

Equine Society or Not? The cultural hegemony of horse keeping at home versus at livery

Julie McKeown

EAAP, 25th August 2014

jum1@aber.ac.uk

Research Questions

- What (and who) makes us the horse people we are?
 - From a consumer behaviour and cultural aspect how are we affected by others?
 - Is there a difference between full livery, DIY livery and keeping your horse at home?
- Who holds the power in different situations and contexts and how does this affect others?



Method

- Auto-ethnographical
- Using anecdotal evidence from fellow researchers (Wallace and Dashper) to correlate
- Qualitative



History

- Bought from and kept my first horse at an arab stud – there for 10 years – full livery, adult only
- Next yard, full livery, adult only, 'hobby' yard
- Then full livery in home yard
- Moved to DIY
- Full livery, adult only professional yard
- At home, now for 15 years



Arabian Stud

- Professional
- Autocratic and inflexible
- No-one as clever as owner
- Excellent grounding/training
- Entrepreneurial and knowledgeable
- Friends?
- Only thought of as novice



Hobby Yard

- Owner a 'wannabe' dressage rider
- 4 liveries all 'friends'
- Schoolyard mentality
- Friend or out
- Little learning or knowledge



'Home' Yard

- Just us and the family
- Relaxed and knowledgeable
- Helped not forced
- Respected



DIY Yard

- Small and friendly but....
- One or two 'kingpins'
- Expected to keep to their routine
- Left after a month



Professional Yard

- Knowledgeable
- Felt at home – respected
- Owner cared
 - Horses and livery owners
- Gentle culture but rules for safety



At Home

- Horses at home for 15 years
- Free to do things my way?
 - Input from friends and husband
- Ride with friends
 - Certain people more 'equal' than others
 - Cliques
- 'My' yard culture
 - Farm horsemanship



Findings

- Full livery culture dominated by yard owner
- DIY culture often dominated by one or two owners
- At home, can be dominated by friends
 - More knowledgeable
 - More forceful
- Confidence can easily be knocked
 - Social Media influence too?
- Gender issue?



Findings correlated by research by Wallace and Dashper 2014

Does this fit with your
understanding/experience?



Any Questions?

