

How to be an Activist
Choreographing Identity and Community
within Social Movement Activism

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ABSTRACT

How to be an Activist Choreographing Identity and Community within Social Movement Activism

Janel Fisher

This thesis is about the creation and performance of identity and community within a specific animal rights activist organisation. More specifically, this thesis argues that the individual as a key player in the development of social activist ideologies needs to take a more central role in an academic approach to social movement theorising.

Social movement activism has long been the subject of inquiry for many different academic disciplines and social movement theories, evolving from Marxist interpretations to New Social Movement theories, have all attempted to explain and examine these phenomena. However, how social movements and their participants have historically been represented across theoretical perspectives has come under criticism as overly homogenising. Primarily, the problem with this homogenous representation is that it does not fully reflect the complexities of both the organisations and the individuals involved in a particular social movement. While such presentations can make a comparative approach easier, it does not address the historical particularities and diversities existing among social movements across social, economic, and political borders. Combined with a preference on the presentation of a communal identity over the individual, I argue that social movement theorising needs to be re-focused making the individual more apparent and visible as a mover and shaper of change.

This thesis attempts to locate the individual within a specific organisation within the more general animal rights movement. It also addresses how they come to understand the role of community, as it exists on both physical and abstract levels. While in the process of actualising this sense of community and solidarity among themselves, individuals also negotiate and deal with tension, uncertainty, and contractions while coming to terms with their own individuality and ideologies. In the end, this thesis is about moving from a typical collective unit of analysis to a more difficult one, the individual.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I: Introduction	1
Organisation of the chapters	4
Chapter II: A Literature Review regarding the Historical Development of the Animal Rights Movement	6
The influence and importance of urbanisation	8
The formation of animal welfare societies	9
The development of animal rights	11
Animal Haven, an animal rights organisation	17
Chapter III: Methodology and Ethical Considerations	20
Situating Place and Identity	23
Choosing a Field Site	27
Performing Field Research	30
What Cannot be Addressed	33
Chapter IV: Theoretical Perspectives	36
Social Movement Theories: Comparing Social Movements	37
Politicalisation of the Mundane	48
Community and Community Boundaries	54
Identities: Individual and Collective	59
Coming together and Staying together as a Community	63
Chapter V: Getting There and Working There	68
Setting the Scene: Arriving at Animal Haven	68
The Structure of the Organisation	79
A Typical Farm Day: Working for a farm animal sanctuary	86
The Shelter	87
The Education Centre	92
Administration, Development, and Campaign	95
Chapter VI: Relationships and Social Activism	99
Cataloguing Relationships: Defining Inside and Outside	99
Interacting with those outside of the movement	104
Working with "locals"	113
Visiting a Stockyard Auction	117
Setup	120
Chapter VII: Training a [Future] Activist	129
Rescuing a Calf	129
Chapter VIII: Ideologies, Philosophies, and Social Movements	139
Developing Relationships and Ideology	139
Legality vs. Illegality: A Point of Contention	142
Can Social Activist Movements Be Linked? Should they?	147
Chapter IX: Solidarity, Tension, and Social Activism	163
I am the Best Activist	164
The Incident with the Cheese	166
Fighting Hierarchies by Creating Hierarchies	170
Chapter X: Conclusions	176
Bibliography	183

Chapter I Introduction

This thesis is about the individual as members of a specific animal rights organisation within the broader context of an animal rights movement. It is about their understanding of community, as it exists on two general levels, the real and the abstract. While in the process of actualising a sense of solidarity among themselves, they also deal with tension, uncertainty, and contradictions through convergence. It is also about understanding the role of the individual and coming to terms with one's own individuality. This too has implications for tension and one's solidarity can then be, and often is, questioned within the group. In the end, this thesis is about moving from a typical collective unit of analysis within social movement theorising to a more difficult one, the individual.

Social movement phenomena have long been the subject of theoretical inquiry within many academic disciplines. Theories of social movements have variously focused on their formation, function, life cycle, and effect on broader societal circumstances. New Social Movement theories are the most popular currently and these frameworks attempt to describe the role of social movements as they act as presenters of oppositional forces to those broader societal structures they seek to change. However, while social movements and social movement organisations are often the unit of analysis, the individual and their voice is often undermined and silenced in this process. This thesis, therefore, makes an attempt to locate individuals and their influence within the realm of social activism and the organisations in which they claim membership.

In much of the published social movement literature, many presentations of social movements and social movement organisations are as a homogenous group of

individuals. Therefore, not only are social movements often generalised, their actors are lost in this process and the “they” that is supposed to represent organisations, groups, and individuals becomes less and less clear. However, no doubt this is difficult as many individuals are fluid, moving among movement organisations making it complicated to understand the physical and abstract elements of social movements. There are many levels of action in terms of being a member of a social movement. The professed ideologies of various social movements are broad and hence, at any given time, many individuals can ascribe to their various ideals without necessarily maintaining membership in a movement organisation, or without being an active or visible participant.

Social movements feature the existence of various groups and organisations that seek to organise related ideologies, philosophies, and perceptions with the hope of garnering an extensive spectrum of support, which often includes financial, political, and social. Garnering this support is done through a variety of means for particular social movements. For the animal rights organisation I worked with, social support was viewed as more valuable than political support (concepts that will be more fully developed in later chapters). While working socially and politically creates a very binary view of looking at the world, one that I do not necessarily agree with, the organisation I worked for did tend to maintain this distinction. The organisation itself, in terms of campaigns, was divided according to the work done in the political and legal realms and in the social and cultural realms.

Working within the formal political and legal arenas requires very specific language and steps; change in these arenas thus takes a very long time. Because there can be an immediacy to addressing social movement issues, garnering social support is

not only viewed as easier, but it also has more immediate results. Working socially means that the development of various relations – personal, inter-organisational, intra-organisational to name a few, also has implications for the creation of solidarity networks and issues of tension among activists. It is not that one aspect is good while one is bad, but both help to foster ideology, philosophy, and the presentation of a movement organisation and possibly a movement to the rest of society.

The specific animal rights organisation, on which this thesis focuses, like many other social activist movements, is composed of individuals who are very self-conscious and self-reflexive on all levels. They are self-conscious in the sense that every mundane action can become the subject of critique both personally and externally. This can be incredibly overwhelming and it is among this critique that relationships are organised and developed.

It is difficult to generalise about any one social activist movement, especially concerning the importance and role of the individuals who claim membership in a given movement. Individuals are important for helping to shape the ideology and focus of a movement. For example, ideology in the animal rights movement has many different themes and levels. Even within one theme, like factory farming and the consumption of food, we can find divergent views. Some members believe that capitalism is an inherently oppressive system that extends to how we raise and use non-human animals. Others, argue that our relation to this non-human animal kingdom is grossly distorted and therefore no boundaries should exist that allow one species to be given more consideration than another.

Organisation of the chapters

As social movements are situated in particular points of time and space, it is important to have a general idea of the history of a given movement. Chapter II therefore explores this history, briefly. It also explores the more specific history of Animal Haven, the field site at which this research was conducted, as it too has a history all its own within the larger animal rights movement.

Chapter III, Methodology and Ethical Considerations explores the position of individuality and how this informs the performance and limits of fieldwork. Chapter IV, Theoretical Perspectives, builds on this discussion in that it attempts to bring the individual in as the unit of analysis. Melucci argues, on a general level, that “movements are not qualified by what they do but what they are” (Melucci 1989: 809). Similarly, individuals in movements cannot simply be reduced to the general actions or ideologies identified with a movement.

The last five chapters of my thesis are dedicated to presenting this animal rights organisation, how it fits into the more general animal rights movement, and gives a voice (albeit limited) to many different animal rights activists who are trying to make sense of their worlds. Chapter V attempts to bring the reader into the physical realm of where this organisation was situated as well as detailing what a typical day might look like for an animal rights activist working on the farm. Chapter VI goes through various situations of activists having to interact with and negotiate their battles with those outside of the movement. This leads into Chapter VII, which discusses the training of activists as a key aspect of this organisation. In this case it was I, as an intern, who was receiving much of the training. Chapters VIII and IX explore how ideology, philosophy, and the building of relationships leads to a great deal of feelings of solidarity and

tension among activists. These feelings of solidarity and tension are shown to be both positive and negative and are natural aspects of social relationships.



Partial view of Animal Haven from the top of the cow pastures.
In the upper-right is the People Barn, bed and breakfast cabins, and the administration building.
(Chapter V describes in further detail the layout of the farm)

Chapter II

A Literature Review regarding the Historical Development of the Animal Rights Movement

The interaction between human beings and non-human animals is a constant element throughout the development of human societies historically and presently. However, interactions throughout this history have changed considerably and, for better or worse, this interaction has become more limited throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. For the so-called 'West'¹, this transformation is rooted and was heavily influenced in the transformations of philosophy and science associated with major historical eras and events, such as the Agrarian, Scientific, and Industrial Revolutions, as well as the Renaissance and Enlightenment. The influences of these eras instigated ideological changes allowing for advancements in technology, science, and particular perceptions regarding the place and status of humans in the natural world. With such advancements also came the further stratification of society into specialised (or unspecialised) labour. These increases in stratification demanded a change in the demographic distribution of populations – particularly in the large-scale movement of people from rural farming areas to increasingly industrialised urban centres. Scott (1998) explains how this shift was highly influenced by the State. A specialisation of labour could be interpreted as a simplification creating legibility and homogeneity among its population. Thus, this would allow the State the ability to manipulate and better control its populations that were transferring into localised urban centres increasingly fixed by political boundaries (Scott 1998: 11-53). This combination of

¹ Social activist movements are time and place specific and since this thesis is primarily concerned with the animal rights movement as it has developed primarily in the United States the focus of historical influences is meant to reflect this. The concept of the 'west' is problematic and is used, for purposes of brevity, to refer to various north-western European countries as the hub for an animal rights ideology as it exists in the US.

urbanisation and advancements in technology and science resulted not just in discoveries of human disease, treatments, and, in general, the intricacies of the human anatomy; it also created great resistance to how such advancements were in fact discovered. Some of this resistance included various animal welfare and rights movements that strongly opposed scientific and agricultural methods as these were seen as exploiting and abusing the various members of the [non-human] animal kingdom.

The idea of animal rights and vegetarianism is in no way a modern realisation; ideas of a humane treatment of animals can be drawn from various religions and philosophies dating back to antiquity and documented by such famous historical figures like Prophyry and Pythagoras. In fact, it was not until 1847 that the term vegetarianism was coined and used to categorise those who abstained from a flesh centred diet; prior to this, those individuals were following the 'Pythagorean diet' (Spencer 1998: 252; see also Tester 1991) as the term 'meat' was used to connote a variety of food (Fiddes 1991). Furthermore the term *vegetarian* does not come from the root vegetable, a common misconception, but from the Latin root *vegetus*, implying purity and wholeness (Tester 1991: 142-143).² However, the ideas behind vegetarianism now, its structure and formulation, is very distinct from early proponents in that early intellectuals who advocated a vegetarian diet on moral grounds did little to actually fight for the rights of animals.

Along with the general impact of urbanisation, the shift from a simple welfare to a rights³ based perspective of animals appears to have featured within two significant

² Similarly, the term 'vegan' comes from vegetarian where the beginning (veg) and end (an) create 'vegan' and implies a 'pure vegetarian' – one who abstains from animal products in all parts of their life, not just diet (see Tester 1991).

³ For the purposes of this thesis and unless otherwise noted, animal welfare refers to those groups and ideologies not opposed to the use of animals for food, scientific and medical testing, or entertainment provided that the animal is given adequate space, food, water, and exercise. Animal rights on the other hand refers to those groups and ideologies believing that non-human animals should never be used as a

periods. The first of these periods began in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and focused more on a welfarist perspective promulgated by anti-vivisection⁴ societies. The second era occurred during the 1960's and 1970's and involved a shift towards an argument for the inherent rights of animals instead of using them as tools for human consumption. Within this period, communities of animal rights activists extended their focus from the scientific community to factory farming, the entertainment business, and the fashion industry.

The influence and importance of urbanisation

Colin Spencer, in The Heretic's Feast: A History of Vegetarianism, argues that the animal rights movement would not have come into existence had it not been for the mass urbanisation that was centred around an increase in industrialisation (throughout Europe) and an associated specialisation of labour (Spencer 2001: 293-294, 328; see also Scott 1998 for issues relating to urbanisation). Spencer argues that prior to urbanisation, individuals practicing and following vegetarian principles were scattered in various rural locales. With an increase in industrialised agriculture (beginning primarily in England), and industrialisation in general, the increase in urban populations allowed for vegetarians to be "within a small area and likely to be going to the same public places...local papers had now given power to isolated voices to spread their views" (Spencer 2001:294). Such groups were displeased with this industrialisation, and as a reaction, they formed communities and protested what they viewed as bureaucratic self-interest and profit at the expense of both human and [non-human] animal life.

means to human ends and that terms such as 'adequate' or 'appropriate' are far too subjective to ensure an animal's well-being.

⁴ Vivisection is the practice of operating on living animals in order to gain knowledge of pathological or physiological processes.

The roots of the animal rights movement lie in urbanisation and industrialisation. As a result of these two developments, contact between humans and other non-human animals were increasingly limited to pet ownership and as a means of transportation within urban centres. The key here is that for many people, the association of animals as a means for labour and production was becoming less visible. For example, in England between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, those reliant on the market system to supply their food needs instead of directly working in agriculture doubled (Overton 1996: 137; see also Fiddes 1991). A newly developing urban middle class was thus further distanced from food production and agriculture while nature was being more and more romanticised. (Jasper and Nelkin 1992: 4, 14-20)

The formation of animal welfare societies

The animal welfare movement as it exists in the west, appears to have many of its roots in Britain. It was here that the first legislation was passed regarding animal cruelty. In 1822, the first animal protection bill was passed in the British parliament making it an offence to unnecessarily beat or abuse any draft or farm animal (Jasper and Nelkin 1992: 56-57; Gold 1998: 1). Yet, 'unnecessarily' is highly subjective and within an equally subjective legal system⁵ offenders could easily get around this legislation by manipulating the legal rhetoric. Two years after the passage of this bill, the first Society for the Protection against Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) was formed and in 1840, Queen Victoria gave the society its 'Royal' patronage (Jasper and Nelkin 1992: 57).

The development of England's RSPCA and animal protection legislation came in tandem with developments of technology and science, specifically with the increases in

⁵ Legal systems often argue for complete objectivity, however where a legal system exists based on the morals and ethics of a given society it is necessarily subjective.

industrialised farming and advances in the medical field. Firstly, factory farming was developing as early as the sixteenth century:

The Elizabethan method of 'brawning' or fattening pigs was 'to keep them in so close a room that they cannot turn themselves round about...whereby they are forced always to lie on their bellies'. ... Poultry and game-birds were often fattened in darkness and confinement, sometimes being blinded as well... [the] 'ox-house, where the cattle are to eat and drink in the same crib and not to stir until they be fitted for the slaughter' (Spencer 1998: 215).

Conditions similar or more severe than these continue in today's factory farming - the most popular focus for modern-day animal rights activists and movements. However, factory farming was not a concern for the nineteenth century animal welfarists because such systems were not directly in their view but located in the rural areas or in larger facilities unattainable to the general public (though still not currently in the view of the public, such conditions have been uncovered and documented by various animal rights groups)⁶. In fact, it was not until the 1870's that vegetarianism became associated with the animal welfare movement. This association was a reaction to the increasing abhorrence of vivisection; for vegetarians, a meat centred diet was viewed as the root of illness, both physical and mental. For many of those adopting a vegetarian diet, there was an association between the consumption of an animal diet with a reliance on the medical profession. One could avoid this reliance by maintaining a diet free of animal products (specifically meat as during this time the consumption of dairy and egg was common). Thus, vivisection came to be viewed as altogether unnecessary and cruel. (Spencer 1998: 285)

The use of animals for scientific exploration became popular with Descartes' philosophy of relating animals to machines where the perception was that animals functioned only mechanically and were unable to feel pain or emotion. However, in the

⁶ Other areas of influence have been literature. Of particular importance is *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair (regardless that Sinclair was not attempting to make an animal rights statement, but rather a human rights one).

late nineteenth century with the publication of Charles Darwin's The Origin of Species, the implication of existing commonalities between human and other animal species raised questions of sentience. Given such commonalities, could animals also feel pain and emotion similar to humans? (see Jasper and Nelkin 1992 and Gold 1998)

Anti-vivisection societies in Britain influenced the development of equivalent associations in the United States. By 1860, the first animal welfare societies were formed in the U.S. in major urban centres. In 1884, the Massachusetts animal welfare society influenced the legislation banning vivisection in elementary classrooms, which sparked and influenced calls for anti-vivisection laws. Already in this period, one can see an emergent divide between the ideologies of animal welfarists and animal rightists. However, divides between conservative and radical fractions already appeared as many SPCA welfarists viewed the efforts of rightists to pass legislation banning vivisection as those of 'eccentric extremists' (although the British RSPCA actively sought to get legislation passed for the banning of vivisection) (Jasper and Nelkin 1992: 57-59). The RSPCA's attempts brought parliamentary legislation in the 1876 Cruelty to Animals Act that stated "each experiment authorisation had to be obtained beforehand from a special board, which would grant it only if the absolute necessity of the experiment was proved... [and] that the animals had to be spared unnecessary suffering" (Spencer 1998: 286). But, again, who was to decide and define what constitutes unnecessary?

The development of animal rights

After World War II various technologies were developed for food production, which led to a further decrease in the number of individuals actually working in agriculture. The percentage of human labour actually working on the land in Britain had dropped to a mere two percent and a disassociation with nature increased (similar

effects were also seen in the United States and other capitalist, industrialised countries).

Spencer explains:

As technology, mechanised drills, tractors and combine harvesters, and use of pesticides for weeding instead of hoeing came in, so human labour was lost and now only two per cent of people work on the land. The old-style farms disappeared, hedges and spinneys were eradicated in deference to the machine, streams were diverted and ponds filled in; any water that was left was soon polluted by animal slurry and the run-off of chemicals from the fields stretching bleakly to the horizon growing their single crop... The farmer has been forced away from an intimate understanding of the natural environment and the creatures in it, to an ever-increasing attempt to control and manipulate nature by artificial means. (Spencer 2003: 328)

Furthermore, the Cold War and Space Race developed demands for the use of animals either for various scientific tests or for their by-products (Gold 1998: 70, 154) while the development of the National Institute of Health greatly influenced the use of animals for scientific testing (Jasper and Nelkin 1992: 116).

In the United States, animal welfarism in the 1950's tended to perceive animal cruelty as being performed by uneducated or abusive individuals rather than being implemented at an institutional or corporate level. By the 1960's the appropriation of a rights-based language began emerging in relation to animal welfarism (see Jasper and Nelkin 1992). People began connecting animal abuse with sectors such as factory farming and the scientific community; in the present situation, various contemporary philosophers (Tom Regan and Peter Singer are among the best known historically; Jim Mason and Howard Lyman are among the more contemporary) appeal to the moral sentiments of individuals retaliating against state and corporate bureaucracy (see Spencer 1998: 320; Regan 1982; Singer 1975; Mason and Singer 1990; Lyman 1998).

In the 1970's, a definitive turning point occurred in the United States that explicitly differentiated animal welfarism from animal rights. During the Carter administration an increase in the discussion of human rights influenced the construction

of animal rights in terms of animals as an oppressed group (Jasper and Nelkin 1992: 22). In 1975, Peter Singer presented his utilitarian perspective on animal rights in his book Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals. This book (re)established the basic principles of animal rights: an opposition to bureaucratic preoccupation with profit over human need that resulted in frivolous scientific testing yielding few positive results for humanity; factory farming that led to inhumane and unhygienic conditions as farmers constantly implemented new methods of increasing production that led to disease and necessitated an increased need for antibiotics; the fashion industry that promoted the mass killing of fur bearing animals for coats and also for the testing of various beauty products; and, the entertainment business that employed brutal training methods for the sake of laughter (like circuses) (Singer 1975; Spencer 2003; Jasper and Nelkin 1992). Ironically, this book is often used and quoted in animal rights rhetoric, but its utilitarian perspective can place it in the realm of animal welfare.

As a whole, the animal rights movement viewed animal suffering as linked with the increase of technological sophistication and an associated commoditisation of animals; the field of science was perceived to be responsible for this commoditisation as it created “knowledge with little regard to its social and moral consequences” (Jasper and Nelkin 1992: 21).

The publication of Singer’s animal rights philosophy, however, aided in mobilising the first demonstration that marked the beginning of the contemporary animal rights movement. In 1976, Henry Spira, inspired by Singer’s Animal Liberation, launched a protest against the American Museum of Natural History that was funding experiments on the sexual behaviour of cats. Due to such public support (especially

because many could relate to cats as they were common household pets), the museum pulled funding and stopped the experiments. As a result, questioning of scientific endeavours began increasing in the 1970's. Individuals began forming communities that compared the unquestionable secular authority of science with that of religion during the seventeenth century and earlier. (Jasper and Nelkin 1992: 26-27, 116)

The differences emerging in the animal welfarists perspective versus the animal rights perspective lies in the fact, generally, that welfarism will promote the use of animals for scientific research or food provided that their lives and the conditions they are kept in are humane, while animal rightists argue that such use of animals is a violation of their inherent right to live a life free of persecution irregardless of the benefits such experimentation may have for humans. The contemporary animal rights movement was greatly influenced by the environmental movement's focus and concern over pollution, limitations of growth, and the extinction of species due to industries that promoted the sale and trade of various animal commodities (such as ivory); today's animal rights movement contains a clear focus on environmental factors, especially as they relate to factory farming (see Jasper and Nelkin 1992). Furthermore, many animal rightists promote world hunger issues as related to issues of animal rights. For example, many fail to see the rationale of letting millions of the world's human population starve while most of the world's grain is fed to a livestock population (Houde and Bullis 2000: 145) that produces considerably less food by comparison, in the form of meat.

Within North America and Europe, the 1980's saw a dramatic increase in moral vegetarianism, that is, vegetarianism that was rooted in supporting the rights of animals. This was combined with self-centred motivations, such as health, as there was an increase of awareness regarding the complexity of animal rights issues. One of the

major reasons for an increase in adherence to this lifestyle was due to major health scares in Britain, specifically with Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, or Mad Cow Disease. This scare in Britain literally collapsed the beef industry overnight as its production fell by about one-third (Spencer 2003: 329). Consumers became increasingly frustrated with government officials and scientists who argued that BSE could not transfer species, which it inevitably did. Followed by an outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease resistant to vaccination and scepticism over genetic engineering, “[i]t [became] obvious soon after the millennium that the methods involved within intense farming practices pursued for maximum profit were giving us sick animals and a polluted environment” (Spencer 2003: 337). As a result, many turned to a vegetarian diet and began advocating changes within the animal agricultural system, as various diseases were identified with the modernisation and industrialisation of agriculture. Now with the latest bird flu scares, many animal rights groups are using this to point to the continual problems with industrialised animal food production.

In the United States, the situation was slightly different. There was not a mass conversion to vegetarianism due to such diseases, but rather an increase in awareness of farming practices. The increase in concern for animal rights and adherence to vegetarianism was prompted by a reaction against the various policies of the fiscally conservative Reagan administration that encouraged the pursuit of self-interest as well as the development of ‘People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals’ (PETA), now the largest animal rights organisation in the world. PETA was organised in 1980 by Ingrid Newkirk and Alex Pacheco as a reaction to the self-interest of science and capitalism, which combined welfarism and environmentalism to give the animal rights movement a mandate that transcended many spectrums. Currently, PETA’s mandate reads:

PETA believes that animals deserve the most basic rights – consideration of their own best interests regardless of whether they are useful to humans. Like you, they are capable of suffering and have interests in leading their own lives; therefore, they are not ours to use – for food, clothing, entertainment, or experimentation, or for any other reason. (www.peta.org)

The growth of this movement in various capitalistic, industrialised countries has been considerable. However, regardless of their numbers, the animal rights movement continues to be a marginal movement and as such little has been accomplished in terms of legally recognising the rights of animals. However, the question remains of whether or not it is appropriate to adopt a rights-based language for this battle (see Ignatieff 2000).

The tenuous nature of law and the obvious manipulation of the language associated with it does not give the animal rights movement much room for error. As with other social movements, the adoption of a 'rights' perspective creates the motivation to change and modify the existing legal framework to ensure that such rights are upheld. However, the current problem the animal rights movement faces is that there exists no legal precedent to gain standing within the courts, especially considering the weight that precedent holds for decision making (see Silverstein 1996; Wise 2000). This begs the question as to whether or not the legal system handles such emergent situations and ideals appropriately. If culture and society are fluid, then why should the foundations of the legal system be limited to past experiences? What gains the animal rights movement has made in the formulation of laws and regulations has been seriously undermined by the strategic use of such generic modifiers as 'necessary,' that allow even questionable practices to continue.⁷ Furthermore, with institutions such as the World Trade Organisation, the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement, the Free Trade

⁷ There have been many cases of bringing issues of animal rights to court, however this is done by manipulating and negotiating the language of the legal system. A more recent and successful case regarding the use of downed animals for human consumption is *Micheal Baur and Farm Sanctuary, Inc. vs. Ann Veneman, Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture*.

Area of the Americas, it becomes difficult, if not impossible, for third parties to raise questions regarding the use of animals and animal by-products, especially when established legal policies of sovereign nations are overturned (see Shrybman 2001).

Today, the animal rights movement retains its marginal position. There are many reasons for this, which this thesis cannot address. However, this marginality continues because of its inability to make linkages to other movement ideologies, such as racism or world inequality issues. The comparisons made to other social movements by many within the animal rights movement continue to lack a clear explanation of how such lifestyles (for example, following a vegan diet) can remedy these other issues like, for example, world hunger issues. These ambiguous comparisons can thus leave those outside of animal rights activism sceptical (at best) or offended (at worst) about this potential.

Animal Haven, an animal rights organisation

Up to this point, I have attempted to cover a very brief history of the development of the animal rights movements, particularly with reference to the United States. I now turn to the development of a specific animal rights organisation that was utilised as the field site for the research on which this is based: Animal Haven.

Animal Haven was formed in 1986 by a young couple, Trisha and Bill, now celebrities in the animal rights movement. At the time Trisha and Bill were researching stockyard conditions when they came across a pile of downed⁸ animals left to die over the weekend. Both Trisha and Bill quickly realised that one of the sheep was still alive and they took her to a local veterinarian. They expected her to be euthanised, but discovered instead that she simply needed fluids. They attempted to press charges

⁸ A 'downer' or a 'downed' animal is an industry term to refer to a non-ambulatory animal that cannot walk, stand, or move freely for reasons unknown.

because of the conditions they had seen in the stockyards and transport system, which often left food animals to die so that the stockyards were free from having to pay veterinary fees. Trisha and Bill did not get far and were blocked by what was considered 'normal industry practice and standards.' Not deterred, they continued with their research and Animal Haven became an incorporated organisation in 1986, operating out of their row house in New England (where they had collected a number of other farmed animals including a goat, a pig, chickens, and turkeys). In 1991, they moved the organisation after purchasing a 175-acre derelict farm farther North. It has now become the national headquarters for Animal Haven, and currently houses over 500 animals. Since then, they have purchased a 300-acre farm on the west coast and are in the process of developing a third farm also on the west coast. In the first three years of Animal Haven's existence, its annual budget grew from 8,000\$ to 100,000\$; currently Animal Haven's budget is over \$2 million annually with a membership of over 100,000.

Animal Haven and those who work there have been amongst the leaders in pushing for formal legislation that would ban or alter some of the more 'common industry standards.' Their efforts have led to some of the first-ever cruelty convictions for farmed animals. Their other campaigns range from encouraging local restaurants to have at least one vegan option on the menu (the Burger King in their area was the first in the nation to serve a veggie burger), organising protests and marches throughout the US promoting the rights of farmed animals, getting formal recognition by various county politicians to recognise farmed animals as sentient beings, obtaining celebrity and political endorsements, and organising and researching with various professionals in an effort to create valid grounds for legal change. Furthermore, all of Animal Haven's campaigns are carried out through a network of animal rights communities and

organisations throughout the nation. Volunteers organise various protests, benefit shows, and other campaigns in conjunction with Animal Haven that help to support the sustainability of the organisation.

The focus of Animal Haven is on the issues associated with modern-day factory farming – the conditions of factory farms themselves, transportation issues, conditions in stockyard auctions, and conditions and methods of slaughter. Animal Haven operates as an educational institution and as a sanctuary for rescued or retired farmed animals. Animal Haven remains unique to many other animal rights organisations doing similar educational, legal, and community organising work because of their sanctuary where other activists and individuals interested can tour the farm and interact with animals normally associated with food or clothing uses. This element is essential to the work done because of its ability to convince and maintain the belief that farmed animals are sentient beings.

Chapter III

Methodology and Ethical Considerations

Conducting ethnographic fieldwork is one of the many characteristics partially distinguishing anthropology from other social sciences. Though other fields of social science maintain a fieldwork component, within anthropology this differs methodologically. The idea of 'being there' and being immersed in a specified context is not without debate within the discipline (refer to Pink 2000; Okely 1996; Hoodfar 1994) and it often relates to having a very physical presence (see Knowles 2000) in the field. This presence and idea of being there is often linked with an idea of difference. As part of the requirements for Concordia University's Department of Anthropology Master's program:

The fieldwork requirement, which may last from 3-4 months, involves undertaking research in a community which differs in important respects from the student's community of reference. (Concordia University Sociology/Anthropology website, accessed 13 November 2005)

While issues of debate over the conduct of fieldwork range from physical presence within a certain context to performing such tasks via various forms of technology, other issues raised are those of 'home' and 'nativity', fieldwork remains to be a defining research method for anthropology inquiry. Concerning the above stated fieldwork requirement, this begs the question, what are these 'important' differences of reference? If we were to utilise the conventional idea of culture as taught in most introductory anthropology courses, then it could be argued that many anthropologists and students of anthropology, myself included, have failed in this regard. As Karen Norman (2000) states, "when anthropologists started studying in their European homelands, that they would be blinded by their cultural similitude with their informants and take too much for granted" (Norman 2000: 121) has been a critique of conducting

anthropological fieldwork 'at home' where conducting fieldwork within one's one home country has traditionally been delegated to the discipline of sociology rather than anthropology (see Amit 2000).

During the course of my fieldwork, I was neither home nor away from home. While technically I was 'home' in the United States, I was also away from Montréal, a place I now consider 'home.' Though I no longer live in the US, I maintain the privilege of having legal residence status. I did not have to worry about special visas or being 'kicked out' because of an association with an activist network unlike in Canada where I am not a legal resident. In terms of identity, I was also home among activists, but at the same time felt very disconnected to these particular activists, partially because I did not know them, but also because of conflicts, which arose with my own personal beliefs and philosophies juxtaposed to theirs.

Traditionally, culture has been limited to a set geographical area usually defined by abstract political boundaries (currently enforced by the State, though this is not without contention). Sir EB Tylor offered one of the first formalised definitions and explanations of this concept:

Culture or civilisation, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities acquired by man [sic] as a member of society (Tylor 1871: 1).

Yet, as 'members of society', individuals ideally have the potential to dictate such characteristics as laid out by Tylor (and built on by other scholars) to create and recreate society, culture, and community (see Cohen 1994). 'Culture' exists as a series of social relations and processes that are lived by individuals within a given 'culture.' People move in and out of these relations and into different social situations, and in this process they are influenced by other beliefs, ethics, ideologies or morals. Rather one usually belongs to several cultures at once and must therefore negotiate multiple relationships

expectations and processes (see Bourdieu 1992). Furthermore, limiting culture to set geographical areas fails to take into account issues of cultural resistance as can be seen most easily among displaced peoples and refugees. In relation to what I am arguing, individuals from various 'other cultures' throughout the US are in constant interaction with beliefs, ethics, and morals that may differ from their own. That these beliefs may differ does not mean that individuals are always in conflict with one another, but at times this can be the case.

Where social activism and movements exist within a broader cultural context they also act as a reaction to these broader societal structures and issues of power (see Graeber 2004; Bourdieu 1992, 1998). It can be argued that such ideologies do, to a limited extent, require an interaction of like-minded individuals to create a community focused on making such ideologies normative. However, the maintenance of ideologies within social activism do not necessarily require a constant interaction and with technological advancements in long distance communication and media vehicles, social movements and sub-cultures have in some cases and ways transcended the need for an ongoing face-to-face community. For most, however, there still exists some form of immediate and direct social interaction that works within the framework of a more abstract, broader community towards an ideological end. For example, Animal Haven exists as a physical presence for some animal rights activists while it also works among other animal rights organisations and activists within a larger communications web.

While the concept of community remains a highly contested term (one which will be more fully developed in later chapters; see Amit 2002; Amit and Rapport 2002), it becomes a central component to many activist communities. Often, it is those

individuals who identify their relationships among other activists as forming a community; communities, which can be tangible and/or abstract.

Situating Place and Identity

From May to August 2004, I lived and worked at Animal Haven, an animal rights organisation and sanctuary for rescued farmed animals located in an New England state. I consider myself an animal rights activist (among many other activist titles). Furthermore, I am from the north-eastern United States (specifically, I have been in or through this area on several occasions before my fieldwork). My membership in animal rights activism and my citizenship prompt questions about ideas of conducting 'native' anthropology. What may appear to be one thing on the surface could become a contradiction when one has worked their way to the centre.

There has been the tendency within much social movement literature to lump particular organisations and actors together within more general theories of social movements. Yet, assigning individuals, albeit even those espousing a shared social activism into one social category is problematic: "telling stories of the lives and works of actual individuals, taking account of the centrality of meaning in human experience, evidences the fact that 'we all live in the particular'" (Rapport 2000: 89). As Wiltfang and McAdam (1991) point out, activists do not constitute a homogenous group nor do social movements, which are

sufficiently large and diverse to constitute a broad umbrella covering a wide variety of participants. Therefore, it should be equally interesting to study variation between participants in a single movement as to study the differences between activists and non-activists (Wiltfang and McAdam 1991: 988).

Thus, the presentation of social movements and its actors in a homogenous form is "contradicted by the everyday reality of movement life... In this sense, the term *social movement* serves as a convenient fiction for a generally varied and diverse collection of

activities” (Witfang and McAdam 1991: 989). Witfang and McAdam’s critique of the traditional homogenous view of social movements has been very important to the development of social movement theory.

It is very difficult to speak of or to conceptualise an ‘American’ culture. Those who are a citizen of the United States are often referred to as *American*, but what exactly does this mean to any given individual? The United States is a vast country and to argue for an ‘American’ culture as some do may be an overly simplistic assumption of continued historical imperial and colonial power structures. While I have been currently residing in Montréal, I am from the north-eastern United States and there are many familiarities and comforts for me when I return. However, despite my recognised citizenship, Montréal is the place I currently make reference to as ‘home’, as this is where my life has and is currently being built. My sense of belonging (see Knowles 2000) is stronger in Montréal, most likely due to my membership in a variety of communities, activist and not. These Montréal communities and activities in which I participate emphasise Dyck’s point that ‘home’ is “far less a matter of birthplace or nationality than of continuing personal engagement in certain types of social aggregations, activities and relationships” (Dyck 2000: 48). At the same time, in referring to participation in the animal rights movement, one must keep in mind that it is composed of so many diverse individuals, organisations, ideologies and philosophies that to be a part of one organisation does not imply equal membership in all other animal rights associations, organisations, or communities.

Although at times I consider myself an animal rights activist, I have also been at times accused of being a specist and not a true vegan, thus not a ‘good’ or dedicated animal rights activist. The particularities of why I am called this is not of importance at

this particular juncture, but rather that my identity, as I understand it, can be completely foreign to me if looked at through the eyes of some other animal rights activists. Throughout my fieldwork, those I worked with, who could be called informants, also experienced conflicting interpretations of themselves, interpretations that created both processes of solidarity and dividing tension. This has significant implications for how relationships and identities are formed and negotiated among members of any given social activist movement and organisation (see Cohen 1994).

Conducting fieldwork within a specific activist organisation was not without difficulty. The question of where to study social activism, specifically animal rights activism, persistently loomed in the back of my mind. I was part of the animal rights scene in Montréal and there was a strong push by many activists for me to stay and conduct this research here. I was hesitant because most of the push, it appeared, was because of my role as a dedicated volunteer and I felt that this plea was more to do with the fact that the organisations I was working for did not want to lose that labour. Furthermore, when I would approach various groups and individuals about my intended study, there was usually the assumption that I would aid in promoting the claims of the movement, thus giving such philosophies and ideologies a new forum with the hope of garnering new support. As Virginia Caputo points out, "the difficulties peculiar to research conducted close to home is that one is never able to be completely 'in the field', nor is one ever completely able to 'leave the field'" (Caputo (2000: 28). Already feeling the pressures of having to transform my friendships and work relationships into 'informants' and feeling that it would be difficult to go from activist to researcher at home, staying within my home and familiar organisations did not seem appropriate or feasible at the time. Since 'home' can also be misunderstood as studying

among 'friends' (see Strathern 1987: 94), in Montréal this could have been the case; however, in the US it is at best an assumption based on a commonality of shared citizenship. With these considerations in mind, I surveyed various animal rights organisations and discovered Animal Haven.

Choosing not to stay at home in Montréal because of the pressure to push an animal rights agenda to a broader audience does not imply that I did not have to face this issue while conducting research in the north-eastern US. Though I made it quite clear that I was interested in the dynamics of social activism and how it negotiates the legal system and relations with people outside the movement, the idea implicitly remained that I could be someone to pass along the beliefs of members of this organisation to new circles. I would constantly reiterate my intentions to individuals, especially those I would interview privately, but it did not always seem to sink in; it was as if the perception was that I must want to try and convert those in my discipline as, after all, I am an 'animal rights activist'. Though, not everyone I worked with and spoke with wanted this sort of publicity, there were many who were hesitant to be interviewed because they feared that their privacy would be violated should their names be published. Most fears were alleviated when I told them that their names and the name of the organisation would be changed and kept confidential. Others were confused: "why would you want to interview me?" Carolyn asked, "you should interview Bill [one of the founders], he could tell you so much about the movement." This was a statement I received often – many felt that their contribution to the movement had very little impact for the sustainability of the movement in general.

Choosing a Field Site

I chose Animal Haven as my field site for a plethora of reasons; the most important was that I wanted an organisation that had the reputation for working in the formal legal and political arenas, rather than just in the socio-cultural milieu (because my initial goal in entering the field was to deconstruct language used by activists in the legal arena). Animal Haven, while adhering to many of the animal rights philosophies against the use of non-human animals in scientific testing, the entertainment industry, or the fashion industry, primarily focused on factory farming issues. As such it was a unique social activist organisation that operated a sanctuary for rescued farmed animals. This was an important aspect as it is typical of animal rights organisations to have a strong educational mandate, yet most have limited resources to carry out 'rescues'. A final reason for choosing Animal Haven as a prime field site was that it is located within a rural, farming area, as I was also interested in negotiated relationships both within and without social activist collectivities. Furthermore, I was interested not only in how this site interacted with people in the surrounding area, but the process through which it sought to create a community for animal rights activists as well. Individuals who came to work for this organisation rarely were from the immediate surrounding area; those who were, typically did not consider themselves involved in animal rights at all. Rather, they were various 'locals' simply needing jobs (and thus worked at those jobs not directly related to activism).

Yet my choice of the 'ideal' field site had much to do with my identity and my lifestyle at the time of my research – many aspects of which I am only able to see now being much removed from that situation and in retrospect (refer to Amit 2000; Knowles 2000; Gupta and Ferguson 1997 for factors influencing the construction of the field site).

As an activist interested in negotiated relationships and identity construction, what and where to study was a very central question. My choice for studying an animal rights organisation and activists had much more to do with maintaining my own personal lifestyle and ensuring an environment where I could do this than I had originally realised or would admit. As I will discuss more fully in later chapters, animal rights activists living a vegan lifestyle always have to justify this lifestyle at some point in their lives. Furthermore, maintaining this lifestyle can be incredibly difficult depending on the area one is in at a given time. For a first time experience of going to the 'field' and conducting research, there were many things that could have possibly gone wrong, but not having to worry about maintaining my lifestyle made the process much easier.

While living in an animal rights organisations and among animal rights activists, I had many identities that I was negotiating. Initially when I contacted Animal Haven about my research it was suggested to me to apply as an intern as it would allow me to live on site (otherwise, for liability reasons, I would not have been able to do so). Thus, I applied and was accepted as an intern for the months of May-July, though I stayed on an additional two weeks in August. Later, I found that during June and July the organisation had accepted the maximum number of interns (six), yet agreed to let me come because of my research. Therefore, the identities that I was negotiating were primarily (for me) as an activist in general, a researcher, more specifically an animal rights activist, then as an intern. However, as I was later to discover through my work, others' perceptions of me weighted my several roles quite differently. These attitudes often shaped how I perceived my work. Where Narayan argues that, in some way or another, we all are a 'native' anthropologist and how we situate ourselves among those we study is more important because it more fully speaks to the ideas of identity

construction (Narayan 1993: 678). Though I would perform the chores and duties necessary of an intern, I saw myself primarily as a researcher carrying out participant-observation. However, for those who worked at Animal Haven, the various tasks I would perform were viewed as simply those menial tasks delegated to interns. In other words, issues of power were redolent within the respective interpretations of my role at the sanctuary. Still, how I was perceived at this organisation changed in the three and a half months of my stay and I came to realise that this work was very much appreciated.

More generally, the position of interns at Animal Haven elicited both tension and annoyance. While appreciating the free labour that volunteer interns offered, much of this appreciation was undermined by the time and energy it took to train interns and also the fact that interns were more likely to make potentially significant mistakes that could place an animal's life in jeopardy. While at first I found myself in an 'inferior' position, this was not necessarily the case as my time there developed. Most interns stay for one month; occasionally two months. It is indeed rare to have interns stay for three months or more. Yet, this was the case for me (and one other intern while I was there). Thus, as my time at Animal Haven extended, the same amount of time and energy did not have to be spent on training me. I was assigned 'better' jobs (some requiring more skill, but more often better because they were not hard or physical labour). For example, taking animals to a nearby city where the animal hospital was located, working in development on various campaigns and with research, or assisting in farm tours in the education centre as well as working in the gift shop. There was also more variety in the kinds of tasks I was assigned as compared to most interns. Where most interns were mainly on the farm, my time became evenly split between the education and development departments, with only one day a week actually spent working on the

farm. Furthermore, because I had worked in other social activist organisations, it became clear that I had relevant experience in the organisation of activist campaigns for development and education.

Performing Field Research

Vassos Argyrou (2002) argues that the result of the ethnographic experience is the opposite of the performance of fieldwork. Therefore, ethnography becomes “authoritative texts – well organised, structured, purposeful and confident of themselves” (Argyrou 2002: 16). At the start of fieldwork, there is usually a plan of how one is to proceed and too often the reality of circumstances is out of the control of the researcher.

Upon my arrival at Animal Haven, uncertainty set in – what exactly was I trying to figure out? I knew that I had an interest in the legal system and how social activist organisations must work within this very limiting structure to evoke change. For this I could do an extensive library research paper, but I wanted to know more – why do people become a part of these movements and what makes them stay; how does it define them or does it? In total, there were about sixty people working on the farm in four different departments – the shelter, administration, education, and campaign/development. About forty of these individuals would consider themselves animal rights activists (almost all were vegan). During my stay I conducted interviews with thirty-three individuals. Of these 33, 13 were interns, 19 were those working directly in the organisation, and the last was with Donna, an educator in the NYC school district who works with Animal Haven on educating children of all ages about factory farming. Each individual was interviewed twice or had a combination of the two interviews in one session (except for Donna who only took the second of the two

interviews and Brenda who only took the first as she quit suddenly in late June). The first interview focused more on how the individual came to be involved in the animal rights movement as well as outlining a brief family and personal history. This interview was intended to provide the individual with a sense of who I was and what I was doing and to become comfortable talking with me about various issues. The second interview dealt more specifically with a dialogue surrounding the ethics and morality associated with animal rights activism. For each individual, this second interview often took place at least two weeks after the first. However, towards the end of my stay and as time was running out, many of the individuals I interviewed in July and August had only one interview, which combined the objectives of the two interviews I had initially prepared.

In conjunction with performing formal interviews there were also those informal conversations with interns, staff members, and local townspeople that offered insights as to how individuals perceived themselves and others. I did not have the opportunity to speak with nearly as many townspeople as I had hoped, primarily due to the fact that I was working/observing forty hours a week at a minimum and the only means of transportation I had to venture out into nearby town was an old generic direct-drive bicycle (and considering this was an extremely hilly area, there was no possibility of travel on this). The only time I engaged with individuals not actually working on the farm was at the Laundromat, the stockyard auctions, taking animals to the animal hospital (Winston's Animal Hospital in Springfield as well as the local veterinarians office in Shepard's Valley), and on occasional nights out for dinner. I also spent a weekend in Springfield during my stay at Animal Haven, which is three towns over and quite a bit larger than the surrounding towns and villages. While there, I was able to talk with individuals in Springfield and many individuals were aware of Animal Haven

through various forms of advertisements in this very liberal, college (there are two) town. I frequented many of the restaurants and pubs in this city and all of them had some sort of advertising for Animal Haven, usually in the form of a brochure or leaflet.

My role as an intern speaks to an important aspect of participant-observation as a research method and tool for anthropology. While it is usually portrayed as a very balanced relationship of observing one's informants and then participating with them in various tasks or chores, my participant-observation tended to be an either-or situation. I was either observing interactions or eaves-dropping on conversations, or I was literally participating by performing various tasks and chores done by other interns and workers, but I was usually alone when working, only with the assurance that everyone else at some point had to do the same job. In short, participation and observation were very distinct activities that were in some tension with each other and were rarely carried out concurrently.

Communities exist on many levels. While a community may maintain an historical element, communities can also be in the process of creation. Animal Haven has continuity of place but a constantly changing set of personnel. This is not only the case for the intentionally temporary interns, but there is also a high turnover rate among more regular workers. Ironically, the high turnover rate is more the case for activists than for the 'locals' occupying certain 'secretarial' or 'farm hand' roles. Thus the identity of the farm is constantly changing. Different individuals reshape the identity of this organisation in the movement – how they develop campaigns, who acts as a spokesperson, etc. Thus, the presentation of the organisation within the general movement changes as its local membership changes over time.

What Cannot be Addressed

Before delving into what this thesis will address, what it will not address requires specification. While I have intimated previously that I did not desire to be a conduit to pass along an animal rights message, it should be expressed more explicitly why this is the case. The species boundary for many animal rights activist is purposely blurred to stress the point of specism in mainstream perceptions.⁹ This is a very important aspect for the creation of community and identity for the animal rights movement and also for those individuals involved. Philosophical arguments in favour of an animal rights ideology often feature a critique regarding the absence of acknowledging and theorising this species boundary. For example, in Animal Rites: American Culture, the Discourse of Species, and Post-humanist Theory (2003), Cary Wolfe introduces his argument by stating,

I want to begin by suggesting that much of what we call cultural studies situates itself squarely, if only implicitly, on what looks to me more and more like a fundamental repression that underlies most ethical and political discourse: repressing the question of nonhuman subjectivity, taking it for granted that the subject is always already human. This means, to put a finer point on it, that debates in the humanities and social sciences between well-intentioned critics of racism, (hetero)sexism, classism, and all other -isms that are the stock-in-trade of cultural studies almost always remain locked within an unexamined framework of *specism* (Wolfe 2003, 1).

Whatever the basis of truth arguments of specism in animal rights ideology and however central to my own personal beliefs, the purpose of my research was not to study the 'animals' – rather my research focused on how relationships are negotiated with social activism, specifically within a major animal rights organisation in the United States. In other words, my research focused on processes of social movement membership rather than on animal rights ideologies in and of themselves.

⁹ The definition of specism for this thesis and for those I worked with is the belief that one's own species (in this case *Homo sapiens*) deserves better treatment solely based on the belief that one's species is superior. It is also the definition held by most other animal rights activists and organisations, yet I cannot speak for all such organisations or individuals.

To sum up the methodological approach used in my study, the data gathered during this fieldwork were obtained using participant-observation, formal interviews (of 33 individuals working on the farm as activists), and informal interactions (which consisted of working with various individuals on the farm as well as talking with various 'locals' in town and at stockyard auctions), and (a limited) content analysis of activist literature. What needs to be stressed is that I was not only *working with* a group of committed activists, I was also *living with* such individuals. On top of this, each month there was a new set of interns that would come in and I would have to go through the learning process all over again. Being relatively shy, though not shy of expressing, "new people scare me" (read: I don't completely trust you yet), this was something I had to struggle with throughout and in many ways had to force myself to interact with complete strangers every month. However, my struggles with being able to trust complete strangers also have implications for the methodology used in anthropological research: how do we know that these 'others' trust the ethnographer? A perhaps futile question, but important nonetheless for establishing a theoretical basis for presenting ethnography and for gaining a better understanding of social relationships and their development, especially in social activism. Furthermore, as an intern, I was often asked to look after people's pets when they had to go away for work or for personal reasons. Problematic as this was, it offered another level of being able to gain the trust of those activists working on the farm. While there was always a new flux of interns every month, I was usually the intern asked to dog or cat sit. A bit to my annoyance, I found these favours burdensome only because they prevented me from interacting with the interns more frequently. It was my extended presence that allowed and encouraged those working on the farm to know me, and thus trust me more than

newer interns. Thus, the creation of trust is an essential human characteristic for maintaining and building relationships and community and this becomes especially important for social activist communities.



Erica, the intern coordinator, Joyce, a May intern, and me with Cecilia and Gidget, who is about 5 days old. Erica was someone I trusted most on the farm and it was Joyce who trained me as an intern (situations regarding trust will be developed in later chapters).

Chapter IV Theoretical Perspectives

The scholarly presentation of social movements has often tended to treat both the participants and the actions of social movements as homogeneous (see Wiltfang and McAdam 1991). Social movement theories have included, to name few, Marxist perspectives, structuralist interpretations, political exclusion explanations, resource mobilisation, frame theories, social networking, and now new social movement theories. All of these theories have attempted to explain the phenomena of social movements – why they form, how they are organised, and to what extent they invoke change. Yet, it is not until recently that theorists, from a variety of disciplines have come to question the over simplification of social movement representations. For example, working among Pan-Mayan movements in Guatemala, Warren (1998) explains, “it is difficult to characterise a movement as institutionally diverse, polycentric, and dynamic as this one; and it is impossible to capture its variegated practices in an overview” (Warren 1998; 173). Indeed, this could be the case for any social movement. However, as Edelman (2005) has noted, theorists are not the only ones to make these kinds of over generalisations, activists themselves can espouse similar simplifications. While there are many academic fields implicated in the study of social movements and activism, until recently most anthropological research on social movements has been located within societies affected immensely (and usually negatively) by major capitalistic economies and countries; basically those “third” world countries affected by the economic power and control of specific industrialised superpowers. Nash explains that within anthropology and the study of social movements,

Our hidden bias for Third World perspectives is becoming more explicit as the failure of modernity projects becomes explicit...Many of these formerly

marginalised areas have become frontiers of the latest capitalist advances, where we find indigenous people engaged in a fight for their territories and their way of life (Nash 2005: 177).

The simplifications of social movements have affected both the representations of specific social movements as well as the comparative conceptualisation of social movements as more general sociological phenomena. But the complexity and rapidly changing nature of contemporary social movements can make it difficult to fully compare the dynamics, focuses, and processes of social movements and their players as they occur across various political, economic, social, and cultural borders.

Social Movement Theories: Comparing Social Movements

Social movements are influenced by the society that surrounds them. They therefore, emerge, develop, and persist as a reaction to specific social, economic, and political factors and situations. A central factor that can effect and influence the progress of a social movement is the issue of violence and how this is played out within communities participating in social activism:

Unprecedented levels of violence, poverty, discrimination, and exclusion would seem to indicate that the 'performance' and indeed the very design of Latin America's 'new' democracies are far from satisfactory. And it is precisely over possible alternative blueprints for democracy that much of the political struggle is being waged in Latin America today. Social movements...play a critical role in that struggle (Alvarez, Dagnino, and Escobar 1998).

The issue of violence therefore requires careful definition as it relates to specific social movements. For example, what is the type of violence and/or towards whom this violence is directed. While working in Central America, Edelman explains:

the small nations of Central America...Impacted like the rest of the hemisphere by economic crises and restructuring, these countries also became a locus of superpower competition and massive social struggles, suffering levels of violence and destruction that beggar the imagination (Edelman 2005: 30).

The situations described by Nash or Edelman are very different from the circumstances surrounding the development of the animal rights movement in the United States, the subject of this thesis. This is not to argue that violence, poverty, discrimination, or exclusion does not occur in the United States, but that the distinctive history surrounding these issues has differently influenced the shape, formation, and status of many social movements. Furthermore, it cannot be denied that individuals within animal rights activism are disproportionately from a very privileged socio-economic background (see Lowe and Ginsberg 2002; Starr 2000; Wesley, Wenk and Parker 2000; Herzog 1993), a background that significantly shapes their understanding of struggle and oppression.

In the battle being waged by many animal rights communities and organisations against violence, discrimination, and exclusion the direct beneficiaries are not those activists doing the actual groundwork (see Silverstein 1996). This particular aspect allows the animal rights movements to stand as distinctive juxtaposed to other social ('left-leaning') movements. To compare this movement to other social movements becomes difficult for this reason. The environmental movement is also argued to fight on behalf of non-human elements and the ideology of this movement has often been compared with that of animal rights activism. However, environmental activism stands to benefit human interest through the protection of the environment for human health, safety, and enjoyment, which, in a way, does make these participants the direct beneficiaries (for example, see Stone 1974). The distinct circumstances of activism in animal rights movement, that is to say that they are working on behalf of others rather than themselves, requires that they be very creative in their efforts of effecting change socially and culturally, as well as politically and legally (see Wise 2001 and 2000;

Silverstein 1996; Eskridge 2003; Eyerman and Jamison 1989; and Gusfield 1981). It requires a manipulation of legal language and precedent to push forward in this arena; and it requires that members of this movement be able to connect to others on a more personal and social level in a variety of ways for social change. The need to adopt a variety of different forms of strategies and connections is not in itself a circumstance that is unique to the animal rights movements, because each particular 'movement' and movement organisation's ideologies are promulgated through very diverse means; these depending the current social, economic, and political siting of a social activist movement, the movement's history and development, where a movement is physically located, and how the individuals as members of this movement dictate, define, and present a movement's ideologies.

There are a variety of focal points for analysing and understanding the dynamics of social movements and globalisation is becoming an increasingly popular focal point. Many social movements are formed as a reaction to increasing international economic and political influence on the global level. The formation of movements as a reaction to these influences however will have differing perspectives regarding their approach to specific issues because of a different history of involvement. Nash explains that

Globalisation processes related to the expansion and integration of capitalist investments, production, and markets in new areas have generated social movements of people mobilising to protect their lands, their cultural identities, and their autonomy (Nash 2005: 1).

Hence, social movements continue to take on different ideals, perspectives, and strategies stemming from these different historical and geo-political contexts. June Nash carried out much of her research in South America with disadvantaged individuals and peoples fighting to maintain their cultural autonomy and cultural rights because state and capitalist interests were undermining these rights. But, the animal rights movement

and most of the members of this movement, who present a very white face to the world, are not having their rights undermined. Their experience does not arise directly from the experience of oppression, but rather as a struggle on behalf of others they perceive as oppressed. Grueso, Rosero, and Escobar (1998) touch on the importance of acknowledging historical and current political implications for understanding the processes of social movements. Working in the Colombian Pacific coast region, the authors argue that the region is

defined by the local black and indigenous movements as region-territory of ethnic groups. Based on cultural differences and the rights to identity and territory, these social movements challenge the Euro-Colombian modernity that has become dominant in the rest of the country...Forces opposed to the movement - from local black elites to new agribusiness capitalists and narco-investors - continue to adhere to the same definitions of capital, development, and the political that have become entrenched in the last fifty years with disastrous consequences on the social, environmental, and cultural reality of the country (Grueso, Rosero, and Escobar 1998: 197).

The issues of violence, the experience of oppression, the undermining of rights, and how these factors are played out presently and historically make social movement activism and actors unique within a specific struggle. Because movements are creative and influential in instigating change within the society and culture they emerge, comparative theorising must take a cautious approach. Challenging a society's entrenched ways of understanding political practices is context specific. Social movements existing within specific political borders approach and perceive society in very different ways, and therefore the issues addressed are not necessarily comparable.

For understanding social movements as they exist in particular contexts, Melucci argues that two aspects be considered: firstly, the nature of the political system and the state, and secondly, the structure of inequalities and the mechanisms that produce and maintain poverty (Melucci 1998: 426). What can be generalised is that

collective action makes conflict visible, and it reminds us that politics is not solely representation – it is also power. It reminds us that the transformation of the social demands into new rules and new rights is an open-ended task of democracy, a never-accomplished process...The distinction between systems of representation and decision making on the one hand, and the forms of collective action irreducible to them on the other, is therefore one of the necessary conditions for contemporary complex systems to keep themselves open (Melucci 1998: 426).

How, then, does one study social movement activism? What are the key factors or important aspects – individuality, community, solidarity, tension? Moreover, and perhaps as a way to understand these important aspects, what is the lived experience of social activism for those individuals who identify with a social movement?

While ‘new’ social movement theories are influential in the scholarly analysis of social movement activism and phenomena, they are insufficient in and of themselves. ‘New Social Movement Theories’ have had the tendency to encapsulate a social movement without fully developing the relationship its participants have to the societies that surround them. Furthermore, new social movement theorising (as well as older social movement theories) too often deny individual agency by not acknowledging the influence that the actor has on the development of social movement organisations and ideology. Instead there has been a variety of research and publications regarding how the formation of a collective identity is important and influential for helping to shape and develop an individual’s sense of identity and ideology (see Stephen 2005; Nash 2005; Stryker 2000; Calderón, Piscitelli, Reyna 1992).

There is nothing new about new social movements. In popularising the idea of ‘new’ social movements, Alberto Melucci (1989 and 1998) did not intend to suggest that in the latter half of the twentieth century entirely new social movements were starting to emerge. Social movements, based on identity politics and ascetics and a sense of community and belonging have always existed; a movement towards women’s rights

had been brewing for some time and was able to be highly influential to varying degrees and at different times. The ideas presented by Melucci (1989) rather pointed to the fact that a Marxist influence on social movement interpretation and analysis was no longer sufficient: "in contemporary societies there are relations and social structures that can no longer be explained within the framework of industrial capitalist society as defined by the classical models of sociology" (Melucci 1998: 424). Rather, social movements and identity ascetics seem to have transcended a linear view and interpretation of action. Therefore, new social movement theories

incorporated cultural issues as central to the motivating logic of society. The rejection of base/superstructure dichotomy...drawing attention to the ethnic, gender, and racial composition of movements that were suppressed by those that gave priority to class position, new social movements theorists opened the stage of history to many new actors...The new leaders embodied the muted demands of diverse groups as women, ethnic, and religious groups contested repressive conditions. In the course of their struggles, they expanded the cultural potential for symbolising their objectives and embodying their concerns (Nash 2005: 10).

New social movements, though existing and evolving through the years, have emerged "out of the crisis of modernity and focus on struggles over symbolic, information, and cultural resources and rights to specificity and difference" (Edelman 2001: 289). What has changed, therefore, is the focus of analyses, involving, according to Edelman a shift from the "labour movement...as the primary social cleavage, category of analysis, organisation principle, and political issue" (Edelman 2001: 289). However presenting 'new' social movements as emerging after the labour movement disregards the fact that some social movements have historically had nothing to do with labour or class. In fact,

the claim of newness ignores the fact that social movements were never a simple matter of the mobilisation of peasants or proletarians under a common banner of class struggle...Perhaps more than anything else, the rise of a literature on new social movements reflects a new sensitivity on the part of scholars to the multiple vectors of political activity that always exist in any society (Fox and Starn 1997: 5).

As briefly explained in the literature review, the animal rights movement has a very long history of development. To fully appreciate and understand a social activist movement, its history, its present, and its future, analyses utilised must transcend a solely class-based, structural, and resource-centred focus. Shifting our focus of analysis requires that social movements not

be defined solely in terms of economic and social categories; they must also be placed in political and cultural domains. Today's social movements – even those that take place solely in the public arena – do not restrict themselves to traditional political activities, such as those linked to parties and state institutions. Rather, they challenge our most entrenched ways of understanding political practice and its relation to culture, economy, society, and nature (Escobar and Alvarez 1992: 7).

Social movement organising is complex and time-consuming. Many individuals dedicate their lives to a cause where even their job or occupation can be used to support their activism (for example, see Herzog 1993). The presentation of social movements, not necessarily in academic or scholarly circles, but also in various public media, often present the efforts of activists in such simplistic ways that activist efforts look very random, when they are in fact well researched and thought out. In an interpretation of Melucci, Martin (2002) argues that

[Melucci] is also critical of traditional approaches because they have tended to reduce social movements to political protest or regard them as part of the political system...They thus ignore the hidden cultural dimension of collective action...sporadic mobilisations are quite different from movements which comprise 'a network of groups sharing movement culture and collective identity...contemporary movements pose symbolic challenges by living out alternative lifestyles and thereby ask the rest of society to recognise and accept their difference' (Martin 2002: 81).

Animal rights activists, and this includes those individuals I worked with, ask the rest of society to recognise and accept their difference in a variety of ways: through the food they choose *not* to eat, the clothing they choose *not* to wear, and the beauty and health care products they choose *not* to buy. However, and as will be explained in later chapters, these individuals were not always accepted. Many of the individuals I worked

with were often ridiculed because of their beliefs and culinary preferences and were also alienated from immediate family members and friends. As a result of this alienation, many individuals did seek out other like-minded individuals and this is how many came to work and live at Animal Haven. It is here that many shared a sense of community that re-enforced their social activism and philosophies.

Social movements are organised around specific ideologies, morals, ethics, and belief systems, which give shape and meaning to implicated organisations, communities, cultures, and individuals. The ideologies giving shape to specific social movements exist on several levels ranging from the communal to the individual. Presentations of ideologies surrounding a movement ethic within scholarly and academic theorising are often framed within a communal identity or ethic. This can be potentially problematic if it assumed that it is possible to study an entire social movement (for example, while they may be experts in their field, I question Johnston and Klandermans' (1995) research methodology and analyses for a variety of social movements that span a European context). No one person can study a movement as a whole; but rather, one studies specific organisations or groups of activists claiming membership to a broader movement. I did not study the animal rights movement no more than another social scientist can study the queer positivism and rights movement as a whole. An undertaking of this magnitude requires more than a simple MA candidate performing three to four months of fieldwork. Bringing this limitation into perspective is important for the study of social movements.

Given the partial nature of any empirical study of a social movement, caution should be taken regarding the over generalising from one segment to the broader movement. If we can only study snippets of an actual movement, then we do an

injustice to those movement members' individuality and creativity by presenting a presumed essentialisation about a specific social movement or social movements in general. Groups of individuals are not easily defined or categorised. Over-simplification meant to represent various groups of people often leads to a stereotyped depiction that too often is not accurate. While stereotypes may hold some truth, more often they are exaggerations of the truth or "erroneous representations acquired other than through direct experience of the reality they claim to represent" (see MacDonald 1993: 221). Those who are not necessarily part of any given activist movement often stereotype social movement activists, and this usually done in an attempt to categorise and make sense of one's world. For example, animal rights activists are vegan; they bomb laboratories; and run around in February chanting slogans that they would rather be naked than wear fur – but not all animal rights activists do these things or agree with all of these tactics. Stereotypes may also exist as a way to legitimate a personal lifestyle or identity by exaggerating the other's lifestyle or identity negatively (see Rapport 1995). While they may serve a useful purpose externally for presenting a group, internally it frustrates and further marginalises many groups and individuals.

The identification of social movements and their actors is carried out both internally and externally. For example with her work among Pan-Mayanists, Warren argues that Pan-Mayanists

dispute these criticism[s], which they see as tactical mischaracterisations designed to dis-empower the movement and attack the intentions and legitimacy of its leadership. From their point of view, the Right and the Left in Guatemala have either wanted to absorb Mayas nationally or to use Mayas as shock troops, as facades for their particular political agendas. While they are willing to work with both sets of structures, Pan-Mayanists are clear about having their own distinct agenda, which in their view is simply not translatable into the agendas of other groups (Warren 1998: 176).

Similarly animal rights activists, often face similar characterisations being made by those outside of the movement that can be meant to discredit or dis-empower the movement and the individuals who claim membership. However, these characterisations, which do not accurately reflect the individuals working on these agendas or their lived experiences, are often nonetheless incorporated into the lived experience of many activists. For example, and as will be more fully detailed in later chapters, many of the activists I worked with found it frustrating that it was assumed that because they were fighting for the rights of animals they “stop giving a damn about anything else” (Irene, health care staff, June 2004). As assumptions may be made to harm the reputation of or destroy the confidence of a group, they are rarely based on an accurate understanding of why individuals align themselves with a particular objective or goal:

Furthermore, this paradigm blurring allows us to ask important questions of social movements, whatever their politics. How do activists structure the production and circulation of the social meanings crucial to their movement? How does the political vision advanced by activists organise the production, distribution, and consumption of the movement? How in practice do other participants consume this culture and produce their own meanings in the process? Movements may seek to adjust access to a variety of resources, both to attract participants and to pursue their political vision. The creation and redistribution of ‘cultural capital’...are other resources, differential access to which makes a material *and* cultural difference in peoples’ lives (Warren 1998: 178).

Ideology, as a set of beliefs, values, and opinions that shapes the way an individual or a group thinks, acts, and understands the world, can therefore influence the construction of identity on both the communal and individual levels. “The internal complexity of an actor...and the actor’s relationship with [their] environment” (Melucci 1998: 72) has huge implications for how ideologies are shaped and presented to those within and outside a movement organisation; it influences the direction of collective action, and it influences relationship networks (see Melucci 1998; Escobar 1992). Hence,

the role of the individual should not be underestimated. Other theorists giving more weight to a collective identity suggest that this

is seen as constructed, activated, and sustained only through interpretation in social movement communities and as shaped by factors such as political opportunity structures, the availability of resources, and organisation strength – in other words, matters of resources and power. In this respect, collective identity is analogous to ideology. Both are activated by individuals who ultimately are the agents of change; as a cultural mechanisms of collective action, collective identity is an emergent socially constructed property that cannot be reduced simply to subjective individual attitudes (Johnston and Klandermans 1995: 172).

It remains unclear why collective identity cannot be explained through individual attitudes. Leaving ideology and philosophy to exist in an abstract realm does not explain where, how, and through whom these are born and re-born. How our surroundings are viewed and perceived leads to interpretations that allow members of society to categorise these surroundings in an understandable way. This categorisation is done in many ways and on many levels, often through the projection of difference and/or sameness.

Part of the success of social movements is contingent on their ability and desire to project the idea of sameness to outsiders (see Stephan 2005), or *strategic essentialism* (see Spivak 1987) as a way to counteract any sort of negative portrayal an outsider may have of a movement and its members. Stephan (2005) worked with a group called the CO-MADRES in El Salvador. While the idea of motherhood in this context was perceived differently among various members according to their diverse life experiences, the idea of motherhood was generalised for strategic purposes. This identity then involved

discursive processes of essentialisation and homogenisation...Their projection of “mothers” as an organisation identity was part of a strategy for achieving recognition and protection from repression...the imagined unity of identities...in everyday life are never experienced as a stable core of self, unchanging through time (Stephan 2005: 75).

Individuals, therefore, are fully capable of being agents of change. But, why should the individual be ignored so relentlessly and “assumed to be plastic, to be modelled by the logic and imperatives of the organisation’s structure” (Cohen 1994: 92)? If individuals are indeed agents of change, then they too can influence the presentation and shape of a community or any other groupings of people. While some individuals may have more influence than others, a community or collective identity can still be shaped by “individual subjective attitudes.” Therefore, if “individuals are ultimately the agents of change” arguing that a collective identity cannot be presented or explained through the individual contradicts her imputed role as a mover and shaper of change.

Politicalisation of the Mundane

Self-consciousness is the basis for the presentation of a social identity. Cohen argues that it is those social roles and the creation of identities that authenticate an understanding of the self for an individual (Cohen 1994: 68; see also Sökenfeld 1999). He asks why anthropologists have neglected the repository of accumulated experience for so long because “the ethnographer’s self consciousness is a (philosophically fraught) medium for testing the plausibility of the kinds of claim we have been inclined to make about other people’s self consciousness or their lack of it” (Cohen 1994: 70).

It remains difficult to truly understand or create a methodology for observing and analysing the self – how can one have a full understanding of another’s perspective on their self (see Rapport 2000; Cohen 1994)? Analysing the way individuals conceptualise and perceive the development of their identities is a way to acknowledge the existence of self-consciousness. An understanding of the self has been looked at and analysed in a myriad of ways (see Rapport 2000; Sökefeld 1999; Rapport and Cohen 1995; Cohen 1994). Identity then, and how it is presented, is an interpretation of the self,

which is done by the individual and is influenced through their social interactions. Identities are both public and private and to an extent the individual may have a part in deciding which part of their identity will be made public (what is presented to the world and what others are able to see). However, when as an activist, one lives a very political life, aspects of one's identity, which at one point may have been private, may take on a public dimension. As a consequence, one can lose control over the private dimensions of their identity, as these can become part of the public sphere. Being a social activist can result in what was once considered a very mundane aspect of one's life becoming politicised and made public. Even just going to the grocery store, a mundane act can become very political and also very stressful. And, it is not only a simple matter of what products to buy, but also in which store to buy them – a small, independently operated health food store or a large chain supermarket? Furthermore, it was not a simple task of buying 'vegan' options – one has to consider the company; how and with what labour, economic, and social standards certain foods and other products are produced, manufactured, and distributed. This sort of action is on display for others because others very clearly see what one is consuming and it is from here that judgements, correct or not, can be made about an individual.

We can name ourselves as one thing or another to fit a specified public situation or circumstance. In so doing, aspects of our 'selves' are on display for other's interpretations. Yet, this kind of social representation can lead to misperceptions and tensions.

Who has the right to determine who a person is: the person in question, or those with whom the person interacts? In treating the self as socially constituted, social science has denied 'authorship' to the individual, seeing identity either as imposed by an other, or as formulated by the individual in relation to an other (Cohen 1994: 73).

It can be argued that no one has the right to determine another's personality, motives, emotions, or sense of self. Why is it that we do it anyway? It is not a matter of passing judgement, but of organising one's own world and coming to terms with issues that one cannot control. That an animal rights activist may view the owner of a factory farm as a cruel capitalist, in turn allows this activist to continue to fight for what they perceive as justice. That the owner of an agribusiness farm would view the animal rights activist as a privileged, educated city-dweller allows this person to discard their opinions as valid in any way.

The politicisation of the mundane and personal can come in the form of a critique from the outside, but this also happens internally, and in both cases this can be incredibly overwhelming and tense, and those persons one may have had a sense of solidarity with can be intensely scrutinised. For example, regarding the changing requirements of being Catholic in São Jorge, an individual claiming sanctuary told Burdick (1992) "it used to be if you missed Mass, the Church didn't concern itself with that. But not now: A person misses even a little others start saying you're no longer a Catholic" (Burdick 1992: 174; see also Stephen 2005). Amongst the activists with whom I conducted my fieldwork, an individual who reverts to being *just* a vegetarian, could risk no longer be considered a 'true' animal rights activist. Among these activists the language used for describing their diet and lifestyle was very important – most had shifted towards a vegan lifestyle and could not fathom *going back* to being *just* a vegetarian. Demands to maintain this strict lifestyle were more often coming from those within the group; individuals would often criticise someone for referring to themselves as an animal rights activist if they continued to consume animal products like dairy or eggs. Furthermore, whom one associated with was also intensely scrutinised. Many

talked about being alienated from their immediate friends and family when they changed their diet and took on a political life in animal rights activism. In turn, many of these individuals, also explained to me their standards for maintaining friendships and intimate relations. While not all individuals maintain a strict code of ethics for their friends, many did have problems with maintaining an intimate relationship if the other person was not *at least* a vegetarian. I asked Kaia, a June and July intern what her standards for this were. She explained to me, very matter-of-factly that “I couldn’t be friend with anyone who is a sexist, a racist, a homophobe – unless it was a sub-conscious thing that I could help them work through. If it was a very blatant thing like, I eat meat, I rape girls, then no” (Kaia, June 2004). While not all individuals have this sort of extreme outlook, reflecting on my time at Animal Haven and being surrounded by a community of animal rights activists, it was rather intimidating for someone if they did not at least have some sort of standard for ‘weeding out’ unacceptable behaviours in people. Charlotte was also a June and July intern whose boyfriend was not a vegetarian or vegan, and he was beginning a career in politics. She explained that she tries to keep a low profile in terms of what sort of activism she will be involved in because she does not want to “screw things up for him.” Furthermore, she confided in me that she did not talk about her personal life too much because others on the farm viewed this as unacceptable and considered it a ‘sell out.’ However, it is understandable how intimidating it must be for someone to want to be involved in a community effort, yet whatever work they do towards this ethic and ideal can be overlooked because of a very personal and private relationship.

The personal as political is by no means a new concept (see Said 1999; Bordieau 2001). Within social activism comes the idea that one’s daily life and actions can

influence and create movement and change: “To live differently, to assert one’s difference, is to practice cultural innovation and to engage in some sort of political practice” (Escobar 1992: 70). When veganism becomes a political statement encompassing a diet and lifestyle, announcing one’s veganism is an act of protest and a political statement against what one views as an abusive and unjust system. Food and eating then becomes a political statement where veganism as a

counter-cuisine represented a serious and largely unprecedented attempt to reverse the direction of dietary modernisation and thereby align personal consumption with perceived global needs...food [is a] visceral, lived daily link between the personal and the political...eating is more than a private, physiological act (Belasco 2005: 217; see also Levi-Strauss 1979).

According to Levi-Strauss, food is good to think with (Levi-Strauss 1979). Food can give us an idea of the different epistemologies and ontologies that individuals and communities carry with them and live daily: “The obtaining and sharing of food can be an eloquent statement of shared ideology and as such expresses group affiliation and apparent solidarity” (Fiddes 1991: 38). Eating and epistemology are therefore implicit and can be an indicator of perspective of how one interprets right and wrong; eating and food are features of society, which become incorporated into societal values rather than being strictly limited to the principles of nutrition (Fiddes 1991: 14). However, while I, as a researcher, may not view things dichotomously, this does not mean that my informants do not maintain a binary view of the world. Indeed, for some I worked with, one is either vegan or not; one is either compassionate or not; one cannot live a compassionate lifestyle in one way, but not in another; it is either an all-or-nothing effort. This is important for understanding some of the dynamics played out in social movements by social movement actors. As mentioned previously stereotypes emerge for many reasons, one of those being as a way to categorise one’s surrounding world. While this is done externally and those implications have already been mentioned, it is

also done internally towards the outside world, often in an effort to protect one's ideals. For many I worked with and spoke to on the farm, it was easier to view the animal production farmers in the area as only interested in the capitalist profits of their work. To humanise these individuals can make it harder to view them as the enemy, even if many activists do not necessarily place the onus of blame solely on farmers.

While Belasco (2005) in his analysis of food and diet is specifically referring to an environmentalist ethic and movement regarding food and diet, generally this can also be compared to the animal rights movement as both are concerned with food production and the outcomes of these processes. Agribusiness is currently giving us sick and diseased animals while also producing a great amount of environmental degradation, poor labour standards, and a decrease in rural sustainability (see Stromquist and Bergman 1997; Stull, Broadway, and Griffith 1995; Mason and Singer 1990; and Fink 1988). While there are similar moralistic stances being presented in the environmental and animal rights movements, both movements maintain fundamentally different ideology regarding the politics of food production. While it is a fact that slaughterhouse workers lack appropriate labour standards, this, arguably, can be remedied (see Stromquist and Bergman 1997; Stull, Broadway, and Griffith 1995; and Fink 1988). An animal rights ethic cannot be reconciled with a simple reform in labour standards in food animal production because of the belief that animals should not be used as a means to an end. Action taken towards this ethic is reflected in the private lives of activists, which are made public because of a need to justify their own lives and to spread these beliefs. If eating cannot be just a private act and it becomes a matter for public policies, this then forces activists to admit their ethical leanings and to justify these to those outside their frame of reference (i.e. non-animal rights activists).

Community and Community Boundaries

The community at Animal Haven existed on many levels. Those working there who were paid employees considered themselves a community. Interns coming to work there temporarily also considered themselves part of this community, but it was from a very different perspective. Many interns identified Animal Haven as belonging to the more general community of animal rights activism. Community remains a contentious term (see Amit 2002) most likely due to its overuse and simplification. However this community existed on several levels for the activists I worked with. Individuals here were part of a very real, concrete community existing on the grounds of Animal Haven. However, many individuals were coming from other locales throughout the US to be a part of this community, even if only temporarily. Finally, there was a sense of a broader, imagined community that existed as part of the larger animal rights movement. Membership here was premised on a shared ideology, centred on a vegan ethic, often referred to as the 'vegan revolution'. Many individuals truly believed that this ideology would eventually instigate massive structural change in the political, economic, and social structures of the United States and quite possibly the world as they attempted to theorise regarding supply and demand of a capitalist economy.

Although it is difficult to avoid invoking a more general idea of the animal rights movement instead of a very specific community of animal rights activists; this reference is nonetheless a conceptual convenience (see Amit 2002). An imagined community (Anderson 1991) exists through individuals who claim membership and identify with stated ethics and beliefs: "all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and even these) are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined" (Anderson 1991: 6).

It therefore emerges as a sense of shared fellowship among individuals who may never meet or know one another. While the community may never be directly experienced it remains very real because there are significant social consequences of claiming membership. Furthermore, the actions undertaken by many members are highly influenced by a broader movement and community ethic. Anderson (1991) is not incorrect when he argues that

dying for one's country, which usually one does not choose, assumes a moral grandeur which dying for the Labour Party, the American Medical Association, or perhaps even Amnesty International cannot rival, for these are all bodies one can join or leave at easy will (Anderson 1991: 144).

However, what happens when one's country loses its validity and individuals gather in groups to address what they view as inexcusable wrongs? Members of the animal rights movement were not exactly dying for the cause,¹⁰ but they did and do challenge popular views on legality and justice. For many fractions of the animal rights movement, justice is not a matter of what is detailed and explained in the legal code, but rather is based on an ideological ethic that may be in complete contradiction with this code. But, as it has been argued by animal rights activists (as well as other social activists), the legal code can be influenced and changed through public popular opinion (for example, see Wise 2000; Silverstein 1996; and Gusfield 1981).

The animal rights 'community' fits into an idea of an imagined community for those individuals who were a part of Animal Haven during my time there. This particular face-to-face community was very real in the sense that individuals who composed this community interacted and knew each other personally. Communities and the creation of communities exist then beyond an abstract existence. In his

¹⁰ Though it should not be forgotten that other social activism does lead to the death of its actors by those who do not agree with their ideology. Choice here often not available to the individual if the choice is to either live amidst severe oppression and violence or fight to end it.

involvement with children's athletics, Dyck (2000) found himself within a community created on certain shared similarities. Similarly, my involvement in social activism allowed me to analyse aspects of community construction through negotiated relationships and network building. Here, "imagined forms of community" (Dyck 2000: 40) are created in contexts of social activist organisations: "Within these situationally specific contexts, imagined selves, identities and communities may be created, shared and enjoyed" (Dyck 2000: 40).

But, however, membership and belonging in a community, in this case the animal rights community, was not always clear. While individuals can claim membership to the broader animal rights movement, membership in one organisation does not imply membership in another, at least immediately. While individuals may share a sense of belonging in an imagined community, this does not mean that each individual is immediately accepted when it comes down to actually interacting and working with other organisations and individuals.

Within the realm of social activism, and the animal rights movement, paranoia can run high. This should not be surprising if social movement activism is seen to be critical of the status quo, which can result in various levels of security measures. It may require that new comers be approached with caution to establish whether or not this individual is an infiltrator (for example, see Ryan 2004). Another factor that may hinder free mobility between organisations is that the organisations that fit under the general umbrella of the animal rights movement may be at odds with each other regarding tactics and specific ideological tenets, as well there can exist interpersonal tension between members of different organisations. For example, Animal Haven, while it does work with other animal rights and welfare organisations, continues to experience some

degrees of tension with other animal rights organisations because it often presents itself as an animal *protection* organisation. However, other animal *rights* or *liberation* organisations often view this as *falling back* to a *welfarist* perspective. While some may view their presentation as a tactical move in order to manipulate and negotiate varying levels of social and political institutions by not appearing as extreme (i.e. using protection rather than rights), others see it as a 'sell out' (for example, see Chasin 2000).

Boundaries are almost necessarily associated with the idea of community. These boundaries may be physically real, corresponding with physical geographical markers. Other boundaries are more imagined and abstract, though real nonetheless. In the realm of social activism, communities exist on both levels physical (real) and ideological (abstract), regardless of their size and marginality. Because fieldwork for this thesis was carried out among an animal rights organisation associated with the animal rights movement, I will focus on this movement, not as representing the general animal rights movement, but as an example of the existence of multiplexity within it (see Cohen 1985).

Social activist organisations often rely on multiple groups and organisations that work on the basis of similar ideals. However these groups and individuals might never have direct contact with each other. Social activism often exists as a vehicle for effecting change socially. As detailed in the historical review of the development of this movement and other similar movements (animal welfare, animal liberation, animal protection), many organisations exist under a more general ideology and collective identity of 'the animal rights movement'. The questionable accuracy of collective identity for individuals is not as important as the fact that many will ascribe to this identity for the sake of maintaining a strong communal presence within mainstream society (mainly in the attempt to move from the margins).

The symbolic expression and affirmation of boundary heightens people's awareness of and sensitivity to their community. This phenomenon is well-known to political activists who often justify their apparently fruitless or hopeless demonstrations by pointing to the effect they have of 'raising consciousness' among participants...People participate in rituals for all sorts of reasons. But, whatever their motivations or ostensible purposes, it would seem that much ritual also has this capacity to heighten consciousness. It should not be surprising, therefore, to find ritual occupying a prominent place in the repertoire of symbolic devices through which community boundaries are affirmed and reinforced...ritual confirms and strengthens social identity and people's sense of social location: it is an important means through which people experience community (Cohen 1985: 50).

Cohen (1985) talks about community as a relational concept constructed around both similarity and difference; that not only do members of a given community reflect on what they have in common, there is also the acknowledgement of difference in relationship to those perceived to be outside of the community. Boundaries of a given community help define identities as they exist within the community and are interpreted outside of the community where "the identity of the community, like the identity of an individual is called into being by the exigencies of social interaction" (Cohen 1985: 12). It is thus at the interaction of difference and similarity that the individual becomes aware of their group/community relationship and the symbolism attached to it. Symbolism can define a group, but it can also lead to a misinterpretation of a community:

Thus we can attribute gross stereotypical features to whole groups: but, for the members of those groups such stereotypes applied to themselves as individuals would almost invariably be regarded as gross distortions, superficial, unfair, ridiculous...But they have no validity as accounts of how people see themselves...The boundary thus symbolises the community to its members in two quite different ways: it is the sense they have of its perception by people on the other side - the public face and 'typical' mode - and it is *their* sense of the community as refracted through all the complexities of their lives and experience - the private face and idiosyncratic mode. (Cohen 1985: 74)

Individuals experience community on two separate levels - being part of a community (see Knowles 1996) and through the experience of difference. Individuals also experience community at the level of private and public representations of the self.

The public presentation of the self and the community will often change according to the social situation: "The public presentation of ethnic identity is also situational, which reveals the plural or hybrid character of modern ethnicity" (Sanders 2002: 328). In terms of many social activist organisations and movements this becomes important as community membership is not necessarily a function of categorical distinctions of race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religion etc, but rather they claim membership and create community based on philosophical beliefs and actions, which are centred around specific ideologies that may not be reflected or may be in contraction with the dominant culture. Furthermore, in these contexts, communities seem to have transcended an idea of kin-based social relations to reflect "symbolically demarcated categories of identity" (Amit and Rapport 2002: 45).

Identities: Individual and Collective

The role and the voice of an individual are elemental for social movement activism, though some voices are stronger and carry more weight than others. That some voices may be stronger aids in creating a sense of solidarity for a movement because it organises ideology and efforts. However, this can also lead to a great deal of tension among participating individuals should this be viewed as an unequal or unfair distribution of power and attention.

Amit (2000) explains how certain fields typically delegated to the field of sociology have become the focus of anthropological interpretation. Social movement activism is one of those areas. Issues of identity and notions of the self now too may exist on a more transient level and are not necessarily limited to established generational or cultural identities of belonging, but would now include the purposive creation of a shared identity based on similar philosophies of like-minded individuals. Identity then

may not be limited to a kin-based or culturally historical relation, but on similar life experiences and feelings of alienation from other communities that in effect help to create new communities or a “chosen family” (Cecil, Campaign Department, June 2004).

Where Barth’s (1969) explanation of the transient and changing nature of ethnicity, dependent on social circumstance of time and place and of other interacting communities, can also be extended beyond the idea of ethnicity to include an achieved, as opposed to an ascribed, community. The focus is then turned towards individuals finding or creating their own communities of interest. For example, within the context of the US, it becomes more difficult to find such examples of ‘isolated’ or ‘pure’ ethnic groups existing within clearly demarcated boundaries (see Benedict 1934). Yet, a sense of belonging for many is created through interaction with like-minded individuals, often done by purposefully seeking out such individuals and established communities. This could be as a reaction to feelings of both alienation (from a status quo) and acceptance (among like-minded individuals). This is not a simple task and Cohen explains that

groups have to struggle against their own contradictions, which lie precisely in the fact that they are composed of individuals, self conscious individuals, whose differences from each other have to be resolved and reconciled to a degree which allows the group to be viable and to cohere (Cohen 1994: 11).

Often, however, individuals are forced into a contradiction of accepting some stereotypes, but maintain the view that this belittles the complexity of their belief systems (see Cohen 1994), which influence the perspective of right versus wrong. Therefore, it becomes difficult when opposing sides engage in a dialogue about who is in the right and who is not. According to Tester (2001) animal rights activists are able to absolve themselves of certain forms of violence through their actions and lifestyle; many do not perceive themselves to be the perpetrators of violence. Oppositely, but similarly, those defending their right to hunt [or to generally use animals] were “unable to admit

that they were behaving violently” (Tester 2001: 188). As explained earlier, many animal rights activists could not accept that one could claim to live a life free of violence, but continue to consume animal products (it is all-or-nothing). In the battle for animal rights, the issue becomes not whether such sides are even able to compromise, since both sides are stating fundamentally different ideals and are “[not] talking *to* one another; they are talking *past* one another” (Tester 2001: 53).

Issues of morality and ethics, specifically who was acting morally and ethically and who was not were central to relationships among those working at Animal Haven and living in the area. There was a similar set of views among the various animal rights activists I conversed with on the farm. Most claimed that they were not perfect, that the consumption of animal by-products was inevitable, but that they at least attempted to live a fully compassionate life free of this perceived violence of harming non-human animals. Juxtaposing this view of violence with some of the townspeople, farmers, and farm hands (who were not animal rights activists) there simply did not exist the same interpretation of violence being enacted towards non-human animals. As Andrew, a farm hand, explained one day while working with some of the interns, “you know, we don’t share the same exact views, but we would never hurt these animals” (Andrew, July 2004). Similarly, James, another farm hand noted,

I don’t share all their views – well, some, but not all. I’ve lost a lot of friends because they can’t believe that I work here and they’ll say things to me like, ‘they’re against farming.’ Well, no, they’re against factory farming, not small family farms trying to survive. There’s a difference (James, May 2004).

The presentation of individual versus collective identity can be mirrored in the presentation of front versus back region claims (see Kubal 1998). That is to say, front region claims are those presented by an organisation or individual regarding their aims and goals; back region claims are those that more accurately reflect an individual or

organisation's beliefs and their ideas of justice and morality. For example, Animal Haven may present its goals in a specific campaign as the end of the domination of the factory farming business while not jeopardising the endurance of the small family farmer. This is the front region claim of the organisation as presented by various individuals. The back region claim is that many individuals involved with Animal Haven simply do not believe that the consumption of animal products on any level is acceptable in the state of the US economy, as well as on a moral level.

As mentioned previously, sifting through a variety of social movement literature, it is very easy to come across theories of collective identity (see Diani 2003; Tarrow 1998; Touraine 1988). However, while not dismissing the importance of this theoretical emphasis of a collective identity, it does not necessarily address the issues of individual identity construction in and of itself and also how this relates to the creation of a collective identity. Referring to the concept of 'collective identity', McDonald argues that this is a "conceptual liability" (McDonald 2002: 124) as this creates "an obstacle to exploring the relationship between individual and collective experience in contemporary social movements" (McDonald 2002: 124). This brings up the important point of experience in the formation of individual identity, as this will be specific to any given individual.

Within social movement activism, individual identity is implicated in the concept of collective identity, as it is individuals who cumulatively dictate and decide the latter. While the ideas of individual and collective identities may feed off of one another, an individual may seek to change the presentation of the collective identity and if she is not able to do so because of a lack of support, et cetera, she can always "vote with her feet" and choose not to maintain her voluntary membership. Admittedly, simply leaving

because does not approve can be a romantic notion where among marginalised philosophies and ideologies many proponents can compromise much of their own personal beliefs to maintain this sense of community. Furthermore, hierarchies do exist within social activist organisations and movements. The beliefs of various individuals can carry more weight and power than those of others (see Block 2003), which can lead to feelings of solidarity, but also tension if others feel powerlessness within the social activist movement or organisation.

While tension may occur as an inevitable result of individuals living and working together, this does not imply that tension is always negative. Tension and conflict become natural aspects of sociality. What is still important regarding community is that it is often created by groups of like-minded individuals seeking solidarity. Cohen takes the idea of community to involve,

that entity to which one belongs, greater than kinship but more immediately than the abstraction we call 'society'. It is the arena in which people acquire their most fundamental and most substantial experience of social life outside the confines of the home (Cohen 1985: 15).

Coming Together and Staying Together as a Community

Circumstantial associations may be present within a large part of social interactions and can be transferred to those communities that are formed quite intentionally – perhaps at first by only a couple of individuals, but also by others. Animal Haven began because a young couple wanted to work towards improving the lives of farmed animals. For them, it was important that work was done politically and socially in terms of educating and changing societal norms and perceptions, while also helping to establish formalised rules and regulations. Gradually, as this organisation grew, the founders of Animal Haven acquired a derelict farm to build what is now one of the largest animal rights organisations in the United States. It was not built because

like-minded individuals stumbled across one another, but rather because of an active effort and need to make this organisation grow and establish a community set on altering the mainstream.

It is difficult to argue that this community was built and exists solely on the idea of an 'us' identity; on a shared identity. While an 'us vs. them' dichotomy influences social and community boundaries, it also aids in establishing a community and individual identity (for example, see MacDonald 1993). Trisha and Bill started this organisation because of a reaction to what was accepted as 'standard industry practice.' They could not accept what was assumed to be 'right' and sought to change, through education and transformations of the legal system, the existing status quo that accepted the use of non-human animals as a means to human ends. MacDonald explains the development of identity and the *us vs. them* dichotomy:

Firstly, any question of identity is clearly dependent on the social and political maps of the time, on the categories available for the marking of self/other or us/them boundaries, and on the particular salience of any one set of these categories. Secondly, difference does not exist simply and solely between supposedly homogenous whole called 'cultures' coincident with these categories...the important point here is that it is also at the boundaries available to us, whatever and wherever they may be, that we are *more likely to notice difference* (MacDonald 1993: 228).

Thus, much of what came to define identities for many of the individuals I worked with was based on a personal history fraught with feelings of alienation, humiliation, and abandonment by those formally considered 'us' (family members and friends) who then turned into the 'them' (those who do not share an animal rights ethic) – the *differences* were becoming more apparent. It was through seeking out various animal rights communities that many of these individuals were able to come to terms with their own ideologies and develop them among other like-minded individuals. However, much of this development of philosophical beliefs is done with the knowledge

that such beliefs continue to be marginal vis-à-vis powerful mainstream beliefs, morals, and norms. However, negotiating our ideals and finding a community of people with which to share them with aids in developing identity:

We are expected to develop our own opinions, outlook, stances to things, to a considerable degree through solitary reflection. But, this is not how things work with important issues, such as the definition of our identity. We define this always in dialogue with, sometimes in struggle against, the identities our significant others want to recognise in us...True, we can never liberate ourselves completely from those whose love and care shaped us early in life, but we should strive to define ourselves on our own to the fullest degree possible, coming as best we can to understand and thus gain some control over the influences of our parents, and avoiding falling into any further such dependencies. We will need relationships to fulfil but not to define ourselves (Taylor 1991: 33-34).

While social relationships may not define our identities, they are fulfilling nonetheless. For many I worked with, having meaningful relations is key to this fulfilment. These meaningful relations allowed many to maintain their different identities and philosophies because of a mutual respect and an understanding that perhaps their parents or other immediate social networks could not understand.

Why do these individuals stay together as a community, even if it is for different periods of time, even when tension seems to be running so high that it is hard to find any sense of camaraderie? Is it because something is better than nothing? In the case of my fieldwork, individuals often were alienated from their primary source of friends and family when they decided to adopt a diet and lifestyle that directly challenged that of their closest kin and friendship networks. I am not trying to imply that distance and alienation occurred and was instigated by family members or friends, often times it was the individual who had decided to change that would alienate and distance themselves in the search for more like-minded individuals. While there may be immense sources of tension among movement members, there are also great sources of solidarity. People stay, even if it is for different periods of time, because their other options for community

may not seem any better. Referring to the idea of an authentic individual¹¹ Taylor argues that

the enemy of authenticity can be social conformity, forces on us the idea that authenticity will have to struggle against *some* externally imposed rules. We can, of course, believe that it will be in harmony with the *right* rules, but it is at least clear that there is a notional difference between these two kinds of demand, that of truth to self and those of inter-subjective justice (Taylor 1991: 63).

In the case of my fieldwork, social conformity was the status quo. Members of this organisation and the activists I worked with were unable to accept those 'right' rules, whether they were formal laws or informal codes of ethics. To be in the position of arguing and fighting against the status quo can be extremely alienating and therefore finding a community of like-minded individuals can be very comforting. One realises that perhaps they are not alone in the fight.

Communities exist because of individual involvement. Individual personalities and identities create both solidarity and tension. The range of emotion produced through human relationships can be both overwhelming and empowering:

But fragmentation grows to the extent that people no longer identify with their political community, that their sense of corporate belonging is transferred elsewhere or atrophies altogether. And it is fed, too, by the experience of political powerlessness...A fading political identity makes it harder to mobilise effectively, and a sense of helplessness breeds alienation. There is a potential vicious circle here, but we can see how it could also be a virtuous circle. Successful common action can bring a sense of empowerment and also strengthen identification with the political community (Taylor 1991: 118).

The individuals involved with Animal Haven during my four-month stay, had created strong networks of solidarity, but also the tension produced by diverse individual personalities, beliefs, and philosophies. Potential vicious circles were made virtuous because of the view that the political community, the issues central to an

¹¹ Taylor's argument for the ethics of authenticity and of the individual refers to the ability for one to choose their ideals, morals, ethics, beliefs, etc. This perspective is not without problems as it has been interpreted as upholding the tenets of individualism and an extreme, self-defeating form of cultural relativism. Taylor on the other hand is not arguing this, but rather is arguing that society itself and the maintenance of a status quo is equally oppressive and it is through this that he is attempting to understand ideas of individuality.

animal rights ethic, were important enough for the community to work through. Any tension or conflict that inevitably was part of their developing social relationships and community networks was not as important as the goals defined through the ethics of animal rights. In the end, some members dropped off, leaving for various reasons, and new members came. Throughout the entire process, individuals had started, were defining, and were re-defining their own identities and how this would shape their own ideologies, ethics, and morals and also how this would then shape that of the organisation and the community of animal rights activism.

Chapter V

Getting There and Working There

Setting the Scene: Arriving at Animal Haven

If you were to drive along the various inner-state highway systems of the North-Eastern¹² United States, at some point you might stumble across a small farming town called Sheapards Valley. If you avoided taking the major highways and instead took local roads, you would pass a plethora of farms – small, family owned and large agribusiness operations. Between the small townships you pass in your car along the road are many small family operated farms. Many of these farms however are not the typical storybook farms of white picket fences and brightly coloured red barns; many of these farms seem to be barely surviving. Barns and land have not been kept, animal numbers are dwindling and much of the equipment has been left unattended to rust on the side of the road. Between these small family operated businesses, you could then run into – right there on the very edge of the road – a Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) or a factory farm if you were to use the jargon of animal rights activism. Such buildings are very confusing to observe – unless you are aware of what exactly goes on inside, you would have no clue as to what you are looking at. These very large, single story warehouse type buildings are intended to hold up to several thousand animals at one time. In this area these structures typically hold pigs or cattle, and sometimes goats or sheep; there are no bird facilities in this area. Sometimes the name of the operation is outside, often times not. This is mainly due to the politics surrounding this type of food production operation. In the growing efforts of animal

¹² I have purposely omitted the exact state where this organisation is located and I have also changed the name of the town, county, organisation, and all the individuals in connection to my fieldwork in order to maintain promised confidentiality. The combination of this animal rights organisation acting as a sanctuary speaks to its rarity. Thus, to even identify the state where it is located would be, in a way, identifying the organisation, potentially identifying all those who work there.

rights activists and activism, these operations have become more and more private, hiding what goes on behind their walls. Additionally, the US government supports this privacy (or secrecy), passing laws and legislation making photographing an act of terrorism.

As you get closer to Sheapards Valley, the combination of these farms increase as this is a high rural farming area. Various smaller villages surround Sheapards Valley itself whose main economic output is farming (Cargill, Inc being the second largest employer in the county). Sheapards Valley itself boasts a population of about 2,200 persons; the surrounding villages are anywhere from 300 to 2,000 persons with the entire county population at just under 20,000. Larger cities surround the area, but the closest is a 45-minute drive in any direction. The area is located alongside Tuscarora Lake, in a region known for its glacial lakes and river basins. This area is also known for its wine trails as well as its State Parks. In Sheapards Valley specifically there is also a racetrack that is open during the summer months. All of these aspects bring in a large tourist population from the months of June to around October. I lived in this area from May to August 2004.

There are two ways to get to Animal Haven. Both require that you get off the highways and take local, country roads. Animal Haven is not exactly in Sheapards Valley, but if you are coming from the North or from the East, you will have to go through this town. Driving through these local roads is quite a beautiful, picturesque country drive - it is quite a steep climb of about 15 miles from Sheapards Valley to the actual farm and on the drive as you go up your view in front is densely forested State Park and from behind you have a view of the town as it sits on Tuscarora Lake. As you get closer to the farm there is one specific road that you have to take that curves around

for about 3 miles – the farm is located in the last mile. There are two farms that share the road where Animal Haven is located; both produce a variety of vegetables. Mostly there are a few single-family houses, most of which are set back away from the road and on densely forested land. As you go up and over various hills you get a peek of the 175-acre plot on the edge of the State Park where this farm is situated. Here the story book farm emerges – picturesque, brightly coloured red barns, farm hands hopping about, chickens running around, cows out to pasture, pigs mud bathing, and at the centre, a typical large, white farm house. Right before you happen upon the farm, on the right hand side of your drive, you pass a single story house; this is where the founders of the farm, Bill and Trisha, live (or did while I was there).

Driving up the final hill and turning the corner, you have entered into a storybook setting of red barns and white picket fences. The farm itself is located on a road about a mile long; the farm itself owning about two-thirds of the property off of it. The first building you come upon is a very large red building. This is the administration building where the departments dealing with campaigns, outreach, development, legal services, the bed and breakfast reservations, and general administrative duties are located. It is here that the original founders of the farm now spend most of their time.

Originally, Bill and Trisha did it all – they worked on the farm cleaning and taking care of the animals and then did all of the campaigning and outreach. They started this farm in 1986 and originally acquired this piece of land in 1991 when it was considered a derelict farm. As young animal rights activists, they were doing research on conditions within the factory farming industry. As such they were documenting the conditions of an area stockyard where animals are brought from various farms to be bid on by prospective buyers (coming from meat packing companies – or

slaughterhouses)¹³. They were there on a weekend when no one else would be there working.

Bill and Trisha were photographing 'dead piles' – piles of animals that could not walk or stand for no apparent reason (referred to as 'downers' by the industry). Such animals are left in this 'dead pile', though not all are dead. Many animals are alive when placed into these piles and are left throughout the weekend – hopefully they will be dead by the following Monday. Leaving them to die has economic purposes for the stockyard. Euthanising these animals requires bringing in a veterinarian and paying for this service. Since the stockyard wants to maximise profits, these downed animals are left in these piles until they die and can be processed (stockyards can usually sell them to rendering factories for a small fee where they will be processed into petfood). When Bill snapped a photo of a dead pile of some cows and sheep, one of the sheep lifted her head. Realising she was not yet dead, Bill and Trisha brought her (though according to the law, they technically stole her) to a nearby veterinarian who gave her fluids and a vitamin shot. According to Bill and Trisha, she was up walking within minutes; she was merely dehydrated.

Appalled that animals could be left in such conditions rather than being put down, Bill and Trisha attempted to prosecute the stockyard without much success. The residents in this area were fully supportive of the stockyard as it was considered a pillar of the community and a significant local employer. Bill told me on one occasion that the local newspapers would present the issue as "crazy animal rights activists living in a bus and selling tofu dogs from a van are trying to rip the community apart." At that time,

¹³ The language used by animal rights activists versus industry should not be overlooked. There is much debate that occurs regarding this jargon. It is not by accident that the presentation of the food production industry takes on opposite polemics, thus deconstructing this language becomes necessary for understanding the perspective of both camps.

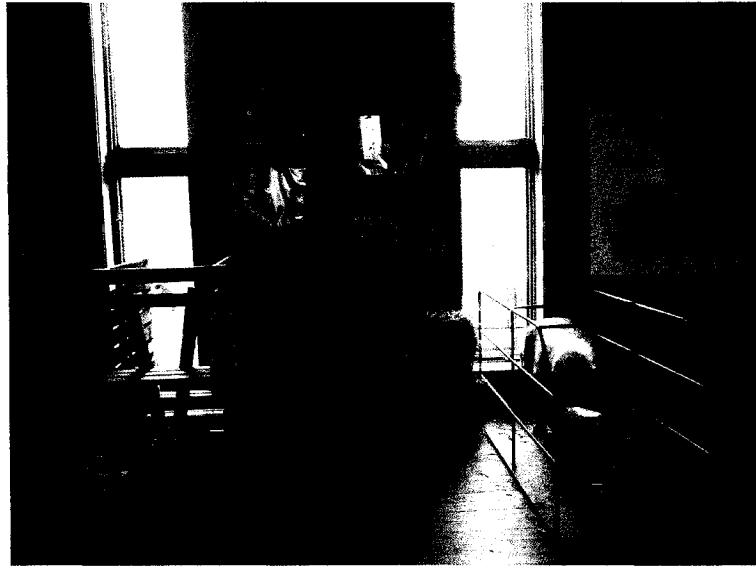
Bill and Trisha had no support within the community and legal actions they attempted did not get very far. Hilda, as the sheep was later named, became the inspiration to start Animal Haven.

By 1986, Animal Haven was formed with Bill and Trisha as the only two members. At this point, Bill and Trisha were living in a row house on the East Coast with a collection of a few animals they had rescued from various factory-farming situations. With time and a considerable amount of work on their part, Animal Haven created a strong base of members and by 1991, they were able to purchase the derelict farm, which is now the headquarters for this organisation. Since the purchase of this farm in 1991, they have re-built all of the barns and the farm has grown to have an annual 2 million dollar budget (90% of this budget comes from memberships and private donations) and in 1996 they started another farm on the west coast and are currently in the process of building yet another farm in California nearer a metropolitan area. So now most of their time is spent working on administrative and legal aspects of the organisation required for the growth of the organisation and for the movement.

A bit further up the road from this administration building you then come across another very large red barn called the "People Barn" – this is the main education centre and in back there are four small cottage-like houses – three of these belong to the bed and breakfast service open during the summer months. The fourth cottage is occupied by the live-in health care staff who tends to be on call at all times. While I was there this person was Alexis, however she ended up moving out – for a variety of reasons, however the main reason being that while she was already incredibly overworked, living on premises rarely gave her any free time away from this. In the middle of June, Carlin, new to the organisation and hired for health-care moved into this apartment and

like Alexis before her, was excited about being able to live on the farm with animals that one typically does not interact with daily. Later as I spoke with her, the novelty was fading quickly (which will be discussed further in a subsequent chapter regarding relationships and social movement activism). At one point as well, Bill and Trisha lived in this cottage before moving off site to a small house around the bend.

The education centre in the summer months mainly deals with the Bed and Breakfast and farm tours that are characteristic of the tourist season in Sheapards Valley. The tourists that come through here in the summer months are a mix of those travelling from distant areas with the intention of coming to this farm. These are typically other activists wanting to interact with the animals they see themselves fighting for. Others are tourists vacationing in or near Sheapards Valley who might have stumbled across an advertisement in the town or one of the wineries and had nothing to do for the day. Others could be 'locals' interested in what this farm actually is. In the education centre, there consisted a variety of literature related to animal rights issues and food production issues. There is the gift store that sells various animal rights paraphernalia consisting of clothing, books, cookbooks, beauty care products, videos, and various food products that push a vegan lifestyle. In the back left corner is Kids Corner with various vegetarian and animal rights literature tailored to children. The barn itself was decorated with various factory farming information and animal rights literature; on the right hand wall there are replicas of a veal and gestation crate that usually horrified activists and other visitors alike. On the main wall is a display of a variety of autographed celebrity photographs given to Animal Haven in support of their campaigns. If you looked up to the rafters, you could often see two cats stalking birds, Momma and her kitten Ashley.



Replicas of veal and gestation crates

Finally, as you drive even further up, you come upon the actual farm. The first is a large, white farmhouse. This is the shelter office; it houses the offices of the shelter workers – the health care staff, feeders, and other farm hands who do various chores. It is also referred to as the lower hospital as the downstairs kitchen and front area act as a hospital for the sickest animals. Typically in this hospital you will find chickens or turkeys who are most likely to have various illness or joint problems because of the way they have been genetically modified for mass production. On the second floor there is another kitchen that is used by the workers and interns on breaks. There are three smaller bedrooms and one larger bedroom on this floor that has sloping ceilings, so if you are to walk towards the windows in the kitchen, at one point you have to be down on all fours in order to look out them. There is another room that remained locked the entire time I was there. However, I do know that it stored files, but I do not know the content of these files. At times, these rooms are used for summer education staff (usually tour guides). If they chose, summer staff could live in the upstairs of this house for one less dollar/hour in their pay. One of the back bedrooms belonged to three feral cats that the shelter staff cared for – Mazy, Madeleine, and Monroe. All three I saw, but

none of them I was ever able to touch. In May, the other back bedroom belonged to (another) Momma and her four kittens that were found by the New Hospital Barn. Two July interns adopted the four kittens and Momma stayed on the farm because she was “the best cat in the world” according to Joanne, the farm director.

The road going back from this house has several barns: directly behind the shelter house was a smaller barn that usually houses up to ten hens and one rooster. When a stray rottweiler mix was found wandering on the road, this barn was converted to accommodate him; rather than send him to a shelter for fear that he would be put down. Across from the shelter house was another smaller barn that houses a small number of chickens and about ten rabbits – every now and then you would see a small calico cat – Cleo – being chased from the area by a very large white rabbit named Bernice, the queen of the bunny barn. Behind the bunny barn was the turkey barn, which also housed more chickens. Right next to this barn was the goat barn housing four pygmies, two billies, and about ten normal sized goats. If you walked by and called to him, Simon, a pygmy African goat, would come running and crying to be let out to run around.



Simon

If you went down the road that curved to the left, after you passed the large straw barn and passed Mayfly's barn – one of the most beloved roosters on the farm who would also come running when you called him, you would see a large manmade pond and you would hear where the ducks and geese are housed – about 25 in total – before you even stumbled upon the two smaller barns. Cleaning this barn was the bane of everyone's existence because of one particular Canadian goose, Cinny who simply refused to migrate with all the other Canadian geese and seemed to enjoy chasing the cleaners and interns out of the barn. According to legal regulations, Animal Haven is only allowed to house 'typical' farmed animals. Cinny is considered 'wild' however and the only reason the farm could keep him was because he simply refused to migrate.

Across from this barn is the pig retirement barn with about ten older pigs. Next to this is the main pig barn with about forty pigs – all Yorkshires. This barn is the newest of all the barns. It was rebuilt five years prior and is heated with underground geo-thermal pumps because of a fire that broke out five years prior that killed 21 of the 30 pigs it was housing. Although I was not there at the time, it had been an established habit for interns to leave random notes and messages of their stay at the farm in the 'intern books'. The year of the fire these notes included very long, detailed descriptions of this early morning fire and what happened in the after effects – how the town reacted with little sympathy; comments in the local papers stating things to the effect of "There's a Barbeque up at Animal Haven" or "Animal Haven is Having a Pig Roast" were some and this gives an indication of some of the tensions that did and continue to exist between local farmers and this organisation. These tensions are not easy to explain, but are based on a variety of factors. One of the main tensions comes from the fact that many family operated farms were going out of business; those that were still in business

were struggling severely. For many small family farmers, much of the blame for their farms not surviving was placed on this organisation and animal rights activism in general, but not on the growing emergence of agribusiness operations that were buying out the land and these businesses. Such tensions and relations will be more fully discussed in a subsequent chapter.

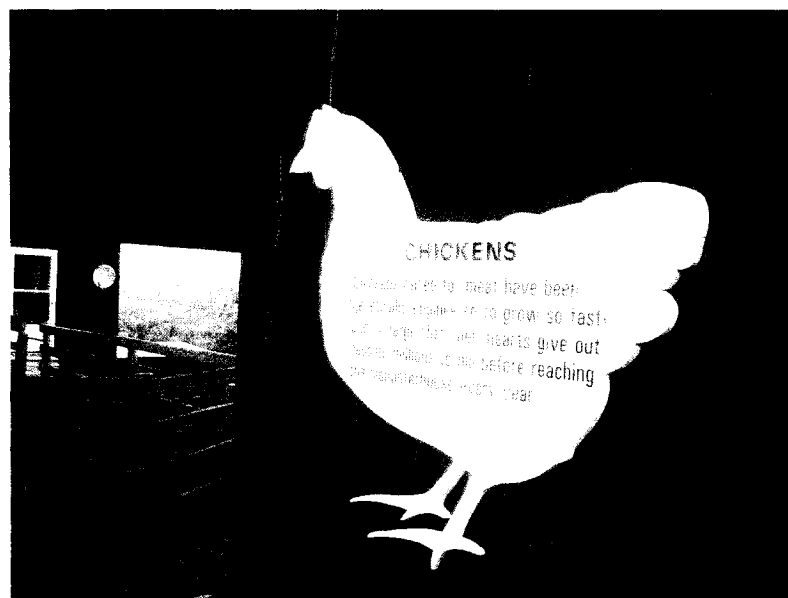
Walking back up this hill and next to the goat barn is the very first barn that was built on this site, the sheep barn. It is a very large two-story structure that housed about fifty sheep, five retirement cows, and two goats while I was there. On the second story, in addition to hay storage was a small one-bedroom loft with a balcony overlooking the sheep and goat pastures, currently where Mary, one of the administrative executives lived with her two dogs and two cats. When Bill and Trisha first started this farm, this was their first home where they lived with their three dogs, two cats, a chicken, and a turkey.

Across from this barn was the main bunny barn, which did not house any bunnies at the beginning of my stay because it had to be disinfected due to a parasitic disease carried by all the bunnies in their urine. Later during my stay, a group of fourteen bunnies were found on a New York City highway and transferred up to Animal Haven and a local woman donated her bunnies that she had been breeding - to the interns delight because this meant babies!

Further up the road you will then come upon two larger chicken barns, one always referred to as the upper hospital that is meant to hold those chickens who are not quite sick enough to be moved down to the lower hospital. The upper hospital housed about 30 hens and one rooster, while the main chicken barn housed about 50 hens and two roosters. Attached to the upper hospital is another small one bedroom loft

overlooking the lower cow pastures where Carolyn lives, a feeder (literally, paid staff who are responsible for the feeds of the day) at the time I was there, however, she and all the other feeders were being trained in health care throughout the summer.

The last barn was the cow barn located across from the pig pasture but a bit farther away from all the other barns. This barn housed about fifty head of cattle and took up the most pasture space because of the space demands of this animal. On all of the sides of the barns, you will find various plaques that give short factory farming facts for each animal; these are intended mainly for educational purposes to inform visitors who come to the farm.



An example of "farm facts" on the side of the main chicken barn.
Across, in the background is the upper hospital.

Leaving the main farm area and driving further up the road, to the left there was one last barn, commonly called the new barn. This was another hospital facility and its intent was to house animals that had just been rescued. Because most of the animals the farm acquired came from various factory-farming situations, these animals had to be quarantined until their medical exams could prove that they did not carry any diseases or parasites. During my stay there was a group of 15 female heifers and one young steer

that were obtained through a neglect case where their owner had abandoned them – 13 of these cows were pregnant. Though most of them had been adopted out by the time I arrived, six of the heifers remained, three of whom were pregnant, and the steer; one having just gave birth to a boy and during my stay I was there for the remaining three births.

Directly across from this barn was a small one story house always referred to as Vegan House (it even said this on our mailbox) – this was the intern house and during my stay anywhere from three to seven of us occupied this three bedroom house that we shared with two of the farm cats, Aieryne and Gryeigh, brothers whom I later adopted.



New Hospital Pasture
Below is a view of the sheep barn and pastures

The Structure of the Organisation

The organisation itself is divided into three main sections: the farm, education, and administration. The farm employs about forty individuals in paid positions ranging from a farm hand (the lowest paying) to administrators (the highest). Comparatively, those working on the farm received the lowest pay for similar positions, with the education centre workers in the middle, and those departments in administration had

the highest pay. Depending on the month, there were between one to seven interns who worked for free – only housing was provided.

The work done on the farm is fairly straight forward in terms of what is usually expected to maintain and run a farm: cleaning barns and maintaining the overall appearance of the farm, health care, and feeding. Another aspect of this area is adoptions where individuals intending to keep them as pets could adopt specific animals. Because those individuals working on the farm had constant contact with the animals and knew them (Joanne, the shelter director, knew every individual animal by name simply by looking at them), it was the job of Carlin and Joanne to handle this program. And, this was not as easy as to simply find an individual to adopt an animal. There was a very rigorous interview process that demanded very specific ideals be met before one could even be considered as a potential adopter. Though it would be difficult to prove or disprove, it was required that animals go to a vegetarian family who would not use any products that could be produced by the animals.

The individuals who worked on the farm as either health care staff or feeders were all animal rights activists to some degree. The job description when applying demands this. The description explains that caring for the animals requires that one share a view of where animals are situated in the world juxtaposed to humans; the typical species boundary that would divide human animals from all other non-human animals is severely deconstructed and blurred, if it exists at all. That is not to say that everyone who works on the farm is an animal rights activist or a vegan. There were seven individuals who one could consider farm hands; basically these were individuals from the surrounding villages and towns who needed jobs and had experience working on farms. Though in their daily lives they may have not been activists or vegans –

though they included one local high school student who was – when on the farm, it was a requirement to follow a vegan diet and this requirement is justified as respect for the animals that lived there and from the conditions from which they came.

Located in the People Barn is the education centre. The role of the education centre depends on the time of year. Since the town and area of Sheapards Valley is a major tourist destination in the summer months, this naturally affects the farm. There are many individuals who come to visit and stay at the farm's bed and breakfast during these months, but there are also many people and families vacationing in the state park, or doing wine tours, that happen upon a brochure and decide on taking a tour. The education centre's main priority for the summer is running the bed and breakfast and giving tours, however there are two other bigger events that this department works on – the 4th of July *Pignic* and the annual Hoe Down, which takes place in August. The first event offers free tours of the shelter throughout the day, while the other is an annual three-day conference event that draws in several hundred activists. The other areas that are dealt with yearly in this department are literature and the internship program, as well as various campaigns that are linked to the outreach department in administration. Every person who worked in the education centre also had to be an activist or a vegan because of the nature of the work done there as well. Since one of the main job requirements was giving tours of the shelter, individuals had to be well versed in factory farming situations because most of the animals were obtained through various 'neglect' or 'abuse' cases; meaning, they were obtained from various farms that use such animals for food production purposes. However, these neglect and abuse cases were also recognised by legal authorities as severe enough to warrant legal action. Therefore, though typical methods for food production may be perceived by animal rights activists

as abuse and neglect, they remain legal though some cases are severe enough to push the industry standard boundary. Animal Haven believed that by not following a vegan or vegetarian diet, this was hypocritical to give these tours and to speak of and educate tourists on the issues of factory farming.

Within administration there are five main sub-departments - outreach, development, campaign, legislation, and finally administration. The administration department deals with the daily financial, legal, and personnel aspects of the every day running of the farm. Like the other departments, many of the people who work in this department were various "locals" who needed jobs and had the experience. The other departments are however occupied by activists, these being the campaign, outreach, development, and legislative departments. The campaign department deals with the development and maintenance of the various campaigns aimed at bringing in resources and raising awareness of factory farming and animal rights issues. The types of campaigns started by this organisation ran the gamut - some were strictly revenue-creating campaigns, others were aimed at recruiting new members, while others were aimed at spreading the animal rights message to the 'mainstream'. On a whole, this department did not necessarily concern itself mainly with bringing in money, but rather its focus was to spread the message to those outside the animal rights movement in hopes of changing public perception of the movement and changing individuals themselves, as well as garnering more support of animal rights activists, who in turn would probably donate money.

It was the development and outreach departments that dealt with bringing in resources of a fiscal sort. Because 90% of Animal Haven's two million dollar budget came from its 100,000+ members, maintaining good relations with these individuals was

of the utmost importance for this organisation. Here too, developing a broader member base is key. This is done by reaching out to communities and individuals both within and outside the animal rights movement, but another aspect of developing this base was by reaching out to celebrities and political communities with the idea that these communities greatly influence the 'mainstream'. The last area covered by this department is legislative. Bill, one of the co-founders, mainly works here and it is his job to be up to date on various legislation that affects animal rights activism efforts as well as working on their own efforts to pass legislation that would offer more protection to farmed animals. Animal Haven has a detailed history of various lawsuits brought about by Animal Haven in attempts to alter the "industry standard."

The last group of individuals who worked on the farm are the various individuals who come on a monthly basis throughout the year as interns. While I was a researcher doing my fieldwork from May to August 2004, I was also an intern. Five days a week, we were all up at 7:00 am and worked on the farm until 4:00 pm or later – none of this work being paid. Interns mainly helped on the farm, but often times we also worked in the education, development, or campaign departments. Since I was the only intern there for the entire summer, I had more of an opportunity to work in these departments because there was the time to train me for certain projects. The farm was also very accommodating by allowing me to work in all the departments more frequently to assist me with my research.

From this description it is quite clear that this is a fully, multi-functioning farm, however, it is not your typical farm – a farm that produces animal products for profit, for example. It has all the necessary animals and the daily routines may appear on the surface to be those of a typical farm, however the nature of this farm primarily is a

sanctuary run as a not-for-profit organisation. All of the animals here were 'rescued' from various 'abuse' or 'neglect' situations and were brought to this farm to live out their lives independent of any sort of commoditisation. Any by-product they may have produced, for example eggs or wool, was not used by anyone on the farm, but rather recycled in various forms. It was not used because of the fact that this was an animal rights organisation that promoted veganism as an ideal. For example, the eggs that were laid were given back to the chickens because the way that these birds are genetically modified and forced to lay up to twenty times the amount of eggs they would normally lay in a year, leaves them with a serious protein deficiency. Therefore, the eggs are taken, boiled, and given back to the chickens in their feed. It is also important to note that there is no breeding on the farm. The farm is already at capacity and could barely house the 500 animals it currently had. Any additional breeding would have completely over run the land that was there making this sanctuary no better than a typical factory farm. The work done on the farm, in its various forms was always done to maintain and expand the ideal of how animals should be used. The animals on the farm are not seen as automatons, but as individuals with personalities, wants and needs. The animals are not referred to in a generic lump sum term, like 'it' or 'the cows', but rather they are referred to by their individual names or with the pronouns she, he, her, or him. Furthermore, in addition to the farmed animals living out their lives, in each department you walk into you are greeted with various 'house' pets that either live in these departments, or are brought in on a daily basis by the employees. Cats and dogs sleep and lounge on top of the desks, at one's feet, or they simply roam about the office. All of these animals run freely and they are not additions, rather they are a part of people's

lives and work. They belong to people, but they are not necessarily possessions, but important aspects of their lives.

This farm remains instrumental in the influence of the development of other farm animal sanctuaries. While this particular sanctuary remains the largest with several sanctuary sites, others exist on smaller scales either in size or in the type of animals they house (some taking only certain animals). It is hard to figure out exactly how many farm animal sanctuaries exist, but it is safe to say that these probably number in the hundreds and they exist in varying sizes and degrees. Farm Animal Shelters (<http://www.farmanimalshelters.org/links.htm>) offers a list of the larger shelters that deal specifically with farm animals and currently lists about thirty different shelters throughout the United States.

Additionally, individuals working for Animal Haven as activists and who are involved more generally in the animal rights movement incorporate other activist-oriented issues into their lives and work. The range of this is incredible and includes environmentalism, human rights, anti-capitalism, anti-globalisation (as it is interpreted as major economic powers like the United States dominating economies and politics in the so-called third world), and feminism (of many kinds) to name a few. Much of this is visible within the presentation and policies of Animal Haven. Animal Haven uses other issues as a method of spreading animal rights issues. For example, the environmental degradation resulted from policies of large factory farming operations. The use of other activist issues is an attempt to push the ideals of animal rights activism from the margins to be recognised as legitimate social grievances.

A Typical Farm Day: Working at a farm animal sanctuary

Describing a typical day at Animal Haven depends on the department you are working in and the time of the year it is. As I was an intern, my experience of working in this organisation and the descriptions of the work done will be mainly from this perspective. Furthermore my experience was somewhat different from the other interns in that I had a certain level of privilege based on the fact that I was there for over three months. This gave me the opportunity to work in all of the departments on a more frequent basis. For example, a typical week for an intern – when we had a full house – was four days doing farm work, with one day either in development or campaign. However, my typical workweek by June was two to three days in education, one to two days in campaign or development, and one day on the farm – every now and then, I would have two farm days, but this was infrequent and congruent when there were special occasions that drew in a considerable amount of tourists and guests. My variety of work on the farm thus gave me an opportunity to see how all three departments of the farm functioned independently and in relation to one another. However, allowing me to work in all three departments was also done to accommodate my research. Furthermore, the time of the year greatly influences what types of work will be carried out in the administrative and education departments where there tends to be more work in the spring, (especially) summer, and fall months because of heavy tourist traffic associated with the area. Since I was there for the summer months, the tourist season, a ‘typical day’ will refer to this time of the year (from May-August; though tourist season runs to October).

Firstly, I will start with a typical shelter day since that was by and large what the bulk of the interns did. And, considering that the house we stayed in was located

directly across from the farm, interns could be seen strolling through the farm and interacting with the animals on their days off. Thus, this will be the perspective of a typical day for an intern, but I will also bring in how the day developed for the paid staff.

The Shelter

Farm work started at 7:00 am, each and every day. Everyone would report to the shelter house to sign in. If Carolyn was working, she usually started her feeds around 6:00; not that this was necessary, she simply would try to get this done as early as possible to have time for any further health checks that might come up. Carolyn had worked as a travel agent before she came to the farm and was one of the live-in staff. Carolyn told me that she took a 70% pay cut to come and work in Animal Haven. Her boyfriend, Josh, was also planning on coming, but since there were no current farm positions available, they were working on creating a job-share (both of them would essentially work part time under the same position so that they could both work and live on the farm). Though this was not without difficulty since it was a policy of the farm to not allow couples to both work for the organisation, much less in the same department. However, this did change later in the summer when one of the founders was essentially fired (as the organisation decided to move in different directions).

The “guys” usually started their cleaning right away. Usually, on any given day, this was James, Randy (James’s eldest son), and Andrew. They were the big barn cleaners, meaning it was their job to clean out the cow, pig, goat, sheep, and new hospital barns on a daily basis. If they were short staffed, Roberta or Janet was placed on this job, though they typically did small barns. It was the job of the interns, the feeder staff (this was Carolyn and Irene), and the small barn cleaners (Roberta, Alice,

and Lesley) to handle cleaning out all the other barns. If you were on small barns, there were always two groups, although there were days that one of the paid farm hands or I had to do the work of both groups because of short staffing (usually this coincided with intern turnover at the end of each month). But usually, one group would handle the upper hospital, lower hospital, bunny barn, and what was later known as Zach's barn (a stray rotweiler found one night wandering on the farm). The other group handled 'small barns' these being the turkey (though this barn was cleaned every other day only), main chicken barn, Mayfly's pen, and ducks and geese.

Interns not cleaning barns, as only two were needed for this, were assigned "projects". These were set cleaning specifics that needed to be carried out on a daily basis, like cleaning up after the cats, cleaning the hospital kitchens and iso (isolation) room, taking care of the mouse traps (they were the humane ones), taking out the trash and recycling, and raking the straw from the side of the road (the bane of everyone's existence because it seemed so futile). Other projects would be written on the board throughout the day and they could range from cleaning out feed bowls, to moving straw from one barn to another, to taking care of the burnables, to dusting the entire inside and outside of the barn areas. Until the farm received a heavy-duty washer and dryer set (on donation), laundry had to be brought into town to the Laundromat to be done – a job everyone loved as this meant one could walk around to the local café and relax for a couple of hours. After, another 'project' was to shake out the laundry so that it would be free of straw and hay as the farm at one point was told it would not be able to use the public Laundromat as it was clogging up the machines (the reason why the farm did not have a functioning one when I first arrived). This was another 'popular' job as it literally meant standing on the back stoop shaking out laundry – not exactly 'hard' labour.

Finally, a last project could be transporting animals to local veterinarians or to Winston's animal hospital. More often than not, I was asked to do this as I was familiar with how to get to each hospital, especially Winston and if an animal was being brought to Winston who was not to be euthanased, it meant it was most likely an emergency.

Basically, this was not the most glamorous work, but it was rewarding nonetheless. Michael, an August intern, explained to me on several occasions, "You know, I was really well off as an engineer – I had the cushy salary and company car. And, I was miserable. But, I can come here and shovel shit for free and I'm so content and happy." Michael worked as an engineer for nearly five years before he realised he wanted to go back to school for a master's in philosophy and work in animal rights. An



Andrea, a May intern, cleaning out the cows water trough;
The cow barn is the barn located directly to the right.
In the distance is the People Barn and the bed and breakfast cabins;
the building farthest to the back left is the administration building.
Just behind, on her left, is the pig pasture with some pigs mud/sun bathing.

intern's normal day on the farm started at 7:00 am and ended at 4:00 pm, with a one-hour lunch break. Some of us would at times stay after to help out more and I typically did this because it allowed me to gain more insights to the usual day of the paid staff and it allowed me to get to know these individuals better.

The paid staff had much longer days. Barn cleaners usually did not finish work until 5:00 pm, though they did have a two-hour lunch break. They did not finish until later as the farm requires they be on until then for final closing chores (the education centre's last tour is at 4:00, so the cleaners have to be there after to make sure everything is in order). James, however, worked about 12-hour days. It was his job to ensure that everything was closed, put away, and immediate repairs were done. He told me on one occasion how though he works up to two hours after everyone leaves, he does not get paid overtime for this, but he doesn't mind. In his other jobs working for "the industry" (larger factory farming operations), he received, at best 5\$/hour and also didn't get overtime pay. That this farm now paid him 10\$/hour, he was happy to stay (he also stated that he needed to keep his pay low to receive social service benefits and to ensure that his children did not have to pay for university).

The feeders and health care workers specifically had much longer days than the rest of the paid staff. Joanne, the shelter director, usually arrived at 7:00 am with everyone else, but she normally did not leave until 7:00 pm, if not later. The same thing happened for those living on site and for the other health care workers and feeders. The health care staff consisted of Rebekah, Alexis, Carlin, and Joanne; while the feeders were Carolyn and Irene (both being trained in health care). It is important and interesting to note that only Carlin and to a certain extent Alexis, had previous training in animal health care before working at Animal Haven. Alexis was in the process of applying to vet school; she and Rebekah were both interns at Animal Haven previously (Rebekah previously being an intern at the East and West coast shelters).



Alexis and Rebekah changing Spout's foot bandages in the New Barn
(the lone steer who came in with a the group of heifers from a cruelty case)

Usually there was always one feeder and two health care staff on duty and Joanne was always there, except on her two days off (however even on her days off, she was on-call). This way the day could be split into a 7:00-5:00 shift and an 11:00-9:00 shift for the two health care staff. The reason for this is that someone always had to be available for the night feeds and since you could not expect someone to work a twelve-hour day, usually the later health care shift would pick up the night feeds. However, notwithstanding this, twelve-hour days were often norm. Furthermore, since in the new-hospital barn there were calves ranging from one-month to a couple of days old, there was an additional 8:00 or 9:00 pm night feed that had to be done. Since Carolyn and Alexis were live-in staff, more often than not, they would do this – Carolyn would even do this on her days off. Carlin picked this up, when Alexis moved off site in late July.

As a not-for-profit organisation (with a 501 c status)¹⁴, Animal Haven could not legally pay overtime, but they could also not afford to hire more staff for what was

¹⁴ Section 501c(3) organisations are those that are organized exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, public safety testing, literary, or educational purposes, or to foster national or international sports

required. This resulted in the majority of the paid staff being overworked. Though Carolyn would start her feeds at 6:00, it was because she wanted to do more health care work, but often times it was also because if she wanted to get everything done in a day, she needed to start this early. Though Joanne was not a live in staff, I remember at times coming into work at 7:00 and going upstairs in the shelter house to clean, to find that Joanne had stayed the night to make sure she could get everything done. As will be explained in detail later, this overwork led to a great deal of tensions within the organisation. Other departments were also overworked, but this also came in phases. For example, organising for the Animal Haven Gala required long days, but after this event was over, days shortened back to normal 9:00-5:00 work days. Those individuals working in the shelter department were always busy and did not get these reprieves. The animals always needed to be taken care, the barns always needed cleaning, and the farm always needed repairs.

The Education Centre

As I stated before, since I was an intern for almost four months, by the second month I was there, it had been determined that I would be working in the other departments on a more regular basis since the organisation could invest the time to train me. By my second month and into my third, I spent the majority of my time working in the education centre taking care of the bed and breakfast, working in the gift shop, stocking literature in the People Barn, and occasionally giving tours.

competition, or for the prevention of cruelty to children or animals. No part of the net earnings of a 501c(3) organisation may be used to benefit any private shareholder or individual. No substantial part of their activities may be used for the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, nor may its activities involve participating in, or intervening in political campaigns on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office.

My day in the education centre was either 7:30-4:00, or 9:00-5:30, each with a half an hour lunch break. If I had to be there at 7:30, this meant that I was preparing the breakfast for the bed and breakfast guests and setting up the barn before it opened to the public at 11:00. This also meant that it was I that gave the bed and breakfast tour at 10:00 – this being a complimentary and more private tour for the guests. It was usually a more relaxed tour where I did not have to worry about getting all the Animal Haven historical facts right or focusing on the factory farming facts other tours required. Rather, I could talk more about the animals and focus on particular concerns the guests might have as most of the guests who came to stay at Animal Haven were already familiar with the issues of animals rights and already had a general knowledge regarding the history of the organisation. However, it was rare that I would give a tour since this was mostly done by Erica, the intern coordinator, Trina, who was summer staff, but used to be the director of the education centre, Stefanie, the campaign outreach coordinator, Danielle, the education centre director, and Brenda, from whom Stefanie took over for when Brenda suddenly quit because of the stress of the job and overwork of the job. Jenny and Laura also worked in the education department, however they dealt with literature distribution (and thus overlapped with the campaign and development departments).

Each tour ran every hour from 11:00-4:00. It is hard to specify the ‘type’ of people who would come in for tours because it varied so much due to the time of the year. Animal Haven only gave tours from May to October, the tourist season for the area. Many of the people who came in were animal rights activists coming from all over the country, but mainly the Northeast. Others were a mix of people from the

neighbouring townships as well as tourists who came for the races, wineries, and campgrounds.

Animal Haven had a variety of advertising for the local area; they had a few billboards, brochures in all the wineries, restaurants, and other tourist attractions, as well as a commercial on a local television station. Therefore, it was rather visible to those outside of the movement, but in the immediate areas surrounding the farm. However, because of the diversity of people you would get coming on the tours, these tours could be incredibly stressful due to dealing with individuals who were hearing about animal rights and factory farming issues for the first time. Every now and then, a local farmer would come to check the place out, but their reactions were always a mix between coming to understand that Animal Haven was not out to shut down small, family farms to blaming Animal Haven for these farms going out of business rather than factory farming operations.

Other tasks that this department dealt with included running the gift store as well as assigning each individual to various campaigns and outreach. For example, Erica was the intern coordinator; therefore, she was always researching applications of possible interns for the coming months. She received applications daily and it was up to her to filter through these, set up interviews, and decide whom the farm would accept. She was responsible for training the interns as well as handling any disputes that may occur. She also organised weekly education meetings for the interns. The subject matter for these meetings typically followed the same schedule: the history of Animal Haven; campaigns that the organisation carries out; how to start and run your own sanctuary; using the law as a means for effecting change; and understanding the factory farming system, economics, and politics. Brenda and later Stefanie worked on various

campaigns to get information to the public on vegetarianism and veganism, as well as animal rights issues as these relate to factory farming. This was the only other section where the education and administration departments overlapped. Jenny and Laura handled the literature that was in the organisation as well as sending it out to various groups and making sure the surrounding area was stocked. One of my jobs while working in education was driving to the local wineries, restaurants, and other tourist attractions to do a literature exchange. Since Animal Haven had a bed and breakfast, the local tourist attractions were more than eager to put out our brochures in exchange for the farm putting theirs out for our guests.

Administration, Development, and Campaign

The administration department had several sub-departments consisting of legislative and legal, development, campaign, and then general administrative duties. Interns usually would work in either the development or campaign departments and this mainly consisted of data entry, stuffing envelopes for mass mailings, performing internet research for various issues meant to garner support for animal rights issues (and against factory farming), or making phone calls – lots of phone calls.

In May, the first month that I was there, Animal Haven was preparing for their annual gala that targets various celebrities and politicians in order to garner more media and political support (which relates to monetary support) for the organisation and for the movement. There was only myself and two other interns on site during the month of May and since neither of my counterparts expressed an interest in doing office work, this became my department. The bulk of my work during this time centred on making follow-up calls to various publicists for celebrities and various campaign directors for politicians (I called politicians who were members of the Senate or House of

Representatives). I mainly left messages at these numbers (as I would call California in the morning and New York during the lunch hours because leaving messages meant I could get through the list more quickly and those interested could call back Judy or Haley). However, to give an example, the amount of calls I would average a day was anywhere between 500 to 1,000. While 1,000 calls in one day may seem unrealistic, one should keep in mind that while many of the paid staff worked over time, as a volunteer, I often stayed beyond the required eight hours.

As mentioned before, this department, as well as the education department, had waves of intense work that needed to get done. In May, it was preparing for the annual Gala event; in July it was preparing for the annual Hoe Down, which brings in various animal rights celebrities for a two-day conference where participants camp out on Animal Haven grounds or in the State park bordering Animal Haven grounds. Preparing for these events required many tasks like planning a schedule of events, identifying and verifying speakers, planning catering options, finding sponsorship, et cetera. After these waves, these departments would get a reprieve of sorts and continue on the normal schedule of the "9-5" workday. However, in the shelter department, events like the Hoe Down only increased the amount of work that needed to be done. Now on top of daily cleaning, additional cleaning had to be completed in order to maintain the best possible impression for visitors. As well, there needed to be a staff member or intern in each barn to let people in and out and interact with all the animals.

The way that work was divided in these departments led to much tension between individuals and departments. It was not uncommon to hear shelter staff complaining about the staff in other departments. Much of this focused on a given department assuming that their work was more intense and that the other departments

did not fully understand the amount of work that went into each department. For example, it was not uncommon to hear hostilities expressed by the shelter staff about the education and administrative departments. The shelter staff did have continual long days, however there was also a sort of protective quality that this staff had towards the animals that was lacking in the other departments. Not shockingly, this came from the direct contact this department had on a daily basis with the animals that lived on the farm. However, certain campaigns, like the adoption program (where individuals donate a monthly stipend to assist the farm), were part of the development department. Directors in this department would often change the names of the animals to make them more 'marketable' – which infuriated the shelter staff. Reversely, some animals had higher PR values (often due to how much press they got during rescue) and thus they would have a better chance to be literally adopted (individuals could adopt animals, but they had to go through a very stringent screening process first). Alexis told me on one occasion, one turkey who was a particular favourite had two names – her real name that the shelter staff gave her, and a pseudonym that was given to the development department. This other name protected her from possibly being adopted out because the shelter staff could easily forge records or claim that she had died.

In this section, I have tried to detail the work done in each of the major three departments at Animal Haven – the shelter, the education centre, and the administration. As an animal rights organisation, most of the individuals who worked there were also animal rights activists following a vegan lifestyle. This led to acknowledgements of solidarity as individuals could relate to one another concerning similar historical experiences of having to try and relate to those outside the movement who do not share their views and also to similar emotional experiences of coming to

terms with the treatment of non-human animals in the modern-day factory farming system. Yet, this also led to a great deal of tension. I have also briefly mentioned how this tension was related to ideas of appreciation of the work that was done, however it is also connected with an individual's personal ideologies and philosophies that, if in conflict with the organisation, were suppressed while at work.

Chapter VI Relationships and Social Activism

Cataloguing Relationships: Defining Inside and Outside

For the purposes of my research, relationships within social activist organisations and communities will focus on two main areas, each containing two subsections. The two main areas of focus are the relationships within social activist organisations and communities; or the relationships among individuals who identify as members of the movement, while the other is the relationship that exists between identified movement members and those individuals who do not identify with the movement (who will be referred to as the 'mainstream' – a term often used by movement members). The latter relationship tends to generalise individuals outside the movement more than those inside because it relies on assumptions that all non-movement members do not identify with movement claims. However, my analysis and presentation of my research will speak to this and the fact that those outside of the movement (those non-members) while not in fact disagreeing with various movement claims, do not identify with the movement (their tactics, 'radical' ideologies, etc). Similarly, while movement members also tend to be homogenised, this too is an assumption. Before moving on to discuss these relationships, there are two further sub-sections that require outlining.

Firstly, among identified movement members, there are two elements at play. The first is the relationships that are played out and negotiated within a specific organisation. For my research, this organisation was Animal Haven and thus this included the associated relationships that existed between the individuals who worked there and interacted on a daily basis. The second aspect of relationships within this social activist movement concerns relationships that are more abstract, meaning

relations where individuals are not interacting face-to-face. Such relationships exist between movement members who are not interacting on a daily basis, but share various movement ideals across organisations and also across individual beliefs (meaning, the relationships that exist between movement members who may not be directly involved with a specific organisation but nonetheless support the movement).

Animal Haven is a national (United States) organisation with two separate shelter sites, and a third in development. Animal Haven has been a foundational player in the development of the animal rights movement in general (in the context of North America, but specifically the United States), especially in terms of education regarding the factory farming/agribusiness industry (and how this industry is constituted within the United States). It has been very innovative in terms of developing an organisation such as itself to deal with animal rights claims. Most animal rights organisations exist at an intellectual, educational level that seek to inform non-movement members about the issues with which they are concerned. Animal Haven does all this, but then goes one step farther in having a sanctuary for those animals whose 'rights' they are fighting for. With that said, the work that is done in terms of altering public perceptions and views about the proper treatment of animals (the social-cultural level) and the work done within legal and political channels (with the hope of changing the social-cultural norms) are not carried out exclusively by Animal Haven, but in conjunction with a variety of other groups working towards similar aims. As will be discussed later, this often requires that Animal Haven adopt some of its 'front region claims'¹⁵ to arrive at a

¹⁵ Back region claims and front region claims are used by social movement organisations to present their ideologies to individuals outside of the movement. Back region claims are those ideals and philosophies fundamental to a specific movement, whereas a front region claim is an ideal presented more strategically. For example, Animal Haven as a rights organisation believes that it is immoral to consume animal products on any level. This is a back region claim. However, working in the farming community where it is located, many campaigns focus on the problems of agribusiness and putting an end to this type of food production. This is a front region claim, used strategically in order to gain various social, economic, or political support.

consensus for ensuring a successful campaign (especially when working within legal and political channels). Thus, although a “rights” organisation, Animal Haven often adopts a “welfarist” perspective for certain matters in order to avoid being viewed as too radical to garner the needed support for change, socially and legally.

Secondly, negotiating relationships with non-movement members also has two main subsections – interacting directly (on a daily basis) with non-movement members living in the same community and also the more removed engagement with individuals who do not identify as members. This last aspect is done through education as much as possible – leafleting, tabling, protesting, advertisements, or any other activities that will get the message out to others.

Animal Haven is situated within a rural, farming area and as such individuals who identify as animal rights activists and work for this organisation are constantly interacting with various non-members. This happens both at work and during leisure activities. As mentioned in the background chapter, many “locals” needing jobs work at Animal Haven and must adjust their lifestyle to this organisation’s ideals (for example, following a vegan diet and lifestyle while on the premises). This requires that individuals who do identify with the animal rights movement’s claims and ideals, must negotiate their daily relationships with individuals who do not necessarily share these beliefs or values. Other aspects of negotiating relationships directly come from living within this rural farming area where individuals with an animal rights perspective are required to ‘pick and choose’ their battles.

Movement members must also negotiate their relationships among individuals they may never meet. With the aim of changing ‘mainstream’ views about the correct use and treatment of non-human animals, campaigns are designed with other

organisations under the assumption of what non-animal rights activists might view as the correct treatment of these animals. For example, it is assumed that non-activists do not even make the association of the terminology used to label animals as food (pork as opposed to pig). Thus, a campaign in this area may simply focus on bringing in the absent referent – that pork was once a pig, or beef a cow (see Adams 2000). Such campaigns are adjusted to meet such individuals ‘where they are at’ in order to minimise defensive reactions. Other aspects of this deal again with the legal and political systems. Social activists movements often resort to working in these channels to prompt social-cultural change. The assumption is that changing the law and influencing politicians to support movement beliefs and ideals will in turn change popular (mainstream) views, for example, of how animals should be used (i.e. small family run farms are okay, but industrialised agribusiness treatment of animals is grotesque).

Success in this legal-political arena requires mainstream support as without this, changing political and legal norms becomes difficult, if not impossible. For example, even if gay marriage is legally and politically recognised, it will not be successfully accepted if the majority of the country’s population never fully accept the institution. The same can be said for various animal rights claims, which is why work on the social-cultural level focuses more on changing belief systems. Briefly, it was the view of many that I worked with that success on the socio-cultural level (changing mainstream perceptions) would advance, if not easily, success on the political-legal front (in the form of laws and legislation). For example, it is unlikely that non-movement members will agree that animals should never be used for food, but many might agree that the confinement of animals in large-scale factory farming industries is inhumane. Here also there is the aspect of ‘stepping stones.’ By allowing things to change gradually, it

becomes less of a shock than to demand that people's lifestyles and how they identify themselves be completely uprooted by, for example, adopting a vegan diet or *becoming* vegan by changing many aspects of one's lifestyle.

This is not to say that these types of relationships exist independently of one another; in fact the above description should indicate that these relationships are constantly overlapping. It also does not imply that these four types of relationships are static or absolute. Indeed, the nature of social activism would require recognition that individuals are constantly adjusting their values and beliefs based on their experiences and interactions within the wider social context, and that people outside the movement who adopt some of its ideals will always retain them. When speaking to many movement members, there was the opinion that once you make certain changes, like adopting a vegetarian or vegan diet, it is extremely difficult to 'go back' to a meat-eating diet, or the prior 'stage' of vegetarianism. However, this difficulty is not exclusive or universal and because of these fluctuations, discussing the negotiation of relationships is key to understanding the development of social movement activism and how individuals construct their identities within these contexts.

Historically, individuals attracted to social activist movements were characterised as being either over dramatic or emotional or out of touch with reality (for example, see Kupers 1993). Additionally, it was not uncommon to label this perceived lack of rationality as similar to a mental illness, or stuck in the temper-tantrum stage of development (see Kupers 1993). While there has been a general shift away from this view, social movement literature continues to have the tendency to present such movements as essentialist or reductionist in the process by which individuals become attracted to and involved with a given issue. Furthermore, much of the literature

continues to generalise about how individuals are then constructed within the groups or organisations they are involved with and tends to forget that a social activist movement is composed of many different individuals who give it complex meaning and form. Because of this last point, it needs to be acknowledged that while I was working within an animal rights organisation this organisation in no way represents the animal rights movement generally. Rather, it represents a particular organisation made up of particular individuals. These individuals created the organisation and continue to recreate the organisation on a daily basis through various campaigns, legislative work, education aspects, as well as the opinions and the ideals of the participants.

Interacting with those outside of the movement

Pearl is an extremely shy goat. She does not approach anyone she does not know and rarely approaches those she does. By the end of my stay, she would come over and smell my hand; occasionally she would let me pet her, but not for too long. Her shyness was a bit of a problem for the tours as tours were always brought into many of the pens. Since TJ was a dangerous goat in with the larger goats, the tours were brought into the small goat barn. I went on many of these tours when I was working in the education centre and on my days off. It gave me a chance to talk with the people who would come to visit the farm. However, strangers coming into the small goat barn were always stressful for Pearl. Often times she would try to hide behind the water trough, only to have people approach her from either side trapping her against the barn stalls. Other times she would manage to run out of the barn. No matter how many times it was explained that Pearl was extremely shy and should not be approached, it seemed to simply pass over people's heads. Pearl was by far the prettiest goat. Her coat was brown and white that cut directly down the centre of her body and she had big floppy

ears that stuck straight out when she was attentive and alert. When she looked at you, her eyes were very direct and she would never break the stare first. Her shyness was always attributed to the fact that she was blind for so long that she created this defence to deal with her surroundings.



Pearl

The relationship between Winston University's Large/Farm Animal Hospital and Animal Haven that developed through Pearl was an important turning point in how Winston viewed and treated its animals¹⁶ (according to those I spoke with at Animal Haven). Winston was adamantly opposed to treating Pearl; Animal Haven was insistent. However, Pearl's success and the simple difference in how Joanne, the shelter director, and the other Animal Haven workers viewed Pearl created an alternative dynamic for how many veterinarians and students at Winston came to view the animals they worked with.

¹⁶ The tendency in various animal rights organisations is to specify animals as 'non-human animals' as a way to stress similarities and to point to the fact that humans are also animals. The lack of specification on my part are for purposes of brevity and do not have any underlying political implications.

By the time I was working at Animal Haven, Joanne had been the shelter director for nearly five years. I never actually got a chance to sit down and speak with Joanne regarding her involvement in the animal rights movement and this organisation; though she agreed to my request for a more formal interview, time never allowed her to do this. Her dedication to the movement was clear in the way she interacted with the animals - knowing each of their names and crying at each of their deaths. Joanne herself had adopted two pigs from Animal Haven along with a guinea hen that was found in New York City and brought to Animal Haven. It was actually illegal for the shelter to have this animal because it is considered 'wild' and since Animal Haven was only permitted to house domestic animals, the Health Department demanded it be gone. For Joanne, this meant adopting Gussie to ensure the hen's safety. Joanne's day on the farm started at 7:00 am and ended around 7:00 pm, if she was lucky. Often times I would come into work to find that she had spent the night in the upstairs of the shelter house because she was at work so late. Joanne's job required being responsible for the daily running of the farm. She was responsible for all the shelter workers and their work on top of all her other tasks. She was also in charge of the adoption program. Out of curiosity I asked on average how many adoption applications the farm gets daily, thinking it would only be a few. I was wrong. Joanne said that she gets well over a hundred a week and it is her responsibility to sift through these (along with Lisa, another shelter worker). Joanne told me that with all of these, there might only be a handful of applications in any one week that are worth looking into. Along with this, Joanne was also responsible for researching various cases for rescues. Daily she would receive notices about various abuse or neglect cases, however, since Animal Haven was already at capacity, it was difficult to accept new animals. Therefore, Joanne was constantly linking with other

sanctuaries around the country trying to place these animals. Inevitably, there were far too many animals needing placement. Though Joanne never had any contact with these animals, the fact that most were never taken out of the various circumstances was a huge stress for her (and others who worked on the farm). Pearl, however, was a successful rescue case. Joanne and Cecil told me the following story during an uncommonly slow afternoon on the farm in late July.

Pearl was found abandoned on a farm in the north-eastern US in the dead of winter. It is not known how long she was left as a baby; however, when she was found, she was incredibly thin with a chest infection, frost bite, and had syphilis that had progressed so badly it had blinded her. She was brought to Animal Haven when she was no more than a year old, about three years prior to my fieldwork.

Pearl was immediately taken to Winston's Large/Farm animal hospital to be treated. They wanted to put her down. Joanne told them "no, lets try and treat her." Their suggestions for treatment were bleak and did not seem much better than euthanasia to Joanne and the other shelter staff at Animal Haven. Since Pearl was so emaciated from neglect, she had a severe chest and sinus infection, which the doctors treated with antibiotics. The syphilis that infected her eyes was so severe that the only course of treatment the doctors suggested was to remove her eyes. Again, Joanne insisted on treating her first with antibiotics. Joanne explained that she could not understand how the veterinarians could simply choose the most extreme course of treatment without considering that there were other options. It was frustrating as this would not be the course of treatment offered to any human, and for Joanne, this goat deserved the same sort of consideration.

Typically when animals were brought into Winston Animal Hospital, especially the large/farm animal hospital, the course of treatments done was according to “industry standard.” This means, for example, that castrating a bull, sheep, pig, etc, would be performed without any anaesthesia. When Animal Haven first opened and started accessing Winston for various services, it was a shock to Winston to even think about using anaesthesia and it was equally shocking to those working at Animal Haven to find out that they did not. It came as no shock to those working at Animal Haven that the industry would not use anything like anaesthesia; however, they did to some extent expect that an animal hospital would. By the time Pearl was in for treatment, it was not a shock to those working at Winston that Joanne wanted to treat Pearl, but it had never truly occurred to them that perhaps treating this goat’s eyes with antibiotics could be possible; nonetheless they proceeded. Winston gave Pearl only a couple of days, not expecting her to last much longer. Pearl was completely healed, eyes and all, within three months. This came as no shock to Joanne or the other workers at Animal Haven. However, the staff at Winston is still always completely shocked and surprised when Pearl is brought in to see that she is a completely normal, healthy goat. While working with Winston continues to be difficult in how they view and treat the animals at times, this does not deter those at Animal Haven from proceeding.

One day when Joanne went in to check on Pearl and speak with the veterinarian about Pearl’s progress, she went back to Pearl’s holding pen to see that instead of ‘Pearl’ written on the name board, ‘Helen Keller’ had been written there instead.

I was furious. I threw a fit. The poor student on duty – I made her cry. I told them how callous and arrogant they were and that simply because they did not view the animals in the same way, it gave them no right to mock her. I yelled at the vet for quite some time. (Joanne, July 2004)

Even under some of the most stressful circumstances, Joanne was able to look back and make light of the situation. She could always take something serious but relate it in her laughing manner. She always had the tendency to be in mid-swear, complaining about Winston's hypocrisy about caring for animals "but they eat them!?" when she was taken off hold while waiting to speak to a veterinarian at Winston. While on hold with the hospital, I was talking with her about a group of bunnies that had been found on the side of a highway and brought to Animal Haven. Since it is hard to tell the sex of a bunny, one of the females had been mixed in with the males. I told Joanne that this bunny appeared to have an infection and Joanne replied, "well she was probably raped repeatedly – oh, hi" as she was taken off hold. "No wonder they think we're crazy," was her reply as she hung up the phone and in response to Cecil's and my rolling laughter.

Cecil reiterated that making the veterinarians and students at Winston aware of Pearl's success is very important for changing people's worldviews on the place of animals in society. He said that any other farmer would have gone in to put her down; if he would have gone in at all. Cecil said that maybe it would have made just one person realise that Pearl did have some worth and should not be discarded because she takes a bit more effort. Cecil explained that since the university was so used to dealing with farmers and the farming industry, especially at the Large/Farm animal portion of the hospital, working with individuals who treat these kind of animals (pigs, goats, sheep, cows) as pets was very confusing for the staff and the students.

Pearl's story sheds some light on how this activist movement, and generally speaking, other activist movements, must negotiate their perspective on their movement ideals within the larger, 'mainstream' society. However, while it is easy to point to the

differences that exist between movement members and non-members, their similarities shed an equally important light on how these perspectives and relationships are negotiated and constructed. Often times, it is easier to discuss how these differences are organised and negotiated, but overlooking similarities can lead to faulty conclusions regarding the relationship between movement members and non-members.

Assuming that the individuals working as veterinarians do not care about the humane treatment and that the farmers bringing in animals also do not care fails to properly analyse the dynamics at play. It is not necessarily the case that these individuals working for the industry lack compassion or an understanding of what it is that constitutes humaneness, but rather there are different priorities, that can be based on context and culture, that are affecting their lives. For example, a small family farmer needing to bring one of his animals in for treatment may not be able to afford things like anaesthesia. It is not that he does not know that castration is painful, but as large factory farming operations are constantly buying out these family operations, financial difficulty has become the norm for these smaller farms. Another example is an individual working in a slaughterhouse/meat packing plant. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) report this industry as among of the most dangerous in the United States, with the highest percentage of on-the-job injuries. It is also an industry with a history of systemic sexism and racism and the past century has seen countless studies implicating the agribusiness industry of these issues (see Schlosser 2002; Fink 1998; Halpern 1996, 1997; and Stull, Broadway, Griffith 1995). However, considering the constant decline in employment in the US, a worker is most likely here because she may not have other employment options.

As stated before, many of the workers on the farm were there because they needed a job. James, the shelter manager who was in charge of maintenance on the farm, told me a bit about his life as I was cleaning the cow barn stalls in early May. James had worked in the farming business for over twenty years before he came to Animal Haven. Though he had the tendency to pull ten to twelve hour days without overtime pay, this was the best paying job he has ever had. He explained that in previous jobs he would risk his life to get to work (often times travelling in sub zero temperatures and climbing through snow banks – frost bite was always a threat), only to be under appreciated and under paid for his work. He explained that former employers would often times try to find things he did wrong in order to dock his pay. James explained that the larger farms that were becoming more industrialised were the worst. When a job came up at Animal Haven, James was sceptical at first; nervous about working with an organisation whose philosophies appeared to contradict James's livelihood.

I don't share all their views – well, some, but not all. I've lost a lot of friends because they can't believe that I work here and they'll say things to me like, 'they're against farming.' Well, no, they're against factory farming, not small family farms trying to survive. There's a difference. (James, May 2004)

In many farm areas, industrialised agriculture is closing smaller family operated facilities. Such larger operations, in addition to high instances of worker injury, often lack adequate job security or a liveable wage; options therefore are decreasing. However, for those who do work in this sector, it is not that such individuals fail to see animals as sentient, but their priorities may lie elsewhere. For example, a small-scale farmer may have other more pressing priorities, such as maintaining his livelihood in an increasingly unstable market system. The judgment for how one 'should' live then becomes the topic of debate.

Often times, while working on the farm, I would hear from various individuals that farmers just do not care about the animals, or that they do not care about environmental sustainability, or I would hear disbelief in the voices of the people I worked with regarding sentience and an inability to understand how other people could not view animals as sentient. This is not to say that some individuals do not view the sentience of animals as valid. However, to say that all individuals in the farming industry (on all levels) also do not view animals as sentient overlooks the similarities that do exist. However arising from these similarities are also points of contention. Firstly, if one can and does view animals as sentient, how can they possibly consider harming them in any way? The focus and argument is then made about the boundary of where respect and dignity can be said to begin and end. For many I worked with, arguing to maintain one's livelihood was not enough. Rather, the abandonment of a morality based on non-human animals sentience was taken as evidence that such individuals are callous and are merely looking to prioritise a capitalist ideology.

Audrey, a July intern, relayed a conversation she had with Andrew, a farm hand who was not an animal rights activist. Many farm hands working at Animal Haven are locals who are there because they needed a job. As Audrey explained, Andrew was very frustrated with the way many of the interns and other activists on the farm would talk to him and the other farm hands, with the assumption that the farm hands do not care about the animals and that they would hurt them or be mean at any given time.

Yeah, he said to me, 'I may eat animals, but we would never hurt any of these animals ever.' (Audrey, July 2004)

For Audrey, this meant that each individual is capable of seeing animals in various ways. Andrew was able to see the animals at Animal Haven as more than food or clothing, but not others. This was okay for her as she explained to me that it was a

steppingstone for him and perhaps in the future he would continue to make connections.

Working with "locals"

Relationships as they existed among the "locals" are those defined in this thesis as relationships that exist between movement members and non-movement members, more specifically, between activists at Animal Haven and non-activists in the surrounding communities. The rest of this chapter will touch on the relationships that existed between Animal Haven activists and their neighbours who did not necessarily share their views and beliefs.

Data drawn from for this section is based on conversations I had with those non-activists who worked at Animal Haven, or those encountered in my visits to stockyard auctions, as well as with some local townspeople. As mentioned previously, it was very difficult to get into the nearest main town. Therefore, interacting and conversing with some local townspeople often happened while I was actually working on the farm. There were many individuals who came to the farm, some for tours, others for contract work. Animal Haven as a farmed animal sanctuary often required various health care for the animals beyond the training of the Animal Haven staff themselves. In such a situation, various 'locals' with such skills were called in. Throughout the duration of my stay, I spoke with three individuals who were regularly called in for this work: Jan, a large/farm animal veterinarian, Ian, who came to trim the cows hooves, and Aaron, the sheep shearer. I only interacted with the last two individuals while working on the farm but I met Jan several times as she always came out when a new calf was born or for other intensive health care needs of the larger animals. However, due to space

limitations, I will focus on my interactions with Aaron, as of the three, I was able to speak with him at length about his work for Animal Haven.

Every year in May the sheep need to be sheared to prepare them for the warmer months ahead and also to give them time for their wool to grow back for the winter months.¹⁷ Most sheep, because of years of genetic manipulation within the farming industry (and because of the demands of the fashion industry), are no longer able to shed their wool on their own. Of the sixty-odd sheep at Animal Haven, only one, Jordan, was “wild” and could do this. While working with Aaron, Joanne and Alexis, I was involved in conversations that were quite revealing regarding the perception of Animal Haven held by others in the surrounding farming community.

Shearing sixty plus sheep is at least a two-day process. Most of this time is spent rounding them up. I therefore spent two days with Aaron and the health care staff assisting in this process. Aaron liked working for Animal Haven and while he is not an animal rights activist or shares in most of their philosophies, he appreciates what they do for farmed animals that he sees abused by large factory farming systems. Aaron had been shearing the sheep at Animal Haven for several years by the time I had met him. He is also the shearer for most other farms in the area. There is a certain farmer, however, that Aaron will not work for – Tony Hill. When Joanne was brought up on a third degree felony charge, it was Tony Hill’s farm where she took (or rescued) a lamb with a broken back. Being among the farmers in the area, Aaron was able to hear all sides of the story, but he sided with Joanne. He saw nothing wrong with what she did

¹⁷ It should be noted that Animal Haven never used the wool resulting from the sheep. Rather it was put into the wooded area at the top of the farm used for composting. According to the workers there, birds and other animals used it for their nests. When I decided to talk a walk to the top of the farm (much removed from sight), I found piles of this wool unused by any animal. This was a topic of debate for many in the farm: should the wool be donated? For some, it was better that it not go to waste; for others, a donation would still encourage the use of animal products. That this was not resolved meant the wool would not be used or donated.

and from Aaron's point of view, Tony Hill was trying to deflect blame by making an example of Joanne.

While there is a level of proselytising that inevitably occurs working in the education or administration departments of Animal Haven, this does not happen to the same degree while working on the farm. It may be a necessary aspect of the other departments. For example, when on a tour, it is obvious that issues of factory farming will arise. Those working in the education department may not be demanding change of the guests by standing on a soapbox, however the simple presentation of the information can be seen as a way of forcing the issue. But, "if you don't want to hear it, then don't come to the farm" (Stefanie, July 2004). Perhaps because of the high number of townspeople working on the farm, this does not happen to the same degree. The animals must be treated in certain ways and that is made clear, however, it is not expected that you listen to rhetoric on why one should not support the factory farming system. Furthermore, it is rare that this type of conversation would come up in a normal workday unless prompted.

Aaron may not have had to listen to this rhetoric, but simply being exposed to individuals treating animals in a profoundly different way than other farmers, inevitably presents different perspectives. Because of his involvement with Animal Haven, Aaron explained that he continues to "get crap from people who tell me not to work here." I asked him if this has been a problem for him in finding work in the area, but, this was not the case since he is one of the few that does sheep shearing and he has his own farm and business that keeps him afloat. He explained that if he is alienated from certain communities because of his involvement with Animal Haven, he could do without that contact. From his perspective such reactions are too juvenile to be dealt

with. He then told me about working with another man who owned a farm supply store. Actually doing a favour for Joanne, Aaron was going to get Animal Haven a large quantity of decorative rock for the cemetery and education centre. When the owners of the farm supply store discovered that it was for Animal Haven, they refused to sell him the rock. Joanne then explained that they used to have to bring in veterinarians and interns from Winston Animal Hospital to trim the cows' hooves and do the sheep shearing, which was incredibly expensive. After contacting many of the local farmers, Aaron was the only one who agreed to take on this work while the other local farmers refused to have any contact with Animal Haven. Aaron explained that he was hesitant at first, expecting to face a barrage of self-righteous indignation. Joanne and Alexis also explained that they very much liked Aaron because he didn't rush the work and thus avoided causing cuts or shaving off the sheep's skin. Aaron explained that most people shear as quickly as possible causing cuts or shaving off abscesses common on the skin. "There's no need for that. You just take your time and go around it. What's the point of having an infected animal? That's just gonna cost you more if you think about it." (Aaron, May 2004)

Still, many of his former friends, local farmers, refuse to have contact with Aaron because of his involvement with Animal Haven. He claims that it is more disappointing than a stress for him as he is rarely able to present his side of the argument or defend the workers at Animal Haven. He also explained how through what he has learned about the agri-business industry from his time at Animal Haven, he is more content and comfortable with changing his lifestyle choices. While he will never fully adopt an animal rights ideology or leave animal husbandry, he explained he has altered some of

his practices. For example, referring to how calves are raised, he refuses to eat veal stating, "if that's the way you have to do it, then I can do without."

Visiting a Stockyard Auction

Every month, as new interns came into the organisation, a visit to a local stockyard was arranged as an educational experience. From the perspective of Animal Haven, it was important to have interns take this trip as it was assumed that each individual would be returning to their other communities to influence and educate others regarding the issues of animal food production. Thus, it was argued that it was very important for interns to be able to argue that, yes; I have seen 'these' places.

A stockyard auction is considered the '3rd stage' of animal food production. The first stage is how the animal is raised - in a factory farm or otherwise. From here the animal is transported (2nd stage) to a stockyard auction to be sold to the highest bidder. Afterwards the animal is then transported wherever this individual desires (or who the person may be working for), and usually this is the slaughterhouse (final stage). It is left up for interpretation which stage is the least unpleasant, though many activists argue it this third stage.

Of the three facilities central to food animal production - the farm, stockyard, and slaughterhouse - gaining admittance to a stockyard is the easiest. Stockyards are public and this is a very important point. Obtaining access to a factory farm (or agribusiness operation) or slaughterhouse (or meat packing plant) is nearly impossible and those who do it as a means to uncover various horrors or mistreatments are more often than not doing it illegally. Others wanting to know the process of food animal production are also often denied access based on security issues (stemming from the actions of animal rights activists). For example, Peter Lovenheim details his difficulty

with gaining access to a slaughterhouse in *Portrait of a Burger as a Young Calf: The Story of One Man, Two Cows, and the Feeding of a Nation* (2002). His goal was to follow calves 7 and 8 (who later ended up at another animal sanctuary) through the process of becoming a hamburger. Lovenheim was eventually denied access to what would have been the final stage, the slaughterhouse, because of, according to the slaughterhouse manager, security reasons. The owner feared that he would leak information to various animal rights groups. Factory farms and slaughterhouses are private operations and not open to the public, regardless of the argument that the production of meat as a food commodity for public use obligates full transparency (though this is not a legal necessity currently in the US). Though technically, a stockyard is also a private operation (you need to purchase a membership, or bidding card, to buy an animal), and therefore it balances between public and private.

In July, before we were to go to the stockyard, Bill discussed the relationship with Empire Stockyards and Animal Haven. The owner of Empire is sensitive to the downed animal legislation, and he thus allows the interns from Animal Haven to visit. Bill explained that though these operations are open to the public, they are in fact private and can thus ask anyone to leave at any point; "Stockyards operate like grocery stores."

I went with other interns and Erica (the intern coordinator) three times to the stockyard (in May, June, and July). Each time there were different reactions from interns ranging from silent introspection, fear, frustration, terror, and anger. There were also different reactions towards our presence from those farmers frequenting the stockyard – from ignorance, annoyance or hatred, to perhaps an opportunity to teach one of us about the process of what they do. While many of the interns could not understand how

many of the individuals working in the animal food production business could turn a perceived blind eye towards animal suffering, many of those working in this field were understandably frustrated with this assumption or attack on their character.

Working in this industry is far from glamorous and is a hard and thankless job. Having a group of animal rights activists present does not help. While both sides maintain and present relevant and justified perceptions of the issues, they are rarely able to negotiate or compromise. How both sides view each other remains influential for the construction of individual and community identities.

It was no secret to anyone that we were interns or workers from Animal Haven when we went to the stockyard. We always went to the same stockyard and before going we were given a rundown on what it would be like and also the rules we needed to observe. For example, we were not allowed to wear any animal rights paraphernalia, take cameras, cause damage, and if we felt we were getting too visibly upset, we were instructed to leave the area and wait in the van. This was considered one of the “better” stockyards, because of its stance on not accepting downed animals.

We always went on a Tuesday to the stockyard. This was veal calf day (as was Thursday). Animal Haven wanted the interns to see the veal calves, as it would leave a more lasting impression. Erica told Andrea and I during our trip to the stockyard (my first trip) that whenever she feels herself getting upset she looks at the crowd and observes the bidders. The stockyard was hard for me and it did not get easier with time. The first time there, I did look into the crowd. The crowd was filled mainly with older men and those women who were there were either tending children or doing ‘secretarial’ work during the auction.

Setup

To get to the stockyard required driving through winding country roads and through small towns and villages. It was only a half an hour away, but you could see tiny villages through the hills and valleys. The stockyard was situated right in the centre of a town thirty minutes away from the farm. As we pulled our van into the lot it was not uncommon to see vendors with various hunting and farming paraphernalia for sale.

When we first walked into the stockyard, passing by various locals waiting and hovering outside, their eyes fell and stayed on us as we passed. We knew there was not a chance of blending into the crowd. Their gazes were not intended as a demand for us to leave, but some did imply that we were not on our own turf anymore. Many of these individuals were eating hamburgers and hotdogs from the concession stand – each time I visited the stockyard with the other interns, someone always made a comment to me about how ironic they found this presentation. While we were standing by the holding area after entering the stockyard, Punita stated, “what is worse than seeing the animals is these pot bellied humans eating them...people come here with their babies, but they don’t see them [the veal calves]” (June 2004).

Walking through the first short corridor we ended up in a small showing area with a stadium-like seating arrangement that could hold up to 250 people (which may not appear that large, but is a fairly decent size for the location of this stockyard). On each of my visits to the stockyard, nothing seemed to be happening in this room.

Through the doors on our right were the holding pens. Cows, goats, sheep, and pigs of all ages were typically found here. For many of the interns, a considerable amount of time was usually spent here. Many told me that they felt it important to

touch the animals in front of the 'locals' to show them another side of an animal's use. Many also talked about the difference they saw in these animals compared to those at Animal Haven. The first time I went to the stockyard with Andrea, her first comment when she saw cows in their holding pens was, "Wow, ours are so much bigger. There are eyes are so sad." (May 2004) Erica confirmed this and said it was because ours were fed a proper diet and were never confined to their stalls.

Through these stalls was the back loading area where hundreds of calves were being pushed through to the weighing area and then into the showing area. The loading and showing areas were connected and centred by several dozen smaller pens holding up to twenty animals that had already been sold. While adults were there maintaining the area, there were also many younger boys helping them (as this was the summer and it was customary to have younger children help out while not in school). The showing area was a small (10 feet by 10 feet) fenced area with stands that could seat up to about 25 people comfortably. The sides were filled with others who could find room (this is where we usually stood knowing full well we would be crossing a line by sitting in the stands). While looking at these stands, where all of the auctioning of livestock went on, each time I was there, these stands were occupied only by men.

From the back loading area, one calf at a time was pushed (usually by being hit on the legs, sides, or hind quarters with a thin wooden cane¹⁸) into a holding pen where they were weighed. They were then pushed into the showing area. The calves need to move around in order for buyers to fully observe them. This was done by men in the showing area pushing and poking them with the same type of long wooden sticks. The bidding happened very fast – not more than a minute for each calf. The auctioneer

¹⁸ Often times electrical prods are used during this process, however, I did not witness the use of these during any of my visits to the stockyard.

performed it in the fast manner typical of an auction. It was usually the same three men who were doing all of the bidding. Most likely, Erica informed us, they were working for a larger meat packing plant that could afford to buy more. Depending on the health of an animal as it appeared for this brief minute in the showing area, the calves would be sold for anywhere from \$.75/lb. to \$2.50/lb. (most calves weighed between 50 and 100 pounds). After the bid was over, the calf was shoved into another holding pen where they would be shipped out after the auction.

Veal calves are male. The calves coming through the stockyard were no older than two weeks, some still having their umbilical chord attached and hanging and they would suckle on our fingers and knees if we let them. These calves were the unusable offspring of dairy cows (and were therefore mostly Holsteins). On my first visit to the stockyard, there was a lone female in a group of males. Females at the stockyard on veal calf day most likely meant that a dairy farmer had a surplus of females and needed to sell some off. As the lone female Holstein came out, the men inside the showing area immediately lifted her up and turned her so that her udders were visible to the men in the stands. As they inspected her, many felt her udders to determine if she would be a good 'milker'. I had positioned myself next to an older man who told me he was into sheep farming (the sheep would be coming out after the calves). I asked him how one determines what makes a good 'milker.' He replied very matter-of-factly, "Well you see it depends on the positioning of the udders. The farther back they are means that it will be more difficult to milk her, so you want them to be closer to her mid-section. This way when they're full she won't have as much difficulty standing and they're easier to get to."

Out of a couple of hundred of these calves, perhaps one would be used for breeding purposes, the others are slaughtered at about four to six months old for veal. As another male calf came through, a man in the back inquired as to the size of the calf's phallus (indicating that it would be used for breeding purposes). A man in the front row reached under and replied, "It's small." The man in the back did not bid on this animal and the farmer beside me said, "Yeah, you see, that would be a waste of money. Mostly likely will be difficult to breed."¹⁹ Though my brief conversation with this farmer, it was clear that this is business, like many others, based on capital. There is a very straightforward approach for being successful and one of these is to understand what is the 'worth' of an animal. For example, is more time going to be needed for milking? And, is the animal likely to not be able to withstand a higher amount of hormones because of the position of her udders? The animals here can bring you more capital, but only if you are objective about how to purchase them. When I told Andrea and Erica about my conversation with the farmer and about the incidents with the calves, their perspective was that it was an incredibly sexist industry. Both the males and females had been objectified, but it was the female animals that were constantly being rated on their productive qualities.

Seeing the stockyard, especially calves, was very upsetting for many of the interns. I remember Abby crying, Charlotte engaging with some of the farmers, and Kaia and Shelly looking to damage property or steal an animal. Kaia was an intern in June and July and she went to the stockyard in both months with myself and the other interns. Kaia, when I went with her on her second trip to the stockyard, tried purchasing a hunting knife to slash tires on the tractor-trailers that brought in the

¹⁹ The trend in breeding today is artificial insemination where a 'dummy' (a castrated male) is used to arouse an un-castrated male. However, this is an expensive operation to set up and smaller farmers are left to rely on traditional methods.

animals. I was able to talk her out of this by arguing that the knife would not be able to get through the tires to do much damage. However, I was also heeding a warning from Cecil:

People that do direct action, they're really not that powerful. I mean, especially in agriculture. People do open rescues [legal and known to all parties involved] and that's probably the most effective thing. But, on the other hand, if they tried to take direct action such as SHAC does, people are going to die. It'll be activists dying in my opinion and they'll just disappear. If ALF became more active in rural communities, against farms in particular, you're going to see people disappear... You know that whole Deliverance thing – it's not a fiction I can tell you. I know from experience. (Cecil, August 2006)²⁰

Cecil was a soft-spoken, retired dairy farmer. Farming was an inherited family occupation for him. Cecil is also speaking from his own work and involvement in social activism. While he may not have been an animal rights activist in his youth, he was still very active in speaking out against what he saw as corporate control over various industries that were once family owned, like farming. Cecil speaks from a degree of knowledge that only comes with time and experience. When he spoke, I listened.

In June a group of eight (six interns, Erica, and myself) visited the stockyard and again it was very obvious to the crowd who we were. In May, Andrea, Erica and I had stayed for about an hour in the stockyard. In June, we were in the stockyard for about four hours – the other interns refused to leave until every calf had been through. They wanted to make sure none of them were downed, or they were hoping that some of them would be. During our ride out in June, Kaia asked what was to be done if there was a downed animal. Erica explained that in the event this happens, she would call Bill, who would then call the owner of the stockyard. The owner would then contact the

²⁰ It should be noted that during the time of my stay, many animal rights activists I worked with were opposed to SHAC USA ('Stop Huntington Animal Cruelty'; various countries have their own chapter). Up until this point, violence that had resulted from the actions of animal rights activists had not intentionally harmed any other human beings. However, members of SHAC USA purposefully and knowingly attacked a CEO of Huntington Life Sciences. It caused a great stir in the animal rights and liberation movements, which further divided organisations and individuals on how to implement change and use tactics. SHAC is also criticised for doing home demonstrations because of the emotional and mental violence that is inflicted on the families of the executives of HLS. SHAC thus far does not acknowledge this type of violence.

stockyard. What happens from there is hopefully they would euthanise the animal if necessary or Animal Haven would get the animal. However, it was unclear how long this process would take. Bill had earlier told me and the other interns that it was likely that the owner would not call him back. It was explained that the best thing to do in the meanwhile would be to take as many notes as possible noting the objectives, not the subjective nature of the animal. For example, does the animal appear to be dehydrated? Are his eyes sunken? How long has the animal been immobile? What's the temperature? Was he being dragged by his legs (as this is an indication that he is downed)? It is useless to note that one thinks an animal looks sad because there really is no way to prove that. But by documenting thoroughly the conditions you observe, you are building evidence for a cruelty case. However, this information would more likely be used as evidence and documentation for building a case to get a law passed in a court of public opinion (it is less likely to be successful in a court of law). As Bill explained this process, it became clear that we (myself and the other interns) were moving from holding a specific ideology to being trained as animal rights activists.

Kaia, among others, was not satisfied with this process. This process was long and would have taken time. In that time it was likely that the farmer who brought it would have taken the animal away or it could die. Many also did not care that building a case could be used legally since from their perspective, the legal system has done little for the protection of farmed animals and it would be too difficult to ever change this system. Instead, many of the interns argued that it should be up to Erica to offer to take the animal immediately. This was unacceptable for Animal Haven for two reasons. Firstly, Animal Haven does not have the room for an animal that is downed (which needs to be quarantined to determine if it has any contagious diseases) and secondly,

Animal Haven claims to have a good working relationship with this stockyard and they do not want to jeopardise this by potentially having a confrontation each month.²¹ The workers at Animal Haven maintain a civil relationship with the stockyard, while at the same time working to end an overtly capitalist objective but the interns tended to not be happy with this arrangement. It is not, however, the interns who must maintain this civility.

While walking among the interns and the other farmers and families at the auction, it was interesting to listen to the differing levels of importance from each group. Before going to the stockyard, Bill explained to us that the “main benefit is to see the different perspective. You see how the people who work there see the animals as commodities, whereas we see the pain and fear in their eyes. They literally see them as cuts of meat – they configure the carcass. It’s summer, so you’ll also see a lot of kids there – we get to see the culturisation as it occurs” (Bill, June 2004).

Each time I went, regardless of the group of interns, it was very important for each of the interns to touch the animals in some way – in an attempt to show the others there interested in purchasing them for their by-products that these animals could be touched, could be played with, they could feel emotions, etc. Some of the ‘locals’ would watch us do this, some snickering. Andrea explained that when she was watching the animals in the showing area, “I tried to look them in the eyes to send them mental comforting...it sounds stupid but it made me feel better.”

I can imagine that this must have been frustrating for many farmers. There are two perspectives at play here. The animal rights perspective has already been considered throughout this thesis and does not need reiteration. For the local farmer,

²¹ Additionally, Animal Haven would never purchase an animal, as they would then be supporting farmers they disagree with ideologically. To support these farmers would be hypocritical.

many of whom were small family farmers (as this was a smaller stockyard auction) the presence of animal rights activists was symbolic of their continual struggle for survival.

It is not the efforts of animal rights activism that is threatening the small farmers, it is large industrialised agriculture buying them out. In addition to this pressure you then have a group of primarily young, white women coming around intimating that one's profession is unethical. Is it any wonder that we were met with hostility?

Many interns and other animal rights activists on the farm were very unforgiving in how they viewed the 'other'. Having a certain perspective made it difficult for many to see any other perspective. Cecil was very good at turning things around. Perhaps because of his work in dairy farming before turning to animal rights activism, it was easier for Cecil to see other perspectives when it came to animal production. He explained to a group of exasperated interns one night:

A friend of mine is a 'sticker' and from his perspective "it's a job." I asked him how he felt about the cows, because I knew he had a preference for farm animals. He replied, "I hate them. They're trying to hurt me [with their kicking]. I've got to stick them before they stick me." There was the aspect of disassociating in order to cope with the nature of the job. I know many farmers who have not been to a stockyard or to a slaughterhouse because they have this need to disconnect from how their animals are treated - they don't need to see or acknowledge their death. [Someone in the group then asked if they acknowledged the horrendous nature of their own practices of factory farming.] People are people. They're not bad. They grow up differently and have the capacity to change. Many farmers hate what they do to their animals. (Cecil, June 2004)

During an education night, Bill explained that to investigate stockyard conditions or to simply look around, it is best to "act like you have a right to be there...don't lie about why you're there. I was asked to leave one time and so I said, 'do you have to have a licence to buy a cow?' And that's when they told me, no you just need a check." Bill explained you can present yourself as being interested: "I'm interested in maybe getting some animals... they hear you want to buy some animals - you're a customer, so they're going to want to be more accommodating." For Bill, while

it remains a matter of perspective on what it means to treat animals humanely, so too does the law in terms of intent.

Our visits to the stockyard were not only so we could say we had been there, but were also intended as a means of education. It was assumed that when we left our internship, we would continue our work within animal rights. Animal Haven wanted to educate us on how we can continue to research and document the conditions of other stockyards and animal facilities in our respective communities of belonging.

Chapter VII Training a [Future] Activist

Rescuing a Calf

Within the first two weeks of my fieldwork, I took part in the rescue of a calf in New Jersey. I was working in development this particular day – making phone call after phone call, sending fax after fax in an effort to get more celebrity and corporate support for the annual gala event. My left ear was both hot and numb from the phone constantly placed there, the left side of my neck and shoulder cramped. I was waiting desperately for 5:00. I had isolated myself in the front reception area, where, oddly enough, hardly anyone came in and I therefore knew I could work uninterrupted. I had been there for several hours with the phone pressed against my ear when Haley came in, “Oh! There you are! Have you heard about the calf that escaped the slaughterhouse in Newark?” she asked rather hurriedly. I told her that I had heard the rumour mill about Animal Haven attempting to get this calf. She then asked if I would be willing to go down with Trisha and Cecil to pick up the calf; that I would have to work through the night, but that I would have the rest of the next day off. I jumped at this opportunity, thankful that I had been assigned to development that day and was willing to do this work (as the other two interns were not too keen on stuffing envelopes or phoning publicists).

I walked as quickly as possible the quarter mile up the steep hill to the intern house to pack some things – which really only consisted of my pen, notebook, and cigarettes as I knew we would be driving all night anyway. As I arrived back at the administration building, Mary and Bill very quickly instructed me on how to use the digital camera; not only the technicalities, but also how I should frame shots, making sure to get as many people in them as possible. If the police or USDA officials were to

show up, I was not to stop filming even if I was told to. Instead, explained Bill, ask as sweetly as possible, “oh, is it illegal to be filming?” or any other question to keep them distracted and to draw out the situation. If it becomes an issue, he further explained, “lower the camera, but don’t turn it off right away. Act like you did, but keep it on as long as possible.” This was another aspect of my training as an animal rights activist. There have already been several documentaries featuring Animal Haven and it was likely that this footage would be used for future reference.

Cecil, Trisha, and I finally left Shepard’s Valley at 5:30 pm on 13 May 2004. Trisha is used to carrying out rescues; after all, she and Bill had formed and started Animal Haven through a rescue. On the way to Newark, both she and Cecil told me many stories about situations in rescues and dealing with governmental and legal entities. They also told me about their interactions with individuals who inadvertently are part of the rescues. Cecil’s first rescue involved a trip to New York City to pick up a sheep caught by animal control, who was assumed to have escaped a slaughterhouse. Cecil explained that the animal control people had never been around a sheep before – not surprising as they typically deal with cats, dogs, racoons, or other animals typical of a city. One man who worked for animal control stated that he had never seen a sheep in person and that he “like[d] how it makes me feel.” For Cecil and Trisha these types of interactions are very important to help people understand that all animals, especially farmed animals used for human consumption, are sentient beings. But, Trisha explained rather pessimistically, many individuals do not make the connection between farmed animals and the food they eat.

Trisha then told us of another rescue that she carried out in NYC rescuing chickens from a shut down slaughterhouse that had been convicted of cruelty to

animals. Animal Haven took these animals because the owners simply closed shop and left them behind. The USDA tried to prohibit this rescue, arguing that the chickens could not be removed from the NYC area because of the threat of bird flu. Trisha lied and told them that she was working on getting a farm in the NYC area. As she was crossing over the George Washington Bridge they called on her cell phone and told her to “cease and desist.” She pulled over and “they were livid! I told them that the farm fell through and that the only other possibility was to bring them to Animal Haven.” According to Trisha, they refused and she explained, “So I told them that I would turn around, but I just kept going towards Animal Haven.” The whole time she was on the phone with the lawyers trying to figure out if the USDA officials even had the power to detain (they do not). Trisha explained, “the USDA doesn’t even know their own rules or all the laws. They kept calling me and I just responded with as much hostility and legal jargon that they were throwing at me.” By the time she got to Animal Haven (about 4 hours later), the USDA had backed off and left them alone.

Each rescue is different and involves dealing with different levels of government or legal interference. During Queenie’s rescue (she is a Texas Longhorn who escaped from a Kosher slaughter house in Queens), Animal Haven did not have to struggle very much with the USDA because there was such a public outcry for the animal. During her escape, a freelance journalist saw her running through the streets of Manhattan and decided to cover the story. The police eventually caught her in Central Park where she was met with enormous media attention (she had been running through the city for hours before being cornered). The public, after seeing this story, flooded the slaughterhouse and papers with calls pleading for the cow’s life. It did not help the slaughterhouse that it already had a cruelty conviction against it. Combined with

faltering PR, the slaughterhouse decided not to try and reclaim her and Animal Haven was able to adopt her.²²

The story behind the calf that I was involved in rescuing, later named Liberty by Carrie (the woman who rescued him and owned the towing company) was that he escaped from a Halal slaughterhouse three days prior to our arrival.²³ Animal Haven had been working on this case since they were contacted by animal rights activists in the area who picked up on the story. Carrie explained how she was in her office facing the street. She looked up and saw this calf trotting down the street and he wandered to the left and ran into her towing lot. She immediately called out to her husband to go shut the gate where the calf then ran into the alley by the garage. The couple then pulled the gate closed so that he could not escape. They did not exactly know what to do with him as they initially had no idea who he belonged to. Ironically, or fortunately, this particular slaughterhouse (whose owner came by demanding the animal back) owed this women's company about 4000\$ in towing expenses. She explained to Trisha and I that she just could not let it go back to be slaughtered. Instead, she told the slaughterhouse that she was not going to give it back because of their outstanding bill. From this, Carrie and the owner of the slaughterhouse began arguing over legalities and the USDA became involved. The calf was only worth about 1000\$ according to the slaughterhouse official. Carrie compromised and said she would knock 2000\$ off of their outstanding bill of one year. On Tuesday (Liberty ran into her towing yard on

²² Animals in such situations need to be signed over (or adopted). They do not hold their own right to independence, but are rather owned. For Animal Haven to obtain all of these animals in rescue it is either because the previous owner has abandoned them, and hence given up their right to ownership, or the owner signs them over with official adoption papers.

²³ Kosher and Halal slaughterhouses have the tendency to have more cruelty convictions against them and more animals that escape. This does not imply that the conditions in these slaughterhouses are worse than conditions in other slaughterhouses, but that it is easier to access these facilities. It is not uncommon that individuals are allowed entrance to pick out an animal they want and so they are frequently entered by undercover animal rights activists. This combined with the fact that these operations are smaller with less security measures to confine animals results in more frequent escapes.

Monday evening), the slaughterhouse had made a verbal agreement with Carrie stating that she could keep the calf. However, by Wednesday they showed up with the police and the USDA stating that it was illegal for her to maintain ownership.

Animal Haven had been aware of this situation by Monday evening when Carrie first obtained the calf and Animal Haven consulted their lawyers on this issue. They decided to argue that since the calf was on the property of the towing company, Carrie could legally be considered the owner. Trisha was explaining how the USDA and the lawyers were not exactly sure regarding the legal standing (which often is the case when dealing with animals – sentient beings, but not rights holders – since they must be someone’s property). This slaughterhouse had also already been convicted of cruelty to animals and its public image was dwindling with this case. Still, the USDA and the slaughterhouse were continuing their effort to reclaim the animal by stating that federal regulations require that the animal return to the slaughterhouse because of the potential of disease, especially mad cow. Trisha seemed to be right when she said, “every time they [USDA officials] open their mouths they say something stupid.” Cecil pointed out the ironic bit to this – that we could not bring this animal to a sanctuary to treat it because of the supposed potential that it was diseased, but the USDA was willing to allow it to return to the slaughterhouse to be put into the human food supply. Trisha explained how she had to be pushy and try to intimidate the USDA or else they would try to intimidate her. As she was speaking with a USDA representative and they were telling her that by regulation the animal had to be returned to the slaughterhouse, Trisha confidently retaliated by demanding to see the regulation and telling them that they could not enter the property without a search and seizure warrant. Trisha and Animal Haven were not going to relinquish power to a governmental agency they viewed as

corrupt and contradictory. Using public support and the media, Animal Haven activists were able to demand that the slaughterhouse relinquish their 'ownership' of this animal in return for slightly less bad public relations.

As we arrived at Carrie's Newark towing company, Carrie, her husband, and a friend met us. The lawyers also met us there in the event that the USDA officials were going to show up, which they never did. These three individuals went to great lengths to protect this animal, none of them ever having been around a farmed animal before. As Cecil and I were approaching the make-shift alley way he had been in, Frank (Carrie's husband) explained, "yeah there was no way anyone was going to get to him. We put a gate in front of it and then we pulled the dumpster in front of it. Then I backed up the trailer (to a semi) and released the brakes. Ain't no way anyone's gonna move a few thousand tons of dead weight!" As they pulled the gate back, we walked into an alley that Carrie and Frank covered with straw at their own expense. In the very back, lying down with his head tucked behind an old tire, was a six month old heifer. As we approached with our flashlights, he slowly pulled his head out to assess the situation. He bleakly looked at us, the white fur on his head darkened by the dirt on the tires with two perfect curved triangles that had started to peak on the top of his head, and then he very slowly and shyly slipped his face back behind the tires. While Carrie, the lawyers, and Trisha were setting up our trailer to take him out; Cecil and I were engaging with Frank and his friend Tom.

Both Frank and Tom had lived in Jersey their whole lives (both now in their fifties) and had never before seen or interacted with farmed animals, except on their plate. They talked in amazement at this animal and of his endearing qualities – his shyness and calmness. As Trisha walked back into the alley way, she stated that if it had

not been for Carrie and Frank “he’d be steak now” and that they were “educating millions of people that cows have feelings too.” On our ride home with Liberty in tow, Cecil made a very important observation regarding the perception that animal rights activists may hold of those individuals not involved with the movement on any level. He stated that if one were to meet either of these men (Frank or Tom) in the street you would not think they would have this soft inside that we saw. Instead one might only see that they have a very rough, tough exterior. Cecil stated, “for me, it’s just so amazing to see angels in cities like that.”

After getting back to Animal Haven (around 5:00 am), we brought Liberty into the upper hospital, which was right across from the intern house. There he was put in an isolated pen, but the other heifers in this barn were interested in him and were squeezing their necks through the gates. Liberty pushed himself against these gates, seeming to prefer this contact. As I left the barn, Trisha thanked me for coming along and hugged me – something rather uncomfortable for me as until that point I had only heard rumours from others working on the farm and other interns about the negative way she treats other activists and especially interns.

Two days later Liberty was dead. He had gone in to be castrated and de-horned. At his age and horn development, he needed to be under full anaesthesia; they could not be simply burned out. According to Winston Animal Hospital he just never woke up. Carolyn believed it was negligence on the part of the hospital as situations like this have happened in the past. She was very distrustful of this hospital as it often operated according to ‘industry standard’. The day he died, I watched as a huff of secrecy surrounded the new hospital barn where he, like all new animals, are held until medical clearance. I was supposed to interview Cecil at 6:00, but he never showed. Instead, I

saw him, Trisha, Joanne, and other farm workers going in and out of this barn. Andrea and Joyce, the other interns, also had no idea what was going on and all of us knew that we should not go over to find out.

The next day I worked in the administration department again working the gala event with Bill and Haley. I overheard a conversation between Bill and Haley about how to break this to the press and if they were going to alert the press at all. They decided against this, instead opting for putting a notice in the monthly newsletter. During my lunch break, I wandered up to the farm to see if I could get any more details about what happened. Those on the farm were quietly doing their work, not conversing with anyone. I ran into Andrea and Irene who reiterated what I had already heard. However, Trisha overheard our conversation and very quickly snapped at us to keep things quiet as the organisation still had not decided what was to be done. She then stormed off in a wave of arrogance that seemed to confirm the rumours I had previously heard. Irene, Andrea, and I went off on our separate ways; none of us talking about how three young adults had just been treated as gossipy children.

Cecil came up to me later in the afternoon and apologised for missing me and rescheduled the interview. He said he had intended to stop by the intern house later that night, but by the time they had finished burying Liberty, he assumed I would be sleeping. He explained that he really wanted to help Joanne as she gets very upset each time an animal dies. He then turned to me and asked, "how are you doing with all of this?" I thanked Cecil for asking and told him I was fine. In all honesty, I was not very attached to any of the animals on the farm at this point, but I appreciated Cecil's acknowledgement that considering my involvement in this case perhaps I might have

been understandably upset by the situation. This altered the way I viewed how things functioned and were handled on the farm. It became clear who held 'power'.

As mentioned previously, many activists and interns coming to work for the organisation held a very idealistic view of the organisation; particularly giving that, in addition to providing a haven for farmed animals, Animal Haven also acted as a sanctuary for animal rights activists. It allowed individuals to work towards a cause they felt was integral for the alleviation of suffering and injustice, while also interacting with other animals on a more emotional level since, not surprisingly, those who came to Animal Haven liked animals. Philosophy and rhetoric surrounding animal rights activism blurs the species boundary and hierarchy. This boundary exists, it is argued, because of human will, not because it is how things *should* be viewed. Many of those I worked with expressed the belief that this hierarchy, while existing for the mainstream, does not exist in their world:

[How I was raised to be a farmer] was all about suppressing natural empathy. I was an innocent. A baby, a little kid, a boy, a young man and during those years [working the farm and animals] they pounded it into my head these values; values I wasn't born with. I was acculturated as they say and sometimes they say 'adulterated.' The adults got a hold of my childish innocence, my natural compassion and empathy for animals, my natural kinship with creatures who were young and innocent like me...And, [my father and uncle] drove that out of me and made me into a man; a western man; a patriarchal, macho man – a killer of animals (David, August 2004).

I grew up with that boundary. I was taught that boundary as a kid. And, now I don't have that boundary. It's been quite a process to get through that. But, as much disconnect that the average person has in our society, like to go to McDonalds, my disconnect is larger because of the things I did to animals. But, anybody can get over that. It's not an insurmountable thing. That disconnect can connect full...to be quite honest, there's a certain amount of boundary that I do have to hold off when I go see these stockyard auctions or factory farms...that coping mechanism is very much part of me that I grew up with...the first time I went to a stockyard when I was working for Animal Haven, I couldn't come to work for a couple of days because of the emotional state I was in. And to be able to keep on doing that I have to be able to focus on what I have to do – the documentation and witnessing this stuff. To a certain extent I've got to turn it off (Cecil, August 2004).

Yet, within this organisation, hierarchies among activists, but also within how the animals were viewed and treated, were very real. Group dynamics in the context of social activism are often rife with feelings of solidarity and tension stemming from an ideological base. In the case of Animal Haven, many of these feelings were exacerbated because of a hierarchical structure that attempted to dictate individual beliefs. In addition, how the actual animals were viewed and treated spilled over into individual belief systems that affected this hierarchy.

Chapter VIII Ideologies, Philosophies, and Social Movements

Developing Relationships and Ideology

Relationships within Animal Haven seemed to develop hierarchically, with a great deal of tension not only existing between the three main departments, but also on a more individual level. Tensions occur for several reasons, but the main reasons seemed to point to a perception that one department always had more work to do and that the organisation could not function without it. However, as an outsider to this organisation, but as a member of the broader animal rights movement, Animal Haven was always presented to me and others I spoke with as a utopia or a haven for the movement and for the activists that would come to visit, volunteer, or work. During a former interview, Carlin, a health care worker, explained to me that in her first year of studies in animal health, she came across the Animal Haven website. The next summer she came to visit and she told me, “I just knew that when I was done with school, I was going to work here. It just seemed perfect – like a haven where I can perform healthcare on animals, but I’m not caught in the evil system of exploiting or abusing them.” Because it would be impossible to mention every aspect of why and how tension developed, I will focus on some of the major aspects of how I saw and witnessed this tension developing and how it was expressed to me by those I worked with: the politicisation of the mundane, the perception of a public versus private being, an idea of a created community/family, and how these three elements together influenced the further development of this organisation and shared individual experiences.

This movement, like many other social activist movements, is composed of individuals who are very self-conscious and self-reflexive on all levels. There is a

constant reflection on agency where this can be destroyed easily due to the overwhelming sense of being in a state of constant self-critique. For many, social relations were cut or seriously placed under stress because of a need to constantly defend one's culinary preferences and lifestyle or because an individual could not cope with having acquaintances consume products and support an industry they perceived as morally bankrupt. For example,

Well, when we started, when I first came, it wasn't important at all. My first couple of weeks here I was like, no, I was just not really interested in vegan guys. I don't know why. I don't know. This weekend was really weird. I hung out with the guy that I'm dating and it was a great time, and then we went to a restaurant and he got veal. I was like, ooooh. In the past, that would have bothered me a little. It just really bothered me now. So, I don't know. I think over time that might change. I think now, I'll date almost anybody, but I think I'm kind of leaning towards vegetarians. It's not really an issue, but it is kind of becoming one. (Carlin, August 2004)

Situations similar to this were often re-iterated to me and were not necessarily unique to Carlin. However, Carlin experienced this as a highly personal dilemma because it required her to re-evaluate her morals and ideology in a way that could potentially hurt those around her she cared for. At the same time, ignoring these conflicts was far too stressful.

The animal rights movement is premised on the perception that certain aspects of 'mainstream' society's ills and faults must be dealt with immediately. Individuals often times get involved in activism and become activists because of a felt need to better society, but also one's own situation. Individuals better their own situation because this often leads to a lifting of weight or relief of tension or stress when one is no longer directly contributing to the perceived problem (in the case of my fieldwork, to the misuse of non-human animals, destruction of the environment, and/or contributing to capitalism as a perceived oppressive system) (for example, see Friedman 1995; Finsen and Finsen 1994; and Jasper and Nelkin 1992). It is also a 'betterment' of society because

it is 'one less person' contributing to the problem and therefore has the potential to (ideally) change the perspective/ideals of 'mainstream' society. Thus, for the individual, being an active participant is, in a sense, what they give back, what they contribute to society (see Wiltfang and McAdam 1991). This self-reflection and personal action of the personal could be considered their sacrifice (martyrism) for society (they are at least doing something – keeping in mind that action is going to take on very different philosophical perspectives, for example, the morality surrounding animal use versus veganism as a way to combat capitalist structures. Additionally, one's martyrism could, and often does, become a competition among activists). Cecil, the former dairy farmer turned animal rights activist working for Animal Haven in the legislative department, explained to me one day that "I will spend the rest of my life saying I'm sorry" because of his former actions prior to getting involved in animal rights activism and veganism – it was his way of "working off past karma."

Among those that I worked with, this betterment of society could be accomplished on two main levels – the socio-cultural and the political-legal. Socio-cultural is meant to represent those aspects of society and community that exist outside a formalised political and legal sphere. Though one could argue that all actions are political (see Said 1999), this is not the debate. Though there are rules, norms, taboos, ethics, and morals surrounding everyday experience, political-legal is meant to be the formalised state creation of laws and rules meant to control daily actions. Therefore, an example of the political-legal realm would be centralised governments and ruling bodies, police and military forces, or a legal system where citizens converge for mediation or arbitration. Codified laws then focus the use of force as a monopoly to centralised governmental systems. The socio-cultural realm however falls outside of

these aspects, but actions and influence here are maintained as 'legal'. The socio-cultural realm can also then be viewed as civil society.

Legality vs. Illegality: A Point of Contention

Veganism is often conceptualised as a lifestyle. Those adhering to such a lifestyle then transcend the limitations restricted to a diet and broach a theoretical realm that questions how one should live. How are differing perceptions of what one 'should' do, 'should' be, and how one 'should' act negotiated? Perceptions of legality, illegality, law, and justice were among some of the topics and questions that affected a sense of self-sacrifice and added to the levels of tension experienced among those social activists I worked with. For many at Animal Haven, there existed competition regarding who was the better vegan or who was the better [animal rights] activist. Furthermore, the approach one took was also a point of contention. For example, was it worthwhile to take a non-violent approach, or is violence always negative? The issue of violence is always problematic for an activist community, especially when it is focused on legality versus illegality. It requires one to make a distinction between law and justice, though the formulation of this distinction varies among individuals. It requires one to define violence. For example, a main argument used to illustrate this distinction poses the question, what is more criminal, destroying a laboratory used for animal testing, or allowing specific testing to be legal? Michael, an August intern explained to me during an interview:

An unjust law is no law at all. What you're talking about right now is civil disobedience and that's immensely important for progress of a society. Whenever you have established laws or practices, customs, traditions that are wrong, you have to act against them and sometimes that means breaking the law or pushing the envelope. Going back to trashing laboratories, I don't want to set off bombs, and I definitely would not want that to be a major part of the movement, but that at the same time, on a very small scale, serves a valuable purpose. (Michael, August 2004)

This also brings up the debate over violence and the rule of law where two main ideals are at play. The first postulates that by breaking the law this constitutes an act of violence. But the second interprets law itself as violence (especially when situated within a capitalist framework; see Derrida 1992 and Benjamin 1996) and simply because something is legal, does not make it just or right. Moreover, simply because something is currently illegal, this does not mean it will continue to be so in the future (as indicated by Michael, law and society are progressive). However, this begs the question of whether or not working within the current legal system is useful at all. There were several people I spoke with on the farm who argued that the legal system serves a very limited purpose, especially when it is situated within a corporate, capitalistic framework. Shelly was a June intern and an activist and an anarchist. She lives in Maryland, just outside of Washington D.C. where she goes to school (she is an undergraduate in her early twenties) and she has been incredibly active on a variety of issues ranging from trans issues, pan-sexuality, feminism, anti-globalisation as it relates to movements against (unelected) global bodies such as the FTAA, NAFTA, the WTO, the IMF, and the WHO. As an undergraduate who is involved in these issues, she was already teaching classes in her Women's Studies department at her university. She argued:

I think for sure, laws are symbolic... Laws are supposedly there to protect us, but they're not and they don't protect us. If anybody does something there's severe punishment. I really have a problem of agreeing with people should be in fear and that's why they should do 'good' things. Also, the fact that laws range so drastically from doing positive things like animal rights and doing really negative things like capital punishment – How does that work?! [And] You've got corporate America working in your government, does it really make a difference? It's all about property; protecting wealth and not protecting people. And, with animal rights, they'll be like, well the law says this, so we can still kill this animal this way. (Shelly, June 2004)

In contrast to Shelly, there were an equal number of people who would prefer to continue to work within a legal framework while attempting to alter societal perception. Joyce was the first intern I met when I arrived at the end of April. She had already been interning at Animal Haven for two months and she was the one who showed me where to find everything and more fully informed me regarding what was going to be expected of me as an intern. Joyce is in her late thirties, married, and is a former police officer. She explained to me on one occasion that her reasons for leaving the police force were due to disagreements with how the current system works; that she finds it appalling that “some things that would be considered a felony if done to human beings, are only a misdemeanour if done to non-human animals” (Joyce, May 2004). Eventually, Joyce could no longer handle the racism and sexism that she viewed within the system, though she told me she was always working to change it. Despite her opinion that the current legal system was not working, she disagreed that simply taking the laws into one’s own hands was the appropriate way to accomplish movement goals.

Just because you think a law is unjust doesn’t give you the right to break it. It’s all a matter of perspective and anybody could have a perspective that a law is unjust. That doesn’t give them the right to break it... What you do is talk to your legislature or anyone you can to try to get the law changed. Don’t just try to circumvent it. (Joyce, May 2004)

Comparing these two perspectives is an example of the divergence within the movement of how to approach changing current mainstream perspective both socially and politically. For one, the argument to work with the current legal system and its actors will never meet eye-to-eye. The latter opinion expressed by Joyce holds belief that current legal actors are actually looking out for the best interest of society where Shelly’s argument is that legal actors are more selfishly motivated. It raises the question of not only animal rights activists and the ‘mainstream’ talking past one another; but whether animal rights activists are also talking past one another as well (see Tester 2001)?

The problematic grey area of the legal system can be found in the situation with Joanne, the shelter director, who 'stole' a lamb (related to me one day while shearing the sheep as well as being told to me, in bits and pieces, by many other Animal Haven workers through my three and half month stay). A few years prior to my time working at Animal Haven, Joanne had rescued a lamb, at least in the eyes of animal rights activists and this organisation. In the eyes of the farmer she took this lamb from, this was property theft. As Joanne explained, she was driving into town one day to meet up with friends. On the way she passed a farm that raised sheep and she saw in the field by the road a lamb whose back was broken and was being trampled by the other sheep, as it was unable to move away from the herd. Joanne pulled her truck to the side of the road, jumped the fence, took the lamb and immediately brought it to Winston's animal hospital where it was put down (at Joanne's expense).

The battle that ensued is typical of a difference in perception regarding what constitutes legality. The farmer pressed charges – it was not difficult to identify Joanne's truck; after all this is a small, rural farming area where 'everyone knows everyone.' Joanne was charged with criminal theft and intent – a charge that could have left her with a seven-year federal prison sentence. Though Animal Haven's official stance was that they had nothing to do with this action (which to an extent is true since Joanne did act independently) the organisation supported this action and supplied her with legal support. In the end Joanne received 200 hours of community service, which she was not able to carry out at Animal Haven. Since Animal Haven is a 501c organisation, legally it is not allowed to pay overtime, yet Joanne consistently worked a 60-hour week. Thus, this made it extremely difficult for her to fulfil this 200-hour requirement.

Interestingly, those who did oppose breaking current laws were quick to change their minds whenever I brought up this situation with Joanne, as is the case in the following example. Carolyn was one of my favourite people at Animal Haven – though I often disagreed with her philosophies, I admired her tireless commitment to her work and the fervour of her beliefs. Carolyn, prior to coming to Animal Haven (in December 2004) worked as a travel agent and took a 70% pay cut to work in a job that offered her mental and emotional peace of mind. Carolyn was not necessarily against breaking the law, but she was also hesitant because of how it could make the movement look and set it back:

[Violence in terms of breaking the law] is not going to help things because then [people are] going to be labelling us as the wackos... the thing is stop being violent period. I don't blame them [other animal rights groups] for wanting to do that, but again I think it's hurting because they're not going about it the right way. Yeah, it's going to take longer to get the legal means to go and get the animals the correct way – what Animal Haven does²⁴. Unfortunately, it is going to take longer to do it legally, but I think in the long run it's going to help more. (Carolyn, July 2004)

When I then asked her about the situation with Joanne stealing the lamb, she reconsidered what could be viewed as a self-defeating relativistic stance on right and wrong:

I knew you were going to bring that up! I know, I know! That's why we're at where we are. It's so tough. We all have the animals interests at heart and Joanne did this one thing and it was on a small scale, but then the other people can do this huge thing like break into a place... I don't know where you draw the line. If I was in Joanne's place, I would've done the same thing. (Carolyn, July 2004)

Yet, some individuals never agreed with breaking the law. Mark was another August intern, in his mid twenties studying international development as an undergraduate.

²⁴ Ironically, Animal Haven often obtains many of their animals through (technically) illegal means. Other animal rights activists not directly connected usually take these animals to Animal Haven. Though front region claims of Animal Haven is to work on changing the existing legal system, they fully support 'taking the law into your own hands' – "just don't get caught" Gene, the founder, told me on several occasions.

Mark also studies Zen Buddhism, and much of his perspective on violence stems from this as he explained:

Violence isn't vegan. By perpetuating the same hate and anger towards the people who are doing things that you don't like, you're just as bad as the actions that they are doing that you don't like. Just because you happen to be representing your side of the argument doesn't make it right because they're representing their side of the argument and ultimately we have no way of gauging who is right or wrong... To hurt another person is not compassionate... In terms of looking at animals as property, I would not oppose that [stealing an animal], however I would not encourage that and I would not fight to say that it's necessary because the way the law is set up, it comes back to the system you have to work in. It is private property as far as law is concerned. I feel spiritually that it's not property... It's really touchy and that's a decision that has to be made I think by the people who are making the decisions to take that action. You are hurting a person by doing that, even though what they may be doing is not right, you're still hurting them. (Mark, August 2004)

The above quotations are offered as a means of expressing how individuals attempt to maintain their own philosophies, but may at times find them constrained "by the movement" and how the movement is presented collectively. For a movement to be successful, there needs to be some sort of ideological cohesiveness that is presented for others outside to digest. Yet, this necessitates many individuals compromising some of their beliefs to make this happen.

Can Social Activist Movements Be Linked? Should they?

If you were to meet an animal rights activist, what would you want to know from them? Would you want to know why they are a vegan perhaps, or a vegetarian? Are they misanthropic? Are their parents hippies? Do they think animals should have the right to vote? All valid questions, but they miss the mark. Such questions are typical, and nearly every animal rights activist who 'comes out' to someone who is not, answers these at some point. They miss the mark because they are not the right questions. Each person coming into a social activist movement has different reasons because of the requirement to contextualise personal history and experiences. For some,

the animal rights movement may be a starting point in social activism; for others, it is a stop along the way.

I cannot generalise regarding the different types and levels of activism among those whom I worked with during my fieldwork. For some, this was an exclusive and primary involvement in social activism; some justified this by arguing that animal rights inevitably deals with other social activist issues, such as world hunger, racism, and sexism to name a few. For others, this movement was one among many involvements. The perspective on the linkages with other social movements for those with many involvements was approached with much caution. Many were hesitant to compare the animal rights movement with movements for anti-racism, for example, because of an increased sensitivity to political, social, and economic structural issues. As a result, linking and comparing social activism was contentious for many within the animal rights movement, and more specifically at Animal Haven.

Various animal rights ideological and philosophical positions stipulate that proper usage and treatment of animals are linked or could be linked with other activist movements, such as anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-genderist, queer positivism, and also with the current labour movements (for example, see Spiegel 1996). Many animal rights organisations have tried to make links to these other movements, but with very limited success. Yet, there is not necessarily a definitive struggle against oppression and exploitation as seen in many other activist movements (for example, structural racism, sexism, or classism). Rather, the disenfranchised, oppressed, and exploited are those animals used as a means to human ends. Alienation from the means of production and other labour issues are not necessarily the focus, but are used when politically expedient

(for example, when trying to make links across social movements and in this case with the labour movement).

In 2003, PETA launched their Holocaust On Your Plate campaign, in an attempt to make a link between how those of the Jewish faith in Europe during World War II were persecuted because of their faith and culture with the current conditions of modern day factory farming. For many within the animal rights movement, these linkages were common sense – it was not a big leap to deconstruct the boundary for those whose view the current industrialised agricultural system as a holocaust. However, those outside the movement (and for some within the movement), especially Jewish communities, were appalled and perceived this movement as equating the Jewish population (or more generally those who did not share animal rights philosophies) with animals. Furthermore, there is intense debate over using the ‘holocaust industry’ outside of the WWII context. In 2002, Charles Patterson published his book, Eternal Treblinka: Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust. While this book may be well read in certain animal rights communities, it does not have the attention that Peter Singer’s Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals (originally published in 1975) maintains. Nonetheless, Patterson’s portrayal of this ‘eternal Treblinka’ has been met with much more acceptance, mainly due to the fact that Patterson goes to great lengths to understand how certain populations will take control of various sectors to use and manipulate such as a means to an end. This he links with the current factory farming system. While comparisons to the WWII Holocaust are made, Patterson goes to great lengths to explain and deconstruct the comparisons he is making that allow a dialogue to develop and continue around issues of exploitation and oppression.

Within the context of Animal Haven, this debate continues and some of the Animal Haven literature does make very basic links to other issues (specifically world hunger and labour standards). For many, making links to other social movements is easy, however, actual campaigns (including those of Animal Haven) rarely speak to this and at best include a sentence in reference to the benefit of humanity should certain systems be abolished (like, for example, easing world hunger or bettering labour standards). Many individuals I worked with during my fieldwork were reluctant to make such comparisons publicly for fear of being perceived as misanthropic. It also needs to be noted that the animal rights movement historically and presently is a very white, middle-class movement, a profile reflected at Animal Haven. It has been referred to as a post-citizenship movement (see Lowe and Ginsberg 2002) where members of this movement, because of their positions of privilege in terms of race and class, have the time and energy to focus and work towards this struggle. This does not invalidate the philosophies or ideals of a post-citizenship movement, but attempts to explain why a privileged lifestyle allows an easier access to other forms of activism.

Throughout my fieldwork, debates around linking the animal rights philosophies to other movement struggles was constant. Each month a new set of interns would arrive, and this topic would inevitably come up, without my prompting. When working in either the campaign or development departments, this was always an issue. While many of those working on the campaigns could see connections, the campaigns themselves were usually centred specifically on the animal rights issue. Much of this was due to the fact that this movement, and this organisation, were continuing to garner as much support as possible. Thus there was the fear that making such links prematurely, without widespread support, could be devastating to the

sustainability of the organisation, again for fears that these attempts would be perceived as misanthropic.

Trina worked in the education department during the summer months. She acted as the Bed and Breakfast and tour coordinator. Previously, she was a full time staff member of Animal Haven as the Outreach Coordinator and then as the Activist Coordinator. She quit partially because of the stress of the job, but also because she felt it was time to move on to other things. She currently works with her boyfriend who is an engineer. She comes back to Animal Haven in the summer months because she always enjoyed the work she did there and feels that she gets more out of doing this work in small doses. I asked her specifically about the presentation of the movement as a white middle class, female movement, and I also asked her about her opinion of these movement ideals as a means to combat other forms of social oppression:

A lot of times it surprises me that, especially minorities and cultures that in the past have a history of being tortured basically, and being treated like factory farming animals... I think part of the problem is that when you have an organisation that operates on donation money, we cater to and we target white, middle to upper class people. Older people usually. And, when you're targeting those sorts of people, they're going to find out about it, so I think it's [reaching to other communities] something that has to be done movement wide... If you go to a PETA conference or an Animal Haven conference, you have to pay 150\$ for the registration, then you have to get a hotel room then you have to get airfare and all that other stuff and already that knocks out a whole group of people - people who can't afford it, people with socio-economic backgrounds that have had less money, and students. So, it's all upper, middle class, older people. So there needs to be a movement made within the movement to reach people. As far as the gender is concerned, especially in the United States, being male in this country is very difficult. Being female is very difficult, but being male is very difficult in that there are so many stigmas about different things that are seen as too effeminate. You are branded and ridiculed and ostracised and so I think a man being into animal rights is a lot harder - it's a lot harder for them to be accepted by their own gender, so I think that's a big deterrent for a lot of men... I think that the separation that people have in our own minds between animals and humans and the importance that humans have over animals, I don't think... it's in such a different ballpark for people that I don't think that it [the connection to other forms of social oppression] would be [realised]. (Trina, July 2004)

While Trina sees a materialist connection between these struggles, where she places the onus of blame is within the animal rights community itself for whom it is reaching out

to. However, because social activist movements are often in the situation where resources are scarce, where one attempts to gain support is often limited to those with disposable financial resources that help keep social activist organisations running. In the United States, the disparity between rich and poor continues to be racialised and gendered. While the movement, and Animal Haven as an organisation within this movement, maintains desires to reach across socio-economic and racial boundaries, often times this is limited because of the need for resource mobilisation.

‘Getting on their level’ is a typical statement I would get when I asked about linking the animal rights movement with other forms of social activism. However, this remains a difficult task because of many of those I worked with (and the general demographic of the animal rights movement) do not have the direct experience of facing socio-economic classism or structural racism. ‘Getting on their level’ It is easier said than done, and attempting this can be seen as a racist or classist effort in and of itself because a person in a position to move in and out of these situations could never fully understand what it would be like to be limited to such a position.

Danielle worked as the education centre supervisor. She was in her mid-thirties, though at times it seemed the stress of the job aged her (though she limits herself to a 40 to 50 hour work week, she told me that when she first started working for Animal Haven it was not uncommon that she work a 70 to 80 hour work week. She explained that if that was how long it took to get the work done, then she would work up to 80 hours in one week.). She originally came to Animal Haven as an intern, four years prior to my time there, and stayed on, starting as a tour assistant that eventually turned into a full-time job as the education coordinator. Her involvement in activism has been limited to the animal rights movement, though, like many others, she has begun to make

connections to other movements because of what she says she has learned in this movement:

My opinion is that I think that it's a predominately white movement at this point because black people are still struggling with issues – there are still racial issues going on. I do feel that if people are not secure themselves, it's hard to take up the fight for other movements...In terms of women, my opinion is that women in this society, it's easier for them to show emotion and feelings. Men are raised thinking that showing signs of compassion and caring is a weakness...I certainly think there are connections, you know between human rights and sometimes we try to mention – and people are very much exploited by the factory farming system and we get, 'why do you care about the animals more than the people?' That's not true. I think environmental issues, definitely there's a huge connection with some of these animal issues and I think it's nice when it can be looked at as a whole. It's all interconnected and all these pieces are important, instead of all these groups doing their own thing. (Danielle, August 2004)

A topic of debate within many social activist communities is not whether social activist issues can be connected, but whether this type of linkage should be made. Generally speaking, the animal rights movement, and Animal Haven as an animal rights organisation within this movement, is constantly attempting to link with other social movements. Much of this could be due to the fact that the animal rights movement continues to be a very marginal movement that is accessible to a very limited number of people. While much of this may be due to necessity for financial resource mobilisation, the animal rights movement as a whole and Animal Haven have not made large efforts to reach out to these other alienated and oppressed populations in society. Those working at Animal Haven were perplexed about how exactly to go about linking with other social movements and with populations viewed as disenfranchised. Should one make these links through comparisons to the similarities of exploitation and oppression; or, should the approach have a more moral philosophical argument for abstaining from the consumption of animal products? Much of the actual activism (i.e. protests, tabling, flyering, etc) that Animal Haven took part in was focused on the latter approach. Thus, to take the former approach in regards to gaining membership could be viewed as

another method of discrimination because it assumes that an individual should adopt an animal rights philosophy because of similar issues of oppression, rather than making a conscious choice to agree with such ideology.

Erica became one of the individuals I trusted most during my stay. Often times we would sit and complain about issues within the organisation and the movement in general that incensed us. Erica was the intern coordinator and as such, it was she who accepted me and convinced Danielle, her supervisor, to allow me to stay to do my research even though the summer months had already been filled with other interns. Erica comes from a very privileged background, and she makes no attempts to hide this fact. She is 24 and graduated from college with a degree in environmental science. She too has a history of activism that extends beyond animal rights and includes environmentalism, but she has also been very active in the anti-FTAA movement (where she recounted to me the times she was attacked²⁵ by the police at these FTAA demonstrations), though now most of her time is spent on animal rights (a movement that lacks this sort of attention). I later found out, after I left, that she was applying to work on an organic vegetable farm because she could no longer handle the tension and stress (long hours and constant criticism coming from others in a more privileged position on the hierarchy) of working at Animal Haven (she asked me to write her a letter of recommendation, which I did). This was her opinion on the structure of the movement and extending the animal rights philosophies and ideals to other movements:

I think it's weird... There are no "minorities" working here. I don't know what it says about the movement. I don't think it's very good. We are maybe reaching out, continually, to the same people. I do the internship program and I get very few male applicants. It's not even like I get all these male applicants and I end up picking the girls. I get maybe like three male applications to every ten female

²⁵ The use of 'attack' is not without significance and it is the term that Erica used to describe such incidences. For many within various forms of activism, there is a distrust of the police system as it represents another form of oppression that caters to those who are privileged and in a position of power.

applicants. And, usually they're going to vet school, something more scientific. I don't know... I think with respect to the working conditions in factory farms and slaughterhouses, I think people can really relate to that. I think sometimes when you compare the abuses of animals to the abuses of people, people who aren't already into it get offended and that kind of works against you. I think it can, but I don't think we're ready for that yet. People are still seeing animals as less than them, then to compare them to a person... I don't know. (Erica, August 2004)

Linking the labour movement with the animal rights movement is often done by equating the oppression of animals within the factory farming system to that of the workers within those systems. There has been a vast amount of literature that speaks to the racism and sexism, as well as the sub-par labour practices, historic to this industry (see Schlosser 2002; Fink 1998; Halpern 1996, 1997; and Stull, Broadway, Griffith 1995). However, within the animal rights movement and Animal Haven, I found that little analysis occurs of the issues of racism and sexism; most of the comparison focuses on the abuse of workers in this system, and also there is a focus on the lack of education of these workers that borders on classist prejudices.

Emma was an August intern who came from New York City to Animal Haven because she wanted to go to vet school and wanted experience working with large farm animals. Though Emma has never been involved directly in social activist movements, she mentioned that she shared many of their different ideals and philosophies. Involvement for her, she explained, always seemed far too overwhelming considering "how many things you can change" (Emma, August 2004). Emma, at 24, came to the awareness of various issues within animal rights that led her to want to become a vet. She saw this as an opportunity to change the way animals were perceived within this milieu. Though she had not been directly involved in social activism, she was aware of many different philosophies that led to her conclusions regarding the connectedness of social movements:

I think animal rights can seem trivial to people who are starving or getting shot or see their schools failing and stuff like that. That's why I think it's important the movement connect animal rights to a greater picture. I think that's really essential for it to be successful. You make people see that the way we treat animals has to do with our impression of other people, our foreign policy, our misuse of the environment, all that stuff. And for women, this is going to sound really stupid, I think women are more interested in other people beside themselves... the way women are raised or have been raised to think about other people before themselves... Yeah, I think it can be applied to the oppression of women and environmental problems and all that stuff. And it seems to be, from what I've read so far, human desire to be dominant over other life forms and I think that's more evident - like the United States wants to be dominant over other countries; certain humans want to be more dominant than others. Looking at that is really tapping into that part of human nature or how humans act and can be applied to a lot of different situations. (Emma, August 2004)

The issue of dominance is important for the animal rights movement and for those with whom I worked most closely. Because there was the lack of any systematised hierarchy between humans and other animals, there was a constant deconstruction of the boundary that individuals placed between humans and other animals. That is not to say that boundaries did not exist, but for many, this boundary was considerably lessened. It is also not to say that with the attenuation of this boundary, individuals believed that humans and other animals would live in a utopic harmony of consensual interaction - it is not even the opposite of this. Rather, such boundaries that create hierarchies of deserving beings are attenuated.

Brandon was also an August intern and he explained that he was white in the sense that, since he was adopted, his family was white, he grew up in a white neighbourhood, went to a white high school and now university - essentially, he was raised in this white setting, though visibly he is not. He stated that he's never really felt oppressed because of his race, but that he also comes from a place of privilege economically and this tends to override any sort of social stigmatisation.

I think animal rights can serve as an example of a good model of fighting oppression. I think animal rights will set a good example and can really further progress because when it comes to human rights I think most people, or a large majority of people, do view animals as a lower species and if we can treat them

better then why the heck aren't be treating blacks better, minorities better, or women better? And, I think that as a model you can say that if you can treat them better, then you must treat these people better. (Brandon, August 2004)

The animal rights movement has been accused of being far too simplistic or ideological in assuming that once animals are treated respectfully and awarded "rights", then it creates a logical outcome, that humans will also be treated with the same amount of respect. Referring to this as a post-citizenship movement, within the context of the United States, this is so far removed from the struggles and poverty faced by many human populations in other parts of the world. In a culture of consumption that relies on systems of oppression where this materialistic, consumer driven lifestyle is forced on those in the developing world, the question is not whether human treatment of animals will better the treatment of other humans, but rather, can the Western world give up its lifestyle that depends on this oppression to ensure that abuse on all levels stops?

Kelly was one of the youngest interns during my stay; she was 17 during the time of our stay. Though very young, Kelly was well aware of various social issues, though her activism was in its infancy. As she spoke, it became clear (and this was not limited solely to her; others expressed similar opinions) that because of her social position, she could not understand how others did not see linkages in oppression:

You would think that a lot of groups of people that have been discriminated in the past would identify with this movement more. I think a lot of people that get involved with this movement, in our country at least, just the way that our history is run; there are a lot more black people in ghettos with low economic opportunities and not much educational opportunities. You need to get the facts from somewhere and I don't think there are a lot of people going into inner city schools where there's a lot of black people living, saying 'hey look at the animals. Look at what's happening.' I think there's a large connection between violence against humans and violence against animals that you can see that link... I think that if people learn compassion for animals then we'd be a lot more aware about human rights. (Kelly, July 2004)

But, where is the foundation for oppression, as it exists within the context of the United States? How far back should we go in getting to the root of the problem? The

following is a very long quote from Cecil outlining his thoughts on the situation of the animal rights movement juxtaposed to other social activism. For Cecil the development of agriculture brought on all of society's ills – it was the prominence of patriarchy that inevitably led to a system like capitalism. Such systems then created oppression on many different levels because it was expedient to do so:

In my opinion, women are much smarter than men are and they have a much greater capacity for empathy, they have a greater capacity for compassion and sympathy. It's a maternal character and it's something historically every culture has destroyed and disenfranchised because it wasn't conducive to their cultural model. It literally started 10,000 years ago because nearly all cultures on the planet were matriarchal until we started agriculture.²⁶ So, when agriculture became patriarchal, everything went to hell... I feel the reason we seem more women in animal advocacy and working in any kind of animal rights, animal advocacy, or animal shelter, group, or organisation is because of that innate empathy, that maternal instinct. If you find men that are able to find that compassion within themselves it's usually catharsis – either they're born with it and are able to maintain it into adulthood or it's crushed and there's some kind of cathartic episode that is able to bring it out of them later in life. And, racial, well I have an opinion about that, a theory. From my experience of working and being in slaughterhouses, the black people have been disenfranchised even from agriculture. What is soul food? Soul food from the meat end of it is the food white people wouldn't eat and now they've accepted as soul food. It runs much deeper than what they eat. To them, they take pride in soul food and it's part of their identity. But, that identity was created and forced upon them by white people... I guess the only experience I have is with my friends who are African American. They also don't make a clear connection between slavery of animals and the slavery of people that's in human history. But going out there and putting that message forward – I mean, it seems to me that it would be so easy for them to wake up to all of this because the 10,000 years of agriculture has totally exploited them. I mean that's why they were put into slavery, because of agriculture. Even now the USDA is guilty of not paying black farmers in America subsidies and they said, oh we'll make right on this and the federal government said they were going to make reparations for that. To date, they still haven't done it. But, again, like after the Civil War when a lot of freed blacks had the opportunity to take like ten acres and a mule. They did what they knew – some knew sharecropping, some did trust farming, but a lot of them went into animal agriculture. And, when that didn't work out and we had the industrial boom in the North, they moved up North and ended up in places like Detroit, Chicago and so on to take jobs in the industry. As industrialisation of agriculture took over, they just didn't have enough acres to compete against those farmers. [As far as combating other forms of social oppression] Oh absolutely. It's most obvious in the dialogue and the rhetoric that's used by the industry to raise animals. They use the exact words, phrases that were used by slavery. So the parallels are absolutely there. (Cecil, August 2004)

²⁶ Cecil is referencing Jim Mason's *An Unnatural Order: Uncovering the Roots of Our Domination of Nature and Each Other* (1992). See also, Nick Fiddes' *Meat: A Natural Symbol*, regarding the presentation of meat historically through archaeological and anthropological representations of a variety of cultures and places.

I find it very interesting to look at these parallels as they are elaborated and deconstructed by many animal rights activists. Marjorie Spiegel (1996) goes into great detail about the comparison of language used respectively for the European slave trade and in the current factory farming system. Because of these comparisons many animal rights activists are able to connect this movement with other social movements (and they do in a materialist and idealist fashion), especially those that focus on racism, sexism, and genderism on the grounds that at various points, different categories of people were viewed as inferior to their white, male counterparts. Likewise, the perspective remains that non-human animals will one day transcend this hierarchy. The main difference is that these other movements share a commonality of the human experience and condition which non-human animals may never be able to transcend. But, for the animal rights activist, this is simply specism.

Kaia is an anarchist, a feminist, queer rights activist, anti-racist, pro-labour, anti-capitalist, and an animal rights activist. For her the root of oppression lay in the concept of specism, the belief that *Homo sapiens* deserve better treatment simply because of their species. She was aware of the privilege that she carried, but it was still a frustrating aspect for her that individuals in other movements did not make the same connections she did:

I can believe that there are mostly girls and I think that's because women are oppressed anyways so it just makes sense for someone who is oppressed to take up animal rights in reaction to that. And, then racially I think for African Americans are very divided from white people anyway and that's a lot to do with the government and media; it's a very consumerist culture. Because of the government and media, I feel like there's no way for them to learn about it... I don't want to go up to a black person and say, 'can't you see the similarities?' because it's not my place. I'm white. I have privilege. But, I want to be like everything you're doing is so wrong for you. Why don't you understand that? I think there's connections in every oppression with animal rights. It appals me that people don't see that. It appals me that feminists eat meat. Or that gays have no concept of any other struggle at all. That's what I've encountered in my activism in this country. It's because of specism. It's because people think that

humans are superior to animals and there's no way you can compare the two in a sense. (Kaia, July 2004)

Irene worked at the shelter as a feeder, and was being trained in health care when I was there. I liked and admired Irene a great deal. Irene is a single mother who moved from Ohio to work at Animal Haven. Felix, her son, who would always remind her what they could and could not eat as vegans, shyly shadowed her when she would bring him to the farm. Irene, now in her mid-twenties, started her animal activist career at a very young age. She too would focus all of her papers on animal rights issues in high school.

Part of it is because whether it is a genetic thing or a cultural thing, women are more sensitive than men. They're more likely to become active in these issues and also women are historically in the US ready to work really, really, really hard for less pay than men... The racial aspect of it is also very important. One reason I see for that is because the majority of the population in any movement, typically is white, unless it is a minority movement... We tend to reach out to people in power and people with money because they can help us the most to get things accomplished, and those tend to be white people. We have to be careful to use it because I think people can look at us and say, 'all they care about is animals, they don't care about anything else.' Like, once you start saying anything about animals, you stop giving a damn about anything else. We have to make sure we let people know that that is totally untrue and totally opposite. When we're talking to other people, we need to make sure to connect. Not that there aren't connections, because there are. People who work in slaughterhouses get paid shit and get hurt all the time. We have to stress those connections instead of ignoring them. (Irene, June 2004)

Typically when activists or organisations in the animal rights movement attempt to make links to the pro-labour movement, it is in relation to the conditions workers must face in slaughterhouses. Various campaigns at Animal Haven that made this link also had this focus. For those I spoke with, the focus was usually on conditions and pay; few spoke of the racism within the industry (with its links to the exploitation of legal and illegal immigrant workers), and even fewer spoke to the issues of sexism. Furthermore, comparisons were often made to the oppression and alienation from the means of production experienced by the human workers, but also experienced by the

non-human animals as 'workers'. A discussion that developed one afternoon in the kitchen of the education centre between the June interns and myself concerned the idea of dairy as rape.

On this particularly hot and humid June day, the interns were assigned to help prepare for the annual 4th of July *Pignic*. We were not working however, but were hiding out in the kitchen trying to keep cool and avoid going outside. It was with my head sunk on the table, eyes barely open, trying to catch the cross breeze coming in from the door that Kaia turned to me and asked, "Janel, what do you think of the idea that dairy is rape?" Lethargically raising my head, I paused and sarcastically replied, "oh my god, Kaia, I'd be careful saying that too loudly." Detailing our conversation is not the focus, but rather, the perception that the animals themselves are alienated labour from the means of their production and then when their skills have been completely exploited, their "dismissal" from their job, is to become another product for the industry. Here, "milkers" (as the industry calls them) are alienated workers and once they are no longer able to produce an efficient, cost-effective product, they are sent off to be made into another more cost-efficient product (meat).

Joyce, though new to animal rights activism as well as other social activism she was becoming interested in, saw connections. However, she related many of the issues to the labour movement and capitalist structures. Later however, as I interviewed her, she was supportive of the capitalist framework should supply and demand change. Her opinion that equitable treatment of animals would extend to treating humans better is a typical argument one hears within the animal rights movement literature. However, it is debatable whether this transference could actually occur.

It's all related. The fact that people do want really cheap food also spilled into wanting cheap labour and spilled into immigrant abuse. And, on one hand you have people complaining about immigrants coming into this country taking jobs

and on the other hand, the jobs that these immigrants have are jobs that they would never work. I don't know anyone that would actually work in a slaughterhouse, minimum wage and never getting overtime, and have no health benefits or anything else. But, at the same time, they don't want to pay more money for their meat so they don't really care that it is a labour abuse issue. But, yeah, I think that if awareness was raised about animal rights and people were to treat animals better, by extension, people would get treated better as well. (Joyce, May 2004)

Linking social activist movements together is difficult on any level. There is always the risk of misrepresentation and of not fully understanding how such movements are or can be linked. Within the animal rights movement, generally, this is especially difficult because any sort of comparisons made run the risk of presenting this movement as racist, sexist, homophobic, classist, or what have you, even though the members of the movement may have the best intentions in mind. Many of the above quotes give valid and legitimate reasons for linking the movements together, but it remains difficult to understand the root of the 'problem', as individuals will have a different perspective on what this is. This can and does lead to intense feelings and levels of solidarity and tension among activists.

Chapter IX

Solidarity, Tension, and Social Activism

When talking about issues of solidarity and tension, I noticed that my biggest resource and where I found the bulk of my information for this was in my field notes, not in my interviews. I do not find this surprising at all. I conducted formal interviews with nearly every animal rights activist working on the farm during my stay. While I constantly asked questions regarding an individual's perception of themselves within the movement and the organisation, without fail, each individual depicted their role and their relations to other animal rights activists, vegans, and vegetarians in a positive light. Hope was expressed that the animal rights community was and will continue to grow. Then I re-read my field notes. It is here that I found expressions of much tension. Individuals did speak of positive things, however, it became very clear that the relationships that existed were much more complex than simply sharing an ideology. While many individuals talked about how they could only date or socialise with like-minded individuals, many found that there was pressure coming from the community to maintain this.

Conflict is a natural part of human interaction, which illuminates the role and dynamics of social relationships; it is not "aberrant or dysfunctional" (Murphy 1957: 1018). Conflict does help to reinforce a sense of solidarity among individuals and groups where "Conflict and social solidarity are mutually re-enforcing; conflict promotes social integration, and solidarity is necessary if the group is to take effective common action against the outer world" (Murphy 1957: 1018). While conflict will obviously exist externally, it will inevitably also exist within groups as a natural process of human interaction.

I am the Best Activist

It is not uncommon to read in various works of animal rights literature that when animals deserve certain basic inalienable rights, at what point do limitations come in? What is it that constitutes a right and how is this related to a duty? Arguing that animals have rights, are animals, especially carnivores, allowed to act as animals? That is to say, can lions eat the lamb, or should they lie with them? To justify the natural instincts of animals, many animal rights activists, including those I worked with, would argue for the 'nature' of animals. However, what then is human nature? If animals are just acting on instinct and nature that allows them to exploit or use other animals for food, how then can humans be denied the same considering humans do in fact exploit animals and have done so historically? One could revert to the argument that humans did not always 'use' animals, but then again, humans were not always humans. It was a long process of evolution to where humans have come to today. The debate should not be rooted in an anachronistic ideal of how humans originally behaved and acted (if so, should we also then ignore issues of racism, sexism, ableism, etc). Rather, how is the current agricultural system exploiting their position of power in a time where humans are argued to have evolved to the point of developing ethics and morals based on our ability to rationalise. However, the use of a rights-based terminology makes it difficult to decipher when and where this language is appropriate and correct. Perhaps the language of rights is not what we should be focusing on (see Ignatieff 2000), but rather human obligation or animal protection.

This is but one of the many arguments/debates I was either involved in or overheard during my stay on the farm. Often, such arguments got so heated that individuals who were not involved had to intervene to tone down the situation and

bring into perspective that 'we' (as animal rights activists) are not the enemy, we should not be fighting so severely among one another. However, these debates and perspectives do create tensions and divisions within the organisation and the movement as a whole.

Is veganism a lifestyle, or more simply, just a diet? In terms of animal rights activism, following a vegan (or vegetarian) diet almost always transfers into a lifestyle. There is an absence of what one will, or can, eat, but this absence is filled with a constant reflection on why one chooses not to eat, wear, or more generally consume animal products. Veganism transcends a mere diet because it politicises the mundane. One is no longer able to do a quick run to the grocery store – until one is able to create a base of products they are able to buy, this simple task can turn into hours of reading product labels, trying to remember, is it vitamin D2 or D3 that comes from sheep and is lanolin really vegan? Furthermore as one becomes more involved, choosing in which grocery store to shop can also be a hassle. Does one shop at the large supermarkets filled with non-organic, genetically modified food from companies with little to no progressive labour policies? Or does one choose (or can they afford) the small cooperative specialising in produce from local, organic farmers or small businesses? The latter requires a more stable economic situation as these stores typically are more expensive because of their labour politics and size.

The following is an excerpt from the month of June that occurred because of cheese. Charlotte, though following the required vegan diet of the farm during her stay, was not a vegan. However, she did indicate to me that after she left Animal Haven she would continue with this diet as she felt she had no other choice. For her, it was the right thing to do even though her involvement with animal rights activism took more of

a welfarist approach. Charlotte has been an active volunteer in various welfare oriented animal shelters, such as the SPCA and one of the largest domestic, no-kill animal shelters in Arizona. Charlotte comes from a very privileged background, but also a very conservative, Baptist background. That she was even a vegetarian was a great deal of stress to her family and she was often alienated from them because of it.

The Incident with the Cheese

When Charlotte first arrived at the farm, she was one of six new interns. While they were all new to me, I was also new to them, but I was also viewed as a resource since I had already been working on the farm for a month. This new set was far different from Andrea, Joyce and I, because the three of us, firstly all being older, produced no tensions in the house. While Punita was older, the remaining five interns were all 21 or younger. I am not intimating that it was the young age of these interns that was the root cause of stress and tension in the house, but rather that it was the different levels of activism combined with very strong personalities that were the source. Because of circumstances, June was the most stressful month of my three and half month stay.

Every week, Erica, the intern coordinator, would pick up the interns to bring us to town do our grocery shopping. We always went to Good Groceries, a small vegetarian store in town run by Darryl and Linda (a married couple who described themselves as old hippies). This 'vegan heaven' as Joyce called it was a staple for us to obtain those products that simply could not be found at the P&C (the large supermarket that we would also hit weekly). Certain brands of soymilk, vegan cheese, vegan sweets, specific granola, sprouted bread among many other products could be found here. The P&C also had similar products, but they were not of the same quality and if you

happened to be very conscious of what company you would buy your soymilk from, you would not be able to buy it at the P&C since they only carried Silk, owned by Dean Foods, which is owned by a major dairy company. While, they do carry many products that are vegetarian friendly, these are not necessarily vegan friendly.

Charlotte, not being vegetarian for that long (she was in her second year of this) and had just recently adopted a vegan diet a few months prior to coming to Animal Haven wanted to try vegan cheese. The P&C carried Vegan Gourmet Soy Cheese, and since it was cheaper than Good Groceries, she thought she would give it a try. Since the brand said 'soy cheese' on it, Charlotte figured that it would be fine, only later to find out she still had much to learn about the intricacies of such products.

I remember the day they got back – it was 1 June and their first shopping trip. People were putting their groceries away and I was in the living room distracting myself with a book or taking notes – trying not to be too intrusive their first week here. I then heard Shelly nearly shout, “whose cheese is this?” There was a bit of an awkward silence and then Charlotte said she had bought it. Kaia then barked in, “that’s not vegan!” What Charlotte did not know is that this brand, while being soy based, is not dairy-free. The problem with most vegan cheeses is that they do not melt. This is because they do not contain casein, an animal product found derived from milk that causes it to melt down when heated, similar to real cheese. The target audience for this cheese is not necessarily animal rights activists or vegans but those who are more into the health-conscious aspect of vegetarianism.

This incident did not necessarily start the tensions, but it was a catalyst for certain individuals to side together against others. For Charlotte, it only furthered her

frustrations with the puritanical and self-righteous aspects of the movement and it made her question how much she wanted to be involved:

I started it because – it was a totally selfish reason to start. I think everybody has to have a good reason for themselves to go vegetarian, to go vegan. They have to have a trigger. I mean, everybody can hear all of the facts and it won't mean anything unless they can see the picture for themselves... I hated it when I first went vegetarian and started learning about this stuff because once you learn about what you can't eat, they you learn bout dairy and eggs and environmental issues. And, then you learn about what car you can drive, what clothing you can wear. Once you get started, you can't call yourself moral about anything... I don't know where to stop. I come here and learn about whole foods and organic and, when do you stop? They're going to turn me into a fruitarian and I have no control. I don't want to do that. I just have to try and find my little place with what I need to do. Because all vegetarians say, 'oh, you're not a vegetarian, you eat this, you do this.' None of us are really vegetarian. There are animal products everywhere and we've got this ideal view of what a vegetarian is and we think we get there and then we stop and say, 'well, I've got it. I'm done.' And, then it never happens... I'm learning. I'm a very good vegetarian and it still overloads what I can't do. People aren't too mean about it, but you know, 'whose cheese is that in the fridge? It's got casein in it, which is a milk derivative.' Well, I learned that like yesterday. So, now I'll stop, but you know give me a break! I don't know everything. I don't pretend to... I don't know how far I'll take it. I'll try and learn more... I don't know yet. (Charlotte, June 2004)

Cecil once told me, in reaction to various self-righteous animal rights activists he has encountered, "you know, no one ever learned anything by feeling bad about themselves." His ideals are very much a reaction to how he has been confronted with aspects of self-righteousness embodied by various movement members and in this organisation (in the administration department where he works). Not only does this create divisions within the movement, it tends to alienate the very people that the movement are trying to get on their side.

In a similar situation the next month involving Kaia, myself and Audrey, things turned out much differently. Part of this was because of the context. Shelly was gone, as was Abby. Though Abby was never as vocal, it created a clique within the house. Not only were Charlotte's dietary choices not good enough, her politics were not as either. With Audrey, it was Kaia, Charlotte, and I that carried over from June into July.

Though I usually worked with Kaia, I did not form the same type of social cliques – partially because of the fieldwork that I was focusing on and partially because I am older than the other interns and as such was not necessarily included in their gossip.

Audrey arrived at Animal Haven with a bag of groceries that she brought from her house. She explained that she just took whatever she could find. While Kaia was looking through the pantry, she found that many of these products contained various animal products from dairy to animal-based broths. Kaia immediately came to tell me that we had to do something. I told her, fine, just go ahead and tell Audrey. I told Kaia that it could be that she simply does not realise the composition of the products since she had already disclosed to us that she was new to the vegan diet. Kaia did speak to Audrey and perhaps because of a difference in personality or a difference in how Kaia told her, Audrey was thankful. She said she was trying to learn and that she just was not aware of everything and not used to reading labels.

I didn't know a lot about what companies did and before I came here I did research to make sure I didn't have anything that would be of offence to anybody... I was trying to find things and I couldn't. It ended up being really hard to find things that weren't tested on animals and every time you pick something up, it's like, oh that's made by that company too... From being here and knowing what I know now and what I didn't know before with dairy cows and all that, I didn't know if I was going to stay vegan when I left. I just thought I'd go back to being vegetarian, but I definitely think that I'm not going to be able to back to be *just* a vegetarian. (Audrey, July 2004, emphasis added)

When negotiating relationships in social activism, it seems that inevitably a hierarchy develops – individuals question others dedication and commitment to the movement and its ideals. Where the mundane becomes a constant arena for critique, overwhelming aspects of this are further exacerbated by surveillance of those within the movement. There can be a constant critique not only of what constitutes veganism, but who also is the better vegan or animal rights activist. How such identities are conceptualised for the individual come into conflict that can stifle the movement as a

whole by creating intra-organisational fighting. This is exactly the case with Animal Haven as an organisation that receives a great deal of critique from all sides of the movement – from the liberationists, from the rightists, and from the welfarists. It may be that Animal Haven's work on many different levels of animal rights activism – promoting the vegan lifestyle or working in the legal and political systems for example – creates some ambiguity of how exactly it should be categorised,

I mean, animal liberation, animal rights, animal advocacy, animal welfare – in particular animal rights and animal welfare. That seems to be, it's been polarised in those two camps. Again, it goes back to my opinion that we all have value and we will all have an effect at one time or another and that we should work together. To get into linguistic battles is really counterproductive. It's not beneficial to the animals. It's not beneficial to the people; it's disabling to the people who are trying to do this work. Because we're basically all on the same page of what we want, it's just that people have different ideas of how quickly that will happen. I know that people say that animal welfare are cowards; they don't have the balls to get out there and do what needs to be done. To a certain extent that may be true, but when you make that statement, you don't know what emotional baggage or emotional violence that person might have experienced in their life. I mean, if you've ever been on the receiving end of extreme violence, that can make a lot of difference for how you're going to show up as an activist for animals...I think it's sometimes hurtful because when you make those judgements against people that could be better activists, you're maybe shaming them for something you have no idea they're dealing with in their own life (Cecil, August 2004).

Fighting Hierarchies by Creating Hierarchies

Animal Haven had pushed itself to capacity in terms of the number of animals it had taken in. Every inch of the farm was occupied, though in all honestly, this would most like always be the case. By the time of my stay one of the reasons the farm was at capacity was due to a high volume of leg horns (chickens). In 2000 a tornado had struck an area where one of the largest egg-laying operations existed. The tornado had completely destroyed all five of the warehouse units that held up to 400,000 hens in each (the operation itself had about 2 million egg laying hens). With the units destroyed, this agribusiness operation was no longer profitable or useful; it was therefore more

profitable to bulldoze the area and collect insurance. This was done shortly after the storm cleared and was being done with live chickens still caught in their cages.²⁷ Animal Haven workers went to this site and rescued over 2000 leg horns. They were able to adopt out many of the hens and since these animals have been so genetically modified their life span has been considerably reduced. By the time I was carrying out my fieldwork, the farm only had about 250 of these hens left. The farm also had ten roosters. Roosters are very territorial and will fight to the death. This requires that each be separated, thus requiring ten separate barns. This was a considerable amount of space according to Trisha. Therefore, she decided that some of the roosters would have to be euthanised. This caused an incredible rift in the organisation, pitting individuals against one another, but mainly those working on the farm against those working in the administration department.

There are (at least) two sides to every story so the saying goes. In the case of these roosters, the same can be said. For the most part, those working on the farm (interns included) were fundamentally opposed to the euthanasiation of the birds. For the workers on the farm who were with these animals daily, it meant choosing which rooster would die. For the administration, rescuing more animals did mean more publicity and ultimately money for the organisation. However, new rescues could not be performed on a larger level because there was not enough room to house new animals. The new hospital barn, where new animals must be kept until blood work and tests can prove that they do not carry any contagious diseases, was already occupied by a herd of pregnant heifers who had been rescued about a month earlier from a neglect case. But, with chickens and roosters occupying most of the barns it made it difficult to

²⁷ The detail of these events is not intended to be cryptic, but rather to protect the identity of the organisation and thus the individuals I worked with during my fieldwork.

move animals around. This was the rationale of Trisha, which was partially true. Joyce came back to the intern house, it was my day off, and told me the story. I asked her how this made Animal Haven different from an animal welfare organisation. She just smirked, shrugged her shoulders and went to take a shower.

Workers on the farm were considerably upset. There was a scramble of ideas about how to try and save the roosters from this. A woman in the administration department took one of the roosters (as hers had just died) and Joanne was going to take one (though in the end she did not). Another idea that was thought of was having the roosters castrated. A veterinarian at Winston Animal Hospital suggested that it may help mellow the birds and allow more than one rooster to live together in the barns. Therefore it was decided that this would be attempted on a particularly aggressive rooster. However, he bled to death and this put a stop to this strategy. But it was not without stress for those working on the shelter. Many knew of the risks going into this and many did not want to even attempt such a procedure. The individuals working on the farm were implicated in the lives of the animals because they cared for them daily. Trisha no longer did this. Her interest was making sure that the organisation she helped to start endured. At the end of the day, none of the other roosters were put down. Some of the others were adopted out throughout the summer. But this situation was only one aspect of the underlying tensions that existed at the organisation.

This situation spoke to various power dynamics existing on the farm. Though Trisha was no longer implicated in the lives of the animals on the farm, she nonetheless called the shots for nearly every aspect of the farm. Bill, her husband, was in charge only of the legal aspects and those projects that would eventually be brought to trial. This did take a considerable amount of time, however this was the only area he worked

in and, as other workers on the farm told me, the only area he was allowed to work in. I reiterated this situation to Shelly and Kaia in June, who burst out laughing at the ridiculous nature of this, “yeah, everything is organised, everything is really clean, but things are so tense! Fuck!! I just feel like Trisha and Bill should just retire and relax. Let somebody else worry about everything” (Shelly, June 2004).



Shelly and Punita feeding Harold, a rescued Jersey calf, clovers.

Harold, because he was rescued from a stockyard, had to be quarantined.

In June, the interns, instigated by Punita, would bring Harold over to our yard in front of the intern house because Punita felt bad that he was separated from all the other animals.

Many individuals were not happy with how their work was viewed. As mentioned before, many came to work on this farm, or to volunteer their time because in a sense it was a haven for them; an opportunity for them to work in a job that actually fit in with their ideologies, morals, and ethics. And, while many did love their job for these ideological aspects, many hated their jobs because of the way they were treated and for the apparent lack of acceptable labour standards. During dinner one evening, Joyce ranted about what she saw as the appalling labour practices of the organisation. She was critical of the fact that Trisha had bought a brand new SUV with custom colouring while the farm workers cannot get paid for overtime work, even though it is not unlikely

for them to work thirteen-hour days on a regular basis; for Trina, an education department worker, it was her opinion that it is the duty of the organisation to budget for this work and hire more people appropriately. I asked why the workers, who were apparently frustrated by this situation as well, did not go to the labour bureau or push for more ethical labour standards. She explained that most of the workers are fearful of doing this because they do not want to turn in the organisation, which is what would eventually happen. They are also fearful of standing up to Trisha because they do fear losing their jobs and for many this job does offer an ideal. Finally, if this were to go to the labour bureau, the farm would risk closing because the fines are so immense.

It is not surprising that alliances are formed within social activist communities. This does not imply that alliances are unique to these communities, but rather it seems to be an inevitable outcome of working in a high stress career that teeters on the margins socially, politically, and financially. Animal Haven is a not-for-profit organisation with 90% of its \$2 million budget coming from private donations. It requires a great deal of publicity to maintain these memberships and to obtain new members. It can be incredibly stressful for many who do not want to view their work in monetary terms but rather in a moral and ethical sense of justice.

But, alliances are not necessarily formed because of monetary stresses; in the case of Animal Haven it appeared that they were formed because of the distribution of power controlling the ideology that this organisation presented to other animal rights, welfare, and liberation groups, and to society in general. It is not necessarily the difference in ideology that leads to alliances of solidarity and tension. Perhaps instead it was the dissemination of power and therefore individual agency within the organisation. Levels of self-righteousness existed in the three main work areas of

Animal Haven, but their targets differed. Administration and Development seemed to be at odds with the farm, the farm was at odds with Administration and Development and didn't care too much for the Education centre either, while the Education centre just didn't like being in the middle of everything (quite literally as well if one remembers the layout of the farm).

Chapter X Conclusions

Since the end of my fieldwork two years ago, it was really in the latter half of this time frame that I had a firm understanding of how this thesis would develop. Theorising about the individual is very difficult; while giving voice to some, others are then silenced. I have argued that often times in social activist organisations, many voices are not heard above others whose position allows them greater ability to be heard. At the beginning of the writing process, it seemed easier to avoid bringing this unit of analysis in altogether and focus on what I had planned to write about. However, describing life at Animal Haven would not have been possible without the distinctive voices, personalities, and ideologies of the various individuals I worked and lived with. While my ethnography only offers an initial look into the role of the individual within social activism, it attempts to acknowledge this need for a more holistic representation and interpretation regarding the dynamics and processes of social movements and activism.

Upon setting out to study social activism within an animal rights organisation, my initial intentions had little to do with understanding the role and importance an individual has within a particular movement. I was interested in how a particular social movement organisation (Animal Haven) which existed within the broader animal rights movement manipulated and negotiated legal language as a way to influence, shape, and change the social and political outlook of justice and legality. I was therefore interested in the potential social movement activism has of influencing society, but not necessarily its impact on the daily, lived experiences of activists. Indeed, my research on social activism prior to conducting fieldwork focused mainly on the importance of a

communal identity, as most academic analyses and theories on social movements are focused on this issue. However, throughout the course of my fieldwork and in the process of transcribing interviews, organising field notes, and sifting through the variety of activist literature produced by Animal Haven I realised that this organisation was more than a communal presence. Rather its creation and definition was contingent on the various individuals choosing, to varying degrees, to make a career out of this type of activism. The existence of the organisation and its philosophies within the more general, abstract existence of the animal rights movement was not simply an example of a *superorganic* phenomenon (see Kroeber 1963). Rather, individuals remain influential in the processes of actualising their ideologies and beliefs. Furthermore, in actualising these beliefs through their lived, daily experiences, I found the way in which the mundane became politicised of great interest. I soon found myself asking very different questions regarding the role of the individual in the creation of identity and community.

Why do individuals, having no real contact with others they view as having a sense of belonging to an imagined community, come together and stay together in a physically real community? Do feelings of desperation and alienation invoke a sense of camaraderie where certain aspects of tension are ignored or overlooked? Is it because something is better than nothing? Additionally, in the effort to push forward with movement causes and ideals, how does this undermine the individual?

Relationship dynamics that are built and maintained within social activism are not necessarily unique, but often mirror the sense of identity and belonging to a specific social and cultural group which often arises out of feelings of marginality and isolation. Hence the creation and maintenance of the community of activists at Animal Haven was voluntaristic, situational, and purposive. Feelings of solidarity and identity with the

group can be strong, but so too can feelings of tension and frustration (with the group or with specific individuals belonging to the group). As mentioned throughout this thesis, others often choreograph our identities – identifying certain roles before and above other identities or assuming that a particular ideology or philosophy is in perfect synch with the main movement's stated goals and objectives. For many of the individuals I worked with, this did become a source of tension because many felt that this was another way in which their ideas were being over-looked, undermined, or assumed. However, this tension also served useful purposes. In the aspects of solidarity networks that became apparent throughout the course of my fieldwork; it also became clear that the frustration and tension felt within this community was being acknowledged and so were the attempts to assuage it. Strong relationships were in fact built and maintained while working towards specific goals.

The experience of alienation can be a result of adhering to a specific ideology that explicitly seeks to challenge more dominant ideologies. To compensate, people in this situation might seek out other like-minded individuals for the social support they may not be receiving in their family and 'traditional' social life. Of the 33 individuals I interviewed, all admitted to intense feelings of alienation from their immediate family and other social networks surrounding them (ie: friends, extended family, public school institutions – both secondary and post-secondary, and the community/society they were living in). The degree of severity obviously differed between these individuals, but it was intense enough that they sought other organisations, groups, and individuals as alternatives to fill this perceived social void. This search for alternatives is especially apparent in the locale where I conducted my fieldwork – i.e. on a farm whose activist base was drawn from all over the United States and which drew interns from various

parts of the globe (while I was there most interns came from the United States, one from India, one from Scotland, and another from Cyprus, though she now attends school in the US). As mentioned previously, Animal Haven was an organisation and a place where these activists could at least have a break from the constant need to justify their lifestyles to those outside of the movement:

I didn't broadcast until later on that I was vegan and later on people found out and nobody was hyper-critical. But, you know, my dad thinks I'm nuts. My mom thought it was a little weird...I think I started volunteering at the one sanctuary within the year [of turning vegan]...I'm here at Animal Haven donating a month of my life, working for free. I think that's huge. I was making 40 grand a year and I had a company car where they paid for everything - gas, insurance, plates. I just wasn't happy. I don't really care how much money I make as long as I can pay the bills. I wish I could stay here at vegan house longer, but they don't pay me! I had my own sanctuary for a while, so there's also that. I do what I can. I wish I could do more (Michael, intern, August 2004).

I actually grew up in this area, which is really kind of meat and potatoes. And, when I was a teenager I went vegetarian for a little while, but it was really difficult. I didn't have any support really. Nobody understood what I was doing and there wasn't much of a choice for me for food, especially with my parents. And, so I kind of forgot about it. I moved to Colorado in 1999 and I was out there and I just felt free to try vegetarianism because a lot of other people were doing it too. That's when I turned vegetarian...I was starting to learn pretty much anytime any animal is used for anything it's exploited, so I just decided to go vegan. And, that was probably two months before I started working here...I wasn't an activist for sure. I was vegan. I was vegan because I care about animals and I learned about what happens to them - not only the animals that are slaughtered, but the ones that are used for products too. And, I wanted to work here because it's an amazing opportunity to have your career be also what you morally agree with in life. I was working in a hotel at the time and every time I threw away too much paper, every time I was putting out milk for the continental breakfast, I felt kind of like I was being a hypocrite (Trina, summer tour coordinator, June 2004).

I like farming, but you can't find a farm with animals where they don't end up disposing of them or eating them (Irene, feeder/heath care, June 2004).

[I sought out other groups and organisations] because I wanted to be sure to make sure I was doing it right...I really looked at a lot of stuff on line and was trying to figure out how to live that way. But, I didn't really do anything...When I became vegan I started to do a lot more campaigns and stuff. But, vegetarian was just really weird. I was in high school - nobody else was vegetarian. I guess just trying to eat differently was the biggest thing...I guess there were always groups like PETA and stuff. But now, I really can't stand PETA at all and I guess it's just because I've developed politically and when all things come together national organisations just piss me off a lot...It's just that within every movement there's so many different kinds of groups that always fucking clash. It sucks, but

you come up with a lot of better ideas that way. Definitely when you're out with a group of people on the streets [campaigning or protesting], you feel so much safer...I like to do stuff on my own too, but just nobody thinks that they are really powerful. As far as making claims of the movement though, that's really big. I don't know if I can speak for an entire movement. No one should speak for the whole movement. That always turns out bad (Shelly, intern, June 2004).

Vegetarian, first, of course. The diet in Japan – most things started in Japan because I went over there in the 70's [and lived there for 25 years]. People don't, or didn't before – they do now – it was little slivers of meat to garnish your food. They would never sit down and eat whole body parts. I wasn't a good vegetarian, but I tried. And, then when I lived in Ohio, I tried to go vegan, but it was really hard. I left there in 2002 and I came here and having the stores here and the people living here being vegans was really easy. I'll never go back (Heather, administration, May 2004).

I fell in love with [Animal Haven] when I was an intern. Granted I was only here in June and July. I loved the people's energy and I loved working with animals, I always have. What else did I like about this place? Oh, I got paid for taking care of animals, which is not something I ever had before (Alexis, health care, August 2004).

The idea of Animal Haven as a utopia to live and to work changed quickly for many of the activists coming to this organisation. While individuals may have had to face alienation from family, friends, and their surrounding social communities, this does not mean that life at Animal Haven was necessarily free from stress or tension. The stress and tension that occurred between people working in different sectors of Animal Haven arose from ideological conflicts, not just in terms of an animal rights ideology, but also in terms of other ideologies that individuals imported from other arenas of activism in which they were also involved. As mentioned in previous chapters, tension and conflict can serve useful purposes. In the case of Animal Haven, much of this conflict was turned and used positively. Ideologies were challenged within the organisation, which acted as a way to refine these philosophies.

Individuals coming to work and stay at Animal Haven were doing so for a variety of reasons. In addition, the nature of an individual's involvement and roles within this organisation, and also within the general animal rights movement also

varied greatly. While some members were new, others veterans, each individual as an activist was not necessarily heading down similar paths. As a result of this changing nature and the rapidly changing nature of social movements, it becomes difficult to define or categorise social activist movements and actors. This membership and representation is very fluid, existing in particular times and spaces.

Social movement activism and actors are not something that can be easily defined or categorised. Academic analyses and representations of social movement activism have evolved from a strictly homogenous representation. Yet, there continues to lack a fully developed representation of the variegated characteristics held by individuals who claim membership. As a result, the individual is not represented as present in the creation of organisations, philosophies, and ideologies that come to characterise social movement organisations and social movements in general.

Referring back to Wiltfang and McAdam, activists and social movements are too “sufficiently large and diverse to constitute a broad umbrella covering a wide variety of participants” (Wiltfang and McAdam 1991: 988). And as McDonald (2002) has argued, the idea of a collective identity is a *conceptual liability* because it does not allow the relationship between the individual and collective experience to be explored completely. Therefore, re-focusing the effort in social movement theorising means to bring the individual more fully into the equation and to abandon the assumption that social movements can be studied in their entirety. It is in this homogenous presentation of social movements and their actors that there is a lack of clarity regarding the position, role, and importance of the individual. Furthermore, this homogenous representation does not allow us to fully look at the distinctive histories of social movements and

organisations and how social movement actors dictating, defining, and presenting ideologies disseminate these through diverse means.

Within my theoretical perspectives and ethnography, I have attempted to bring to light the strengths and weaknesses I perceive in the academic presentation and analysis of social movement activism (as well, there are problems with other representations within activist communities themselves and by other sources such as the media and governments, however there is not ample room to fully discuss these issues). Social movement theorising has continually evolved to acknowledge and reflect on the differing and changing social, political, and economic demands that influence and shape social movements, social movement organisations, and social movement actors. The role and importance of the individual within social movement analyses is becoming more apparent and visible. The individual as an actor in social movements has moved from being perceived by various academic analysts as stuck in the temper tantrum stage of development (Kupers 1993) to being understood as unique, influential, and powerful.

Social movement activism often develops as a reaction to societal structures and institutions. Therefore, it often represents certain perspectives and voices within a society that are opposed to these structures and institutions. At the core of social movements and their organisations are a variety of individuals fabricating ideologies and philosophies, which structure the movements and their organisations and communities. As individual interest, membership, and participation waxes and wanes, ideologies, philosophies, organisations, and movements will evolve and change accordingly.

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