inexpressible” (p.8) within such operations. The notion that animals’ natural behaviour is limited within factory farms is the most prevalent issue regarding the conditions of these animals that are integral to the production of food. The difference between ‘husbandry’ and ‘confinement’ agriculture is discussed by Rollin. Husbandry agriculture has been replaced by confinement agriculture which entails giving animals less living space and moving them indoors to meet the need to produce greater amounts of food more efficiently. The industry is now thought to have “values of efficiency and productivity” (Rollin, 2010, p.8) rather than of husbandry agriculture which places more value on the individual animal. Livestock within factory farms suffer through diseases and physical and psychological deprivation and prove that “this type of agriculture is incompatible with common decency” (Rollin, 2010, p.12).

Bold language is often employed when writing about the conditions of factory farms in the literature I have encountered. Hariri (2015) employs such language in his article, believing that “the treatment of domesticated animals in industrial farms is perhaps the worst crime in history”. The living conditions of farm animals has become a pressing ethical issue, resulting
in calls to action posed by many authors to engage with these concerns on an individual level.

There has been significant exploration into how to deal with these issues. Driessen (2012) terms this complexity of issues the ‘mosaic of concerns’. Solutions to dealing with this mosaic include principalist ethics, which entails a pluralist approach to dealing with the complexity; and technological optimisation, the use of scientific research and technological innovation to improve conditions on farms and ethical engagement in the practice of farming. This latter solution is particularly relevant to my research interest as it deals with the public engaging in a discussion of ethics involving farmers. Other authors have presented more simplistic solutions to the issues surrounding factory farming, such as Pluhar’s (2009) call for the adoption of a vegetarian lifestyle which would foster an end to the production of meat.

The analysis of the public concern surrounding agriculture has led me to explore how these issues can be dealt with. In the following sections of the chapter I will focus on farmers’ responses to these issues, and I will question what happens if we treat the responses to these issues as matters of concern rather than matters of fact. I will also investigate how small farms are different to the intensive farms that attract significantly more public concern.

1.3.5 FARMER RESPONSES

An important aspect of public concern surrounding livestock agriculture arises from “the widespread public confusion about the simple facts of what modern animal production entails” (Fraser, 2001, p.183). There are numerous accounts of farmers attempting to create more openness and transparency of agricultural practices for the public. Examples of this are the foundation of the term ‘Agvocacy’ and the AgChat Foundation and farmers’ growing usage of social media.

1.3.6 AGVOCACY

‘Agvocacy’ stands for agricultural advocates and was coined by the AgChat Foundation (AgChat Foundation, 2011b). The role of an advocate revolves around “empowering farmers and ranchers to connect communities through social media
platforms” (AgChat Foundation, 201b). They seek to make farmers’ stories more public and allows them to openly connect with other farmers and consumers. This is intended to foster discussion around agriculture to address the publics’ confusion about food production.

An important feature introduced by the AgChat Foundation is the weekly Twitter conversation ‘#AgChat’. The conversation is open to anyone “with an interest in the business of growing food, fuel, feed and fibre that is on Twitter” (AgChat Foundation, 201a). Michele Payne-Knopper founded ‘#AgChat’ and ‘#FoodChat’ in 2009 to “build stronger connections between the farm gate and consumer plate” (AgChat Foundation, 201a). Every Tuesday members of the ‘#AgChat’ community convene on Twitter to network and answer questions on the topic of the week. The AgChat Foundation website outlines these aspects of the ‘#AgChat’ conversation and offers the best ways for farmers to participate through the use of hashtags.

The potential for farmers who use social media has been documented in a positive manner (Pritchett, Naile & Murphy, 2012; Stanley, 2013; Mess, 2015). The social dimensions of Twitter have been explored and compared to face-to-face communication. There are no facial cues in Twitter conversations, which function most successfully when the user wishes to be involved in conversations on topics relevant to their social media account. An analysis of the differences between these two modes of conversation has led Pritchett, Naile and Murphy to the conclusion that “Twitter conversations can be a successful way to communicate agricultural stories to others” (2012, p.62). Stanley (2013) elaborates on the benefits of social media for farmers and chiefly writes about the potential for farmers rather than drawing on actual evidence of its success. The article provides a how-to guide for farmers who wish to use “social media as a valuable tool” (Stanley, 2013, p.62). Mess (2015) provides another example of a how-to guide for farmers using social media, writing about the use of hashtags to discover relevant interests, and of replying, favouriting and ‘retweeting’ to amass online attention.
1.3.7 SOCIAL MEDIA USE

There are various reports of the ways farmers are currently using social media. I have explored news articles from the UK and US of farmers’ uses of social media. These are mainly positive reports of social media and how it has benefitted farmers.

UK-based Gray (2014) describes the term ‘selfie’, which is an example of the growing number of farmers using social media. ‘Selfie’ stands for farmers taking selfies and is an example of one way farmers take photographs and display them publicly. It also provides evidence for how farmers are forming communities online. Another example of this is the ‘#sosdairy’ campaign in 2012 for fairer milk prices in the UK (Gray, 2014). Social media has been said to have improved the public view of farmers in the UK, with a survey by the National Farmers Union finding that 68 percent of people had a favourable view of farmers (Bowern, 2015).

In the US, similarly positive reports of farmers’ usage of social media can be found. Coulter (2015) writes about how social media is used by farmers to connect with consumers and producers. This is done through posting photographs to Facebook, sharing ideas on Twitter and sending emails to communicate with a large group of farmers. The benefits of social media for small farms are reported, as it helps attract attention to the farm-to-table movement and allows consumers to hear how the farms got started (Mazurak, 2015). A farmer in the US has been cited as saying that “it’s been a pleasant surprise that when we tell our story via social media people aren’t horrified by what we do – it’s shown me that there’s no need for secrecy” (Green Futures, 2011).

Although there have been numerous reports of farmers currently using social media, there is a gap in this field of academic knowledge. My approach to this area will answer questions about the way farmers are using social media and how this addresses public concerns. I will provide critical reflections on this topic; the theoretical framework for which will be provided in the following section of the chapter.
1.3.8 MOBILISING PUBLICS

The theory through which I will address the issues presented above will be explored in the final section of this chapter. A definition of ‘matters of concern’ can be applied to public concerns surrounding livestock agriculture rather than thinking of them as ‘matters of fact’ (Latour, 2005). The contrast between the two terms is integral to how I will deal with the issues surrounding livestock agriculture and the ways they are publicly addressed. The value of making things public is integral to the understanding of whether social media can mobilise publics around a common topic of livestock agriculture and farming.

1.3.9 AGONISM

Mouffe (2005) defines an agonistic approach to the public and advocates for an agonistic model of democratic politics. Agonism is the acceptance of political conflicts that arise from the pluralism of society which entails different opinions and beliefs. In an agonistic approach to the public a consensus does not have to be reached. Mouffe concludes by writing that what “democratic politics requires is the fostering of a multiplicity of public spaces of agonistic confrontation” (2005, p.807). This agonistic model creates “a battleground where different hegemonic projects are confronted, without any final reconciliation” (2005, p.806).

Marres (2005) explores a similar idea, writing that human subjectivity is central to democracy and that the public should be involved in political problems for their own sake, rather than just in political results. Marres summarises this viewpoint by writing that “a politics that revolves around the problems that people are actually implicated in can be a democratic politics” (2005, p.17). This places further importance on the notion that public involvement arises from an implication in the issue at hand.

In Carl DiSalvo’s book ‘Adversarial Design’, he writes about the way that adversarial design enables agonism. Adversarial design is defined by its ability to “evoke and engage political issues” (2012, p.2). DiSalvo believes that adversarial design is important because it provides “more about a subtle, playful contestation than about consensus” and supplies examples of design that
achieves this (2012, p.3). The author calls for more design that enables “the productive and ongoing questioning, challenging, and reframing that typifies agonism” (2012, p.7).

This agonistic model applies to the way I address public concerns surrounding livestock agriculture. My research does not seek to attain a consensus on the issue, but intends to explore concerns and generate new knowledge about how these can be addressed through farmers’ usage of social media.

1.3.10 MATTERS OF CONCERN

‘Matters of concern’ exist as a contrast to ‘matters of fact’. ‘Matters of fact’ arise from what is seen as an objective truth and are based off the existence of facts about an issue. ‘Matters of concern’ belong in the subjective realm and are presented as assemblages of facts, entities, issues and forces. This means that they do not rely solely on facts, but also on human subjectivity and their beliefs and opinions. Bruno Latour (2005) coined the phrase in his chapter ‘From Realpolitik to Dingpolitik or How to Make Things Public’. Latour is opposed to matters of fact, writing that making facts public is a “rather messy, pesky, risky business” (2005, p.19). Latour believes that an indisputable and transparent fact is rare and that matters of concern should take the place of facts. Matters of concern define our grasp of facts and our understanding of objectivity and allow public conversations to shift positively.


Leino and Laine (2011) write about matters of concern in relation to public participation. They believe that contemporary spaces for public participation are limited and unsatisfactory. This is due to the fact that they are approached from issue politics, rather than methodologically or philosophically, and people are not taking part in the planning process enough. The authors assert that matters of concern are crucial points in organising the principles of the public. An emphasis on matters of concern allows for a focus on the core of public participation, which is the notion that publics form around issues they most care about. The idea of assembling around matters of concern is evident in design (Ripley, Thun and Velikov, 2009). Projects that arise directly from matters of concern attempt
to seek problems rather than solve them. This results in a critical approach to design and emphasises the importance of a broader engagement with discourse that does not focus solely on the specific design discipline.

1.3.11 MAKING PUBLICS

The notion of making publics can arise from the idea of matters of concern as a way of assembling around an issue. The term ‘publics’ is defined by Warner, who writes that a public is difficult to define, but he summarises it in this way: “The public, as a people, is thought to include everyone within the field in question” (2002, p.49). Warner discusses the different roles that a public plays in our social world. These roles include the self-organised public that revolves around the self-organisation of discourse publics (2005, p.50). Another role is the idea of a public as a relationship among strangers and as more than just a list of one’s friends (2005, p.55). This leads to the idea that the address of a public speech is both personal and impersonal and can be directed to the stranger to give them social relevance (2005, p.58).

There have been numerous examples of making things public and making publics. Marres and Rogers (2005) write about the making of publics online. They provide a history of issue-networking which allowed them to recognise that not all issues organise publics, but most publics do care about issues. Issue networks are “a heterogeneous set of entities that have configured into a hyper-link network around a common problematic area” (2005, p.928). Marres and Rogers concluded that issue-networks often fail to organise a public for the issue they have adopted, although some online issue networks “did contribute to the organisation of actors affected by the issue into a collective” (2005, p.933). Reber (2005) explores ways for people to successfully organise around an issue through publicity. Reber writes of the complexity surrounding the possibility of more innovative discursive rules that enable “a greater degree of ‘publicity’ and thus allow for more sustained and articulated forms of critical expression” (2005, p.314).

Bierens (2005) applies the idea of making things public and organising people around issues through the art project entitled ‘MILK’, which seeks to address the current distance we have from the production process of milk and how it arrives
in our homes. Through satellite imagery, the path of milk production becomes traceable for the public. Personal control over these processes of production reflects the idea that “we have to want to know, for knowledge remains the key to power” (2005, p.496). Bierens provides an example of how things are made public to address a matter of concern surrounding our lack of knowledge about food production processes.

I have argued that public concerns surrounding agriculture are important in discussions about farming and farmers. The growing prevalence of farmers using social media proves that those involved in the agricultural industry are attentive to the public’s concerns and are forming communities focused on openness and transparency through the telling of their own stories online. This area of agriculture is under-documented, and my approach to this issue is important for researchers and designers. I have addressed the public concerns and will design novel ways to engage with farming narratives. The agonistic model that has been applied in the political sphere will inform my critical design process. Assembling around matters of concern rather than matters of fact will allow these concerns, and the existence of farmers’ social media accounts, to be addressed in a subjective manner which is open to broader discourse. These issues demonstrate that mobilising publics is an effective way to organise people around a common topic, which in this case is contemporary farming and the stories that can be told.
1.4 DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

Background research informs how Longbush Pork and their activity on social media can be understood and explored. It provides a history of the relevant contexts and enables me to look at the posts by Longbush Pork through a more informed and coherent lens. The public’s concerns surrounding farming and the phenomenon of farmers’ growing usage of social media are relevant to Longbush Pork as they are a sustainable and ethical pig farm with methods that are made open and public through social media. These methods do not coincide with those that elicit public concern as their pigs are free-range and they are a small family farm. Nevertheless, it is important to understand the public’s impressions surrounding farming before launching into a case study which analyses online engagement with stories about farm animals. The way that Longbush Pork makes things public and creates spaces for public discussion online will be the focus of the following chapters.
CHAPTER TWO ONLINE STORIES OF PIGS
2.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to explore the story of Longbush Pork and their pigs in depth, I will analyse their posts on social media. The narrative themes of Longbush Pork’s Twitter and Instagram accounts are conveyed through their most popular posts, and the captions and pictures which form these stories undergo analysis. The stories these social media posts tell are presented in the following section of Chapter Two. To better understand the public’s engagement and relationship with stories about livestock, I will analyse the responses to an online survey which was posted to the followers of Longbush Pork’s social media accounts. I will arrange the responses to the online survey by narrative theme in accordance with a core aim of this thesis, which is to explore stories about animals and how these are conveyed online. Finally, I will present my in-depth, qualitative interview with the owners and operators of Longbush Pork, Jeremy and Naya. The discussion with Jeremy and Naya and the responses to the online survey will act as the beginning of the exploratory stage of co-design.
2.2 ANALYSING LONGBUSH PORK SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

The following section presents a summary of the top ten posts of Longbush Pork’s Twitter and Instagram accounts with a view to better understand the narratives involved and to see how people relate to images and texts concerning farming. I have analysed the way the images and texts relate to each other in order to explore how Twitter and Instagram posts convey stories of farming and to see how social media captures human-animal relationships. I have conducted this summary of Longbush Pork’s most popular social media posts through narrative analysis to understand the relationship between the images and text (Rose, 2012; Wells, 2011). This framework provides me with the ability to view the images and text as part of a visual narrative. I have analysed the comments posted by the followers to gauge how narratives of farming are perceived online. The social media platforms influence the way that followers perceive the narratives conveyed by Longbush Pork, and the way that social media is used “as a set of tools people use to connect” that “influence the daily realities of embodied life” (Baym, 2010, p.176) is examined. I have chosen to look at the top ten posts as they have attracted the most attention and contain the most comprehensive examples of online conversations. Furthermore, they aptly demonstrate Longbush Pork’s online presence.

I started following Longbush Pork on Twitter because I had heard from my research supervisor that their farming practices were sustainable and ethical. This means that Longbush Pork farms in a way that is conscious of the ecosystem and their effect on the environment and that they uphold a high standard of welfare for their animals. I am a vegetarian and have a complex relationship with farming. The rise in public concern about farming has pushed me to look thoughtfully at farming practices. As a result, I stopped eating meat. Although I do not eat meat, I am interested in farming practices that deviate from mainstream factory farming. The human-animal relationships within these systems and the stories they tell are the focus of my research. My interest in small, sustainable and ethical farms has led me to follow the accounts of various farmers which are similar to Longbush Pork, and my vegetarianism has led me to an interest in food and lifestyle social media accounts that focus on plant-based diets. My Twitter feed is awash with a
plethora of differing opinions about animals being slaughtered for food, giving me insight into various kinds of human-animal relationships.

Longbush Pork quickly became prominent to me on Twitter due to the highly visual nature of their posts. There are very few posts on their account that do not have a photograph attached to them. My interest in them was intensified by meeting the owners and operators, Jeremy and Naya, in person. They were immediately interested and engaged with the type of research we were talking about, and they were clearly passionate about caring for their pigs. Part of the reason my focus is on Longbush Pork is due to the sheer number of images they post on their Twitter account (approximately two photos or more daily), and the followers’ ongoing engagement with the images and captions. Life on the farm at Longbush Pork is represented by pictures of pigs in pastures, barns, mud, water troughs, pig huts and of pigs which are, perhaps surprisingly, in the owners’ home. The photos and videos provide me with an avenue to explore the way one farmer interacts with his pigs and how people can relate to this farmer’s images and texts online. The images Longbush Pork posts act as “sites of socialising” and become more than simply images, as “comments from both the user and their friends can provide them with context, history and aesthetic importance” (Thomas-Jones, 2010, p.64). Since I started following Longbush Pork’s Twitter and Instagram accounts I have not interacted with them online. This is because I wanted to focus my attention on observing and reading the posts and interactions from within their accounts rather than adding my own voice.

Twitter is an online social networking service created in March 2006 that enables users to send and read 140-character messages called ‘tweets’. Users can post images or short videos called ‘vines’ (Vine is a separate video-sharing service allowing users to share six-second looping videos). Twitter users choose who to follow and can ‘Favourite’ or ‘Retweet’ their most well-liked posts. They can also ‘Reply’ to a post by writing a comment beneath the image or video. On the dates the posts were gathered (28 October 2015), Longbush Pork’s Twitter account had 1822 followers and 6,042 tweets since the date they joined Twitter in June 2013. Their top ten Twitter posts have the highest number of favourites. I have conducted narrative and visual analysis of the content of the most popular posts. I have
also evaluated the replies to these posts through a framework which assesses online engagement and communication over the internet (Jenkins, Ford & Green, 2013) in order to understand the value and meaning of online networks.

*Instagram* is an online mobile photo-sharing, video-sharing and social networking service released in October 2010 that enables its users to take photos and videos. Users are able to take photos with the *Instagram* mobile application that then get posted on their *Instagram* feed with an optional description of the image. Users can ‘Like’ and ‘Comment’ on photos or videos posted by other users. On the dates the posts were gathered (28 October 2015) from Longbush Pork’s *Instagram* account, they had 330 followers and 269 posts since the date they joined *Instagram* in February 2014. I have implemented the same theoretical framework of narrative analysis that I used for their *Twitter* posts. The top eleven Instagram posts had the greatest total number of ‘Likes’ and ‘Comments’ on the Longbush Pork account (there are eleven because two of the images had the same exact total number of likes and comments). I have analysed the images with regard to their textual descriptions and have evaluated the comments on the top eleven posts in order to examine the human-animal relationships that are captured by social media. The conversations highlight the possibility of exchanging meaning and information via online interactions and relationships (Donath, 2014).

These online human-animal relationships are interesting because they embody stories about farming and the way these can be conveyed through a digital and virtual platform. In the following section I have assessed these relationships and have organised them into sections according to narrative themes which are revealed through online interactions between humans and animals. The narratives I have observed on Longbush Pork’s online accounts can be summarised by the key themes of anthropomorphising, stories of care, consumers’ desire to own pigs, pigs as meat, and people asking farmers questions.
The most prominent theme evident in Longbush Pork’s popular social media posts is the anthropomorphising of their farm animals. Anthropomorphising is the attribution of human qualities and behaviours to animals. This is largely done to make animals more relatable for the human audience. In this section I will focus on the way Jeremy, owner and operator of Longbush Pork, anthropomorphises his pigs online. McHugh writes that “literary histories in the past century cast pigs as screens for human ego projection” (2011, p.171). Pigs have played a significant part in animal narratives and are often attributed human characteristics and personalities. The way that pigs are portrayed by farmers, who work closely with these animals and who see them every day, and the way that consumers anthropomorphise these animals have various similarities and differences. It can be said that the accounts “of animal behaviour by people who work closely with animals” (Mitchell, Thompson & Miles, 1997, p. 7) are more trustworthy. I will focus on these accounts in the following section.
The pigs of Longbush Pork develop characters and personalities through social media posts. Longbush Pork uses humour in many of their online posts, using puns and jokes in the images’ captions. One such post is in the ‘vine’ posted on Twitter that shows a pig bursting into a sudden sprint that quickly ends (Figure 2.1). Jeremy makes jokes about the pig’s running, and in the replies he clarifies that she is just a “silly gilt having a party by herself”. Jeremy has given the pig a personality and suggests that she is engaging in the human activity of having a party. This is an example of the lighthearted nature of Longbush Pork’s social media posts, and it attributes a naughty, silly and humorous character to the pig. Although this pig is not given a name, Jeremy has developed her personality through his captions and replies.
A Twitter post of a pig with mud on its face suggests that the pig is “proud of her mess” (Figure 2.2). Once again Jeremy has assigned the pig certain human characteristics of naughtiness and silliness. In capturing the antics of their pigs, Longbush Pork construct a narrative which gives their followers a sense of the playful character of their pigs and of the fun aspects of life on a farm. Follower @lispearsonyes (2015) replies to the post with “nice character in these hogs”, illustrating a positive response to the anthropomorphising of the pig. Jeremy assigns positive character traits to the animals, creating a narrative that appeals to their social media audience.

Figure 2.2. Longbush Pork, Twitter. (2014, November 2). Bless her. She’s obviously pretty proud of her mess. #TeamNZPork
If there is a protagonist to the *Twitter* story of Longbush Pork, it would be the Large Black pig, Lucy. Three of the top ten most popular posts document her growth, and the most popular post is an image of Jeremy holding Lucy (Figure 2.3). Lucy is a ‘house pig’ and was brought inside when she was a sick piglet. Thus, she develops a special bond with the owners of Longbush Pork. In this particular post Jeremy guesses what Lucy is thinking, and the photo shows him looking down into her face. There is an evident closeness between human and animal both visually and within the caption. Jeremy guesses what the pig is thinking, further developing Lucy’s personality as the special pig that was brought indoors and grew up around the farmers. This story is echoed in two of the most well-known pig narratives, the novels ‘Babe’ and ‘Charlotte’s Web’. Both stories begin with pigs that “escape their doom as essentially meat” (McHugh, 2011, p.185) and are brought inside the home at some point. This welcoming of the pigs into human homes is a defining moment in both books as it exemplifies the specialness and uniqueness of these pigs. This is also present in the story of Lucy, and the popularity of this narrative implies that this theme is appealing to readers. The anthropomorphisation of these pigs creates a stronger identification with the animals.

*Figure 2.3. Longbush Pork, Twitter. (2015, June 20). And then there’s Lucy, who still thinks she’s the size of my hand.*
There are instances of Jeremy referring to farm animals as if they are colleagues. This is illustrated by the caption on a photo of a black and white Great Dane puppy (Figure 2.4). Jeremy refers to the puppy, Max, as his “little fencing assistant”. The animals are presented as other workers on the farm. There is humour in this anthropomorphisation as it creates an image of a small puppy working beside the farmer as his “assistant”. Followers have replied with words like “gorgeous” and “adorable” which exemplify the positive reactions to this post and the followers’ preoccupation with the visual appearance of Longbush Pork’s animals. The anthropomorphising by online followers will be further explored in the following section.

Figure 2.4. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2015, October). My little fencing assistant Max. #puppy #GreatDane
2.2.2 CONSUMERS ANTHROPOMORPHISING

The anthropomorphising of Longbush Pork’s pigs extends to replies to their posts by their online followers. Twitter and Instagram allow followers to comment on or reply to such posts. I will focus on the way that followers use replies to anthropomorphise the animals they see in photos posted by Longbush Pork. The social media accounts of this farmer “broadcasts visual images in ways that change everyday stories of cross-species intimacies” (McHugh, 2011, p.190). Followers are able to see daily images of pigs and life on the farm, and thus can develop their own closeness to these animals through anthropomorphising. I will explore the ways that the anthropomorphising by the producer and the consumers differ and how this is expressed through comments and replies on social media platforms.
Due to the nature of the social media posts, consumers react to the visual appearance of pigs differently to the farmer’s focus on the character and personality of their pigs. There are numerous examples of consumers commenting on the appearance of the pigs. Words like “cute”, “adorable”, “beautiful” and “pretty” are used to describe the pigs. Consumers are prone to using human characteristics to comment on the pigs’ appearance. As a reply to the top Twitter post (Figure 2.3) @NikCarmichael (2015) calls Lucy “babygirl”. The phrase “baby girl” is also applied to an Instagram photo of a pig, Gertrude, who is being helped up by Jeremy (Figure 2.5). Consumers are relating to the pigs in ways that they might relate to human babies or children.

Figure 2.5. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2015, September). Beautiful Gertrude at six weeks old and weighing in at 21 kilos. She’s one of our Duroc Large Black crosses that we’ll run a Hampshire boar over… when she’s older of course.
Another example of consumers commenting on the visual appearance of the pigs is two commenters calling Lucy “cheeky” (@NikCarmichael & @progger, 2015) on a Twitter post of Lucy being held up by Jeremy (Figure 2.6). The followers also comment on her ‘smile’. The followers have developed a personality for the pig, writing that she looks cheeky and that she is smiling. The labelling of her as “Ms Tubby” in the caption furthers the humorous nature of Lucy’s character in this post.
The content of Longbush Pork’s posts on Instagram differ from those on Twitter, leading to alternative anthropomorphising by the consumers. Twitter does not require the poster to attach an image to the post, although almost all of Longbush Pork’s ‘tweets’ are of photographs. Instagram requires the posting of images and does not require captions (exemplified by the captionless post, Figure 2.7). The text Longbush Pork posts beside images on Twitter develop a written narrative, whereas the Instagram posts rely solely on photos to tell stories. There is greater focus on the visual, and commenters on the Instagram posts are centred around the aesthetic qualities of the pigs. The words “cute”, “perfection” and “beautiful” are used to describe the piglets.

Figure 2.7. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2015, May). [Close up photograph of two piglets].
The second most popular post on Instagram is a close-up photo of a Duroc piglet, Gertrude (Figure 2.8). One of the commenters writes that “Gertrude could possibly be the prettiest piggy you have” (@sugarandspice_nz, 2015) and another writes about her “beautiful bright eyes” (@daisymcgarr, 2015). This kind of aesthetic praise is similar to that used to describe newborn babies and is another example of the consumers’ visual anthropomorphising of the pigs.

Longbush Pork offers “realistic depictions of animal life” (Barker, 1996, p.288) through their anthropomorphisation. The pigs are not wearing human clothes and are not attributed human speech, as is evident in other narratives of pigs (specifically in children's stories). They present their pigs as the animals that they are, and yet both farmer and consumer are inclined to attach human qualities to them. This humanness is perpetuated throughout the consumer’s impression of the animals and in how they positively react to the appealing characters, personalities and aesthetic qualities of the pigs.
2.2.3 STORIES OF CARE

A third narrative theme of Longbush Pork’s social media accounts is the care they take for their animals. Longbush Pork is a free-range, independent pig farm. The emergence of these types of farms has created fictions that show that “increasingly difficult circumstances surrounding farm life did not lead to the death of the meat industry but rather to its transformation into a technological dystopia for humans and animals alike” (McHugh, 2011, p.201). This harshness of life for farmers, particularly on independent farms, is not prevalent on the accounts of Longbush Pork. However, their type of farming has resulted in stories of unique care that are documented on their social media accounts. These narratives show the farmers taking sick animals inside and attempting to ‘save’ them. In the following section I will provide examples of these stories and comment on the implications they have for human-animal relationships.
We’ve had a great run of no piglets in the house, but just pulled this one who was falling way behind the others.

The most prominent story of care on *Twitter* is that of the Large Black pig, Lucy. Her story begins with a photo of a piglet that has been taken inside as it was “falling way behind” the other piglets (Figure 2.9). The piglet is inside and is being bottle-fed. This act of saving the sick piglet is commended by one of the replies to the photo, calling Longbush Pork “wonderful pig parents” (@Rudifatcat, 2015). The follower’s engagement continues in the replies, and one of the followers decides to name the piglet ‘Lucy’ after another follower. Longbush Pork agrees to name her Lucy, a “wonderful name for a wonderful piglet”. As a result, these followers and Longbush Pork have established Lucy as a character in the narrative of Longbush Pork and the success story of care that she embodies.
There is also an example of an unsuccessful story of care in the most popular Twitter posts. This post shows the farmer warming up a newborn piglet in their oven at home, “as you do” (Figure 10). Reading the replies on the image informs us that the pig eventually dies, and there are various sympathetic posts about the death of the piglet (@DarMcMullan, 2015, writes “sad to hear... you tried though”). There are also jokes about cooking the piglet in an oven which the farmer does not respond to as there is a tone of seriousness about the piglet’s death that they uphold.
A third story of care, whose beginning is not evident in the most popular posts, is that of “Hannah the house piglet” (Figure 2.12). A ‘vine’ posted on Twitter shows Hannah wearing a grey cardigan and drinking from a bottle being held out to her (Figure 2.11). The piglet is indoors and is being bottle fed by the farmer beside a lamb who is also being bottle fed. Twitter follower @HighFarndale (2015) writes that the piglet seems “chilled out”. Longbush Pork adds a small anecdote to the narrative already established in the original post by replying that they should “see/hear her while the milk is heating up! Anything but chilled out”.

Figure 2.11. Longbush Pork, Twitter. (2015, August 31). Double duty.
The presence of pigs indoors, which is a feature of these stories of care, is relatable to consumers as it gives them a vision that many are familiar with if they have owned pets. This image of caring for pigs indoors leads to people wanting their own pigs which I will explore in the following section.

*Figure 2.12. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2015, September). Hannah the house piglet.*
2.2.4 CONSUMERS OWNING PIGS

There are various examples of consumers expressing the desire to own a pig on Longbush Pork’s social media accounts. In the following section I will provide examples of this and will discuss whether these claims represent wishful thinking or genuine desire. I will also explore the implications of this desire and what it means when people predominantly comment on wanting pigs only when they see them treated as pets.

The first photo of the piglet, Lucy, (Figure 2.9) incites one such expression of desire to own a piglet. Follower @lucymk (2015) writes “Can I have it? #love”, to which Longbush Pork replies “only if you promise to feed it every couple of hours!”. The follower replies “I so would!!”. This exchange between producer and consumer makes it clear that the follower has no real chance of owning the pig, as the notion is seemingly entertained in a humorous, joking manner. The follower wishes to own this specific piglet, and this is not a realistic desire.

Another example of a follower wanting a piglet is a reply to a photo of two piglets on Longbush Pork’s Instagram (Figure 2.7). Follower @steakknife tags a friend and writes “get one for Angie”, to which the friend replies “she can live in the third bedroom”. This exchange is similar to the previous one in that the follower writes about acquiring a specific piglet in the photo. The other follower makes a facetious reply about where the piglet can live. Once again, this does not seem to be a realistic desire. The social media platform these followers are using to express their desire to own a specific piglet is not a realistic avenue through which to actually procure a pig (there are no examples of this in the Longbush Pork posts I have evaluated); therefore, the desire to own the piglet does not appear realistic.

The final example of followers of Longbush Pork expressing a desire to own a piglet is a reply to a photo of Hannah, the house piglet, on Instagram (Figure 2.12). Follower @michajjohansen writes “Oh I want a house piglet! Probably not long term though” (2015). This follower explicitly states that they only wish to own a pig whilst it is small, akin to Hannah in the photo. The fact that the piglet is inside and the follower calls her a “house piglet” suggests that the follower can more easily imagine owning a pig when it is small and can be kept indoors as with most pets.
There is one instance of a follower commenting on a photo of a pig, rather than a piglet, with the wish to own a pig. This is a reply to the most popular post on Twitter of Lucy lying on top of Jeremy (Figure 2.3). Follower @ReaverBait (2015) writes “I want a pig...” to which Longbush Pork responds “Careful what you wish for. Years ago I too just wanted a pig or two, now got a pig farm”. The follower replies “Brb making all the wishes”. Longbush Pork replies with a light-hearted warning about owning pigs, but the follower still expresses the desire to own a pig. It is not clear whether this is genuine desire, although it does not appear to be realistic (“making wishes” does not imply that they will actively seek out a pig to own).

The first three examples I have provided typify consumers’ reactions to photos of small piglets. Their “cuteness” and size lead the followers to express desire to have their own piglet. However, none of these wishes are entirely genuine. This is called the “human cute response” by Serpell, which is cited as the “origin of pet-keeping; this widespread human practice of adopting other species, forming affectional bonds with them, and treating them as members of the family” (1986, p.84). Two examples are of people who want to own the specific piglet in the picture, whilst the third is of a person who clearly states that they only want to own a piglet whilst it is small. This implies that followers think of piglets as “pets” that they can own inside their homes. The final example is of a follower who wants to own a pig rather than a piglet, and who proclaims a desire to start their own pig farm. This wish seems lighthearted and is imbued with humour, suggesting that this is not a genuine, realistic desire.
2.2.5 PIGS AS PORK

In the following section I will discuss the instances where pigs are explicitly acknowledged as food. These examples are rare and occur less frequently than the desire to own a live pig. The reasons why this is less common will be explored. The anthropomorphising of pigs has some effect on the explicit discussion of pigs as meat, even though “the spectre of death haunts all farm-animal fictions” (McHugh, 2011, p.199). Followers do not seem overly willing to mention this aspect of farming. The development of the character of farm animals in fiction creates a desire from the reader to keep the pig alive so that it can escape its fate as meat (as in the novels Babe and Charlotte’s Web). This desire is echoed in the narratives of Longbush Pork’s social media account. The naming of the pigs solidifies them as characters in the Longbush Pork story, strengthening the consumer’s desire to keep them alive.

The photograph of the piglet in the Rayburn oven (Figure 2.10) contains various replies that joke about roasting a pig in an oven. One follower writes “you forgot to add a few sprigs of thyme, rosemary and sage!” (@Alex_Aston, 2015) to which @Nihilon45 responds “You forgot the spuds” (2015). Another follower, @swineseatin79, jokes about the size of the piglet, saying that the “chops” would be a little small. These three followers are using humour to talk about the eating of pork. The discussion revolves around a piglet in the oven which is clearly not being used as meat. Longbush Pork does not respond to these three comments as there is a solemnity in this post as they were unsuccessful in saving this piglet. The followers know that the piglet is not pork. However, the fact that it is in an oven allows them to make the leap to thinking of the animal as meat.

The only other instance in which a pig is acknowledged as meat is on a photo of Gertrude on Instagram (Figure 2.5). Follower @ruthprettycatering writes “You are putting me off eating pork! She is so cute” (2015), to which Longbush Pork replies “Thanks! She is a little darling. Happy to say we will keep her as a breeding sow”. Longbush Pork reassures the follower that she will not be made into pork. The fact that the pig is given a name and that she is visually appealing has led to the follower being “put off” eating pigs in general. The follower does not wish to think of this pig as meat as she has been given a name and is
commended for her appearance.

The reluctance to label pigs as meat on the Longbush Pork social media account echoes the relationship many people have to existing narratives of farm animals. In the novel Babe, the pig escapes his fate as meat by proving that he is a useful worker on the farm. The farmer develops an attachment to him and does not wish to slaughter the pig. This story “remains indeterminate on the question of livestock as commodities” (McHugh, 2011, p.193). Social media allows followers to learn the names of the pigs and to follow their stories. They begin to think of the pigs as characters online rather than as “commodities” or pork. This is illustrated in the previous example of a follower being “put off” pork and in the instances of anthropomorphising by the consumers.

2.2.6 SHARING KNOWLEDGE

The final narrative theme I will discuss arises from the ability to ask farmers direct questions on social media and from sharing knowledge about farming. These platforms allow followers to reply to, or comment on posts with a question, and Longbush Pork replies in each of these examples. Social media provides an avenue through which consumers can learn from producers and producers can learn from other producers.
As a reply to a video of eight large black pigs walking across a field (Figure 2.13) follower @UrsulaEdg asks “out of interest are pigs tested for TB in NZ?” to which Longbush Pork replies “1. Carcasses are inspected at works for TB lesions, and 2. Feral pigs are often submitted for testing from pest control ops”. The follower is asking a question that is irrelevant to the original post (the only relevance being the presence of pigs in the video and the question). This is an example of the uses of the platform and its ability for producers to learn from each other. The two producers talk about technical aspects of farming that are not usually brought up by followers who are solely consumers. Farmers are learning from each other through online conversations, specifically about New Zealand pig farming, and they use such social media posts to talk with each other about topics that are unrelated to the social media post itself.

*Figure 2.13. Longbush Pork, Twitter. (2015, October 5). March of the #Ladypigs.*
Social media also provides an outlet for people to share their own narratives about farming which are prompted by the original photos posted by Longbush Pork. In a reply to a photo of two pigs in a field on Instagram (Figure 2.14) a follower warns that the pigs will have the pasture “dug up in no time” (@terrehouse, 2015). Followers contribute to the story of Longbush Pork by adding their own small narratives surrounding the behaviour of the pigs. This social media platform provides an opportunity for a communication centred around animals and farming that would not otherwise exist.

Figure 2.14. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2015, August). [Photo of two Large Black pigs in a green field].
Another similar example of a follower sharing their own story of animals and farming occurs in a reply on Twitter (Figure 2.15). Follower @blacksheepfibre posts their own photo of their Great Dane with a small black piglet sleeping on top of her which the follower describes as “My late labrador Guinness doing surrogate duty for Welly the LB piglet a few years back. Dogs rock!” (2015). This is another instance of a social media post acting as a prompt for followers to share their own stories of farming, thereby adding to the narrative of human-animal relations on a farm. This demonstrates the ability of social media to give followers an outlet to share their own relevant narratives. It also shows that the posting of photos by Longbush Pork can induce memories of living on a farm and of the consumers’ or producers’ own past interactions and relationships with animals.

These examples demonstrate the type of sharing that can occur on social media. In this case, each instance adds to the narrative of human-animal relationships that Longbush Pork establishes with their social media posts. Followers, whether they are consumers or producers, are able to ask Longbush Pork direct questions or to share their own relevant stories.
about farming and animals. There is an exchange of knowledge about farming and animals that occurs on Longbush Pork’s social media accounts which would not exist without the technological sharing functions of Twitter and Instagram.

2.2.7 REFLECTIONS

After conducting narrative and visual analyses of Longbush Pork’s most popular social media posts a number of main themes have become clear. These are the anthropomorphising of the animals by the producer and consumers, stories of care, the desire to own or eat pigs and the sharing of knowledge on social media. The story of Longbush Pork is captured by the images and captions that they post and the ways the followers, whether they be consumers or producers, react to the top ten most popular posts. These narratives reveal an array of human-animal relationships and shed light on the way that stories are constructed around farm animals, particularly pigs.
2.3 RESPONSES TO THE ONLINE SURVEY

The following section of Chapter Two provides a summary and discussion of the responses to an online survey. This survey was posted to followers of Longbush Pork on their Twitter account and ran for two weeks (see Appendix section A.2 for survey documents). The survey was anonymous and open to all followers of Longbush Pork’s social media accounts and was answered by fourteen people. I conducted the survey in order to understand how followers engage with social media posts through firsthand accounts. These responses are important as they provide a starting point for the design work. After gauging how followers relate to images and captions that Longbush Pork posts the goal of the design work becomes clearer. The responses revealed what the followers found appealing, interesting, rewarding or difficult about Longbush Pork’s social media presence. The questions I posed prompted them to communicate their impressions of life on the farm for both animals and farmers, what constitutes a good life on the farm, whether or not they would like to be pig farmers, how they felt when pigs were born or died and whether or not they ate meat.

These questions were gleaned from my analysis of Longbush Pork’s popular social media content and were constructed subsequent to the development of the previous section. A core aim of this thesis is to explore online storytelling methods, therefore the questions pertain specifically to the ways that Longbush Pork tells stories about animals online.

I identified five main narrative themes from my analysis of the survey responses. These responses will be discussed in the sections below, and the implications and importance of the answers to Longbush Pork’s online presence will be conveyed. The narrative themes include the followers’ impressions of farm life, the prevalence of the pig’s personalities, the death of the pigs and the popularity of piglets. The responses are arranged according to narrative theme to correspond with the structure of the previous section which identified the predominant narrative themes in Longbush Pork’s social media content.
2.3.1 IMPRESSIONS OF FARM LIFE

In this section I will discuss the followers’ impressions of farm life. I will focus on the importance of happiness on the farm and the perceived idyllic nature of Longbush Pork. The second half of this section describes the way the practicalities and harshness of farm life are understood by followers. Pigs play an important part in the conceptions of rural life and “enable the historic transition from rural self-sustaining agriculture to urban industrialised meat production” (McHugh, 2011, p.170). Based on the replies discussed below, it is clear that Longbush Pork represents the rural idyll and the sustainable side of pig-based agriculture.

When asked “What is your impression of life on the Longbush Pork farm for the animals?” the answers were overwhelmingly positive. Many cited that the pigs were “loved and happy”. The animals’ happiness was attributed to the natural behaviour the pigs can display on Longbush farm; “the pigs seem to be galavanting around all day, in a social environment, with plenty of space to stretch their legs and plenty of mud to play in”. Another response said that the pigs “get to eat, sleep, produce offspring in a place that sounds like heaven. They sound not only well cared for but loved”. The welfare of the pigs was seen as integral to a happy farm life. Two responses demonstrated that a good life for a farmer is achieved through “happy healthy pigs”. These responses convey the significance attributed to the pigs’ welfare in achieving a good farm life for animals and farmers.

There were also responses which revealed that followers believe that Longbush Pork embodies a good farm life. Longbush Pork was seen as unique and as a farm which provides a life which is “much better than for most pigs!” and “idealic [sic]” and as the “best life a pig could have”. When asked what constitutes a good life for a farmer and a pig, one follower wrote “@longbushpork”. Two responses showed that life on Longbush Pork also appears “fun” for the farmers, and a follower writes “I want to be your friends”. Another response expressed a similar sentiment; “friendly mag [sic] stop on for tea one day”. These responses convey a sense of the appealing nature of Longbush Pork. Farm life appears idyllic and followers believed that the farmers “love what they do”. Longbush Pork is regarded as an exemplary farm. Followers were attracted to this idea and to the idea that
the farmers are happy and, in some instances, are people they would like to meet.

The responses also revealed how followers believe this good farm life can be achieved. These answers demonstrated the understanding of the practicalities of farm life. When asked what was thought most challenging about pig farming, followers wrote about the difficulties presented by the pigs, the hours, the weather, the death of the pigs and the terrain. One response illustrated the perceived difficulties presented by the pigs: “They’re sizeable animals, and from what I can gather from Longbush’s twitter, they have a lot of room which would require maintenance”. The nature of working outside is also seen as an aspect of the harshness of daily life on the farm. Followers wrote of the “mud and bad weather”, “the hard dirty work”, “24/7 job, need to be out in all weathers”. Followers also cited the slaughter of the pigs as another difficulty of farming. This will be discussed more extensively in a later section of this chapter.

An important aspect of the practicalities of farm life recognised by the followers was the ability to make a living from pig farming. There were various responses which demonstrated what is seen as essential for a good life for a farmer. These are having a “good customer base for product/certain income”, “consumer demand for the farm’s produce”, “making a decent living”, “earning a good living” and “that they can afford to run the farm in an environmentally conscious way”. This ability to earn a living is linked to the nature of Longbush Pork as a sustainable and ethical pig farm. The responses revealed that followers believe recognition of Longbush Pork as a unique farm is integral to the farmer’s happiness. One response summarised this:

*Hopefully there is some recognition of the quality/sustainability/ethical-nature of their produce. With sufficient demand for the produce, this should ensure the farm’s financial needs, to allow the farm to flourish (and grow), but also to allow the farmer(s) and their family(ies) to live enjoyable lives.*

The responses discussed indicate the various impressions of life on the Longbush Pork farm. The farm was considered uniquely good, and it fulfils the requirements that followers
cite as necessary for the happiness of the pigs. Followers did not reveal how they had attained this knowledge of farming; however, they had clear ideas about what is important for achieving the optimum welfare for pigs. Despite the positive impressions of life on Longbush Pork, when asked whether or not they would like to be pig farmers, only three respondents expressed this desire. This is due to the harshness of farming life and the perceived practicalities (“not personally – farming seems very labour-intensive”, “no, it is hard dirty work”, “in some ways yes I would but underneath it all I know I would not be a farmer 24/7”). This showed that these followers were interested in Longbush Pork even though they had no intention of emulating the idyllic life that they see online.

2.3.2 PERSONALITIES OF THE PIGS

Another important aspect of the Longbush Pork farm that was prevalent in the responses was the personalities of the pigs. Many responses communicated that followers attribute personality to the pigs and that the character of the animals is an integral part of the Longbush Pork social media accounts. McHugh writes that the pig “inhabits an assortment of grey areas, whether between barn and home, pet and pork, or unclean and acceptable meats” (2011, p. 170). Some of these conceptions of pigs are revealed in the replies discussed below.

The happiness of farm life was attributed to the “antics and behaviour of the pigs” in one response. This was cited as the most rewarding part of pig farming in a number of the responses. One follower wrote that “getting to work with intelligent charismatic animals” is the most rewarding aspect of pig farming. Others wrote that it is “getting to know their personalities”, “the relationships between pig and human” and that the pigs are “impressive creatures”. This idea of creating relationships with pigs and getting to know them was appealing to followers. The bond between the human and nonhuman animal was viewed as important and special and showed that followers believe that the farmer can get to know their pigs on a personal level.

There were various responses which indicate the followers’ fondness for pigs. This was often exemplified by their dislike for the slaughtering of animals. When asked whether they could be pig farmers, two responses demonstrated this attitude: “No, I
couldn’t send the pigs to be made into pork. Even though I love Pork” and “nope. I like pigs as a species to [sic] much”. Another follower wrote that they were sad at the death of a pig “that I knew had a name and personality, but if I didn’t know it I’m not overly stressed at its passing”. These followers’ liking for pigs, especially if they have personalities, made it more difficult for them to accept their slaughter.

These responses showed that many followers hold pigs in high regard. There was an evident “fascination with stories of this animal as an exceptionally versatile symbol” (McHugh, 2011, p.170). Followers believed pigs have personalities and this was important for the development of relationships between pigs and humans. According to numerous responses to the online survey, this uniqueness of pigs and the bond that can be established between them and farmers is the most rewarding aspect of farming. Photos and captions capture the personalities of the pigs and convey a sense of character, which is demonstrated by the followers’ impression that the pigs are unique, impressive and interesting. In some instances this high regard for pigs can create a reluctance to accept the slaughter of these animals.

2.3.3 DEATH OF THE PIGS

One of the questions presented to followers was “How do you feel when you learn that a pig has died?”. The responses communicated various attitudes towards the death of such animals. It is evident that “meat is now implicated in an array of animal stories” (McHugh, 2011, p.163), as seen in these responses to the survey concerning Longbush Pork’s online story.

Many followers conveyed an understanding that the pigs’ death is inevitable. This was evident in responses such as “I realise that the pigs are being farmed and this will involve their death. So I feel a bit sad but not devastated. I expect their deaths to be quick and as painless as possible” and “somewhat sad but understand that things die”. These followers understood the inevitability of the pigs’ deaths. Other followers wrote that their sadness at the pigs’ deaths was dependent on the circumstances. One follower wrote “sorry if they’ve been ill, not worried when they’re going off to the works”. Another follower expressed a similar sentiment: “Depends on the reasons. Out of sickness and accident is sad. But the ‘planned’ ending of
going to abattoir is inevitable. The important thing is that they were given a decent life”. This second response showed that the slaughter of animals for meat is accepted more readily and that an unexpected death is sadder. It also reiterated the importance of a good life for the pigs. A third response summarised this feeling:

*If a pig was ill or died for some other reason at the farm it would be very sad, but when the pigs leave for slaughter perhaps I am less sad because this was an accepted part of the pig’s life. I guess the former example is sad because it was unexpected (and this sadness is enhanced because we have gotten to know the pigs themselves, and know that the farmer(s) are close with them too).*

Two responses revealed that followers had not noticed the death of the pigs, writing “never notice assume they are killed at some point” and “I haven’t heard about that, but I guess I would be sad”. These followers did not appear to have encountered the fact that the pigs are slaughtered or that there are unexpected deaths on the farm. The omittance of animals’ deaths on social media has been commented on by Fisher (2013) who writes about the beautified aesthetics of agriculture online, with farmers often glossing over the more difficult or ugly aspects of farming. The responses which communicate an ignorance of the animals’ deaths hint at the notion that a more accurate image of farming life could be conveyed in order to clearly present the death of the animals. This will be further explored later in the thesis where I document the initial exploration stage for the co-design process.

The majority of the responses expressed sadness at the pig’s demise. As McHugh writes, there is a “movement toward reading animals as animals” (2011, p.172), rather than solely as commodities. Most of the responses also revealed an understanding of the death of pigs on a farm, and respondents accepted the fact that pigs are slaughtered for meat. When asked about their diets, all the followers were meat eaters (there were no vegetarians or vegans). The acceptance of the pigs’ deaths could be partly attributed to the fact that followers eat meat and were acquainted with the idea that farm animals must be slaughtered in order for this to be possible.
2.3.4 POPULARITY OF PIGLETS

Various responses to the online survey mentioned piglets and their “cuteness”. The importance of photos was also communicated in these responses, as followers expressed their liking for photos and being able to see the pigs or piglets. Grauerholz writes of farm animals that are “cutified” in order to make them more marketable. This means that “anthropomorphism, neotony and disnification” (Grauerholz, 2007, p.340) are used to promote meat consumption. Farm animals appear cuter and are, therefore, more appealing and their upkeep is likely to be supported by consumers. In this case, “neotony” proves to be appealing to the followers of Longbush Pork. Grauerholz writes about baby animals and deconstructs their representation to explore their “transformation of animals into meat for human consumption” (2007, p.340). In the case of Longbush Pork’s followers, the eventual death of some of the piglets for meat was largely untouched. However, it is clear that baby animals are appealing representations of farm animals according to the responses discussed below.

When asked “How do you feel when piglets are born?” the responses were all positive. Two of the followers wrote that they “love piglets”, one writing that they “love new babies”. The mention of “new babies” relates to the anthropomorphism of the animals, and the excitement felt for the birth of piglets is related to that of newborn babies. Four of the responses called the piglets “cute”. This was a comment on their physical appearance and communicated the importance of the photos Longbush Pork posts on their social media accounts. One follower wrote “I enjoy looking at the pictures, they’re very cute”. Four of the followers wrote that the birth of piglets made them “happy”. One follower wrote “warm and fussy [sic] sorry that they may make bacon”. The question about piglets prompted the follower to think of the end of this piglet’s life, which detracted from the happiness that they feel when a piglet is born.

When asked if there was anything they would like to see more of on Longbush Pork’s social media accounts, three of the followers wrote that they would like to see more piglets, and one wrote “piglet pictures”, which is a clear indication of the popularity of piglets. Piglets make the followers happy
because of their cute and “charming” physical appearance. The prevalence of piglet pictures in the most popular social media posts discussed in the previous chapter is another example of the popularity of pictures of baby pigs.

2.3.5 CONCLUSIONS

The responses to the survey revealed a number of narrative themes. These involved impressions of farm life, whether they were idyllic or harsh and practical, the personalities of pigs and the relationships between farmers and animals, the death of the pigs and the popularity of piglets. The answers provided by the followers gave me a greater understanding of their reactions to Longbush Pork’s posts on social media. The responses also provided me with material to discuss with Longbush Pork during subsequent co-design processes. The impressions of the online public were important in shaping how new narratives will be told and are indicative of the kinds of human-nonhuman relationships that are already embodied in the online story of Longbush pork and its audience. There are numerous similarities between the narrative themes identified in the content analysis of Longbush Pork’s most popular social media posts, implying that the online audience was consistent in what they found interesting, appealing and challenging about life on the Longbush Pork farm. There was a clear appreciation for the nature of Longbush Pork and their sustainable and ethical farm. There was also an apparent liking for the number of images of animals that Longbush Pork posts, with one follower adding at the end of their survey:

Longbush Pork are a wonderful online presence. I never knew anything about pig farming before I came across their Twitter account. I have 100% faith in their product having seen their pictures and tweets about life on Longbush Pork farm.
2.4 TALKING TO LONGBUSH PORK

After gathering and analysing the content from the Longbush Pork social media accounts and conducting the online survey, I interviewed Jeremy and Naya - the owners and operators of Longbush Pork. This was an in-depth interview that was conducted at the farm (see Appendix section A.1 for interview documents). During my first five-night stay at Longbush Pork I became accustomed to their daily schedules. The day started at 5am, at which time Jeremy drove up to the farm and made the feeding rounds. The pigs that were not yet fed by automated feeders (hoppers) clamoured for their food by gathering at the fence when Jeremy approached, buckets in arms. Various tasks were conducted at the farm after the pigs were fed, and all were checked to make sure nothing was amiss and all pigs were well. Evenings at the house were the least active time of the day and were perfect for the interview with Jeremy and Naya. On my first evening there we sat down after dinner and began our qualitative, in-depth interview.

Qualitative interviews allow for a “density of information” and are useful for “understanding the complexities of respondents’ experiences” (Weiss, 1994, p.viii). Qualitative interviews involve open-ended questions and aim for a discussion in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the respondents’ experiences and perspectives. A summary of the goal of qualitative interviews is provided by Weiss, who writes that it is an “effort to elicit from respondents detailed, dense, and coherent reports of external or internal experiences from which descriptions, inferences, and conclusions can be drawn” (1994, p.210).

This interview was conducted in order to understand the ways in which Longbush Pork uses social media in detail and to gauge what kinds of stories they would like to tell. These new narratives will be the culmination of our co-design efforts. The material gathered from the survey responses was discussed with Longbush Pork to allow them more insight into the reactions their followers have to their online posts. The focus of the questions was on how Longbush Pork uses their social media platforms, what kinds of posts they favour, whether there are topics they avoid, how they interact with others online and what they would like social media to be
able to do. The questions were chosen according to the survey responses as these gave me an insight into how the online audience perceives and reacts to the stories told by Longbush Pork. Jeremy and Naya’s responses are organised according to narrative theme in a similar manner to the previous section. These involve Longbush Pork’s preferred platforms and why they use them, the antics of the pigs online and the personality conveyed through the posts, and the online discussions and communities they have encountered. Throughout the analysis of the interview responses I will draw connections between the themes of the above-described survey responses. I will discuss how the survey responses align with the experiences and goals of Longbush Pork’s social media accounts. The final paragraphs of this section provide discussion of the interview and the potential iterations the new narratives can take.
In order to understand Longbush Pork’s current use of social media, their history online must be explored. This allows for comprehension of why the current platforms are preferred and why the avenues previously used have fallen out of favour. The switch from blogging and Facebook to sites such as Twitter and Instagram illustrates the methods of storytelling that Longbush Pork prefers and indicates the kinds of stories they no longer want to tell.

Longbush Pork’s social media presence began with a Twitter account under a different name, @YukonPiggie, a Facebook account and a blog. Naya, co-owner and vet at Longbush Pork, was the initial account holder. Below is a section of the transcript which describes the shift from Naya’s blogging to Jeremy’s control of the social media accounts:

Naya: I would tell people what we were doing on the farm. Jeremy hated it... Like, you know, it’s been a really tough month on the farm. There’s a lot of mud this month and the pigs were blah blah blah... We were basically talking about farming.
Jeremy: But nobody read it except your mother. People don’t re-

ally read farm blogs.

Longbush Pork strayed away from blogging as they were not, in Jeremy’s words, “looking for some overarching thread to bring it all together. I’d say I’m more about the moment and I think social media probably lends itself to that”. The respondents reiterated that they are not writers and that posting snapshots of farming life are more “contemporaneous” and honest to the experience. Jeremy also believes that “people generally won’t read a long-winded blog”. The fact that Twitter and Instagram provide the opportunity to post largely image-based snapshots of daily life on the farm was appealing to Longbush Pork and was believed to be more attractive to the online audience.

The initial Longbush Pork account was on Twitter and started in June 2013 and eventually expanded into Instagram in February 2014. Instagram allows Jeremy the “license just to post pictures. You don’t have to tell the story, you just post the pictures”, whereas on Twitter there is an expectation to tell a story through the 140-character limited caption. This reinforces the importance of the photographs to Jeremy:
Naya: It’s contemporaneous to the experience. You put it out there because it just happened. You tend not to compose these things two days later. And a blog is like that. If people wanna read a blog, if they wanna read some pre-digested concept of what’s going on, they could probably read a book or something.

These responses clarified the importance of the immediacy of the social media platforms Longbush Pork uses and illustrated why they switched from Facebook and blogging to Twitter and Instagram. The new narratives that are the result of the co-design process need to be relevant to this function of social media as it is the way Longbush Pork prefers to tell their stories of farming. The importance of visuals is an overarching theme of Longbush Pork’s social media accounts. The responses to the online survey reflected that images are also important to the followers and provide them with views of pigs in pastures that aid their positive impressions of farm life. Followers referred specifically to elements of the environment that the pigs live in. The responses also conveyed the followers’ enjoyment of the pictures on the Longbush Pork account (particularly of the piglets). Immediacy was another dominant theme discussed above and is present in the functionality of Instagram and Twitter. The following paragraphs explore the content of the posts on these preferred platforms.

2.4.2 PICTURES OF PIGS

As mentioned above, images are central to the posts of Longbush Pork. These images are largely of pigs with occasional posts of other animals (mainly their Great Danes). The following paragraphs explore the kinds of posts Longbush Pork favours and how they choose what to post. There is a distinct sense of humour imbued in the captions posted with the images, particularly on Twitter. Jeremy and Naya discussed how this is achieved. They also commented on the kinds of photographs they do not post. This allows me to understand the interior workings behind their social media posts. There is a clear connection between the personality of the farmers and the content of the posts, and this will not be lost in the new narratives that we design.

I asked them what their favourite kinds of social media posts on their accounts are:

Naya: I really like the farrowing posts. I think it’s really cool that
Jeremy makes an effort that when the girls have had a litter to always, as soon as possible, show the mum with babies. It’s kind of like a money shot. I like those because they’re feel-good, but for us they’re progress. For us every litter, that’s pigs on the ground, that’s progress. To me that’s achievement. That’s our business growth, in how well our girls are performing.

Naya’s favourite posts also contain something that is popular with followers: piglets. This is why Naya called these kinds of photos “money shots”. Followers find the piglets ‘cute’ and ‘charming’ and Naya sees progress. This is an instance in which the documentation of life and progress on the farm aligns with the kinds of posts followers like to see. Jeremy and Naya acknowledged that photos of piglets are popular and represent part of the idyllic image of farming. Piglets signify progress to Naya, which is an important element in the way new processes are conveyed by Longbush Pork as the farm continues to grow. For Jeremy and Naya the focus is always on the pigs, and Naya said that the farrowing posts make it seem “that we’re proud of them by posting it”. Coincidentally, the followers of Longbush Pork expressed aesthetic enjoyment at seeing photos of piglets. Fisher (2013) writes about the misconceptions that can arise from posting images on social media that convey the beautified aspects of farm life, such as baby animals. Questions of honesty and accuracy are raised with regard to farmers’ responsible usage of social media. Jeremy and Naya’s adherence to the notion of truthful storytelling is discussed in more depth later in this section.

Pride is another prevalent theme in the Longbush Pork social media accounts, and the pride they have in their animals is reflected by their images of pigs and the attribution of names and characters to the animals. This makes a clear impression on followers, as was indicated in the survey responses. All fourteen of the responses referred to the happiness or personality of the pigs as the most rewarding aspect of pig farming. Followers referred specifically to the farmers loving what they do and creating an environment that results in happy pigs and happy people. The responses to the online survey revealed that a good life for a farmer was believed to be closely attached to the wellbeing of their pigs. The pride Jeremy and Naya have for their pigs reflects their close relationship to the animals and the important responsibility they have for their care.
Jeremy’s answer to the question about his favourite social media post led to a discussion of the distinct character of the Longbush Pork social media accounts:

*Jeremy: I like the whimsical, silly ones. In the moment. Playing music to the pigs. That’s my latest thing. I legitimately play music up there and I was just sitting there in the ute just turning it up and watching their interaction with it.*

Naya listed other themes that Jeremy has posted on Twitter, such as “the meet the girls ones, then you were playing the music, the haikus, the Greek letters”. Jeremy described these posts as “spontaneous”. This relates to the theme of immediacy previously discussed and to the notion of playfulness and avoiding telling a story that may seem “boring” to an online audience. They are not overly preconceived and he naturally posts along this theme. The silliness and farcical nature of the posts clearly appeals to the followers. As discussed when exploring the notion of anthropomorphism in the content summary of Longbush Porks social media posts, the pigs were attributed humorous characters and personalities. This was also evident in the responses to the online survey in which followers referred to the unique character of the pigs and nine responses expressed explicit interest in the personalities of the animals. In terms of storytelling Jeremy said “It’s more interesting to me, as the person telling that story, to tell it that way rather than just play it straight. I read people that play it straight, it’s boring”. Jeremy’s goal is to present a story that contains lighthearted elements, and this vision of the fun aspects of life on the farm was clearly conveyed by some of the survey responses. The followers referred specifically to the intelligence, charisma and antics of the pigs. The human-nonhuman relationships are affected by the manner in which the pigs are presented as humorous and uniquely characterful animals. They are seen as integral to the farmers’ happiness by the followers and are the inspiration for Jeremy’s humour in Longbush Pork social media posts.

We also discussed the kinds of images and themes that are not posted on Longbush Pork’s social media accounts. Jeremy and Naya recounted a specific instance with a particularly troublesome boar:

*Naya: I wouldn’t have one of him hanging on the hook, just been shot.*
Jeremy: I took pictures of that and I elected not to post that, because though that boar gave me absolute hell, he was an animal that was just killed... You may not like that animal, that animal may wanna go after you and try to kill you, but that’s a life you took. I wouldn’t do that.

The farmers expressed a clear respect for the animals and preferred not to post images of the carcasses of their pigs. However, Naya asserted that they “strive to be as honest as they can”. They’ve shown “sick pigs” and expressed “it’s all part of pig farming, there’s nothing to hide”. This aligns with the idea that “farmers are doing ourselves a disservice in gliding over the bad and the boring in favour of the pretty and cute” (Fisher, 2013). Jeremy and Naya are uninterested in sharing stories that present the pigs disrespectfully. This means that they elect not to post the “gory” side of farming and avoid showing the killing of pigs. Nevertheless, they intend to communicate an honest picture of farming which shows sick pigs and occasionally highlights the death of the animals. However, their goals are not to present every aspect of farming life as some facets of this may be distasteful to an online audience of both consumers and producers. Accuracy and honesty are central in Longbush Pork’s social media presence, but there are limits to the extent of what they will show visually through photos taken at the farm.

The reactions to the death of the pigs were discussed in the survey responses and suggested that ten of the fourteen followers possess clear notions about the end of the pigs’ lives. This corresponds to Jeremy and Naya’s goal of presenting an honest story of farm life from beginning to end. The relationship the farmers have with the animals’ deaths encapsulates the respect and care they have for their pigs. Therefore, they do not show the killing of pigs and instead provide some insight into their deaths through occasional posts about the end processes of farming. This means that followers’ relationships to the animals’ deaths are more distant. They expressed sadness at the death of the pigs in the online survey responses, revealing that whilst followers do not get shown every detail of the pigs’ deaths they have an understanding of the process and inevitability of livestock farming and have formed emotional attachments to the animals that are displayed on their screens through Longbush Pork’s online story. However, two of the responses conveyed ignorance of the pigs’ deaths on Longbush Pork’s social media accounts,
hinting at the notion that this part of the farm’s story could be explored.

It is important for me to know what stories Jeremy and Naya do not want to tell on social media for the subsequent co-design phase of this research project. Another aspect of farming that they elect not to post is that they “won’t criticize other systems”. As free range, ethical and sustainable pig farmers, they do not explicitly use those labels in their social media posts. Longbush Pork tells a story which visually reflects that they are a free range and sustainable pig farm, but they avoid comparing their system to other pig farms. Their facilities and the pigs they show are representative of the unique way that they farm, and they do not intend to use this to denigrate other systems or to alienate groups of producers. Jeremy and Naya do not want to be “preachy” about their own system of farming, and positivity is another significant theme of their posts on social media. The reason for this is that they do not wish to close off a dialogue. This aspect of online community and conversation will be explored in-depth in the following paragraphs.

2.4.3 CONVERSATIONS ONLINE

Some of the final questions I posed to Longbush Pork centred on their involvement in online communities and the conversations they have had online. Their responses revealed the kind of dialogue they preferred to have and the sorts of conversations that their posts enabled. The new narratives that will be designed will explore online interactions, and the reactions to the stories will provide feedback on the designs. Therefore, it is important to understand the ways in which Longbush Pork considers their interaction with their followers and other online communities and what kinds of dialogue they do not wish to attract.

As stated in the above paragraphs, Longbush Pork avoids criticising other systems of farming:

Naya: We have a no criticism policy.
Jeremy: If you’re an indoor pig farmer, the conversation’s gonna be shut. And you’re not gonna be able to engage with these people if you say “I think free range is the only way”. That way you’ll never get anywhere. I try not to be disparaging of that. I really wouldn’t want my pigs in that situation. But you gotta understand from their perspective they’re doing their job to the
best of their abilities, and they think they’re giving their animals a wonderful life within the confines of the systems. If you can understand that you know that they’re trying as hard as I am. And who am I to say that’s right or wrong.

Another reason they do not want to close off a dialogue with farmers within different systems is illustrated by Jeremy’s assertion that “I’ve learned a hell of a lot from indoor pig farmers. And they interact with me and I interact with them”. Learning and sharing information between farmers is a key aspect of the online conversations that Longbush Pork is involved in. The farmers enjoy learning from each other’s experiences, and social media provides a platform through which to do so easily. Longbush Pork does not engage in “negativity” concerning other farms and employs a “stand back” approach in order to maintain the open sharing of experience by all farmers. This is in accordance with the theme of positivity previously mentioned and maintains a sense of support and community in Longbush Pork’s social media presence. The theme of humility is also present as Longbush Pork does not present their farming system as superior and takes an honest and open approach to storytelling.

I also asked Longbush Pork what kinds of conversations they favoured with followers. Naya talked about the discussion following the death of a beloved pig, Ruby:

Naya: I think my favourite was when Ruby died and all the sympathy that came through. I thought that was pretty cool. Lots of conversations about Ruby.

Jeremy: That was overwhelming. It really hit home that people do listen even if they don’t interact with you all the time. And they know your pigs. If you repeatedly post pictures or commentary on Ruby it does seem to get through. I was overwhelmed with the amount of sympathy shown when she died.

The community that has formed around Longbush Pork’s social media accounts proves sympathetic and caring in the above case. The use of names to distinguish between the pigs is frequent on the social media posts and allows followers to become acquainted with certain pigs. These animals can be tracked through Longbush Pork’s online activity, and when one of them dies the community is affected. The relationship between animals and humans, whether this is tangible or digital, is a key component of the online community of Longbush Pork. Empathy is a dominant theme in Longbush Pork’s social media posts which fosters this sense of caring for
the animals. The followers’ reaction to the death of one of the pigs (Ruby) represents an aspect of the human-nonhuman relationship. It is clear that a sympathetic bond can be formed with an animal when it has been given a name and a visual story online that both consumers and producers can follow and learn from. Twelve followers expressed sadness at the death of any of the pigs in the responses to the online survey, and the death of a well-known and named pig can have even more impact.

When asked if they felt they were part of a community, Jeremy responded that they have many interactions with farmers, but these are mainly dairy farmers. He mentioned that there is a smaller online presence of pig farmers. His past use of the hashtag #NZPork was referred to. This was used, unsuccessfully, in an attempt to find other pig farmers in New Zealand, (he mentioned that the only hashtag he uses now is #LadyPigs). Another hashtag which garnered much more attention and enabled some gathering of an online community of farmers was discussed. This was the ‘#felfie’ hashtag (farmers taking selfies). Jeremy said that this resulted in him “following quite a few people from that and vice versa. It was one of those trendy things in the moment”. Longbush Pork does not currently actively seek an online community. However, one has formed around them naturally and from the use of a popular hashtag.

The community of farmers is valued as it provides learning from each other’s experiences, whilst the community of consumers provides evidence of the care and attention people pay to Longbush Pork’s social media accounts and to the documented pigs’ lives. In the final paragraphs I will explore the potential for new stories that seek to remain relevant to these communities and provide something novel for them to form a dialogue around.

2.4.4 REFLECTIONS AND NARRATIVE DIRECTION

In order to gauge what kinds of new stories Longbush Pork might like to tell online, I asked them questions about the functions of social media and what they would like to change. The new narratives are informed by a number of the themes I analysed above in relation to the interview and online survey responses. Some of the prevalent themes in Longbush Pork’s
social media presence that we discussed were the importance of visuals, the immediacy of Twitter and Instagram, the playful personalities of the pigs, the pride Jeremy and Naya have in their animals, honesty and openness and a sense of community, learning and support. This opened up a discussion about the potential for telling different kinds of stories online that they have not told before. This final section explores these new narratives and their potential for becoming the culmination of our co-design efforts.

When asked how Jeremy and Naya would like to change the way social media works, both responded with “smell”. Jeremy said “it’s one thing to sit there and look at a picture and show pigs in mud. But you’re missing that extra scent”. This was another instance in which the realism of the farming experience is given immense importance by Jeremy and Naya, who wish to stay honest to what life on the farm is like. Naya then discussed the new technology they are introducing on the farm. This involves a camera mounted at the top of the farm allowing them to film the pigs when they are not there:

Naya: One thing I would really like to do... Social media is by nature associated with you as the person, so when you’re not there the story isn’t told. [...] That’s the one thing social media is, it’s social, it’s human, human, human. So when you’re telling a story about animals how will we incorporate what the farm’s like when we’re not there?

Jeremy and Naya expressed they would like to show pigs in their natural environment when there are no humans around:

Jeremy: How would the interpretation be different if the piggies were telling their story? Cause I tell the story through a human lens, and I’m anthropomorphizing all over the show. See what they do.

Once again, there was a desire to show what life on the farm is like from the pig’s perspective. We discussed the idea of putting a GoPro camera on a pig, so that it is filming from the pig’s perspective, and how this only shows the life of one pig and may not be representative of life on the farm for all of the pigs. GoPros have the ability to be attached to an animal. However, they may not capture greater naturalness and instead embody a technological and human perspective. The act of attaching a camera to a pig for a point-of-view video is neither
completely subjective nor objective. Instead it could allow for a new perspective that gives humans a technologically captured visualisation of a pig’s life from its own eyes. This brings to mind stories told from an animal’s perspective (e.g. Adams’ *Watership Down* and Sewell’s *Black Beauty*). Storytelling from the animal’s point-of-view reflects the notion that the books are written not about the animals “themselves; but rather it is about human psychology and language”, as it can only be told through human language (Le Goff, 2012, p.125). Le Goff also writes that in narratives about animals, “human beings differ from other animals because their education, instead of giving them control over their environment, opens the world to them” (2012, p.130). Language allows us to access these stories of animals. The answers from Longbush Pork expressed the desire to introduce an increased naturalness by eliminating some of the human commentary.

Naya said that “I think what most people would want to hear is the story of a pig from start to finish, the story of a pig from being born all the way to the abattoir. That is the story I’d wanna know. I’d love to understand everything, all that process”. After this idea was introduced we discussed the limits and potentials of showing the pig’s life from beginning to end. There was also mention of how informative the stories should be. Whilst there was an expressed desire to educate followers about the pigs’ lives whilst humans are not around, there was also concern that this would not appeal to followers:

*Naya:* Until GoPros, drones, potential to actually tell the story from the pig’s point of view, other than David Attenborough, you don’t have many of those stories floating around. You only have human versions of it.

*Jeremy:* They all have their own story in their own way. It’s how do you extract that story.

The ideas raised establish the desire to show more of the pigs’ lives online. Naya and Jeremy presented various scenarios in their answers to my final questions about what kinds of stories they want to tell. Naya expressed an interest in showing a pig’s life from “start to finish”, including the birth and death of a pig at the farm. She wanted to be as honest to the farming experience as possible, believing that showing the whole lifespan of a pig at Longbush Pork is a worthwhile narrative to undertake. The second narrative was the idea of attaching a camera to a pig as this would give some autonomy to the pig,
and would allow the pig's story to be conveyed through the animal's own eyes, rather than through a human-directed lens. The third scenario they presented was to film the pigs when there are no humans around, thereby showing how pigs behave when they are not conscious of a human's presence. These three ideas that appealed to the research participants introduce some interesting narratives to develop during the next stages of the co-design process. These are explained in the following chapter.
2.5 CONCLUSIONS AND REFLECTIONS

Longbush Pork’s social media activity conveys the narratives that are described in the previous chapter. These narratives are centred around the animals’ relationships with the producer, consumers and other producers. Chapter Two sought to analyse and present the themes of Longbush Pork’s social media narratives, as well as the ways that online followers respond to these stories. One of the primary aims of this thesis is to understand the stories that are told by one farm online and the way that these reach the public. The analysis of Longbush Pork’s social media content revealed what is important to the farmers. The stories that are told represent their values as free-range, ethical and sustainable pig farmers. The images and corresponding captions of their farm animals convey the deep sense of care the farmers have for the land and for the individual characters and personalities of their livestock. The analysis of the online responses to the survey reaffirms that sense of care and dedication Longbush Pork has to representing the lives of their pigs. The online followers of Longbush Pork’s social media replied with answers that relate closely to the narrative themes that were drawn from the most popular posts in section 2.2 of this chapter. These online survey responses were also connected to the discussions I had with Jeremy and Naya during the in-depth qualitative interview described in this chapter. The interview and the responses to the online survey acted as the beginning of the exploratory stage for the co-design process that is presented in the following chapter.
PIGS IN CYBERSPACE
CHAPTER THREE CO-DESIGN AT THE FARM
3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Three presents the design process and planning that serves as the preliminary work for the final designed narratives. The methods used to plan the design outputs were ethnographic and involved staying with the farmers in their home at Longbush Pork. This enabled me to conduct in-depth interviews, participatory observation and scenario development with the farmers. This form of research is qualitative and allows a deep understanding of the daily life of the subject matter which is being explored. Spending time around the pigs enabled me to get a better sense of what it is like to work with animals, thereby allowing deeper insight into the way Longbush Pork is able to tell the kinds of stories conveyed by their social media accounts. I got to know the characters and personalities of the pigs through firsthand experience and anecdotes from the farmers. Alongside this learning, the gathering of material for the creation of new stories took place. The designed narratives took the form of videos which will be posted online. This is relevant to one of the primary aims of this thesis, which is to create novel narratives that open up a space for public engagement. Online discussion and responses to the narratives are facilitated by hosting the videos on an accessible online platform. Working and creating with the farmers ensured that the owners of Longbush Pork’s social media accounts would be able to both tell the stories that they wanted to and explore new design avenues for these stories.
3.2 EXPLORATION OF CONTEXT

The first stage of participatory design is centred around initial exploration. This stage draws from “ethnographic methods such as observations, interviews, walkthroughs and organisational visits, and examinations of artifacts” (Spinuzzi, 2005, p.167). This involved visits to the Longbush Pork farm. The initial stay was five days long, and it allowed me to enact extended observation on site and to interview the owners and operators of Longbush Pork. This section of the chapter on the co-design process focuses on the exploratory phase, which involved experience mapping and participatory observation. The initial exploration of the context is “typically conducted on site, during the normal work day” (Spinuzzi, 2005, p.167). This allows the researcher the chance to witness and partake in the everyday context that is being investigated.

The responses to the online survey and the discussions involved in the in-depth interview with Longbush Pork acted as the beginning of the exploratory co-design phase. The online responses enabled me to gauge what was important to followers of Longbush Pork and what kinds of stories were most compelling. These responses were connected to answers provided by Longbush Pork, and a number of their goals were aligned with the followers’ perceptions. The themes of honesty, openness, support and learning were integral in the construction of new narratives. The conversations Jeremy, Naya and I had about the accuracy of stories of farm life and the connections an online audience can have to individual pigs, along with the sadness they feel at the pigs’ deaths, were also drawn from the exploratory co-design phase. In accordance with the knowledge generated after hearing from online followers and talking to Longbush Pork, further design methods were undertaken to continue the co-design process.
Figure 3.1. Experience Map of Pig Farming and Social Media.
3.2.1 EXPERIENCE MAPPING

Experience mapping is part of the contextual inquiry into pig farming and social media. It was conducted at the beginning of the co-design process and entailed the mapping of key terms related to the context. These words are gathered from the content summary, online survey, qualitative interview and on-site observation. The words are manually listed on a large sheet of paper, and then “anchoring” words are chosen (see Appendix section A.3 for experience map iterations). These are the key terms that assist in clarifying the context and are highlighted on the map. Other words from the list are then connected to corresponding anchoring terms. The relationship between the two words was written along the line connecting them in order to understand how all these key points related to each other. The development of the map was iterated as more words were added or moved around. Once the preliminary version of the experience map was completed and digitised, I discussed it with my research participants. This gave them the opportunity to highlight words that needed greater visual importance, point out words that may be missing and decide which words should be given lesser importance hierarchically. The research participants have the greatest knowledge of the context, and their input was integral to the creation of an accurate map.

This mapping exercise was developed to check my understanding of the experience of pig farming, social media and the ensuing storytelling. It was a way of organising the data gathered during visits to the farm in a visual manner. The experience map afforded a better understanding of the relationship between all the points of Longbush Pork’s activity on social media and how it connects to their daily life on the farm. The map also highlighted the most important aspects of pig farming in relation to Longbush Pork’s social media posts.

The map building with the co-designers was the primary means of co-design. After presenting the map to the research participants their input was used to involve them in this research project’s first design stage. The experience map was the first visual activity we took part in together as it was important to involve Longbush Pork in the co-design process from the beginning. This ensured that the eventual creation of new narratives would align with important themes identified in the previous chapter. After showing them the physical drawing
of the map, Jeremy and Naya believed I had comprehensively captured most of the experiences of farming and social media. Subsequent to showing this version of the map to Longbush Pork, I created a digital version of it that was clearer and more visually distinct. This version was also shown to Longbush Pork to ensure the most important aspects identified in the previous version were maintained.

3.2.2 PARTICIPATORY OBSERVATION

During the creation of the experience map participatory observation at Longbush Pork took place. This involved the initial exploration of potential scenarios with my research participants. Throughout my first five-night stay at Longbush Pork I traveled to the farm with owner and operator, Jeremy. This allowed me to work and learn alongside the farmer and involve myself in the daily life on the farm. I was able to witness how Longbush Pork captures images and posts them on social media while on the farm (a process which takes under five minutes and which can only take place at two specific spots on the farm which receive Wifi signal). There are limits to this type of observation. When I was assisting with farm tasks I was not able to visually record with cameras as most tasks required the active use of both hands. It also meant that while I was recording I was not fully participating in farm life and was merely an observer. Effectively balancing these two challenges was achieved on my second day at the farm. The visual material I captured served as personal documentation as well as some experimentation into the methods that could be used to capture the three narratives that Jeremy, Naya and I discussed during the in-depth interview.
Figure 3.2. Images Taken with iPhone at Longbush Pork.
The first footage I gathered with my smartphone camera included fifteen-second videos of pigs. I made the conscious decision to capture images via my iPhone in order to maintain consistency with the technology used by Longbush Pork. I limited the videos to fifteen seconds as this was the time limit for Instagram videos. The videos I captured showed the different lives of the individual pigs within each paddock. The paddocks were separated into the farrowing sows, gilt, piglets, boars, weaners and growers. These short videos serve as exploration into the way stories can be captured at a farm. There were limitations to this method of capturing footage as it is a handheld camera. The iPhone generally remains with the owner of the phone; therefore, I had the phone with me at all times. This did not allow me the opportunity to capture a pig's perspective, as was discussed during the interview in the previous chapter. I was also unable to record the pigs with the iPhone camera when there were no humans around. Therefore, this footage merely served as visual research and exploration.
Figure 3.2. Images of Bridge Camera at Side of Paddock.
Participatory design seeks to achieve “common aims that represent the user’s interests” (Spinuzzi, 2005, p.170). These interests involved capturing the naturalness of pigs in their environment without human intrusion or perspective. As an experiment directly relating to this goal, I situated my bridge camera near different paddocks and set it to film automatically while Jeremy and I were elsewhere. This was done in conjunction with the filming with my iPhone and allowed me to capture a different perspective using a camera that does not have to be handheld. I attempted to show pigs in their uninterrupted environments. However, my equipment was lacking, and it was difficult to position my camera in an aesthetically convenient location. The size of the camera was an issue as it was too big to situate atop fence posts or pig huts. This would have provided a perspective which showed more of the pigs’ activities.

The two methods of gathering footage described above detail my attempts to capture some aspects of the pigs’ lives at the farm. The videos taken from my iPhone are short and allowed me to see how much of the pigs’ antics can be recorded in a limited timeframe. The other footage was taken from a bridge camera which was left at the side of paddocks to experiment with viewpoints for capturing the pigs when no humans were around. As well as gathering this video material, I was taking photographs and sound recordings of the pigs as further personal documentation of life at Longbush Pork.

3.2.3 REFLECTIONS

The first visit to the farm was centred around discussions with Jeremy and Naya as well as visually recording some of the life processes at the farm. This was done through videos and photos taken from my iPhone and bridge cameras. Both methods served as initial exploration into the ways new narratives could be captured. The experience map was a visual representation of the connections between social media and farming. This gave me a clearer understanding of the context and was supplementary to the visual recording done at the farm. These activities were directly influenced by the in-depth interview with Jeremy and Naya and from responses to the online survey.
There were limitations to the capacities of both cameras. The iPhone camera was adept at capturing short videos such as those already posted by Longbush Pork through ‘vines’ on Twitter and Instagram. However, this method was unsuitable to represent a pig’s perspective and to show pigs while no humans were around. The bridge camera had similar limitations in capturing a pig’s perspective and filming without humans. However, both cameras had potential for documenting a pig’s life processes from beginning to end. I was able to film various activities of the pigs from both cameras. This was promising for devising a format through which the entire story of a pig’s life could be told. This was the third narrative discussed with Jeremy and Naya during the interview. More successful attempts at capturing the three stories Jeremy, Naya and I were interested in co-creating are described in the following section of this chapter.
3.3 DISCOVERY AT LONGBUSH PORK

The next phase of participatory design is the discovery process, which is “where researchers and users interact most heavily” (Spinuzzi, 2005, p.167). For this project the phase took place during a three-day stay at Longbush Pork. This was subsequent to creating the experience map, interviewing Longbush Pork, and the preliminary gathering of images and footage at the farm with iPhone and bridge cameras. The goals for the discovery stage were to capture footage for the three narratives discussed with Jeremy and Naya. These narratives were conveying a pig’s perspective, capturing the activity and behaviour of pigs without the potentially distracting presence of humans, and the documentation from ‘birth to death’ of the pigs at the farm. The social media survey also provided direction for this stage of the design process as it enabled me to understand how the followers respond to stories that are already being told and where there may be gaps in their knowledge about life on Longbush Pork. These new narratives aim to provide insight into these areas and open up online dialogue about alternative stories about pigs at Longbush Pork.

After conducting personal documentation and experimentation with capturing video on my first stay at Longbush Pork, I was able to ascertain what equipment was needed for my second visit. I synthesised the material from the in-depth interview with Jeremy and Naya and consulted the experience map and images taken at the farm to define my design direction. My second visit to the farm was shorter than my first as I had a clearer goal in mind for the video material that needed to be gathered. This time I focused on capturing the narratives and transferring them onto storyboards, as described below. Jeremy and Naya assisted me with the recording of this footage, and my conversations with them about online storytelling and human connections between farming and livestock were informative and inspiring throughout the discovery stage of the co-design process.

The acquisition of GoPros (a brand name action camera often used in extreme-action videography) enabled me to capture imagery of pigs that fit well into the three narratives. I decided to use action cameras after experimenting with the iPhone and bridge cameras. I was also inspired by my research supervisor who had previously attached a GoPro camera to one of the pigs
at Longbush Pork during an earlier visit. The use of GoPros would serve as the generation and collection method for the final creation stage of the co-design process which is later described. During the discovery phase the bridge camera was also used to gather footage for the narrative of the life of a pig at Longbush Pork. After the exploratory phase, I discovered that it would be possible to film this narrative from either a bridge camera or iPhone camera. I chose the former due to its superior image definition.

3.3.1 STORYBOARDING

The first stage of the discovery process involved storyboarding the three aforementioned narratives. A storyboard “consists of a number of panels that show the visual action of a sequence in a logical narrative” (Tumminello, 2005, p.1). The storyboards were used to visually express the stories told to Longbush Pork. The storyboards also served as a visual plan for the footage that was to be captured during my second stay. They allow the “designer to plan on paper the intended message for a project” (Timmuniello, 2005, p.ix).

After drawing out the three narratives, I presented these to Jeremy and Naya. I did so in order to clearly describe the intended plot for each narrative and to provide them with visual references. The storyboards solidified the three narratives discussed during the interview and allowed them to clearly see what my goals were for the footage I would gather during my visit. The storyboards were particularly useful for Jeremy as I accompanied him on the farm every day. They enabled me to describe what kinds of shots I was hoping to record at the farm. Thus, he was able to assist me in positioning cameras while we were in paddocks, and he ensured I made effective use of my time. Jeremy knew when the pigs would be most active and what times of the day would be best for filming the scenes I showed him in the storyboards. This was integral for gathering footage at the farm. The following sections describe how I filmed video material for each of the three narratives represented in the storyboards.
Figure 3.4. Storyboard for Pigs' Perspective video.
3.3.2 PIG’S PERSPECTIVE

The first narrative for which I captured footage involved filming from a pig’s perspective. The plot for this video is shown in the corresponding storyboard (Figure 3.4). The storyboard shows the viewpoint from the top of a pig’s head and follows it as it leaves a farrowing hut. It then walks between other farrowing huts towards a wallow covered by a shade. The final frames show the pig within the wallow.

In order to obtain footage from the viewpoint described above, a GoPro camera needed to be attached to a pig using a harness. A GoPro harness for a human head was used as the Fetch GoPro harness specially made for dogs did not fit around the pig’s shoulders. The human head harness had more elasticity and was relatively easy to get over the pig’s snout and ears so that it rested just behind the pig’s ears. The purpose of filming from a pig’s perspective was to explore the idea of telling stories through the eyes of an animal. The narrative questions the relationship between humans and nonhuman animals and the potential for us to see from an animal’s perspective through the use of action cameras.
Figure 3.5. Images of Hannah with the GoPro mounted on her head.
Figure 3.6. Images of Lucy with the GoPro mounted on her head.
The first pig I put the harness on (with help from Jeremy) was a Large Black pig named Hannah (Figure 3.5). Hannah grew up in the farmers’ home (she features in one of the most popular social media posts as ‘Hannah the house piglet’). She wore the GoPro for approximately one hour as I watched from a distance leaving her to carry out her natural behaviour uninhibited and to ensure that there were only other pigs and features of the landscape in the shot. The next day we attached the GoPro camera to Lucy’s head (Figure 3.6). Lucy is a Large Black pig that also grew up in the farmers’ home (and features in three of the most popular posts on the Longbush Pork Twitter account). We attempted to attach the GoPro to one of the Duroc pigs that was in the same paddock as Lucy, but they proved too difficult to get the harness around. The pigs reared at home were more used to human contact and were not bothered by the attachment of the harness, whereas the other pigs were more wary and stubbornly avoided the harness. The GoPro camera was also left on Lucy for approximately one hour.

The footage captured differs significantly from the narrative drawn in the storyboard. The sows in the farrowing huts were too big for the GoPro harness; therefore, it was not possible to film a pig emerging from a farrowing hut and walking towards a wallow as sows are the only inhabitants of the farrowing huts (with their piglets). Hannah and Lucy were smaller and more docile. These two pigs became the co-authors of the videos and dictated what shots were captured. Jeremy also expressed a desire to get the GoPro onto one of the Duroc pigs in Hannah and Lucy’s paddock as they were more dominant and would provide a different perspective on the pigs’ social hierarchy. This was not possible. However, we were able to fulfill one of Naya and Jeremy’s wishes, which was to film from the perspective of a pig at the farm rather than one that is in the farmers’ home. They wanted to see from the perspective of a pig within the paddock surrounded by other pigs, rather than seeing how a pig might interact with a more human-centric surrounding such as the home.

Hannah and Lucy carried out natural behaviours, including eating, drinking, lying in wallows and sleeping in their huts. Their movement caused the GoPro to become askew so that some of the footage is not completely centred on top of the pig’s head. The proximity to mud also blurred the lens of the camera.

The sows in the farrowing huts were...
on various occasions. Despite this, the resulting footage was of a reasonably high quality. Once reviewed, I began editing the footage and attempted to retain the most interesting aspects of the pigs’ journeys through their paddocks. When deciding which footage was best, I focused on sections of the videos which were unobscured by mud. I also placed importance on the moments in which the pigs were highly active. After the initial capturing of the footage, I showed some of the video material to Jeremy and Naya. They reacted positively to moments in which the pigs were running or bumping into obstacles (such as the hoppers or other pigs). The initial editing of the footage was influenced by these reactions, and I sought to retain the lighthearted nature of the initial viewing of the videos.
Figure 3.7. Storyboard for Paddock Camera videos.
The gathering of footage for the second narrative also took place during my second visit to the farm. This story is shown in the second storyboard (Figure 3.7). The storyboard shows pigs in different paddocks exhibiting normal activities. The frames present pigs eating, wallowing and sleeping while surrounded by other pigs. I intended these images to be captured by various cameras placed around a number of the paddocks at Longbush Pork.

The filming for this narrative also involved the use of GoPro cameras and the human head harness. This time the harness was tied around the tops of the sows’ farrowing huts or around the tops of fences on the edges of paddocks. Filming was done at different times of the day when the paddocks were not inhabited by Jeremy or myself. Jeremy informed me of when the pigs were most active, which was at dawn and dusk. We were usually not at the farm by dawn, so I elected to film the pigs at dusk when Jeremy and I were leaving the farm. The aim of this narrative was to see the pigs while they were undisturbed and behaving naturally. The videos intend to allow us to visually experience what would otherwise have eluded human eyes.
Figure 3.8. Images of GoPros in sows’ paddocks.
Figure 3.9. Images of GoPros in other paddocks.
The first two paddocks filmed contained the sows and their piglets (Figure 3.8). The cameras were attached at dusk when Jeremy and I were leaving the farm. The second attempt to film the pigs without human interference occurred in the paddock containing George, a boar, and the gilts he was to breed with. This was also set to begin filming at dusk. The third filming session took place in two of the finishers’ (pigs that are the size at which they are to be sent to the abattoir) paddocks during the day (Figure 3.9). The GoPro cameras were used to film each session for approximately two to three hours, after which the cameras shut off automatically. The second and third sessions did not capture enough activity from the pigs for a significant period of time, and the cameras were not in an advantageous position to capture the little activity that took place. The first attempt at filming in the two sows’ paddocks provided the most interesting footage as it contained the most activity from the pigs. Therefore, this was selected to be edited into a finished film.

The actions of the piglets and the sows were captured from an advantageous position. Due to the low activity of the pigs in other paddocks, we were not able to obtain footage that was in direct accordance with the story depicted in my storyboard. Nevertheless, we were able to capture interesting shots of pigs in two of the paddocks at Longbush Pork. Parts of this footage were also viewed with Jeremy and Naya during my visit to the farm. They both joked about the kinds of antics that the pigs would get up to while no humans were around, and they conjured up far-fetched stories about pigs walking and talking. The actual footage showed the sows and their piglets displaying natural behaviours. When initially reviewing the footage with Jeremy and Naya, I skipped forward to various sections of the video as each one was approximately two hours long. As a result of this viewing session, I recognised that the videos would have to be presented through time-lapse in order to effectively convey the whole scope of the pigs’ activities without showing a video that was over four hours long.

The footage from the sows’ paddocks provided the material for the video narrative of filming pigs without human distraction.
Figure 3.10. Storyboard for Life of a Pig video.
3.3.4 LIFE OF A PIG

The final narrative involved capturing moments of a pig’s life from ‘birth until death’. This narrative is described in the third storyboard (Figure 3.10). The frames within this storyboard show newborn piglets with their mother, their eventual exploration outside of the farrowing hut, the progression to the weaner stage and solid food, and then the fully-grown pig eating and surrounded by other ‘finishers’. The final frame shows the pigs in a trailer being taken to the abattoir.

The different stages of the pigs’ lives were filmed using a bridge camera throughout the duration of my farm stay. Footage was gathered from a farrowing pig, piglets, weaners, growers and finishers. This accurately captured each of the stages that a pig goes through at the Longbush Pork farm. The decision to film a pig grown for meat rather than for breeding was made in order to convey the most common experience of a pig at the farm. This video sought to document the entire life of a pig at the farm and to present it to an audience. Snapshots do not often allow us to understand the entire experience of a pig from the moment of its birth to its journey to the abattoir. This video explores ways that this story can be told through footage recorded at the Longbush Pork farm.
Figure 3.11. Images taken for Life of a Pig narrative.
Snapshots from each of the stages of the pig’s life were filmed throughout the three days at the farm. Activities such as eating, drinking, being around other pigs and walking were filmed for the different sizes of the pigs at the farm. A Duroc pig was chosen at each of the stages in order to keep the appearance of the pig consistent. It was a practical impossibility to choose one pig and film it over months due to time constraints. The loading of the pigs onto the trailer to take to the abattoir was not filmed during this stay as the days did not coincide. During filming I did not physically interfere with the pigs so that I could capture them behaving as naturally as possible whilst I was within close proximity.

The editing of this footage proved to be the most challenging as it was difficult to convey a pig’s entire life at the farm using discontinuous snapshots of footage. The atmospheric conditions during filming resulted in sound issues during the editing phase. The pigs’ vocalisations and sounds made by their movements were recorded separately using my iPhone recorder and were imposed over the footage. The short duration of the edited video also made it difficult to accurately represent the whole life of a Longbush Pork pig. After creating the first edits of the videos I sent these to Jeremy and Naya. The initial narrative did not include the pig’s death, as I was unsure of how to present it without footage of the loading of the pigs into the trailer to be taken to the abattoir. The feedback I received from Jeremy and Naya highlighted this missing aspect of the pigs’ lives. Therefore, I made sure that the pigs’ deaths would be evident in the final video narrative which is described in the following section. It was important to take Jeremy and Naya’s wishes into account for the representation of an honest, accurate and respectful narrative of the life of a pig at Longbush Pork.
3.3.5 CONCLUSIONS

Each of the narratives was edited into a video of approximately four minutes long. This time was chosen due to the current video culture of social media which promotes user engagement through shorter videos and the ability to comment on these videos (Burgess & Green, 2009, p.61). The videos were edited with consideration of social media so that they could eventually be posted online through Longbush Pork’s social media accounts.

Another common aspect of each video was the attempt to keep the animal’s behaviour as natural as possible. By natural I mean that the pigs acted normally around the farm with as little human intervention as possible. Videos are a technological medium, and throughout the description of the design process I will consider the balance between the natural and unnatural aspects of video ethnography about animals. The footage from a pig’s perspective and its behaviour in paddocks was filmed by cameras that were not held by me or Jeremy. The GoPros were attached to Hannah and Lucy in order to capture footage that attempts to convey what they see while they carry out their daily activities. In this instance, the Large Black pigs can be regarded as both co-designers and co-authors of these videos as I was not in control of the cameras. During the filming of pigs without humans the cameras were attached to inanimate objects so as not to distract the pigs and to allow them to be as natural as possible. I actively captured the third narrative, but there was an attempt at fly-on-the-wall filming in which the videographer stands back and allows the pigs to behave without physical interaction from a human. This created a transferral of control from human to animal; there were variables that were not under my control, such as the movements of the pigs, their behaviour and activity.

The co-designing of the narratives was carried out closely with Jeremy and Naya. My interview with them inspired the initial ideas for the three main narratives. This discussion as well as the responses to the social media survey provided initial direction for the gathering of footage during my farm visits. Assistance from Jeremy was also important in capturing the video material at the farm. This co-design is the central component of my thesis and relates to my goals of telling new stories to an online audience of consumers and producers about farming.
3.4 CREATION OF THE FINAL VIDEOS

The following section of Chapter Three describes the design decisions that resulted in the video outputs. This encompasses the creation phase of the co-design process. These videos are titled ‘Hannah Cam’, ‘Lucy Cam’, ‘Pigs in Motion’ and ‘Life of a Pig’. The former three are approximately three-and-a-half minutes long, and the latter is a series of thirty-second videos. Each of the videos will be discussed in terms of how the narratives were constructed from the footage. These videos were intended for an online audience, and the final section of this chapter describes the responses to these videos. This section describes the design decisions that were undertaken in order to create effective videos that convey the three main narratives to an online audience.

Unlike the discovery phase which was conducted through co-design methods, I was the sole designer during the creation phase. After reviewing the initial footage with Jeremy and Naya I was able to create these new narratives. Their input was integral in shaping the ways these stories were told. During my time at the farm I was able to attain a comprehensive understanding of life at the Longbush farm and to gather sufficient video and photographic material to prepare for the final design phase. As a result, Jeremy and Naya were less involved during the creation of the final videos. However, their input was invaluable in certain times which will be described in this section. Iterations of the videos were also informed by my supervisors. Changes that were made to the narratives and the decisions that led to them will be discussed in the following section.

3.4.1 EDITING ‘PIGS’ PERSPECTIVES’

The narrative that conveys a pig’s perspective is shown through two separate videos. The first is ‘Hannah Cam’, shot from a GoPro mounted on a Large Black pig named Hannah, and the second is ‘Lucy Cam’, shot from a GoPro mounted on a Large Black pig named Lucy. The videos are both approximately three-and-a-half minutes long and follow the pigs engaging in various activities around one of the Longbush Pork paddocks. The unedited footage of both videos was approximately one hour long. Therefore, a significant amount of editing needed
to be done to make these videos presentable to an online audience.

In the previous section I wrote about the importance of naturalness in filming these videos. This was expressed by Jeremy and Naya during our initial interview at the farm. The narrative of the pigs’ perspectives attempted to convey the natural aspects of the pigs’ lives at the farm. Both Hannah and Lucy were left to carry out their activities in the paddock for approximately one hour. As a result, they are the co-authors of their videos and control the narrative of the footage. However, subsequent to their capturing of the footage, I edited the stories into a significantly shorter format, thereby introducing unnatural processes into the final videos. My technological intervention meant that the narratives are not wholly natural depictions of the pigs’ lives. The collecting of the videos was done through GoPro cameras. This represents another technological interruption into the pigs’ lives. However, these videos act as an exploration into how humans are able to view narratives from the eyes of a pig and to experience parts of their day as they might see them. The lowered perspective and movement of the camera on the pigs creates a unique viewpoint that is not completely natural but does allow us closer proximity to the lives of the pigs, Hannah and Lucy.

There were various iterations of both ‘Hannah Cam’ and ‘Lucy Cam’ that resulted from feedback from both my research supervisors and Jeremy and Naya. After showing the initial cuts to my supervisors, it was recommended that I place greater focus on representing the characters and personalities of the individual pigs, Hannah and Lucy. This directly informed my design decision to maintain the moments of high activity within the videos as they show the viewers the way the pigs move and interact within their environment. The dynamic moments of the videos were juxtaposed with moments of low activity to highlight the diverse traits of the pigs. My supervisors also recommended choosing a soundtrack that was more in keeping with the exuberant and buoyant activities of the pigs as I had previously chosen a more subdued soundtrack. The final soundtrack choice is described in more detail later in this section.
In accordance with my supervisor’s suggestion that I convey a greater sense of the character and personality of Hannah and Lucy, I included supplementary information to provide context for each of the pigs. I provided Hannah and Lucy’s age, birth parents and the fact that they were both raised in the Longbush Pork home before being moved to the farm. This information is shown as text at the beginning of the final videos and was provided by Jeremy. I showed the initial versions to both Jeremy and Naya before the stories contained any textual information. After feedback from my supervisors, I arranged a discussion with Jeremy where I gleaned useful information to provide more context for the protagonists of these videos.

The final videos of the pigs’ perspectives demonstrate the character and personality of the two pigs that the GoPros are mounted on. To convey a sense of personality, the moments of high activity and low activity are juxtaposed in often humorous ways. The length of the unedited footage provided some challenges to the editing process. It was often difficult to choose which moments of the pigs’ activities to leave in and which to cut out. Ultimately, I chose to represent as much of Hannah and Lucy’s hours at the Longbush Pork farm as possible. I attempted to create a sense of continuity by avoiding sharp transitions from one section of the paddock to another. The viewer should be able to see how each pig moved around the paddock in the final videos. Because Hannah and Lucy built the narratives themselves, it was my task to ensure that I represented the scope of their activities in a way that could be followed by an online audience.
3.4.2 FINAL VIDEOS OF ‘PIGS’ PERSPECTIVES’

The iterative process described above eventually led to the creation of the final videos. These videos were intended for an online audience. The decisions regarding imagery and sound for the videos were made to appeal to an audience of both consumers and producers. I considered the perspectives of this online audience when choosing the information that the videos were to convey. After conducting the initial online survey, I knew that followers responded positively to the fact that the pigs have names, personalities and characters. As a result, I intended to maintain these elements in both ‘Hannah Cam’ and ‘Lucy Cam’ so that the videos would attract online attention. The final plot of both ‘Hannah Cam’ and ‘Lucy Cam’ is described below, as well as the soundtrack chosen for both videos.
Figure 3.12. Screenshots from ‘Hannah Cam’ video. (Link to video: https://vimeo.com/164931145)
Figure 3.13. Screenshots from 'Lucy Cam' video.
Link to video: https://vimeo.com/164931449
Hannah’s journey throughout the paddock provided contrasting images of the various moments of her hour with the GoPro (Figure 3.12). The video begins with details about her age, her parents and the fact that she grew up indoors with Jeremy and Naya. We see Hannah playing in the straw inside the pig hut. She eventually joins other pigs at the wallow and catches water from the hose above her and has a drink from the tap beside the wallow. The video finishes with Hannah lying in the dust near the hopper after having a bite to eat. Hannah shows us a diverse view of life on the Longbush Pork farm. The angle of the camera from above Hannah’s ears allows us to imagine we are visually experiencing each of the activities just as Hannah would.

Alternatively, Lucy remained in the vicinity of the hopper. This created insight into the social dynamics of the group of pigs around that hopper (Figure 3.13). Lucy is a submissive pig, and in the video we see her failed attempts at getting close to the food while there is a more dominant pig feeding. There is little movement away from the hopper, and this video centres on the social hierarchy of the pigs in Lucy’s paddock. The position of the camera atop the pig’s head allows for an unusual perspective. We can see the other pigs in a way that is similar to how Lucy would see them.

Two different music tracks were used in the background of ‘Hannah Cam’ and ‘Lucy Cam’. Both songs are high-energy and fast-paced to create an upbeat atmosphere which suits the pigs’ humorous and active characters. Both Hannah and Lucy are fairly young pigs that are friendly with humans, and this youthful and affable energy is captured by the songs that play alongside the videos shot from the GoPros. The vocalisations of the pigs and the sounds of the GoPro camera-case and straps brushing up against Hannah, Lucy and other nearby pigs are present in the final videos. This conveys the sounds that surrounded Hannah and Lucy while they were wearing the GoPros. The music serves to emphasise the lighthearted nature of the stories.
3.4.3 EDITING ‘PIGS IN MOTION’

The second story is told from GoPros mounted on the farrowing huts while no humans were around. The final video is approximately three-and-a-half minutes long and shows the movements of pigs in two paddocks after Jeremy and I had left the farm. The first cut of this video footage was separated into two videos, one for each of the GoPros mounted on the farrowing huts. The final video combines the two in order to provide a more interesting and fast-paced view of the pigs’ antics. The editing process of ‘Pigs in Motion’ is described in the subsequent paragraphs.

The idea of naturalness was important to this narrative. The goal of ‘Pigs in Motion’ was to capture the pigs’ behavior when no humans were there. This was in accordance with the interests expressed by Jeremy and Naya during our interview at the farm. This insight into the pigs’ lives is a facet of many human-nonhuman relationships. Pet owners often wonder what their pets do when they are not there (this has led to the emergence of technologies such as digital pet collar cameras). GoPros provided me with the ability to film the pigs in certain paddocks. The positioning of the cameras was done by me, which introduces some unnaturalness into the process of creating these videos. The editing of the footage also removes some aspects of naturalness. If I had presented the videos in their full-length, there would have been approximately four hours of footage. These videos were intended for an online audience which led me to shorten them significantly. Although we see all of the pigs’ activities over these hours due to time-lapse video techniques, the technological intervention detracts from the naturalness of the final narrative.

The task of editing four hours of footage into less than four minutes presented some obstacles. The initial cuts created two videos. After showing these to my supervisors they advised me to combine these into one video. This would serve to provide a more dynamic and changing view of the paddocks so that the viewer is not solely watching the movements of pigs across one area. This meant that even more of the footage had to be cut out. In order to provide an interesting narrative to the online audience I decided to maintain the occasions of high activity. These moments consisted of numerous pigs moving across the paddocks, or of individual pigs that were engaged in
interesting activities such as wallowing or play-fighting. This process resulted in humorous imagery as the large sows slow waddling style of walking was sped up and the already speedy piglets became even faster. The element of fun was sustained throughout the video through this contrast between sped-up imagery and standard pace. As with the previous two videos, my supervisors suggested more upbeat music to complement the tone of the imagery. I was advised to create a title for the video which was more relevant to the fun tone of the footage. The title and credit screens are the only textual information provided in this narrative.

3.4.4 FINAL ‘PIGS IN MOTION’ VIDEO

The intention of the final video is to show Jeremy and Naya what their pigs do when they are not there. It is also intended for an online audience of producers and consumers. The responses to the online survey expressed that followers of Longbush Pork enjoy watching the pigs’ antics and seeing images of piglets. This video was captured in paddocks which contained sows and their piglets. These elements were intended to appeal to an online audience, and the soundtrack was chosen to support this fun and whimsical video.
Figure 3.14. Screenshots from 'Pigs in Motion' video.
Link to video: https://vimeo.com/164931779
This video shows the movements of pigs across two paddocks of the Longbush Pork farm. The video footage taken from one paddock lasts for about thirty seconds before switching to another paddock. This allows the video to feel fast-paced while maintaining a sense of the patterns of movement across both paddocks. The video shows the way the sows eat at the hopper and occasionally lumber towards their farrowing huts while the piglets play and run about. Viewers are able to see how pigs traverse each paddock in a short time frame. It also conveys a sense of the space of the farm in terms of the sections for sows and their piglets. Both paddocks show similar scenes of farrowing huts, one central hopper and the surrounding sows and piglets, but with visual differences in the position of the sun and the background elements.

The soundtrack chosen for this video consists of fast-paced guitar music that matches the pigs’ sped-up movements. The song contains upbeat elements that transition into slower sections. This corresponds with the contrasting speed of the video footage. There are no sounds from the pigs within the video as the speeding up of the footage distorted their vocalisations into indistinguishable sounds. As a result, the song is the sole auditory element of the video.
Figure 3.15. Storyboard for Life of a Pig series.
3.4.5 EDITING THE ‘LIFE OF A PIG’

The ‘Life of a Pig’ narrative encompasses the life processes of a pig at Longbush Pork from beginning to end. The preliminary cut for the ‘Life of a Pig’ video was approximately four minutes long. The final story was edited into fourteen thirty-second videos which document a pig’s life at Longbush Pork. The shortened length of the videos was due to the time limit of videos on Instagram (sixty seconds). The fourteen videos are serialised and will be posted on social media in order, from the beginning of the pig’s life until the end. This enabled an exploration of an alternative format of storytelling in comparison to the previously described narratives. The narrative shift from portraying the life of a pig in one video into fourteen short videos required additional storyboarding as each stage could be explored in greater depth through a series of videos (Figure 3.15). The design decisions that followed the change from one video into fourteen shorter ones is described below.

The naturalness within these videos was achieved through a fly-on-the-wall approach. I filmed each of the scenes that comprise the ‘Life of a Pig’ narrative from my bridge camera. I intended to capture instances of a pig’s life at various stages; piglets, weaners, growers and finishers. As I was behind the camera filming, there was a degree of unnaturalness in this video. The purpose of the ‘Life of a Pig’ narrative is to convey an honest picture of a pig’s life. This included representing its birth and its growth at the farm to its eventual death. The farmer’s interventions at stages are important in this narrative. As a result, naturalness was less integral to this story. Instead, themes of openness, honesty, learning and empathy were the focus. The pig’s story needed to be represented honestly so that the online audience could learn about each stage of the animal’s life. The representation of the pigs’ deaths needed to be handled with empathy. Jeremy and Naya revealed the respect and care they have for their animals in our initial interview, and they did not wish to show the killing of their pigs. Nevertheless, the inevitability of the death of most of the pigs at the farm had to be included. I chose to convey the life of most pigs, which is a progression from a piglet born on the farm until they are taken to the abattoir at around six months old. There are also pigs
that are chosen for breeding which stay on at the farm, as well as some piglets that are bought from outside breeders. These stories are not told in ‘Life of a Pig’ but provide interesting avenues for future video narratives on pig farming.

After showing the initial four-minute video to my supervisors they suggested separating it into a series of videos. This would allow me to explore a format that was an alternative to the previous videos. It would also enable me to go into more detail about each stage of the pig’s life as each video would be dedicated to a specific stage. My supervisor recommended providing textual information so that an online audience of both consumers and producers could learn about each stage of the pig’s life at Longbush Pork. The first four minute long video contained information that only defined which stage of growth the pigs on the screen were. By separating this video into a series of shorter clips I was able to include more details on each stage of the pig’s life.

I also showed the initial cut of the video to Jeremy and Naya. The first video did not show the pig’s death as I was not able to capture footage of the pigs going to the abattoir.

However, Jeremy and Naya highlighted the significance of not representing the final stages of the pig’s life. As a result, I decided to include textual information about the death of the pigs over video footage of the live pigs at the size they would be sent to slaughter. I sourced all of the information provided in the final videos from Jeremy. It was necessary to gain details directly from Jeremy as the lives of the pigs at Longbush Pork may vary from other farms.

3.4.6 FINAL ‘LIFE OF A PIG’ SERIES

The final narrative is conveyed through fourteen videos which are each about thirty seconds long. Responses to the initial online survey revealed some ignorance concerning the pigs’ deaths. This narrative provided an avenue through which this process could be conveyed in a respectful and open manner. Followers expressed sadness at the pigs’ deaths in the responses to the survey. It was important to present this aspect of the pig’s life alongside more appealing imagery of piglets and the playfulness and character of the pigs. This would provide a diverse and honest representation of the lives of the pigs at Longbush Pork. The following section describes the plot of this
entire series and the nature of the information provided within each one.
Figure 3.16. Screenshots from 'Life of a Pig' series.
Link to video album: http://vimeo.com/album/3928383
Piglets begin nibbling and sampling solid food as early as two-weeks-old.

Pigs are separated from their mothers at 8 to 10-weeks-old.

The pigs are 6 months old when they are taken to a nearby abattoir.
There are four stages of the pig’s life (piglet, weaner, grower and finisher). In order to represent each stage equally there are three or four videos for each one. Each video consists of shots of pigs at the age that corresponds to each stage so that viewers can track the growing size of the pig through each video (Figure 3.16). The videos either consist of a single shot of the pigs (for example, the video of the piglets suckling from their mother) or are edited into a montage of shots that convey an activity (for example, eating, drinking, sleeping and playing in groups). These videos differ in pace in order to capture the atmosphere of the various stages of the pigs’ lives and the activities therein. The piglets are faster and play with other piglets in contrast to the older pigs. Therefore, there are videos which display this quickness through a montage of various piglets at play. The older pigs are more laid-back, and the montages slow down and show the pigs sleeping or eating with other pigs. The videos represent the variety of movement and life of the pigs at Longbush Pork and show a progression from the small piglets into the large six month old ‘finisher’ pigs.

This narrative needed the greatest amount of textual information as the subject area required the most clarification for online audiences. The previous two stories explore how to creatively use action cameras to capture interesting aspects of pigs’ lives. This narrative conveys the story of a pig’s life to an online audience that may not be familiar with its various stages and details. The textual information displayed within the videos concerned aspects of the pigs’ lives such as the duration of each stage, the corresponding size and weight of the pigs, when they move onto solid food and the process of taking pigs to the abattoir. Viewers are able to follow a pig’s development and learn something about each stage through the textual information displayed in the videos. There is a title page in each of the fourteen videos which creates continuity and consistency throughout the series.

The music that was used in the background of this series consists of pieces from a long track of ambient music. The sounds and vocalisations of the pigs were important to most of the videos in the series. Therefore, the music was less dominant than in the videos described above. The sounds the pigs made as they ate, snuffled and wallowed about in mud can be heard
above the music as they provide a soundscape for the life at Longbush Pork. The music used is slower and less intrusive so as not to detract from the sounds of the pigs.

3.4.7 REFLECTIONS

The final videos effectively portray the three main narratives that were discussed during the interview with Jeremy and Naya (Section 3.2). Important themes present in the new narratives are naturalness, openness, honesty, learning, empathy and humour. Iterations of the videos were shown to my supervisors in order to get feedback about the successful and unsuccessful aspects of each cut. The editing stage involved imbuing the pigs with more character, choosing more complementary music and providing information for the video’s intended viewers.

Each narrative was created with the perspective of an audience in mind as the final videos will be shown to an online public. This means that I considered the responses to the online survey in order to take the followers’ interests into account. I also sought to present followers with stories of farming which they may not have been accustomed to, thereby creating a new viewpoint for them to engage with pigs. The elements of imagery, sound and information were carefully considered in order to present accessible and novel videos that convey different aspects of the pigs’ lives. The online platform enables an area of public discussion and creates a clear link back to the social media platforms of Longbush Pork. The following section describes the online reception of the videos through an analysis of responses to an online survey which was posted alongside the final videos. Before finally releasing the videos to the public, Longbush Pork were consulted in order to ensure their continued approval of the narratives and to ascertain whether the information provided accurately described a pig’s life processes at the farm.
3.5 ANALYSIS OF ONLINE RECEPTION

An online survey was posted in conjunction with the final four videos to foster public engagement and to garner reactions to the new stories of the Longbush Pork pigs. It was answered by fourteen people (see Appendix section A.4 for survey documents). This survey asked followers of Longbush Pork’s social media accounts questions pertaining to the types of stories these new narratives tell, how these new perspectives impact their impressions about pig farming and how the stories are different from those already told through Longbush Pork’s social media accounts. These questions were devised to achieve a deeper understanding into the way the public engages with new stories about livestock animals and to create a space for online discussion. They were influenced by the questions posed about followers’ understanding and impressions of farming in the initial online survey. This prompted followers to assess the way the stories are told and whether they would like to see more videos of this type on social media.

The responses allowed me to achieve a thorough sense of what aspects of storytelling about animals are most compelling to an online audience. I assessed the impact of the videographic outputs as a result of the co-design process. This was important because new narratives were intended to be viewed and interacted with in an online sphere akin to how the stories told by Longbush Pork are already engaged with. This meant that the main difference between the previous narratives and these new videos was the manner and format in which the stories are told. The responses to these are analysed in the following section.

Initially, I will analyse the responses to the three separate narratives; the videos told from a pig’s perspectives, the video of what the pigs do when no humans are around and the film of the entire life of a pig at Longbush Pork. Subsequently, I will reflect on the recurring themes within these responses in the final paragraphs of this section. Similarities and differences between the responses to Longbush Pork’s social media accounts which were analysed in Section 2.3 will be discussed at the end of this section. The themes of these responses provided me with valuable feedback on the co-designed outputs and
suggested areas for potential future narratives and ways of
telling stories about animals online.

3.5.1 LUCY CAM AND HANNAH CAM

The responses to the videos ‘Lucy Cam’ and ‘Hannah Cam’ have
been conflated into the following paragraphs. The majority of
the answers pertained to the experience of viewing life from
a pig’s perspective, rather than specifically drawing from the
viewpoint of the individual pig.

When asked what kind of story these videos told, the responses
focused on the character of the pigs and the idea of seeing
things from a pig’s perspective. One follower wrote that these
videos provide a “more ‘personal’ story, allowing you to see
what an individual pig gets up to”. One of the aims of the videos
was to capture the personality and character of the pigs, Lucy
and Hannah, which was picked up by the previous response.
Three of the responses referred specifically to the events
which occur within ‘Lucy Cam’. The followers wrote “there is a
hierarchy – but pretty dam [sic] funny”, “Lucy seems a little shy
of feeding, or is deferential to the other pigs” and “this video
in particular showed the pig getting into scuffles/interacting
with the other pigs”. Each of the followers responded to the
occasions within ‘Lucy Cam’ in which she is interacting with
other pigs and noted that she is a submissive pig. The narrative
elements of the story which characterise the pigs and which
demonstrate social aspects of the pigs’ lives were realised by the
followers, leading to the deduction that the videos successfully
encapsulate the individual characters of Lucy and Hannah.
One of the responses noted the lack of human intervention in
the videos: “This video seems to mostly be about the pigs doing
piggy things but I imagine farming as involving the farmer”.
These responses convey the sense that the character and unique
behaviour of the pigs was clear to the viewers through the
viewpoint of a pig’s perspective.

Positive impressions of farming were expressed by followers
after watching these videos. The responses frequently
compared the scenes that are shown in these videos to
the ideas they hold about intensive pig farming. One such
response revealed “If I was asked to imagine pig farming I
would have pictured a more ‘intensive’ set up – more pigs in
a smaller space”. Another follower wrote “Pigs raised outside
seem to have it better than those raised indoors”. These videos have presented the followers with a view of farming that is an alternative to the indoor pig farming which they refer to. Followers referred to activities they see pigs doing in these videos as evidence of the good life for the pigs. These included “a nice life living free and eating when they please” and “looks like the pigs have good interactions with each other, a bit of play fighting/scuffling, digging in the dirt, lazing about”. The activities that Lucy and Hannah get up to serve to support the positive impressions online followers had about free-range pig farming and affirm the idea that these challenge the preconceived notions of indoor, intensive pig farming.

These videos also presented new viewing experiences for followers which will now be described and analysed. When asked specifically how these videos are different to what Longbush Pork usually posts on social media, one response conveyed the sentiment that it was “interesting to see things from the pig’s perspective”. Another follower elaborated on this point: “I hadn’t seen any go-pro [sic] videos on their accounts before so this was a new experience. I really enjoyed it as it’s a closer look into the pig’s life, probably even closer than being there myself as it’s shot from the pig’s perspective”. These followers reacted positively to the viewpoint of these videos. This new perspective enabled a novel viewing experience. One follower compared these videos to others seen online:

*Definitely nice to see a piece of media showing how pigs can live and be farmed in positive ways, rather than the usual thing you see on facebook, for example, where people post petitions to improve the conditions that pigs live in. Usually these contain pretty awful photos.*

The lack of negative imagery within these videos is referred to in this response. The follower indicated that they preferred to see videos which present a perspective which is an alternative to the imagery that intends to foster concern about intensive livestock facilities. The videos presented from the pigs’ perspectives allowed viewers to have a closer look at the life of a pig at a free-range and sustainable farm and provided a novel viewpoint for this narrative.
The following paragraphs describe the reactions to the ‘Pigs in Motion’ video, which conveyed what the pigs in two of the Longbush Pork paddocks got up to when no humans were around.

The followers’ responses reveal what kind of story this video told. Many of them referred to the specific activities that they see in ‘Pigs in Motion’. One follower wrote that this narrative captures “The daily life of the pigs: wandering around, eating, playing, interacting, snoozing”. Other followers wrote about the breadth of the pig’s activities that this video conveys; “always on the move”, “The pigs have a very piggy time. The older bigger pigs eat and the piglets play”, “Seems that pigs only care about food”. The latter two responses referred to the amount of time the pigs spend at the hopper. One of the followers compared the high activity of the piglets to the comparatively slow sows. Followers gained a comprehensive view of life in two of the Longbush Pork paddocks due to the format of this video. The video spans a number of hours in under four minutes, and this enables followers insight into the various activities that can take place during this time.

The fact that there are no humans present in this video has led some of the followers to believe that farming involves little physical input by the farmer. One follower wrote “It seems very hands off. I imagine farming as the farmer actively doing things most of the day”. Another wrote “pig farming looks easy, not much labour input needed”. The intention of this video was to portray the pigs’ activities without human interruption. As a result, some of the followers were left with the impression that farming requires little intervention by the farmer. Nevertheless, the impressions of farming that this video garners were largely positive. As with the videos showing the pigs’ perspectives, followers compared the views seen in ‘Pigs in Motion’ with visions of factory farming. One response asserted “I imagine pig farming to be like feedlot farming but this is ‘free-range’”, and in a similar vein someone wrote “I thought pigs were kept in more confined spaces”. To these followers the idea of indoor, intensive pig farming is more easily imaginable than the free-range facility which is presented by this video. All of the responses conveyed the sense that this video presents a good life for the pig, with phrases such as “Looks like a good life for
the pigs”, “They seem to have a good life” and “Looks great!”.

The format of this video was referred to when asked how this narrative is different from those previously told online by Longbush Pork. One follower wrote:

*It’s longer than most videos I’ve seen on the account, but I like it because it gives you a more detailed look into the pigs’ lives, and allows you to see more of what they get up to during the day/the way they interact with each other.*

The follower responded positively to being able to see what the pigs do over a longer period of time. Another follower expressed a similar sentiment: “It’s good to see them doing their thing with no humans interfering with their normal day”. It was important for this video to convey activities engaged in by the pigs when undisturbed, and the viewers reacted positively to this insight into their daily lives. Another response which refers to the length of the video presented the notion that “this one is longer than the ones showed on twitter and tells a more detailed story. But this one is a bit too long and repetitive. The music keeps it engaging though”. The idea that the video could still be shortened was hinted at, and the success of the music was conveyed. In future, shorter videos that show the lives of the pigs without human interruption could be created to alleviate this issue.

### 3.5.3 LIFE OF A PIG

The third narrative was told by the ‘Life of a Pig’, a series of fourteen videos approximately thirty seconds long. In this case, the videos were all shown on a separate website with the survey link below the fourteenth one.

The narrative elements followers responded to related to this story as representative of a “lifecycle”. One of the respondents wrote about each stage of the pig’s life that the videos convey in more depth, “It tells you that a pig’s life is short but that in those 6 months, they are active, ‘busy’ interacting with each other and have a lot of room to roam around”. This follower responded to the length of time that the pigs are alive and positively reacted to the array of activities the pigs engage in during this time. The same respondent went on to say, “Other videos show how lively and active the pigs are, how engaging they are as creatures, that they have names and must really
mean something to the farmers who look after them”. Once again, followers reacted positively to the video’s representation of the variety of activities pigs engage in around the farm. They also referred to the personality of the pigs and the fact they have names. The videos do not explicitly refer to the names of the pigs. Therefore, this follower relied on prior knowledge of Longbush Pork and their propensity to name their pigs and document their lives online. Another response referred specifically to the representation of the end of the pigs’ lives:

"Perhaps, because the pigs have names and are such engaging and entertaining creatures, it is difficult to reconcile the fact that such creatures are going to be killed. But it is satisfying and good to learn/see that their lives are happy whilst they are on the farm."

This response further affirms the success of one of the goals of this series of videos, which was to present every stage of the pig’s life from beginning to end in an accessible manner which confronts viewers with the some of the realities of pig farming.

As with the previously discussed two narratives, this series of videos challenged some viewers’ preconceptions of pig farming. One follower wrote, “This series made the farmer’s interventions in the pig’s lives clearer but they still make me rethink my idea of pig farming which I pictured as far more intensive, like factory or feedlot farming”. The comparison of this free-range operation to factory farming is explicitly referred to again in this response. Another follower elaborated on the contrasting styles of farming:

"The videos show you that the life for a pig on Longbush Farm is a happy one. It would be interesting to see videos from other pig farms to compare how Longbush Farm differs. One would expect that farming practices on ‘normal’ pig farms are not so humane."

This response expressed a clear interest in further exploring the differences between the style of farming presented by ‘Life of a Pig’ and that of factory farming.

This series of videos presented the most challenges to the followers’ impressions of farming. This may be because it presents the greatest amount of information on the farming processes that take place at Longbush Pork. One commentator wrote that they “thought that pigs just roamed around a pen
(in the mud) and were fed on grain. To see them roaming in ‘paddocks’ was a surprise, and it was also a surprise to see how active they are and how they are so free to roam”. A number of the followers expressed surprise at details surrounding the death of the pigs. Some of these responses revealed “I was surprised that the pigs are only 6 months old before being sent to slaughter” and “surprised that they are only 6 months old when they go to the abattoir”. This conveys the sense that the age of death for the majority of the pigs at the farm has not been clearly expressed online to these followers or that followers have not been informed about the details surrounding the taking of livestock to the abattoir. This presents a potential area to further explore through online video narratives as there are references to this lack of information about the pigs’ deaths in the responses analysed in Section 2.3. Jeremy and Naya both highlighted the importance of presenting viewers with the pigs’ deaths. The online responses illustrate that this aspect of the videos has had a direct impact on the viewers of the final ‘Life of a Pig’ series.

The format of the videos was commented on in-depth by the following response:

*I think the videos are difficult to play on phones whereas photos on Instagram are easier to look through. It is interesting to see videos as you can see what the pig’s daily life is like. The short 30 second videos maybe work best and I think would be good on Instagram from time to time. I liked seeing the sequence from birth to fully grown. The photos on Instagram are often of farming equipment and farming processes, but it is the photos of the individual pigs that I enjoy most!*

This follower effectively reflects that these videos could be serialised over *Instagram* and expressed a desire for this to be presented on the Longbush Pork account. The fact that Longbush Pork occasionally refrains from posting photos of pigs is lamented in this response, and the posting of videos from the ‘Life of a Pig’ series would provide the desired focus on pig imagery.

3.5.4 REFLECTIONS

The analysis of the responses to each of the videos revealed a number of similarities and differences in comparison to those analysed in Section 2.3. The positive impressions of free-range farming are present throughout the responses to both the
social media stories and to the new narratives presented by the four co-designed videos. The amount of space the pigs have and the “good life” that this farm represents was a prominent feature of the followers’ impressions of the lives of the pigs at Longbush Pork. The characters and personalities of the pigs were also commented on within the stories posted by Longbush Pork and the new narratives in the co-designed videos. The uniqueness of the pigs and their entertaining antics were captured by the imagery and captions on Longbush Pork’s Twitter and Instagram and by the new perspectives conveyed by the final videos. The important themes of playfulness, humour and avoiding boring stories as discussed with Jeremy and Naya successfully affected the viewers of the new videos.

The novel narratives gave the viewers a more in-depth look at aspects of the pigs’ lives at Longbush Pork. This was conveyed by a number of the responses analysed in the previous paragraphs. Followers largely expressed positive reactions to the new videos, revealing that the introduction of more narratives such as these into the online discussion surrounding farming would not be remiss. The videos challenge their previous conceptions of intensive pig farming and present them with a viewpoint that can be engaged with more positively. The responses indicate that these videos present a more idyllic view of pig farming than they are accustomed to. The references to factory farming and the issues for animal welfare that these facilities encapsulate hints at the importance of presenting narratives of farming that convey a “good life” for the livestock animals. These new videos have explored various formats for visually presenting this method of farming and the lives of the pigs within this free-range, sustainable system. This coincided with one of the goals of the co-design effort which was to create open, honest and transparent stories of farming. The new videos convey the care and responsibility Jeremy and Naya have for their pigs, as is reflected by the positive impressions of the online responses.

The final question to followers was to indicate which video they most enjoyed. The result was as follows: 10% - Lucy Cam, 10% - Hannah Cam, 30% - Pigs in Motion and 50% - Life of a Pig. The most successful narrative was the one that presented the full lifecycle of a pig at Longbush Pork. This reveals the followers’ desire to engage with the pigs online in a way that presents them with more comprehensive information about the details
of the pigs’ lives. The following response shows the appeal of the ‘Life of a Pig’ series:

It explains all the different stages of a farm pig’s life, something I didn’t know about at all. Was cool to see the pigs at different stages of life. The piglets were also super cute.

Nevertheless, preferences for the other videos are evident throughout the responses. The successful elements of the final videos are encapsulated by this response:

I probably enjoyed Life of a Pig and also Pigs in Motion the most – the music and liveliness of the pigs was fun and amusing in Pigs in Motion. Life of a Pig had excellent info about a pig’s life from birth to leaving the farm. It was also great to be so up front and personal with Lucy and Hannah… as these videos gave you the pigs’ perspectives.
PIGS IN CYBERSPACE
3.6 DISCUSSION AND DESIGN DIRECTION

Chapter Three described the exploratory, discovery, creation and reception stages of the co-design process. The exploratory phase consisted of experience mapping and participatory observation activities that were influenced by the responses to the online survey and the in-depth interview with Jeremy and Naya. This phase took place during my first visit to the Longbush Pork farm. The second phase took place during my second visit to the farm. This was the discovery stage of co-design in which I gathered video footage for the final narratives and explored possible avenues for telling these stories with Jeremy and Naya. The final stage was the creation of the videos. The editing of these videos and the goals of each narrative were described in Chapter Three. The online reception of the videos allowed assessment of the co-design and prompted critical reflection about the new narratives. Further analysis of the videos is presented in the final chapter.
CHAPTER FOUR  NEW NARRATIVES
4.1 INTRODUCTION

The final chapter presents a summary and discussion of the thesis project to highlight what was learned at each stage of the research. Longbush Pork continues to offer new insights into how stories can be told online by farmers and there is a short section within this chapter which presents the novel ways the farm is conveying their narrative through social media. The final chapter critically reflects on the successful elements of the final videos. I highlight what could have been done differently and what could still be done in terms of video ethnography and telling stories about farming. Finally, I explore the potential application for the kind of ethnographic design-based thinking and making propounded by this thesis in terms of how it relates to human-nonhuman relationships and the ways we can tell stories online.
4.2 SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Over the course of this thesis the Longbush Pork farm went through numerous changes. At the time of my first visit to the farm all of the pigs were based in paddocks outside the home of the owners and operators of Longbush Pork. Over the following months they steadily moved their operation to a significantly larger section of land in the Wairarapa region of New Zealand. As with many other events that take place at Longbush Pork, this move was documented on Twitter and Instagram. Longbush Pork is continuing to expand at the time of writing, and the number of pigs living at the farm grows too. As the number of animal inhabitants increases, the introduction of new and updated equipment follows. Online audiences have been able to track the farm’s progress through photos and captions posted to social media, and the Longbush Pork story remains compelling to follow.

This thesis has explored the narratives that Longbush Pork communicates to an online public and the way that these stories are received. It has argued that it is important for such stories about livestock animals to be told as concerns about animal welfare and agriculture become increasingly prevalent. New narratives are presented as the culmination of a participatory design project that explored alternative avenues for the representation of livestock animals and their relationship with humans.

In Chapter One I outlined the primary design research methods of my thesis. I then presented the relevant research surrounding contemporary concerns about livestock agriculture, specifically factory farming. The primary issues around factory farming systems are their environmental impact, a lack of animal welfare and its effects on human health. These areas embody significant concerns about livestock agriculture and are well-documented academically (Abdalla, 2002; Ilea, 2009; Kirby, 2011; Rollin, 2010; Wender, 2011). I then analysed farmers’ reactions to these concerns through their use of social media. Online agricultural advocacy, or Agvocacy, was led by groups such as the AgChat Foundation (2011) in order to create transparency about farming through farmers’ online activity. The growing usage of social media by farmers and their engagement in online discourse surrounding
agriculture presents a gap in academic knowledge. Therefore, press articles were referred to as evidence of this phenomenon. This thesis addressed this lack of knowledge about farmers’ usage of social media through a case study of Wairarapa-based pig farm, Longbush Pork. The theoretical basis for the design research was presented in Chapter One. This included the idea of making things public and addressing matters of concern rather than matters of fact (Latour, 2004). I highlighted the importance of agnostic and adversarial design, which creates spaces for public contestation and seeks to explore political issues rather than promising upheaval (DiSalvo, 2012, p.121).

The second chapter analysed the popular social media content of Longbush Pork’s Twitter and Instagram accounts. Our conversations are increasingly taking place in the realm of social media, and so this thesis was able to draw from a rich archive of online images and text. In Chapter Two I conducted narrative inquiry (Wells, 2011) into the ten most popular posts on Longbush Pork’s Twitter and Instagram accounts and uncovered five narrative themes that are present across both accounts: anthropomorphism, stories of care, popularity of piglets, death of the pigs and sharing of knowledge. The stories are told in humorous and lighthearted ways through images and their corresponding captions on the two social media platforms. I then analysed the responses to an online survey taken by followers of Longbush Pork’s social media accounts. It was clear that followers had positive impressions of farming life, while maintaining an idea of the difficulties that being a farmer might pose. The images of pigs that they encounter daily online on Longbush Pork’s accounts gave them a sense of what life on the farm is like for the farmer and the animals. The responses also revealed the followers’ emotional attachment to the pigs and their perceived characters and personalities. I discussed these survey responses with Jeremy and Naya during the in-depth interview described in Chapter Two. The answers supplied by Longbush Pork and their followers provided inspiration and direction for the exploratory phase of the ensuing co-design at the farm.

In Chapter Three I described my ethnographic design process (Creswell, 2012) at the farm and the various participatory design activities that took place. The co-design stages can be summarised by the exploration stage, the discovery stage, the creation stage and the reception of the final videos. I was able
to assimilate Jeremy and Naya’s ideas relating to how stories about animals can be told and attempted to gather material which adequately captured this. My stays at the farm were spent having discussions with both Jeremy and Naya about the nature of farming, social media and our relationships and connections to livestock. Alongside these conversations, I spent time capturing footage of the pigs as they went about their activities in the paddocks and used action cameras to capture new perspectives of the lives of these animals. This undertaking provided the footage which was used to create the four videos that explore the new narratives discussed with Jeremy and Naya.

The final videos presented in Chapter Three include ‘Hannah Cam’, ‘Lucy Cam’, ‘Pigs in Motion’ and the ‘Life of a Pig’ series. Each video explores different ways stories can be told about livestock animals. The videos were presented to an online audience and their responses were analysed. The public engagement fostered was integral to this research project, which argues that it is important to create open spaces of contestation in order to address public issues and concerns. The notion of adversarial design and its reliance on participatory design methods informed this approach to presenting new narratives. DiSalvo states that participatory design is concerned with “opening the design process beyond the experts and including those who might be affected by the designed thing” (2012, p.124). He goes on to highlight the culmination of this method as adversarial design:

If we abandon the notion that any one design will completely or even adequately address our social concerns or resolve our social issues, then adversarial design can provide those spaces of confrontation – in the form of products, services, events and processes – through which political concerns can be expressed and engaged (2012, p.125).

Contemporary stories about livestock are particularly relevant due to the rising concerns surrounding agriculture as there is significant focus on animal welfare. The narratives told online by Longbush Pork and the new stories that I created with them present the lives of pigs from a small, free-range and sustainable system. These new narratives explore alternative perspectives to show the lives of the pigs within this style of farming. The videos tell these stories in formats that are
different and complementary to the visual storytelling on Longbush Pork’s Twitter and Instagram accounts. Whilst still aimed towards an online audience, the new narratives convey the lives of the pigs in more depth through videos of longer duration and through a serialised representation of life processes at the farm. These videos challenged preconceptions about pig farming that were largely informed by images of intensive factory farming operations and afforded viewers novel insight into the lives of the pigs at one free-range, sustainable farm.
4.3 STORYTELLING AT LONGBUSH PORK

During the final stages of this research project, Longbush Pork took over the Farms of the World (@FarmsOfTheWorld) for one week. Farms of the World is a Twitter account that invites international farmers to take over their account for one week and document life at their farm. I created a Storify story of Longbush Pork’s week on the Twitter account (see Appendix section A.6), as they told a thorough story of their farm. The week began with Longbush Pork documenting how they started as “accidental pig farmers”. The week took followers through the various events and life processes that take place at the farm. These included the amount of food a lactating sow eats, the various types of housing for the pigs, the characteristics of boars and details surrounding the death of the pigs and their eventual production into meat. As always, images of the pigs at Longbush Pork were central in conveying their story on the Farms of the World account. The ‘tweets’ were centred around images of pigs and the facilities at the farm, as well as an occasional video. There were responses from followers which reiterate the important discussion points of this thesis; the followers comment on the characters of the pigs, the innovative farming equipment and generally praise the content and apparent welfare of the pigs. The week on the Farms of the World Twitter account presented yet another way Longbush Pork tells their stories about pigs to the public and indicates the considerable potential for online narratives about livestock agriculture and the public discourse this can encourage.
Jeremy and I had a discussion about online narratives and how he told the story of Longbush Pork in just one week. He said that he settled on two themes a day and ‘tweeted’ according to those themes at different times of the day as he was aware of catering to the timezones of an online global audience. This allowed a thorough tale to be told that conveyed various aspects of the farming processes at Longbush Pork in some depth. Jeremy said that this was the extent of his planning and that he “really didn’t set out the week months in advance and say, “This is how I’m gonna frame it”’. An aspect of the spontaneity of the posts from the Longbush Pork account was upheld in the week that was spent ‘tweeting’ from Farms of the World, although there was greater conscious decision making given the short amount of time provided to tell a broad story. Jeremy tried to maintain a more factual tone over the week to inform the online audience of the “evolution” of Longbush Pork and to provide some information that might be useful to farmers and other producers as well as to the general public. Nevertheless, elements of farce and fun were littered throughout the ‘tweets’ as “it’s also important for people to know that we just enjoy our pigs”.

Figure 4.1. Farms of the World. (2016, May 9). Good morning from New Zealand! My name is Jeremy, and together with my wife Naya, we run @longbushpork.
Figure 4.2. Farms of the World. (2016, May 14). One last shot of some of the crew as the sun heads down and the winds pick up.

Figure 4.3. Farms of the World. (2016, May 14). One last shot of some of the crew at the sun heads down and the winds pick up.
Jeremy and I talked about the nature of telling stories about farming online and how this can lead to a misrepresentation of the reality of farming through a focus on the beautified aesthetics of agriculture (Fisher, 2013). There have been claims that farmers promote a “precious image of farm life” (Fisher, 2013) through images on curated social media accounts rather than showing the arduous and boring parts of farming. Jeremy admitted to doing this on the Longbush Pork social media accounts, saying that “it’s easy to gloss over the negative stuff and focus on the good things. But are you really presenting the reality of farming?”. At Longbush Pork they try to present every side of farming life so as not to do a “disservice” to the reality of farming. This includes presenting the dirt and hard work of farming in unfavourable weather conditions, as well as conveying the death of the animals. Jeremy mentioned that he is trying to be more conscious of presenting the culmination of animal husbandry, which is “superb pork, you’ve got really beautiful animals and you’re proud of that”. This was evident in his portrayal of the transporting of pigs to the abattoir on the Farms of the World Twitter account, and this continues to be conveyed through a combination of photographs and captions on Longbush Pork’s social media platforms that aim to tell a complete story of farming life. Jeremy also talked of the avoidance of posting gory images to an online audience: “You convey your point without having to go too far. You’re being truthful but you’ve got to balance it”. Presenting the realities of farm life to the general public on social media is complex and relies upon the farmer’s judgement in order to balance what is appropriate and important in the story of farming.
4.4 CRITICAL REFLECTIONS

This section of the final chapter reflects on the successful and unsuccessful elements of the new narratives and the process of creating them. The video outputs served as the synthesis of my knowledge of public concerns surrounding farming, matters of concern, adversarial design and are the result of co-design at the Longbush Pork farm. I will examine the ways that filming could have been improved, and present discussion concerning the online engagement with the videos. The manner in which the design process could have been done differently will be explored in this section. There were elements of filming which were dependent on the amount of time I was able to spend at the farm. The activities of the pigs dictated what I was able or unable to film. These elements both positively and negatively affected the way the final stories could be told. In the following section I will present these issues and challenges as well as reflect on how the co-design process functioned. I will discuss the ways the videos fulfilled the goals I had for the online viewers as well as for the co-designers of the narratives, Jeremy and Naya of Longbush Pork.
4.4.1 SUCCESS OF THE NEW NARRATIVES

Firstly, I will present the successful elements of the new narratives. These include the positive engagement the online audience had with the final videos as expressed in the responses to the online survey. Jeremy and Naya’s reactions to the final videos are referred to, as well as my invaluable experiences during my stays at the farm.

Two of the viewers who responded to the online survey wrote about the closeness to the pigs these videos conveyed. This was one of the aims of the new narratives and especially pertained to ‘Hannah Cam’ and ‘Lucy Cam’. The stories were intended to give the viewers more personal insight into the way the pigs viewed their world. It was clear from the online responses that viewers responded positively to this viewpoint and to being up close and personal with the activities of the Large Black pigs, Hannah and Lucy. Part of the appeal of these videos may be attributed to the fact that the personalities of the pigs were established on Longbush Pork’s social media accounts as they both appeared in the most popular posts analysed in Section 2.2.

The fun and humorous elements of the videos were successfully conveyed to the viewers of the videos. The online responses engaged with the lighthearted nature of the videos. Their positive impressions of farming life reaffirmed the uplifting nature of the videos. The final choice of music was complementary to this tone, and I was satisfied with the way the imagery and the soundtracks interacted to create videos which were engaging and upbeat. The playfulness of the videos directly reflected the character of Longbush Pork’s posts about their pigs on social media. I feel I was able to capture this irreverent tone within elements of the final videos, particularly in ‘Pigs in Motion’, ‘Hannah Cam’ and ‘Lucy Cam’. Viewers responded affirmatively to the question about whether they would like to see more videos of this type on social media. This suggests that there is scope online for exploration of new narratives that convey experiences of livestock on a free-range and sustainable farm such as Longbush Pork. All fourteen responses cited the apparent high welfare and care for the animals and how these challenged their negative preconceptions about farming. As concerns about factory farming become increasingly prominent the presentation of animals’ lives on a small family farm highlights the discrepancy
between intensive systems and free-range, sustainable practices. It is important to show audiences that the matters of concern surrounding livestock farming can be called into question by alternative stories of the animals’ experiences.

The experience of co-designing the narratives and spending time at the farm was another successful element in creating the final videos. Jeremy and Naya both expressed satisfaction after viewing the four new narratives. They promoted the videos on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. It was clear that they were happy with, and proud of, the work we had created together, and they shared it with as many of their online followers as possible. Jeremy and Naya were closely involved in various co-design stages. This was especially true during the exploratory and discovery phases, whereas the creation of the videos was mostly done by myself. This ethnographic design method was highly beneficial for creating the final videos. It ensured that the research participants and their knowledge and care for farm animals were a strong presence in the new narratives. DiSalvo highlights the benefits of participatory design practice, writing that it is a way to engage with groups in order to use design to “collectively and collaboratively” (2012, p.123) explore issues. The participation of Jeremy and Naya generated design outcomes that were markedly different than what would have resulted from a project created by the designer alone (DiSalvo, 2012, p.124). Participatory design methods resulted in a project which addresses notions of agonism and adversarial design to engage with issues relevant to its research participants.

The extensive amount of time I spent at the farm was another benefit of this type of co-design. I was able to spend a number of nights at the farm and worked with the farmers and their animals. This provided valuable insight into life at Longbush Pork. My discussions with Jeremy and Naya instilled in me a deep sense of what was important to them in telling stories about their pigs and their beliefs and values regarding farming. The duration of my stays at the farm allowed me to collect ample footage so that I was able to create videos for each of the co-designed narratives. A shorter stay may have only resulted in the creation of one of these narratives. The openness of my research participants meant that I could have frequent discussions with them by email and phone calls throughout the creation of the videos, ensuring their continuous approval, insight and support.
4.4.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE NEW NARRATIVES

The following paragraphs explore the unsuccessful elements of the final videos in terms of their content and the techniques with which the footage was captured. As with the previous section, these were influenced by the online responses to the new narratives as well as the challenges presented during the gathering of video material and the creation of the final videos. I reflect on what could have been done differently to counteract these issues.

One of the viewers responded negatively to the duration of ‘Pigs in Motion’. This introduces the notion that each of these final videos could be shortened. Further limiting the length of the videos could have allowed greater relevance to social media. Most videos on social media do not exceed one minute. The final videos could have related more closely to this function of the online platforms which Longbush Pork prefers. The ability to post each of these videos directly onto online social media platforms may have resulted in greater online participation. More responses from followers would have provided a higher number of perspectives on each of the final videos (there were a total of fourteen survey responses). This would have allowed me to see how a wider audience might react to new narratives about pigs at Longbush Pork. This aligns more closely with the goals of adversarial design and agonistic politics which seek to create open spaces for public contestation. Involving more people in the issues they care about, such as farming, would have created a more diverse space for the online public.

The notion of naturalness was another challenge presented when creating the final videos. Naturalness was important in the final videos as it was a significant narrative theme that Jeremy and Naya wished to further explore through our co-designed stories. They expressed a desire to convey less of the human viewpoint in the videos. It was difficult to retain natural elements when composing videos that were intended for an online audience. The videos had to be short to guarantee the attention of such an audience. Therefore, I had to significantly edit the footage that was captured at the farm. This involved cutting out hours of video material in order to create narratives that were under four minutes long. As a result, a purely natural view of the pigs’ lives was impossible. The pigs, Hannah and Lucy, acted as co-authors of their videos. Therefore, their
natural	  behaviours	  were	  recorded.	  However,	  I	  had	  to	  edit	  their	  

 Ƥ

stories	  into	  short	  clips	  that	  consisted	  of	  their	  movements	  across	  

I	  chose.	  It	  would	  have	  been	  favourable	  to	  attach	  the	  GoPro	  to	  

the	  farm.	  This	  was	  also	  a	  challenge	  in	  the	  ‘Pigs	  in	  Motion’	  video.	  

more	  than	  two	  pigs.	  This	  would	  have	  allowed	  me	  to	  compare	  

ǯǡǦ

 ơǯ 

format	  prevented	  viewers	  from	  accurately	  seeing	  how	  pigs	  

 ǤƤ

naturally	  moved	  over	  a	  two-­‐hour	  time	  period.

Jeremy’s	  goal	  of	  attaining	  a	  perspective	  from	  a	  dominant	  pig	  
within	  the	  animals’	  social	  hierarchy.	  More	  time	  at	  the	  farm	  

ƤǮǯ Ƥ

may	  have	  resulted	  in	  a	  greater	  array	  of	  perspectives	  for	  the	  

spending	  more	  time	  at	  the	  farm.	  It	  would	  have	  been	  compelling	  

‘Pigs	  in	  Motion’	  video.	  I	  would	  have	  liked	  to	  attain	  viewpoints	  

to	  show	  a	  sow	  farrowing,	  but	  while	  I	  was	  there	  all	  of	  the	  sows	  

from	  all	  of	  the	  paddocks	  at	  Longbush	  Pork	  to	  show	  an	  entire	  

that	  gave	  birth	  did	  so	  at	  night	  when	  neither	  Jeremy	  nor	  I	  were	  

picture	  of	  the	  farm	  through	  time-­‐lapse	  videos.	  This	  would	  have	  

Ǥ Ƥ

 Ƥ

trailer	  to	  be	  taken	  to	  the	  abattoir.	  Filming	  these	  two	  crucial	  life	  

two	  GoPros	  at	  once	  (I	  usually	  kept	  one	  GoPro	  at	  the	  Longbush	  

processes	  would	  have	  provided	  a	  more	  accurate	  and	  honest	  

Pork	  home	  to	  recharge	  its	  battery.	  This	  meant	  I	  could	  only	  keep	  

ƤǤǯ

two	  of	  the	  cameras	  up	  at	  the	  farm).	  The	  GoPros	  were	  in	  water-­‐

lives	  are	  moments	  which	  are	  not	  often	  seen	  by	  an	  online	  

resistant	  casing	  which	  meant	  that	  they	  were	  the	  only	  cameras	  

audience.	  This	  was	  described	  in	  the	  analysis	  of	  the	  initial	  survey	  

Ƥ  

ȋ ͞Ǥ͟Ȍ   

could	  not	  guarantee	  that	  a	  regular	  camera	  would	  not	  get	  wet	  or	  

Naya	  concerning	  transparent	  storytelling	  about	  farming	  (see	  

damaged	  when	  unattended.	  The	  acquisition	  of	  more	  GoPros	  

 ͞Ǥ͠ȌǤ

Ƥ    
interesting	  narrative	  of	  ‘Pigs	  in	  Motion’	  over	  the	  whole	  farm.

PIGS IN CYBERSPACE 175


4.4.3 AREAS FOR FUTURE EXPLORATION

After critically reflecting on the successful and limiting elements of the final design outputs and outcomes, I was able to identify what could still be achieved in terms of online storytelling and exploring human-nonhuman relationships.

As discussed in the previous paragraphs, filming from a wider array of perspectives around the farm might be explored. This could involve filming from the perspectives of pigs that are more dominant than Hannah and Lucy to see different social dynamics and how these function from the eyes of other pigs. Attaching cameras to each of the paddocks for a long duration of time is another area of filming which could be explored. This recording would result in videos that reveal even more of the natural behaviour of the pigs when no humans are around. It would be interesting to film the pigs overnight and in the morning before any humans are around. I was unable to do this during my time at the farm.

There are other processes of the ‘Life of a Pig’ which might be represented by videos online. This could be applied to a number of livestock animals and presents an area for potential expansion of this ethnographic research. Working with farmers allows the possibility of presenting narratives that align closely with the goals and aspirations of those who work with animals every day. In the case of Longbush Pork, Jeremy and Naya wished to show stories that are honest, transparent and convey the respect and pride they have in their animals. These narratives could potentially be expanded to other farms as farmers continue to visually convey their stories of nonhuman animals and the various processes of farming through the use of social media. The extension of these narratives would allow for future development into the nature of human-nonhuman relationships and would present more stories online that engage with public concerns surrounding farming practices and animal welfare. These ideas are presented in the final section of this thesis.
4.5 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

As previously stated, farmers’ growing usage of social media has been largely undocumented in the academic sphere. This thesis can broadly help scholars understand the ways that farmers and the online community of Agvocacy engage with discourse surrounding concerns about livestock farming. These conversations are increasingly prevalent within the digital realm. The research conducted in this thesis asserts that stories told by farmers online connect to consumers in various ways and communicate the many diverse elements of farm life. Online ethnography provided the avenue through which I assessed the way consumers and producers relate to stories about pigs told by Longbush Pork. Ethnography facilitates direct involvement with a culture-sharing group (Creswell, 2012), and asks questions in order to understand what is important to the group involved. This qualitative approach can help scholars understand the interconnectedness of humans and nonhumans through the ways that we engage with nonhuman narratives on social media.

The design outputs were created through participatory design methods and ethnographic fieldwork. These approaches led to an in-depth understanding into how the stories told on Longbush Pork are conceived and developed within the landscape of the farm. These research methods are particularly pertinent to those practising ethnographic design. Co-design is a valuable method to explore a cultural context with those that the designer is investigating. In this case, the owners and operators at Longbush Pork were invaluable co-designers of the final videos that were presented to an online audience. As stated above, the amount of time I spent at the Longbush Pork farm learning with and from Jeremy and Naya led to the success of the final videos. Narrative design enabled the investigation into human and nonhuman perspectives on free-range, ethical and sustainable farming operations. Storytelling provided an avenue to understand the ways that pigs live on farms such as Longbush Pork, and the methods by which my videos were created resulted in useful insight into farming processes and the importance of opening these up to an online audience. These research methods are highly relevant to those exploring ways of visually telling stories on an online realm. I have clearly set out each step of my storytelling process and the co-design
of new narratives in Chapter Three which designers can follow when navigating the field of ethnographic video-making.

The co-creation of new narratives opens up the possibility to further explore issues surrounding farming and provides a useful method for those wishing to explore the relationship between humans and nonhumans as well as our connection to farming and the issues related to it. Many more stories can be told solely about the lives of the pigs at Longbush Pork. For example, the ‘Life of a Pig’ series could follow the birth and growth processes of a breeder pig which is not destined for the abattoir. This would provide a new, detailed perspective on an alternative life of a pig. The use of action cameras could be applied to the representation of other pigs’ experiences at the farm so that we could see journeys from the perspectives of numerous pigs at Longbush Pork as discussed in the previous section.

There is the potential to explore areas of farming which appear largely absent from the storytelling on farmers’ social media accounts (a number of survey responses cited in Sections 2.3 and 3.5 referenced an ignorance of the death of the pigs). The story of a farm animal’s death presents a compelling area to explore through the co-design of new video narratives with farmers. The issues raised by Fisher (2013) surrounding the representation of the “ugly” side of farming introduces areas that can be further pursued through stories told about livestock animals on social media. Fisher (2013) writes that “essential facets of our lives as farmers remain invisible”. Stories such as the ones told by Longbush Pork’s Twitter and Instagram accounts begin to address the aspects of farming which are not beautified such as the dirt, hard labour and death involved in farm life. The new narratives we presented further explored the representation of the death of pigs. The capacity for telling stories on social media is expanding as the platforms continue to introduce new features (for example, Instagram extended the duration of videos posted on their application from fifteen seconds to sixty seconds during the writing of this thesis (Instagram, 2016)). These platforms provide spaces for publics to form around matters of concern and to actively engage
with the issues and experiences that are being presented. Online videos can tell stories about pigs that reveal to us novel perspectives which both challenge and expand our conceptions of farming. Such stories provide valuable insight into the complex and rewarding relationships between humans and nonhuman animals.
REFERENCES
REFERENCES


FIGURE LIST
FIGURE LIST

LONGBUSH PORK IMAGES BEFORE CHAPTER TITLES

Figure 1.1. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2016, March). Stripes. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/BCrn8rajQZz/?taken-by=longbushpork

Figure 1.2. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2016, April). George, aka The Dude. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/BDufN4fjQYj/?taken-by=longbushpork

Figure 1.3. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2016, January). Doing my afternoon rounds yesterday and came across this scene. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/_4fsqADQVk/?taken-by=longbushpork

Figure 1.4. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2015, October). Stand alongside Bullet and he acts like an arse, but stand in front of him while scratching his forehead and he’d a gentleman. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/8y_

tkqDQXF/?taken-by=longbushpork

Figure 1.5. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2015, October). Lining up for brekkie. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/9NKMCVDQd9/?taken-by=longbushpork


Figure 1.7. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2015, November). Moved a single break simultaneously over four paddocks of pigs. It’s such a better and more efficient way to run this gig. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/-ic7NejQZ5/?taken-by=longbushpork

Figure 1.8. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2016, February). Forget the fancy fans and aircon, my girls and boys just like to dive into the wallows. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/BA_glidjQfh/?taken-by=longbushpork

Figure 1.10. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2015, October).
Chloe. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/BC1LTdLjQbL/?taken-by=longbushpork

Figure 1.11. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2015, October). My little helpers. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/89oXZRDQdE/?taken-by=longbushpork

Figure 1.12. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2016, January). Wee Durocs. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/BA3zbMgDQbS/?taken-by=longbushpork

Figure 1.13. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2016, January). Her mum is named Ava, but I’ve taken to calling her Dragon, as she is super protective of her piglets and has chased me. Therefore, this beauty is called Mini Dragon. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/BA9Cbd2jQbO/?taken-by=longbushpork


Figure 1.15. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2016, February). Bullet trying to keep it cool on this hot summer day. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/BBO1go_jQSc/?taken-by=longbushpork

Figure 1.16. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2015, November). As of today, 26 more pigs call this place home. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/9vHtSMDQXg/?taken-by=longbushpork

Figure 1.17. Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2015, October). You talkin’ to me? You talkin’ to me? You talkin’ to me? Then who the hell else are you talking... you talking to me? Well I’m the only one here. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/9WdFhlDQVO/?taken-by=longbushpork
**Figure 1.18.** Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2015, October). The new place is starting to look like a pig farm. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/8uTheBjQcr/?taken-by=longbushpork

**Figure 1.19.** Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2015, November). The pigs love the most recent paddock, complete with tree stumps for scratching. The whole design concept is to subdivide this one big paddock into a series of long smaller paddocks, and break the pigs across, them move them ont a new one after a period of time (cont...). [Photo]. Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/9d2fMaDQS/-?taken-by=longbushpork

**Figure 1.20.** Longbush Pork, Instagram. (2015, November). Fat Boy Junior. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/-QLY1FDQXq/?taken-by=longbushpork

**CHAPTER TWO**

**Figure 2.1.** Longbush Pork. (2015, September 27). On you mark, get set, GO!! [Video]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/longbushpork/status/648366507920068608

**Figure 2.2.** Longbush Pork. (2015, November 2). Bless her. She’s obviously pretty proud of her mess. #TeamNZPork. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/longbushpork/status/529059870146691072

**Figure 2.3.** Longbush Pork. (2015, June 20). And then there’s Lucy, who still thinks she’s the size of my hand. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/longbushpork/status/612443381776584704

**Figure 2.4.** Longbush Pork. (2015, October). My little fencing assistant Max. #puppy #GreatDane. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://instagram.com/p/9AODINjQfG/

**Figure 2.5.** Longbush Pork. (2015, September). Beautiful Gertrude at six weeks old and weighing in at 21 kilos. She’s one of our Duroc Large Black crosses that we’ll run a Hampshire boar over... when she’s older of course. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://instagram.com/p/77G5-EDQee/

**Figure 2.6.** Longbush Pork. (2015, May 4). Lucy is a girl we brought inside our home only a few weeks ago, probably
a day away from death. Now look at Ms. Tubby. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/longbushpork/status/595310535144448001

Figure 2.7. Longbush Pork. (2015, May). [Close up photograph of two piglets] [Photo]. Retrieved from https://instagram.com/p/24lMe7DQTv/

Figure 2.8. Longbush Pork. (2015, September). Gertrude. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://instagram.com/p/7mLPgWDQZE/

Figure 2.9. Longbush Pork. (2015, March 30). We’ve had a great run of no piglets in the house, but just pulled this one who was falling way behind the others. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/longbushpork/status/582443918261813248

Figure 2.10. Longbush Pork. (2015, June 20). Just warming up a chilled newborn piglet in the #Rayburn… as you do. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/longbushpork/status/612441703425773568

Figure 2.11. Longbush Pork. (2015, August 31). Double Duty. [Video]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/longbushpork/status/638424292586356736

Figure 2.12. Longbush Pork. (2015, September). Hannah the house piglet. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://instagram.com/p/6_v0lijQWg/

Figure 2.13. Longbush Pork. (2015, October 5). March of the #Ladypigs. [Video]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/longbushpork/status/651192800378142720

Figure 2.14. Longbush Pork. (2015, August). [Photo of two Large Black pigs in a green field] [Photo]. Retrieved from https://instagram.com/p/6g4_IzjQfO/

Figure 2.15. Longbush Pork. (2015, August 21). Our Great Dane Rex currently acting as foster mum to house piglet. You can’t make this stuff up… [Photo]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/longbushpork/status/634627408902025216
CHAPTER THREE

Figure 3.1. Author. (2016). Experience Map of Pig Farming and Social Media. [Digital Map].

Figure 3.2. Author. (2016). Images Taken with iPhone at Longbush Pork. [Screenshots of videos].

Figure 3.3. Author. (2016). Images of Bridge Camera at Side of Paddock. [Photos].

Figure 3.4. Author. (2016). Storyboard for Pigs’ Perspective Videos. [Handdrawn Sketch].

Figure 3.5. Author. (2016). Images of Hannah with the GoPro Mounted on her Head. [Photos].

Figure 3.6. Author. (2016). Images of Lucy with the GoPro Mounted on her Head. [Photos].

Figure 3.7. Author. (2016). Storyboard for Paddock Camera Videos. [Handdrawn Sketch].

Figure 3.8. Author. (2016). Images of GoPro in Sows’ Paddocks. [Photos].

Figure 3.9. Author. (2016). Images of GoPro in Other Paddocks. [Photos].

Figure 3.10. Author. (2016). Storyboard for Life of a Pig Video. [Handdrawn Sketch].

Figure 3.11. Author. (2016). Images taken for Life of a Pig Narrative. [Photos].

Figure 3.12. Author. (2016). Screenshots from ‘Hannah Cam’ Video. [Screenshots of video]. Link to video: https://vimeo.com/164931145

Figure 3.13. Author (2016). Screenshots from ‘Lucy Cam’ Video. [Screenshots of video]. Link to video: https://vimeo.com/164931449
CHAPTER FOUR

Figure 3.14. Author. (2016). Screenshots from ‘Pigs in Motion’ Video. [Screenshots of video]. Link to video: https://vimeo.com/164931779

Figure 3.15. Author. (2016). Storyboard for Life of a Pig Video Series. [Handdrawn Sketch].

Figure 3.16. Author. (2016). Screenshots from ‘Life of a Pig’ Video Series. [Screenshots of videos]. Link to video series: https://vimeo.com/album/3928383

Figure 4.1. Farms of the World. (2016, May 9). Good morning from New Zealand! My name is Jeremy, and together with my wife Naya, we run @longbushpork. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/FarmsOfTheWorld/status/731609322807910401

Figure 4.2. Farms of the World. (2016, May 14). We drive our pigs to the abattoir and assist to offload them quietly. They are killed later the same day. [Photos]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/FarmsOfTheWorld/status/731710382859919360

Figure 4.3. Farms of the World. (2016, May 14). One last shot of some of the crew as the sun heads down and the winds pick up. [Photo]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/FarmsOfTheWorld/status/731710382859919360
APPENDIX
A.1. HUMAN ETHICS - INTERVIEW

PIGS IN CYBERSPACE: A CULTURE EXPLORATION
OF NZ FARMING

Postgraduate Researcher: Madeleine Made半个月, Quick.
School of Design Innovation, Victoria University of Wellington

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM:
IMAGES OF PERSONS AND/OR PROPERTY

I have been given, and have understood, an explanation of this research project. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

I understand that the Postgraduate Researcher, Supervisors, will not use any identifying information unless I give written consent for it to be used for publication and/or public presentation.

I understand that any images of persons and/or property will not be used for any other purpose or released to others without my written consent, and that all transcripts and notes will be securely stored and destroyed 1 year after the completion of the project.

I understand that any images of persons and/or property will not be used for any other purpose or released to others without my written consent.

I consent to have photographs taken by the Researcher through fieldwork and/or interviews (for the purposes of publication and/or public presentation).

Signature

Name (please print)

Date
PIGS IN CYBERSPACE: A DESIGN & CULTURE EXPLORATION OF NZ FARMING

Postgraduate Researcher: Madeleina Mañetto Quick,
School of Design Innovation, Victoria University of Wellington

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM:
INTERVIEWS

The interview will take approximately 45 minutes and involves a discussion around the list of questions provided on the supplementary Interview sheet.

I have been given, and have understood, an explanation of this research project. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

I understand that the Postgraduate Researcher and Supervisor will not use any identifying information unless I give written consent for it to be used for publication and/or public presentation.

I understand that any recorded information will not be used for any other purpose or released to others without my written consent, and that all transcripts and notes will be securely stored and destroyed 2 years after the completion of the project.

I understand that I may withdraw myself, and my permission, before 31 January, 2016 without having to give any reasons.

I understand that I will receive copies of all presentations and publications related to this research.

I consent to have information obtained by the Researcher through fieldwork and/or interviews for the purpose(s) of publication and/or public presentation.

Signature

Name (please print)

Date

18 Jan 2016
PIGS IN CYBERSPACE: A DESIGN & CULTURE EXPLORATION
OF NZ FARMING

Postgraduate Researcher: Madelena Mañietto Quick,
School of Design Innovation, Victoria University of Wellington

INTERVIEW BACKGROUNDER

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of my research. I appreciate your time and interest.

To give you a sense of what you can expect from me, on the second page of this document you will find a list of questions I have.

But I also believe that a good interview is a dialogue – and I encourage you to let me know if you think I may have missed anything important, or if there is something else you would like to discuss.

In preparation for our meeting, I would also appreciate if you review the information sheet and consent form you were provided.

Before I begin audio-recording our conversation, I will be happy to answer any questions or concerns you might have, and confirm the type of consent you are giving.

If the interview is conducted in person, I ask that you please bring the consent form with you, as I require a copy for my records. In the case of telephoned interviews, a scanned copy or email is acceptable.

Thank you again for your participation, I look forward to speaking with you.

Kind regards,

Madelena Mañietto Quick
Questions for Discussion

- Please describe Longbush Pork’s history of social media use.

- Please describe what a typical day or week looks like on each of your social media accounts.

- Are there things that you always or never post? Why?

- Have you ever regretted posting something? If so, why?

- Please describe some of your favourite posts and explain why you like them.

- What do you enjoy most about social media? What do you enjoy least?

- If you could change one thing about how social media works, what would it be?

- If you could tell any kind of story on social media what would it be?

- What kinds of posts do your followers like most? Why do you think that is?

- How do you think your followers understand farming?

- Do you consider yourself part of an online community? Why or why not?
PIGS IN CYBERSPACE: A DESIGN & CULTURE EXPLORATION OF NZ FARMING

Postgraduate Researcher: Madelena Mañetto Quick,
School of Design Innovation, Victoria University of Wellington

FIELDWORK PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

To Naya Brangenberg and Jeremy Wilhelm,

I am a postgraduate student in the Masters of Design Innovation programme at Victoria University of Wellington. As part of my degree I am undertaking a research project leading to a thesis submission on March 31 2016. This research has received approval from the Victoria University of Human Ethics Committee.

There has been a growing awareness of farming, animal welfare and emerging activism around the term ‘agvocacy’. I will investigate this issue through the responses and attitudes of consumers and producers. I will carry out a case study into Wairarapa-based Longbush pork and your use of Twitter and Instagram to understand how farmers are able to tell their own stories through an online medium.

To this end, my research has three objectives:

1) To critically examine the role of social media use in agriculture today

2) To assess the role of social media in New Zealand farming through a) an in-depth ethnographic case-study of Longbush Pork farming and social media use; and b) an anonymous online survey of their followers

3) To co-design and exhibit creative farming narratives for public feedback.

As part of Objective 2, all observations, images and interviews and questionnaire responses will be analysed for publication and/or public presentation.

You will be asked to provide written consent before I publish and/or present any quotes from conversations or interviews. No other person besides me and my supervisor, Dr. Anne Galloway, will see the material collected. The thesis will be submitted for marking to the School of Design Innovation and published and disseminated in the Victoria University of Wellington Library.

Participation in this project is completely voluntary and you may withdraw yourselves, or any information you have provided, before 31 January 2016 without having to provide any reasons. The research materials collected will be destroyed two years after the conclusion of the research, on 31 March 2018.

You will receive copies of all presentations and publications related to the research project.
If you have any questions or would like to receive further information about the project, please contact:

**Madelena Mañetto Quick**  
*School of Design, Victoria University of Wellington*

Email: manettmade@myvuw.ac.nz  
Phone: 027 778 5797

Or my supervisor:

**Dr. Anne Galloway**  
*School of Design, Victoria University of Wellington*

Email: anne.galloway@vuw.ac.nz  
Phone: 04 463 6230

For any other queries:

**HEC Convener AProf Susan Borbett**

Email: susan.corbett@vuw.ac.nz  
Phone: +64 4 463 5480
PIGS IN CYBERSPACE: A DESIGN & CULTURE EXPLORATION OF NZ FARMING

Postgraduate Researcher: Madelena Mañetto Quick

ANALYSIS OF LONGBUSH PORK SOCIAL MEDIA

After analysing the content of your social media accounts, I identified five main narrative themes. I analysed the relationship between the images you post and their captions, and looked at all of the comments to these posts by you and your followers. I decided to look at the top ten most popular posts on your Twitter and Instagram accounts as they have garnered the most attention and contain the most comprehensive examples of online conversations, plus they aptly demonstrate your online presence. Below I have listed the main narrative themes and some notes on each one:

Anthropomorphising of the Animals
- done by the producers and consumers
- makes the pigs more relatable to human audience
- pigs attributed humorous personalities
- producers notice the physical characteristics more and use these to anthropomorphise (calling pigs “cute”, “baby girl”, “beautiful” etc.)

Stories of Care
- stories of the unique care you take with your animals
- farmer taking sick animal inside and attempting to ‘save’ them
- images of pigs indoor prove popular

Consumers Owning Pigs
- followers express their desire to own their own pigs
- usually comments on photos of piglets (followers mostly want pigs when they are small)

Pigs as Pork
- these are rare instances of when pigs are acknowledged as food
- pigs are not often discussed as meat on the posts I analysed

Sharing Knowledge
- your online accounts provide a platform for people to ask you questions about farming
- people share their own stories of farming as replies to images of farm life
- producers are able to ask you specific questions about pig farming
SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESPONSES

I have also identified five narrative themes after analysing the responses to the online survey. I organised the responses according to which theme they correlated with. I have listed the five main narrative themes with notes on each one below:

Happy Farm Life
- many responses talk about the “happy” pigs
- responses show that people regard happiness of the pigs as extremely important
- life on Longbush Pork is seen as “idyllic”
- there are responses which also acknowledge the harshness of farming life (e.g. weather, terrain, “male pigs”)

Popularity of Piglets
- there is an overwhelmingly positive response to the birth of piglets
- when asked if they would like to see anything more on your accounts, three people asked for “more piglets”

Personality of the Pigs
- responses reflect the perceived personality and character of the pigs
- many cite the most interesting thing about pig farming as the personality of the pigs (e.g. “comical”, “intelligent”, “charismatic”)

Death of Animals
- a number of responses express the harshness of slaughtering the animals
- an equal amount also understand that the death of the animals is inevitable
- every respondent was a meat-eater
PIGS IN CYBERSPACE: A DESIGN & CULTURE EXPLORATION OF NZ FARMING

Postgraduate Researcher: Madelena Mañetto Quick,
School of Design, Victoria University of Wellington

INFORMATION SHEET FOR ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

Welcome to the Pigs in Cyberspace: A Design & Culture Exploration of NZ Farming online questionnaire!

You will be asked questions about your engagement with Longbush Pork’s Twitter and Instagram accounts, so that I can better understand how people relate to farmer’s images and text online.

- Participating in this research is VOLUNTARY and ANONYMOUS.
- You may respond to as many, or as few, questions as you wish.
- You are NOT required to provide any information that can personally identify you (such as your name or location) but individual responses will be used for public presentation and publication.
- By submitting your answers to these questions you are consenting to participate in my research and to the terms outlined above.

This questionnaire should take about 15 minutes to complete. Thank you in advance for sharing your thoughts!

This research has been approved by the Victoria University of Human Ethics Committee. My thesis will be submitted for marking to the School of Design, and disseminated via the Victoria University of Wellington Library. This research may also be published in print and online.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact Postgraduate Researcher Madelena Mañetto Quick (manettmade@myvuw.ac.nz) or Dr Anne Galloway (anne.galloway@vuw.ac.nz).
QUESTIONS

What is your impression of life on the Longbush Pork farm for the farmers?

What is your impression of life on the Longbush Pork farm for the animals?

What do you think is interesting about pig farming?

What do you think is most rewarding about pig farming?

What do you think is most challenging about pig farming?

Would you want to be a pig farmer? Why or why not?

How do you feel when piglets are born?

How do you feel when you learn that a pig has died?

What do you think constitutes a good life for a pig?

What do you think constitutes a good life for a farmer?

Is there anything you would like to see more of on Longbush Pork’s social media accounts?

Are you:
- a meat-eater
- vegetarian
- vegan
- other (please specify)

If there is anything else you would like to say about Longbush Pork online, please leave any additional comments below.
PIGS IN CYBERSPACE: A DESIGN & CULTURE EXPLORATION
OF NZ FARMING

Postgraduate Researcher: Madelena Mañetto Quick,
School of Design, Victoria University of Wellington

WEBSITE INFORMATION SHEET FOR ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

Welcome to the Pigs in Cyberspace: A Design & Culture Exploration of NZ Farming
research project!

On this website you will find four short videos filmed at the Longbush Pork farm
(https://longbushpork.co.nz/) in New Zealand’s Wairarapa region.

I am investigating how people relate to stories about livestock animals and farming, and after each
video you will find a link to a short questionnaire about what you have seen.

Please note that:

- Participating in this research is VOLUNTARY and ANONYMOUS.
- You may complete as many, or as few, questionnaires as you wish.
- Within each questionnaire, you may respond to as many, or as few, questions as you wish.
- You are NOT required to provide any information that can personally identify you (such as
  your name or location) but individual responses will be used for public presentation and
  publication.
- By submitting your answers to these questions you are consenting to participate in my
  research and to the terms outlined above.

Each questionnaire should take 10-15 minutes to complete. Thank you in advance for sharing your
thoughts!

This research has been approved by the Victoria University of Human Ethics Committee. My thesis
will be submitted for marking to the School of Design, and disseminated via the Victoria University
of Wellington Library. This research may also be published in print and online.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact Postgraduate Researcher
Madelena Mañetto Quick (manettmade@myvuw.ac.nz) or Dr Anne Galloway
(anne.galloway@vuw.ac.nz).
PIGS IN CYBERSPACE: A DESIGN & CULTURE EXPLORATION
OF NZ FARMING

Postgraduate Researcher: Madelena Mañetto Quick,
School of Design, Victoria University of Wellington

VIDEO QUESTIONNAIRE PROTOCOL

I have created four short videos to be posted online for viewer feedback. The first two videos are approximately three minutes long, and show two pigs’ perspectives as they move around the farm. The second video is also approximately three minutes long, and provides views of the farm from atop different pig shelters. The final four minute video is segmented into shorter, serialised videos that follow the lifecycle of a typical pig.

Each video will be hosted on Dr Anne Galloway’s More-Than-Human Lab Vimeo account (https://vimeo.com/morethanhumanlab) and posted to a project website at: https://pigsincyberspace.wordpress.com/

The front page of the project website will provide an overview of the thesis project and the content of the questionnaire infosheet (also attached).

After each video, visitors will be provided a link to a Qualtrics webpage that will handle the anonymous questionnaire.

Questions:

1. What kind of story (or stories) does this video tell about pigs?

2. What kind of story (or stories) does this video tell about farming?

3. What is your impression of life for the animals on the Longbush Pork farm after watching this video?

4. How does this video relate to, support, or challenge your impressions about pig farming?

5. How is this video different from what you usually see on Longbush Pork’s social media accounts, and would you like to see more videos like this? Why or why not?

6. Which kind of video did you most enjoy, and why?
   a. Pig’s Perspective (Hannah & Lucy Cam)
   b. Life of a Pig
   c. Pigs in Motion

7. If there is anything else you would like to say about the videos, please leave any additional comments below.
A.4. EXPERIENCE MAP ITERATIONS

Diagram showing relationships between farming, Twitter, Instagram, and social media. Keywords include "dairy farmers," "free range," "hashtags," "followers," "pigs," and "conversations."
A.5. LONGBUSH PORK’S WEEK ON FARMS OF THE WORLD

Link to Storify story: https://storify.com/MadzMQ/longbush-pork-farms-of-the-world
PIGS IN CYBERSPACE

Jason Uden
@FarmOfTheWorld

Jamie, here is a farmer you need to get on air, doing some really cool stuff.
Better than an economist. twitter.com/FarmsOfTheWorld...
9:25 AM - 9 May 2016

James Wright
@BPRCH

Really looking forward to @longfushwick’s week on @FarmsOfTheWorld. It has been great to follow his pig farm develop over the last few years.
10:33 AM - 9 May 2016

Oogie McGuire
@OogieMc

Eat them to save them, rare breeds need a job, without one they vanish. Great show eating rare breed meat.
@FarmsOfTheWorld
12:19 PM - 9 May 2016

Naya and I describe ourselves as accidental pig farmers. She is a veterinarian and I was a statistician specializing in sample design.
10:40 AM - 9 May 2016

We moved to the Wairarapa over eight years ago and bought three Large Blacks. We intended to keep one for breeding and eat the other two.
10:49 AM - 9 May 2016

We spent a few years building our herd, selecting the best for breeding, and selling the others as weaners for eating.
1:00 PM - 9 May 2016

At one stage we were selling weaner pigs to an outfit called Happy Pigs just outside Wellington. But they eventually folded...
1:04 PM - 9 May 2016

So there we were with all these piglets wondering what next? Then in one very caffeine moment I said to Naya that we’ll do it ourselves.
1:09 PM - 9 May 2016

And by do it ourselves that meant raising all the piglets to market weight, having them processed, butchered, and selling the pork ourselves.
1:11 PM - 9 May 2016

Large Blacks came from England, and were brought to NZ in the early 1900s. Used to be common on dairy farms. pigs.co.nz/largeblack.html
12:56 PM - 9 May 2016

We won’t say it was a smooth decision, but Naya eventually came around. Here she is even giving a talk to visitors!
1:29 PM - 9 May 2016
PIGS IN CYBERSPACE

Farms Of The World

About six months into the markets, we were approached by a wonderful chef in Waltham who had a nose-to-tail philosophy with cooking pork.

0:52 PM - 9 May 2016

This led to supplying him, & shortly afterwards other chefs approached. Being a small producer, it was a challenge to balance supply/demand.

5:06 PM - 9 May 2016

We elected to give up retail & focus on supplying chefs. This has been a successful model for a few years, where we are currently expanding.

6:09 PM - 9 May 2016

Farms Of The World

Tomorrow I’ll talk more about our expansion, including the land, the additional breeds, feed, water, and some of the technology we use.

6:10 PM - 9 May 2016

And I promise lots more pictures! My tweets look odd to me without them.

6:12 PM - 9 May 2016

Farms Of The World

Good morning! I like to get out between 6 - 6:30 am. Here’s one of our Duroc boars, Bullet Tooth Tony.

6:33 AM - 10 May 2016

Generally I do a first check to assess stock and odd bit of damage control. Pigs are more active at dawn/tusk, so easy to pick things up.

6:37 AM - 10 May 2016

Miaish the Younger

@Brackenhills

should I call you bullet? Tony?

You can call me Susan if you like.

6:50 AM - 10 May 2016

We were small scale (10-15 sows) for a few years, but knew if we were to make it sustainable we had to expand.

7:04 AM - 10 May 2016
That meant looking for additional land that was more suited to running pigs, i.e. flat to rolling and free draining soil.

Just a couple of years ago a big opportunity presented itself to acquire additional land, apply all our learnings and start afresh.

Our aim was to cross with the Large Blacks to get the hybrid vigour, improve growth rates and muscling.

Currently feeding out aquash to the dry sows, which is a supplement to their main diet, which I'll talk about later.

We also acquired our first Duinos, which are faster growing than LBS, and also do well in a free range system.

These crosses (Blackrots) have been massively successful, with carcass weights of 75-80 kgs at around 23 weeks.
PIGS IN CYBERSPACE

We acquired the new property in July 2015, and quickly set about getting the tracks, fencing, shed, water all going.

On the fencing front, I’ve created a series of 20 smaller rectangular paddocks, and a big lactating sow paddock.

The series of rectangular paddocks is to have the ability to rotate pigs, then reseed/crop after they’ve moved. Helps to better manage soil.

We’re in an area called Gladstone, in limestone country, over 400m above sea level, surrounded by sheep/sheep farms.

If we just set stocked, then the paddocks would quickly become a big moonscape. That is neither good for the land nor the pigs.

It is also worth noting that we don’t ring noses, so their grazing also includes digging. Hence the necessity to move them on.

Here are some paddocks that had pigs on them in summer. I put down a new clover mix that is just starting to grow.

Admittedly they should be a little further along, but we’ve had a very dry autumn.

After running LBS for years, it was an adjustment to Dunocs. They have a lively temperament & are protective mums.
PIGS IN CYBERSPACE

225

Our feed is from Sharpe's Stock Feeds, stockfeed.co.nz.

There are three diets:
- Grower
- Fattener
- Finisher

Longbush Pork @longbushpork

Dry sow and boars will get the grower ration, lactating sows and gilts the grower ration, and market pigs >70 kgs the finisher ration.

Longbush Pork @longbushpork

The diets are exclusive to our farm, where Sharpe's visited along with a nutritionist, and even factored in our soil sample results.

Longbush Pork @longbushpork

Sharpe's delivers the feed and puts into our three silos. I then auger the feed out and distribute to hoppers.
The hoppers have made a huge difference. Instead of spending hours feeding groups, I just bulk feed as required.
8:36 AM - 11 May 2016
12

Meet it’s intriguing to me and I’m a farmer. Longshrease is a very impressive operation.
8:36 AM - 11 May 2016
12

This method also minimises feed wastage, and helps more submissive pigs to get a decent feed.
8:40 AM - 11 May 2016
3

Thanks @farmjase ! We’ve made plenty of mistakes over the years, but are rectifying now. Always learning and improving!
9:04 AM - 11 May 2016
5

Our water is pumped up via a bore from aquifer to two 30 thousand litre tanks, then gravity fed to water units.
10:10 AM - 11 May 2016
1
15

These water units are our preferred way for them to drink, as pigs dirty troughs. I wouldn’t give a pig water that I wouldn’t drink myself.
10:24 AM - 11 May 2016
1
3

The huts measure 2.2m wide x 2.6m long x 1.1m high, and are easy to assemble and move around.
10:58 PM - 11 May 2016
5
The second type of hut is for groups of pigs, & is simply a 25-30 litre reject water tank I cut in half. Very snug.

Fenders are also important. They attach to hut and prevent newborn piglets from venturing away. Mum can walk over.

Twelv Wairerepa winds sometimes rival the winds of Jupiter’s Great Red Spot.

I do anchor these huts down as it can get very windy in the Wairerepa.
Regardless of the type of nut, we use lots of straw. Wheat/loaf as a base membrane, and barley as insulating straw.
4:04 PM - 11 May 2016

We do have a vaccination programme, starting off with Cirovirus for piglets from 3 weeks old & Improve for boars.
6:42 AM - 12 May 2016

The breeding herd is vaccinated for leptos, parvo and erysipelas.
6:52 AM - 12 May 2015

Too right! This photo quite accurately encapsulates our relationship 😊/twitter.com/moiraugrahm25/…
7:36 AM - 12 May 2015

Having a vet on farm is a bonus, ranging from technical knowledge & ability, affordability, through to her networks & other opportunities.
7:51 AM - 12 May 2016

Some of the LadyPigs greeting me at the gate.
The actually just want their squash and are giving me a hurry up.
4:07 PM - 11 May 2016

It’s advisable to do this when they are small, otherwise the chubbers can squirm and give a good knock to the nose!
6:45 AM - 12 May 2016
PIGS IN CYBERSPACE

We've hosted vet students from Denmark, Japan, & Australia, the latter being keen to compare our system to her experience in an indoor farm.
7:55 AM - 12 May 2018

Not only do we deal with earthquakes, but also wind. This is just the start. suppose to get up to 140 km/h soon.
5:29 AM - 12 May 2018

As I was just checking on this lot, we got a short and sharp magnitude 5.2 earthquake.
8:00 AM - 12 May 2018

Great photo! Wow, that is a high rate earthquake. They look like they don't miss a beat.
8:00 AM - 12 May 2018 - Bathurst, New Brunswick, Canada

It's been so brilliant to see the story of @bushpigspock's "accidental" pig farming adventures on @FarmsOfTheWorld this week!
10:15 AM - 12 May 2018

Obviously upset the pigs... Not 😞
twitter.com/FarmsOfTheWorld...
8:02 AM - 12 May 2018

And while I secure down huts and hopper lids, they play and carry on as normal.
10:21 AM - 12 May 2018

Recently we acquired our first Hampshires, in the form of one 5 month old boar, and 11 weaners.
1:09 PM - 12 May 2018
The motivation is to improve our growth rates. The boar is weighed weekly and is currently gaining 1.3 kg/day.

It’s important to spend time with these dudes, particularly when young, so they are easy to work with when older.

They are a very lively breed, more so than Durocs. The plan for the boar is to cross over Blackross & keep best weaner gilt for breeding.

Here is a link if you are interested in knowing more about the Hampshire breed: pigs.co.nz/hampshire.html

Here is a link if you are interested in knowing more about the Hampshire breed: pigs.co.nz/hampshire.html

Good morning! Having made it through the earthquakes and fierce winds yesterday, let’s hope today is an improvement!

Over the years we’ve helped universities on studying a fat gene, making how to’ videos for vet school at Massey, & a design/culture project.

For the latter, a Postgraduate Researcher at Victoria University looked into how we convey our story via Twitter/Instagram at @longhoofpark
PIGS IN CYBERSPACE

She analysed our accounts, and also visited and put a GoPro camera on a couple of pigs, as well as mounted shots.

They are amazing videos, and provide valuable and unique insight into these wonderful creatures! Plus there's cool music throughout!

@FarmsOfTheWorld

Our accounts are our interpretation of their world, this flipped it around so that you can see things from their point of view w humans.

@FarmsOfTheWorld

we have helped with research into cot death, bone forensics and ballistics. All very interesting.

@FarmsOfTheWorld

The wind just knocked the power out, so I'm having to use the chutes to access feed.

@FarmsOfTheWorld

An afternoon drafting 70+ kg pigs to finish paddock. Great conditions to work in, ignoring the gale force winds.

@FarmsOfTheWorld

Breaking my Twitter silence to share what I've been doing for the past year pigsincyberspace.wordpress.com

@Madi559Q

@longbushpork @saka_mancandy Haha awesome! He has been loving your @FarmsOfTheWorld tweets :D

@Danni_Moow

@longbushpork
The weighing system is a major advancement for us, stopping guesswork & helping me make better management decisions.

The portable yards are also used for loading pigs for the abattoir, rounding up for injections, preg checking sows and weaning.

They sleep when the earth is rumbling, and don't really seem aware of the strong winds battering their hut.

Holy crap is that dog 65 kg or 65lbs
Some of you noticed the dog in the weigh crate. I should have introduced my puppy, Kingman, Max earlier in the week.
6:16 AM - 14 May 2016

My favourite time of day, just before sunrise.
7:07 AM - 14 May 2016

The farm is always under observation with surveillance cameras. Used for security, checking pigs, hoppers, etc.
7:21 AM - 14 May 2016

Obviously this is used within reason. As I strongly believe first hand observation is still best, along with the other senses.
7:25 AM - 14 May 2016

I can control the cameras either with a laptop or an app on my phone, which means this works anywhere where there is internet coverage.
7:37 AM - 14 May 2016

The ultrasound is a never bit of tech we use. Good for preg checking (pigs or dogs), & measuring intramuscular fat...
9:36 AM - 14 May 2016

Ultimately it will assist in selection criteria for breeders, and to optimally select mating combinations. Lots of data to collect first!
9:38 AM - 14 May 2016

Started following @FarmsOfTheWorld because of @kyngbushyork. Only interested in real farms with animal welfare at heart.
9:35 AM - 14 May 2016
Pigs do not sweat, so in order for them to stay cool in summer, all paddocks have shade cloth with drip tube.

12:31 PM - 14 May 2016

And sometimes it's just fun to give them a hose down...

12:54 PM - 14 May 2016

Conversely, going into winter it's all about keeping them warm and keeping the drafts down with good huts and straw.

1:06 PM - 14 May 2016

The three wire option is electrified, while the other two have stand-off electric. Electric separates chaos/order.

2:12 PM - 14 May 2016

As far as fencing, main corridor is netting, between paddocks three wire insulated batten, and sow paddock x-fence.

2:05 PM - 14 May 2016

And of course the preferred method of sinking posts is with the post rammer!

2:14 PM - 14 May 2016
The fence was designed for alpacas, but I like the finer mesh to contain pigs. Being 1.2 m high, it cuts in half to get twice the length.

Come springtime it will be right back into fencing for this side of the operation. Can’t wait!

A couple of breeding boar candidates checking me out... as I check them out.

what bruises!

Good morning on what is my last morning on this account. Just out on morning rounds enjoying the sights and sounds.

Wel, @brangerhoff does procedures like toenail trims and injury surgeries under anesthesia w/ pain relief and abx.

The process of bringing pork to market begins with selecting and loading pigs that are 100-110 kg live weight.
We drive our pigs ourselves to the abattoir and assist to offload them quietly. They are killed later the same day.

Weekly weighing went well. Hampshire bear Barrington still gaining 1.3 kgs/day, and Huckle just cracked 200 kgs.

The carcasses are broken down and delivered to restaurant chefs, butchers, charcutiers, and home cooks.

As performance/production oriented as we become, we still love to have fun with them & play them odd bit of music.

About 3/4 years to figure out what we’re about, what our pork best suited for & developing long term relationships.

For at the heart of it all, we are just an ordinary couple that is passionate about pigs and love working with them.

Thank you for a great week! It was an honour to be here & share our story. If you would like to keep up with us, we are at @Longbushpork.
If you have any comments or questions, I'll be on this account for a few more hours.

But now to feed the Ladypigs their squash!
3:29 PM - 15 May 2018

@FarmsOfTheWorld your radio station is worse than mine
3:04 PM - 15 May 2018

One last shot of some of the crew as the sunheads down and the wilds pick up.
4:05 PM - 15 May 2018