

Interspecies Mateship: Tom Collins and Pup

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The renowned loquaciousness of Tom Collins—his prolix verbosity and his penchant for innumerable obtuse digressions—coupled with his notorious myopic unreliability as a narrator—are some of the reasons why Joseph Furphy’s *Such is Life* (1903) has a reputation as a classic Australian novel that is difficult to read and teach. Put more harshly, Furphy’s masterpiece is often dismissed as an impenetrable long-winded series of bush yarns with no apparent plot or structure: a shaggy dog story *par excellence*. However as numerous literary scholars have highlighted, including Furphy himself, there are ways in which *Such is Life*—and in particular Tom’s often oblique digressions—do contain various thematic structures and a carefully crafted plot held together by the use of hidden stories.

A little discussed structural element of Furphy’s magnum opus and the two excised chapters that later became the novels *Rigby’s Romance* and *The Buln-buln and the Brolga* is the importance of dogs to these narratives, especially the centrality of Tom’s infamous mayhem-inducing kangaroo dog Pup (aka ‘The Eton Boy’). Pup is a major character who, I argue, links these three novels together in his own meandering way and whose misadventures provide not only comic relief, ironies and puns, but also a canine-centric structure to Furphy’s collection of shaggy dog stories. Moreover, I contend that the intimate relationship between Tom and Pup points to something deeper and emotional; a companionship between bushman and dog which offers a model for a potentially radical form of interspecies mateship.

Pup may not occupy the same amount of narrative space as Tom’s ‘two-footed mates’,¹ such as the American socialist Jefferson Rigby, the boundary rider Barefooted Bob or Tom’s childhood friend the bullocky Steve Thompson, but Tom’s kangaroo dog is the only character to appear—besides Tom and Steve—in all three novels.² Pup’s continuous presence as Tom’s companion provides an important link between texts, especially in his role as a comic plot device. This is perhaps most evident, and utilised to maximum comic effect, in the river crossing episode in Chapter III of *Such is Life*. In the early evening, just after Tom’s meerschaum pipe has delivered a sermon on the virtues of Christian socialism, he attempts to

cross the murky fast-moving Murray in a bark canoe but is effectively thwarted by Pup's erratic behaviour. The kangaroo dog firstly capsizes and sinks the canoe, then just as Tom has managed to place his damp clothes and still-dry pocket valuables on his head, Pup unwittingly nearly drowns Tom by 'catapult[ing] himself through twenty feet of space' (99) submerging man, dog and possessions. Pup's behaviour here triggers a confusing and comic chain of events as Tom grapples 'in puris naturalibus' (82) for most of the remaining chapter. As Susan K. Martin argues 'the chapter records the progressive loss of all boundaries' (69). Tom's nude wanderings lead to a loss of not only his trousers and masculinity, but also his sense of time (his watch), geography (he mistakes Victoria for New South Wales), his identity (Tom is misread as a lunatic) and eventually, as Ivor Indyk explains, 'he in effect loses all significance as a human being' (310) when the naked bushman is described as 'Morgan's big white pig' (126) and 'a white thing' (107). Even the absence of Pup forms an important structural role in this chapter as his 'confirmed habit of getting lost' (261) allows Tom to meet the Quarterman family and more importantly the opportunity to indulge in a flirtatious encounter with Jim/Jemima Quarterman.

A possible prototype for the mayhem-inducing antics of Furphy's Pup, as R. S. White has argued, is Shakespeare's Crab: the dog of the clown Launce from the play *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (White 9-10). Crab is the subject of Launce's two famous comic monologues. In the first he bemoans his dog's lack of sympathy with his misfortune of having to leave his family to travel with his master (II, iii, 1-31). In the second monologue, the Clown recounts the various canine offences Crab has committed, which include stealing puddings, geese and a 'capon leg' from the Royal court, and worse still, the misdemeanour of urinating under the Duke's table and on the heroine Silvia's dress. Launce receives punishment for Crab's antics in order to spare him (IV, iv, 1-37). In this sense Furphy's Pup can be read as the antipodean mongrel offspring of Shakespeare's famous dog, as rewriting Crab within an Australian Riverina setting. The shame and angst Launce experiences and complains about is intertextually echoed in Tom's naked canine-created shame in Chapter III of *Such is Life* and in Chapter XLV of *Rigby's Romance* where a quote of misplaced melodrama from Macaulay's poem 'Virginia' in *Lays of Ancient Rome* (1842)—'See, see thou dog! What thou hast done; and hide thy shame in hell' (240)—serves as an epitaph for Pup's 'crime' of eating Furlong's fish. Launce's momentary loss of his identity and humanness—expressed in his muddled lines: 'I am the dog. No, the dog is himself, and I am

the dog. O, the dog is me, and I myself' (II, iii, 21-22)—is paralleled in Tom's confusing loss of his identity and humanness in Chapter III at the paws of Pup.

Pup's role as a comic plot device is not limited to individual chapters or episodes, but rather pervades all three novels especially through a series of extended jokes and puns centred on Pup's whims and desires. A major running joke that provides structure to Furphy's three novels, or more aptly ironically punctuates the narrative at key moments, is Pup's insatiable and often larcenous gluttony. Just as Shakespeare's Crab accumulates a litany of crimes relating to food that the clown Launce must bear responsibility for, Tom is similarly compromised by Pup's notorious appetite. Pup's gastronomic habits and thievery literally pull Tom this way and that, undercutting the narrative and creating comic and dramatic effects. At the beginning of *The Buln-buln and the Brolga* Tom offers the reader the image of Pup with 'ten pounds of stolen sausages hanging festooned from his mouth, and tripping him up from time to time' (12). Despite Tom claiming 'as a rule only fishermen's dogs eat fish' (240), the 'capitalistic contour' (240) of Pup's stomach is all that remains of Furlong's prized thirty pounder in *Rigby's Romance*, which serves as a telling 'dog-eat-dog' conclusion to the debate about individualism versus socialism that occurs among the bushmen the previous night (Croft, 242). In *Such is Life* Pup purloins bullocky Mosey Price's boiled leg of mutton (5-6), 'ten pounds of salt mutton' (51) and varies his tastes with a plucked and dressed fowl (104). Tom describes Pup's stomach as 'gorged like a boa-constrictor' (261) after eating Nosey Alf's turkey leaving only 'a pair of half-chewed feet still attached to the loosened rope' (261). Pup even manages to raid the secured tuckerbags of Tom's horses, Cleopatra and Bunyip. As Tom notes: 'a kangaroo-dog can abstract food with a motion more silent—and certainly more swift—than that of a gnomon's shadow on a sun-dial' (201). Tom does not simply turn a blind eye to Pup's larcenous appetite but actively colludes in his dog's gastronomic crimes. With Furlong's fish Tom covers up Pup's muddy tracks and blames the theft on a native cat. And in true *flâneur* style, Tom tramps through the slums of Echuca chiefly to allow Pup time to digest his stolen sausages in *The Buln-buln and the Brolga*.

Pup, however, is also legitimately fed in *Such is Life*. Tom gets him 'a pluck' from a 'Tungusan butcher' (175), Ida the 'white trash' housemaid of Runnymede Station feeds him a 'whole milk-dish full o' scraps' (219), the ex-sailor turned boundary rider, Jack the Shellback, exclaims 'Pore creature's hungry' and feeds him cooked mutton (274). When recovering Pup from the Quarterman family, Tom finds him contentedly chewing 'a large

bone between his paws' (126) and in *Rigby's Romance* he is welcomed with 'twenty pounds of scraps' (xvii) at Mrs Ferguson's coffee palace in Echuca. When it comes to water rations, Pup receives the same half-pint as the mysterious wayfarer in the Wilcannia shower, more than Tom's 'quarter-pint' (267). Furphy's text also plays with the Aesop fable of the greedy dog looking at his reflection in a puddle with stolen meat in its mouth. Tom espouses the moral of the fable when discussing the good-hearted Christian squatter, Stewart of Kooltopa, who 'knowing when he is well off ... leav[es] reflected meat to the inverted dog in the water' (165). However, Pup refutes the fable's moral with his gluttonous crimes remaining unpunished. As Tom proclaims, 'There's always a siege of Jerusalem going on in his inside. The kangaroo-dog's the hungriest subject in the animal kingdom' (274). Pup's supposed real name, 'The Eton Boy', becomes in this comic gourmand context a phonetic pun on 'eatin' boy'. The ultimate logic of this joke about Pup's unappeased appetite occurs towards the end of *Such is Life* when Tom is staying with Jack the Shellback and Pup starts to sniff the comatose Tom in preparation for eating his human companion:

We were both asleep, when I became aware of any icy touch on my face, accompanied by a breath strongly suggesting to my scientific nose the hydro-carburetted oxy-chloro-phosphate of dead bullock. Drowsily opening one eye, I saw Pup standing by my side. He had thought I was dead; but finding his mistake, he walked away through the gloom with an injured and dissatisfied air, and began trying to root the lid off Jack's camp-oven with his pointed nose. One peculiarity of the kangaroo-dog is, that though he has no faculty of scent at the service of his master, he can smell food through half-inch boiler-plate; and he rivals Trenck or Monte Cristo in making way through any obstacle which may stand between him and the object of his desires. (274)

Julian Croft, one of the few critics to substantially address the importance of Pup in Furphy's novels, reads the kangaroo-dog and his unrelenting appetite as 'the embodiment of selfishness, the nonpareil of arrogant consumerism, and a fitting symbol of all that is wrong with the Darwinian social model' (205). In particular, Croft draws attention to the opening scenes of *The Buln-buln and the Brolga* and highlights the way both Furphy and Tom play with Darwin's last work on the utility of earthworms³ as a contrast to the ruthless individualism, survival of the fittest ideology and capitalist dog-eat-dog mentality that Pup supposedly represents and literalises (Croft 252).

Besides the roaming larcenous whims of Pup's stomach, Tom is also much attuned to his kangaroo dog's sleeping habits. While at Nosey Alf/Molly Cooper's hut, Tom boasts: 'One

characteristic of childhood I still retain is the ability to sleep anywhere, like a dog' (259). Ironically, the next line has Tom making a fuss about Pup's sleeping arrangements, requesting Nosey Alf leave the door open because he 'likes to go in and out at his own pleasure' (249). Throughout *Such is Life* Pup takes numerous such slumbering liberties, for example, sleeping on Tom's coat (31) and his 'possum rug' (83-84). He can often be found 'reposing by [Tom's] side' (177) or when it suits him on Tom himself, as in *Rigby's Romance* when Tom awakes to find Pup 'pillowed on my neck' (240).

Similar to Pup's gluttonous appetite another thematic thread, or running joke, throughout the three texts is how attractive Pup is: the way he is held up as a valuable object and subject of desire among the diverse range of Riverina inhabitants. People invariably compliment Tom on Pup's attractiveness: the swagman Andy Glover declares 'Rakin' style o' dog you got there' (93) and the bullocky Mosey Price 'Grand dog you got' (6). Pup is admired by Nosey Alf, Sam Brackenridge, eight-year-old Hereward Falkland-Pritchard, the postman at Echuca, and at the end of *Rigby's Romance* the 600 odd 'football crowd' in Deniliquin (250). Tom is also on the constant lookout for would-be thieves eager to steal Pup. The dog is coveted by the farmer Quarterman JP, Mosey Price, the kangaroo hunter in *Rigby's Romance* and Toby the Aboriginal stockman who wants to inherit Pup after Tom's death: 'I don't wish you no harm, Collins; but I wouldn't mind if you was in heaven, s'posen you left me that dog' (283).

Why is Pup so valued? Is it another joke? In one sense Pup's value in the Riverina can be read in an ironic jocular vein as he does not actually function as a valuable working dog: he is no good with cattle—as in Chapter I of *Such is Life* when he chases the bullocks off in the wrong direction (42)—and cannot even catch his namesake, the kangaroo. In this light, Pup's name may also refer to the colloquial saying 'to sell somebody a pup', meaning to dupe someone by selling them something worthless. Yet Pup's inability or unwillingness to work does not seem to deter admirers and would-be thieves: he remains a prized canine in the bush. Tom's ownership of a useless working dog can be viewed as a sign of his privileged class status, functioning as a potent symbol that Tom can afford conspicuous consumption in such harsh utilitarian rural conditions. Pup's anti-work habits, the fact he is a working dog who does not work, can also be read in a potentially more radical way as an Australian example of the French concept *désœuvrement*. This French word is often translated as 'idleness' or more awkwardly 'worklessness' in English. Pierre Joris in his translator's preface to Blanchot's *The Unavowable Community*, argues that no English word truly conveys the sense of the

French; rather ‘the puritan impulses of Anglo-American culture block the very possibility of a positive, active connotation to be attached to the notion of an absence of work’ (xxiv). But Joris overstates the case: the virtuous pleasure of unemployment or the positive release from work does find a synonym in the English language in the concept of leisure.

The positive value attached to Pup’s anti-work habits, the ways in which he is admired and desired despite the fact that he is useless at any given job, unable to perform the most rudimentary working or hunting dog tasks, presents a radical challenge to a Protestant work ethic by offering the reader an Australian version of *désœuvrement*. The representation of Pup as a non-working working dog echoes the famous opening lines of *Such is Life* when Tom Collins proudly proclaims ‘Unemployed at last!’ (1) and later describes himself as ‘a man with no official hopes, or corresponding fear of the sack’ (264). Rather than Pup simply representing capitalist, materialistic or social Darwinist traits and impulses as Croft has argued, the opposite can be read in Pup’s anti-work working dog behaviour. Pup does what he wants: he refuses a utilitarian ethos and challenges the human-centric logic of the capitalist marketplace with his voracious theft of food coupled with his ‘ambling listlessly’ (*SL* 2) and ‘dawdling along’ (*BB* 12).

Such is Life is populated with other dogs in addition to Pup. However, the only other canine to receive a name, in fact two names, is Steve Thompson’s dog ‘Monkey’ who is lost or stolen and reappears as the Christian boundary rider Sollicker’s dog ‘Jack’. One way to approach the representation of dogs in Furphy’s novels is to follow Croft’s lead and read such canines as symbolic. In this sense we can view Furphy’s dogs as reflecting the traits or values of their owners in various ways. For example, Nosey Alf’s black and tan collie affectionately licks his/her fingers when depressed (259), while Warrigal Alf’s dead cattle dog echoes his own near death state (134). The lost/stolen Monkey highlights the curse of betrayed mateship that continually haunts Steve Thompson. In *Rigby’s Romance* Thompson gets a new puppy and bemoans its fate as he has already lost five dogs (104). The Irish boundary rider Rory O’Halloran is sadly placed in the predicament that his dog fails to find his lost daughter Mary, ‘the coming Australian’, just as he has failed (190).

Another symbolic use of dogs occurs in *Rigby’s Romance*, where triggered by the howling of Thompson’s new cattle pup that ‘resembled the shrill appeal of a pig caught in a garden fence’ (104), the camp fire stories turn to the topic of dogs, revealing key character traits of the bushmen gathered. Thompson’s new pup is nursed on his lap with real affection. The

farmer George Binney remarks on the value of clever dogs as property in the bush, easily stolen. Tom agrees. Frank Furlong, the possum trapper, watchmaker and taxidermist declares that ‘the fidelity of some dogs is marvellous’, while the bible-reading and Latin-quoting bullocky Dixon recalls how dogs will reputedly ‘shepherd a drunk master’ and asks if they have souls. Lushington, the young Methodist minister or ‘sin-shifter’ discusses the supposed anti-Semitism of dogs (104-105). The diverse range of opinions, values and ideas associated with dogs in the Riverina highlights not only the importance of working dogs to these men but the ways in which a four-footed companion is essential to bush life.

In addition to Tom and Pup sharing an anti-work work ethic they also resemble each other in the way their identities change and ambiguously fluctuate depending on the situation and the audience. Tom’s name changes, as does his title and appearance in his travels. At various points he is mistaken for a Member of Parliament, a bishop, a potential buyer of Runnymede station and a banker. Tom also poses as a Scotsman. He has an ability to move with relative ease through the Australian class system from the squattocracy to the bullockies’ campfire. Correspondingly, Pup’s colour changes throughout the three texts from ‘slate-coloured’ (2) at the beginning of *Such is Life* to ‘blue’ (122) while Hereward in *The Buln-buln and the Broлга* describes him as the ‘ghat big, spindly, green dog’ (63). As an unofficial breed kangaroo dogs are generally agreed to be a mix of greyhound and deerhound, so like his master, Pup is an antipodean hybrid.⁴

Even though such a symbolic reading of the dogs in *Such is Life* and Furphy’s other novels has its merits and can be illuminating, it also reads through the relationship between bushmen and dogs as representing something else, rather than looking at what these interspecies relationships actually do and are. In other words, reading dogs as symbols is a very human-centric approach. In this light, Pup’s name reflects not only the directness of Australian humour—‘calling a spade a spade’ idea—but it can also be read as recognising a dog is simply a dog. Pup is a very non anthropomorphic name: Pup just is. The *désœuvrement* of Pup is not just an example of the dog symbolically reflecting his master; it is part of the bond that holds them together and confirms their relationship. Pup is an active participant sharing with Tom an approach to the world, unlike the other dogs in Furphy’s novels.

In *Rigby’s Romance* when Tom asks the young and keen Sam Brackenridge why he desires Pup and what he could use him for, Sam answers: ‘Well, a feller must have a dog, an’ he may as well have a kangaroo dog’ (34). Sam’s seemingly simplistic reply points to a deeper notion

of needing a dog—‘a feller must have a dog’—for companionship. This profound want for canine companionship is also expressed and experienced more explicitly by Steve Thompson in *Such is Life* when he opines on the importance and love of his lost or stolen dog Monkey: ‘That dog would have broke his heart if he’d been parted from me’ (179) and ‘That dog would never leave me while he had a breath in his body’ (180). Nosey Alf asks Tom the quite obvious question to pose to the owner of a kangaroo dog: ‘Do you get many kangaroos with him’. Tom replies:

‘Oh, no [...] I never get one, and don’t intend to. I never let him go after anything. It’s quite enough, and sometimes more than enough, for him to do his regular travelling. The hot weather comes very severe on him; in fact, some days I have to give him a drink every hour, or oftener. Then he has the hard ground to contend with; and when the rain comes, the dirt sticks between his toes, and annoys him. Windy weather is bad for him, too; and frost puts a set on him altogether. Then he’s always swarming with fleas, and in addition to that, the flies have a particular fancy for him. And, seeing that one half of the population is always plotting to steal him, and the other half trying to poison him, while, for his own part, he has a confirmed habit of getting lost, you may be sure we have plenty to occupy our minds, without thinking about kangaroos. He’s considerably more trouble to me than all my money, but he’s worth it. As you say he’s a fine dog. I don’t know what I should do without him.’ (261)

Tom’s litany of complaints is comically delivered and can be read as a prime example of Tom’s fussiness when it comes to Pup, however, the passage is also another example of Pup’s *désœuvrement* and an apt description of a bush dog’s life, desires and personal whims. Tom acknowledges this canine-centric world view which he understands and has empathy for. The close companionship Pup and Tom share, how this relationship between species is built on a canine-centric rather than human-centric dynamic, presents a potentially radical coupling: an interspecies version of mateship epitomised in Tom’s use of ‘we’ and ‘our minds’.

Among Furphy’s contemporaries are other literary examples of interspecies mateship: notably Henry Lawson’s ‘The Loaded Dog’ (1901) and Barbara Baynton’s ‘Squeaker’s Mate’ (1902). In Lawson’s comic story Tommy the gregarious retriever is described as ‘an overgrown pup, a big, foolish, four-footed mate He seemed to take life, the world, his two-legged mates, and his own instinct as a huge joke’ (96). Akin to the inability of Furphy’s Pup to undertake productive work in the bush, Tommy’s actions, especially his desire to enthusiastically retrieve everything, from a dead cat, his swimming human mates and the

loaded cartridge of explosives, creates memorable humorous episodes. As Ken Stewart argues Tommy is ‘the gregarious impulse incarnate, canonised and canine-ised’ (113). Like Pup, it is Tommy’s lack of utility that endears him to his fellow bushmen; ‘They loved him for his good-heartedness and foolishness’ (96). In a more gothic and sombre vein, Baynton’s story suggests that Mary’s dog is her true loyal and unwavering mate when compared to her mousey husband Squeaker. The new wife pinpoints the relationship between the crippled Mary, ‘the old mate’, and her dog: ‘She rated this dog’s intelligence as almost human, from many of its actions in omission and commission in connection with this woman’ (69). In Baynton’s story interspecies mateship sheds its humorous connotations and instead becomes a relationship essential to the survival of the Australian bushwoman, a sentiment echoed in Lawson’s ‘The Drover’s Wife’ (1892) where the dog Alligator defends his mistress in her time of need.

Of all Tom’s flirtatious encounters and potential romances—with Jim/Jemima Quarterman, Helena Vivian, Mrs Beaudesart and Ida—the only consistent and earnest object of desire is his much admired kangaroo dog who ‘constantly loved me although I was poor’ (97). In relation to the parting conversation between Nosey Alf and Tom about the value of dogs, which follows their heated debate about the nature of romantic love (257-259), Croft argues: ‘A less generous reading of Furphy might interpret the moral as: women love men; men love dogs’ (199). However, this reading is only ungenerous if one devalues the man-dog relationship and fixes it in a binary against a normative man-woman love. For example, Croft’s reading ignores Nosey Alf’s intimate relationship with his/her black and tan collie dog: Nosey explains, ‘I don’t know what I should do without my dog, either’ (261).

So how are we to read the declarations of dog love in Furphy’s novels? Do Pup and the other canines function as substitutes for other types of emotional relationships whether it is heterosexual marriage, homosocial bonding or even a desire for paternity? One way to approach such questions is to critique the very notion of substitution. Marjorie Garber in her book *Dog Love* (1996) argues:

The point is perhaps not to argue about whether dog love is a substitute for human love, but rather to detach the notion of ‘substitute’ from its presumed inferiority to the ‘real thing’. Don’t all loves function, in a sense, with a chain of substitutions? ... To distinguish between primary and substitutive loves is to understand little about the complexity of human emotions’ (135).

Donna Haraway in her *The Companion Species Manifesto* (2003) sees the idea of substitution as an offensive and reductive human-centric understanding of interspecies relationships:

I resist being called the ‘mom’ to my dogs because I fear infantilization of the adult canines and misidentification of the important fact that I wanted dogs, not babies. My multi-species family is not about surrogacy and substitutes; we are trying to live other tropes, other metaplasms. We need other nouns and pronouns for the kin genres of companion species, just as we did (and still do) for the spectrum of genders. (95-96)

Like the symbolic approach to dogs, to read interspecies alliances and love as representing something else—as a substitute or form of surrogacy—avoids looking at what these human-dog relationships actually do and are. Instead of being a figure for displacing non-normative desires—like Tom’s horses or Warrigal Alf’s bullocks (see Barlow, 173)—Pup is both an object and subject of desire in Tom’s recollections. The verbal and non-verbal love expressed between the two requires, following Haraway, ‘other nouns and pronouns’ with one example offered here being my use of interspecies mateship.

At the beginning of *The Buln-buln and the Brolga*, Tom and Pup parody a courting couple when Tom feeds his beloved companion a festoon of stolen sausages, then ‘after a mutual caress, we resumed our way to the romantic nook that I wotted of’ (12). Tom may have erotic day dreams about Jim Quarterman’s lips, but it is The Eton Boy who provides Tom with his only kiss in the three novels: ‘Then I became aware of the faithful Pup, lying at my back, his throat pillowed on my neck, and his fine Osiris-like muzzle resting against my moustache’ (RR 240). This queer kiss of muzzle on moustache ambiguously valorises a bond between dog and man as a form of interspecies mateship that challenges dominant heteronormative and human-centric thinking. Tom’s unconditional affection for Pup can be viewed as offering a non-normative configuration of desire that remakes both heterosexual and homosexual models of coupling and moves in a queer way beyond the homo/hetero and human/animal binaries into the radical realm of interspecies mateship. As Alice Kunziar elaborates:

Dog love reorients companionship and kinship away from the normative strictures of heterosexual coupling and the traditional family. Taken seriously, it enjoins us to redefine bonds of privacy, succour and habituation. Indeed, the relation to the dog cannot be restricted to the singular role of guardian, lover, companion, or child but incorporates all of those modalities and shifts between them. (207)

Pup plays a crucial role in Furphy’s *œuvre* not only as a comic plot device, but also as an invaluable and constant companion for Tom Collins in his nomadic bush life. To Tom, Pup is

not a substitute or a furry surrogate for a human mate, whether it be man, woman or child. Rather, Tom and Pup's bond is something different, an interspecies form of mateship that provides a lasting unconditional companionship built on love, respect and empathy; as Alice Kunzinar argues 'a radically open alternative to common social partnering' (209). Together Tom and Pup share a positive anti-work work ethic—an Australian version of *désœuvrement*—that challenges the materialistic and utilitarian ethos of nineteenth-century colonial life in the antipodes. Furthermore, Pup's antics defy the human-centric logic of the world he so aimlessly inhabits. Tom's life, his routine, his day and night, are disrupted and adjusted in relation to Pup's desires and whims and especially his unrelenting appetite. Pup refuses human training or logic and Tom acknowledges this as part of his 'such is life' philosophy.

NOTES

¹ This phrase comes from Henry Lawson's story 'The Loaded Dog' (1901).

² Tom and Steve's childhood antics also feature in Furphy's short story 'High Art' (1904).

³ Tom is reading Darwin's *The Formation of Vegetable Mould, through the Action of Worms, with Observations on their Habits* (1881).

⁴ See the cover image of a Pupesque kangaroo dog (although, appropriately, a female).

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