

Who Cares?: Women, Emotion, and Bodies in Animal Activism

by

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs

In partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Sociology

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

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Abstract

This thesis uses a critical feminist lens to examine the role of gender in shaping animal rights (AR) activism in North America. It draws on the content of eight semi-structured interviews conducted with AR activists who live in a mid-sized Canadian city. I argue that North American AR activism is a feminized space within the public sphere, by virtue of the emotional labour of care that characterizes it. This community of mostly white, female AR activists reflects a dominant patriarchal hierarchy of legitimate knowledges. Insofar as we are a society constrained by gender, the women use strategies of activism that draw on their bodies and emotions which, within the gendered constraints of society, are acceptably female forms of knowledge and expression. They experience corporeal effects, observable in high rates of burnout and PTSD among activists, and through exclusions of bodies through the practices of veganism and nude activism.

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Acknowledgments

I am incredibly proud and honoured to have completed this project with unending support and encouragement from all of the fine, intelligent, and caring people who grace my life.

Thank you to Jacqueline Kennelly, my thesis supervisor and mentor. The transparency, honesty, reflexivity and care with which you guide your students has been an unbelievable gift – to myself and to others – as I have navigated a world that feels so foreign. Thank you, also, to Lauren Corman for your involvement in this project. Your tough questions have inspired me to push forward in thinking and writing around this subject.

Thank you to the professors who have challenged me intellectually, and who have pushed the boundaries of my comfort in the classroom and on paper. Thank you for recognizing quiet intellect, and for thoughtfully making space in your classrooms. Thank you, in particular, to Paula Whissell for the genuine care that you have for all our students and faculty.

Thank you to the animal rights activists with whom I have worked, and who have contributed so meaningfully to this project. It would not have been possible without your effort. Thank you for working for animals, and thank you for working to inspire compassion and care in others. Thank you to the animals.

Thank you to my peers and colleagues, with whom I have grown so close. I could not have been blessed with a better, more encouraging, caring, or intelligent group of comrades. Thank you, in particular, to Oliver Crosby, Kent Hall, and Preeti Hothi. You have, individually and collectively, inspired me with your enthusiasm for teaching and learning, and with your beautiful, critical minds. Our Friends Against Research and Thesis Stagnation (FARTS) group has been a crutch for me throughout this process. Truly, you are the kindred spirits I had hoped that one day I would find.

Thank you to my sister and my parents for your continued support. Thank you to my best friend and partner, Ronald Garson. Words cannot convey my gratitude for the love you have shown and the support you have so selflessly given me throughout this process. Thank you for bearing with me on this emotional roller coaster, and for picking up the slack while I was married to this project.

Thank you to Kayla Hill, Kerry Turner, Seghen Woldai, Kerry Maclaine, and Heidi Hanson – my girls – who have been with me from the early days. Thank you for being the incredible, inspiring women you have grown to be, and thank you to Kayla and Seghen for blazing the Master's trail for me – had I not seen you both struggle and succeed before me, I might not have considered it an option. Thank you, most of all, for the laughter.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

My Beginnings

The groundwork for my interest in undertaking this research project was laid over the course of the past seven years. I came to the conversation about animal rights in 2010. Until that point vegetarianism was completely foreign to me, and I subscribed to predominant understandings of the stereotypical vegetarian. My sister, having been vegetarian for four years during my teenage years, was victim to my incessant taunting, my jabs, and my unintentionally unsupportive quips about the lack of meat on her plate and her inability to partake in our meat-centred family traditions. My parents, who supported her decision to forgo meat, chided along with me. It was not until I became acquainted with someone who dragged me unwilling into the conversation about eating animals and using their by-products that I found, to my surprise, that the arguments resonated with me. As quickly as I had dismissed my sister's decision to be vegetarian, I made the transition to vegetarianism, and nine months later to veganism. From 2011 to 2015 I lived a healthy vegan lifestyle, and embodied the role of the animal activist and advocate. I took every opportunity to "educate" my friends and family on the horrors of and tortures suffered by farmed animals. I made vegan food for my friends; I joined Carleton University's now defunct Animal Rights Society; I leafleted across campuses and outside of grocery stores; I held PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) signs, sometimes with grotesque imagery. I was there, I was involved. I never felt comfortable being there or involved though, and so my participation in public advocacy eventually tapered off, and I transitioned from veganism *back* to vegetarianism in 2015.

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At the outset of this research project, I was interested in animal rights activists' use of the concept of animal rights, how and in what ways this concept was drawn on by activists, and whether the concept was recognized as an effective tool in their activism. As the research project began to unfold, however, my focus shifted toward the ways in which gender works to shape activists and their activism. Reflecting on this, my interest in the use of the concept of animal rights by animal activists was derived through my own observations and experience of what I perceived to be a difference between the philosophy of animal rights and animal rights activists' modes of action. My original questions were based on a feeling that something was different between the philosophy of animal rights and the work and words of animal activists, whom I observed to make what appeared to be largely emotional appeals to the public, seemingly devoid of the rational moralistic arguments of the doctrine of animal rights (brought to the academy and popularized by Peter Singer (1975) and Tom Regan (1983)).

It is within the context of my veganism and my activism that I became interested in animal rights activism as a site for social observation and arrived at my preliminary research questions. In conducting my research, my focus on what I perceived to be an absence of rationalistic, moralistic arguments about animal rights, turned instead to a focus on the presence of emotion – empathy and compassion – which I observed to come largely from women activists. As my research project took shape and themes began to emerge, my research questions turned to focus instead on the role of gender in animal rights activism.

Scope of My Research

In this thesis, I ask: *How does gender work to shape animal rights activism and activists within a white, North American context?*; and *How do the animal rights activists in this community draw on conceptions of gender within their activism?* To answer these questions, my research focuses on the community of animal rights activists within a mid-sized Canadian city, drawing in particular on the lived experiences of eight members of the community with whom I conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews. Though my participant group is small, this thesis presents my interpretation of the influences of gender on this community of animal rights activists. I present findings that can be used to think critically about animal activist communities that take a similar shape. The animal rights community in this city is largely led by women, though men do participate. Further, the community is largely white, though racialized minority individuals do participate. My research participants understand their activism as existing within and in relation to a broader, international movement of animal rights activism. However, animal rights advocacy and activism is diverse and varied in terms of actors, motivators and actions. As such, my work is not wholly representative of the diversity of animal rights activists and activism. Though my research participants are not wholly representative of the diversity and plurality of activism happening in the name of animals globally, they do reflect a general trend within a Western context, in which women, typically white, dominate mainstream animal advocacy efforts (Kruse, 1999; Groves, 2001; Gaarder, 2008; 2011; Harper, 2010).

Notably, I do not touch on the concept of speciesism in this thesis. Speciesism, introduced by animal advocate Richard Ryder (1970) and popularized by Peter Singer (1975) in his book *Animal Liberation* and later work, refers to the systemic discrimination against non-human animal species that allows for wide-spread and systematic use of non-human animals for human gain, namely in the form of meat, dairy, fur and leather production (Ryder, 1970; Singer, 1970). While the constraints of time and space do not allow a lengthy discussion of the role of speciesism in the production and consumption of animal products and the disregard for animal rights activism, it is significant to note that claims by animal rights activists are also disregarded due to pervasive speciesism, which holds the human species above all other species. Importantly, as Western animal rights activism is widely led by women, it is mainly *women's* claims about animals that are dismissed when due to speciesist understandings of the domination of *mankind* over nonhuman animals.

Main Arguments and Overview of Chapters

In Chapter 2, I draw on critical feminist and ethic of care scholarship to conceptualize the role of women in animal advocacy efforts presently and through history. Critical feminist and ethic of care scholarship responds to and conceptualizes the construction of emotionality as belonging to women, and existing as inferior to the capacity for objective rationality. The gendering of emotion has worked to devalue women's voices, such that their participation in the public sphere comes to be seen as less legitimate. As the literature suggests, the hierarchizing of legitimate knowledges has contributed to the emergence of animal rights activism as a cause led largely by women activists (Donovan, 1990; 1996; Adams, 1990; Birke and Parisi, 1999; Witt and Loots,

2004). Scholars have conceptualized the role of emotion in social movements as being an instrument for social change (Goodwin, 2001; Groves 2001; Eyerman, 2005; Flam and King, 2005; Gaarder, 2008;2011; Jasper, 2011; Jacobsson and Lindblom, 2013; Jacobsson and Hansson, 2014). Focusing in particular on *women's* activism, I will draw on literature that signifies that (women's) emotionality, as well as their bodies, are used strategically in animal rights activism, suggesting that the movement, existing within a patriarchal society, draws specifically on the forms of cultural capital that are and are not afforded to women.

In Chapter 3, I outline my methodological process, reflexively considering the process of doing qualitative research. In Chapters 4 and 5, I draw on excerpts from interviews with my research participants, field observations, and my own experiences of doing animal activism and of being vegan in order to provide evidence to support my arguments.

In Chapter 4, I argue that animal rights activism is a gendered space within the public sphere, distinctly feminized by virtue of the emotional labour of care that characterizes the movement. Drawing on critical feminist scholarship (Donovan, 1990; 1996; Adams, 1990; Birke and Parisi, 1999; Witt and Loots, 2004), I contend that the movement is reflective of a dominant patriarchal hierarchy of legitimate knowledges, which holds emotion and affect, typically associated with femaleness and femininity, as less legitimate than logic and rationality, typically associated with maleness and masculinity.

In Chapter 5, I argue that, insofar as we are a dominant society constrained by gender, my women participants use strategies of activism that draw on forms of capital

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that are culturally available to them as women: their bodies and emotions. By using their bodies and emotions as a tool in their activism, my women research participants work within the gendered constraints of society by drawing on what are acceptably female forms of knowledge and expression. As such, women's participation in animal rights activism has corporeal effects, observable in high rates of burnout (compassion fatigue) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) among activists (Shapiro, 1994; Gaarder, 2008; Kennelly, 2014), high moral standards of embodied practices for belonging (through the practice of veganism) (Warkentin, 2012; Cravens, 2009), and, in the case of nude activism (a heavily-used tactic), the inadvertent exclusion of bodies that do not fit the feminized ideal (Deckha, 2008; Wrenn, 2013; Harper, 2010).

I conclude with a summary and discussion of the overarching themes and arguments that I presented throughout the thesis. I point to the implications of using a critical feminist lens in understanding the emergence of a feminized animal rights movement in which women use tools – their bodies and their emotions – which are culturally available to them as women in a patriarchal society. Further, I discuss the limitations of this research project, conducted within constraints of time and space, and propose directions for future research.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

This thesis explores the ways by which animal rights activism in North America, and largely women's advocacy, is shaped by structures of gender within the context of a patriarchal society. Below, I begin by setting up a theoretical framework, drawing largely on feminist ethic of care scholarship to conceptualize women's place in the world of animal rights, as it has emerged through history and within the constraints of gender. As I will show, feminist ethic of care scholarship responds to the hierarchizing of (masculine) objectivity and rationality over (feminine) emotionality, the possession of which has worked to devalue women's voices, limiting their legitimate participation within the public sphere. Such hierarchizing of legitimate knowledges has contributed to the emergence of animal rights activism as a cause led largely by women activists (Shapiro, 1994; Groves, 2001; Gaarder, 2008;2011; Kruse 1999), and it is therefore important and helpful to understand contemporary animal activism through a gendered lens that centralizes and legitimizes women's voices.

The Emergence of a Feminist Ethic of Care

Josephine Donovan (1990), a dominant voice among feminist ethic-of-care animal rights theorists, explores the circumstances under which arguments against animals' exploitation at the hands of humans came to be recognized as a legitimate topic for moral consideration. As she argues, animal rights theory emerged in and through the "rationalizing" voices of men – most notably Peter Singer and Tom Regan – and in opposition to the voices of women – 'bleeding hearts' – whose advocacy efforts had been

(and continue to be) disregarded due in part to the emotionality of their claims. To illustrate her point, Donovan draws on two excerpts, one from Singer's (1975) *Animal Liberation* and the other from Regan's (1983) *The Case for Animal Rights*. In both excerpts, the theorists position their respective arguments for the legitimacy of animal rights theory in direct opposition to the irrationality, sentimentality, and emotionality typically associated with animal rights activists, and generally the reason for the dismissal of their claims. The excerpts used by Donovan are below (p. 351):

Singer: We were not especially interested in animals. Neither of us had ever been inordinately fond of dogs, cats, or horses . . . We didn't 'love' animals . . . The portrayal of those who protest against cruelty to animals as sentimental, emotional 'animal lovers' [has meant] excluding the entire issue . . . from serious political and moral discussion (p. ix – x *in original*).

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Regan: Since all who work on behalf of the interests of animals are . . . familiar with the tired charge of being 'irrational', 'sentimental', 'emotional', or worse, we can give the lie to these accusations only by making a concerted effort not to indulge our emotions or parade our sentiments. And that requires making a sustained commitment to rational inquiry (p. xii *in original*).

Donovan's pointed use of these excerpts, read together, expose an important historical moment in which the legitimization of the relevance and importance of an animal rights theory within the academy emerged in and through the juxtaposition of rational thought against "'womanish' sentiment" (p. 351). Singer's and Regan's success in bringing the case for animal rights to the academic sphere was due in part to their rejection of that which was (and still is) regarded as a misplaced feminine sentimentality that detracts from the ultimate goal of objective, rational moral consideration "without the restraint of 'subjective' relational considerations" (Donovan, 1990, p. 363). As Donovan (1990) goes on to elaborate, Singer's (1975) utilitarian and Regan's (1983) natural rights approaches to animal rights differ considerably, "they nevertheless unite in their rationalist rejection

of emotion and sympathy as a legitimate base for ethical theory about animal treatment” (p. 81).

Donovan (1996) suggests that the emergence of a feminist caring ethic for animals was due, perhaps, to the systemic erasures experienced by women and common to nonhuman animals, whose subjectivities, judged by human standards, were all but erased by the natural rights and utilitarian doctrines of the time:

Perhaps this is why many women of the period seem to have felt a kinship to animals. Both were erased (at best) or manipulated (at worst) to behave in accordance with paradigms imposed by the rationalist lords – whether vivisectors or sexologists. Women in fact became the primary activists and energizers of the nineteenth-century antivivisection movement, which should be seen, I propose as one manifestation of a counterhegemonic resistance undertaken by women against the encroachments of the new disciplines (p. 366).

Contemporary conceptions of ethicality (Regan, 1983, in particular) were strongly influenced by Emmanuel Kant’s (1785) *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, in which he “rejects feeling or inclination as a morally worthy motive for ethical action” and instead proposes that ethical action “must be performed out of a sense of duty” (Donovan, 1996, p. 82). Through a Kantian rationalist rights-based ethic, Donovan notes that moral consideration for animals came to be understood in terms of “abstract universals” which “elide[d] not just the personal, the contextual, and the emotional, but also the political components of” animal ethics (p.81). As she argues, “Kant's objection to an ethic rooted in emotional response, or sympathy, betrays a conception of emotion that construes it as irrational, uncontrollable, and erratic” (Donovan, 1996, p. 83). The rejection of emotionality as a valid consideration in moral decision-making, she suggests, is derived from the popular (mis)conception that “emotional experience necessarily obliterates rational thinking” (Donovan, 1996, p. 83). By “privileg[ing] reason (in the case of rights theory) or mathematical calculation (in the case of utilitarianism),” Kantian

animal rights theory has worked to uphold forms of reasoning which historically have been the domain of Man (Donovan, 2006, p. 306). Under the Kantian parameters of rational ethics, essentialist notions of female emotionality, irrationality, and unpredictability have worked to exclude women as legitimate “rights-holders” and has, historically, justified their exclusion from participation in social and political life (Donovan, 1996, p. 92).

The emergence of an emotionally-devoid animal rights theory, like that of Singer and of Regan, cannot be considered without an understanding of the influences of gender. As contemporary feminist theorists’ arguments suggest (Gilligan, 1982; Noddings, 1984; Donovan, 1990; 1996; 2006), the rejection of sentimentality as a measurement of moral reasoning is linked to the historical construction of male superiority, which regards women’s judgement-clouding emotionality as inferior. As Donovan (1996) notes, such emotionality, through which the feminist ethic of care has emerged, “has been confined largely to the domestic sphere and to women” (p. 92).

Carol Gilligan (1982) is a dominant voice in challenging such Kantian rationalist standards of ethicality which, she argues, work to exclude women’s voices from participation in the moral (male) sphere. In her classic work titled *In a Different Voice*, Gilligan challenges then-dominant psychological theories of the stages of moral development that held “male” logic, reasoning, and judgement as the highest epithet of morality. In her work, which emerged out of a rejection of the influences of Kantian rationalist ethics, she challenges the *ethics of justice* approach to the measurement of morality in which one’s ability for moral reasoning is judged by their ability to think within a set of universal principles – those that historically have defined ethics of

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equality, fairness, rightness and wrongness. The *ethics of justice* approach holds that morality develops trajectoryally, with the ability to reason objectively being held as the highest stage of moral development. Gilligan argues that this standard of moral reasoning inordinately excludes women from the moral (public) sphere of judgement, knowledge production, and decision-making historically inhabited by men. As such, women's voices and moral judgements, informed by understandings of relational interconnections and an ethic of care and responsibility, have come to be understood as being inferior to the male standard and thus overlooked and excluded from the moral realm.

Reflecting on her work, Gilligan (2011) notes that "a problem in theory became cast as a problem in women's development, and the problem in women's development was located in their experience of relationships" (p. 7). Responding to wide misinterpretation, in which she was accused of essentializing women's empathy, Gilligan situates her argument in relation to the constraints of patriarchy, noting: "In the gendered universe of patriarchy, care is a *feminine ethic*, not a universal one. Caring is what good women do, and the people who care are doing women's work. They are devoted to others, responsive to their needs, attentive to their voices. They are *selfless*" (p. 19). She elaborates, pointing to a paradox in which "the very qualities that distinguished women's moral goodness, their relational sensitivity and empathic concern, marked them as deficient in development" (p. 19). Thus, to Gilligan, to care within the constraints of "the gender codes of patriarchal order," is a relational performance of femininity:

Within a patriarchal framework, care is a feminine ethic. Within a democratic framework, care is a human ethic. A feminist ethic of care is a different voice within a patriarchal culture because it joins reason with emotion, mind with body, self with relationships, men with women, resisting the divisions that maintain a patriarchal order (p. 22).

A feminist ethic of care for animals

Like the natural world, women in dominant Western contexts have been conceived of, insofar as their feminine nature stands in opposition to masculinity, as an irrational, unpredictable (emotional) force. At the same time, women are expected to be gentle, soft, and conquerable, and by this very nature incapable of the rationalizing, objectivizing intellect of Man. Feminist ethic of care scholarship emerged in and through Gilligan's critique (as noted by Donovan, 1990; 1996), as a rejection of the exclusionary parameters of objective rationalism and of such essentializing arguments that have likened women to nature and have, through history, justified "weaker sex" arguments. In the following sections, I will explore the ways in which caring-ethics have been taken up in conversation with the question of animal rights by prominent feminist scholars.

In challenging masculinized conceptions of moral reasoning, feminists have "attempted to restore these emotional responses to the philosophical debate and to validate them as authentic modes of knowledge" (Donovan, 2006, p. 306). Since Gilligan's (1982) early work, in which she challenged the accepted parameters of morality and suggested the validity of women's care-based mode of moral reasoning, feminist scholars have worked to conceptualize the central roles of women and of care in animal rights theorizing and organizing. Women's propensity to care for animals has been differentially conceptualized, due in part to diverse politics within ecofeminism and animal-rights inclined feminism. As such, arguments linking women to nature were co-opted to explain women's propulsion to speak out against perceived injustices against the environment and against animals. Carol Adams (1991), for example, notes that early ecofeminist discourses, in justifying women's voices in environmental theorizing, drew

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on essentializing arguments about women's *natural* relationship and closeness to the natural world to their end:

Socialist feminists linked meat eating with capitalist forms of production and the classist nature of meat consumption; spiritual feminists emphasized the association of goddess worship, a belief in a matriarchy, harmony with the environment, and gentleness toward animals; radical feminists associated women's oppression and animals' oppression, and some held the position of "nature feminists" who see women as naturally more sensitive to animals (p. 127).

Birke and Parisi (1999) call this the "nature/culture binary" in which "nature, animals, and women – each likely to be seen as embodied and lacking mind or soul – stand as irrational Others to culture, human beings, and men" (p. 57). Such constructions of masculinity and femininity, they suggest, rooted in biological/essentialist permutations of gender, have been problematized/taken up differentially by feminist scholars: "With respect to the culture/nature binary, modern feminism includes those who argue for women's inclusion in culture, those who prefer to see women as closer to nature, as well as those who seek to transcend the binary altogether" (Birke and Parisi, 1999, p. 57). Rejecting conceptions of feminist care ethics that centralize essentializing arguments about women's predilection to care, Birke and Parisi suggest "a better politics (of feminism and of animals)" that draws on "the situated knowledges of all of us, of whatever kind" and that "start[s] from a premise of becoming rather than one based on individuals and their rights" (p. 70). In emphasizing "becomings," Birke and Parisi suggest a feminist ethic of care that centralizes the affective experiences of women (and men), through which animals' experiences of oppression and violence, and their embodied expressions of resistance are felt, heard, and responded to. It is an ethic of care that "goes beyond companionship or (worse) ownership [through] . . . a series of becomings" (p. 70).

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Witt and Loots (2004) argue that, within the context of some arguments emerging from the ethics of the ecofeminist movement of the late 1970s and '80s, women's activism came to be understood in terms of an "abstract and biologically determinist notion of women's ethic of caring and nurturing" (p. 5). In effect, explanations of women's activism that are rooted in biology amount to the essentializing of their "caring nature" and an innate maternal instinctiveness. Witt and Loots suggest that such arguments that "universally link women with nature" negate the very intersections of power and oppression that have constrained women to "biologically over-determined gender roles":

The further trap of creating a dichotomy between women and men, of nature and culture, caring and destruction, intuition and rationalism, obscures, as bell hooks (1986) has argued, the need to assess each historical moment of oppression with a keen sense of how power interconnects and manifests itself where elements like race, class and gender, weave complex webs of oppression (p. 6).

Rejecting such biological determinist arguments about women and animals, Adams (1991), Birke and Parisi (1999), and Witt and Loots (2004) (also see Jackson, 1993) point to the utility of a care-based feminist ethic in animal advocacy efforts. Adams' own reflections on the plight of being a factory farmed sow – an effort to centralize and convey animal subjectivity – are expressed in terms of affection and empathy:

I respond on an emotional level with horror at what each individual pig is subjected to and sympathize with each pig, whose extreme sociability is evidenced by these animals' increased popularity as pets (Elson 1990). On an intellectual level I marvel at the language of automation, factory farming, and high-tech production that provides the vehicle and license for one to fail to see these animals as living, feeling beings who experience frustration and terror in the face of their treatment. As a lactating mother, I empathize with the sow whose reproductive freedoms have been denied and whose nursing experience seems so wretched. As a consumer and a vegetarian, I visualize this information when I witness people buying or eating "ham," "bacon," or "sausage" (p. 134).

Such a move towards the emphasis of affect in feminist theory is known as the ‘affective turn’, whereby understanding and theory is turned towards the feeling subject, whose affective and emotive experiences are rendered valuable avenues for knowledge production. In the Global West, affect and emotion have historically been associated with women, womanhood, and femininity, juxtaposed to a set of characteristics associated with maleness and masculinity, namely logic and rationality (Pedwell and Whitehead, 2012). Drawing on Moira Gatens (1996), Pedwell and Whitehead note that rationality, “one of the key historical criteria for political participation and other citizenship rights . . . has been defined in opposition to the qualities typically thought to correlate with femininity and the female body” (p. 119). In other words, the duality of the affective female care-giver who exists in the private sphere, and the rational male decision maker who exists in the public sphere, has long been held as a measuring stick for the legitimacy of claims and knowledges, and as a determinant for whose claims have legitimacy within the public sphere.

Affect, Activism and Women’s Organizing for Animals

In the preceding sections of this chapter, I do three things. First, I explore the ways by which, through history, the ability to reason rationally and objectively (the detachment of reason from the Self) has been upheld as the standard of morality, juxtaposed against (implicitly feminine) modes of moral reasoning that centre on sympathies. Second, I examine the emergence of a feminist ethic of care as a response to the silencing and rejection of *different* modes of moral reasoning, which were (un)heard

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in women's voices. And third, I consider how feminist ethic of care theorists have taken up questions about women's animal advocacy.

In this section, I will illustrate how a certain manifestation of animal rights organizing has come to be characterized by femininity and by emotions, by nature of the sentimental women who do the work and to the effect that prominent male thinkers such as Peter Singer (1975) and Tom Regan (1983) came to position their animal rights theories in contrast to (women's) sentimentalist claims about the plight of animals. Pedwell and Whitehead (2012) call those of us pursuing understanding via affective politics to emphasize "the ways in which feelings can (re)produce dominant social and geo-political hierarchies and exclusions" (p. 120). As such, my aim is to examine women's organizing for animals (understood as feminine care manifested in the public sphere), comes to be characterized by its charges of hysteria, undue sentimentality, and misplaced care, thus (re)producing hierarchies of knowledges within which logic and rationality have remained the dominant social currency for legitimacy within the public sphere.

In *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2004), Sara Ahmed explores the "sociality of emotions," – how they "circulate between bodies" – arguing that emotions work from the "outside in" to "shape the very surfaces of bodies" (p. 4). In particular, she works to understand how "'being emotional' comes to be seen as a characteristic of some bodies and not others" (p. 4). Ahmed's "sociality of emotions" can help us to understand the ways by which a space comes to be characterized by (undesirable) emotionality by nature of the bodies that inhabit that space.

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Drawing on a *British National Front* headline warning against ‘soft touch’ politics (an emotive response) to illegal immigrant Others and asylum seekers, Ahmed argues that within such rhetoric, cautioning against emotionality, lies an implicit rejection of the perils of femininity, “a reminder,” she suggests, “of how ‘emotion’ has been viewed as ‘beneath’ the faculties of thought and reason” (p. 2). She further states: “Emotions are associated with women, who are represented as ‘closer’ to nature, ruled by appetite, and less able to transcend the body through thought, will and judgement” (p. 3). Such warnings against the dangers of softness and penetrability, she argues, are “instructive”; they draw on the nature/culture binary that differentiates humanity from inhumanity, man from woman, rationality and reason from emotionality.

For Ahmed, the line between “emotion and thought/reason” that preferences one over the other is inextricable from the bodies they come to characterize. Expressions of emotion are not in and of themselves undesirable. Rather, it is a certain embodiment of emotionality that comes to be regarded as weakness; it is the particular expression of emotion understood as “being emotional,” insofar as it is associated with the weaknesses and dangers of femininity, that is undesirable:

The hierarchy between emotion and thought/reason gets displaced, of course, into a hierarchy between emotions: some emotions are ‘elevated’ as signs of cultivation, whilst others remain ‘lower’ as signs of weakness. . . Within contemporary culture, emotions may even be represented as good or better than thought, but only insofar as they are re-presented as a form of intelligence, as ‘tools’ that can be used by subjects in the project of life and career enhancement (p. 3).

Thus, she argues, it is not emotions themselves that are regarded as signs of weakness. Rather, it is about attachments, the ways by which emotions “stick” to bodies (individual or collective), as well as the ways by which “we respond to objects and others” through

which “feminine” emotionality comes to be regarded as undesirable while “masculine” expressions of emotion are “elevated” (p. 10).

Ahmed suggests that “[a]ttention to emotions allows us to address the question of how subjects become *invested* in particular structures such that their demise is felt as a kind of living death” (p. 12). Her work can help us understand the ways by which my research participants’ dedication to animal rights comes to be embodied, such that successes and failures of the movement are corporeally experienced by activists, as evidenced by high rates of burnout, and mental and emotional distress. Further, her work allows us to explore the ways by which women animal rights activists come to be defined by an undesirable “feminine” sentimentality. Peter Singer’s (1975) and Tom Regan’s (1983) work, for example, is defined against bodies that are guilty not of having and expressing emotions, but of “being emotional,” insofar as emotionality is attached to women, their perceived weaknesses, and the dangers of femininity:

Feminists who speak out against established ‘truths’ are often constructed as emotional, as failing the very standards of reason and impartiality that are assumed to form the basis of ‘good judgement.’ Such a designation of feminism as ‘hostile’ and emotional, whereby feminism becomes an extension of the already pathological ‘emotionality’ of femininity, exercises the hierarchy between thought/emotion discussed in the Introduction of this book. This hierarchy clearly translates into a hierarchy between subjects: whilst thought and reason are identified with the masculine and Western subject, emotions and bodies are associated with femininity and racial others. This projection of ‘emotion’ onto the bodies of others not only works to exclude others from the realms of thought and rationality, but also works to conceal the emotional and embodied aspects of thought and reason (Ahmed, 2004, p. 170).

As Ahmed notes above, the attachment of emotion to femininity works to exclude those bodies and knowledges associated with feminine emotionality from legitimate consideration in the public sphere. Arlie Russell Hochschild’s (1983) work, which focuses on the “specialization of emotion in the marketplace” and the differential

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socialization of women and men towards the management of emotions, was a key contribution to critical feminist literature that worked to denaturalize women's emotionality. Importantly, Hochschild's work on the emotional labour performed by flight attendants in the United States, examines how, through women's entry into the public sphere in the form of paid labour, feminine emotionality came to be commodified. Arguing that, in a Western context, women's subordinate status affords them less legitimacy than men in the public sphere, Hochschild (1983) notes that "lacking other resources, women make a resource out of feeling" (p. 163). Hochschild's (1983) work was key to drawing attention to the ways by which women, collectively and individually, are defined by emotion, working to define the nature of their participation in the social sphere. According to Hochschild, "It is believed that women are more emotional, and this very belief is used to invalidate their feelings" (Hochschild, 1983, p. 173). While we rely heavily on women's socialized emotionality in the form of (often unpaid) emotional labour, we simultaneously devalue and subordinate them and their abilities on the grounds of *being emotional* (Hochschild, 1983, p. 173).

In this thesis, I use the above theoretical perspectives as a lens for understanding (white) women's animal rights activism in a North American context. I consider the *different* sound of my women research participants' voices (Gilligan, 1982, p. 22), understanding their advocacy efforts as being informed by empathic forms of moral reasoning which are devalued under patriarchal order. Following Ahmed (2004), I explore how feminine emotionality and care is extended to animals toward the emergence of animal rights activism as a feminized social space. Women's (sexualized) bodies and the possession of an inherent "feminine" emotionality are often the grounds upon which

women's legitimacy is dismissed in the public sphere. Women, reduced to their bodies and emotions, are often devalued on this basis and dismissed from legitimate participation in the public sphere. However, within a Western context of patriarchy and capitalism, women are paradoxically qualified in the public sphere as (sexualized) bodies and as emotional labourers. In this way, I regard the women activists' who participated in my research to be using their bodies and emotions instrumentally to advance the case for animal rights.

Review of Literature

For my literature review, I have chosen to focus on how scholars have conceptualized the role of emotion in social movements, and particularly within animal rights activism. I will draw on literature that focuses on the animal rights movement as a feminized movement. The relevant literature illuminates the patriarchal hierarchizing of rationality over emotionality, and further, the hierarchizing of some emotions over others (Ahmed, 2004), within the context of animal rights activism. Further, I will draw on literature that demonstrates that (women's) emotionality, as well as their bodies, are used strategically in animal rights activism, suggesting that the movement, existing within a patriarchal society, draws specifically on the cultural capital afforded to women.

Toward Emotion in Social Movement Literature

Following a turn in interest towards emotion in social movement literature, Hochschild's (1983) notion of emotion management has been taken up more recently in relation to animal rights activism (e.g. Goodwin, 2001; Groves 2001; Eyerman, 2005;

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Flam and King, 2005; Gaarder, 2008;2011; Jasper, 2011; Jacobsson and Lindblom, 2013; Jacobsson and Hansson, 2014).

Kerstin Jacobsson and Jonas Lindblom (2013) argue that “social movement activists carry out emotion work primarily for the purpose of action” (p. 56). By Jacobsson and Lindblom’s (2013) account, social movement actors, particularly those involved in animal rights activism, use “moral emotions” to “fuel protests” (p. 58). By living and promoting counter-normative values, animal activists come to experience emotional tension (within themselves and relationally). Emotion work, according to Jacobsson and Lindblom, effectively works to bind activists together in an “emotion culture,” wherein they learn emotive responses (to issues of perceived cruelty or to meat, for example). “Emotion work,” they argue, “serves the dual purpose of helping to sustain commitment to moral ideals and to alleviate the emotional stress that norm-transgression often implies” (p. 60).

Feelings of guilt have been noted as a commonly felt emotion amongst animal and other social activists (Jacobsson and Lindblom, 2013; Gaarder, 2008;2011; Kennelly, 2014). For Jacobsson and Lindblom (2013), within the “emotion culture” of animal activism, guilt “is seen as a sign of animal rights activists’ commitment to their moral ideals” (p. 64), and thus becomes normalized as a motivator for perseverance in the fight for animal rights (Jacobsson and Lindblom, 2013, p. 64). In this way, guilt – as the feeling of not doing enough for animals – is a result of, as well as a motivator for, animal activists’ dedication to the cause.

Kerstin Jacobsson and Niklas Hansson (2014) have turned towards the corporeality of emotion in animal activism as a means of further understanding the role of

affect in “direct[ing] action, perception, sensibility, and judgements over time” (p. 266). Importantly, Jacobsson and Hansson (2014) do not analyze the process of coming to recognize animal suffering as a legitimate concern. Rather, their work focuses on the ways by which emotions work and circulate *within* activist circles. They argue that the adoption of an animal activist identity – the point at which a person decides to advocate for animals – involves a process of becoming, wherein they learn accepted “affective dispositions” and bodily responses to issues of violence and cruelty to animals (Jacobsson and Hansson, 2014, p. 269). In becoming activists, they learn, for example, appropriate affective responses (such as revulsion and disgust) to the sight of meat, or to videos or images representing animal cruelty (Jacobsson and Hansson, 2014, p. 269). Furthermore, while the ability to empathize with non-human Others is often a precursor to being sympathetic to the cause of animal rights, activists learn how to collectively channel their empathy towards social change (Jacobsson and Hansson, 2014, p. 277). These learned affective responses, according to Jacobsson and Hansson, “are anchored in a sense of self and community and are bodily grounded” (2014, p. 285).

Jacobsson and Lindblom (2013) and Jacobsson and Hansson (2014) effectively demonstrate how activists learn to be appropriately and effectively emotional through shared affective experiences. However, their accounts each lack an important thread that ties emotions (feelings of guilt, for example) to women, who make up the majority of animal rights activists (Shapiro, 1994; Groves, 2001; Gaarder, 2008;2011; Kruse 1999).

The Gender of Emotions

It is important, within the context of animal rights and given the social attachment of emotionality to femininity, to turn our attention towards the *gender of emotions*.

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Further, it is essential that animal activism is understood in terms of its emergence within the context of a Western patriarchal and capitalist society. There are a number of ways by which we can understand the influence of gender on animal activism. Demographically, through history, women have been at the forefront of organizing for animal rights (Shapiro, 1994; Groves, 2001; Gaarder, 2008; 2011; Kruse 1999). Further, these women have typically been “white, college educated, middle class, urban or suburban, and in her 30’s” (from Cravens, 2009; see also Guither, 1998; Plous, 1991). In terms of historical divisions of labour, women’s animal activism has worked against “very male-oriented industries of exploitation” commonly targeted by animal activists (Wrenn, 2013, p. 135; citing Luke, 2007). Despite women’s predominance at the front lines of animal rights, several scholars have noted that men tend to hold more positions of power within animal rights organizations (Shapiro, 1994; Groves, 2001; Munro, 2001; Hall, 2006; Gaarder, 2008; 2011). Munro (2001) notes that women were, in fact, “denied leadership positions in the early Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA), its counterpart, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and local SPCAs” (p. 44). Contemporarily, while leadership positions continue to be disproportionately occupied by men (in relation to the generally female population of animal activists (Groves, 2001; Gaarder, 2008; 2011), young men who embody hegemonic masculinity also tend to be exploited by direct action groups like Animal Liberation Front (ALF), which relies heavily on their proclivities towards violence and aggression (Wrenn, 2013, p. 136; citing Hall, 2008).

The divisions of labour and dynamics of power that structure animal rights groups and organizations are reflective of Western patriarchal order. Western women’s

participation in animal rights activism can be traced to anti-vivisection movements in Victorian England, a time during which men dominated public life and women were largely confined to the private sphere (Groves, 2001, p. 212; see also Gaarder, 2008; 2011; Munro, 2001; Kruse 1999). Involvement in animal activism, caring for the wellbeing of animals, provided women with a means of legitimate participation in the public sphere (Groves, 2001, p. 212).

Goodwin (2001) calls us to explore the “emotional attachments attributed to [activists]” (p. 22). Within a Western, patriarchal context, emotionality has been constructed as a female characteristic, contrasted against male rationality (Gilligan, 1982; 2011); the hierarchizing of objective rationality (which belongs to men in the public sphere) over emotionality (a judgement-clouding “female” characteristic) has worked to shape the evolution of animal rights activism as a women’s issue, and continues to inform the ways by which animal rights activists’ claims are delivered and received. According to Romanin (2013), for example, several of his male vegetarian research participants reported feeling the need to “fact check” information about animal cruelty or suffering coming from women animal rights activists. He attributes this trend to “a valuing of gendered knowledges or ways of knowing that prefigures rationality, intellectual argumentation and scientific positivism (all read as “masculine” types of knowledge) above intuition, empathy and intersubjectivity (read as “feminine” ways of knowing)” (p. 102).

Importantly, while rationality is constructed hierarchically in relation to emotion, emotion itself is not necessarily undesirable. Rather, it is the embodiment of a “feminine” emotionality that is socially and culturally devalued (Ahmed, 2004), the basis upon which

women animal rights activists are routinely dismissed. Historically, for example, as Munro (2001) notes, some women animal rights activists were medicalized “diagnosed as suffering from ‘zoophil-psychosis’” (Munro, 2001, p. 45; citing Buettinger, 1993). Ahmed (2004) conceptualizes the favouring of some emotions over others as a “hierarchy *between* emotions” (Ahmed, 2004, p. 3; emphasis added). As I will show, the literature suggests that while women animal rights activists are dismissed because of the emotionality of their claims, some forms of emotion are valued – even valorized.

Rachel Einwohner (1999) explores how the identity of animal rights activists in the United States affects the perceived legitimacy of their claims. Her work demonstrates how, within the context of animal rights activism, emotions are hierarchized, to the effect that some expressions of emotion are given credence while others are not. Interviewing hunters who were the target of animal rights activists’ anti-hunting campaigns, Einwohner (1999) found that her participants held gendered assumptions about animal activists, who they assumed were largely young, white, well-educated women, and that these views informed the hunters assessments of the credibility of the activists’ claims. Their gendered assumptions framed animal activists, universally, “as emotional, sentimental individuals, “bleeding hearts” who do not or cannot understand a logical, scientific practice like hunting” (Einwohner, 1999, p. 66). Einwohner (1999) notes, however, that the expression of emotion in and of itself is not derided by the hunters. Rather, she notes: “The ‘acceptable’ form of emotion is the heart-pounding excitement that one experiences when approaching a wild animal, which is very different from a sentimental attachment to animals. It is the latter type of emotion – the weaker form – that is used to discredit and dismiss the activists’ arguments” (p. 67).

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The “hierarchizing between emotions” (Ahmed, 2004, p. 3) further plays out *within* animal rights activist circles. Julian Groves (2001) explores how the gender of emotion and care work to shape contemporary animal rights movements. Groves (2001) works from the idea that the contemporary animal rights movement is characterized by rationalistic, scientific, and philosophical understandings of animal exploitation, a shift from earlier movements for animals which were characterized by “compassion and kindness [and] led by middle-class women” (p. 213).

The grassroots animal rights activists with whom he worked – largely middle-aged professional women – felt that emotionalism was limiting (and delegitimizing) to their advocacy efforts. Groves (2001) (see also Gaarder, 2008; 2011 and Wrenn, 2013) describes a movement in which men hold powerful organizational roles and women do the majority of advocacy and outreach work; within the context of his research, activists outspokenly preferred rational (scientific and philosophical) arguments over emotional ones (those rooted in philosophies of compassion and care) (p. 213). Groves (2001) notes that the “animal rights activists use the term *emotional* to describe those individuals whose approach to animal protection they consider to be less legitimate” (p. 213).

Interestingly, Groves (2001) also notes that younger, idealistic, “radical” activists are also derided – seen as less legitimate – by his research participants due to the emotionality that is perceived to characterize their activism (p. 216). Here, then, women animal rights activists actively distance themselves from a feminine emotionality, as well as from what is perceived to be the emotionality of juvenility or simplicity, all the grounds upon which women’s participation in the public sphere has been devalued and delegitimated through history:

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Drawing on traditional dichotomies between rationality and emotionality, most activists believe that their emotions alone cannot justify to outsiders or themselves why they should take part in the movement. Feelings, they say, are “the fuel to” or the “passion behind” animal rights activism, but they are also “gut reactions,” “impulsive,” subjective, and therefore “irrational” (Groves, 2001, p. 220).

While women make up the majority of animal rights activists, Groves (2001, p. 225) (see also Wrenn, 2013) notes that male activists afford the movement credibility due to their supposed objective rationality, perceived as being an inherently male quality. However, it is not necessarily the case that men are valorized on the basis of unemotionality. Rather, as Groves (2001) notes, women’s and men’s expressions of emotion are regarded differently; while women’s emotional appeals are often dismissed as “feminine, trivial, or hysterical” (p. 228), “men are praised not only for being angry” but also for being “sensitive, caring, and compassionate” (p. 225). Within a movement socially and historically characterized by women’s emotionality, male presence works to legitimate the cause:

The perceived scarcity of men who express their feelings for animals pushes up their value. Men pay their emotional dues simply in the shame they have to endure by being in an animal movement, a movement historically and culturally associated with women. Men’s willingness to express their feelings is considered a sign of fearlessness, but in women it is a sign of weakness. Being emotional becomes legitimate when men do it, and women can point to men’s participation in the movement to justify the legitimacy of their own feelings about animal cruelty (Groves, 2001, p. 226).

Observing the animal rights movement through a gendered lens and understanding the emergence of the movement within the context of a patriarchal society exposes ways in which gender works to shape the movement, activists, and their tools and tactics. Further, it is important to centralize the emotional weight of animal activism, which is carried largely by women in the animal rights movement. Similarly to Groves’ (2001) findings, as I will demonstrate in Chapter Four, my research participants draw on

the presence of men – on the existence of normative masculinity in an implicitly ‘feminine’ social space – as a legitimating tool in their activism. In this way, Groves’ (2001) and my research recognize the influences of gendered knowledges on the production of animal activist identities and in the practices of animal activism. However, my research findings diverge from Groves (2001) in an important way. While he suggests that his research participants deride emotionality as a detraction from their ability to be regarded with legitimacy, my research focuses on the presence and instrumentalization of normative masculinities and femininities and of emotionality by women animal activists. Further, Groves’ (2001) research draws a distinction between organizational and leadership roles which are held largely by men, and advocacy and outreach work performed mainly by women activists who volunteer their time. My research focuses on a community of grassroots animal rights activists who do the advocacy and the outreach, within which women tend to provide leadership.

Carrying the Burden of Emotion

Jacqueline Kennelly (2014) effectively draws Ahmed’s theories into conversation in her exploration of the gendered subjectivities of actors involved in global justice activism. Interested in “how specific emotions ‘produce the surfaces’ of activist work for women and men,” Kennelly focuses her argument on the “expressions of affect” particular to the women activist participants with whom she worked. Drawing on the work of Raymond Williams (1977), she refers to a “gendered structure of feeling” that runs in and through the activists and their work. She notes that the women activists who participated in her research often referred emotively to their activist work and expressed their motivation for activism “as a personal choice drawn from a deeply felt sense of

responsibility, inflected with powerful emotions including guilt, despair, and suffering.” Contrastingly, men activists expressed their motivation in terms of “an abstract language of justice or ethics” (Kennelly, 2014, p. 246). Kennelly posits that the affective rendering of activism exhibited by women, and the notable difference in the expressed motivations of men activists, are the result of the intersection of the neoliberal female subject and a feminized tradition of care. She argues that individual responsabilization under neoliberalism shifted “the focus of public care away from the state and towards individuals” (Kennelly, 2014, p. 246). Now, traditional associations between womanhood, femininity, and capacity for care, which until recent history played out predominantly in the private sphere in the form of child-rearing and homemaking, “have come to play a central role” in feminized spaces in the public sphere (Kennelly, 2014, p.246).

Importantly, Kennelly is careful not to reduce the women activists’ repeated expressions of guilt and culpability to their individual subjective experiences of activism; she suggests that the “repeated occurrence” of guilt in the expressions of affect of the women activists “tells us less about the individual women, and more about the broader social and cultural spheres within which these young women are positioned” (p. 243). In exploring the women’s affective expressions in relation to their activism, she works “to understand how gender has been retraditionalised under current neoliberal regimes” (p. 243; citing Adkins, 2002 and McNay, 1999).

Kennelly notes that her women participants’ words expose a feeling “of being bound by the suffering of the world”, and she suggests that this results from a “retraditionalisation” of the gendered capacity to care in the modern era:

. . . these individual subjects are reflexively placing themselves at the centre of efforts to create social change – yet also feeling that their efforts can never be enough. Guilt belongs to women under retraditionalised forms of gender in modernity; instead of benefitting from the liberal freedom that is meant to accompany the newly individualized subject, women continue to be tied to the gendered expectations that they care for others, expressed in this case through their activism (Bartky, 1990; Federici, 2012). That they can never ultimately do so in sufficient measure results in feelings of guilt, anxiety, and the constant propulsion to ‘do more’. (p. 246)

Kennelly is careful to point out that while men do make affective claims in relation to their activism, their motivations for activism tend to be rooted in “an abstract language of justice or ethics” (p. 246):

-By contrast, when I asked male participants about their reasons for engaging with activism, their responses emphasised rational and abstract motivations that were grounded in a sense of injustice in the world – but not a sense that was felt as emotional pain, so much as injustice that simply did not ‘make sense’, and thus required rectification (p. 247).

Similarly, Gaarder (2008) studies the lived experiences of women animal activists’, who, because of their dedication to animal rights activism, she argues, experience both “pain and joy” associated with the emotionality of their work. Contrary to popular stereotypes of the staunchly vegan animal rights activist who holds uncompromising ideologies, Gaarder’s research draws on women animal activists’ personal narratives, which suggest that they navigate being vegan and being activists through their social relationships, a process through which they experience both pain and pleasure. In line with Kennelly (2014), Gaarder notes that the women in her study often reported feelings of guilt and issues of burnout related to their activism:

The feeling of “no matter what I do, it’s never enough” was common among the activists, no matter the issues on which they focused. They invested a great deal of emotional energy in learning about, and then responding to, various animal injustices. The women felt drained by the magnitude of work yet to be done . . . (Gaarder, 2008, p. 7; citing Groves, 1997).

As I will argue in the following analytical chapters of this thesis, and similar to the findings of Kennelly's and Gaarder's research, my research participants' experiences of doing activism, of embodying an animal activist persona, often comes with a heavy emotional burden. While my research also centralizes women activists' voices, I work to understand my research participants' experiences of doing activism – and the “pain and joy” associated with it – through a gendered lens that focuses on women's practices of emotion and care in a white, Western context. Gaarder's findings are similarly reflected in the words of my research participants. However, I view the “pain and joy” associated with animal activism as emotive experiences that *belong* to women within a gendered social structure.

Strategizing the Gender of Emotions and the (Desirable) Female Body

As I discussed previously, essentialist arguments about women's natural affinity to Nature has been posited to explain women's predominance in animal rights and environmental organizing (as noted by Merchant, 1980; Adams, 1991; Gaard, 1993; Birke and Parisi, 1999; Witt and Loots, 2004; Jackson, 1993). Shapiro (1994) takes a social-developmental approach, arguing that women, “socialized to leave the self through immediate empathic involvement in another person,” are predisposed to have “a caring attitude” towards nonhuman animals (p. 153). Shapiro further suggests that women's propensity to care for animals is rooted in their shared oppressions (1994, p. 153; citing Adams, 1990).

While the above explanations have been offered to explain the draw of women to animal rights activism, Shapiro seeks to understand how caring for animals “crystallizes

into a vocation” (1994, p. 158). According to Eyerman (2005), social movements achieve progress “fram[ing] emotions [such as] anger, frustration, shame, guilt, which move individuals and groups to protest, to publicly express and display discontent” (p. 44). Within the context of animal rights activism, this framing and channelling of emotions occurs through regular observation of animal suffering (Jacobsson and Lindblom, 2013; Jacobsson and Hansson, 2014). Because of the nature of modern Western animal industrial practices, which are largely hidden from the public, sustained commitment to animal rights requires activists to actively and regularly seek out and to identify cruelty, inhumane practices, and animal suffering. According to Shapiro (1994), the practice of seeking out cruelty becomes “a way of life” that itself causes pain and suffering:

Whether seeking them or not, the activist senses traces of animal suffering and exploitation all around. The street in which she walks is no longer an open road, a horizon of stimulating possibility and chance encounter, but a set of potential clues, hints, suspect provenances. All roads become part of a network of bloody trails. Paradoxically, what is everywhere hidden, forgotten, denied, erased, transmuted, manufactured is yet everywhere present. The shopping mall, the restaurant; the city, but no less the woods and the sea - each has its own network of bloody trails. For animal rights activists, there is meat in their soup, animal-based research in their medicine... They can't stop seeing or seeking the suffering (Shapiro, 1994, p. 159).

In other words, animal activists, perhaps being predisposed to care for animals (Shapiro, 1994), animal activists are *made* through a reflexive process in which the seeking out of suffering – a practice that, she argues, permeates their daily lives – is both experiential and productive. In making the argument that animal activists are consumed by the practice of finding and feeling suffering, Shapiro (1994) neglects to confront the joy that animal activists might find in their activism, for example through the experiences of community or through shared values and vegan food. Nonetheless, Shapiro (1994) presents an understanding of how the intentional seeking out and feeling of animal

suffering works as a tool for effecting social change (see also Eyerman, 2005; Jacobsson and Lindblom, 2013; Jacobsson and Hansson, 2014).

Above, I established that there is an overall consensus in the literature that women make up the majority of animal rights activists in a Western, North American context. Further, the animal rights movement is a feminized movement, insofar as animal rights is socially and culturally understood as and dismissed on the basis of being a women's issue. Women animal rights activists work within a gendered social structure that values them for their bodies and essentializes care as *women's* work.

Scholars have shown that, through history, women's bodies have been used to draw attention to the plight of animals (Ferguson, 1998; Beers, 2006; Deckha, 2008; Wrenn, 2013). In particular, PETA, an organization well-known for its use of women's naked bodies in advertising campaigns, has been the subject of criticism in feminist scholarship and amongst activists (Glasser, 2011; Deckha, 2008; Wrenn, 2013). Wrenn (2013) takes a critical view of the use of "feminine stereotypes as leverage" in animal advocacy (p. 131). Wrenn (2013) asserts that women's bodies are both the subject and object of professionalized animal rights advertising campaigns (p. 132). She argues that professionalized animal rights organizations (PETA, for example) work to reinforce patriarchal order by sexualizing and exploiting women's bodies for organizational gain, as well as by disproportionately targeting women's bodies (as they are consumers of cosmetics and fashion fur, for example) as *the site* for social change (p. 135). PETA has not been shy about using provocative, often nude images depicting normative femininity to draw attention to the cause for animal rights since its formation in 1980. Wrenn (2013) critiques the organization's continued exploitation of "female vulnerability" (p. 132). She

suggests that in exploiting normatively feminine ideals and desirable female bodies, PETA's advertising campaigns further perpetuate gendered expectations, while also marginalizing "other body types and people of color," and otherwise non-normative bodies (Wrenn, 2013, p. 137; citing Harper, 2010).

Glasser (2011) extends the argument that PETA's advertising campaigns are sexist by arguing that they "reinforce the oppression of animals" (p. 52). She argues that PETA advertisements "perpetuate dichotomous ways of thinking" that hierarchize men over women, and Man over nature (Glasser, 2011, p. 57). Women in PETA's advertisements, depicted as animals, are presented as "objects of consumption and desire" (Glasser, 2011, p. 62). The advertisements, she argues, rely on the objectivizing male gaze and dichotomous hierarchization, requiring the viewer to accept both women and animals as subordinate – women as objects of men, and animals as objects of humans – and thus reinforcing their oppressions (Glasser, 2011, p. 62).

Deckha (2008) also points to PETA's sexualisation of women's bodies as perpetuating a "dominant white femininity" that, in effect, works to exclude Othered bodies (p. 42). The "long, nimble, blond, and able-bodied white model bodies" typically represented in PETA campaigns traverses the species divide, calling viewers to draw inferences between the innocence and purity of young, white femininity and the "innocence of animals" (p. 50). Deckha (2008) notes that the inclusion of men's bodies in PETA's advertising campaigns is typically "comedic and non-sexualized," further emphasizing the sexualized and "appropriately gendered female body" (p. 51).

While Wrenn's (2013) and Deckha's (2008) critiques of professionalized animal rights organizations' commoditization of women's bodies and of whiteness is suggested

as being antithetical to anti-oppressive ideologies, the animal rights movement has also been understood as a challenge to patriarchal powers. Guither (1998), for example, considers animal rights activism to be a “social site for bargaining with patriarchy” (p. 193), within which the constraints of dominant masculinities are tested by norm-defying vegetarian and vegan men. While Guither’s (1998) and Wrenn’s (2013) understandings of the ways by which patriarchy is challenged or reinforced are seemingly contrary, their arguments, in fact, can simultaneously be true. Women animal rights activists work within a movement typically associated with women, and use their bodies and voices in ways culturally available to them, as women, within a patriarchal society. They defy norms of consumption that rely heavily on the exploitation of biologically female animals, using their own widely exploited bodies to do so. Men animal rights activists also work within a feminized movement – a challenge to patriarchy – and are applauded (within the movement) but simultaneously devalued by their proximity to femininity (Groves, 2001). Guither (1998) also notes this phenomenon, suggesting that “being ‘overly emotional’ is associated with culturally prescribed ‘feminine’ traits, and is therefore likely to have different consequences for male and female activists” (p. 42). In this way, animal activism can indeed be a site whereby patriarchal order is both challenged and reinforced.

Similarly to the way that Wrenn (2013) and Deckha (2008) critique the sexualisation and exploitation of women’s bodies in animal rights, Harper (2010) calls us to critically consider “social injustice within vegan and animal rights activism” (p. 25). The practice of ethical veganism is one way by which animal activists challenge industrialized animal exploitation, and “go vegan” has become the party line for many

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animal rights activists and organizations (Cravens, 2009). Cravens (2009) notes that “most contemporary animal rights activists are in fact vegan, or at minimum vegetarian working towards veganism” and that “there exists a strong pressure in the movement to be so” (p. 12). The vegan body, as represented in PETA’s advertising campaigns, is typically white, typically female, and normatively desirable (Wrenn, 2013; Harper, 2010). Harper suggests that such representations of veganism white-washes a practice that is, in fact, racially, ethnically, geographically, religiously, and philosophically diverse (Harper, 2010, p. 5; citing Cherry, 2006 & Iacobbo, 2006).

Drawing the arguments made by Wrenn (2013), Glasser (2011), Deckha (2008), and Harper (2010) together, a picture emerges of how large-scale animal rights organizations (such as PETA) achieve status and recognition in the mainstream by emblemizing dominant white femininities and by drawing on the sexualisation of “appropriately gendered female bod[ies]” (Deckha, 2008, p. 51). It is important to recognize the erasures that occur as a result of the means by which status and recognition are achieved. By appealing to the patriarchy, mainstream animal rights organizations and ideologies inadvertently marginalize those who do not embody whiteness, thinness, and desirable sexuality. This is an important criticism, and something that is helpful in lengthening the reach of animal rights ideologies. As Glasser (2011) notes, PETA’s approach to animal rights is not representative of animal activism and activists *everywhere*, but its prominence as the largest animal rights organization means that its advertising campaigns are highly visible and “can potentially direct popular sentiment toward animal rights” (p. 52). Importantly, my research participants use PETA resources to supplement their activism, and several of the women have demonstrated in the nude

for PETA. As I will go on to show, they understand their nude activism as existing within a gendered social structure that sexualizes (desirable) female bodies, and simultaneously value the potential power that exists in the display of their naked bodies to attract attention to their cause. Some of the activists view nude activism as anti-oppressive and as an act of empowerment insofar as their (sexualized) bodies are being reclaimed and repurposed for a deeply felt cause.

Thus, my research presents an understanding of how my research participants use PETA as a resource in their activism, as it emerged as a theme across the data. The arguments made by Wrenn (2013), Glasser (2011), and Deckha (2008) are valuable for understanding how PETA, as an organization, subversively reinforces women's *and* animals' oppressions in their use of sexist imagery. Further, while Wrenn (2013) and Deckha (2008) explore the *commercial* exploitation of women's bodies by analyzing popular PETA advertisements, my research demonstrates how women animal rights activists, who are encouraged (by PETA) to use their bodies in this way, navigate a movement that exists within the constraints of gender.

Conclusions

Above, the literature paints a picture of animal rights activism as a movement presently and historically led predominantly by women, and socially and culturally devalued on the basis of its characterization as a women's movement, informed by 'feminine' sentimentality (Ahmed, 2004; Donovan, 1990; 1996). Dominant gender ideologies work from outside to shape the animal rights movement, determining who is *able* to participate and in what ways and, further, they work from *within* the movement to

shape animal activists and the ways by which their messages are both delivered and received (Einwohner, 1999; Groves, 2001; Kennelly, 2014; Gaarder, 2008; 2011).

Within the literature, there has been a shift towards the role of emotion in constituting animal rights activists and their activism (Jacobsson and Lindblom, 2013; Jacobsson and Hansson, 2014). Here, I suggest that a gendered lens is important in understanding the role of emotions in animal rights activism, insofar as emotionality belongs to women in the public sphere. Scholars have pointed to the predominance of women in animal rights activism and the presence and weight of emotion in their work (Shapiro, 1994; Gaarder, 2008; 2011), and Shapiro (1994) suggests that the emotionality of animal activism – of ‘seeking out’ and perceiving cruelty – becomes a *way of being* for animal activists. Scholars have also pointed to the (exploitative) instrumentalization of (white) (desirable) women’s bodies in animal rights activism and the erasures of Othered bodies that occur as a result (Deckha, 2008; Wrenn, 2013; Harper, 2010).

In this thesis, I aim to expand on the existing literature by drawing together a cohesive narrative that focuses on the centrality of women to animal rights activism and the use of their bodies and emotions as forms of cultural capital available to women within the public sphere. Further, I expand on the literature by suggesting that women’s activism – the strategic use of their bodies and their emotions – is corporeally felt *by women*.

In the following Chapter, I present the methodological approach taken in conducting this research, outlining the processes of recruitment and data collection, and reflecting on my position as a researcher doing activist research.

Chapter 3: Methods and Methodology

Critical Feminist Methodology

This research project is qualitative in nature. In undertaking this research, I took a critical feminist approach to the understanding of the influences of gender on animal activism and activists. The representations that I derive from the observation of, conversation and interaction with my research participants are rooted in critical feminist approach to research, holding that “the real world makes a material difference in terms of race, class, and gender” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011, p. 14). Following Sprague (2016), my approach to understanding animal activism centres on an understanding that “gender structures most social settings, assigning men and women to different spheres of responsibility and expertise and limiting entry to specific sites of social activity” (Sprague, 2016, p. 148). Throughout the research process, my aim was to use a gendered lens to centralize and draw on the “subjugated knowledges” of my research participants (De Vault and Gross, 2006; Hesse-Biber, 2007), analyzing them through processes of reflexivity. In the following sections, I reflect on my methodological practices and decisions, informed by a critical feminist approach to doing qualitative research.

Recruitment

In their reflections on research design, Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012) note that qualitative researchers should be transparent and reflexive about the selection of research participants. They argue that throughout the research process, notably at the design and data collection stages, researchers should continuously reflect on the source of their

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evidences (research participants) and the ways by which this choice generates knowledge appropriate to answering the proposed research questions. They also point to the importance of accessing local knowledges that speak to lived experiences. As opposed to researchers who follow a positivist tradition of social inquiry, Schwartz-Shea and Yanow suggest that researchers exist within a dialogic relationship of knowledge production whereby “the researcher’s expert role [shifts] from technical-rational subject-matter expertise to process expertise, in knowing how to locate and access local knowledge and make it the subject of reflection, publicly discussable” (2012, p. 23).

The target population for this research project is the considerably small (but growing, according to my research participants) community of animal rights activists who do activism within a mid-sized Canadian city. As I will further explore shortly, I selected this city as the research site because of the convenience of locality and familiarity with the community with whom I endeavoured to work. It is important to note that within the animal rights community as a broad and generalized movement, and the forms of organizing ranges substantially. It varies in scope and intensity, ranging from the non-violent and peaceful “grassroots” action to violent and non-violent direct action that centre on “lobbying, picketing and demonstrating, marching and rallying,” and sometimes sabotage and property destruction (Yates, 2011, p. 469). I have chosen to situate my study within a community of activists who, generally, err on the side of legality and opt for outreach and peaceful though boisterous and eye-catching PETA demonstrations. My goal in working with this community of activists is to co-produce an interpretation of the lived experiences of animal activists.

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While activists who engage in direct action certainly do exist within the chosen population and I did not set criteria that would exclude those activists from participation in the research project (certainly many activists engage in an array of efforts for animals), my interest lies in those individuals who generally participate in peaceful, non-violent grassroots organizing. There are a number of reasons for my selection of this population. First but not necessarily foremost, it is due in part to accessibility; grassroots organizers are loud and proud, are active within the city, and tend to be active on social media; activists who engage in direct action, on the other hand, tend to be less easily accessible due to the illegality of their work. Second, the reliance that grassroots organizers have on the use of language – communicated through speech, through social media, signage, and leaflets – presents a particularly interesting site for studying gender in animal activism.

The selection criteria for the research participants were that they self-identified as an animal rights¹ activist and that they participate regularly in animal rights activism within this mid-sized Canadian city. I recruited eight local participants. The initial recruitment strategy was done by posting a callout (see Appendix A) on two public Facebook groups where vegetarians and vegans - many of them also self-identifying as animal rights activists - share tips and tricks about the lifestyle, commiserate and lend support to one another. The groups are also used for organizing and promoting meet-ups, potlucks, and activist events, among other things. The callout provided a brief description of the research project and asked individuals to email me to express their interest in

¹ During our interviews, because my initial interests revolved around the concept of animal rights, I asked each research participant if they self-identified as an “animal rights activist.” The answer was ‘yes’ for each participant. However, as I observed in conversation with my research participants and through observation of activism in action, the identifier most often is shortened to “animal activist.” Thus, throughout this thesis, I will interchangeably refer to my research participants as “animal rights activists” and as “animal activists.”

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participating. While upwards of 10 individuals expressed interest from this initial callout, only four of these individuals followed through with participating in the project. Two more participants were recruited through an activist-friend who was a key player in the animal rights movement in this city until relocating to another city; I asked her to refer me to any activists within the city who would be good contacts. The remaining two participants were recruited through my other research participants, who kindly suggested fellow activists who would be interested in participating.

Of the eight activist participants, one, Hypatia, was a self-identified male while the others were self-identified female. Hypatia also identified himself as a person of colour. At the time of our interview, he identified himself as a dedicated ‘philoso-fan,’ human rights activist, and animal rights activist. The female participants were all white. The participants’ ages spanned a wide range; two participants were in their early 20s, two participants were in their early 30s, and four participants were between the ages of 40 and 55. At the time of the interviews, they held various occupations and had been involved in animal activism for varying amounts of time: Ingrid was a paid employee of a local animal welfare organization; Doris was employed as a child welfare worker; Margaret was an educational assistant; Elizabeth was an employee of the federal public service and a student of counselling psychology; Louisa was a student in a child welfare program at a local college; Doe Adams was a local barista and a graduate of a Bachelor of Journalism program; and Frances was working towards finding a way to fund full-time activism. They had been involved in animal activism for varying amounts of time; of the four middle-aged women, each had been involved in animal activism in this city for twenty

years or more; of the three younger women, each had been involved in animal activism in this city for around five years.

Participants were presented with a letter of information and a consent form (see Appendix B and C), approved by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board (CUREB). They were notified of their ability to discontinue participation in the research project, and throughout the process of interviewing I made sure to ascertain ongoing consent.

Field Observation

I chose to observe two aspects of the movement: I observed street-level protests and demonstrations, and I observed interactions and organizing between activists on two public Facebook groups dedicated to the movement in the mid-sized Canadian city within which the research took place. Following Emily Ignacio (2012) and Sarah Gaston (2011), I regard the online space as an extension of the research field, whereby the scope and goal of activism and organizing remains the same as that of public demonstrating by activists. During my observation of the Facebook groups, I solely observed the interactions, opting not to participate in group discussions. During my observation of public demonstrations, I acted mostly as an observer, though the activists were curious about the work that I was doing and I often found myself in conversation with one or more of them throughout the course of a demonstration. Over the course of a few months, I attended two demonstrations, and countless more in previous years when my participation in public demonstrations was at a high. My foray into the field was miniscule in comparison to the dedicated work that members of this animal rights

community do: by winter, anti-fur demonstrations occur most weekends in response to a recent influx of fur trim as a fashion item, (re)popularized most notably by winter gear company Canada Goose; there are protests against the infamous annual seal hunt, which witnesses the slaughter of hundreds of thousands young seal pups for their fur; there are anti-circus demonstrations which target the Royal Canadian Circus, which, over the course of a few days in late summer, attracts thousands of attendees and hundreds of animal rights activists; vegan outreach occurs across the city daily, with animal rights activists leafleting across campuses, outside grocery stores, at markets; there are potlucks and bake sales; and, using social media platforms such as Facebook and YouTube, countless activists work to promote compassion and veganism in order to dismantle our heavy reliance on the exploitation of non-human animals. This list is not meant to be exhaustive, as there are many other engagements that animal rights activists do.

For the sake of this research, I attended two protests that took place in the city's downtown core: one was an Anti-Fur Protest that targeted a popular Canada Goose retailer, and the other was an Annual Anti Seal Hunt Protest, which aimed to target and challenge policy makers on the controversial practice.

Interviews

I conducted semi-structured interviews with all eight research participants. Using an interview guide (see Appendix D), the interviews ranged from 1 to 2.5 hours in length. All interviews were conducted in semi-quiet cafés, chosen as mutually convenient and comfortable spaces for myself and each research participant. The interview guide consisted of 14 questions aimed at exploring their respective paths into animal activism,

degree of participation in the movement, understanding of the concept of animal rights and how this concept is used within their activism, if at all. The interview guide became less relevant as the direction of my research questions shifted towards the influence of gender on animal activism and activists. What emerged in its place was a more narrative process in which my research participants told me about their lived experiences of doing animal activism. With the concept of gender framing my research interest, each interview was selectively transcribed.

Reflexivity and Positionality

Tracy (2013) suggests that as qualitative researchers, we should “consider [our] personality, demographic background, traits, and preferences” prior to embarking on a qualitative pursuit (p. 11; see also Rallis and Rossman, 2012). For Tracy, this is a question about personal suitability as well as the feasibility of pursuing and completing the inquiry, for example within a given timeframe or within a given budget. Similarly emphasizing the importance of personal suitability, Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012) state: “Prior knowledge, including language skills and personal contacts (perhaps developed through previous non-academic field experiences), may make some projects doable for only some researchers, enabling them to gain access where others cannot” (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012, para. 8). The authors also point to the fluid nature of research relationships, noting that access to the field, while influenced by personal suitability, involves an “ongoing process that rests on self- and other-awareness, learning, and adaptation to the field” (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012, para. 7).

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Notably, animal rights activists pursue a cause that is often challenged, disregarded, and devalued within the powerful, meat-centric mainstream that they work to deconstruct. Animal rights activists in North America, though often existing in spaces of privilege, simultaneously exist as a marginalized group; their arguments are regularly challenged, sometimes aggressively, and dismissed. Vegans are frequently confronted for their choice to abstain from consuming animals and their by-products; they are often the subjects of unfair and inaccurate stereotyping. Their words and actions, as I experienced firsthand, are susceptible to twisting, misinterpretation, and misrepresentation by media and the public. It is not surprising then, that a (perceived) outsider might be regarded with defensiveness and skepticism by animal rights activists, whose work and credibility – and by extension the lives of the animals for whom they advocate – are put at risk when in the hands of a non-ally.

Thus, it is important to address and reflect on and to make transparent my positionality in relation to the subject matter and my research participants. As I noted earlier in this chapter, I have come to this project with a personal history of being vegetarian and vegan, and of participating in animal rights public outreach and demonstrations. I understood this set of criteria as making me well-suited to pursuing this inquiry. However, I also recognized that my recent failure to be vegan and to participate in activism might be a barrier to negotiating access to the research field and to my research participants. For instance, what I perceived as a set of qualifying criteria was challenged when a member of the animal rights community regarded my self-presentation with skepticism; while I regarded and perhaps took for granted that my *past* participation in the movement would unanimously qualify me as an advocate and as an

ally, my *current* non-participation in demonstrating and outreach for animals might be most visible to my research participants.

However, the challenge did not prove to be insurmountable. In the same way that animal rights activists' work and credibility are threatened by misinterpretation and misrepresentation, successful advocacy for animals – with the end goal being the dismantling of the systematized exploitation and oppression of nonhuman animals – also paradoxically depends on acceptance into the mainstream. In this way, the same defensive skepticism that initially presented itself as a challenge to accessing the field eventually granted me access. Being “granted access” to my research participants and to the field is slightly misleading; it is more accurate to regard it as continual and dialogic, a process of rapport building and negotiations of trust that were ongoing. Of course, the process of negotiation was not always fruitful and, as I will elaborate on below, I periodically came up against barriers to continuing my research.

As I will revisit periodically throughout the thesis, it is important to reflect on and to situate myself within the world of animal rights. Drawing on Sarah Tracy (2013:256), a “confessional tale” is a self-reflexive narrative tool that acknowledges and critically engages with a researcher's situatedness within her research and in relation to her research participants. A confessional tale centralizes the researcher's voice, allowing her, among other things, to name the ways in which her story is imbricated in the research story and in turn, the ways in which this shapes the research. My goal in drawing on this literary tool is not to put myself at the centre of a story that is not solely mine, but to highlight the ways in which my experiences as a carnivore-turned-vegetarian-turned-vegan-turned-vegetarian, and (sometimes) as an activist-turned-academic have shaped

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and continue to shape my inquiry into a subject matter that, as most qualitative researchers will not be shy to admit, is close to my heart.

Throughout the course of my Master's program, my personal circumstances have changed in a way that affects my relationship to the process of my research, the participants, the field, and the relevant literature. When I originally began thinking through and designing this research project, I had been living as a vegan for four years and had participated semi-regularly in efforts led by the animal activist community in this city. Though my participation in ground-level activism had waned by this point, I considered myself, and still do, to be an ally with the animal activist community. In the early stages of developing the research project, I recognized the utility of my position as an ally, as an "insider." This, I thought, provided me with an easy "in." As the development of the project progressed, with its details still being fleshed out, I began a slow transition from my staunch veganism to vegetarianism, a diet I feel is more flexible. This transition was dialectical, informed by and informing my understandings of and feelings about veganism as a mode of action and its relationship to public advocacy. My transition from veganism to vegetarianism and of stepping away from participation in public advocacy has been, on a personal level, fraught with anxiety, questions about ethics and morality, and concerns about the impact of my choices and actions. This anxiety was compounded by the fact that I had developed my research project, in part, around my understanding of myself as a vegan, a sometimes-activist, and always as an ally, and the assumed accessibility that this granted me to my research field and participants.

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My decision to pull away from participation in public advocacy and my transition from veganism to vegetarianism did weigh heavily on my conscience, but in the context of my research presented a whole host of difficult questions that arose through engagement with relevant texts and reflection on collegial discussion: if I have left veganism and public advocacy behind, is this still my domain? In what ways does/will this change my relationship to the project itself?; to the process of inquiry?; to my research participants?; to the analysis of my data?; to the writing-up of my findings? In what ways does this personal change affect the ways by which I present myself to my research participants, and can I still call myself an ally? Does the change in my personal life constitute something worthy of disclosure? If I were to disclose the change in my personal life, how would this affect my relationship to my research participants, how I read them and how they read me? And importantly, what if it hinders my access to the community, compromises my “insider” status? The questions carry on.

While I toyed with these questions, I continued to develop my research project. A possible effect of my pulling away from veganism and public outreach became apparent when I posted the original callout to participants (see Appendix A).

I received a number of emails from interested members of the community, some willingly volunteering themselves, others looking for further information. However, it was with one response to the callout that I felt my positionality shift, and with that the series of reflexive questions with which I had been toying became ever more important.

She wrote:

I'm very curious about you wanting to study local activism yet you seem to be unknown in the local animal rights movement. Are you an activist yourself? Are you vegan?

Importantly, her questions might have been an attempt at vetting, a means of protecting herself and other activists against the possibility of police or law infiltration. However, I felt that my position as a researcher and my identity as a self-identified ally with the animal activist community was suddenly in flux; I understood myself as an ally and at times as an insider, though I felt this self-identifier wane along with my veganism, but in this moment I was read with skepticism and out-rightly as an outsider, no less by an influential and active member of this animal activist community.

This situation generated a number of questions for me about ethics, reflexivity, self-disclosure, and my dual positionality as an insider and as an outsider. Drawing on a large body of literature related to the ethics and reflexivity of qualitative methodologies, I was able to reflect on this situation. Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012), citing a chapter authored by Samer Shehata in Yanow and Schwartz-Shea (2006), argue that the researcher-researched relationship is marked by a dynamic and continuing process of negotiation, whereby researcher identity presented through self-expression is “read” and evaluated by research participants. In the same way that we read people in everyday life, they argue, research participants read and react accordingly within the research relationship. Likewise, Tracy (2013a) discusses the ways in which researchers’ “bodies and identities can both help and hurt” the research process (p. 77). She argues that, like anyone, we are marked by demographic identifiers, “social attributes, and personality characteristics,” and that “fieldworkers’ identities are ‘read’ and evaluated by participants just as much as participants’ identities are read and evaluated by fieldworkers” (Tracy, 2013a, p. 77). Generalizing this to the research process as a whole – the callout and initial responses of interest, the email exchanges, the interviews, the fieldwork, the data

analysis, the write-up – how I am read by my research participants *matters*. My style of dress, my speech, language and tone, my demographic characteristics, my social attributes – all that I do is up for evaluation within the research relationship. In this case, my perceived absence from the animal rights community was read with skepticism, threatening to hurt or hinder the research process; while I presented myself as an insider and an ally, I was initially read as an outsider and as a non-ally.

A number of scholars emphasize the importance as well as the shortcomings of the practice of reflexivity in qualitative research. As Tracy (2010) notes, reflexivity helps to maintain sincerity and honesty throughout the research process and best practices begin in the “early stages of research design through negotiating access and trust, data collection, analysis, and presentation” (p. 842). In engaging in my own practice of self-reflexivity, I have been able to begin to work through the complexity of my dualism – being both an insider and an outsider. Pillow (2003) discusses the role of self-reflexivity in dealing with insider/outsider positionalities, or “dual identities” (Pillow, 2003, p. 182). She asserts that insider status does not necessarily render the researcher-researched relationship level, and furthermore that plural relationships of power “shape and challenge the research process” (Pillow, 2003, p. 182). She further argues that a process of self-reflexivity in which a researcher simply discloses her positionality as a “truth claim” to the reader is insufficient in addressing the complexity of relationalities within research relationships (Pillow, 2003, p. 190). And indeed this is relevant to my own process of reflexivity – a simple acknowledgement of/disclosure to my eventual readers of the complexities of my dual identity (researcher/sometimes activist and vegan,

ally/dissenter, insider/outsider) is insufficient for addressing the ways in which these dualities will influence, challenge, and trouble the research process (Pillow, 2003).

As a remedy, Pillow (2003) suggests that “a baring of the ethical questions central to the doing and writing of qualitative research” renders a written text dialogical, allowing one’s readership to “engage in questioning that is different from the dialogue possible in simple confessional-tale or truth-claim accounts” (p. 190). Writing my self-reflexivity dialogically, inviting my readership to engage in the process of reflexivity in thinking through the ethical questions that arise through my positionality in relation to my research participants and to the movement in general, presents one of many salves for addressing the complex nature of the self in qualitative research. I am still, however, left with questions about how reflexivity responds to the unease I feel surrounding the feeling of being or wanting to be an ally, compromised by my waning involvement in and disagreement with many tactics used in public advocacy and what I feel are staunch requirements for membership in the vegan ideal.

Berger (2015) discusses researcher positionality, drawing on her experiences of doing research while *being* an insider, of *becoming* an insider, and of *being* an outsider, and the role of researcher reflexivity in responding to these differing positionalities. Berger asserts that researcher positionalities may have particular impacts on the researcher-researched relationship, stating that “access to the field,” types and levels of participant disclosure, as well as analysis of data, findings and conclusions, are impacted by the positionality of the researcher (p. 220).

While Berger’s account of her own positionalities are distinct situations, experienced while conducting different research projects, each account provides me with

various tools for reflexively confronting my insider/outsider duality. For example, in her account of being an “outsider” and of becoming an “insider,” Berger discusses the role of reflexivity in responding to situations in which her views differ significantly from, or run contrary to, those of her research participants. While her disagreement stems from a lack of “insider” understanding of experience and I attribute the disagreement that I experience to be a *product* of “insider” knowledge, Berger’s account reflects some of my own hesitations. She states, “I had to make myself deliberately aware of the possibility that these conflicting reactions may tint the way in which I hear, ignore, and overemphasize certain aspects and disregard other aspects of women’s narratives” (Berger, 2015, p. 228). Echoing Berger, I have become aware that while my discomfort with being involved in public advocacy (a significant contributor to my pulling away from the movement) do not necessarily constitute a barrier to my research, contingent on them not being read as such, they do require a process of reflexivity that confronts the ways by which my positionality affects my own “situatedness within the research” as well as my interpretation and representation of the words, actions, demeanors, and behaviours of my research participants (Berger, 2015, p. 220).

In the Facebook callout to participants and the brief exchange that ensued with the prominent animal activist, I identified myself as a researcher, a vegan-turned-vegetarian, an ex- or sometimes-activist, and an ally. As Pillow (2003) and Berger (2015) have expressed, this complex *mélange* of self-identifiers can be addressed through “a process of a continual internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of [my] positionality as well as active acknowledgement and explicit recognition that this position may affect the research process and outcome” (Berger, 2015, p. 220). However, simple disclosure of my

situatedness is insufficient for addressing the complexity of my situation, where I am in flux as both an insider and an outsider. My positionality is further muddied when taking into account the ways by which my research participants read me. As exemplified earlier in the skeptical response from an activist, being read as an outsider, particularly by members of a community whose action and advocacy are often met with criticism and skepticism from the general public, acts as a potential barrier to my research. Importantly, such skepticism also affords protection to a movement vulnerable to infiltration by law enforcement or by non-allies.

The researcher-researched relationship becomes even more complex when thinking about the role of self-disclosure. Beuthin (2014), in her discussion of her experience of conducting narrative interviews and the tensions that arise therein, draws on the experience of being “both a knowing insider and a not knowing outsider” (p. 129). She points to the ways by which this muddies the “personal and professional boundaries” of disclosure, pointing to her own ethical processes of reflexivity “about just how open to be, how much information to share” with her research participants (Beuthin, 2014, p. 128). Reflecting on inhabiting the space that exists between insider and outsider status, she notes that her situatedness can lead equally to nuanced understandings of her research participants’ narratives, as it can to overlooking context and layers key to the narrative (Beuthin, 2015, p. 129). Hence, the decision to disclose or not disclose what I understand to be both personal and pertinent information to the research process affects the knowledge to be produced.

Guillemin and Gillam (2004), differentiating between “procedural ethics” and “ethics in practice”, argue that while doing research, researchers should be mindful of the

“ethically important moments” that arise in their practice (p. 265). Ethically important moments, according to the authors, happen “where the approach taken or the decision made has important ethical ramifications” and, they argue, this “moment of response is an ethically important moment for there is the possibility that a wrong could be done” (p. 265). Generally, Guillemin and Gillam (2004) refer to ethically important moments as the moments where a research participant discloses sensitive information or moments of refusal or push-back from a participant being interviewed. However, perhaps the ethically important moment can also refer to the moment where I was read, publicly, as an outsider or to the momentary decisions I am called to make during the research process “about just how open to be, how much information to share” with my research participants (Beuthin, 2014, p. 128). These moments do indeed have “important ethical ramifications” for the research process as my decisions about how much of myself to share with my participants will affect the knowledge that is produced between them and myself.

I will admit that, while in my response to the Facebook post I disclosed that I am vegetarian (less than vegan) and that my participation in public outreach has waned, in the two interviews that I conducted at the outset of this research project I chose not to disclose the details of my consumptive choices to my research participants. While this in part was influenced by my own feelings about personal choice and privacy, my non-disclosure was also affected by my understanding that the details of my personal choice might impede the research process. A number of scenarios have run through my mind about the potential effect of self-disclosure: the interview could end abruptly when suddenly I am read as an outsider and an Other instead of an insider and an ally; relatedly, but perhaps not as drastic, sharing that I am vegetarian *but not vegan* could act merely as

an impediment to shared knowledge as the interview carries forth; or the researcher-researched table could turn, putting me in line for questioning, the original intent of the interview falling away. Though I chose not to self-disclose this information, I also did not actively avoid questioning – I compromised by deciding that, upon questioning, I would disclose my positionality for the research participant to do with as they would. Beuthin (2014) notes that these “in the moment decisions” are ethically important in that they contribute to the construction of meaning and understanding in the research process (p. 128). Considering this, I know that my decision to disclose or not to disclose is an “ethically important” decision that will contribute to the shaping of knowledge production in my research project and it is important that I engage with this issue through a continued process of self-reflexivity that not only discloses my positionality but calls my readers to engage in the process as well (Berger 2013).

Pseudonyms in Activist Research: To Name or Not to Name?

While assigning pseudonyms, enumerating or otherwise stripping research participants of potential personal identifiers in an effort to ensure confidentiality, is common and accepted practice for research involving human participants, Maria Lahman et al. (2015) invites us to reflexively challenge and draw on implications that arise through the use of pseudonyms in social science research practice. Informed by theoretical traditions of Critical Race Feminism (CRF), Lahman et al. (2015, p.446) aim to “increase the transparency of the research process whenever possible”, in this instance by critically engaging with what they purport to be an oft-ignored component of social science praxis: the question of naming and identifiability of research participants.

While the authors agree that disguising participants' identities presents a number of potential relational, developmental, and economic implications for participants, they argue that using "a reflexive methodology" and obtaining ongoing consent – a dynamic and continuing process of checking-in with a research participant in order to (re)ascertain consent – may work to mitigate these potential challenges to confidentiality (Lahman et al., 2015, p. 451). Calling for transparency, Lahman et al. (2015) suggest that taken-for-granted research practices, such as assigning pseudonyms, be challenged and given space in reflexive methodological research practices.

For the purposes of this research project, each research participant was given the opportunity to self-select a pseudonym. In the absence of a self-selected pseudonym, I have assigned a pseudonym. While a number of the research participants suggested that identifying them by the use of their orthonyms (given names) would be unproblematic, inconsistency in naming – naming some and not others – potentially challenges the confidentiality of those who wish not to be named. For this reason, among others that I will describe shortly, I have decided to ensure that each participant's identity is kept confidential through the use of a pseudonym.

Of course, the use of pseudonyms can be problematized further. As Lahman et al. (2015) point out, assigning pseudonyms to research participants can result in dangerous erasures of identifiers that situate and contextualize the research participant within the field of study. Names are laden with meaning, origin, and histories.

Names themselves, as well as the practice of naming and of being named, are inherently political and are intricately connected to one's positionality within social worlds. Names, among other things, are often taken to be indicators of one's

demographic and social status. Thus, lived experience is inextricably linked to names, naming, and being named, and the removal of one's name in the context of social research has the potential to erase important contextualization of the individual. Hurst (2008), as cited by Lahman et al. (2015, p. 449), argues that we should be attentive to "power in naming" – the power of the researcher to rename and potentially obfuscate the identity of an individual participant.

I focus intently on the subject of naming because, as Hurst (2008, p. 345) puts it, "personal names *do* matter" and within the context of activist research, the issue of naming is complex. On one hand, the activist participants with whom I have worked throughout this project have an agenda; they work to promote awareness about the plight of animals whose lives are implicated in contemporary consumptive practices, and part of doing so involves being seen and heard. Personal names can be an important humanizing tool in grassroots organizing around animal rights, where being well-known and approachable may help encourage interest in and sympathy towards the movement. Within the context of non-violent grassroots organizing for the alleviation of oppression of animals, exposure to and awareness of the plight of animals is top priority. The animal activists who participated in my research *want* to be seen. They *want* to be heard. They use mega-phones. They chant and cheer. They converse with passersby. They – their bodies, faces, voices, presence – are the avenue through which the (needless) oppression of animals will cease. Whether or not personal names are important to the effective promotion of compassionate consumptive choices is up for debate and, of course, is a personal choice.

On the other hand, I should note that this is not the only manifestation of animal activism: of course, there are activists who, bravely though illegally, work to expose farming practices through undercover, filmed investigations, who release farmed animals, and who otherwise vandalize the property of businesses implicated in systematized animal cruelty and suffering. Thus there are situations in which the protection of one's confidentiality through the use of a pseudonym, in the case of animal activists who err further from the side of grassroots organizing in favour of direct action, is rendered more important. However, in the case of animal activists who organize with grassroots gusto, names and identity can be important.

Returning to the issue of naming and bearing in mind my decision to ensure confidentiality through the use of pseudonyms, I turn our attention to Hurst's (2008, p. 345) concern "about the power of the researcher to rename his or her respondents" (as cited in Lahman et al., 2015, p. 446). Hurst engages in a reflexive process of pseudonym selection, in which "length and complexity" of the original name, pre-existing nicknames, ethnicity and language of the research participant are considered in the selection of an appropriate pseudonym, striving for "names that [she] intuitively felt would be of similar meaning and connotation" (p. 345). Of course, we can problematize the role of intuition and gut feelings in name selection. Names hold meaning, and *meaning for me* is different than *meaning for you*, thus an intuitive choice based on *my* intuition and *my* understanding of your representation of self does not necessarily represent *you*. Regardless, the argument put forward by Lahman et al. (2015) and Hurst (2008) is valid – as qualitative researchers we should strive to remain cognizant of the power that comes part and parcel with our role, and the ways by which this power manifests itself in the

lives of our willing research participants, and of the potential erasures that could result from the taken-for-granted process of naming.

Conclusions

In this Chapter, I explained my methodological approach to doing activist research through a critical feminist lens, outlining my processes of recruitment, interviewing, and field observation. I reflexively engaged in a discussion about my positionality as a researcher and as a lapsed vegan in relation to my research project and participants. Further, I reflected on the issue of naming in activist research. Given my pre-existing and complicated relationship to veganism and to animal activism, this Chapter has demonstrated the importance that I place on situating myself within this research, both as a researcher *and* as a person. Taken together, the themes that I have chosen to engage with in this Chapter are reflective of the value that I place on critical feminist approaches to doing qualitative research.

In the following Chapter, I draw on interview excerpts and the content of leaflets produced by animal rights organizations to illustrate the ways by which structures of gender work to shape animal activism and activists, and how this influences the ways by which animal rights arguments are delivered and received. I also draw on my own experiences as a vegan-turned-vegetarian and as someone who once considered themselves an animal activist.

Chapter 4: The Gendered Structure of Animal Activism

At the outset of this research project, my interests centred on the question of what animal activists are doing in their activism, and in turn, how they understand and conceptualize their activism. In reflecting on my research, the question of *who (and by what means) is doing the advocating* has become a focal point. Importantly, there has been scholarship produced on the topic of animal agency and on forms of resistance *by animals* against their own exploitation (Hribal, 2007), as well as on the value of recognizing animal subjectivity beyond suffering (Corman, 2016). As this research focuses on work done by animal activists, I recognize the oversight committed by focusing primarily on the voices of the activists who advocate for animals, excluding animals' voices and the roles that they play in resisting their own exploitation. However, given constraints of time, a focus on animal subjectivities is something worthy of future research.

Thus, focusing on the community of animal activists who are the subject of this study, I have reflected on the following questions: 'who takes part in this community?', or perhaps more importantly, 'who is able to take part in this community?', and by extension, 'what (who) is the face of this community of animal rights activists?' In the context of this research, by and large, the answer to these questions is women, insofar as they are characterized by normatively female bodies and to the extent that the voice that cries cruelty is normatively feminine (Gilligan, 1982; 2011). By asking these questions, I have come to a feminist analysis of how the influences and constraints of gender work in and through the animal activists, their work, and their community. Drawing on Gilligan (1982; 2011), I focus on the *differences* between women's and men's voices in animal

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activism, in particular on the emotionality of women's claims and the ways by which such emotionality is juxtaposed against (men's) thought and reason. Drawing on Ahmed (2004), I am interested in the ways by which emotions 'stick' to bodies, shaping their surfaces and defining their boundaries, such that, in some cases, women animal rights activists and their activism can come to be defined by *women's* sentimentality. As I highlighted in Chapter Two, Ahmed points to a "hierarchy between emotions," through which "some emotions are 'elevated' as signs of cultivation, whilst others remain 'lower' as signs of weakness" (p. 3). By making this distinction, Ahmed suggests that it is not all expressions of emotion, but instead a particular manifestation of emotion – 'being emotional' – that comes to characterize women, and exists hierarchically in relation to thought and reason.

Following Kennelly (2014), I argue that these women animal rights activists, whose voices reflect an (undesirable) emotionality associated with femaleness and femininity, engage in a form of care work "retraditionalised" in the public sphere, under neoliberalism. As such, to the extent that the burden of care falls predominantly to women, and animal rights activism is characterized by (women's) emotionality, I argue that animal rights activism, in which women's voices and bodies dominate, is a gendered space within the public sphere, distinctly feminized, by virtue of the emotional labour and care that characterizes the community.

It is important to note that while women are disproportionately represented in animal activism, men do participate in animal activism, albeit to a lesser degree. Drawing on Gilligan (1982) and Ahmed (2004), the imbalance of women to men in the movement can be understood in terms of the ways by which emotionality comes to characterize

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women and the social spaces that they inhabit. Insofar as animal activism comes to be characterized by women's emotionality, men who participate in animal activism challenge masculinities by existing in a feminized space. In doing animal activism, my research participants struggle and work within the constraints of (and against) a dominant patriarchal hierarchy of legitimate knowledges, which holds emotion and affect typically associated with femaleness and femininity as less legitimate than logic and rationality typically associated with maleness and masculinity. While men *are* present within this community of animal rights activists, I argue that their (masculine) presence works primarily to validate and legitimate the affective claims of women activists.

Donovan (1990) suggests that Peter Singer's (1975) and Tom Regan's (1983) success in bringing animals into the moral sphere was due in part to their overt rejection of that which has been regarded as a misplaced feminine sentimentality that detracts from the ultimate goal of objective, rational, moral consideration "without the restraint of 'subjective' relational considerations" (p. 363). Following Donovan (1990), I contend that the women activists with whom I worked are a contemporary manifestation of the exemplary of feminine sentimentality against which Singer's and Regan's rationalistic frameworks were developed. Their claims centred on issues of cruelty, violence, exploitation, and oppression, relying predominantly on emotive and affective language to their end and calling for compassion and care as a remedy. By arguing that women and men activists differentially express their concern for animals, my aim is not to argue that women do not rationalize and that men do not emote, nor is it to draw a line between rationality and emotionality as distinct entities. Rather, I aim to highlight the modes by which claims about animals are differentially communicated. My aim is to highlight a

trend, observable in the context of my research, in which women rely largely on empathetic modes of moral reasoning. While men activists do express emotion, what I am drawing attention to is the affective ways by which my women animal activists express their moral concern for animals. Like Singer and Regan, my research participants' rights-based claims centre on animal sentience – their abilities to feel pain and to suffer. While these women use rights-based discourse, the importance rests on *how* they appeal to and draw on emotions as a means of communicating their messages.

Drawing on literature that situates animal activism within the constraints of patriarchal order (Donovan, 1990; 1996; Adams, 1991; 2000; Donovan, 2006; Donovan and Adams, 2007), I will explore the ways in which animal activism is a notably gendered movement, drawing on the content of semi-structured interviews, field notes, and discursive analysis of outreach material provided to me by my research participants and compiled throughout the research process. The remainder of the chapter is divided into two prominent and interrelated sections. First, I will discuss the ways in which my research participants' paths into and continued participation in animal activism is gendered, drawing predominantly on data derived from our interviews in order to draw a distinction between rationality and empathy as underlying justifications for activism. While my male research participant suggests that rational, philosophical reasoning has informed his path towards activism, my female research participants suggest that it is predominantly feelings of empathy and compassion that underlie their activism. Second, in concert with some of the research discussed in Chapter 2, I will argue that animal activism is a distinctly feminized space within the public sphere, in which women engage in a form of care-work informed by an ethic of compassion. I will establish that animal

activism is work and that this work constitutes a form of emotional labour that reflects historically gendered divisions of labour within which women carry the burden of care. While the movement is predominantly made up of women activists (Gaarder, 2008; 2011; Kruse, 1999; Shapiro, 1994; Groves, 2001; Munro, 2001; Hall, 2006), men play an important role. Specifically, the intersections of heteronormative masculinity and female caring serve as a form of legitimation for affective claims made by a distinctly feminized movement. As I suggested in Chapter 2, there are animal activisms in which folks work to disrupt normative masculinities. As will become apparent throughout this chapter, my research participants both challenge and work within the constraints of normative masculinities. They challenge, for example, social connotations that equate meat-eating with masculinity. In doing so, however, they reinforce normative masculinity by suggesting, for example, that *men can still be masculine* while also caring about and advocating for animals. In doing so, their work draws on normative masculinities instrumentally, as a means of political legitimization. As we will come to learn, animal rights activism is enmeshed in a discourse of affect. For clarity, I will now dissect the roles of the senses and feelings of empathy and compassion. In the chapters that follow, these emotional expressions crop up repeatedly and are seemingly used interchangeably. In the course of my research, I came to recognize a distinction between empathy as a feeling, informed largely by the senses, and compassion as the corresponding action. My women research participants regularly refer to compassion as both a feeling and as an action on a feeling; they *feel compassionately* for animals, implicated in the animal industries, who they see as unjustly suffering cruelty and violence at the hands of humans, and they *act compassionately* by boycotting the animal industries and by

inciting others to do so through their activism. In order to simplify my arguments, I have interpreted their feelings of compassion instead as feelings of empathy, to which compassion is an actionable response. In other words, my research participants trajectorially *feel empathy* and *act compassionately*. As I will go on to discuss, the senses play an important role in feeling empathetically and acting compassionately towards animals. *Experiencing* what is perceived as cruelty, violence, and suffering, for example in the context of an undercover exposé from a factory farm, often impels a visceral feeling in the body. Empathy is corporal, for example, as the viewer might feel compelled to vomit or remove their eyes from the screen. Compassion, in contrast, is an action on empathy, referred to by my research participants as a desire or feeling of need to *do something*.

Thinking Rationally, Feeling Empathetically

In order to talk at length about the activist work of my women participants, it is important to consider the role of men and masculinity in directly and indirectly shaping women-led animal activism (Groves, 2001). As I will demonstrate, the gendered nature of animal activism shows itself repeatedly in the words and work of my women research participants. Their words often gesture to either the lack of male presence or to the benefit of having men in the movement. This is reflected in a number of ways. First, the presence of men in the movement defies gendered norms that conflate meat with masculinity. Veganism, regarded as a “moral requirement” (Munro, 2001) for animal activists, is legitimated by male vegans; by disrupting associations between meat and masculinity, men validate veganism as a viable diet by being vegan while exuding masculinity in other ways (Groves, 2001). Second, the presence of men in the movement

poses a challenge to gendered norms that code caring and expressions of emotion as being naturally feminine, and hardness, rationality, and emotional composure as being naturally masculine. In defying gendered norms, in at least certain ways, male presence in the movement works to legitimate the emotive claims of women, and by validating male potentiality for caring about animals, encourages male participation in the movement.

Before digging into the ways by which the presence of men and masculinity work to legitimate the emotive calls for compassion by women animal rights activists, I want to explore the pertinence of my one male activist, whose presence in the movement, I argue, both reflects and defies the typically gendered nature of animal rights activism. While I cannot make sweeping generalizations about male animal rights activists based on having only one male research participant, our interview is nonetheless an important example of the gendered nature of animal rights activism that was discussed in my literature review, and the ways by which being a man in the movement is *different* (also noted by Groves, 2001; Cravens, 2009; Romanin, 2013).

When I asked my male research participant if he would like to choose a pseudonym that he felt would be representative of him, he responded by email: “If I was a woman, I always thought I would love to be called ‘Hypatia’ but not sure if it matters the ‘gender’ of the name.” His choice is relevant for a couple of reasons. First, his gender-bending selection of a ‘female’ name is noteworthy in that it was done in a way that suggests that doing so does not threaten his masculinity. His willingness to be named a typically female name parallels his presence and participation in a movement often satirized and disregarded, at least in part, due to a pervasive hierarchy of legitimate

knowledges that muffles female voices and valorizes rationality and emotional composure.

Second, the name Hypatia is itself noteworthy within the context of this study. Hypatia of Alexandria was a renowned mathematician and philosopher of the 4th century. As a woman in the 4th century, her “fame and stature were unprecedented,” and, as a result, the name Hypatia has been adopted as a symbol of progress towards gender equality by feminists and scholars (Mendez, 2001, np). A case in point is the prominent feminist philosophy journal, *Hypatia*.

Whether or not it was his intention, I neglected to ask, but as a self-proclaimed “philoso-fan,” my research participant’s selection of the name Hypatia points to his awareness of the symbolism of the feminist icon. Thus, Hypatia, my participant, both reflects and defies the gendered nature of animal rights activism. On one hand, as a self-identified man who is an animal rights activist, he defies the predominantly female make-up of the community; on the other hand, Hypatia reflects the gendered nature of caring for animals by challenging hegemonic masculinity as a feminist ally. As I will go on to discuss later in this chapter, the relevance of Hypatia’s presence as a male animal rights activist becomes more apparent as we dissect the entanglement of gendered social assumptions that juxtapose masculinity, meat, and emotional composure on the one hand, and femininity, weakness, and the expression of emotion on the other.

Hypatia is a person of colour, who self-identified himself as being *visibly different* from the general population of predominantly white, female animal right activists within the community:

I’m a man, I’m a person of colour, and I got into this through philosophy. I think a lot of people do get into it [through] philosophy but it’s mostly health,

environmental, and then at the same level animal abuse or cruelty. I do want my views to be heard too, but it is not the mainstream, it's mostly . . . not middle class, but yeah it's middle class white women. It is what it is. I mean, [if] you just go into any of the events – you'll see it. We literally have three guys in the group!

Interestingly, Hypatia expressed that his being an animal rights activist and a vegan evolved through his interest in philosophy and ethics, and via his participation in a small community whose purpose is to promote critical and rational thought and the integrity of scientific method. His path into animal rights activism circumvents the general trend of female animal rights activists, whose paths into activism tend to centre on one or a number of realizations about the inherent cruelty, violence, and injustice involved in meat, dairy, and fur farming. Hypatia described his path into activism as a process of rationalization:

Every week on Sunday, we have something called an “unsermon.” We [members of the critical community] talk about spirituality, atheism, science, whatever...and there was one vegan in the group and he was quiet about it! It just never got brought up – nobody thought about it – and so [one day] while I was eating a hamburger I just wanted to question my epistemology for why I consumed meat. I'm around biologists, philosophers, thinkers, and so [I wondered] why am I doing this? I grew up on a farm and I was told that's just the way it is. Never had to question it! But I wanted to question it! I'm like OK, here's a vegan, he's living a healthy, happy life – why am I making this choice? And so we looked at all the arguments and, well, you know the end result. I realized that . . . I have no moral or rational or scientific *reason* – justification to [eat meat].

Importantly, a more common trope runs through the words of the women participants, none of whom credited philosophical rational justification as a reason for becoming vegan or an animal rights activist. Instead, their stories emphasized tacitly *knowing* and *feeling*, commonly expressing affective motivations for becoming vegetarian and vegan, and subsequently coming to participate in animal rights activism. Many of them pointed to a deeply felt sense of injustice and moral concern, translated to compassion, about cruelty and the felt pain and suffering of farmed animals.

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When asked about their paths into animal rights activism, most of the women activists gestured towards a gradual, transitory process of revelation about the plight of farmed animals, characterized by a deep sense of compassion (Jacobsson and Lindblom, 2013; Jacobsson and Hansson, 2014). Each woman conveyed a story that preceded their involvement in animal rights activism, many of them pointing to a process of enlightenment or of *coming to know and coming to feel* the reality of cruelty and violence inherent to the animal industries. Elizabeth, who has been involved in the animal rights community for over twenty years, emphasizes two childhood experiences that shaped her future engagement with the animal movement:

When I was about five I gave my dad a little seal that was made out of seal skin and I didn't think about it you know, I just bought it at the store, and he gave it back to me and he said "oh no, I can't take that, it's made out of baby seals" and I started to think about that. Then when I was 14, we went to [visit] some friends of the family . . . and they had a little lamb. So we played with the lamb and the lamb was so sweet, so shy. And then we went the following week, and the lamb was not there but there were lamb chops for lunch. I was just horrified because I remembered the lamb and I had sort of been looking forward to interacting with him again. And I was the only one who refused to eat and when we got home I continued to refuse to eat lamb. And then I started not eating chicken, and started not eating any meat.

Elizabeth recognized lamb chops not as food but as someone who had, not long before, been her friend. Her new distaste for meat was informed by empathetic feelings towards an animal with whom she bonded.

Like Elizabeth, Doe Adams, an animal rights activist in her early twenties, points to a “defining moment” in which she came to a realization about meat: “I remember this one defining moment when I was really young, I was eating a chicken wing and I asked my dad ‘what is this?’ and he said ‘Oh, that's a vein.’ And that was a kind of a big moment for me.” In both of these stories, revelation occurs when food consumption is

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connected to an accumulated affective knowledge, impelling them to feel and confront their own dietary practices.

Margaret, who has been involved in the movement for over 20 years, expressed that her long path towards animal activism was born out of her Christianity. She expressed a sense of deep moral concern about issues of suffering, injustice, and starvation that she saw afflicting humanity, particularly children, in the late 1980s:

I didn't start out as an animal rights activist, I started out as somebody who was very, very concerned about suffering and injustice in this world and how many people were dying of starvation. I think that that was my big thing, was how many people were needlessly dying of starvation every single day. Back in 1988 or '89, I became aware, through Greenpeace, that something like 25 to 35 thousand children were dying needlessly every day from preventable causes, and a lot of that was food-related. I thought this was terrible and I couldn't believe that the world was just letting it happen, but it just spun me into almost-depression because I felt so helpless. When I went vegetarian [it was] because I wanted to live a more compassionate life. I felt that I didn't need to eat meat.

This feeling of deep moral concern for humanity was amplified while living with her young family in Los Angeles at the time of the Rodney King Riots in 1992, when Reginald Denny, a driver for a construction company, was pulled from his truck and beaten by four rioters:

We actually watched Reginald Denny being dragged out of the truck and beaten up on TV - actually live - it was very, very disturbing [and] that made me so ashamed of being a human being. I thought human beings were better than that and so I wanted to disassociate myself from being a human being. So it wasn't for animals that I went vegetarian. It was to try to make myself a more compassionate person in the hope that if I got into this position where I was in a mob mentality – the idea of hurting somebody, the idea of looting – maybe being a vegetarian might just help me distance myself a little bit from being that violent.

Margaret's path into activism thus differs slightly from the other women participants. While her adoption of vegetarianism was motivated by a desire to no longer be complicit in the violent racial and political strife of the 1990s, she emphasizes a deeply felt sense of empathy for those with whom she has no immediate or personal connection. Her concern

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for human suffering eventually turned to concern for farmed animals and in 2005 Margaret transitioned to veganism, influenced by the research of Dr. Michael Greger, now a well-known American physician, public figure, and advocate of the vegan diet.

I started the journey trying to help people, and then suddenly discovered it wasn't just people I was helping. The answer is phenomenal, that we can use justice and compassion to [solve] everything, it doesn't have to be a one-stop shop. You can save the planet, you can save mankind, you can save the animals, and it's kinder, it's more compassionate, it's just such a wonderful feeling to eat vegan. You look at your plate and there's all this beautiful colour, and you can know that no animal has suffered.

For the women activists, their paths into activism are defined predominantly by feelings – in the form of an emotional bond made with animals, feelings of concern for their wellbeing, and a horrified sense of the violence suffered by animals. Notably, description of their paths into activism do not centre on a process of ostensibly masculine instrumental rationalization, but rather on empathic expressions of concern for the lives of animals.

Not only do the women's paths into activism evolve through affective understandings of human-animal relationships, this empathy continues to work as a source of inspiration. Empathy acts as a wellspring, recurrently producing a demand to which compassion must respond.

“Getting it”: Seeing is Believing

Similar to the findings of Shapiro (1994), the women activists, who generally take a position rooted in empathy and compassion for the lived experiences of animals implicated in the animal industries, focus predominantly on the suffering of animals. The women activists draw on outreach material from mainstream animal rights organizations (PETA, Mercy for Animals, and Vegan Outreach, to name a few) which present the problem of animal suffering in formats designed to evoke an empathetic response:

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enlarged images that graphically depict the lived experiences of factory farmed animals, YouTube videos that carry the brutal sounds of slaughter, and so on. Through these mediums, the women activists rely on the senses as a way to convince the public of the atrocities of the animal industries. Their view (i.e. Louisa, Ingrid, Doe Adams, and Margaret) is that one only needs to *see and hear* the pain and suffering experienced by animals in order to “get it”, and suffering is undeniable when it is so blatantly expressed. Much like their own experiences of “getting it”, understanding, empathy, and compassion develop via compounding tidbits of information, and repetitive exposure to the representations and realities of the animal industries. Louisa, for example, suggests that understanding comes via a gradual process, noting that “for someone to fully take in a concept they have to have that concept hit them about 21 times”; Doe Adams notes that “it takes a special kind of person to *get it* right away.”

Planting seeds is important and that's why I guess you can feel good about not necessarily winning people over right away because at least you planted the idea in their head and maybe next time they'll see something else that'll add to that until eventually they want to stop exploiting animals.

While all of the activists (women and a man) note that conversation and questioning are important tactics in their activism, the women tend to ask questions that require one to reflect on the plight of animals by emplacing her- or himself in the position of animals. We will see this later in the case of Frances, who works to evoke empathic understanding by asking people to emplace themselves in the position of a mother coyote faced with chewing off her own leg in order to return to her pups. Similarly, Doe Adams attempts to empathetically communicate the lived experiences of animals by strategically adjusting her vocabulary, drawing attention to the ‘literal’ suffering of animals:

So when I have those moments of being able to reach an audience I like to fill them up with facts as much as I can. Like, calling coyotes 'dogs' . . . because

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people love dogs. I like to try to use literal language instead of using symbolic language. So as an example, during this interview I've probably said 'eating animals' more than I've said 'eating meat', 'cause we like to, as a culture, put words over other words to make them sound nicer . . . We say we're eating a chicken wing, not a chicken's wing, or we're eating foie gras, not whatever happened to that poor goose.

Like Doe Adams, Louisa talks of the importance of relatability and humanization in animal rights activism:

I try to paint a picture for them with my words. If I'm talking about fur for example, I'll talk about how coyotes are caught in these traps that will get them at the leg, and they'll be caught for days or weeks at a time so they'll try to get back to their babies and sometimes they'll chew off their own legs to try to get out. I really try to paint a picture as much as I can, and I try to do it while sounding very sympathetic and empathetic to that person. Again, just humanizing myself and getting them to relate - [saying] 'you know, I didn't know either and it made me so sad, and I think that if more people knew...' and then just bringing it back to the animals, bringing it back to *that* animal.

Turning our attention back to Hypatia, there is a notable difference between what he and the women activists rely on and qualify as evidence of injustice. These differences may not be immediately apparent, as Hypatia also draws on shared qualities between humans and animals in order to evoke interest in the case for animal rights, and also participates in outreach and demonstrations that rely heavily on graphic imagery depicting the suffering of factory farmed animals. However, it is clear that Hypatia's focus is not on empathy, but on an ostensibly masculine logic. This important difference is present in his personal justification, communicated to me, for being an animal activist and a vegan:

I believe *we are animals*, so when I think [about] animal liberation, I think *all* animals. And when I see oppressed *animals*, I get upset. I think there's injustice and I want fairness in that and even if I don't [achieve] it, I know I'm gonna fight for it. I take . . . John Rawls' Veil of Ignorance to another level. I apply the veil to other species because I see *no* good reason not to! . . . Species-membership is not sufficient, philosophically, to ignore or to arbitrarily exclude them from moral concern.

Hypatia's reliance on philosophical reasoning toward his understanding and explication of the problem of human use or exploitation of animals and their bodies is notably different than how the women participants explicate their processes of enlightenment, of coming to know, understand, and feel animals' pain and suffering at the hands of humans. Instead, he uses a rhetorical device which he calls "street epistemology" in order to get people thinking about their justifications for consuming animals and their by-products, for being complicit in animal exploitation.

When I go to protests and people walk by and they're just curious, I tell them what we're there for and what our message is . . . I question like the Socratic method. I'm like 'so what do *you* think?' Instead of just *giving* the information, [I ask] 'what do you think about what I just said? Do you have any objection? Do you have any counter-arguments?' . . . If the logic and the philosophy is *wrong*, I'm down to change my mind according to the evidence and the logic. That's *my* worldview.

Here, Hypatia emphasizes that his veganism and his activism are informed by logic and philosophical reasoning. He is willing to make changes to his ideals based on evidence, though there is unlikely to be evidence sufficient to sway his veganism or his advocacy. By presenting an argument with no logical counterargument, the people with whom he is communicating, theoretically, are left with no rational reason for upholding their beliefs.

Compassion for Animals: Care Work in the Public Sphere

As I pointed to in the introduction of this chapter, until recent history women's presumed natural desire and propensity to birth and to care for others, in Western society, has played out predominantly in the private sphere in the form of unpaid emotional labour. Post-second-wave feminism, the tradition of female care has migrated to the public sphere, albeit into notably feminized spaces (Kennelly, 2014, p.254; Groves, 2001). Here, my research diverges from Groves (2001). While Groves similarly points to the emotionality/rationality dichotomy as a factor in shaping animal rights activists'

advocacy efforts, his research shows that the women activists with whom he worked routinely rejected “feminine” emotionality in favour of rationalistic arguments, generally made by male leaders of the movement. Instead, the women who participated in my research tend to harness emotionality as a tool in their activism. I argue that the animal activist community in this mid-sized Canadian city, led by women, is a distinctly feminized space, in which activists engage in a form of empathetic care-work. Like the burden of care carried by women in the private sphere, the emotional labour of caring for animal wellbeing is unpaid and notably un(der)appreciated. In the following section, I will argue that the work of animal activism is work, and constitutes a form of emotional labour that we can understand as a manifestation of historically gendered divisions of labour in the global West.

Compassion.

For my research participants, activism is a form of care-work that plays out as *compassion*. Activism is characterized by feelings of empathy towards those who suffer – animals *and* humans – and an unwillingness to be complacent. In this way, compassion can be understood as the actionable extension of empathy, which emerges as a theme across my data in three interrelated ways. First, compassion is both a feeling of empathy and a way of being and acting for the animal activists. Compassion is described as a feeling, which for some came early in life (as in the case of Ingrid, below), and as a reaction and resolution to issues of perceived suffering, violence, and cruelty experienced by animals. Put another way, moral concern for the wellbeing of animals, whether in a general sense or in relation to one particular animal or group of animals, is understood and expressed by my women activists as a feeling of compassion and care. I have

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interpreted the feeling of compassion as a feeling of empathy. Ingrid, for example, who has been a vegetarian and vegan involved in animal activism for over 20 years, describes a “feeling of compassion” that came early in life and persisted into her teenage years.

I think the feeling of wanting to do something and the feeling of compassion for animals came very, very young, you know, as early as I can remember having any cognizance. And so as a small child I thought about animals, I thought about them as beings, I thought about them as being equally important. And as a teenager, it was the circus that really made me think about how we treat animals – I saw the animals of the circus as prisoners.

Second, and relatedly, the activists frequently refer to the importance of showing kindness to and having compassion for those who they are working to influence. The activists practice care – for each other, for animals, and for others – in order to encourage and support a move towards a more compassionate lifestyle. As I will show, the animal activists act with care towards those who are considered the human victims of the animal industries, understanding their emplacement in a system of oppression. In doing so, they work to encourage similar feelings of empathy with the hope of encouraging acts of compassion for animals.

Caring plays an important role in how the women activists think about their activism. Consider, for example, their thoughts on the best tactics for doing public advocacy: demonstrations, protests, outreach, and so on. These approaches are informed by an understanding that we are each a product of the same oppressive systems that lead us to rely on animals and their by-products, and attempt to hide the devastation inherent to the animal industries.

This is demonstrated by Doe Adams, who encourages activists via her video blog (vlog) to “still have faith in people and basically see [them] as pre-vegans”:

Whenever you're approaching a subject . . . and you're approaching it in the most aggressive way possible, it's more of an ego thing and less about the animals . . . It

all just comes down to learned behaviours. Once you can understand that everyone is really just repeating learned behaviours that they didn't have the choice to be exposed to in the first place, and the fact that society really tries to hide the truth from us, you kind of just begin to see people as victims as well. Because even though the people who are eating animals are perpetrators of violence, they're also victims of not having the truth being told to them which allows them to practice stuff that doesn't align with their own values.

While the people involved, the values held, and the tactics employed across global animal rights initiatives and organizing vary, the stereotype of the hysterical, bucket-of-blood-slinging (female) animal rights activist, has typically dominated popular narrative (Gaarder, 2011; Kruse, 1999). As I will go on to show, my research participants are part of a broader discourse in which tactics of activism are moving towards a form of outreach that extends empathy and care to the target audience. Doe Adams, for example, suggests that by “concentrating on the things that we share . . . the ability to love, the ability to feel pain and to feel torture and to want freedom,” in other words, by drawing on their capacities for empathy, she is able to speak to people about animals in a way that resonates with them. Likewise, when I asked Ingrid about how she communicates to others through her activism, she notes that she “connect[s] to their emotions first”:

That's why we stop hurting animals right, is because we see them being hurt . . . nobody wants that. We are wired to be upset and I dare anyone to watch any of those films and not feel physically ill from watching it. You're supposed to! You're supposed to feel disgusted. So yeah, you've gotta connect [to] their emotions first.

Doris, too, suggests that as an activist, humanizing herself as someone relatable by communicating that she was once in their shoes, can be very impactful. She encourages people to care about animals by asking herself what she herself would like to hear in that position, and by drawing on their empathic emotions:

I try to think ‘what if I was that person?’ You know, what would I want to hear? What would and wouldn't work? . . . I find that that approach opens people up, when you say ‘that's a really good question’ or ‘I used to be the same.’ . . . One thing that I really put a lot into last year was [asking people] ‘how would you

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feel? how would you feel if it was you? If you had to do those dumb tricks and turn around? They don't get to go home and relax and watch TV when they're done the way you do. They have to do more shows and be on a truck!

Louisa communicates in a similar way, suggesting to me that the role of an animal activist is to connect humans to the experiences of animals caught up in the animal industries: “When you look at . . . the differences between humans and animals, there's one thing that does unite us and that's the ability to feel pain and suffering.” Louisa incites people into action by asking them to empathize with the pain and suffering experienced by factory farmed or trapped animals. Frances draws on empathy as a tool for encouraging care and action in a similar way:

You make it intriguing, so you're like ‘OK well let me ask you this: you like fur so you think fur is OK and you think there's a natural way to do it . . . what if you were walking in the woods one day and . . . you step in a trap. The only way to get back to your kids is to chew off your own leg. How does that make you feel?’ And then people are like ‘well, shit!’

Similarly, Ingrid notes that her approach to activism involves “choos[ing] a voice of compassion, more soft”:

When you're being yelled at you're engaging in fight or flight, so you're not accessing any of your higher capabilities. Therefore, you're not communicating. Neither of you are listening any more, the person's feeling judged, they're becoming defensive, angry, and scared. It's a waste of time! All you've done is create fear and anger and maybe hatred, people hating you, people never wanting to listen to you again, people going home and saying "they're crazy", and that's not what we want. You need to approach each individual with compassion and have them open up to you so you can have a conversation, and they're not gonna do that if you're yelling and saying "you're an asshole, do you know what you're doing?" and wagging your finger in their face. Their brain is gonna shut down, and they're gonna shut off from you. Is that effective? I don't think so.

The ways in which my research participants communicate their claims to the general public is informed, in part, by the academic research and public lectures of Dr. Melanie Joy, a prolific and outspoken social psychologist, vegan, and animal rights activist. Joy's (2003) dissertation and her subsequent book, titled *Why we love dogs, eat*

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pigs, and wear cows: an introduction to carnism (2010) introduce the concept of *carnism* as a means of explaining the underlying belief system with which humans justify eating and wearing some animals while loving others. Joy's (2012) lecture, *The Psychology of Eating Meat*, is referred to as an influential piece for some of my women activists (for example, Doe Adams, Louisa, and Ingrid), who use the work to inform the ethic of compassion with which they approach their activism and the people they are seeking to educate.

Joy's (2015) video, titled *The Secret Reason We Eat Meat*, explains carnism as an institutionalized belief system that relies on three defense mechanisms that allow "rational, humane people [to] participate in irrational, inhumane practices": denial renders the violence and cruelty of the animal industries invisible; we rely on justifications which hold the consumption of animals as "normal, natural, and necessary"; and cognitive distortions render some animals, like pigs, mere abstractions, while others, like cats or dogs, are rendered lovable pets. Carnism, she argues, "conditions us to block our awareness and our empathy." Joy suggests that awareness is the key to combatting carnism, and that we should strive for "compassion rather than cruelty, empathy rather than apathy, authenticity rather than dishonesty, [and] justice rather than oppression." The takeaway for my research participants, from Joy's written work and videos, is an approach to activism that sees meat-eaters as 'victims of institutionalized carnism'; with awareness, people have the information to make informed, rational, and humane consumptive choices.

Joy's work can be understood as an appeal to rationality that at face value does not appear to align with my account of activism as a distinctly feminized space in which

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activists engage in care-work; activists give people the facts, and with those facts they can make informed, *rational*, and humane consumptive choices. However, by looking at those facts and the way by which they are disseminated, we get a slightly different picture that aligns with my central argument. The facts, as presented in Joy's video, are animals' experiences of inhumane practices, violence, brutality, suffering, unnecessary death and waste at an unprecedented scale. The facts, communicated via animation, are depicted in a way that purposefully appeals to our emotions. Further, the way by which Joy encourages activists to see meat-eaters as *victims*, and, importantly, how those words have been interpreted and put into practice by my research participants, suggests that expressions of care and compassion are paramount to effective activism:

I've done a fair bit of street activism and I've very recently kind of changed my approach after learning about Dr. Melanie Joy and her psychology of eating meat [video]. Basically, what I learned from that is, you really have to seem like *people* to people, and you really have to put yourself on their level . . . I'm still having a hard time because I'm still in that transitional phase; I only discovered Melanie Joy probably a couple months ago, but it's really been making me think about how I use language and what the best way to use it is, and I think coming off as just a normal person who cares is the best approach because if someone sees you and thinks you're crazy, that's not gonna get them thinking about animal rights.

Above, Doe Adams explains how exhibiting *care* – kindness and compassion – is an important and effective way to raise awareness about the animal industries. By embodying compassion – in their consumptive choices and in their awareness-raising interactions with people – the activists develop a foundation from which to encourage compassionate choices. In other words, the activists practice what they preach; by being compassionate and caring towards people, they are more likely to attract them to their cause.

The third way that compassion emerges as a theme is the way in which the activists “urge people to choose compassion” in their demonstrations, during public outreach, and online via their personal social media. While engaging in participant

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observation in the field, I observed two activists' (both women) use of the megaphone².

Depending on who was using the megaphone, their messages flitted between words of encouragement and shame:

It's time that you all become better people! Be the compassionate and kind people who I know you are!

Be a compassionate person!

I believe in you!

Choose compassion over fashion!

Teach your children compassion!

There is no way to make fur humane!

You wouldn't wear your cat or dog!

Your fur had a face!

Innocent animals deserve their lives!

There's dead animal on your jacket – shame on you!

There's no excuse for wearing fur!

Fur is beautiful on animals, UGLY on people!

At face value, the above messages seem conflicting: one is a message of care and the other a message of shame to people, informed by a feeling of care for animals. However, both messages seek to evoke emotive responses with the desired goal of getting people to think and feel differently about their consumptive choices. And importantly, the seemingly conflictual messages speak to an emergent tactical shift in their activism toward an extension of care towards the human victims of the animal industries. Notably, the shift that extends a message of care and compassion from animals to the target audience emerged much more frequently in my interviews with the animal activists. Frances, for example, discusses one of the approaches she takes to encouraging people to

² Both of these activists eventually became my research participants. In the context of this vignette, I am keeping their identities confidential as field observation was conducted pre-consent.

choose compassion, when they express care and concern about the material and information she shares about animals:

This is a new tactic I've been using as well - I'm not expecting you to do all or nothing but if you're obviously hurt by this, you're obviously still hurt about the fact that you've been supporting it, I'm not going to tell you that you're OK for supporting it, but what's the first change that we can do to get you moving towards a more compassionate life? And then eventually, hopefully into activism where you can start fighting for the animals.

Similarly, Margaret expresses that a feeling of compassion should translate to acting compassionately:

If you think you're a compassionate person . . . I think most people would think of themselves as being good people, . . . as being right . . . If you consider yourself to be that person, then we owe it to ourselves to do as little harm as possible, and to look at the harm that we're doing. That fur trim isn't just a piece of fur trim; that's a sentient being that's died in fear and pain and horrific suffering, just to have a little bit of fluff around you.

Compassion is a theme that runs in and through the work of my research participants, and it is observable in three overlapping ways: they feel compassion towards animals; they act compassionately towards animals and towards their human audience; and they encourage others to feel and act compassionately as well. Compassion is an act of care, and, existing within a gendered society within which the role of care traditionally has fallen to women, to feel, act, and encourage compassion is considered feminine.

Masculinizing Compassion.

In the preceding sections of this chapter, I have explored the motivations of and approaches to activism of the women who participated in my research project, drawing on the words of Hypatia, my male research participant, as a means of emphasizing and understanding this animal rights activism as existing within and working against the constraints of gender. Importantly, the activists, too, express understandings of animal activism as being distinctly gendered, though not necessarily in those terms. The women

activists point to the ways by which masculinity and male presence are important to the success of the animal rights movement. Drawing on the words of the women activists, field observations, and supplementary material such as leaflets and informational guides provided to me by my participants, I have distinguished three ways by which the presence of men and the legitimacy afforded to the male voice in a patriarchal society work to validate the claims of women who, throughout history, have dominated the public scene in the fight for animals. Male presence in the animal rights movement challenges the categorization of animal rights as a “women’s issue”, and in doing so, normative conceptions of masculinity are also challenged. As my women research participants’ words (Elizabeth and Doe Adams, for example) suggest below, getting men on board with animal rights and veganism carries the extra weight of challenging gendered ideas about what constitutes masculinity. However, here, my aim is to explore the ways by which the presence of men works to legitimate the feminine voice.

First, in the Global West, claims made by men have and continue to be afforded legitimacy in the public sphere, due to deeply embedded gendered assumptions about biological sex and intellectual superiority. I propose that when a man speaks out against the animal industries, two things happen. One, the general absence of men and male voices in the animal rights movement lends legitimacy to the arguments made by a predominantly female movement; if *he* is speaking up for animals, there must be some legitimacy to the argument. Two, because of the normalcy with which *he* occupies the public sphere and his ability to speak freely and to be listened to *because he is male* (this argument cannot be made without considering the intersections of whiteness, cisgenderism, heterosexuality, class, and able-bodiedness), his argument is regarded with

more legitimacy than the same or similar arguments long made by women activists (Groves, 2001).

While discussing influential voices in the animal rights movement, for example, Ingrid points to Peter Singer as someone whose work and public presence she felt validated what she had long felt and argued about the wrongness of the animal industries:

Well, I mean first of all [Peter Singer] was a man. We were discussing genders . . . being involved in caring about animals and issues of compassion. So it sort of – I'm sad to say – gave it credibility over me saying “yeah, you see! It's not just a ladies' thing or a girls' thing.” He approached it from a compassionate angle but it also felt academic, which made me feel validated, made me feel like it wasn't just "oh it's just a girl who loves dogs." No, there was a real reason . . . sentience and suffering. [He argued] that animals, although we see them as different and although we've learned them as different through our upbringing [and] our religions - they're not; that they are other beings that we don't understand and that they are suffering. It was critical both for the issue of not hurting them and for our own humanity . . . I felt intellectually validated for feeling that way. *It was more than feelings*. It was like...smart people think about animals!

This excerpt from my interview with Ingrid does two things: first, it points to the way by which our gendered biases work to construct the issue of animal rights as being an issue for bleeding hearts – women – whose nature it is to care. By extension, it highlights the ways that forms of knowledges are differentially accepted. In this case, academic knowledge – rational, logical, rooted in “fact” and research, and historically constructed as the domain of men – is given primacy over affective knowledge – derived from feeling and emotion, expressed through caring and concern, and historically constructed as the domain of women. Ingrid continues:

I think that [it] speaks to the fact that as women, sadly, we still haven't come far enough. There's still more credibility lent to the male voice and that's true even in the Western world where we have often more credibility – it's still not as great. So that's unfortunate and I hope that it comes around but I've had the very, very good fortune of meeting Jane Goodall. I've had the very good fortune of meeting Joanne McArthur, who is behind movies and takes photographs that most people would not be able to take. She's immensely great. The women that I've worked with in the animal rights movement...there's a lot of strong women. I hope in the

future they'll be featured even more . . . Maybe in the next few decades that will come. That would be really nice. Not just people laughing at Pamela Anderson, you know. [laughs] Although we're grateful for her too and her compassionate part.

Despite the hard work and progress made by women activists, claims made by women are afforded less legitimacy than those made by men. Pamela Anderson's advocacy on behalf of animals and public support for PETA has been extensive and prolific, using her celebrity, her public platform, and her widely publicized and highly sexualized body in order to attract attention and support to the cause. However, as Ingrid aptly alludes to, Anderson is often not taken seriously due in part to her hypersexualized celebrity and public persona and the lack of credibility afforded to women who "flaunt" their sexuality. The lack of credibility afforded to Anderson is apparent in a publicized exchange in which Anderson and Miley Cyrus individually spoke out against Christy Clark, the Premier of British Columbia, Canada (CBC News, 2015 September 17) and the Province's decision to allow a systematic wolf cull as a means of protecting its caribou population. Cyrus requested her vast Twitter following to sign a petition against the cull; Anderson drafted an open letter to Clarke, published on *The Pamela Anderson Foundation* website (Anderson, 2015). The letter reads:

Dear Premier,

I am proud to tell people that I hail from British Columbia, and I spend a great deal of my time on Vancouver Island. But as an honorary director of PETA, I won't hold my tongue when I witness cruelty to animals, and I am deeply disturbed that my beloved province is allowing people to hunt and kill wolves.

We all want to restore the populations of endangered caribou, but gunning down wolves is not the answer. Hunting is a grossly inefficient method of wildlife control, because more animals will simply move into the less-populous area to replace the ones who have been killed. For wolves, who usually mate for life and live in close-knit family groups, hunting can devastate entire communities. Many animals experience prolonged, painful deaths when hunters severely injure but fail to kill them. And hunting disrupts the delicate balance of the ecosystem.

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Caribou are threatened because humans have overdeveloped their habitat. Rather than spending millions in taxpayer dollars to kill more animals, we need to invest in a plan to protect Canada's forestland, which would also preserve the habitats of many other species, offset carbon emissions, and, because the forest acts as a natural water filter, provide everyone with cleaner water. Killing every wolf in the country won't save the caribou if the animals have no protected habitat.

I'd be happy to meet with you to discuss further how British Columbians can protect our beautiful land and all its inhabitants.

Sincerely yours,

Pamela Anderson

While defending the cull at a Press Conference, the Premier responded to the claims made by Anderson and Cyrus by joking about their clothing choices and dance moves. CTV News Vancouver (2015 September 18) quotes Clark as saying: "I want to make sure that Miley knows that I'm willing to sit down to 'twerk' it out" and "Both Pamela Anderson and Miley Cyrus, when they open up their closets, they probably don't find a lot of clothes." Clark then goes on to defend the cull, suggesting that the celebrity women have misunderstood the issue at hand: "I just hope that they really work a little to understand the issue" (CTV News Vancouver, 2015 September 18).

Despite Anderson's decades-long dedication to and outspokenness about animal rights, this exchange shows how her advocacy is reduced, delegitimized due to the clothes she does or does not wear. As I will explore in the subsequent analysis chapter, the use of women's bodies is common practice in animal activism. But the point I am trying to make here is that, as Ingrid points out above, Anderson is laughed at; her message is delegitimized due to her status as a female sex symbol.



Image 1. "Pamela Anderson Shows That All Animals Have the Same Parts" from

<http://bit.ly/1HvEiJe>

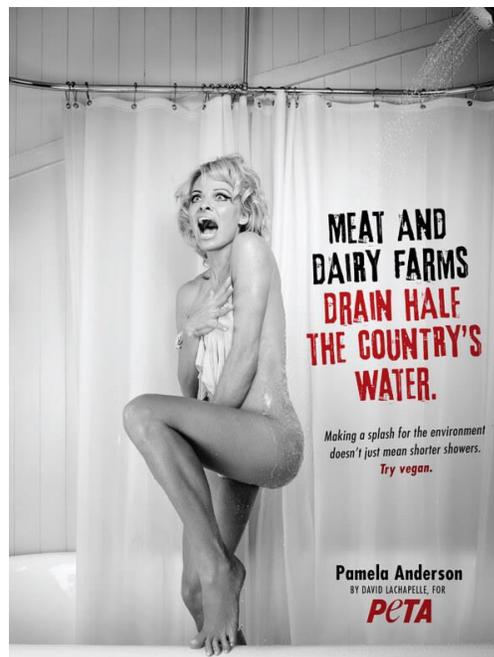


Image 2. "Pamela Anderson Showers in Fear for the Planet" from <http://bit.ly/1HvEiJe>

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The second tenet of my argument is that the caring and compassionate man affords legitimacy to the claims of the animal rights movement by maintaining his masculinity *despite* his expression of emotion and his “bleeding heart.” Relatedly, the third tenet of my argument is that the *vegan* man affords legitimacy to the claims of the animal rights movement by maintaining his masculinity *despite* choosing to forgo meat and dairy. The following two images (*Images 3,4*), taken from an issue of *The Compassionate Athlete* by Vegan Outreach (2016) aptly demonstrates the way by which hegemonic masculinity is used to validate claims made by animal rights activists. Each image and corresponding quote conveys the message that masculinity can remain intact despite venturing onto feminine ground, espousing weaknesses of compassion and care. Deckha (2008) points to a recurring theme in PETA advertisements whereby the representation of black men follows a “dominant pattern of the hypersexualized black body” (p. 51) David Carter, a sweaty, well-muscled, tattooed, and bearded male athlete is “living proof that you don’t have to kill animals to gain muscle.” “Clearly, no meat was no problem for me,” says Robert Cheeke, insinuating that his muscular build conveys an undeniable masculinity.

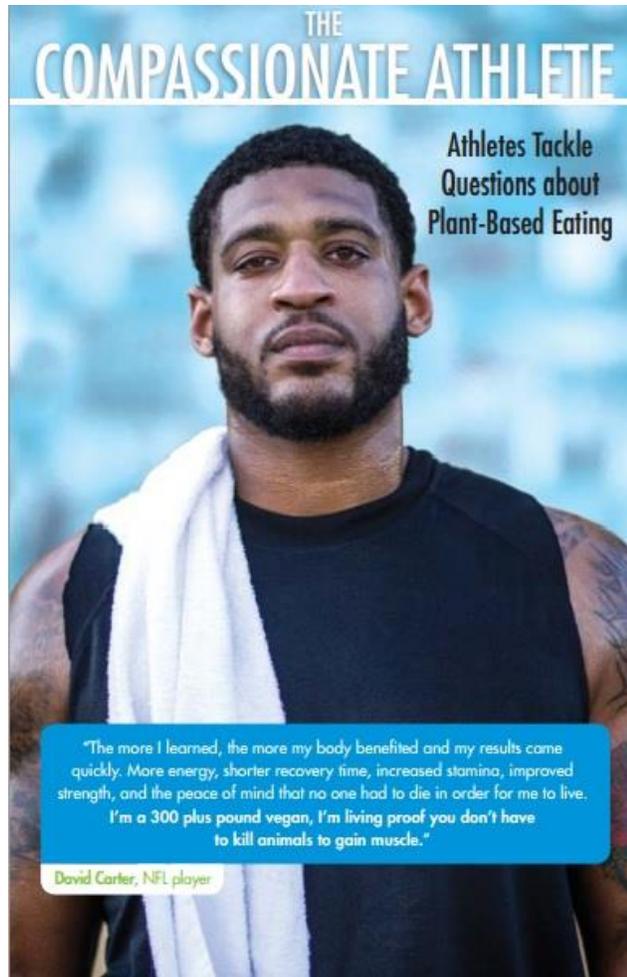


Image 3. The Compassionate Athlete, David Carter from <http://veganoutreach.org/CA.pdf>

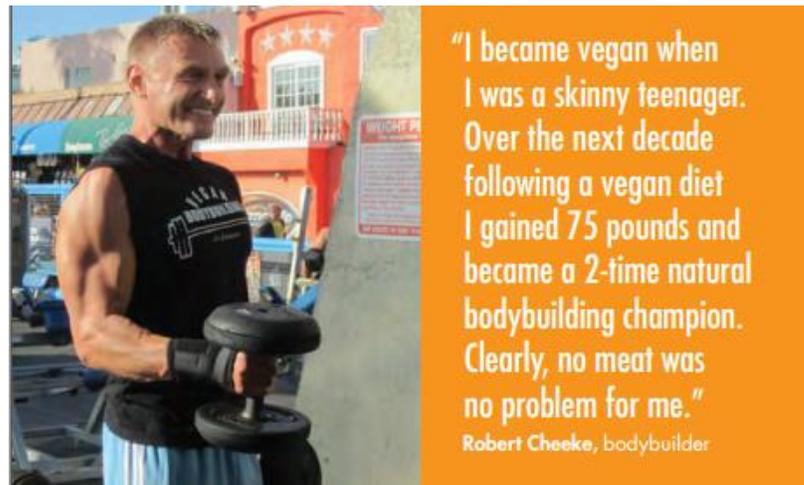


Image 4. The Compassionate Athlete, Robert Cheeke from <http://veganoutreach.org/CA.pdf>

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These images perpetuate gendered ideas about masculinity and femininity; if eating meat is the epitome of masculinity, eating plants and advocating for animals is undeniably feminine. They also convey the message that men can disavow hyper-masculine meat culture, opt for a vegan diet, and advocate publicly for animals, while continuing to espouse normative masculinity. In doing so, the images work to garner support from men by disrupting gendered associations between meat and masculinity, compassion and femininity:

There's a lot of celebrity males now speaking out about the environment, about animal activism, about factory farming, about being vegan, about being vegetarian. So that's helpful - having celebrities or famous people talk about it is always helpful. I think social media helps us share things like shocking videos, where people are coming to see that you know, it's not hysterical women who love bunnies and dogs. We're talking about large-scale, oppressive, brutal abuse. That's very obvious to see - anyone can see it. And men don't like that either! So I think that the more who come out, and go online and see other men are going to an event, that's probably very encouraging. Maybe there's a little more . . . neutralizing of genders as time goes on, I'd like to hope. You know men can care about things and that's acceptable, they're allowed to have feelings and care and get upset about these types of issues.

As Elizabeth expresses, having male allies who are present and active in the animal rights movement is an important way to encourage other men to become involved in what has historically been regarded as being a non-issue pedaled by hysteric, animal-loving women. My research participants are unequivocally aware of the parameters of gender within the animal rights movement, and their activism works to trouble that common narrative. Speaking to the relationship between gender and animal activism, Doe Adams explains that gendered relationships to animals and to food dictate who is able to be vegan and to advocate for animals:

I feel like women are more affected by animals [because] we are creators, we do create other beings and have a connection with nature that's a little bit different than what men have. And when I'm talking about men and women I'm talking about womb-carrying women and men with penises. Also advertising and culture

isn't putting it in our faces all the time as women that we should be eating animals. We're almost expected to be hotter and healthier . . . so I think the more vegan men that are breaking down those stereotypes, the better.

Here, she speaks paradoxically about the reasons that men might be deterred from participating in the movement. On one hand, by emphasizing that womb-carrying women are perhaps more connected with animals due to their *natural* ability to give birth to beings, she reinforces gendered stereotypes that hold women as nurturers and caregivers, while also emphasizing the relevance of *feeling* in animal advocacy. In gesturing to the social constraints that she suggests explain the relative absence of men in the movement, she engages in an essentializing discourse that binds the biologically female body with the naturally feminine act of caring, and by extension binds women to the animal rights movement.³ On the other hand, gesturing to standards of masculinity perpetuated by advertising culture which deter men from participating in an arguably feminized movement, Doe Adams troubles the same essentializing discourse which subversively discounts the animal rights movement as predominantly a women's issue. This excerpt demonstrates the embeddedness of gendered constructs in our social worlds; despite recognizing the constraints of gender as a social construct, she herself exists within and perpetuates the gendered narrative that she problematizes.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I argued that animal rights activism is a notably gendered movement and is reflective of a dominant patriarchal hierarchy of legitimate knowledges that values objective rationality over emotionality. I have focused on the *differences* between women's and men's voices in animal activism, in particular on the emotionality

³ As noted in Chapter Two, Carol Adams (1991) notes this as a critique of early ecofeminism.

of women's claims and the ways by which such emotionality is juxtaposed against (men's) thought and reason (Gilligan 1982; 2011). As I communicated at the outset of this chapter, my intent is not to draw a clear distinction between rationality and emotionality, nor was it to essentialize these as inherently masculine or feminine characteristics. Rather, my intent is to point to the ways by which emotion and care are expressed in women's voices; the importance rests on *how* the women appeal to and draw on emotions as a means of communicating their messages.

I have explored the ways by which emotionality 'sticks' to women's bodies, and how this works to shape animal activists and activism (Ahmed, 2004). Drawing on the content of interviews with my research participants, field observation, and supplementary material such as publicly available outreach material, I have demonstrated the ways by which the 'stickiness' of emotions works to define animal activism, such that it has come to be characterized by *women's* sentimentality. Drawing on the words of my research participants, I have demonstrated the ways by which animal activism exists and works within the constraints of a gendered society; I have argued that their activism works to disrupt gendered norms and stereotypes that connect masculinity and meat consumption, femininity, veg-ism, and caring, while also using these gendered norms to further their cause. While the words of my single male research participant, Hypatia, are not enough to generalize about male animal activists, I have drawn on his words in order to highlight a tendency towards masculine claims about objective rationality. My women research participants do rationalize, and Hypatia also makes affective claims about animals; however, there is a notable difference in the emotionality of the women's claims. Following Kennelly (2014), I have argued that these women animal rights activists,

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whose voices reflect an (undesirable) emotionality associated with femaleness and femininity, engage in a form of care work “retraditionalised” in the public sphere, under neoliberalism. I have argued that animal rights activism, in which women’s voices and bodies dominate, is a gendered space within the public sphere, distinctly feminized, by virtue of the emotional labour and care that characterizes the community. There is a complex relationship at play in which normative masculinities and femininities are both challenged and reinforced in the fight for animals.

Chapter 5: Women, Bodies, and Affect in Animal Activism

In the preceding chapter, I argued that the animal rights movement is a feminized movement that draws on normative masculinities as a means of achieving legitimation in the public sphere within the constraints of a patriarchal society. Men *do* participate in public advocacy, though they are significantly outnumbered by women (Kruse, 1999; Gaarder 2008;2011) and while objectively, men play a similar role as women in doing activism – picketing, chanting, pamphleting – they participate in very prescribed ways.

Drawing on the content of interviews with my research participants, I will argue that women animal rights activists perform care within the cultural constraints of gender. Insofar as we are a society constrained by gender, my women participants use strategies of activism that draw on their bodies and emotions. By using their bodies and emotions as a tool in their activism, my women research participants work within the gendered constraints of society by drawing on what are acceptably female forms of knowledge and expression.

Jacobsson and Lindblom (2013) and Jacobsson and Hansson (2014) suggest that animal rights activism is emotional, and that emotions associated with the work are corporeally experienced and used as tools by animal activists. Importantly, however, their work does not include an analysis of the corporeal experiences of emotions through gendered bodies. In the following sections, I will demonstrate how animal activism plays out in and through the body in a number of socially important ways. First, I will explore the practice of veganism as a form of social and political dissent that requires a high standard of bodily purity. Second, I will explore women’s use of their naked bodies as tools in their activism. I argue that within a society constrained by gender, the use of nude

activism in animal rights is a means of drawing on one form of cultural capital afforded to (some) women. To the extent that women animal rights activists work within the constraints of gender that dictate what are acceptably female forms of expression, the expression of care through the body relies to an extent on particular, hegemonic manifestations of femininity. As such, the dominant animal rights movement excludes non-normative bodies. Lastly, I will explore the issue of compassion fatigue as experienced by my research participants, arguing that physical and emotional burnout is one of the products of the reliance on women's bodies and emotions as resources in the fight for animal rights.

An Industry and a Movement Built on Bodies

Being an active participant in the animal rights movement requires the involvement of one's body through avoidance of the consumption of animals and their by-products. For example, Dr. Melanie Joy's (2015) video, *The Secret Reason We Eat Meat*, emphasizes bodies – human and animal. Joy details her experience of transitioning to vegetarianism, much in the same way my research participants did, by describing it as a process of coming to know and understand the relationship between meat and the animal industries, and how, by consuming meat, she was unknowingly implicated in an industry with which she grew to fundamentally disagree:

Like many people, I grew up with a dog that I loved and I also grew up eating meat, and I never thought about how strange it was that while I would never want to eat my dog, I regularly ate the flesh and eggs and dairy of animals who were not terribly different from my dog. They, too, had feelings and lives that mattered to them. I just never thought about why I ate some animals and not others. I never thought about the inconsistencies in my attitudes and behaviours toward animals, because when I was eating meat, eggs, and dairy, I didn't actually think I *was* eating animals. Of course, I knew on some level that these products had come

from individuals who had once been alive. I had that *knowing without knowing*, but on another level, I just didn't make the connection. It wasn't until I ended up hospitalized from eating bacteria-infested beef that I had a major paradigm shift. After I got sick, just the thought of eating beef disgusted me. In fact, all meat seemed disgusting. And suddenly, I saw meat not as food, but as dead animals. Beef stew seemed no different than golden retriever stew, and as I looked at the world with new eyes, I saw animals' body parts everywhere I turned – lining grocery store shelves, filling trucks bound for the market, spilling off lunch trays, packed for delicatessen freezers. And people everywhere – rational, caring people like myself – were putting these animals' bodies into their mouths as though nothing at all were wrong.

In the above excerpt, Joy is doing two things. First, she describes a corporeal experience of *coming to know*, of making the connection between meat, as it is packaged and sold at the grocery store, and animals, as they are living, sentient beings. Through her own body's experience of consuming and rejecting diseased meat, she came to see meat not as food but as the fleshy body parts of once-living animals. Second, and relatedly, by emphasizing body parts instead of meat, and by conveying that by eating meat, we are putting animals' bodies into our mouths, Joy uses literal language to bridge the gap between ignorant consumption and the living, sentient beings that comprise the contents of our food and other consumer products. In doing so, the consumption of animal bodies becomes associated with our own bodies as a lived, embodied experience of consuming flesh.

Joy goes on to compare carnism to racism, sexism, and heterosexism, suggesting that these institutions of oppression are fundamentally the same, with the exception of the species of the oppressed. By emphasizing the physical and experiential similarities between human and animal bodies, she calls us to think in and through our own bodily experiences of oppression in order to understand the use of animals' bodies as a manifestation of oppression. Louisa makes a similar connection, emphasizing similarities

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between the lived experiences of women and animals, focusing in particular on the ways by which the body – woman or animal – is often a site of oppression:

One thing that's difficult for me is supporting [other movements] and being a part of their demonstrations, and then not having them grasp ours, and not making that connection. [Take] women's rights for example, people are working so hard to get these ideas passed along that women should have the rights to their bodies, that rape is wrong, consent needs to happen, that women can wear what they want, when they want – and then these [same] people will sit down and consume meat and dairy. And the connection there – you can't deny it. The only difference is the species of an individual. They're saying that rape is wrong, but then dairy is produced through artificial insemination by forcefully impregnating an animal and then taking away her child, and then killing that child so that we can consume milk from her body parts.

Frances makes a similar connection and, in effect, works to humanize dairy cows' experiences of rape and confinement by drawing inferences with women's sexualization and objectification:

I first started out with the animal rights stuff and then [started] finding out the information with what's going on in the dairy industry and with the egg industry and the chicks and stuff, and I started connecting it to a lot of women's rights issues that are going on as well. You know, we fight against the words rape and pimp all the time, you wouldn't want your child ripped away from you, but these cows are being strained to *rape racks*, they're being pimped out and bred.

Connections drawn between women's and farmed animals' experiences of oppression are common for my research participants. Indeed, feminists have long drawn inferences between experiences of oppression across species (Adams, 2000; Gluck and Adams, 2011). However, it is important to note that there are differences in the modes by which we take action against these oppressions. Because farmed animals' experiences of oppression are directly affected by human consumptive norms and practices, boycotting animal products through the practice of veganism has become central to animal rights movements. As such, *women's bodies* have come to play a central role in the fight for animal rights.

Embodied Legitimacy of Veganism

One of the ways by which my research participants' care for animals plays out in and through the body is through the practice of veg-ism. While veg-ism, in the context of animal activism, is a collective effort of social and political dissent, dietary choices are also undeniably *personal*. In transitioning to vegetarianism or veganism, insofar as what we wear and what we eat is purposefully political, the body becomes a site of political dissent and a tool for critical social commentary. Through veg-ism, activism becomes embodied. At face value, vegetarians and vegans share a common goal. However, as suggested by Warkentin (2012) (see also Munro, 2001), there is a notable trend within animal activist and critical animal studies circles whereby veganism is regarded as a moral requirement for those who advocate for animals. While activists encourage and applaud small (vegetarian) steps towards compassionate dietary choices, veganism is actively promoted as *the* compassionate choice – the ultimate goal – while vegetarianism plays a peripheral role. I argue that within the movement, veganism has come to hold an embodied legitimacy over vegetarianism. This, I argue, is deeply implicated by the gendered cultural capital available to the women activists involved in my research, and by the devalued status of this feminized movement.

Amongst animal rights activists, veganism is held as the pinnacle of moral consumptive choices, in the same realm as but morally superior to vegetarianism, and above carnivorousness. Drawing on Traci Warkentin's (2012) reflection on the intersections of feminism and critical animal studies, I will explore veganism as a 'moral imperative' that requires animal activists to practice their activism in and through their bodies. In her short essay, Warkentin (2012) reflects on the emergence of a 'vegan imperative' within

critical animal studies and suggests that veganism as the pinnacle of morality in dietary choice should be met with a “constructive, nuanced critique” (p. 500). Noting that environmental/eco/feminist scholars of the early 1990s laid the groundwork for current feminist scholarship on the topics of environment and animals, Warkentin argues that critical animal studies, as it has manifested within the academy and in activist circles, has largely ignored the work and thought of the earlier movement. While both movements suggest vegetarianism and veganism as solutions to the degradation of environment and ecosystems and to the exploitation of animals, she suggests a stark difference: where environmental/eco/feminists readily critiqued the vegetarian/vegan solution, critical animal studies scholars and activists largely posit veganism as *the* answer, universally (Warkentin, 2012, p. 500). Warkentin suggests that critical animal studies as a discipline can benefit from incorporating the “internal criticism” of environmental/eco/feminism in that it would allow for a “diversity of viewpoints and [would] account for the complexity of a given situation, thereby avoiding counterproductive allegations of hypocrisy based on an all-or-nothing type purity” (p. 500). She points out an emergent trend noticeable at animal studies conferences, which are commonly catered only with vegan food. She says, “participants appear to feel the need to confess whether they are a ‘vegan’ or a ‘carnivore’” (Warkentin, 2012, p. 501). Similar to Warkentin’s observation at critical animal studies conferences, my participants advocate for an exclusively *vegan* diet – free of animals’ flesh and their bodily by-products. I argue that the roots of this form of embodied moralism might be found in the gendered dynamics of animal activism itself.

Within the context of my research, vegetarianism is applauded as a good step in a moral direction, while veganism is the ultimate dietary choice – an answer to an

inherently violent industry that exploits and profits hugely from animals' bodies. Asked about whether animal rights activists *must* be vegan, Ingrid, using women's bodies as a metaphor, suggests that veganism "is just the most obvious step" for activists, and for those who oppose the exploitation of animals:

I think [veganism is] just the most obvious step, right, it's the most obvious step when you make that leap in your mind about why this animal is different from that animal. So it just seems only logical. I often think of it as – I remember having this conversation with my ex-husband years and years and years ago: we were talking about strip clubs, and he was saying "well there's nothing wrong with that, if that's what these women choose to do." And I said "well, would it be OK if it was your daughter?" – "Well, no." "Would it be OK if it was me?" – "Well, no." "OK so how are these people different? This woman is being objectified [and] you're going to see this woman. You wouldn't be OK with any members of your family or people you care about doing that." To me, that's similar to vegetarian and vegan thinking. You can't say that you're standing up for some animals while eating other animals. It just doesn't work. It's like a man saying "Well I love my dog, but I'm wearing this coyote." And you're discredited too, if you're wearing leather boots and you're standing up against fur. Well, what's the difference? You're wearing the skin. You're wearing the fur. So [veganism is] actually mandatory, really.

For her, there is no compromise, no moral middle-ground in the fight for animal liberation. Vegetarianism is akin to supporting the erotic dancing industry while not supporting this as a suitable occupation for a female daughter, family member, or loved one. In this way, vegetarianism is incompatible with the ultimate goal of animal rights, as she understands it, which is total emancipation of all animals from the animal industries; it is saying *I will not support the use of animals' bodies for meat because it is wrong, but I will support the use of their bodies for eggs, dairy, leather, and fur*. She is suggesting that values and action should align. Her argument, then, is that if you do not support the use of animals' bodies for meat because it is unethical, it is logical that you do not support the use of animals' bodies for their by-products. In this way, vegetarianism is illogical, and veganism, which is logical, takes moral superiority.

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While veganism is held as being morally superior to vegetarianism, one research participant suggests that abstention from animal products is not necessarily effectual in and of itself. Animal activists work to encourage compassionate food choices in the form of veganism. Indeed, the more vegans the better. However, the ultimate goal of animal activists is to incite people into action by instilling feelings of empathy and encouraging an ethic of compassion by exposing the inherent moral wrongness of the animal industries:

In my opinion activism needs to be more important . . . the moral baseline is not *veganism is activism*. I heard this the other day and I love it: You see somebody kicking a dog. You join in on kicking the dog – that's obviously meat-eating. You don't join in on kicking the dog and you don't do anything to stop them [and] you're just like 'I'm obviously not going to be part of that' – that's veganism. If you jump in and be like 'hey, stop kicking the dog, that's wrong!' – that's activism.

Above, Frances lays out a hierarchy of choice which extends trajectoryally from least to most moral. For her, choosing veganism but failing to discourage others from supporting the animal industries is akin to choosing not to kick a dog based on a moral judgement, while allowing others to carry on engaging in what one has deemed immoral. For Frances, veganism is an immediate, tangible, and effectual change one can make in order to help animals. However, she suggests that veganism is but one manifestation of the ethic of compassion that informs her actions. She goes on to emphasize veganism as a lifestyle:

Like with animal rights, veganism is not just about food, it's about a whole lifestyle. It's about not exploiting or oppressing [animals] in any single way whatsoever. So I think that when people think veganism they automatically think food-related, diet-related. *It is a lifestyle*. There's a lot of oppression going on and that's what we're fighting for every day.

Here, she is suggesting that veganism is more than a set of dietary restrictions that delineates categorically what someone does and does not eat. Instead, for her, veganism

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is one facet of a lifestyle with which animal activists *fight oppression*. Frances' words suggest that veganism and activism cannot be reduced to a solitary action or set of actions extricable from their selves. Veganism is an embodied moral choice that pervades one's life and informs the ways by which activists navigate daily confrontations with consumerism and personal relationships.

You go to your family and your friends and you tell them what you've learned, and you're kind of like "why isn't anyone else as shocked as I am?!" You're expecting everyone to kind of get on your boat and [when] they don't, that kind of changes the way you see people. Because before, you know, you think everyone is so compassionate: we take care of one another, we take care of homeless people, we help children, we help whatever. And then you see your best friends and your family eating these innocent little dead beings all the time, and it kills a piece of you, almost.

My friends were kind of joking about [my choice], which really hurt even more because I was feeling so strongly about my position and my feelings about these industries. They just found it to be funny and humorous that I was going through this *phase*. And I actually ended up losing a few friends because it got to a point where, if you show them and you educate them and they still don't care and they continue to make comments, it's kind of like "I'm out of this right now."

Here, Louisa conveys a deeply felt sense of hurt that arises in her personal relationships due to conflicting values which became apparent when her friends found humour in her choice to be vegan. Her friends' and family's failure to act compassionately when presented with the facts is felt personally. It *changes* the way she sees others. It kills a piece of *her*. Louisa goes on to convey a feeling of social isolation that results from her veganism:

Everyone's always like it [must be] so hard being vegan because you can't eat this or that. And I'm like no-no-no, the hardest part is the social aspect of it. It's going to office parties and not being able to eat and everyone wondering why; it's dating people and them trying to feed you and then feeling horrible that they don't have anything; and [it's] people making stupid little bacon jokes.

Compassion manifests itself in and through the body. In the physical sense of the body, the ethic of compassion informs what one chooses to eat and to wear, where one

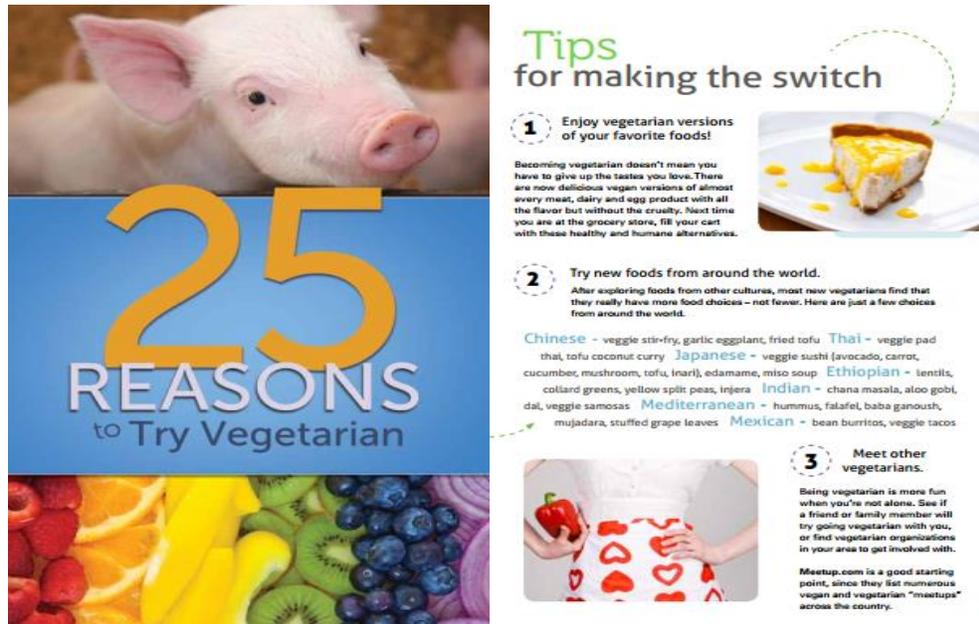
chooses to go, who one chooses to interact with. In a more abstract, intangible way, the ethic of compassion sets the moral parameters within which one chooses to act. In this way, the ethic of compassion is embodied. In Louisa's case, and for others, she struggles with not being taken seriously while simultaneously feeling a pressing urge to be heard and to see change. Within a gendered cultural context in which women's primary political and cultural capital continues to be their bodies and emotions, the most concrete and direct way in which the women in my study can express their deeply held political values is by living them through their bodies.

In the context of this research and the movement that I am studying, dietary choices can be broken down into three categories, hierarchically organized: veganism > vegetarianism > meat-eating. To the general public, vegetarians and vegans are one and the same; they are the ones who wave graphic signs, chant, and picket outside of our grocery stores – they are Other. The relationship can logically be inverted to say that to vegetarians and vegans, meat-eaters are Other; they are those who support the Industry, who we work to educate, and who we need in our corner. However, my research suggests that a more complicated relationship exists between vegetarianism and veganism *within* the movement, where vegetarianism is merely seen as a step towards veganism, which is the ultimate humane end-goal. Vegetarians are allies to vegans insofar as we encourage others to think critically about the animal industries, but our consumptive practices do not align with our supposed values.

Looking to the informational outreach material that my research participants use to supplement their advocacy, the importance of choosing veganism (a 'cruelty-free diet') becomes apparent. The outreach material that I have collated throughout the process of

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my research unanimously advocates for a vegan diet, sometimes indirectly. Take, for example, the pamphlet titled *25 Reasons to Try Vegetarian* by Mercy for Animals (MFA):



Tips for making the switch

- 1 Enjoy vegetarian versions of your favorite foods!**

Becoming vegetarian doesn't mean you have to give up the tastes you love. There are now delicious vegan versions of almost every meat, dairy and egg product with all the flavor but without the cruelty. Next time you are at the grocery store, fill your cart with these healthy and humane alternatives.


- 2 Try new foods from around the world.**

After exploring foods from other cultures, most new vegetarians find that they really have more food choices – not fewer. Here are just a few choices from around the world.

Chinese - veggie stir-fry, garlic eggplant, fried tofu **Thai** - veggie pad thai, tofu coconut curry **Japanese** - veggie sushi (avocado, carrot, cucumber, mushroom, tofu, inari), edamame, miso soup **Ethiopian** - lentils, collard greens, yellow split peas, injera **Indian** - chana masala, aloo gobi, dal, veggie samosas **Mediterranean** - hummus, falafel, baba ghanoush, mujadara, stuffed grape leaves **Mexican** - bean burritos, veggie tacos


- 3 Meet other vegetarians.**

Being vegetarian is more fun when you're not alone. See if a friend or family member will try going vegetarian with you, or find vegetarian organizations in your area to get involved with.

Meetup.com is a good starting point, since they list numerous vegan and vegetarian "meetups" across the country.

6 meal ideas

- 1 Vegan Pizza**

Order your favorite veggie pizza without the cheese. Or try making your own!


- 2 Veggie Burgers**

Sauté a delicious veggie burger in a little bit of oil and serve on a bun with all the fixings!


- 3 Stir-Fry**

Heat up your favorite veggies in a little oil over medium-high heat. Add your favorite stir-fry sauce at the end and serve over rice.


- 4 Tacos and Burritos**

Try these fillings and toppings: beans, rice, salsa, spinach, cilantro, fresh tomatoes, olives, guacamole, and bell peppers.


- 5 Steamed Veggie Combo**

Put veggies and tofu in a steamer for a few minutes. Serve over rice and top with lemon juice, soy sauce, or your favorite salad dressing.


- 6 Lentil Soup**

This hearty, high-protein soup can be purchased at most grocery stores. Serve with sliced whole wheat bread or chips for dipping.



To see references for facts in this brochure, visit: 25reasons.com/references

Image 5. "25 Reasons to Try Vegetarian" from

<http://www.animalvisuals.org/p/resources/25reasons-web.pdf>

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While explicitly using the word *vegetarian*, the content of the pamphlet actually promotes “delicious vegan options of every meat, dairy, and egg product with all the flavor but without the cruelty” and provides a slew of recipes completely free of animals and their bodily by-products. At face value, the use of the word *vegetarian* to promote veganism may be an attempt to soften the tone, to avoid the negative stereotypes and connotations associated with being vegan and with those who promote veganism. However, an alternative and critical reading of its content suggests that it is fine to call yourself a *vegetarian*, if it takes the radical edge off, as long as what you actually consume is free of meat, dairy, and eggs and otherwise cruelly-derived products.

Another place I witnessed this dynamic was on a public Facebook page administrated by the local vegetarian association. I have been a member of this group for several years, though I rarely post; I grab recipes, tips about local veg-friendly restaurants, and follow veggie entrepreneurs making their mark on my city. What I have found most interesting about the group, though, is the contradiction between its name – I will call it the Vegetarian Association – and its stated mandate:

This group and organization promotes a vegan baseline. All are welcome, regardless of their diets, but must respect that it goes against the mandate of the group/organization to promote consumption and use of animals.

Like the MFA pamphlet above, the Vegetarian Association’s mandate conveys the message: “please leave your vegetarianism at the door.” The group operates as an all-welcoming group, albeit under a presumption of veganism. Frequently, the tension between the Association’s mandate and its claim to be open to all is challenged when a vegetarian member shares a recipe or an article that contains eggs or dairy. Such posts result in lengthy threads where vegan members (some of whom are research participants in my project) enforce the mandate by expressing dissent, and vegetarian members

respond with expressions of disappointment in feeling silenced and unsupported by their presumed allies. A recent dispute resulted in the creation of a new Facebook group, mandated specifically as a “non-judgmental and supportive” group for the “imperfect vegan”:

The imperfect vegan. That middle ground between a vegetarian and a vegan. Non-judgmental and supportive. [We] will avoid leather and fur and boycott circuses and zoos because we are very much aware that these things are unethical. Some of us might be transitioning, some of us might still be eating eggs from a local farm, some of us might eat fish once a year, some of us might eat a vegetarian dish if there are no vegan options at the restaurant. These are all very reasonable choices which we should not be judged on by our fellow vegans. Rather than focusing on our bad choices, we should be commended for all the hundreds of good choices that we are making every day. There are various reasons why some of us may not wish to be vegan. We may wish to ride horses, own sheep, alpacas and rabbits for their wool, or raise honey bees, to name a few. Kind, loving [members] adore their domesticated pets and treat them better than most humans. [Members] must be non-judgmental and supportive of veg-oriented individuals in all stages within the plant-based community. This is a safe space for those striving towards various levels of veganism. Open minded vegans . . . and transitioning vegetarians are welcomed. And don't worry.... no one is perfect. In fact, we embrace imperfection.

The tensions here, as captured by the competing Facebook groups, highlight the very real imperative felt within contemporary animal rights movements to be “pure” – to be vegan – in order to be seen as a legitimate member of this particular movement. Putting the contradiction between group name and mandate aside, the interaction can be read as a democratic process of in-group policing, whereby administrators enforce a shared code of conduct, explicitly written in the group mandate. However, the creation of the new Facebook group suggests that the messages of dissent are taken to say something of the self and about one's ability to take the moral high ground. The new group is a safe space, supportive and non-judgmental, sympathetic to one's imperfections and *bad* choices.

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Vegans are held – by themselves, their allies, and their foes – to a high standard of practice in order to have full legitimacy in the movement. With such high standards of practice, people are bound to fail. In failing the standards of veganism, lapsed vegans fail on the basis of their bodies. Importantly, bodies are the site by which women have, through history, been failed or reprimanded within the public sphere. Below, Elizabeth discusses her long history of being vegetarian:

So, all that time there were periods when I ate fish and other times not, but once, [when] I was in a period where I was eating fish, there was a guy next to me and he said "well you know, fish are animals and in fact there are only 10% of the fish left in the ocean." And so I stopped eating fish and haven't eaten fish since. And [now] it's been 7 years that I've been vegan.

It is worth noting that at the time of this interaction in the 1990s, being vegetarian was still a fairly radical dietary restriction; veganism has since usurped vegetarianism as the ultimate ethical choice among animal rights activists. I neglected to ask whether this *guy* was a fellow vegetarian hoping to point out a misalignment between her values and her consumptive practices, or whether he was a meat-eater hoping to watch her falter by pointing out her imperfectly ethical dietary restrictions. However, regardless of his motive, the interaction points to a common trend whereby the legitimacy of one's claim about animal rights teeters on their ability to adhere to a collectively agreed upon standard of practice. One has to be fully *in* – purely vegan – in order to have full legitimacy in the movement. Impurity threatens the movement by undermining its legitimacy, which is grounded in its members bodies and consumptive practices.

My research participants convey understanding and supportiveness to the general public, particularly for those who show interest in making the transition from meat-eating to veganism. The overarching message of compassion towards those on the outside is this: how can *we* enable *you* to make compassionate choices? However, a critical reading

of the vegan message suggests that vegetarianism and veganism exist categorically and hierarchically, with veganism being the ultimately moral and most effective dietary choice. In essence the vegan message tells Others that it is fine to take the time to align your values, to “make the connection” between meat and cruelty, as long as veganism is the ultimate end. Upon achieving veganism, judgement from other vegans comes not from a failure to follow a set of rules per se, but rather, as Elizabeth expresses, a feeling that “once you become aware of how things are, you can't become unaware.” Being an imperfect vegan, then, amounts to a failure to align one's practice with their values. In this way, veganism is exclusive; it excludes those who do not or cannot adhere to the highest practice of veganism.

Reflecting on my personal experience of having been vegan for four years, having transitioned from veganism *back* to vegetarianism, and having been immersed in animal activism and critical animal studies, I have become well-acquainted with the implicit vegan imperative in these circles. I remember vividly the trepidation with which I told other vegans that I have been vegan for *only a few months*, as if my newness to the diet and my liminal proximity to vegetarianism somehow made my effort inferior to the efforts of long-dedicated vegans. I remember, too, the encouragement and support from vegans who reminded me that meat was murder, that dairy and eggs were too, and that my morally superior dietary choice *was* making a real, tangible difference by saving animals. I remember the feeling of pride at being able to tell vegans, new and experienced, that I had been vegan for one, two, three, four years. I remember the feeling of shame and embarrassment, of failure, the resistance toward having to *confess* my transition *back* to vegetarianism to other, morally superior vegans. Whether real or

imagined, this feeling was powerful enough that my trepid withdrawal from animal activism eventually led to complete non-participation in public advocacy for fear that my vegetarianism somehow made me less capable of advocating for animals. My transition back to vegetarianism was felt as a bodily experience, too. My vegan body – trim, healthful, and strong *despite* the lack of animal proteins – had been a source of pride, something that I (as vegans do) used to show others that veganism was not only beneficial to animals, it also had considerable personal benefits. When I began consuming dairy products again, my body plumped up. This was not likely visible to others, but importantly, it was felt as a bodily failure on my part. I no longer embodied the happy, healthful, glowing vegan that is so important to promoting veganism as a tenable dietary practice. In *wanting* to consume animal products despite knowing and having seen the horrors of the animal industries, and in *enjoying* the taste and the sociality that accompanies normative consumptive practices, my body became the site of my moral failing.

After writing this reflection, I shared it with my partner who questioned my wording about moving from veganism back to vegetarianism, suggesting that the emphasis on *regression* misrepresents the value of being vegetarian and of being vegan, which, as he sees it, are two mutually exclusive and equally important categories. A carnivore himself and a pseudo-vegetarian when we share meals, he too exists in a liminal space where his consumptive practices move between culture and unintentional counter-culture. Eating meat is something he has always done, and eating vegetarian is something that he does to support me and, likely, to make mealtime less complicated. But for me, existing in the liminal space between vegetarianism and veganism is felt largely

as a moral failure due to my acceptance and internalization of what I perceive as a moral hierarchy of consumption (veganism > vegetarianism > omnivorism). This short interaction with my partner emphasized, for me, the bodily aspect of animal activism; while for my partner my movement from veganism to vegetarianism suggests, perhaps, the difficulty of maintaining what he perceives as an extreme dietary restriction, for me it suggests something about my Self, something that is lived and felt and plays out in a myriad of ways with every bite of food that I take and every item of clothing with which I cover my body.

Today, I am still vegetarian, I am still conscious of the sources of my food and the implications of my consumptive choices, and I am still slightly ill-at-ease being involved in public advocacy and conducting this research, as if my regression to vegetarianism makes me less qualified to critically analyze the dedicated work of animal activists. Warkentin's (2012) essay encourages us to be critical of the vegan imperative, suggesting that it may discourage non-vegans from engaging in the important work of critical animal studies. I am a case in point.

Nude Activism and the Exclusion of Human Bodies

In the early stages of my research, I conducted fieldwork at an anti-fur demonstration outside of a retail store notorious for carrying Canada Goose parkas, controversial due to their fur trim. Amidst the chanting, sign-holding, and pamphlet-slinging crowd of 20 to 30 protesters, four women wearing nude spandex clothing and smeared in fake blood lay silently on a bloodied fur coat. Even to my fully-clothed, winter-ready body, it was a biting cold day that hovered around two degrees; I took

breaks from jotting down my observations, warming my hands in fleece-lined mittens. They wore mittens and hats, but the women activists' bodies were exposed to the wind, with only the fur coat and a blanket breaking their contact with the icy concrete. I am uncertain whether the demonstration had been planned before or despite the cold weather, which was unseasonably cold for the first week of November. Regardless, the women laid silently in lifeless character, bodies folded together, without much complaint. After forty-or-so minutes of nude protest, the women, visibly cold but smiling, snuck away to clothe themselves and reappeared to participate in the remainder of the demonstration. While a handful of men were present as demonstrators, their bodies were not part of the naked display.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is well-known for its use of nudity as a tactic in animal rights activism. The animal rights organization first launched its "Rather Go Naked Than Wear Fur" campaign in 1991, featuring the all-woman rock band The Go-Go's.



Image 6. “We’d Rather Go-Go Naked Than Wear Fur” from <http://www.mediapeta.com/peta/Images/Main/Sections/MediaCenter/PrintAds/gogos.jpg>

Since then, big name women celebrities – Pamela Anderson, Alicia Silverstone, Eva Mendez, to name a few – have stripped down and posed for the cause (PETA, 2016a). The organization’s website provides an explanation for its use of nudity in animal activism:

PETA believes that women—and men—should be able to use their own bodies as political statements. Like Lady Godiva, who rode naked on a horse to protest taxes on the poor in the 11th century, PETA knows that provocative, attention-grabbing actions are sometimes necessary to get people talking about issues that they would otherwise prefer not to think about. The smart, compassionate men and women who pose “naked” for PETA choose to do so because they support the cause and want to take action to help animals. For example, model Rosanna Davison, who has a degree in biomedicine and naturopathic nutrition, chose to pose naked for PETA’s “Vegans Are Red Hot” advertisement because her body has benefited from wholesome plant-based foods and she wanted to promote healthy vegan living . . .

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Many famous men, including football player Bret Lockett, actor Steve-O, rapper Waka Flocka Flame, and goalkeeper Tim Howard, have stripped down to make a difference for animals as well. Thanks to them, countless people visited our website to learn more about the issues and find out what they can do to help animals.

While PETA's nude activism mission statement suggests that both women and men have posed nude in the name of animals, gender norms underlay their message (see also Deckha, 2008; Wrenn, 2013; Glasser, 2011; and Harper, 2010). By including men as an afterthought (– *and men* –), PETA suggests that nude activism has been dominated by women. In doing so, they convey the message that the men who *do* pose nude for animals play an important legitimating role in the fight for animal rights; by stripping down for PETA, celebrity men give legitimacy to the animal rights movement in general, and also validate the use of the naked body. Insofar as the naked, white female body has been normalized in society – in the advertising and pornography industries in particular – the naked male body works to legitimate the use of nudity as a form of awareness-raising protest. Again, the overarching message is that *it's not just a women's issue*. Despite PETA's emphasis on women *and men*, the women celebrities who have stripped down for the cause significantly outnumber the men celebrities. Furthermore, in challenging stereotypes of nudity in advertising by showcasing men's bodies, the ways by which male nudity is depicted in PETA's ads also works to uphold the common sexualisation and animalization of women's bodies, which, according to Glasser (2011), reinforces women's *and* animals' oppressions.

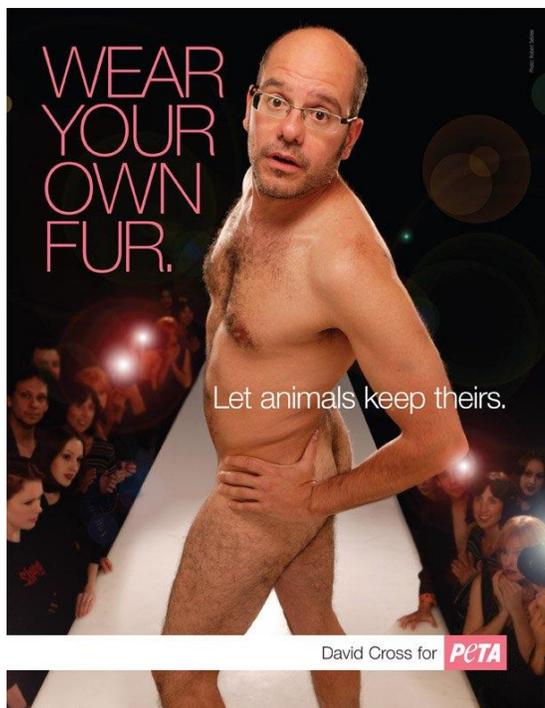


Image 7. David Cross in “You Won’t Believe Which Celebrities Got Naked for PETA.” Retrieved from <http://www.peta.org/features/naked-celebrities-peta/>

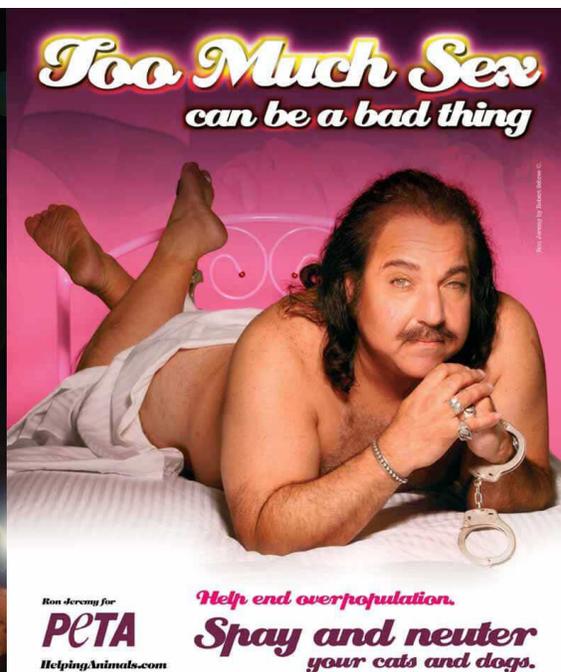


Image 8. Ron Jeremy in “You Won’t Believe Which Celebrities Got Naked for PETA.” Retrieved from <http://www.peta.org/features/naked-celebrities-peta/>

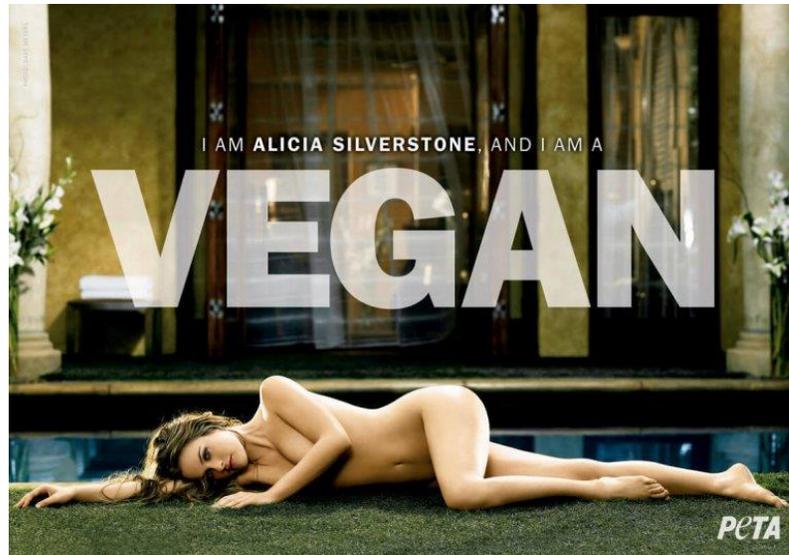


Image 9. Alicia Silverstone in “You Won’t Believe Which Celebrities Got Naked for PETA.” Retrieved from <http://www.peta.org/features/naked-celebrities-peta/>



Image 10. Eva Mendes in “You Won’t Believe Which Celebrities Got Naked for PETA.” Retrieved from <http://www.peta.org/features/naked-celebrities-peta/>

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Above, a selection of images from PETA's (2016a) article, *You Won't Believe Which Celebrities Got Naked for PETA*, demonstrate the differential use of women's and men's bodies in animal rights advertising. *Image 7*, picturing David Cross, best known for his comedic role as Tobias Fünke in HBO's *Arrested Development*, satirizes the fur industry by parading his less-than-perfect, hairy male body down a runway typically trodden by chiseled, hairless, and stoic women and men. In *Image 8*, Ron Jeremy, a well-known male porn-star, lays on a single bed, draped in sheets and posing in a way typically reserved for women; there is humour in the way that his undeniable maleness is contrasted with white, pink, and general softness. In an article accompanying Ron Jeremy's naked pose, touted as being "tongue-in-cheek", PETA (2016b) satirizes his claim to fame to make a point about the responsibilities of pet ownership:

In a business in which talent can be measured in inches, Ron [Jeremy] has been keeping up with the Johnsons since the '70s to become one of the biggest stars in adult films . . . Jeremy proved that he's a big man when it comes to small animals by taking a break from his daily grind to pose for a PETA ad promoting spaying and neutering.

Both images of the men are mockingly and purposefully feminized; they pose, nude, in positions typically reserved for women, inhabiting typically feminized spaces – runways and beds. In her critical analysis of PETA advertisements, Deckha (2008) similarly notes that while representations of men are rare in comparison to those of women, there is a common trend in which white men are represented as "comedic and non-sexualized . . . or appear along with naked white women" (p. 51).

Looking to *Image 9* of Alicia Silverstone and *Image 10* of Eva Mendes, the representations of nudity are notably different. The images are soft and suggestive. Rather than looking out-of-place, as do David Cross and Ron Jeremy, the women look so in-place that the nudity is almost unremarkable. The ways by which PETA includes men

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(– *and men* –) in their advertising conveys a gendered message about bodies and about nakedness; the images suggest that women inhabit the space *naturally*, while men are welcome visitors who, by being there in a feminized space, legitimate the arguments being made.

PETA's motive, first and most obviously, is to raise awareness for their cause. However, by having celebrities pose nude for the cause, PETA invites its global supporters to partake in nude activism, too (PETA, 2016c):

Animals always need more lovely ladies and gorgeous guys who can draw attention to PETA's campaigns by dressing up as "Lettuce Ladies" and "Broccoli Boys" (in lettuce bikinis or dresses or banana-boy briefs!) and handing out vegan food at public events as well as by participating in our iconic "Rather Go Naked Than Wear Fur" protests and by taking part in the many other eyebrow- and consciousness-raising events that we coordinate to promote animal rights!

Of my research participants, Doe Adams and Louisa, both in their early 20s, have participated in nude demonstrations on multiple occasions. PETA's call goes out to everyone, lettuce ladies and broccoli boys alike; however, the demographic of nude protesters, at least in the context of my research, is undeniably gendered. Doe Adams feels that nude demonstrations by women are doubly purposeful, working to combat both women's and animals' oppressions:

I do know of some nude male activism but it is definitely outnumbered by females. One of the reasons for that is because there's a [gender] imbalance in vegans and vegetarians; there's a lot more women who are eating that way and who are in the movement. I think that a lot of the people who are in the movement are also really strong feminists so they really have this *double right* that they're working towards. I think the female body works very well because other times we see it, it's really sexualized and it's materialized . . . it's used to promote a product for material gain. So [the reason] why I personally feel empowered by using my body [in] that way is because often times it's used for something that is completely unimportant and if it's a product that exploits animals, I'd say it's used for evil purposes. So for me to draw attention for something completely separate to that, I think that's a really interesting way to use it.

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Louisa agrees that women make up the vast majority of animal rights activists who do nude demonstrations:

Obviously sex sells, we know that through any form of advertising, but it's a lot harder to get men involved. As we spoke about briefly earlier, the numbers of men in the activist movement, especially in Canada, there's a lot more women than there are men. We have like two activists in this city right now that are male. It's insane! So to get one of those two to agree to go nude – your chances are very slim. I've done demos with men but it's very rare. I've [also] done demos where men agree and then bail last minute. And women – not all of them are willing to do it so even then it's hard to find women that are willing to go out into the middle of the street wearing underwear and [nipple] pasties and feel comfortable doing so. I don't know if it's necessarily PETA's choosing women, or that it's just such slim pickings that this is what we have. Because even the coordinators that I've worked with in PETA that are male say that they would never do it.

On one hand, she suggests that a reason for the relative lack of nude male demonstrators stems from an overall lack of male animal rights activists in her city. On the other, she notes that, while she *has* done nude demonstrations with men, many of the men with whom she has worked – even those who coordinate nude demonstrations themselves – would not agree to strip down for the cause. To an extent, this could be reduced to the disproportion of men to women in the animal rights movement, or to a personal preference to be clothed in public. However, insofar as our recognizably female bodies are regularly and unapologetically gazed upon, it is easier and more acceptable, as women with recognizably female parts, to inhabit the public sphere as a naked, unmoving body. Much like PETA's *Rather Go Naked Than Wear Fur* advertisements, to the extent that the naked female body is normalized, the naked male body, at least in the context of the feminized sphere of animal rights activism, is unnatural.

By participating in nude demonstrating, women animal rights activists are drawing on what is culturally available to them as objectively female bodies and voices in a patriarchal society. Being constrained by gender, women animal rights activists who use

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their naked bodies work within the boundaries of what are considered acceptably female forms of expression. Louisa points out that media coverage, which is highly important to spreading the vegan message, is typically difficult to secure:

I think [nude activism] is all about media. If your cause doesn't have any media attention, you don't have a cause. And unfortunately animal rights is something that's very depressing. You know, we're going against these industries that the media is also promoting: fur, meat, dairy. So to get [the media] to come out and to be non-biased or to have an interest ... our protests of maybe 10 to 15 people – that's not really media worthy unless it's something very radical. So really, it's a tactic. It's controversial. It's sexual a lot of the time, and [that's what] draws media attention. We've planned many demos and we've asked media to show up, and they don't show up. Unless it's 100 people protesting, they're not gonna do it because it's not newsworthy.

Frances, recognizing that nude activism perhaps panders to women's sexualisation, similarly points to the benefit of stripping down to attract media attention:

I hate saying that we would use naked women but unfortunately we've tried so many other tactics and media doesn't come out unless there's a big hoo-ha.

As Louisa's and Frances' words convey, the naked female body is a tool. Women's voices alone are not newsworthy, but their bare breasts and buttocks are. Of course, my research participants are not oblivious to the institutionalized objectification and sexualisation of their female bodies. To them, however, nude activism is a reclamation of their bodies; they use the power of the male gaze as a means of drawing attention to their cause.

When I was 18, one of the organizers reached out and asked me if I wanted to do a nude demo and I was totally intrigued, and I was like oh my God, Khloe Kardashian [from Keeping Up with the Kardashians] did this! So I was automatically on board, and they ended up using me over and over again for different demonstrations. I loved the idea that I wasn't only speaking up for the animals – I was also kind of making a statement, with my own body, about how I feel about how women are portrayed in society, and [about] how much we're told that, you know, you can show this much skin, or you should show this much skin, or you shouldn't. I find women are told, regardless of what choice they make – whether they're showing more skin or covering up with a hijab or a headscarf – that they're wrong. And who are we to tell any woman that she's wrong for

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showing her body? And it's interesting because I've done demos with men as well and no one ever says anything about the men and we're wearing like equal amounts of clothing. People literally get angry. They get furious seeing us! And I love making that statement that like *this is my body, this is my choice, if you don't like it, that's too bad*.

Here, Louisa points to the differential treatment she has experienced as a naked female demonstrator alongside naked male demonstrators. For her, demonstrating with her naked body is empowering; by using her naked body *on her terms* and for a cause that she believes in, she challenges social standards that tell women when and how they can show their bodies, and to/for whom. Frances shares a similar view, but sees nude activism as a starting point, a way of attracting attention to the cause, which will grow the movement. As the movement grows, she insinuates, nudity will no longer be (as) necessary.

The women who do this. . . we're all feminists and we're all huge rights activists. So for us, when people talk to us like “that's a huge women's rights issue, why are you using your body?” – we're *choosing* to do that, no one's forcing us. The reason that I think we [use nude activism] *now* is [because] we are a sexualized society. But as we get more numbers and the movement gets bigger . . . you're going to get more media attention and your groups get bigger. The more people showing their bodies [grows], [and] then you get media attention for the *actual cause*. So I kind of think that [nude activism is] like the starting point.

Nude activism, for Frances, is a temporary means to an end. While Frances conveys that the women activists are *choosing* to use their naked bodies as tools in their activism, her words also speak to the resources available to them in speaking out against the animal industries; the women use their bodies strategically, a personal choice within the constraints of a gendered society in which (some) women's bodies are a form of cultural capital. Ingrid, who is in her fifties and has been involved in the movement for over twenty years, has a slightly more critical view of the use of nudity as a tactic in animal rights activism:

[Nude activism is] not a tactic that I favour but I wouldn't put anyone down for using it either. In every movement there's lots of different approaches and it's helpful, like, any creative thing you can think of is helpful. It's unfortunate that it generally ends up being a woman, and as a woman I have to say that's not my favourite thing. I think a lot of the times it's used to attract attention because one of those things that I've learned over the years is that animal rights isn't – media just doesn't come out that much. They're coming out more, but it's very hard to get your side of the story. Sometimes it ends up being nothing more than a gaffe, just poking fun at us. So on the one hand it's objectifying women [and] I don't particularly like it, [and] it also limits the women that can be involved. Obviously, if you've had children and you're in your fifties, you don't look as nice in a lettuce leaf bikini. No one wants to see you, maybe, in a lettuce leaf bikini! [Laughs]. So it limits the people that can be involved, it also limits the people who, maybe from a moral standpoint, don't agree with [public nudity] and they may not want to be a part of it. So it can really leave people out. It can be a bit exclusive.

Ingrid supports her women allies who strip down in the name of animals, because, in her opinion, every effort is important. However, she notes that nude activism has the potential to be exclusive. Despite being counter-culture, the tactic exists within the constraints of normativity. It typically favours bodies that are conventionally attractive – those that are young, thin, unblemished, and able. It is a space comfortably inhabited by women whose bodies meet the standards of conventionally attractive femininity. Thus, insofar as nude activism is liberating and empowering for some – Doe Adams, for example, describes a “high” that she gets from doing nude demonstrations – it is equally as limiting for others whose bodies are stereotypically undesirable.

Burnout (Compassion Fatigue)

As I pointed to in the preceding chapter, until recent history women's presumed natural desire and propensity to birth and to care for others, in Western society, has played out predominantly in the private sphere in the form of unpaid emotional labour. Post-first- and second-wave feminism, the tradition of female care has migrated to the

public sphere, albeit into notably feminized spaces (Kennelly, 2014, p.254). As I have argued, animal activism, within the context of my study, is a distinctly feminized space, made up mainly of women who engage in a form of empathetic care-work. Like the burden of care carried by women in the private sphere, the bodily and emotional labour of caring for animals is unpaid and notably un(der)appreciated. In the preceding section, I explored some of the ways by which women (are encouraged to) choose to use their bodies as resources for the promotion of animal rights. Here, drawing on the experiences conveyed by my research participants, I will explore the costs of the cultural imperatives that work to essentialize women's emotionality and care, and through which women's naked bodies as a sign of protest become normalized. As I will argue, the ways in which women draw on their bodies and emotions as resources in their activism has corporeal effects (Jacobsson and Hansson, 2014), and often comes at the price of experiences of trauma and physical and emotional burnout.

Shapiro (1994) similarly points to the emotional weight of caring for animals. Activism is work. In addition to having paid employment and academic commitments, my research participants regularly dedicate many hours of their time per week to their activism. At any given time, there is a demonstration to attend or to plan and pamphlets to be slung. In addition, signage and outreach material need to be ordered (from mainstream animal rights groups like Vegan Outreach, PETA, Mercy for Animals), stored, and somehow be transported to the demonstration site. Supporters and fellow activists need to be recruited and organized in order to ensure a successful turn out. And the burden of this work often falls on a small number of dedicated organizers, most of them women, like Doe Adams:

Burnout is pretty real for me. I've never burnt out but I was pretty close a few months ago. There's actually a lot of animal rights events that happen, like there's pretty much something every week. I was pretty much doing everything at one point *and* trying to [participate in] kind of a new group that started a couple of years ago. Basically the idea is [that] they go into a place where speciesism is normalized, put up some signs, people say stuff, and then you walk out chanting "it's not food, it's violence", or something like that. So that came [here] . . . and I was like "sure, I'll be the coordinator" . . . The people I asked to help me out didn't do anything so . . . every month I was organizing an event, choosing a place, doing press releases, getting someone to film but also filming with my go pro, editing it, putting the video out, [all while] trying to start my own YouTube channel, being in school, and going to weekly activism on top of that.

Similarly, Ingrid, who organized her first circus protest over two decades ago, details the work that she has done and continues to do as an animal activist:

Mainly, I attend events. I used to sometimes speak to media [and] sometimes we would send in press releases . . . Because I'm an introvert, speaking to media is very challenging for me – I'm not particularly quick on my feet when I'm feeling stressed. I can freeze sometimes! I'm getting better and if I have my key talking points really nailed I can do it, but we have someone else who's strong in our group and she's really a leader in the activist movement [in our city], so she's taken that over for the past seven years. If she needs anything, I help. And that includes carrying stuff, making signs for campaigns, . . . fundraising events. I've done tabling events at the vegetarian food festival, bake sales, you know, any of those types of things. I help out with ordering materials.

For the majority of my research participants, activism is more than a timely commitment during which they temporarily wear the activist hat. Instead, activism is more of a practice, something that daily informs actions and interactions. Ingrid, for example, goes on to explain that her activism cannot be reduced to her organizing or her presence in public outreach events and demonstrations. Instead, her activism runs in the foreground alongside professional and familial commitments and her otherwise busy life:

I do activism everywhere I go. I always have things in my purse. I approach – I don't know – 10 to 15 people throughout the day and have conversations with them . . . I'm a lot older now and I have a lot of responsibilities - I travel, I work full time, I'm studying, I provide support to my daughters.

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When prompted, all of my research participants readily pointed in some way to the mental and emotional drain of their activism. However, there is a notable gendered difference in the language used to describe the burden of work. Hypatia, for example, acknowledges the demands of activism and responds pragmatically about the time and effort he is able to dedicate to the cause:

I want to do as much as possible and it does take a lot of energy when you're working [you have] friends, family, hobbies, and then activism to balance. . . It's just allocating my time accordingly and efficiently as best as I can, according to my personality type [and] according to my energy levels.

Contrarily, Doe Adams acknowledges the impossibility of doing *everything* for the cause, but describes a feeling of culpability for progressing the movement:

It's such an overwhelming thing because the problem is so big but *you just can't do everything* to help it all the time, and then you just feel like you just blame yourself because you're one of the few people that actually care.

There is a notable difference between Hypatia's excerpt and Doe Adams'. While Hypatia notes rather matter-of-factly that his ability to participate in activism is affected by a range of personal and external factors, Doe Adams describes a feeling of personal responsibility. Because she feels she is one of the few who does care, *it is her job to care*. She goes on to describe a feeling of dejection, a result of seeing progressive change while simultaneously having a pressing sense of urgency due to the animals' continued experiences of violence and suffering:

It's really hard when you're fighting so hard and you see changes every day but you're still constantly seeing the sadness around you . . . it's really easy to sink down and feel a little helpless that people aren't changing fast enough.

Doris, too, suggests that there is an emotional weight to animal activism, carried by sensitive, feeling people. In order to cope, she has learned to emotionally detach from

the crude realities of the animal industries by considering her activism as a task, something that needs to be done:

I can see why people do burn out. There are people who have a lot of emotional issues already – I think it attracts a certain type because we feel things so strongly. There are people who already kind of have anxiety or emotional difficulties and so yeah, it's easy to kind of topple over . . . I've learned to just detach, like I look at it like it's a task. I just try not to think about what I'm seeing.

Activism is work, and that work is highly personal and emotional. It is also gendered. Consider the lived experiences of dedicated animal activists and the ways by which their dedication to the cause is felt and highly personal: they rail against a powerful industry to have their views regularly rejected and mocked; they choose veganism as a solution to what they perceive as an exploitative, oppressive industry, only to have their animal-free dinner plates become reason for emotionally-infused jabs and low blows by friends, family, and strangers who take issue; they are regularly exposed to the violent reality of the animal industries via graphic images and descriptions of animal suffering. Ingrid, for example, explains that psychological trauma, and subsequent burnout, is a looming reality for many animal activists, including herself:

I have some mild sort of Post Traumatic Stress just from seeing those [graphic] images for so long. It's not anything that impacts me that greatly in my day to day life, but I have images screening through my head constantly of things that I've read and that's just the way it goes . . . I think we all *do* face burnout. It's like, you know, those people that work in children's aid, those people that work in so many other areas of work where you can become stressed out because it's a painful and traumatic subject matter. I don't look at [the images] anymore and that's very important. In my work during the day I talk to a lot of supporters who feel very deeply traumatized by seeing those images and so then you need to stop. You know what happens in factory farms . . . we've all seen that. We don't need to be martyrs. Avoid it, you know! Don't look at the nasty, horrible, abusive video.

Similarly, Elizabeth describes a place inside herself from which she draws the ability to deeply empathize with animals and, correspondingly, to rally for their rights.

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While she believes deeply in the value and importance of animal activism, she describes the process as *painful*:

There is definitely a dark place inside myself that I can sort of go to and I'm not even sure whether it's a dark space in terms of, you know like, I can connect to how the animals are feeling because I've been there before so I know about it, or whether it's been exacerbated by all the [graphic] images. How do I psych myself up to it? Well . . . sometimes I'm up to it and sometimes I'm not. So that's kind of what limits my activism the most . . . I can't do *that thing* every week. It's just too painful.

The question of how much exposure to the violent realities of the animal industries one should have – in the form of graphic images, site visits, descriptions of animal suffering – is common among animal activists. As explained by my research participants, there is no unanimous answer because experiences of exposure are highly subjective. There is an overall agreement, though, that exposure and general participation in animal activism can be traumatic, and there is an emotional labour involved in being able to persist under the weight of their cause. As demonstrated by excerpts pulled from my interviews with Doris, Ingrid, and Elizabeth, this sometimes involves accepting and respecting one's personal emotional limits or hardening oneself against the distressing and pressing subject at hand. As I have demonstrated, my research participants' activism is corporeally experienced, a result of their emotional and bodily dedication to animal rights. In using their bodies and emotions as resources for portraying the violence and suffering experienced by factory farmed animals, the women in my study experience and live the effects of violence and suffering themselves. The weight of activism is felt physically and emotionally. The activists' reliance on their bodies and emotions as resources in their activism often comes at the price of physical and emotional burnout.

Conclusion

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In this chapter I have argued that, holding that animal rights activism is reflective of a dominant patriarchal hierarchy of legitimate knowledges, my women participants use strategies of activism that draw on the capital that is culturally available to them as women: their bodies and emotions. By using their bodies and emotions as a tool in their activism, my women research participants work within the gendered constraints of society by drawing on what are acceptably female forms of knowledge and expression. As such, women's participation in animal rights activism has corporeal effects, observable in high rates of burnout (compassion fatigue) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorders among activists, and, in the case of nude activism (a heavily-used tactic), the inadvertent exclusion of bodies that do not fit the feminized ideal. I also demonstrated, by drawing on the content of public Facebook groups, that high moral standards for the practice of veganism can have the effect of excluding people from the conversation about animal rights.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusion

Using a critical feminist lens and drawing on feminist ethic of care scholarship (Gilligan 1982;2011; Donovan 1990;1996; Adams, 1991; 2000), this research project worked to draw the lived experiences of eight dedicated animal activists working within this city into a cohesive narrative that reflects the role of hegemonic masculinities and femininities in shaping animal activism and activists. Drawing on a body of literature in which animal rights activism is conceptualized as a feminized space in the public sphere, this research project worked to centralize women's voices, and their strategic use of emotion and their bodies as tools in their activism. The community of animal activists in this city is largely reflective of mainstream animal rights movements across the Western world, in which women make up the vast majority of those advocating for animals (Shapiro, 1994; Groves, 2001; Gaarder, 2008;2011; Kruse 1999).

This research situates the emergence of a feminized animal rights movement within a historical context of patriarchal order, under which women have been devalued and confined largely to the private sphere (Groves, 2001, p. 212; see also Gaarder, 2008; 2011; Munro, 2001; Kruse 1999). It has demonstrated that women's animal activism can be conceived of as a practice of care, rooted in feelings of empathy for nonhuman animals, and derived from historically gendered divisions of labour in which the burden of care has fallen largely to women. Drawing on literature that understands emotion as *belonging* to women in the public sphere (Ahmed, 2004), this research demonstrates the ways by which women's emotionality has come to characterize animal activism. The women activists who participated in my research make emotional appeals to the public, drawing on their own and others' capacity for empathic care, as a means of advocating

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for animals. This has been demonstrated in excerpts derived from our interviews, observation of their activism, and can be located in outreach material that they use to supplement their activism.

Reflective of the means by which women historically have occupied space within the public sphere, my women research participants use their bodies and their emotions instrumentally in the fight for animal rights. By using their bodies and emotions as a tool in their activism, my women research participants work within the gendered constraints of society by drawing on what are acceptably female forms of knowledge and expression. This has been demonstrated in two important ways. First, in order to attract attention to their cause, the women activists engage in nude demonstrations that draw on deeply embedded gender stereotypes that objectify and sexualize women's bodies for public consumption. By participating in nude demonstrating, women animal rights activists are drawing on what is culturally available to them as objectively female bodies and voices in a patriarchal society. Second, the women activists embody care for animals through the practice of veganism, which is held, by themselves and by others, to high standards of practice. Impurity threatens the movement by undermining its legitimacy, which is grounded in its members' bodies and consumptive practices. Importantly, bodies are the site by which women have, through history, been failed or reprimanded within the public sphere.

In line with research on the role of emotions in animal activism (Jacobsson and Lindblom, 2013; Jacobsson and Hansson, 2014), this research has demonstrated that being an animal activist is an affective, embodied experience. Importantly, drawing together research on the embodiment of emotion in social movements and literature on

the lived experiences of women animal activists, this research demonstrates the ways by which women disproportionately carry the emotional weight of animal activism. As I have shown, for the animal activists with whom I worked, their activism and the practice of veganism permeate their lives. The emotionality of their activism is lived and felt as a weight, something that they do not simply *turn off* at the end of a protest. Instead, this research has shown that women activists live the emotional weight of animal activism in and through their bodies, demonstrated in high standards of practice for veganism and the women activists' experiences of burnout and Post Traumatic Stress Disorders.

Implications

This research project draws together literature that, on the one hand, focuses on the embodied emotionality of animal activism (Jacobsson and Lindblom, 2013; Jacobsson and Hansson, 2014), and on the other, emphasizes the role of women at the forefront of animal advocacy efforts (Gaarder, 2008; 2011; Shapiro, 1994; Kruse, 1999).

My research fills an important gap in the literature. Jacobsson and Lindblom (2013) and Jacobsson and Hansson (2014) emphasize the importance of understanding emotions as embodied by animal activists, but neglect to focus on the gender of emotions, and the ways by which women disproportionately carry the burden of animal activism. Where Gaarder (2008; 2011) and Shapiro (1994) emphasize women's emotionality in animal rights activism, they neglect to speak to the ways by which the emotionality of animal activism is *embodied* by animal activists.

Contrarily, this research project places importance on the role of *women's* bodies and *women's* emotions in progresses made by the animal rights movement. Thus, this research responds to a gap in the literature by drawing together a narrative in which

women, at the forefront of animal rights activism, draw on and embody care for animals, observable in the emotional shape and form of their advocacy efforts, the use of their bodies in nude activism, their practices of veganism which require a high standard of purity, and their experiences of burnout and PTSD.

Importantly, this research diverges from some of the literature that speaks to the use of women's bodies in animal activism. Deckha (2008) and Wrenn (2013) critique professionalized animal rights organizations' use of women's bodies, arguing that sexualized images of predominantly white, normatively gendered and attractive female bodies run counter to emancipatory movements and work to reinforce oppression and subjugation. While their arguments effectively dissect the use of women's bodies in this way, in considering the practice wholly exploitative, they overlook the agency held by women activists who *choose* to use their bodies in this way. As I have shown, many of the women activists who participated in my research project consider the use of their bodies in this way to be empowering, in line with their feminist values, and an important tool in drawing attention to the movement. Nonetheless, the contrast here emphasizes an important trend in which contemporary mainstream animal activism both reinforces and challenges normative gender ideologies.

Limitations and Future Research

This research was carried out in a mid-sized Canadian city in which much of the animal rights organizing occurs in the largely professional downtown core. The city's animal rights movement is largely white, and largely female, and thus my participant group was too. The city's movement is not necessarily as diverse (in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, age, ability) as one might find in a larger metropolitan

city. As such, this research should be taken up on a larger scale and in different geographical locations. As I stated in the Introduction to this thesis, this research speaks to contemporary, mainstream animal activism in a Western context, which is typically women-led and predominantly white. As such, the research does not represent other important and influential animal rights efforts, such as those led by Queer, Punk, or Black communities.

This research is my interpretation of the influences of gender on this particular animal rights community, derived from my analysis of the lived experiences of eight animal activists, seven of whom were women. I allowed my participant group to evolve rather organically, relying mostly on referrals from other activists, which resulted in a group dominated by women. This makeup is closely representative of the general makeup of the animal activist community in this city. However, I did not actively seek out male participants and therefore cannot claim that this research is representative of men's experiences of doing activism. And while this research draws on the content of my interview with my one male research participant, this is not and cannot be wholly representative of men in general.

Further, the way by which I arrived at a gendered analysis of this community of animal activists presents an important limitation. I began this research project by questioning how and in what ways animal rights activists understand and use the concept of "rights" in their activism. As such, my interview questions (see Appendix D) focused primarily on this concept, though throughout the process of interviewing, my questions changed shape and I asked more explicitly about gender. I arrived at gender somewhat indirectly then, which possibly limits the scope of my analysis. Future research should

focus more directly on questioning animal activists on their understandings of the influences of gender in shaping their activism.

A limitation to this research is the exclusion of animal subjectivities in discussing resistance against animal exploitation, as I have focused my thesis largely on the humans who advocate *for* animals. Further, my focus on what is largely representative of mainstream animal rights activism in North America means that this thesis overlooks the diversity of animal activists and activists who exist globally, and outside of the mainstream. Future research on the topic of animal rights activism would benefit from the inclusion and consideration of critical animal studies scholarship that focuses on the topic of animal agency and on forms of resistance *by animals* against their own exploitation (Hribal, 2007), as well as on the value of recognizing animal subjectivity beyond suffering (Corman, 2016).

This thesis presents an interpretation of the animal rights activism, in a North American context, as I see it, through a critical feminist lens that centralizes the presence and influence of gender. Herein, I have presented my interpretations of the work and words of my research participants, brought into a broader narrative that suggests that, within a North American context, structures of gender shape animal activists and their work, even where gender is challenged. Where possible, I have reflected on my own experiences of being a lapsed vegan who feels as though she has lost her voice in a movement that holds veganism as the highest standard of moral consumptive choice.

My hope in sharing this thesis with my research participants is that it will present them, and others, with a tool for furthering their activism, and an opportunity to reflexively consider their positionalities as social justice activists who fight for animals

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within the constraints of patriarchal order. My aim has been to situate animal activism as work that falls largely to women, who bear its weight, within a society ruled by patriarchy. Importantly, this work is not meant to criticize the work that (women) animal activists are doing. Rather, by reflecting on the ways by which *women's* emotions and bodies are implicated in mainstream animal activism, my hope is to highlight potential exclusions (of bodies and of voices). Further, I hope that the gendered analysis of this community that I have put forward will be affirmative of the emotional weight and corporeal effects of being an animal activist, and of being a body (that sometimes fails) in the fight for animals.

Appendices

Appendix A: Facebook Callout

Hello veg community members!

My name is Allison Wallis and I am a Master's of Arts candidate in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton University. I am working under the supervision of Dr. Jacqueline Kennelly, also in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology.

I am conducting a research project titled "Exploring Animal Rights in Action with Animal Activists." The purpose of this study is to understand what concepts and discourses animal activists use in their work for animals and aims to understand how the concept of animal rights informs the work of animal activists, and when it is not used, what concepts, ideas, or discourses are used instead.

I am looking for research participants who have been or who are currently involved in any form of animal activism here in [redacted]. I am interested in studying the animalactivist movement within my community, with an eventual goal being a generalstrengthening of the movement and the community.

I am looking for 2-10 research participants who self-identify as animal activists to participate in this study. The study has three possible components which, with your consent, you will participate in. First, you will be asked to participate in a one-to-one interview with myself, lasting between one and two hours. Second, you may be asked to participate in an arts-based focus group involving 2-10 people and lasting between 60 and 90 minutes. Finally, I may also request to shadow you during some of your activist work.

The Carleton University Research Ethics Board (CUREB) provided clearance to carry out this research project on January 5th, 2016. Clearance for this project expires on May 31st, 2016.

If you are interested in taking part in this project or if you would like more information, please email me at allison_wallis@carleton.ca with the subject line: Animal Rights. I will send you a formal invitation to participate in the study, which will provide further information about the research project, and the steps to be taken towards your participation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Allison Wallis
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Carleton University
allison_wallis@carleton.ca

Appendix B: Letter of Information

Subject: Invitation to participate in a research project on the use of rights discourse in animal activism/advocacy in [redacted]

Project Number: 103991

Dear Participant,

My name is Allison Wallis and I am a Master's student in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton University. I am working on a research project under the supervision of Dr. Jacqueline Kennelly.

I am writing to you today to invite you to participate in a study entitled "Exploring Animal Rights in Action with Animal Activists." The purpose of this study is to understand what concepts and discourses animal activists use in their work for animals. This study aims to understand how the concept of animal rights informs the work of animal activists and when it is not used, what concepts, ideas, or discourses are used instead. I have chosen to select you as a participant in this research project because I believe that your active involvement in animal activism in [redacted] will inform this research by providing a rich and nuanced account of the work that you do for animals and the ideas that inform your activism.

This study has three components: 1) you will be asked to participate in a one-to-one interview that will last between one and two hours, and will take place in a quiet, comfortable and mutually agreed upon space; 2) you may be asked to allow me to shadow you during some of your public activist work – I may observe you and your interaction with other activists or members of the public, ask you questions, and take notes; and 3) you may be asked to participate in a focus group consisting of 2-10 people. Within the focus group you may be asked to engage in group discussion, and activities such as brain-storming, mind-mapping, charting and table-making, drawing and diagramming. I may contact you with follow-up questions via email. With your consent, the interview and focus group will be audio-recorded.

Once the audio recording has been transcribed, the recording will be destroyed and its transcript will be kept for up to five years for potential use in future projects only by myself. Both electronic and hard copies of the transcription will be stored on an encrypted USB flash drive and kept securely in a locked safe in my home. Any written notes or other hard-copy material will also be stored securely in this safe.

As a participant, you are at risk of some potential social and psychological harms involved in disclosing information within the context of the study, though they are expected to be minimal. Social and psychological risks include a potential impact on your social status and/or reputation within the animal rights movement, and potential feelings of distress or re-traumatization in discussing your involvement in animal activism. In order to offset these risks, any data associated with your participation in the project will

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be kept confidential by the use of a pseudonym. It is not possible to guarantee your confidentiality if you participate in the focus group, as it will be impossible to conceal your identity to other focus group participants.

If you would like a copy of the finished research project, you are invited to contact me or Dr. Jacqueline Kennelly in order to request an electronic copy. Should you decide to retract or redact any statements made as part of your participation, or should you decide to end your participation in my research project, you may do so up until April 30th, 2016. You may withdraw from the study by contacting me or my project supervisor, Dr. Jacqueline Kennelly, by email or by telephone on or prior to this date. If you choose to withdraw your participation, all information associated with your participation will be immediately destroyed.

The Carleton University Research Ethics Board (CUREB) provided clearance to carry out this research project on January 5th, 2016. Clearance for this project expires on May 31st, 2016. Should you have questions or concerns related to your involvement in this research project, you may contact the CUREB research chair, myself, or Dr. Jacqueline Kennelly. Contact details are below:

CUREB-B contact information:

Professor Shelley Brown, Chair (CUREB-B)
Carleton University Research Ethics Board
Carleton University
511 Tory
1125 Colonel By Drive
Ottawa, ON K1S 5B6
ethics@carleton.ca

Researcher contact information:

Allison Wallis
Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology
Carleton University
allison_wallis@carleton.ca

Supervisor contact information:

Jacqueline Kennelly
Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology
Carleton University
Jacqueline_kennelly@carleton.ca

Thank you for your time and consideration in reviewing this invitation. If you would like to participate in this research project, or if you have any questions or concerns, I can be contacted at allison_wallis@carleton.ca.

Sincerely,

Allison Wallis
MA Candidate
Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton University
allison_wallis@carleton.ca

Appendix C: Letter of Consent

I _____, choose to participate in a study that explores my relationship to the concept of animal rights and my understanding of what it means to *act* in the name of animal rights. This study aims to explore the ways in which the concept of “animal rights” is understood and used in the work of animal activists in [redacted]. **The researcher for this study is Allison Wallis in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton University.** Allison is working under the supervision of Dr. Jacqueline Kennelly, also in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton University.

Involvement in this study includes: 1) a one-to-one interview lasting between one and two hours; 2) potential participation in an arts-based focus group involving 2-10 people and lasting between 60 and 90 minutes; and 3) potential engagement in participant observation – this will involve the researcher shadowing you during some of your activist work, asking questions, and taking notes. With your consent, the interview and the focus group will be audio-recorded. Once the recordings have been transcribed, any audio-and/or audio-visual recordings will be destroyed. All data, including notes and transcriptions, will be kept securely on an encrypted external hard drive, stored in a locked safe in the researcher’s home for up to five years. Research data will only be accessible by the researcher and the research supervisor. At the end of five years, all research data will be securely destroyed. (Electronic data will be erased and hard copies will be shredded).

As this study will ask you about your involvement in animal rights activism, there are some potential social and psychological risks involved in disclosing information within the context of the study, though they are expected to be minimal. In signing this consent form, you acknowledge that you are aware of the potential social repercussions (i.e. impacts on social status and/or reputation) and psychological risks (i.e. feelings of distress in discussing involvement in animal rights activism) that may arise through participation in this study. While the risks are expected to be minimal, I will take precautions to protect your identity. This will be done by keeping all responses confidential and allowing you to request that certain responses not be included in the final project. Should you experience any distress during the interview, you will be provided with contact information for counseling services available nearby.

In signing this form, you consent to the use of your data for this research project. You have the right to end your participation in the study at any time, for any reason, up until April 30th, 2016. You can withdraw by phoning or emailing the researcher or the research supervisor. If you withdraw from the study, all information you have provided will be immediately destroyed.

If you would like a copy of the finished research project, you are invited to contact me or Dr. Jacqueline Kennelly in order to request an electronic copy. Should you decide to retract or redact any statements made as part of your participation, or should you decide

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to end your participation in my research project, you may do so up until April 30th, 2016. You may withdraw from the study by contacting me or my project supervisor, Dr. Jacqueline Kennelly, by email or by telephone on or prior to this date. If you choose to withdraw your participation, all information associated with your participation will be immediately destroyed.

The Carleton University Research Ethics Board (CUREB) provided clearance to carry out this research project on January 5th, 2016. Clearance for this project expires on May 31st, 2016. The project number is: 103991. Should you have questions or concerns related to your involvement in this research project, you may contact the CUREB research chair, myself, or Dr. Jacqueline Kennelly, citing the above project number. Contact details are below:

CUREB-B contact information:

Professor Shelley Brown, Chair (CUREB-B)
Carleton University Research Ethics Board
Carleton University
511 Tory
1125 Colonel By Drive
Ottawa, ON K1S 5B6
ethics@carleton.ca

Researcher contact information:

Allison Wallis
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Carleton University
allison_wallis@carleton.ca

Supervisor contact information:

Jacqueline Kennelly
Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology
Carleton University
Jacqueline_kennelly@carleton.ca

Appendix D: Interview Guide

First, thank you for taking the time to be here today. As indicated in the email invitation and the consent form, the purpose of this study is to understand what concepts and discourses animal activists use in their work for animals and aims to understand how the concept of animal rights informs the work of animal activists, and when it is not used, what concepts, ideas, or discourses are used instead. The research project has been designed for the fulfillment of my Master's dissertation in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton University. I am working under the supervision of Dr. Jacqueline Kennelly, also in the department of Sociology and Anthropology.

So to begin, this is a project that aims to explore the concept of animal rights and its place and use within the community of animal activists here in [redacted]. I am interested in exploring the ways in which animal activists draw on the concept of "animal rights" in their activism – what reasons are given for using or not using this concept, when is it drawn on, and whether or not animal activists see this concept as an effective tool in making change for animals? I have requested your participation in this research project because of your devout work as an animal activist in the [redacted] area. I am interested in understanding:

- Your path into animal activism
- What kinds of events you are involved in and in what capacity you participate
- Your thoughts on what you consider to be effective activism
- Your understanding of the concept of animal rights
- How, if at all, you use this concept in your activism
- When you are not using this concept, what concepts you are employing in your activism

Before we begin, do you have any questions or concerns about your participation in the research project?

Note to REB: This is a semi-structured interview guide and thus the questions listed may be reworded, explored in non-sequential order, or passed over entirely. It will be up to myself and the research participant to decide which questions will be most interesting and fruitful to discuss.

Interview Questions

1. Would you self-identify as an animal activist? How would you define the work that you do for animals? What is your work informed by (theories, philosophies, positions)?
2. Can you tell me a bit about your journey into animal activism? What informed your decision to begin publicly advocating for animals?
3. Can you tell me a bit about your work as an animal activist?
 - i) Do you organize events, participate in them?
 - ii) What kinds of events do you get involved in?
4. Are you involved in any other activist projects/groups?

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- i) How do you feel your animal activism aligns, if at all, with other activism that you do?
5. This project is about the use of animal rights as a concept in animal activism. What comes to mind when you hear “animal rights”?
 - ii) Can you think of a time when you’ve heard the concept of “animal rights” being used or spoken?
 - iii) Can you think of a time when you have used this concept in your work as an animal activist?
6. How, if at all, has the concept of “animal rights” informed your personal consumptive choices?
7. How does “animal rights” inform your activism, if at all?
8. In your activist work, are you able to think of a time when “animal rights” has been a contentious concept?
9. Is “animal rights” a concept that you would employ in conversation with interested members of the public? Say, in the context of pamphleting? What concepts would you use when discussing with interested members of the public?
10. Does your strategy/use of language change based on the individual/group you are working with?
11. How would you describe the collectivity of animal activists in [redacted]? Is there cohesion among activists in terms of what they think constitutes effective activism or advocacy?
12. In your experience, do you think the concept of “animal rights” has been effective in promoting change locally, regionally, nationally, internationally, globally?
13. There is a general distinction between animal welfarists and animal liberationists. Animal welfarists advocate for the humane and compassionate treatment of all nonhuman animals in life and death – the right to life without undue pain and cruelty. Animal liberationists advocate for full emancipation of the use of nonhuman animals for the consumption and profit of humans. Do you identify with one camp over the other?
 - i) In your opinion and experience, are welfarists and liberationists able to work together effectively?
14. Finally, is there anything you would like to add or any topics that haven’t been covered, that you feel would be beneficial for this research project?

Thank you for taking the time to be here with me today. Your contribution to the research project is greatly valued. Do you have any final questions or concerns that you would like to address? If any questions or concerns regarding your participation in this project arise, please do not hesitate to contact me, my research supervisor, or the Research Ethics Board chair. All contact details are on your copy of the consent form. Are you OK with being contacted by me for clarification on some of your comments made today? If the need does arise, what would be the best way to contact you? Once again, thank you kindly for your contribution to the research study. I look forward to sharing the completed work with you in the future.

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