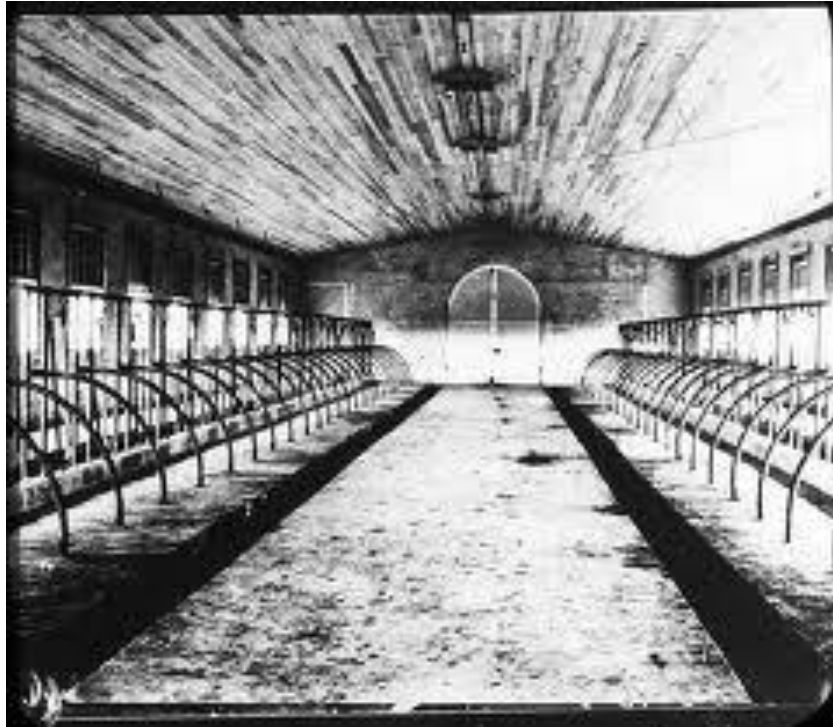


Towards a **VEGAN ECO-FEMINIST
CRITICAL CARE THEORY:**
A Search for
**A COMPASSIONATE, RESPONSIBLE,
RESPECTFUL, POSTHUMANIST
PARADIGM**



By
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Towards a Vegan Ecofeminist Critical Care Theory:
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Abstract

Anti-speciesist theory is not often taught within the humanities nor has it been present in the Women and Gender Studies programs I have attended. To do research concerning the realities other-than-human beings face an alternative theoretical framework is necessary. This thesis explored multiple theoretical perspectives, from a deconstructive (eco) feminist stance, that attempt to bridge the human/animal divide. The six unsanctioned discourses explored were: 1) Animal Rights theory, 2) Feminist Care/Defense theory, 3) Ecofeminism, 4) Radical Anti-Speciesist theory, 5) Liberationist theory, and 6) Posthumanism. From these theoretical strands, and through an affirmative discourse analysis, an alternative hybrid theory, composed of terminology, concepts and ideas selected from the unsanctioned, was pieced together. From this hybrid theory it will be possible to do future research concerning the lives of animal beings under human despotism. This bricolage offers an alternative and intersectional lens from which to know, see and be in the world.

Date Submitted: April 25, 2014

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTIONS

Section 1.1

General Introductions

Throughout all my years spent in academia I had not, up until I took it upon myself in this very thesis, been introduced to an adequate theoretical lens through which I might be able to frame research focusing on the realities of some of the many different creatures who exist in this world. It is from my own experience of this absence and from my own awareness of the incompleteness of the theories I *had* explored within academia that my thesis stems. My thesis is a search through multiple theoretical paradigms (academic as well as popular and political) that are not often taught within academia (in my experience at least) and that attempt to theorize the world as inclusive and considerate of more than merely human beings. The purpose of this exploration is to lay the *foundations* for a hybrid theoretical framework that I will ultimately be able to expand on and through which I will, in the future, be able to address research questions regarding the realities of diverse other than human life forms. For this thesis, however, my focus is on other-than-human animals, those animals who are flesh and blood.¹ The lens I build intends to be a compassionate, responsible, respectful, posthumanist paradigm: a vegan eco-feminist critical care theory.

Concerns for other-than-human animals “have elicited a number of responses from feminists, ranging from deep engagement by ecofeminists to indifference or resistance by

¹ Creatures, other-than-human beings, living beings, etc. all of these terms, elaborated on in Chapter 5 and used throughout, refer to “animals,” as they are traditionally labelled. Although this theory’s aim is to eventually be able to incorporate, and therefore consider, microorganisms, insects, plants, ecosystems, environments, and all sorts of other life forms into its analysis and understanding it begins with those creatures who are flesh and blood. This is largely because the literatures, the unsanctioned discourses, I chose to use as the data for this thesis placed their focus on “nonhuman animals” and also because this is where my own research interests lie.

others. ...While ecofeminism has put animal issues on the map of feminist concerns, they remain a marginal topic within feminism as a whole” (Gaarder 2011, 4). Those feminists who are deeply engaged with animals’ issues such as Carol J. Adams, Donna Haraway, Josephine Donovan, Greta Gaard, Brian Luke, Karen Davis, have not been present in the Women and Gender Studies programs in which I have participated. If anti-speciesist feminist theorists are absent from the curriculum of Women and Gender Studies programs, potential connections between speciesism and sexism remain unexplored. If we consider the interdisciplinarity of Women and Gender Studies these missed connections multiply and leave significant gaps in feminist ways of knowing. I believe the overarching reasons for these exclusionary practices in Women and Gender Studies and beyond, be they intentional or unintentional, can be directly linked to anthropocentrism, the belief that “human beings [are] the most significant entity of the universe” which leads to the interpretation of “the world in terms of human values and experiences” (Merriam-Webster 2000, 49) and speciesism, which is defined and elaborated on in Section 1.2.

To the list that reads: sexist, racist, classist, homophobic, ageist, ableist, and heterosexist, speciesist has not in my experience been included in the context of academia and is also often evaded outside these institutional walls. Yet such “processes of exclusion” are an opportunity for me in the context of this thesis, in that they “make even dominant discourses vulnerable... provid[ing] the terrain on which alternative, oppositional, and counter discourses might emerge”(Strega 2005, 219-220). It is on this terrain, and to fill this gap I have observed in Women and Gender Studies, that I piece together this hybrid theory. I want to challenge the omission of theories that acknowledge other-than-human animals. I believe that Women and Gender Studies has provided me with a context from which to

speak about and give voice to othered animals via the exposure of alternative and oppositional texts and discourses (counter discourses). This thesis is largely a “project of centering subjugated knowledge[s]” (Brown and Strega 2005, 8) in order to challenge “the hegemony of current research paradigms” (2005, 10) which maintain humans at the centre and all other beings on the periphery.

In what follows I piece together a theoretical paradigm through which both “human” and “animal” can be radically reconceptualised in order to begin to break the cycles of speciesism that are perpetually reinforced by the ways we exist, act and think under global corporate capitalism. By piecing together a model that shifts humans out of the theoretical center and takes seriously the other creatures on this planet perhaps we can begin to challenge our own individual speciesisms. By questioning our own speciesisms perhaps we can begin to challenge the speciesisms that permeate the globe. I am in search of a compassionate, responsible, respectful, posthumanist paradigm from which I can see, know, begin to act, exist and do research differently.

The remainder of this chapter introduces speciesism as a concept, discusses the importance of language to this thesis and introduces my self and my place within my research. In chapter two I walk you through the theoretical place from where I began this research and the methodological ways I used to produce a new theoretical bricolage. Chapter three explores the Canadian context (in which I exist) and discusses where women fit into what is commonly considered to be the animal rights movement, giving context to the content of this thesis. Chapter four outlines the six “unsanctioned discourses,” a framework for understanding alternative discourses, developed by Strega (2005, 219). The unsanctioned discourses are the theories I used to re-construct the hybrid theory crafted in Chapter five;

they are theories that attempt to consider ‘animal’ that have not only been absent within my own academic career but also arguably within academia more generally. Chapter six discusses the alternative zine that I produced alongside my thesis – *Think: Crafting Another Way* – offered in the Appendices section. The zine offers a working demonstration of accessibility by making alternative ways of knowing available to diverse reading publics. In Chapter seven I reflect on the process of this project, summarize the hybrid theory, highlight some of the limitations of the theory and discuss future research possibilities.

Section 1.2

An Introduction to Speciesism

Speciesism, as a concept, was coined in 1970 by Richard Ryder, a clinical psychologist who turned towards animal rights advocacy after having been involved in animal experimentation. He also coined the term “painism”: “his position that all beings who feel pain deserve rights” (Wikipedia 2012). The definitions of speciesism are multiple, layered and diverse; however, the definition that I began to work from and to which I have added to further emphasize the human centrism central to speciesism, is as follows:

Speciesism refers to the widely held *human* belief that the human species is inherently superior to *all othered* species and so has rights *and* privileges that are denied, *by humans*, to *all* other sentient animals. Speciesism... also...describes the oppressive behaviour, cruelty, prejudice and discrimination... associated with such a belief (Ryder 2012, www.richardryder.co.uk – my additions emphasized).

Speciesism is complex, deeply engrained, and rampant in Euro and Anthropocentric capitalist societies. The term itself describes both the ideology and the realities perpetuated by human beings believing that the human species is positioned above all other species even

though human beings are only one species in a multitude of others. Speciesism, like sexism, racism, heterosexism, and other forms of prejudice and discrimination, results from and reproduces a built hierarchy, one in which the human species takes the privileged position, leaving all other species as lesser- than- human. Speciesism is a way of thinking, knowing, and understanding the world from a human-centric viewpoint. It is a way of being and knowing that often perpetuates horrendous and unnecessary treatment of all other species whom we (can barely claim to) ‘share’ the planet with. Speciesism can be seen, if we choose to look, in who we eat, who we wear, who we rely on for the safety of our skin, hair and body care, who we also perform scientific, military, medical, and chemical experiments on, who we domesticate to be our pets, who we domesticate and train for entertainment, who we hunt, whose habitats we destroy, who we abuse, use and who we deem disposable for the benefit of one species: the human species.

Nonhuman beings “are systematically marginalized, objectified, and exploited by human beings of [all] sexes, of every color, age, and ability, and from every socioeconomic background” (Kemmerer 2011, 16). Although this is a sweeping generalization to which all human animals cannot arguably or equally be party to, if we look to the dominant norms of a capitalist, affluent country such as Canada, it is not difficult to see how such a society facilitates the systematic marginalization, objectification, and exploitation of other living beings. Whether done intentionally or unintentionally, humans from all walks of life partake in practices that perpetuate speciesism. While our circumstances are diverse, there are some humans who make an effort to oppose speciesism in the choices they make and the actions they take, for example, by abstaining from consuming living beings as “meat,” constructed as a commodity. Humans are, however, generally speaking, speciesists in that they believe in

their own superiority over other species to inflict what they will on natural environments and the life forms that (co)exist here whether for the perceived benefit to those creatures and the planet or for our own.

Section 1.3

Linguistic Considerations

I begin this section with a question: How many lives, those of creatures raised and slaughtered for human consumption, do you eat in a day? A week? A month? A year? How many of these lives will you consume during your lifetime? Although our relationships with animals go beyond those (whose dismembered segments) we eat, eating is something we do often: everyday, if we are able. What, who and how we eat is often culturally constructed; it becomes a personal choice, even a right, and comes to be a normalized activity in our food-fetishizing society. It is due to this normalizing effect that we so often fail to see that what and who we eat has political under, over and inner tones and implications for others. We mask the creatures we consume by turning them into “absent referents” and constructing them as “mass terms” devoid of individuality (Adams 1990, Ch. 2) (Adams 1994, 101-102).

As Carol J. Adams puts it in *The Sexual Politics of Meat*:

Once the existence of ‘meat’ is disconnected from the existence of [the] animal who was killed to become that ‘meat’, meat becomes unanchored by its original referent (the animal), becoming instead a free-floating image... Animals are the absent referent in the act of meat eating (Adams 1990, 13).

“Meat” generalizes each singular, unique and irreducible² creature into a mass, a thing, no longer visualized as living beings to be considered, but as “meat” to be consumed. This is why I began by asking “How many *lives* do you eat?” This attempts to make those absent present, to make who we call food or “meat” into a life of an animal taken to be eaten. We speak of chickens and fish as “harvested” rather than killed, label cows beef, pigs pork, deer venison, calves veal. This wording encourages us to avoid the lived realities of who we are feeding on, including the realities these creatures face prior to ending up on our plates (often justified by our palates), and our responsibility for those beings’ lives we, quite literally, consume. This language, along with the physical incarceration of those species we brand as food, creates the distance needed to avoid the building of respectful relationships and allows us to easily remain detached and thus void of compassion for the animal others we continuously consume.

Transforming animals into “meat” or imagining them only as food, as never dead or living, rather than as (once) living beings, is only one example of how we transform somebody, a subject, into some-thing, an object and into some-body/thing who becomes essentially killable via language and distance. Similarly, by labelling animals pets, lab animals, wild animals, etc, humans allot certain animals, often entire species, inescapable fates. For example, labelling animals “lab animals” constructs specific creatures as innately to be vivisected. In fact, “like racism and sexism, speciesism is a form of prejudice sustained in part by biased, misleading words” and such “speciesist language remains socially acceptable”

² To avoid using the term “individual,” which carries with it too much liberal humanist baggage, to describe creatures I instead use the terms “singular,” “unique,” “irreducible,” and “some-body,” rather than “someone,” to express that these creatures are not just part of a species, a mass but exist as separate beings as well. Each creature is part of a “multiplicity of beings” and all beings are, although interdependent, “irreducible” (Derrida 2008, 41).

(Dunayer 2003, 61) thus animals remain other, object, and absent, suffering the consequences of these constructions.

As I worked through this project, I searched for language, as others before me have (Kemmerer 2011, 38-40), that is respectful and acknowledges animals as irreducible beings with lives they would likely live differently if given that option. The term animal in itself is disrespectful (beyond having the constructed air of an insult -“you filthy animal!”). It also generalizes animals in all their diversity and difference to one “general singular... ‘The Animal’, as if all nonhuman living things could be grouped within the common sense of this commonplace” (Derrida 2008, 34). It is a word “that men have instituted, a name they have given themselves the right and authority to give to the living other” (Derrida 2008, 23).

To work through and move beyond this term Derrida proposes a “theory of animots” (2008, 39) in which “Ecce animot [is] [n]either a species nor a gender nor an individual, it is an irreducible living multiplicity of mortals...a sort of monstrous hybrid, a chimera” (2008, 41). What Derrida is doing here is destabilizing the term and opening up alternative possibilities for its meaning. I interpret this as not only i) a challenge to the human/animal binary but also as ii) a challenge to the singularity of this duality; a challenge to the limits put on the human and the animal in this divide as well as to the line that supposedly separates them.

Labelling humans and animals in all their diversity as “human or animal” does not allow for overlap between the two or for the multiplicity of relationships that truly exists amongst and between all living beings, human and animal. This binary does not need to be

reconstructed or inverted but exploded³ and this can be done, according to Derrida, by destabilizing the categories by complicating them. Throughout my research I searched for a multiplicity of terms that could also work to explode the overly simplified and singularized human/animal divide. Derrida's "animot" serves part of this purpose.

As I worked through this project, I struggled and continue to struggle to speak without speciesist inferences. For example, using terms like misogynist pig or greedy pig is an insult to an entire species that is not misogynist nor greedy (it is the human species who both define what greed and misogyny are and who can be deserving of said labels). Dunayer asserts that "[n]onhuman-animal epithets insult humans by invoking contempt for other species: *rat, worm, viper, goose*" (2003, 61). In my day the insults were cow, pig, dog, pussy (which could refer to gender or feline), etc. Paying attention to the language I used helped me to avoid perpetuating this "contempt" for creatures other than humans and to avoid elevating humans to a superior status.

Avoiding speciesism in its linguistic form also required that I challenge the worthiness of human centered terms such as murder, enslavement, and rape by appropriating them for other creatures and in doing so challenging their anthropocentric roots. Animals are not only slaughtered, domesticated and bred, they are murdered, enslaved and raped. I have also been explicit when speaking of other animals' bodies. Words such as "*leather* and *pork* serve as comfortable code for skin and flesh. *Domestication* softens captivity [or incarceration], subjugation and forced breeding [aka rape and sexual assault]" (Dunayer 2003, 62). It has been one of my main endeavours to challenge myself and this speciesist language, to be

³ To *explode* refers both to the potentially, and perhaps necessarily, violent breaking or shattering of dichotomies into multiple pieces and to the potentially less violent exploding or expansion of these dichotomies beyond their often confined definitions and boundary limits.

considerate and cautious, and make creative corrections to words and terms that have no place here. I will speak of animals as ‘whos’ not ‘whats’ or ‘its’ because “[t]he way we speak about other animals is inseparable from the way we treat them. Along with our actions, our words must accord them full consideration and respect” (Dunayer 2004, xiii). The words we use have personal and political meaning and with that comes consequences, for us and for them.

Section 1.4

Location/Standpoint/Positionality and Privileges

A main vein of feminism recognizes that the personal is political and that lived experience is a valid way of knowing and learning. I often refer to my own experience as evidence and grounds for my work and interest in anti-speciesist theory and think it crucial, with this in mind, to position myself as a subject within my research. A “[s]tandpoint is the position adopted by a researcher who recognizes the need to be an advocate for a particular point of view. It embodies the assumption that the researcher is working in a context which is oppressive and in which certain groups are routinely denied social justice” (Somekh 2005, 348). Others use the term social “location” (Esterberg 2002, 12) to identify their position in relation to the work they do.

I came at this project from a particular position: one that makes an effort to take the point of view, as much as is possible, of different beings and their diverse realities in a speciesist context. By doing so I believe I am able to see and imagine the world from a different, less human centric, lens. During the course of my thesis it has also been my intention to allow for my position to shift and remain fluid. This was necessary because, as I

explored discourses that attempt to include other than human beings, discourses that often remain unsanctioned - that exist outside the mainstream, as alternative to those discourses that stem from humanism, - I was bound to encounter new ways of understanding. I wanted to leave room to be changed by what I learned, thus modifying my position/views.

My theoretical and methodological positions are discussed in Chapter 2. However, to begin to position myself in this context I must first state that I am vegan. According to Wikipedia, a useful tool for generalized views, veganism is: “the practice of abstaining from the use of animal products, particularly in diet, as well as following an associated philosophy that rejects the commodity status of sentient animals. A follower of veganism is known as a **vegan**” (Wikipedia 2014). Veganism for me has never been a “healthy” choice but a necessary one if I am to exist in my body and in my mind in a world (most directly, the affluent capitalist country of Canada and a global world I only know through media and internet) that treats animals, not as living and dead, but as economically viable products to be processed, harvested, and consumed for profit.

My food, fashion, cosmetic, entertainment and academic choices are taken in order to oppose and challenge industries that rely on the exploitation of other animals and the construction of animals as other to maximize their profits. My choices are also made with the intention to support organizations and industries that oppose/avoid the cruelty involved in using animals as objects. It disturbs me to know that billions of animals are being born, living and dying in prison-like places, processed on disassembly lines like lifeless automotive parts and perpetually tortured in laboratories like guinea pigs (some of whom are guinea pigs) for the sole purpose of satisfying human consumption and greed. If I do not *need* to live off another’s misery I will not.

I am (economically) privileged to have access to a variety of food and other products available at all times in supermarkets,⁴ overstimulation, in terms of entertainment, in every direction (there is no need for me to entertain myself with circuses, aquariums or zoos) and I have the ability to make consumer choices that need not directly support the animal industrial complex (for example, choosing not to wear hair or skin). My veganism grew out of my awareness of animal issues, which stemmed from a past and present full of interspecies relationships and the willingness to self-educate and face unnerving realities. These relationships and the experiences that extend from them are what I draw upon throughout this project for both inspiration and as experiential data.

I also come at this project with other privileges beyond class and nationality that I work *with* as well as challenge. These are the privileges of being a) human b) white and c) an academic. These privileges intersect with the interconnecting oppressions that both animals and humans endure (discussed in Chapter 4, section 4.3: Feminist Care/Defense Theory) and complicate the binaries of privilege/prejudice and oppression/liberation. I want to acknowledge my human privilege since I consider human privilege to be a privilege that too often goes unacknowledged. My white middle-class privilege intersects and connects with this human privilege, in effect a human skin privilege.

This racialized and classed human skin privilege also interconnects with my academic privilege, since being any being besides a human being limits your positional opportunities in academia (for example: “laboratory rat” vs. “scientific researcher”) just as being white potentially expands these opportunities. As much as I use these privileges, both intentionally

⁴ It is not necessarily accurate to say that a vegan diet/way of life costs more because meat and dairy are often more expensive than grains, beans, legumes, etc. which are central to a vegan diet. See Messina 2010, <http://www.theveganrd.com/2010/01/the-high-cost-of-ethical-eating.html>.

and unintentionally, in order to communicate with other humans and to succeed on multiple levels in a human centric social order, I also attempt to question these privileges throughout this project by exploring texts that acknowledge racism, its connection to speciesism, and the interconnections between those prejudices and discrimination and others experienced as sexism, homophobia, ageism, etc.

To summarize: I am human, middle-class, and white, a privileged position in which I may interpret myself as a free being, yet I am also female which often arouses prejudicial treatment and oppressive circumstances. Furthermore, I enjoy privilege as an academic to create knowledge and have (a certain kind of) voice, which entitles me to a relatively elite position in society promoted by the general exclusiveness of academia. However, for me, this academic privilege is also oppressive in that it stifles my creativity with rigid rules and regulations pertaining to what are valid and legitimate ways of writing, thinking, knowing and researching. I attempt to complicate the privileged position I hold and the exclusiveness of academia through my production of a zine, a more accessible edition of my thesis (discussed in the Theory and Methodology chapter and additionally in Chapter 6).

While I come at this project with certain privileges I also come with a disadvantage, namely, as woman identified in a world where sexism (patriarchy) is still alive, nurtured and well. This is important to acknowledge especially within the confines of my research where terms such as “animal lover,” “irrational” and “overly emotional” have all been labels plastered on animal activists of all genders in order to silence, disregard and delegitimize animal liberation and animal rights activists and the associated movement, one that is largely composed of women (Gaarder 2011, 1). Being human, white, female identified and educated positions me directly within the demographic frame of the animal rights movement, which

consists of mostly female identified activists, who are largely white, and educated (Gaarder 2011, 15-16). I myself have also been called “irrational” for caring about and speaking up for animals. Although these judgements often come from external sources, some of this sexism is perpetuated from within the movement. For example, Peter Singer and Tom Regan have both been accused of discounting sentimentalism and opting for overt rationalism (Donovan 2007, 58-59), disregarding the feminist approach to activism, which involves caring and compassion.

Although I consider being vegan an invaluable experience because of the worldview it fosters and the diverse interspecies relationships that become possible with such a way of knowing and seeing, it can also be considered a disadvantage. In certain circles being vegan is rewarded; however, outside of these circles I have come to realize based on my own experience that to many, at first at least, it is looked down upon as a hindrance, a challenge, often equated with irrationality, weakness, being overly emotional, sensitive and untrustworthy. In a patriarchal context where meat eating is often a practice associated with masculinity (Adams 1990, 25-38) this “feminization” of veganism, associating it with emotion over reason, weakness over strength, passivity over activity etc., can by extension impact the animal rights/liberation movement’s ability to strive for a better world for all beings.

Even more detrimentally, if veganism is not feminized it is often sensationalized and considered extremist. This view may be influenced by some of the direct action tactics used by groups such as the ALF (Animal Liberation Front - see “Animal Liberation Front Guidelines” in Best and Nocella II, 2004, 8), the history of direct actions by animal advocates (see Molland 2004, 67-80) and the coverage of these actions by media (see Dawn 2004, 213-228). These perceptions can have dangerous consequences for those involved in animal

rights or liberation, even mere vegans, in that they equate people who care about animals passionately with terrorists in a post-911 context (Best and Nocella II 2004, 9-11; see Watson 2004, 279-287 for further discussion).

I attempt to position myself in a way that is honest about my biases and preconceptions, my privileges and disadvantages, my ways of seeing the world, and ultimately my investments in and connections to this project (Esterberg 2002, 13). This is the position from which I began this project. Throughout the thesis, I shifted as the context surrounding me shifted and as I challenged what I think I know and understand, as I discovered and created meaning and transformed myself in order to understand the world from an expanded lens. At the end of this project I find myself standing in another location, looking from, if not an entirely new position, one that has radically shifted.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK, METHODOLOGY, AND METHODS

Section 2.1

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework through which I approached this thesis project, as with the intended end result of the project itself, is a hybrid. It shares many principles with eco-feminism, intertwines with feminist poststructuralism and takes conceptual tools from deconstruction; in this sense it is a deconstructive eco-feminist lens. Semantic realities are central to all of these theoretical lenses. Here I am referring to how language can be used to convey multiple meanings which, depending on interpretation, influence the ways we understand not only what we are reading or hearing but also the way we perceive the world around us. Since this thesis focuses largely on language, both speciesist and antispeciesist, the concepts in the tool box of this hybrid theoretical outlook are often textual in their functioning, in that they work with words to find, create, alter and “subvert” (Prasad 2005, 238) meaning.

Adams, referenced in the introduction, lends the concepts of the “absent referent” and the “mass term” to the theoretical framework from where I began this project. Animals are “made absent through language” (Adams 1994, 17). Becoming an absent referent occurs through a discursive process that alters living beings into such things as “meat,” a “mass term”: a term that allows for “no individuality, no uniqueness, no specificity, [and] no particularity” (Adams 1994, 27). “Through detachment, concealment, misrepresentations, and shifting the blame, the structure of the absent referent prevails” because the language we

employ acts as a powerful tool to both explain away and mask our realities (Adams 1990, 97). These two concepts in particular enabled me to look at language critically, paying attention to those beings made absent and analyzing mass terms, while searching for language to challenge the conceptualization of animal as other, absent and invisible.

Certain feminisms insist that oppressions be considered in the plural, as interconnecting, intersecting and interlocking since “[d]ominance functions best in a culture of disconnections and fragmentation”(Adams 1990, 7). Understanding oppressions as interconnected was also important for my theoretical framework. Although I have had to set limits in terms of my inquiries, there are no limits to the connections that exist between and even within different forms of oppressions experienced by different people, beings, creatures and species.

Making connections is key to ecofeminism (Gaard 1993, viii) and understanding the plurality of connections possible from a “holistic” point of view (Birkeland 1993, 19), even those between forms of oppression, enabled me to grasp the complexity of a “mutually reinforcing system of oppression[s]” (Gaard 1993, 5). Ecofeminism stems directly from the acknowledgment of connective plurality; it is “a theory that has evolved from various fields of feminist inquiry and activism: peace movements, labour movements, women’s health care, and the anti-nuclear, environmental, and animal liberation movements” (Gaard 1993, 1).

This connective plurality and interdisciplinarity enabled me to partake in a cross-disciplinary investigation into the theories that together would result in a hybrid paradigm. By stressing interconnections, ecofeminism pushed me outside of its theoretical realm to other disciplines which further encouraged me to piece together the theory for this project. I might have otherwise locked myself within the walls of feminist theory, resulting in a different, less

comprehensive outcome. Interdisciplinarity is “one thing feminism and deconstruction [also] share” (Elam 1994, 11).

Resonating with deconstruction, discussed below, and the feminism as discussed above, feminist poststructuralism entangles the researcher with their data (Davies 2005, 319), acknowledges that “lived experiences [are grounds] for theorizing” (Davies 2005, 323), “makes visible, analysable and revisable” binary oppositions (Davies 2005, 318), relishes the disruption of “that which is taken as stable/unquestionable truth” or “the taken-for-granted knowledges,” and advocates for “creative possibilities” (Davies 2005, 320). I endeavoured to do the above in my thesis by using my own experiences as grounds for theorizing, by challenging dichotomies specifically the animal/human divide, by asking uncomfortable questions and raising often avoided (animal) matters, and by advocating for alternative realities made possible by being imaginative.

For the purposes of this project, a feminist poststructuralist conceptualization of power is key because it is understood as “circulated and dispersed,” as well as “exercised and relational rather than...oppressive or repressive” (Strega 2005, 225). As well knowledge is conceived as “never disinterested or neutral, but both produced by and productive of power” (Strega 2005, 226). Defining power in this way complicates the apparent and assumed powerlessness of other animals in the contexts they face but also makes apparent the power humans often hold over animal others. If we understand power as “circulated and dispersed,” nonhuman animals may also be seen to have power in their relations to each other and to certain humans because animals also have ways of knowing, , whether humans will admit this or not, even if these ways are different from our own or remain unrecognizable to the often limited and speciesist human frame of reference.

Even though I employ the term “oppression” throughout this thesis, I recognize that power exists in a much more complicated web of inter-actions than a simple dichotomous relationship between oppressors and oppressed. “Significant otherness,” as Haraway discusses throughout her work, is an alternative way of doing relationships that respects the other for their differences, building a more complex relationship between human beings and other beings where power is not so simplified. For example, a human can be both oppressor and liberator at the same time in the context of a “companion species” relationship where power is dispersed (Haraway 2008).

Deconstruction, as put forth by Jacques Derrida and those who attempt to interpret/understand him, is the other part of this theoretical framework. Deconstruction is a way of reading (Johnson 1987, 17-18) and entails a creative pursuit and can be “thought of as a certain inventionalism” meant to be “affirmative,” political and filled with possibilities “to come” (Derrida 1997, 42). “The very word *deconstruction* is meant to undermine the either/or logic of the opposition ‘construction/destruction’” (Johnson 1987, 12). Deconstruction offers a way of reading that is “unsettling” to “many established notions about knowledge, Western civilization, and progress” (Prasad 2005, 239). What deconstruction encouraged me to do was to destabilize “unexamined assumptions”(Prasad 2005, 241) surrounding nonhuman and human animals via the re-interpretation of meaning(s) found in diverse texts and by leaving meaning open to multiple, creative and imaginative possibilities. Deconstruction is “decentering.” One way in which decentering is accomplished is via exploring and uncovering the multiplication of meaning in order to complicate assumed dichotomies. Derrida states that:

Deconstruction is respect, respect for the other, a respectful, responsible affirmation of the other, a way if not to efface at least to delimit the narcissism of the self...and to make some space to let the other be (1997, 44).

Without a respectful deconstructive space, a space where multiplicity is made permissible, there would be no hope or sincerity in the possibility of change; confronting speciesism, a form of prejudice and discrimination that is so complexly entrenched in our everyday lives, would seem insurmountable. In this project I use deconstruction to shift the human self out of center, a necessary step in order to be able to seriously consider and contemplate all creatures different from our selves. Deconstruction also lends the concepts of “difference” and “justice,” with which comes “responsibility,” as well as the concept of “carnophallogocentrism” to this project.

Carnophallogocentrism is an alternative and expanded version of logocentrism that emphasizes the central place of language, whether spoken or written, to our human existence (Wikipedia 2013). Carnophallogocentrism goes further by highlighting that language and its meanings are created and maintained by the “phallus” since language and meaning is centrally constructed within a patriarchal hegemony. Language and meanings create *consumable* beings both symbolically, for example creating women as sex, and literally, creating animals as food. This accounts for the “carno,” or carnivorous consumption, of carnophallogocentrism, stemming from the male dominated epistemology that echoes a male dominated ontology. Carnophallogocentrism relates to (eco)feminism’s comprehension of oppressions as intersecting, in the sense that sexism, a product of phallogocentrism, echoes “truths” (the logo) that permit the consumption of the other as other, the carno, by perpetuating meaning that entrenches speciesism, racism, and sexism institutionally

(Birnbaum and Olssen 2009, www.e-flux.com). Carnophallogocentrism makes important connections between patriarchy, meaning making, and our consumption. These are necessary connections for understanding why animal use or consumption as it is undertaken today is problematic.

“Différance” is Derrida’s way of maintaining meaning as “multiple, layered, and never definitely fixed” (Prasad 2005, 244). The word in French complicates difference by multiplying its meanings to mean both to differ and to defer (Prasad 2005, 244; Lucy 2004, 27; Burman 2005, 285). What this allows for is multiple understandings and a deferral to the possibilities of differences. This deferring permits meanings to remain fluid and open to multiple and continuous (re)interpretations rather than unalterable. This term demonstrates “the importance of writing as a social process and the need to resist all attempts at fixing meaning in writing” (Prasad 2005, 243). “Différance” as a conceptual tool enabled me to use a diverse array of terms and concepts borrowed from the theories I investigated and gave me the possibility of creating my own meanings and concepts liberating me from definitional incarceration. It also allowed me to theoretically defer completing my hybrid theory by leaving it open and in process.

Justice is another crucial concept for my theoretical purposes. The way Derrida conceptualizes justice is that it is “never absolutely outside the law” but neither necessarily is there “justice once ‘the law has run its course’” (Lucy 2004, 64). According to this understanding, “justice not only demands our responsiveness but always also our responsibility... There is always work to be done when it comes to the question of justice” (Lucy 2004, 64). To do research, even in the theoretical space where animals are spoken (in other words where “othered” animals enter into academic discourse), a pre-existing respect

for the other and sense of responsibility is critical. Just as it would be unjust and irresponsible for someone with sexist or racist beliefs to do research on the lives of “lesser-than-men-humans” (aka women) or “lesser-than-white people,” so too is it unjust for a speciesist human animal to do research on “lesser-than-human animals” because this would mean the responsibility to the other owed justice is jeopardized or ignored. As Elam states towards the end of her book discussing feminism and deconstruction:

Justice involves recognition of the debts that cannot be paid, the debts that set a limit to one’s autonomy. To recognize such debts as unpayable is not to write them off, either-it is rather to commit oneself to an endless work of reparation without the final solace of redemption. This, for instance, is the debt America owes to its native peoples (1994, 111).

This, for me, is the debt I will forever owe, as a human, to animal others.

“Deconstruction and feminism allow us to imagine other political spaces- spaces of political otherness” (Elam 1994, 84). Deconstructive eco-feminism acknowledges that systems, structures and realities are not permanent nor necessarily true but constructed and maintained, embedded in systems of power and structural inequality, through various normalizing tendencies. It encourages us to question what is held as “normal” by understanding reality as fluid and forever shifting. This stance is hopeful because it remains open to (im)possibilities, as Derrida would write it (1981). For example, at this point in time, it might seem impossible that humans could live without eating meat or that restructuring or ridding our societies of factory farms and mass disassembly line slaughter is unattainable; yet in other times the end of slavery would have seemed just as much of an impossibility. What is impossible is more likely (im) possible; there is always a potential with possibilities. Deconstructive eco-feminism opens up connective possibilities, crosses, criticizes and

destabilizes boundaries between humans and all other life forms to create more inclusivity and more possibilities in terms of the ways we look at and live in the diverse, physical, discursive, and ideological spaces we occupy with others.

Deconstructive eco-feminism is not purely theoretical but, as the feminisms I know and practice assert, a form of “praxis” (Gaard 1993, Adams 1990) that requires participation in order to break the cycle of (in this instance) speciesist thought, practice, and perpetuation. One place this action begins is through raising awareness about the realities animals face, educating oneself and others and advocating for those that are due justice. Advocating and practicing veganism as a personal and political praxis is where I begin to breach the distance and break down the built hierarchy that elevates humans to the summit of the pyramid and denigrates non-human animals to the lower rungs. Birkeland writes: “[w]hile ecofeminism provides a useful framework for political analysis, it is perhaps most fundamentally a *process*. To ecofeminists, values and action are inseparable: one cannot care without acting” (1993, 19 *emphasis mine*).

Section 2.2

Methodology & Method

Deconstructive eco-feminism is where I come at this project from, my theoretical paradigm; it is also how I attempt to move through my research, so it is my methodology and method. It influences both the way I think about (my ways of knowing) as well as how I go about (my ways of doing) my research.

Thinking of research as a form of resistance, “feminist poststructuralism raises useful questions about knowledge, power, truth, difference, and the constitution of the self, and thus contributes to the developing dialogue about anti-oppressive research” (Strega 2005, 215). In this project I situate the “unsanctioned discourse[s]” (Strega 2005, 219) - those theories or literatures that attempt to include animal others and make visible the oppressions they experience - within this “developing dialogue” of anti-oppressive research. For these purposes it was crucial to be aware of “how it is that power works not just to force us into particular ways of being but to make these ways of being desirable such that we actively take them up as our own” (Davies 2005, 318). The hybrid crafting of an alternative theory is meant to expand this discussion by raising questions surrounding speciesism and its relationships with knowledge, power, truth, difference, self and other.

Strega declares that “feminist poststructural research” has to “be reconstructive and deconstructive,” and ask crucial questions regarding who the research is “about” and also who the research is being done “for” in terms of both accessibility and, I would argue, benefit. She also asserts that research, and the researcher, must be “reflexive” in terms of both “accountability” to one’s research and “complicity” in one’s research (2005, 229). It was necessary for me to be deconstructive, reconstructive and reflexive when interacting with the texts that I examine for my thesis, the theoretical languages they use, and my own language use as it was re-constructed for my thesis. As Joan Dunayer states in an article about animal oppression and language: “Like racism [and] sexism, speciesism is a form of prejudice sustained in part by biased, misleading words” (2003, 61). Therefore, my method required me to be wary of the words I chose to employ and what definitions and meanings I wanted to ascribe to them.

Deconstruction “is a theory, methodology, and a method” (Saukko 2003, 135). “From a methodological point of view, the greatest advantage of deconstruction is that it exposes [the] slippery terrain, where all positions are suspect” (Saukko 2003, 141) and “as a method, deconstruction is highly effective in unravelling the problematic underside of all positions that, on the surface, appear ‘progressive’” (Saukko 2003, 147). Deconstruction, in questioning “all positions,” helps me to ask questions of the unsanctioned discourses I myself endorse. This critical and questioning eye encouraged me to dissect these theories, to “unravel” them, and highlight what is problematic with even the counter discourses, when considering what pieces to use in the theory building of this project.

Deconstruction is a “textual analysis with the intent of rewriting and repositioning textual utterances in order to unsettle established hierarchies of thought and to eventually put new language forms in [the] place” of those long established. Deconstruction is a way of “reinventing writing in ways that will not reproduce institutionalized categories of thought” (Prasad 2005, 241-242). In doing so, deconstruction leaves discourses open to, for my purposes, feminist re-articulations and alternative creations such as the hybrid theoretical lens I have assembled. The process of deconstruction involves a constant awareness of “binary oppositions” (Burman 2005, 284).

Since the human/animal binary is so integral to the way we understand the world and ourselves within the world, it is a very complex one to dismantle. Even within the discourses that question animal as other, the human/animal binary often remains in place. To explode the human/animal binary and create an alternative response to it, deconstruction does not merely employ a reversal, which would simply reinstate yet another binary, in this case animal/human, but instead looks for a “différent” way to both differ and defer the two and

to multiply meanings and possibilities for this divide (Prasad 2005, 244). For example, acknowledging that humans are also animals creates a bridge, replacing the dividing line, between human and animal. This decentering is vital to my critical deconstructive and reconstructive critical discourse analysis. As Burman advises, I have worked to: “Challenge the taken-for-granted... in order to *open up* textual spaces that seems closed...to *tangle up* or confound things that seem too intent on keeping their distance” (2005, 286).

Both “deconstruction and feminism allow us to imagine other political spaces-spaces of political otherness” (Elam 1994, 84), spaces where “the subject [is seen] as neither sovereign nor autonomous but as always caught up in a network of responsibilities to others” (105), spaces and responsibilities that can include animal others. In this way deconstruction as a methodology enables me to go beyond a simple compiling of theoretical wanderings that attempt to include othered animals. Deconstruction provides me with a way to look at this collection of theoretical literatures that is critical and questioning, a way that shifts “human” out of center to encourage imaginative and creative re-articulations and apply multiple meanings throughout the process. Via deconstruction, I am able to imagine alternatives and gather concepts from multiple texts ultimately creating the hybrid that is the aim of my thesis.

Feminisms, eco and otherwise, offer a way of looking that grasps interconnections between oppressions, between the theories, theorists and the animal others that are the subjects of the theories, and between the concepts and contents of the texts themselves (Burman 2005, 288). This “complex interrelationship between a text and other texts” is known as “intertextuality.” These interrelationships are what I focused on for the interpretation of the unsanctioned discourses, as well as for the creation of my own vegan

eco-feminist critical care theory (Webster 2000, 612). Deconstructive eco-feminism makes it possible to hybridize with existing tensions, and understand these tensions as productive, whether that be in terms of encouraging critical thought and interrogation or arriving at critical confusions where no one “truth” is the end result.

My method of research was a deconstructive and re-constructive critical discourse analysis. This required me to read the unsanctioned discourses deconstructively as expressed above, searching for alternative concepts and meanings and challenging dichotomous and pre-established relationships, taking from these theories what I deemed would be useful to the hybrid under construction. I began with a review of the “unsanctioned discourses” (Strega 2005, 219), those theories that attempt to think animal and that are often absent from academia. These unsanctioned theories make up the bulk of my data for my hybrid re-construction. These literatures have been broken up into six strands: 1) moral philosophy/animal rights, 2) feminist/animal defense, 3) ecofeminist, 4) anti-speciesist, 5) liberationist, and 6) posthumanist. Each strand does not stand on its own; they often flow from and into each other, and the boundaries between them are flexible and permeable.

Firstly, I summarize and discuss each of the unsanctioned discourses on their own in the literature review, chapter 4. After the main theories were sketched, I shifted my efforts to a critical deconstructive and re-constructive discourse analysis of each strand of theory. My critical discourse analysis is both deconstructive and re-constructive because the discourses I investigate are part of the counter-discourse to the speciesist discourse that I would otherwise merely deconstruct. I contribute to this counter discourse by picking up theoretical pieces from the unsanctioned discourses and putting them back together again, re-constructing a theoretical framework from which to work.

I was interested in partaking in “constructive discourse research” with a “focus on constructive social action” (Alba-Juez 2009, 253-254). Rather than simply criticizing discourses that perpetuate inequality and power abuse I also criticized those discourses I believe resist and expose these abuses and inequalities. This analysis highlights what the texts “do well’ and ‘get right” (Macgilchrist, 2007 in Alba-Juez’s, 2009); it also provides a sort of constructive criticism that emphasizes the ways “social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted” in the texts (Alba-Juez 2009, 352). I explored these literatures both deconstructively and re-constructively in search of a new theoretical paradigm, one that, at the beginning of this project, lay fragmented across broad theoretical strands. I re-assembled these fragments by questioning as well as admiring the unsanctioned discourses.

What this process involved was a focused and careful reading of each strand of theory to break down, de-construct, and compile the fragments, in order to re-construct a theoretical hybrid with the theoretical concepts and ideas I chose to borrow from each strand. What I accomplish via this bricolage is a compiling of a complex and layered vocabulary with concepts and terms that function as theoretical tools to enable alternative ways of knowing/understanding, and an interactive map that emphasises the semantic interconnections between the unsanctioned discourses and my own hybrid theory.

The questions I asked myself as I read the texts to determine these interconnections stemmed from my deconstructive eco-feminist theoretical framework: i) Are attempts made to question or explode the human/animal binary? ii) Is there a context disclosed situating the text in a time and place? iii) Is space left for the making of multiple meanings, ways of understanding and knowing? Does the text encourage expansion and/or theory as process?

iv) Does the author attempt to make the text accessible through language, style, diversity of examples? v) Are there suggestions for possible forms of actions/praxis to move the reader beyond the text, beyond theory and into action?

Given my findings from asking these questions, I reintroduced these theories to each other in a different way: in the form of their fragments. The final outcome of this process is a hybridized theoretical model that is vegan and ecofeminist, one that demonstrates that it is critical that we care, become compassionate, responsible and respectful to animal others and shift our-human-selves out of center. As “many discourse analysts are motivated,” I too was motivated “by the desire to produce counter or oppositional discourses that provide alternative ways of interpreting, understanding, and interacting with the world” (Henry and Tator, 2002, 73).

Feminist principles of inclusivity and accessibility ensured that I included theory created by animal rights advocates, activists, as well as academics, and used sources that came in more than one format such as books, articles, and/or films. This is a “project of centering subjugated knowledge(s)” (Brown and Strega 2005, 8), knowledge(s) that allow us to think differently about difference. One way to think differently is to engage with multiple mediums. One way to be considerate of inclusivity and accessibility is to use sources that use different ways of communicating ideas such as film, books, articles, online sources and, as I add, zines. With the visual being a central sense that should be utilized in research publications, especially those that require a sort of empathetic understanding or imagining of an other’s reality, this multiplicity of mediums becomes crucial.

For the purposes of this thesis project, I, like Brown and Strega, “take the position that research cannot challenge relations of dominance and subordination unless it also

challenges the hegemony of current research paradigms” (2005, 10) both theoretically and methodologically. It is also a main tenet of critical discourse analysis to “use the analysis of discourse as a means to make people aware of...important social and political issues” (Alba-Juez 2009, 239). When we write we exclude (unavoidably); therefore, to complement the theory I have developed through the thesis, I created a short zine format of my thesis, further discussed in chapter 6.

Different ways of writing exclude by targeting different audiences. For example, academic writing, often containing large vocabularies and jargon, is aimed at a specifically educated audience while writing for a zine, using more common terminology and often writing as dialogue, is aimed at a wider audience that includes people from all walks of life. The zine I write for this thesis focuses on the hybridized theoretical lens, with the intention of creating an accessible alternative to an academic thesis. This format can reach another audience and perhaps inspire individuals to praxis. The more artistic layout “might be used to help [others] understand more imaginatively and more emotionally” (Eisner 2006, 10) the realities of speciesism.

This alternative mode of dissemination “push[es] the boundaries of method and explore[s] alternative ways of knowing. [It] supports methodological pluralism” (Eisner 2006, 11). I want this theory to be visible and ‘feelable’. This is achieved “[using] images whose meanings transcend the linguistic” (Eisner 2006, 15) which in turn “make[s] emphatic forms of thinking [or theorizing the world] possible” (Eisner 2006, 13). I take these images from the literatures I have investigated, since many include imagery, if not within the pages themselves than on the cover of the work itself. Art can be a form of resistance just as

research can be resistance. A zine is an artistic creation, its creation and subsequent distribution a form of action (Sullivan 2006, 32).

This alternative version of my theoretical thesis is the compelling conclusion to a project stemming from a deconstructive (poststructuralist) ecofeminism and striving towards a vegan, eco-feminist, critical care theory that is compassionate, responsible, respectful, and posthumanist. The zine takes the hybrid theory formed through this thesis, a theory that promotes responsibility, accessibility, awareness, imagination and creativity, and pushes it into practice by way of existing as an artistic, creative and imaginative, alternative re-articulation of this theory to be disseminated to others to promote awareness through accessibility.

CHAPTER THREE: A BRIEF CONTEXTUALIZATION

Before entering into the core literature review which highlights and elaborates the unsanctioned discourses central to my thesis I first need to position my work in two ways: 1) as research being done in a Canadian context that aims to challenge a euro-centric and anthropocentric capitalist worldview and 2) as research coming out of a movement that is largely comprised of women identified activists and advocates (Gaarder 2011, 11). In order to do so I summarize two works that provide a *brief* contextualization: 1) *About Canada: Animal Rights* a work by John Sorenson (2010), a Canadian sociologist (www.fernwoodpublishing.ca, 2014), and 2) *Women and the Animal Rights Movement* a work by Emily Gaarder (2011), an American sociologist, anthropologist, and activist (www.d.umn.edu, 2006).

Section 3.1

The Canadian Context and Animal Exploitation: Sorenson's *About Canada: Animal Rights*

Exploitation of animals is a fundamental component of capitalism, systematic and institutionalized, with interlocking industries that breed, feed, cage, sell, transport, experiment upon and slaughter animals, using their skins, flesh, organs and genetic material (Sorenson 2010, 18).

The exploitation of animals is a global phenomenon whereby many creatures are commodified and labeled “resources” to be outsourced and insourced from one place to another for scientific experimentation or product testing, for vivisection, as entertainment or

as “pets,” to be processed, killed and dismembered, packaged and redistributed, ultimately to be consumed, in some way or another, by humans. In Canada, as elsewhere, “[e]conomic exploitation of animals was [and is] essential to colonialism...fur and skin trades, fishing, whaling and cattle herding” all played their crucial roles in colonization via trade-relations (Sorenson 2010, 12). Most, if not all, Indigenous societies practiced “sustainable resource management” and held respect for animals and nature (23) and many continue to do so today. Sorenson determines that “in Canadian history, the exploitation of animals is directly involved with the erosion of Indigenous cultures and production of new cultural groups” (24), an erosion that continues to impact Indigenous cultures to this day. Sorenson’s remarks raise some interesting questions surrounding the current and ongoing practices of colonialism and the relationship(s) between animal rights and indigenous rights and resistance for which I lack the space and time to investigate here.

Canada harbours many forms of animal exploitation, some of which have become integral to a particular image of Canada and Canadians themselves. Hunting, for example, is part of the identity of many Canadians. Hunting, in the Canadian context, is often a recreational human activity, which is why hunting is referred to as “sport” rather than as necessity or for subsistence (Sorenson 2010, 59). In fact, as Sorenson notes, “[m]any government departments depend on funding from sales of permits and licenses” (60) which supposedly enforce sustainable use of “our wildlife.” This “neoliberal speciesist discourse of ‘sustainable use’ considers animals only as resources to be managed for human benefit” (62).

The seal hunt is a specific Canadian example of hunting as central to the identities of many Canadians. Captain Alex Cornelissen from the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society is quoted in Sorenson stating that the seal hunt is “the largest marine wildlife slaughter on the

planet,” a “slaughter”(90) that is at the same time officially considered a part of “Canadian cultural Heritage” (80). The government, as Sorenson claims, justifies this slaughter with the “pretended concern for indigenous people” and tradition which remains a “standard tactic...to defend commercial slaughter by non-natives” (92).

Beyond hunting, the domination and exploitation of animals remains part of the construction of “Canadianness” for many. Rodeos, another Canadian icon, such as the Calgary Stampede, assert human power and control over animals. These “spectacles reinforce ideological understandings of human relationships to animals, naturalizing hierarchy and domination” (Sorenson 2010, 95).

Another typical use of animals in Canada is as pets. Pets are part of many Canadian families, often functioning as “another means to display status [and] lifestyle” according to Bourdieu in Sorenson (2010, 106). Pets are legally considered property, as are other animals deemed to exist for human use, such as “agricultural animals,” meaning animals are *owned* by humans. Being the property of some-body else “means [animals’] interests are overlooked almost entirely” according to Sorenson (2010, 108) and human interests in the animals and for them are given precedent.

Although people claim to love their pets and do often spoil them, giving these creatures what humans consider to be “the good life,” the lives pets lead may not in all actuality be ideal for the animals themselves. For example, living indoors for one’s life is not necessarily the life all cats would choose, nor would hamsters necessarily choose to live in a plastic cage, nor would dogs choose to be on a leash or tethered never able to run, nor would fish want to live in a tank never able to swim free. Even if the animals humans regard as pets are treated better than some humans, these creatures are leading lives humans permit them to

lead and not the lives they would potentially choose to lead if given any choice in the matter. Animals as property, as pets, has also resulted in the devastating construction of animals as disposable (105). If we take a quick glance on kijiji, a classifieds website, or into the overcrowded shelters this “form of commodity fetishism” (105) is not difficult to see.

Other animals are also considered property and suffer the consequences. In places such as zoos, aquariums and circuses, animals, who have been taken from their home lands and oceans, brought to Canada and held captive behind bars, glass and plastic walls, or held in concrete tanks, are stared at or paraded in front of human audiences to perform like, as Sorenson states, “anthropomorphised clowns”(2010, 113).

Animal exploitation is extensive yet the largest industries that exploit animals are often kept out of plain sight even though the products of animal exploitation and slaughter, meat and dairy, are in plain sight and even emphasized with “I ‘heart’ Canadian beef” stickers and nationwide “Milk” and “Get Cracking” egg advertisements, for example. As Sorenson states:

Capitalist production often conceals animal exploitation, locating slaughterhouses and factory farms in rural or low income areas and restricting access to vivisection laboratories [and factory farms], surrounding them with surveillance and security forces (2010, 95).

If you take a drive through the Canadian countryside places of slaughter and confinement litter the landscape. You may not be able to see them, since many animals are kept in windowless buildings, but you can certainly smell them. Unlike “other forms of exploitation [that] become profit-generating spectacles [that are] sold as entertainment” (Sorenson 2010, 95) the animals in laboratories and factory farms are often out of sight, out of mind. If the “actions we consider humane are those marked by compassion, sympathy, and

consideration” as Sorenson states (82) then “there are no humane forms of exploitation and murder” (20). In fact, Sorenson notes “[t]he real benefit of humane meat is to producers, who are able to charge premium prices to affluent consumers who wish to consume animal products but salve their consciences [by means of] purchasing a sense of moral superiority” (173).

One farming operation that is not well known in Canada but that has recently received some media attention is the horsemeat industry. In fact, “Canada is among the world’s largest producers of horsemeat,” according to Sorenson (2010, 121), meaning many horses have their lives ended at slaughterhouses. This industry is also intertwined with the Premarin industry, which incarcerates horses to exploit them for their urine in order to extract a hormone that is then prescribed as medication to menopausal women (Sorenson 2010, 129).

According to Sorenson, the Canadian context is bleak in terms of its regulations for protecting animals:

Canada offers almost no protection for wild or stray animals because they are not considered anyone’s property,... over 99 percent of acts of cruelty go unpunished in Canada....Consequences for convictions remain light. Incarceration lengths and maximum fines are among the lowest, and offenders are not required to pay restitution for welfare groups that care for abused animals. While many countries impose permanent prohibitions against owning animals for convicted abusers, Canada only prevents offenders from owning animals for two years (maximum), the shortest time of all countries surveyed by [the International Fund for Animal Welfare] (2010, 155-156).

Animals exempt from the above inadequate regulations include those who suffer the worst atrocities: animals classified as food, such as chickens, cows, and pigs, test objects, such as rats, rabbits, and monkeys, and fashion accessories, such as coyotes, geese, and mink

(Sorenson 2010, 157). These creatures, under human control, are often predestined to be food, laboratory test objects, skin (leather) and hair (fur) for humans to wear but this does not mean they are inherently so. This is not to mention the environmental impacts animal-exploitative industries have on Canadian natural environments, which are devastating here as they are elsewhere (166).

Canada, a country built on the exploitation of animals, continues to house industries that use animals for just about anything that will generate a profit. As Law Professor Vaughan Black made clear in his lecture “Animals and Law,” according to the law, unnecessary cruelty is only that cruelty which doesn’t make a profit (Dalhousie University Mini Law School, 2013). “These industries, based on suffering, recognize that any change in public attitudes toward animals, any recognition of animal’s ethical standing or of increased human responsibilities towards animals represents a potential threat to their own interests”(Sorenson 2010, 157). With this in mind and the sheer expanse of industries and businesses that rely on the oppression and exploitation of animal others (from local restaurants to factory farms, from clothing stores to fur farms, from cosmetic and household products to vivisectioning laboratories, from trappers in countries across the world to zoos, circuses, and aquariums, and the list goes on) it is not difficult to comprehend why animal rights activist are often considered “the worst kind of terrorists” (50): because within a capitalist context, the exploitation of animals is a means to the most sought after end: profit.

Section 3.2

Women and the Animal Rights Movement: Gaarder’s *Women and the Animal Rights Movement*

There are many reasons to be an animal welfare advocate, animal rights or animal liberation⁵ advocate or activist when we consider the realities so many creatures face day in and day out, despite the negative monikers such as “terrorist” that have, post-911, been linked to the movement and those involved (Best and Nocella II 2004, 9-10). Emily Gaarder notes at the beginning of her book *Women and the Animal Rights Movement* (2011) that “one of the most striking characteristics of the animal rights movement is that women make up the majority of its ranks” (2011, 1). This is not surprising if we look to the roots of the “contemporary movement for animals” which stems from “early humane groups and antivivisection organizations whose members were [also] largely women” (Gaarder 2011, 7). With women as “68-80 percent” of the members it follows that the animal rights movement and its activists have often been delegitimized via sexist retorts. The “stereotypical portrayal of overly emotional and irrational activists” (11) involved in the animal rights movement is one of these sexist responses that both delegitimizes female identified activists for their compassion surrounding animal liberation and male identified activists who are relegated to “animal lovers” and “irrational” human beings.

In *Women and the Animal Rights Movement* (2011) Gaarder investigates who these women animal rights activists are and the connections they make between their activism and their own experiences, including their often gendered positions within the movement. Although Gaarder attempts to give voice to a diversity of women in the American animal

⁵ To briefly define the three categories of advocates and activists mentioned: Welfarists advocate for changes/reform to the current ways in which animals are used, striving for more humane treatment, Rights advocates and activists struggle for animals’ legal rights challenging their status as property, and Liberationists embrace direct action in order to liberate animals from places of oppression and strive for revolution and an end to speciesist exploitation.

rights movement, the reality is that “the majority of animal rights activists” within the movement are women who are white, well-educated and middle-class (2011, 15-16). This is an interesting aspect of the animal right movement to take into consideration. Although I discuss my own white, middle-class privilege in Chapter 1 and animal rights as a single issue movement below, I do not fully explore the class and racial dynamics of the movement, or the questions these dynamics involve, within this thesis.

Similarly, Gaarder emphasizes gender when she identifies three overarching explanations for the larger percentage of women involved in the movement, based on her data obtained from interviews with female identified animal rights activists. The first is “*empathy based on shared inequities*: the idea that women identify with the oppression of animals based on similar experiences of objectification, subordination, and abuse” (Gaarder 2011, 44). The second is “gendered socialization,” the reality that women are often socialized or “learn to care” (51). The third are “biological explanations” such as “motherly” or “nurturing instincts” which Gaarder deems essentialist (52-53, 57).

It does not follow that because women are the majority of the animal rights movement’s members that within the movement women are at the forefront, although there certainly are some. A prime example is Ingrid Newkirk, head of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). In fact, according to Gaarder’s findings with regard to the “gendered division of labour” (2011, 95) women tend to be the “organizers” doing the “day to day” work and men in the movement tend to be in positions of “leadership” and those performing “heroic actions” (2011, 88-95). Gaarder found that out of the 27 women activists she interviewed (see Gaarder 2011, 157-160 for more information on the activists interviewed) the majority thought that more men in the movement was key to the

movement's "credibility" and "legitimacy" (2011, 104), and that even though emotion was seen as important it was "assumed that rationalist discourses (and men) would be more convincing to the public" (2011, 116). However, the women activists of this study "saw themselves as informed individuals who were also passionate about violence and cruelty towards animals" acknowledging the importance of reason and emotion to their activism (Gaarder 2011, 116).

"The animal rights movement has a reputation as a single-issue movement" according to Gaarder (2011, 129). This has to change if we are to acknowledge the connections between oppressions and the importance of "cross-movement alliances" (130-131) and "coalition building" (139) to the advancement of social justice movements. Other forms of oppression, such as racism and sexism, have to be acknowledged, discussed and investigated as intersectional within and across factions in order to create a "paradigm shift in the animal liberation movement, one that is essential to establishing integrity and credibility with other groups working for social change" (147).

The animal liberation movement and the activists that comprise it call for "revolutionary change." In this sense "[t]hey challenge the type of political ideology and action deemed appropriate for women" (Gaarder 2011, 152) based on sexist assumptions. Gaarder concludes that there are two frameworks that exist within the animal rights movement. The first is an outlook that recognises that "animals suffer the greatest oppression of all" and therefore that the focus needs to be on the animals, leaving human oppressions aside (153). The second understands "oppression as part of a broad, intersecting web of inequality [and] prioritizes campaigns and coalition building that reflect the common goals of other movements for social change" (154). Gaarder goes further to state that "[t]he

gender inequalities [within the movement] cannot be resolved unless the animal rights movement challenges the sexist devaluation of emotion and the sexual objectification of women that saturates our culture” (153) calling for “a compassionate and contextual understanding” and “solidarity” with animals (156). Providing an intersectional analysis of the movement and its participants would also help.

According to the women activists that Gaarder interviewed, the “animal rights movement was a place to explore alternative ways of thinking about and being in the world” (Gaarder 2011, 56). Because of their experience as activists within the animal liberation movement, their “lives had become more enriched and meaningful” (84) even in light of the “emotional toll” (81) that comes with being involved in a movement that is acutely aware about the ways in which animals are made to suffer and of the vast numbers of who end up dead. The unsanctioned discourses which are the focus of this thesis, theories that have in many ways influenced this movement, are often the result of activists becoming theorists through their involvement in the movement on multiple and diverse levels. In the next chapter the unsanctioned discourses and the ways in which the unsanctioned theorists (re)think “animal” are delineated.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE UNSANCTIONED DISCOURSES

Section 4.1

Introducing the Unsanctioned

The “animal question,” an umbrella term for an expansive set of questions that inquire into the existences of animal others (under human despotism) and human relationship(s) to and with them, is tackled by many theorists with diverse disciplinary, personal and political backgrounds. In this chapter I work through and summarize a number of theoretical strands⁶ that attempt to theorize non-human animal others. Those I have included within each of these strands do not encompass the entirety of those who write along these lines (or within these strands), but are rather a place from which to begin to understand each theory. It is through these unsanctioned discourses - in the sense that they have been excluded from or made secondary within what is aptly called the humanities - that I strive to craft a hybrid theoretical paradigm. For my purposes, unsanctioned discourses refers to those discourses that attempt to shift human out of the centre in order to consider other beings.

At the start I visualized the theoretical paradigm I was building from the unsanctioned discourses in pieces, as if they were parts of a puzzle I had to piece together in order to build a lens with which to do future academic work, but also a paradigm from which to learn, teach and live. To achieve this objective I looked to those who have written,

⁶ I chose to use the term ‘strand’ or ‘strands’ of theory in order to highlight the fluidity of the theories I have chosen both in terms of their connections to each other and to any other authors whose writing argues along similar lines (or strands) whom I have not had the space or time to include. Strands are interconnected, interwoven and ongoing which serves the purpose of my thesis.

thought about, and challenged the hierarchical dichotomous human/animal relationship(s) before me.

This chapter looks at six unsanctioned discourses: 1) moral philosophy/animal rights theory 2) feminist defense/care theory 3) ecofeminism 4) anti speciesist theory 5) liberationist theory and 6) posthumanist theory. The borders between these theories are far from concrete. They are internally complex and externally permeable; these theoretical strands do not exist in a vacuum but rather as extensions of, responses to, and re-combinations of each other and other discourses that have and continue to evolve in a variety of directions.

I also left a couple, seemingly crucial, strands out: environmental ethics and environmentalism. I did this largely because these areas of thought are very diverse and could be thesis' unto themselves. I also did so because these paradigms often shift attention away from animals, as irreducible, to nature, ecosystems, and the environment, broader systems that confine animals to species and resources. Instead of delving into environmentalism or environmental ethics I chose instead to include ecofeminism which problematizes the environmentalist approach while offering environmentally conscious and inclusive arguments and ways of knowing.

Section 4.2

Moral Philosophy / Animal Rights

Often labelled “animal rights theory,” this unsanctioned discourse is the foundation of most contemporary theory related to animal others within the realm of the humanities. It is rooted in moral philosophy and has Peter Singer, who is well known for popularizing the

term speciesism, and Tom Regan as two of its main proponents, so called “founding fathers.” The theoretical work of Regan and Singer is touted as having greatly influenced the animal rights movement, a movement that works to end the oppression, exploitation and suffering of animals and whose ultimate aim is towards “Animal Liberation”, as the title of Singer’s “revolutionary”(2002, back cover) book states.

Peter Singer, an “Australian moral philosopher” (Wikipedia 2013), is the author of *Animal Liberation* (1975, 1990, 2002) and editor of other, more recent, works such as *In Defense of Animals: The Second Wave* (2005). In *Animal Liberation*, he argues the “animal question” from a rational, ethical, utilitarian standpoint, one that stems from Bentham’s utilitarianism and the “principle of equal consideration” (2002, 6). Singer’s theory is intended to appeal to “reasonable people... [who] occupy the high moral ground” (1990 edition preface, XIX). His focus is on “reason, not emotion” (1975 edition preface, XXII) because he believes that “[t]he portrayal of those who protest against cruelty to animals as sentimental, emotional ‘animal-lovers’ has had the effect of excluding the entire issue of our treatment of nonhumans from serious political and moral discussion”(1975 edition preface, XXI).

In *Animal Liberation*, Singer constructs his theory by focusing on two examples: factory farming and animal experimentation. He sheds light on these two realities that innumerable animal others endure because humans offer them no other choice. He concludes that most use and abuse of animals is done unnecessarily, for profit, not for the greater good, and that, therefore, it is ethically unjustifiable and morally wrong. Singer theorizes the need for a “clear ethical principle - of equal consideration of the interests of all animals - by which we can determine which of our practices affecting non-human animals

are justifiable and which are not, [and that] [b]y applying this principle to our own lives we can make our actions fully consistent” with a moral framework (2002, 231).

Singer advocates for theoretically based action, praxis, and discusses vegetarianism as a necessary step away from supporting the continuous exploitation of animals. He thinks of “[v]egetarianism [as] a form of boycott” and asserts that in order “[to] make the boycott aspect of vegetarianism more effective, [vegetarians] must not be shy about our refusal to eat flesh” (2002, 162). In this sense he also, importantly, highlights the need to spread awareness about the ways in which animals are subjected to inhumane treatment within the industries that exploit them. This is especially important since “[i]gnorance...is the speciesist’s first line of defence,” an ignorance that is often based in a personal “desire not to know” (2002, 217).

Singer’s goal is to disrupt speciesism, the human-centric ideology that considers the human species to be of unique importance, and to do so by encouraging rational thought based on facts. He claims this speciesist ideology is outdated and even “obsolete,” as are the religious ideas that encourage it (2002, 185). Arguing the influence of the bible over the ways humans treat and use animals Singer states that “[a]fter the fall of man (for which the bible holds a woman and an animal responsible), killing animals clearly was permissible” and so went the dominion of (hu)man over animal. However, Singer questions this interpretation of the bible, deciphering the translation as *stewardship* rather than dominion (2002, 187-188).

Singer makes connections between the consumption of animals and the excessive use of resources (2002, 167) and environmental degradation (2002, 169), and between the consumption of animals by humans in affluent societies and the realities faced by people in less prosperous places. He states: “Indeed, the food [and water] wasted by animal production

in the affluent nations would be sufficient, if properly distributed, to end [the need for clean drinking water as well as] hunger and malnutrition throughout the world” (2002, 166).

He makes another important connection when he states:

Historically...the leaders of the animal welfare movement [in the United States and elsewhere] have cared far more about human beings than have other humans who cared nothing for animals. Indeed, the overlap between leaders of movements against the oppression of blacks and women, and leaders of movements against cruelty to animals, is extensive... [It is a] confirmation of the parallel between racism, sexism, and speciesism (2002, 221).

He goes on to name some of these leaders, including early feminists such as Mary Wollstonecraft and Susan B. Anthony (2002, 221). This statement, although it does not recognize interconnections per se, acknowledges the overlap between movements and is a step towards understanding oppressions in the ways that many feminists and ecofeminists have long theorized, as interconnected, intersectional and interdependent. Following this statement, Singer points to the overlap of “the women’s movements and “the vegetarian movement” by highlighting the fact that certain “early American feminists” were members of what was then called, “the vegetarian movement” (2002, 221). He fails to go further by bridging the connection between them, acknowledging speciesism and sexism’s interplay.

Singer finishes with the following avowal:

Animal Liberation will require greater altruism on the part of human beings than any other liberation movement. The animals themselves are incapable of demanding their own liberation, or of protesting against their condition with votes, demonstrations, or boycotts. Human beings have the power to continue to oppress other species forever, or until we make this planet unsuitable for living beings (2002, 247-248).

Tom Regan is “an American philosopher who specializes in animal rights theory” (Wikipedia 2013) and although he is often lumped in with Singer, his theory differs from that proposed in Singer’s *Animal Liberation*. One aspect that remains constant between the two thinkers, however, is the use of the rationale of reason. Although Regan does not express “contempt for emotion,” he does state that he believes “emotion has its limits” (2004 edition preface, xliii). Regan believes the only way to counter the “tired charges of being ‘irrational,’ ‘sentimental,’ ‘emotional’ or worse” is “by making a concerted effort not to indulge our emotions or parade our sentiments” (1983 preface, iii). Following the philosophical tradition, Regan’s *The Case for Animal Rights* (2004) argues for animal rights by arguing against previous philosophical arguments. He begins with Descartes’ mechanistic understanding of animals as “*automata*” with “no mind” and only “first (grade)” sensations (2004, 3-4) which functioned as justification for vivisection (2004, 5). Regan refutes Descartes (2004, 3-24), stating that “Descartes’ dualism [of mind and body] fails the test of explanatory power” (2004, 23).

Regan investigates animals’ supposed lack of language as one of the first arguments used to discount them as sentient and thinking beings, and he concludes consciousness is only denied to animals due to “human chauvinism” (2004, 31). He delves into the complexities of consciousness and comes to the conclusion that animals have beliefs, desires, intention, perceptions, memory, a sense of the future, “a sense of their own future,” emotion, sentiment, and ultimately self-consciousness (2004, 80-81).

Regan argues that animals, based on their resemblance to humans “in morally relevant ways,” are “subjects-of-a-life” (2004 edition preface, XVI), a very speciesist argument in that animals ‘worth’ relies on them being like humans. According to Regan, it is from this subjectivity that their inherent value arises as well as “a basic moral right to

respectful treatment” (XVII). Regan’s theory is anti-utilitarian, meaning it focuses on animals and humans as individuals rather than focusing on the greatest good for the greatest number of beings, claiming equal inherent value across all creatures, and endorsing principles of direct duty (our duty to “preserve” endangered animals for example for humanity as well as for the animals themselves (2004, 151)), and respect for those who are “subjects-of-a-life” whether they be moral patients (as he argues other-than-human animals are) subjects deserving of moral treatment even though they are unable to act with morality in mind, or moral agents (as he argues human animals are) able to consciously enact morality (2004, 263-265).

By “moral agent” Regan refers to an individual with the ability “to bring impartial moral principles to bear on the determination of what, all considered, morally ought to be done and...to freely choose or fail to choose to act as morality...requires” (151). Moral agents are therefore “morally accountable” (152). On the other hand, “moral patients...cannot do what is right, nor can they do what is wrong” (152); however, they “can be on the receiving end of the right or wrong acts of moral agents” (154). Moral agents and patients can be subjects-of-a-life, individuals who are:

able to perceive and remember;...have beliefs, desires, and preferences;...able to act intentionally in pursuit of their desires and goals; ... [be] sentient and have an emotional life; ...have a sense of the future, including a sense of their own future; ...have a psychophysical identity over time; and...have an individual experiential welfare that is logically independent of their utility for, and the interests of, others (2004, 264).

According to Regan, subjects-of-a-life have “basic moral rights” which are universal and differ from legal rights (2004, 327). Other animals, like us, “have certain basic moral rights, including in particular the fundamental right to be treated with the respect that, as possessors of inherent value, they are due as a matter of strict justice...They must never be treated as

mere receptacles of intrinsic values” (2004, 329). Regan uses an uncritical liberal humanist approach in his theory, maintaining, even reinforcing, the human/animal binary, a criticism in which I further elaborate in Chapter 5.

Regan’s animal rights theory argues for vegetarianism and political action (2004, 399-400), and therefore, like Singer, for praxis, and ultimately for the “total dissolution of the animal industry as we know it” (2004, 395).

Animal rights theory, with Singer and Reagan as its proponents, was revolutionary for its time and has many core concepts that remain useful for re-thinking the human/animal divide. These concepts continue to be disseminated throughout other, different and more contemporary, theoretical investigations that have often sprouted up as challenges to animal rights theory itself and taken over where it left off.

Section 4.3

Feminist Animal Defence/Care Theory

In this section I have chosen to focus on two theorists: Carol J. Adams, “an American writer, feminist, and animal rights advocate” (Wikipedia 2013), and Josephine Donovan, “an American author... retired literary scholar” and feminist (Wikipedia 2013). These two women can be considered the “founding mothers” of contemporary animal defence theory and care theory in the sense that they have both tackled the “animal question(s)” independently in their own texts, and collectively by bringing together the work of multiple and diverse feminists in edited compilations. I give this strand of unsanctioned discourse the designations “defence” and “care” based on Adams’ book entitled *In defence of animals* (1994) and with reference to care theory, subsequently discussed, which was

appropriated and altered by animal rights feminists to be inclusive of animals. Defence in the context of animal rights or liberation seems an appropriate choice of verb to describe what feminists who tackle animal issues ultimately set out to do. It also compliments caring.

Defence can be interpreted as active caring when caring is what propels defence or action.

In the edited collections *Animals and Women: Feminist Theoretical Explorations* (Adams & Donovan 1995) and *The Feminist Care Tradition in Animal Ethics* (Donovan & Adams 2007), there are many collaborators who make very important contributions to feminist defence/care theory. Therefore, although my focus is on Adams and Donovan, I also attempt to incorporate some of the many theoretical voices heard within these collections.

With the many different voices within feminism that debate animal issues and their place within feminism, there come many divergent responses. There are a number of feminist theory responses to the “historical alignment of women and animals,” which is rooted in woman’s traditional alignment with nature and man’s with culture (Adams & Donovan 1995, 1). In the past, a common response to the speculated association between animals and women was to sever “the women-animal identification,” seen as “a necessary phase in the transformation of cultural ideology about women” (2). This has been and perhaps continues to be based in an understanding of “the domination of women as a result of the western masculine denial of the human-animal connection” (2) or, more importantly, of the denial of the man-animal connection and belief in the woman-animal link. In order for women to gain status under patriarchy, some feminists thought it necessary to follow the path of man by severing ties with nature and becoming more cultured by, for example, becoming formally educated.

Another feminist response to the parallels drawn between animals and women, similar and perhaps stemming from that above, has been to assert “that feminist theory has nothing to do with animals” and that concern for animal others is a mere “diversion” away from “pressing human needs” (Adams & Donovan 1995, 3). I can attest from experience that this is still a response, based in a speciesist mind frame, that surfaces today. This response in particular is challenged by yet another feminist response, the rejection of:

a narrowly constructed liberal feminism that pursues rights and opportunities only for women [often white and economically privileged women]. Instead [this response] proposes a broader feminism, a radical cultural feminism, which provides an analysis of oppression and offers a vision of liberation that extends well beyond the liberal equation, incorporating within it other lifeforms besides human beings (2-3).

Animal defence and care theory emerge in this articulated space where “all oppressions are [understood as] interconnected [and where] women and animals [are seen as having] shared in these oppressions historically” (3).

The context of theorizing “the animal” feminist defence/care theory begins at the point where animal rights theory seemingly ends: at reason. These theorists work from the premise of debunking animal rights theory, as Singer and Regan have put it forth, by adding emotion. The broad claims of animal defense/care theory are that the animal rights approach a) nullifies differences between humans and animals by arguing similarities between animals and humans, b) ignores cross species interdependence and interconnections, c) excludes emotion, d) favours rules and universalizability and e) ignores situational and contextual realities (Donovan & Adams 2007, 5-6).

The feminist ethic of care is based on Carol Gilligan’s care theory, introduced in the 1970’s, and subsequently “elaborated, refined and criticized” (Donovan 2007, 360). Gilligan’s theory defined feminine morality as one of responsibilities to others and masculine morality

as one centered around rights (Donovan & Adams 2007, 1-2). Although Gilligan's theory was criticized, especially for its essentialist view of women and men, some of its core components are still key to feminist defence/care theory as they extend care responsibilities to animals and as essential for people of all genders, races, classes, ages and sexualities.

Although this theory is often labelled simply feminist care theory I have chosen to put animal defence and care together for this section as I see them as intersecting and complimenting each other. Defence/care theory is to be found “within movements that challenge the social oppression[s] of humans, to establish points of connection that create solidarity” (Adams 1994, 17-18) across difference. What animal defense/care theory contributes to our ways of knowing, being and doing is an interconnected (Adams & Donovan 1995, 3), intersubjective (Adams 1994, 40) understanding in which oppressions are seen as “linked by common ideologies, by institutional forces, and by socialization that makes oppressions normative and invisible” (Kemmerer 2011, 11). Feminist defence/care offers a space for lived experiences and the feelings they foster to exist as legitimate ways of knowing and understanding our choices and their consequences (Kheel 2007, 47-49). As Adams states: “Feminist defences of animals offer liberation from a conditioned mind frame that devitalizes other beings. We insist that our inactions as well as our actions have consequences” (Adams 1994, 13).

Another emphasis of feminist defence/care theory is on communication beyond the narrow boundaries of homosapiens' vocal apparatuses. This requires paying “attention” (Adams & Donovan 2007, 3), listening carefully and taking seriously (4) what other creatures are attempting to communicate. Body language is one example of alternative communication. To communicate across species requires our compassion, imagination (Adams 2007, 32-33)

and, I would argue, some effort. Although “all communication is imperfect,” with “openness, receptivity, empathy, sensitivity, and imagination,” as well as critical thinking, come possibilities of making contact and understanding differently (Donovan 2007, 364-365). As Adams states: “Animals, after all, are not speechless” (1994, 56), which to me infers that animals do, in fact, “speak” but do so differently. This way of knowing requires a “fundamental respect for non-human lifeforms... accepts diversity... and the validity of [different] realities” (Donovan 2007, 75). As Donovan concludes: “a feminist animal care ethic must be political in its perspective and dialogic in its method” (2007, 365).

The authors of this theoretical strand also recognize the connection between feminism and vegetarianism. This connection is deemed necessary in a context where humans are eating an estimated 2600 once living beings each in a 75 year lifespan “most of [whom] are females who have suffered egregiously” (Kemmerer 2011, 184)⁷. As Adams states in *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory*: “Our meals either embody or negate feminist principles by the food choices they enact” (1990, 216).

Understanding that “people with power have always [often] eaten meat” further complicates both gender and class distinctions (1990, 48) by adding another means - what we eat - to distinguish ourselves from each other. For example, we need to move beyond the construction of “men” as meat eaters, or privileged people as the eaters of specific kinds of meat in order to challenge the constructed link between meals of meat and power. Meat can also be seen as a “‘power-structure relationship’ in which [symbolic] power is thought to transfer to the consumer. [Therefore] meat reflects back male [and other] power every time it

⁷ Since female animals are used for breeding, and then for their lactating and menstruating bodies they are often the preferred sex of animal industry. Slaughter is but one ordeal, which happens only after these female creatures have been “spent,” that is, used for their reproductive capabilities, breeding, and functions such as menstruations (eggs) and lactations (milk). Therefore, they arguably endure more at the hands of humans because of their sex.

is consumed.” Not only are you consuming some-body’s flesh, their life, when you eat meat but you are also asserting your position above the other who is being eaten. This means that in order to “destabilize patriarchal consumption [and reinsert autonomous female identity through vegetarianism (1990, 226)] we must interrupt patriarchal meals of meat” (1990, 242).

Although “the kitchen has been an oppressive context for women...it has also been a context of sociability and solidarity among women” (Curtin 2007, 97), a place where resistance can and should be manifested, a space where personal food choices are in reality very political. For Adams “feminism is the theory and vegetarianism is part of the practice” (1991, 217). One way to “interrupt patriarchal meals of meat” (Adams 1995, 242) is to cook meatless meals. Although it may be problematic coming from a liberal and anthropocentric framework, animal defence theory “extend[s] the notion of personhood to animals” (Adams 1994, 61). Animal defense/care theory respects animals as “individuals” rather than as absent referents or as mass terms such as “meat” (Adams 1990, 1994, 1995, 2007) or “species.”

This strand of theory encompasses multiple theorists that tackle many topics surrounding the subject of animal others. Here I highlight some of the different directions taken and connections made within feminist defence/care theory starting with its most fundamental connection: that between animals and women.

Adams explicitly discusses this connection in *The Sexual Politics of Meat*. She defines the “sexual politics of meat [as] an attitude that animalizes women and sexualizes and feminizes animals.” It is a politics that assumes “men need meat, have a right to meat, and that meat eating is a male activity associated with virility” (1990, 4). Like women who work the second shift, “female animals are doubly exploited” first for their reproductive capacities

and secondly for their dead bodies, their flesh (Adams 1990, 21). It is the same qualities that “traditionally defined humans from animals – qualities such as reason and rationality – [that are] used as well to differentiate men from women” (Adams 1994, preface) and white from black via “racism that bestializes,” animalizes and/or feminizes (Adams 1994, 76). Animals, women and racialized peoples are “ontologized as usable (rapeable... consumable)” (Adams 1994, 69).

Just as meat eating and animals’ subordination to (hu)man(s) is deemed natural, “it is often argued that women’s subordination to men is natural” (Adams 1994, 100), or that racialized peoples are inherently subordinate to white people. Adams and Donovan “wonder whether [the] original pattern of domination was not itself preceded by and modeled upon the domination of animals by humans” (1995, 7). Although neither Adams nor Donovan provide an intersectional analysis of these forms of domination by humans, they argue that all of these forms (based on sex, race, ability, age, etc.) are *potentially* based on the domination of animals by humans.

Another overarching theme that deserves mention here is feminist defence/ care theorists’ sustained confrontation with language. Joan Dunayer, extensively quoted in the linguistic corrections section of my introductory chapter, investigates language and establishes connections across words, such as, labeling some-body, a cow for example, *something* (2003, 61), which perpetuates speciesism, sexism and racism (1995, 11-31) by helping to hinder our compassion. Linda Vance attempts to achieve an ethically conscious narrative that speaks of animals in “ecologically appropriate” and “ethically appropriate” ways that give voice to creatures by telling their stories with the goal of making us, humans, care (1995, 176-179). Marti Kheel emphasizes “an appeal to the reader’s emotions and

sympathies” as more “relevant” than an appeal to reason for arguments such as moral vegetarianism (2007, 53). Similarly, a sympathetic way of understanding is discussed by Donovan, as a contributor to her own collection, as “a valid tool of knowledge [and] as a systematic investigatory tool” (2007, 177).

Lisa Kemmerer sums up this interest with language: “language is equally a tool for oppression and a resource for liberation” (2011, 40). All of these authors contribute to unsanctioned discourses by analyzing words and advocating for different ways of using them that ultimately promote praxis. Writing animals into existence in alternative ways, whether appealing to emotion or making them present in our stories, is crucial to feminist animal defence/ care theory because it demonstrates that we care enough to consider animal others, and works to illuminate who we are defending.

The theorists that fall under feminist defence/care theory investigate many subjects connected to the “animal question(s).” Some of these include animals as property (Kelch 2007), the connection between women battering and animal abuse (Adams 1995), animal liberation theory as a form of taming ourselves emotionally or going feral (Luke 1995), and traditions that perpetuate our often abusive and deadly relationships with animals (Kemmerer 2011). The questions that arise surrounding animal issues are also often questions for humanity as well; for example, the ways humans treat animals often directly reflect the ways we treat our own species. Humans do not exist as separate from animals, rather, we exist intricately intertwined and as interdependent even though the human/animal binary attempts to maintain our divide.

Section 4.4

Ecofeminist Theory

This section focuses on ecofeminist theory by Greta Gaard, a prominent “ecofeminist writer, scholar, activist, and documentary filmmaker” (Wikipedia 2013).

Although ecofeminism has many authors I have chosen to focus on Gaard due to the strong emphasis on animals in her writing. To quote Gaard at length:

Ecofeminism is a theory that has evolved from various fields of feminist inquiry and activism: peace movements, labour movements, women’s health care, and the anti-nuclear, environmental, and animal liberation movements. ... Ecofeminism’s basic premise is that the ideology which authorizes oppressions such as those based on race, class, gender, sexuality, physical abilities, and species is the same ideology which sanctions the oppression of nature. Ecofeminism calls for an end to all oppressions, arguing that no attempt to liberate women (or any other oppressed group) will be successful without an equal attempt to liberate nature (1993, 1).

Ecofeminism is a theory that strives for solidarity between movements and recognizes connections between its own and others’ struggles; it understands the self as one “that is interconnected with all life” (Gaard 1993, 1). Understanding the world through this lens means that the dualities that sustain hierarchical structuring of all kinds are exposed and questioned (3-5). Gaard explicitly acknowledges animals within her articulation of ecofeminism, which makes her articulation of ecofeminism attractive for my purposes. She considers oppressions “sexism, racism, classism, speciesism and naturism (the oppression of nature)” to be “mutually reinforcing” (5). This connection of oppressions and “the analytic frameworks for gender, species, and sexuality” (2010, 644) is one aspect that ecocriticism, as Gaard calls it, and/or environmentalism lack because of their focus on connections in the form of ecosystems. Gaard’s ecofeminism crosses cultures and contexts (2001) and even includes a queer way of seeing (1997).

In her article “Toward a Queer Ecofeminism,” Gaard focuses on the coalition building roots of ecofeminism (coalition building between social justice movements) and on the intersections that arise between queer theory and ecofeminism (1997, 115). She adds to the already long list of dualities that ecofeminism tackles, “heterosexual/queer and reason/the erotic” (Gaard 1997, 116). Where the erotic is oppressed, seen as deviant and scrutinized, “erotophobia” arises, “as queer theorists have shown” (118-119). Erotophobia fears the queer side of the hetero/queer divide and the unnatural side of the natural/unnatural dichotomy, aligning with hetero/queer and categorizes certain queer, “lusts” and “acts” as unnatural and others, that are hetero, as natural (119-120). Where heteronormativity pervades, the queer and erotic are demonized, resulting in erotophobia. These limits put on, and fear of, difference extends from humans, in terms of their sexuality, race, gender, etc., to animals.

In the process of “queering ecofeminism,” Gaard highlights the importance of examining “the ways queers [but also “persons of color” and “nature”] are feminized, animalized, eroticized, and naturalized in a culture that devalues women, animals, nature, and sexuality”(119). In this sense, “nature” refers to the other side of the culture/nature divide and “naturalizing” nature, animals, women, or marginalized peoples is to construct them as lesser-than-human, assigning them to the nature and animal sides of the culture/nature and human/animal divides, and often also to the abnormal side of the normal/abnormal dichotomy.

Gaard turns to other than human species in order to challenge what is culturally constructed as “natural” when it comes to sexuality and sexual practices (121) since sexuality and sexual practices, including procreation, exist in many forms in ‘nature.’ Looking at

institutional Christianity's authorization of "the exploitation of women, indigenous cultures, animals, the natural world, and queers" (122), Gaard finds that "[g]ender-role deviance and the accepted presence of nonheterosexual erotic practices" became "the rhetorical justification for genocide and colonialism" (128-129). Gaard concludes by stating:

[a] queer ecofeminist perspective would argue that liberating the erotic requires reconceptualising humans as equal participants in culture and in nature, able to explore the eroticism of reason and the unique rationality of the erotic. Ecofeminists must be concerned with queer liberation, just as queers must be concerned with the liberation of women and of nature; our parallel oppressions have stemmed from our perceived associations (1997, 132).

Gaard furthers her investigation of colonialism in "Tools for a Cross-Cultural Feminist Ethics: Exploring Ethical Contexts and Contents in the Makah Whale Hunt" (2001). Here she focuses on the "minimum conditions for ethical behaviour (for example, adherence to feminist goals) and the various and multilayered contexts of ethical decisions" using the Makah whale hunt as one of the complex contexts "in which it appears that the rights of animals and of an indigenous tribe are in opposition" (Gaard 2001, 3). Gaard, who is not Indigenous, claims to approach this contention with an antiracist ecofeminist ethic in which the first step is "self-reflection" (9). She acknowledges the history and context of the Makah (3), emphasizing the "differential power positions" of those involved in the Makah whale hunt including the "multination corporations" involved in "industrial food production" who kill large numbers of creatures and the Makah tribe and their much smaller scale hunting practices (9). An antiracist ecofeminist approach "would be inclusive of [the] layers of relationships, examining the interrelationships between the ethical context and the ethical contents" in a holistic fashion (9). Gaard complicates the historical context and contents of the Makah Whale Hunt's with its present context. She discusses the legal context

and contents (i.e. treaties); the diverse types of hunters, categories that can refer to both Indigenous or settler hunters, based on a “critique of hunting” in the western world by Marti Kheel (the “hired hunter,” “hungry hunter,” “hostile hunter,” “happy hunter,” “holist hunter,” and “holy hunter”)(Kheel 1990; 1995 in Gaard 2001, see pages 12-13 for more details); types of diets, both Indigenous and settler, such as “subsistence carnivorism” and “moral vegetarianism”; as well as tradition, culture, and privileges (gendered, raced (colonial), classed)(10-18). Gaard comes to the conclusion that:

it is no contradiction for an antiracist feminist or ecofeminist to support native treaty rights (the ethical context) and simultaneously to oppose traditional cultural practices that perpetuate the subordination of other marginalized groups (the ethical content): rather it is a position that reflects an acute awareness of where one stands in a complex multilayered set of relationships (18).

Gaard supports “border crossing” and “cross-cultural communication” by which people from different contexts listen and share “experiences and analyses” about their work in “social and environmental justice within their [cultural context]” in order to “reopen dialogue”(19), build relationships, establish solidarity and promote the development of “postcolonial perspectives” within antiracist feminism and ecofeminism (19-23). Although Gaard herself, as a non-Indigenous person, is doing research on the Makah whale hunt she does acknowledge that:

In this specific intersection of historical, political, and cultural contexts, it is not the place of non-native feminists and ecofeminists to challenge even what we perceive to be oppressive features of marginalized cultures; rather, only members of a specific culture are positioned to *lead* an inquiry into traditional cultural practices (18-emphasis mine).

This may come across as an existing tension within Gaard’s work however, to cross borders and communicate cross-culturally, to share and listen, all sides must speak. Gaard, I believe,

makes it clear in her work that she remains open to developing a postcolonial perspective by expanding on her anti-racist eco-feminist stance through sharing openly her thoughts with the hope of reciprocation from others who may also share theirs while she listens.

According to Gaard, ecofeminist theorists “must also be activists” since the “goal of ecofeminism [is] praxis” (1993, 3). One of these theorist activists is Marti Kheel, referenced in Gaard’s own work, who links “femicide and biocide” (1995, 110) through a critical look at hunting. Kheel determines that “environmental ethics” are predominantly controlled by men (2007, 39) and suggests “a concept of holism that perceives nature as comprising individual beings that are part of a “dynamic” web of interconnections in which feelings, emotions, and inclinations (or energy) play integral roles (2007, 44).

Karen Davis investigates and challenges environmentalism’s priority hierarchy, their tendency to advocate for the protection of wild creatures rather than domesticated ones (1995). An example of the implementation of such a priority hierarchy would be advocating for the protection of song birds at the potential detriment of domesticated cats. Some environmentalists and environmental organizations advocate that cats ought to live their lives, often forcibly confined, indoors for the sake of these birds to live their lives freely (Rankin 2014 – online). Ecofeminism, like most unsanctioned discourses, advocates practicing theory. In the following strand of unsanctioned discourse, praxis is taken to a different level.

Section 4.5

Radical Anti-Speciesist Theory

Joan Dunayer, addressed in the introductory chapter, is a “writer, editor and animal rights advocate” (Wikipedia 2013) and a proponent of what I have chosen to call radical anti-speciesist theory as discussed in *Speciesism* (2004). This theory challenges Singer’s understanding of anti-speciesism in animal rights theory. Radical anti-speciesist theory sees language as a crucial tool to achieve “full consideration and respect” for nonhuman animals (Dunayer 2004, xiii). Beyond the use of language, it also advocates for the use of abolitionist bans and boycotts of industries and consumer habits that promote the exploitation of nonhumans, and for direct action, animal rights and veganism as a way of life (151-157).

Dunayer discusses speciesism in its many manifestations, with its many excuses, and confirms that “[p]eople who claim that human life has more value simply express their own preference: *they* value human life more” (Dunayer 2004, 19-*emphasis mine*). Even Regan and Singer are speciesist according to Dunayer (3), in that they “define intelligence in a way that favors humans” (22) and therefore these “new-speciesists,” as she calls them, privilege “some nonhumans, those whose thoughts and behaviour seem most human-like” (77) over others who “experience the world differently” (87). According to Dunayer:

New-speciesists accord greater moral consideration and stronger basic rights to humans than to any other animal. They see animalkind as a hierarchy with humans at the top. In their view, ‘some animals are more equal than others’ (77).

Dunayer also criticizes those whom she labels “old-speciesists,” whose “advocacy includes appeals to human self-interest, language that trivializes or legitimizes abuse of nonhumans, and ‘welfarism’, which seeks to modify, rather than end, some forms of speciesist exploitation” (51). She believes appeals to welfare and reform help to further entrench

animal oppression and work to “maintain, rather than dismantle, enslavement” (63). She asserts: “The problem is the whole system” (63).

Dunayer highlights the hypocrisy of statutes and legislation within the US, such as the ‘Animal Welfare Act’ and the ‘Humane Methods of Slaughter Act’ (Dunayer 2004, 41-49), that purportedly protect animals. She demonstrates that these acts “authorize exploitation [and] perpetuate abuse” by “defining nonhumans as property” and subsequently enabling the continued slaughter, vivisection, and exhibition of millions (48-49). The “exclusion of the very animals who are most often abused” (43), such as animals’ labelled food or those fated for scientific testing, from these types of regulations make animals who already suffer tremendously at the hands of humans even more vulnerable to “inhumane” treatment. Dunayer advocates for animals’ legal rights in a “call for an end to enslavement and slaughter” (157). She claims that “sentience, defined as any capacity to experience, is the only logical and fair basis, [the only valid criterion], for basic rights” (134, 15). This she claims is neither “old speciesist” nor “new speciesist” but a “non speciesist” approach to advocacy (151-152).

This may, however, be interpreted as a sort of “alternative speciesist” stance rather than a completely “non speciesist” position in that Dunayer does not challenge speciesism on all levels, for instance as that which implicates other life forms beyond the “animals” she is concerned with here. By advocating for other-than-human beings’ rights, the abolition of animal exploitation and, most importantly, direct rescue of creatures from places of incarceration and abuse, Dunayer touches on a main vein of Liberationist theory: direct action.

Liberationist Theory

Just as “overly emotional” and “animal lover” have been used to disqualify animal activists so too has the “terrorist in a stocking mask” or the “extremist” label (Shapiro 2007, 154). Feminist defense/care theory and ecofeminism have worked to shift the damagingly feminized perspective which constructs activists as overly emotional, weak, and therefore easily dismissed, into a dynamic stance that values caring, responsibility, and respect. The next strand of theory I examine is one that works to shift and expand our perspective on those animal liberation activists labelled “extremists” and “terrorists,” by the very industries they criticize and challenge and, post 9-11, by the legal system, for the actions they take in accordance with their beliefs (Best and Nocella II 2004, 34-35, 75). This unsanctioned discourse is liberationist theory and its advocates endorse direct action.

Since members of the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) are the main advocates of liberationist theory as it pertains to other animals I focus on their theory and practice. I have chosen three texts: i) Shannon Keith’s (“an American animal rights lawyer, activist, and documentary director/producer film” (Wikipedia 2013)) film *Behind the Mask: The Story of the People who Risk Everything to Save Animals* (2006), ii) the anthology edited by Steven Best, “an American animal rights advocate, author, and associate professor of philosophy” (Wikipedia 2013), and Anthony J. Nocella II, an “author,” “organizer,” “educator” and “scholar-activist” (www.anthonynocella.org, 2014), *Terrorists or Freedom Fighters? Reflections on the Liberation of Animals* (2004) and iii) Rik Scarce’s, an author and teacher (www.skidmore.edu, 2014), *Eco-Warriors: Understanding the Radical Environmental Movement* (2006).

Since the ALF is a global organization, formed of individual cells often unknown to one another, an organization that has “no structure” (Keith, 2006) and remains decentralized (Best & Nocella II 2004, 11), existing in “ordered anarchy” (Scarce 2006, 38), it is difficult to know for sure whether or not those who take action do so loyally following the tenants of liberationist theory. However, there are certain theoretical guidelines followed by ALF adherents that I want to highlight. Taken from the ALF Primer and reprinted in Best and Nocella II’s book, the ALF guidelines are as follows:

To liberate animals from places of abuse, i.e., laboratories, factory farms, fur farms, etc., and place them in good homes⁸ where they may live out their natural [as in not prematurely ended] lives, free from suffering.

To inflict economic damage to those who profit from the misery and exploitation of animals.

To reveal the horror and atrocities committed against animals behind locked doors, by performing nonviolent direct actions and liberations.

To take all necessary precautions against harming any animal, human and nonhuman.

Any group of people who are vegetarians or vegans and who carry out actions according to ALF guidelines have the right to regard themselves as part of the ALF (2004, 8).

These guidelines form the fundamentals of liberationist theory, which, according to Scarce, is deep ecology, a strand of environmentalism, evolved into and crossed with ecofeminism (2006, 35-44). According to others, such as Paul Watson, liberationist theory includes non-violence, such as that practiced by Ghandi and Martin Luther King (Watson in Scarce 2006, 106); animal rights theory as Singer, Regan and others have constructed it; as well as feminist

⁸ Although “good homes” implies keeping these liberated creatures in a state of domesticity, which can be problematic, it is considered to be a better option, perhaps one of the only options, for animals liberated from inherently oppressive situations.

theory. Patricia Jones claims that liberationist theory takes from “ecofeminism, anarcha~feminism, radical feminism, and feminist ethics” (2004, 141). Liberationist theory is itself a hybrid pieced together by the activists that practice it: liberationist theory not only advocates praxis but is praxis.

The ideological shift that is crucial to this theoretical practice is to an “ecological consciousness” which accepts that “humans are not the measure of all things” (Scarce 2006, 7) and that “comes from the heart-not the head” (31). Liberationism is a “frontal assault on the prevalent mentality that says that animals are objects, resources, or property,” and a means to “challenge long entrenched prejudices” against animals (Best & Nocella II 2004, 12-13). Liberationism acknowledges that “animal liberation and human liberation are interrelated projects” (15) since, as Jones quotes an “anarchist slogan” in her article on Feminisms and the ALF, “no one is free while others are oppressed” (2004, 142).

Since liberationist theory is praxis, those who endorse this way of thinking must go through a “radical transformation in... habits, practices, values, and mindset” (2004, 13) and they must also become agents of nonviolent direct action. Proponents of liberationist theory, beyond being active in other ways, such as disseminating knowledge about the issues animal face or becoming vegan, are often ready and willing to partake in direct actions such as liberating animals from laboratories or factory farms. This means the “consequent anger” of activists that comes out of seeing and understanding the world in this ecologically conscious way, the anger that comes following judgment and with responsibility (Baard 2004, 166-168), must be “harnessed constructively” (160).

This is done through well planned and diverse forms of nonviolent direct and indirect action (Jones 2004, 137-139). These actions range from “sabotage: destruction of

property or obstruction of normal operations” (Keith 2006) to raids: “the illegal entry and rescue of animals” (Keith 2006) to demonstrations: “a public display of group feelings towards a person or cause” (Keith 2006). Although there are disagreements over what is considered to be violence both within the animal rights movement and from without, the ALF does not consider the destruction of property that enables the perpetuation of horrendous acts against the life, liberty and happiness of animals as violence (Best & Nocella II 2004, 25). As Regan states in his contribution to this text: “The violence done to *things* by some animal rights activists (...destruction of insensate property) is nothing compared to the violence done to feeling creatures by the major animal user industries” (2004, 235 – my emphasis).⁹

Actions such as these have purpose beyond their immediate consequence of liberating or freeing animals (Best and Nocella II 2004, 24): “social transformation” and “abolition” of these profit driven industries (57-58) by public education through “McLuhanist principles (for attracting media attention)” (Watson in Scarce 2006, 101). Media is central to liberation (Keith 2006) (Scarce 2006) (Best and Nocella II 2004) because it can generate discussion by exposing the realities of animal industries to the public (Dawn 2004, 227-228). Learning how to use the media to gain support for the animal liberation movement is a crucial tool in the liberationist’s tool kit (213-228). For example, entering a farm where mink are held captive to be killed and skinned for their fur and liberating the creatures is one purpose of such an action, but taking photographs and video footage and releasing it to the media is another. Spreading awareness via multiple media about the realities these beings face is seen by liberationist activists as a means to sway public opinion

⁹ See pre-quote on pg. 235 of Regan’s article in Best and Nocella II (2004) for further elaboration.

and potentially put an end to this torment and treatment (See Liz Marshall's *The Ghosts in Our Machine*, released 2013); this is part of their praxis.

Section 4.7

Posthumanist Theory

Posthumanist theory is aimed at a different audience. This strand is immersed in academic language and debate and, although there are multiple interpretations of what posthumanism is, I have chosen to work from Cary Wolfe's (an American "significant voice in recent debates in animal studies" (Wikipedia, 2013)) interpretation of the term since his view reflects what I am searching for in posthumanism. Wolfe's posthumanism grapples with the human/animal or human/nonhuman binary in order to move beyond humanism and take the animal, nonhuman, and other (2010, 47), seriously.

For Wolfe posthumanist theory is a shift away from humanist theory that encourages us to connect to "nonhuman being... and within that to nonhuman animals" (Wolfe 2010, 126). What Wolfe aims to achieve via theory is a "posthumanist posthumanism" which is vastly different from a "humanist humanism," the latter a way of knowing "that perhaps needs little elaboration, because nearly all our social and political institutions and most of our public intellectuals take such a formation for granted" (126). Humanist humanism is human centric thought and learning that reflects humans' speciesism in that it is perpetually self-interested. It is a way of knowing about humans, by humans, and concerning how humans interpret and define the world as revolving around them. A posthumanist posthumanism

shifts the human part of us out of the centre and attempts to understand what humans look like from another, perhaps more self-reflective lens after unlearning speciesism and relearning how to be in a posthumanist way. It also enables humans to understand the world as revolving not around or for us but with us or us with it. According to Wolfe, a:

posthumanist posthumanism...has to do with understanding– and understanding the consequences of– the very redefinition of what humanistic knowledge is after the disciplinary subjectivity at its core, the notion of the human that it ‘gives to itself,’ has been rewritten (126).

Posthumanism attempts to step outside of humanist thought and reflect on what human is and does. “[P]osthumanism in [Wolfe’s] sense isn’t posthuman at all- in the sense of being ‘after’ our embodiment has been transcended – but is only *posthumanist* in the sense that it opposes fantasies of disembodiment and autonomy, inherited from humanism” (xv). What Wolfe considers posthumanism to be is a paradigm that:

Far from surpassing or rejecting the human- actually enables us to describe the human and its characteristic modes of communication, interaction, meaning, social significations, and affective investments with *greater* specificity once we have removed meaning from the ontologically closed domain of consciousness, reason, reflection, and so on. It forces us to rethink our taken-for-granted modes of human experience...by recontextualizing them in terms of the entire sensorium of other living beings and their own autopoietic ways of “bringing forth a world” – ways that are, since we ourselves are human *animals*, part of the evolutionary history and behavioural and psychological repertoire of the human itself. But it also insists that we attend to the specificity of the human – its ways of being in the world, its ways of knowing, observing and describing – by (paradoxically, for humanism) acknowledging that it is fundamentally a prosthetic creature that has coevolved with various forms of technicity and materiality, forms that are radically “not-human” and yet have nevertheless made the human what it is...[T]his constitutive dependency and finitude...has profound ethical implications for our relations to nonhuman forms of life (xxv-xxvi).

Posthumanism can be a multitude of different attempted perspectives on life. It involves a diversification and deeper way of understanding humans by acknowledging how

we became human in the first place only because of the world and other life forms in it. It is crucial that we take all life forms into consideration if we are to gain a deeper understanding of ourselves and if we are to become better not only to ourselves but to other life forms as well. Here my focus is on expanding on our ways of thinking about and being with non-human animal life forms.

I return to Wolfe after I visit French deconstructionist philosopher Jacques Derrida's *The Animal that Therefore I am* (2008), and feminist biologist and science and technology scholar Donna Haraway's *Companion Species Manifesto* (2003) and *When Species Meet* (2008). I have chosen this order of explication because Derrida's work on "the animal" greatly influenced both Haraway and Wolfe's work towards a posthumanism, or a "nonhumanism," as Haraway has named it (2008, 92).

In *The Animal that Therefore I am* (2008), Derrida addresses the "animal question." He begins this query with an encounter with a cat, an "irreplaceable living being" (Derrida 2008, 9). It is this encounter which propels him to consider "*being-with...* the animal" (10), "the absolute other" (11), the "radically other" (107). In doing so, Derrida's mind is opened: "[a]s with every bottomless gaze, as with the eyes of the other, the gaze called 'animal' offers to my sight the abyssal limit of the human: the inhuman or the ahuman, the ends of man, that is to say, the bordercrossing from which vantage man dares to announce himself to himself" (12). This "bordercrossing" refers to the possibility of a posthumanist shift. By shifting the human out of the center and acknowledging another gaze and from this gaze the possibility for response (13), Derrida begins to destabilize human-non-human animal speciesism, although he does not refer to the concept per se. He speaks of the philosophical discourse of the denial of and misunderstanding of the animal, "this immense disavowal,

whose logic traverses the whole history of humanity” (14). Investigating this history, beginning with the Christian story of creation (16), Derrida discusses naming the animal: “The animal, what a word! ...an appellation that men have instituted, a name they have given themselves the right and the authority to give to the living other” (23) “to name in general, but in the singular, *the animal*” (24). This general singular generalizes all non-human beings that can be defined by “animal” to this singular naming and in doing so seriously limits the diversity of who animals are in all their diversity.

Derrida speaks of taking seriously our compassion for the other by avoiding a logocentric, as well as anthropocentric question: “can they speak (human language)?” He instead asks “can they suffer?” for which “the response... leaves no room for doubt” (27-28). The “thinking” that stems from this question and response “is not only a duty, a responsibility, an obligation, it is also a necessity, a constraint that, like it or not, directly or indirectly, no one can escape” (Derrida 2008, 29). Derrida believes we must reconsider “the animal.”

Derrida investigates and expands the limits of this thinking, labelling his subject “*limitrophy*” (29), by searching for and multiplying, while complicating, “intertwined and abyssal” relations (31) that can and do exist between human animals and nonhuman animals. It is a “theory of animots” that Derrida is “following” (39), where the animot is “[n]either a species nor a gender nor an individual [but rather] an irreducible living multiplicity of mortals” (41). The “irreducibility” of these living beings emphasizes Derrida’s perspective on animals as irreducible and unique creatures rather than mass entities, to borrow from Adams. Derrida also discusses the autobiographical animot, the human with the language of the “I,” continuously concerned with itself, and highlights “a place of intersection between

[the] two general singulars, the animal (l'animot) and the "I"... Singularly and in general. It could be anyone at all" (50). By this I believe Derrida is pointing to the fact that the "I" can be animal or human, "anyone at all," challenging the philosophical "I think therefore I am" justification for *human* existence and in doing so complicating the human/animal binary.

Derrida's emphasis is on response, the type of response that comes from asking questions, and ultimately on responsibility and respect for the other when he asks and seeks answers for his ongoing questions:

The animal in general, what is it? What does it mean? *Who* is it? To what does that 'it' correspond? To whom? Who responds to whom? Who responds in and to the common, general, and singular name of what [the humans] thus blithely call the "animal"? Who is it that responds? ...as for me, who am I (following)? (51-*emphasis mine*).

His aim in the theory of animots is not only to discover the other but to re-discover the self; to better understand what it is to be human by alternatively acknowledging animal.

In the second section of his book (2008, 52-118), Derrida investigates and, I think, successfully responds to philosophic arguments, ranging from "Aristotle to Lacan," by critiquing Descartes' "anthropocentric prejudice" (102), the Cartesian animal as machine, and "the Kantian... hate for the animality of the human" (103). The "two criteria" used to distinguish, and disrespect, the animal in these arguments are, according to Derrida:

(1) nonresponse, the [animal's] inability to respond, to respond to *our* questions, hence to hear *our* question marks [and] (2) a lack, defect, or general deficit, a deficiency that is nonspecific... What the animal lacks, in its very perfection, what its defect is, is incommensurable with what is lacking in human imperfection, which in turn draws from this lack, from this incomparable defect, its superiority (81-82 - *emphasis mine*).

Here, I believe, Derrida is indicating that human superiority fabricates animal inferiority, and that this human “imperfection,” our superiority complex, produces our lack of ability to comprehend the different responses or nonresponses from animots when asked our human centric questions. According to Derrida, “the animal is deprived of the power and the right to respond... and therefore of responsibility (and hence of the law, etc.), yet it is also deprived of nonresponse, of the right of nonresponse that is accorded the human face by means of secrecy or in death” (112). What I think Derrida means by this is that humans often respond for animals based on the reactions and inactions of animals; for example with “pets” people often speak for them and personify them with a (specific kind of) voice. Humans, on the other hand, through secrecy and death, do not respond, and I would argue, are at times allowed to be nonresponsive without someone else choosing to speak for them.

For the purpose of Derrida’s argument “it is not just a matter of giving back to the animal whatever it has been refused, in this case the I of *automonstration*. It is also a matter of questioning oneself concerning the axiom that permits one to accord purely and simply to the human or to the rational animal that which one holds the just plain animal to be deprived of” (Derrida 2008, 95). Derrida shifts the focus from the animal to the human on multiple occasions to complicate both human and animal. He also comes to the larger realization that “[t]here is...neither socialization, political constitution, nor politics itself without the principle of domestication of the wild animal” and therefore without the animal, the human would have never come ‘*after*’” (96-97). His emphasis in the third section of *The Animal that therefore I am* is on breaking “with the Cartesian tradition of the animal-machine” (119) via attention to response, reaction, pretense (pretending to pretend), responsibility, and the

imaginary vs. the symbolic. Derrida aims to take the “animal” seriously and as a living being (119-140). To quote Derrida:

It is *not just* a matter of asking whether one has the right to refuse the animal such and such a power (speech, reason, experience of death, mourning, culture, institutions, technics, clothing, lying, pretense of pretense, covering of tracks, gift, laughter, crying, respect, etc. – the list is necessarily without limit, and the most powerful philosophical tradition in which we live has refused the “animal” *all of that*). It *also* means asking whether what calls itself human has the right rigorously to attribute to man, which means therefore to attribute to himself, what he refuses the animals, and whether he can ever possess the *pure, rigorous, indivisible* concept, as such, of that attribution (135).

Derrida claims that all anthropocentric distinctions that attempt to reinstitute “the superiority of the human order over the animal order” are in actuality “subtle and fragile” (136). By this he endeavours to demonstrate that there is potential for change in the ways we understand ourselves and others.

Haraway approaches the animal question from another angle, although she begins *Companion Species Manifesto* (2003) and *When Species Meet* (2008) from a similar place to where Derrida starts, with a sort of relationship or a “value added encounter” (Haraway 2008, 46) between a human, Haraway, and a dog, Cayenne, in a particular context, that of “expropriated native land” (2003, 2) (2008, 16). Haraway theorizes that “actual encounters are what makes beings” (Haraway 2008, 67). She means that our interactions with others profoundly shape who we become. Haraway’s focus is on the interspecies intra- and interactions (4), occurring in “naturecultural contact zones” (7), places where nature and culture intertwine, where humans and animals interact. She focuses on significant otherness, the reality that all creatures are “significantly other to each other” (Haraway 2003, 3), and how our differences ultimately construct certain animals and humans into “constitutively, companion species” (Haraway 2008, 3) or “knotted beings” (5). She speaks of companion

species as a process of becoming that involves “co-constitution” and “co-evolution” (Haraway 2003, 32) as well as “copresence” (Haraway 2008, 237), meaning those in these relationships become, evolve and are present together. It is in the contact zones where animals and humans are together that “most of the transformative things in life happen” (219) and from which “shared building of other worlds,” or alternative worlds, is made possible (237-238).

Stemming from her biology background, Haraway also sees this contact as initializing biological processes that further entangle humans and nonhumans, such as “symbiogenesis” and “DNA transfections” (2003, 15), which refer to, for example, swapped saliva quite literally from mouth to mouth as between human and dog companions, or built immunity to dander allergies. This means that humans are not as distinct, and pure, as perhaps we would like to believe since we have co-evolved surrounded and entangled with multiple other beings. Haraway’s primary understanding of entanglement is through her own experience of “training together,” with her companion Cayenne, for agility competitions. In this relationship she recognizes domestication as problematic and in need of historical analysis and redefinition. Haraway focuses on “becoming together” rather than prioritizing human wants and needs (as domestication often epitomizes) in interspecies relations (2008, 207-208).

Co-habiting with other animals requires that we recognize the “mistake” of building relationships based on assumptions of “unconditional love,” which Haraway labels “abusive” (2003, 33), and move onto building relationships that acknowledge other “life worlds” (Haraway 2003, 4, 38) and “honour difference” (39) that emphasize “cross-species respect” (42), meaning the refusal to partake in the “infantilization of [animal companions]” that is so

prevalent in our culture (39) and recognizing “companions species” as adults with “species interests and individual quirks” (Haraway 2008, 213).

An example of what this might look like would start with a process of learning together, or as Haraway calls it: “training together” (2008; 2003). This learning and training can be done respectfully, through positive training practices (Haraway 2008, 210-214). This would involve both parties learning how to behave together as well as within diverse contexts and to be respectful of each other’s wants and needs. It might take some work to teach a dog, for example, to remain on a sidewalk within city limits or to not leave their companion behind while roaming/hiking through the woods but it also takes some work for humans to unlearn our assumptions surrounding our fellow creatures intellects, such as with which the dogs we share our lives.

It is through learning together and about each other that we are able to potentially build trusting relationships where, for example, we can let our companions explore the world at their own pace (i.e. to run off leash and explore without constant supervision). It is not only the infantilization but the humanization of animals that is problematic, since “resistance to human exceptionalism *requires* resistance to humanization of our partners” (52). We must accept creatures for the unique beings that they are and let them be other instead of constructing them and treating them like human infants and children.

Haraway, when speaking of response and responsibility, speaks of respect, reciprocity, and honesty (2008, 26-27), paying attention and listening (Haraway 2003, 62-63) to the present, to the past, to our “naturecultural” histories (82), and to the possibilities that come from taking these connections seriously (3) and “taking animals seriously” (2008, 73). Haraway argues that it is our “unarticulated responsibility to participate in re-

imagining...ways of life” (2003, 97). Every human, she suggests, has “failed to imagine: ongoing [animal]-human lives that are attentive to complex histories of animal-human entanglements, fully contemporary and committed to a future of multispecies naturecultural flourishing in both wild and domestic domains” (Haraway 2008, 273).

Humans must learn “a whole new way of being in the world” (24) with the animals we label as “pets,” the animals we label as food, those we use in research and those we call wild. Our relationships with other animals must be “multidirectional” (71) and even though they may be relationships of use we must take them seriously (73); “taking such things seriously draws us into the world, makes us care, and opens up political imaginations and commitments” (300). We ought to do this while remaining “open to reconsideration with care” (77). As Haraway puts it “[s]ome instrumental relations should be ended, some should be nurtured, but none of this without response” (77). Haraway does not advocate veganism (80, 105-106) but rather for killing nonhuman animals responsibly and against “making beings killable” (80-82). She also discusses sharing pain as “an ethical obligation, a practical problem, and an ontological opening. Sharing pain promises disclosure, promises becoming” (84). What Haraway is speaking about here is compassion.

Haraway looks at racial and colonial discourses that intertwine with speciesist discourse and practices, such as the distinctions made around purebreds (Haraway 2008, 15-18) and the “entangled species world[s]” that occur when the “life worlds of human-animal-technology” are compounded. She gives the example of “the colonial organism called Crittercam,” a camera affixed to a creature’s body for the purpose of humans gaining entry into what animal others are doing in their lives (251-261). She argues that this is similar to the ways in which colonizers entered into the lives of the colonized, allegedly for their own

benefit and often without consent of the other. Haraway exposes the interconnections and complexities that arise from cross-species and technology entangled interactions.

Haraway focuses on “becoming with” different creatures, and the “knot of species coshaping one another in layers of reciprocating complexity”; she argues that “[r]esponse and respect are possible only in those knots, with actual animals and people looking back at each other” (Haraway 2008, 42). It is here that a flourishing in relationship, of self and of other, happen. As Haraway, reflecting on the work of feminist philosopher Chris Cuomo, states: “[f]lourishing... is the core value... Compassionate action is... crucial to flourishing” (134). Flourishing happens when we choose not to become stagnant, by remaining open to possibilities. Yes, Haraway uses dogs to think, to theorize, but she also recognizes that they “are here to live with” (2003, 5). In her concluding chapter Haraway summarizes what she has worked towards:

I remember that “becoming with” is “becoming worldly”. *When Species Meet* strives to build attachment sites and tie sticky knots to bind intra-acting critters, including people, together in kinds of response and regard that change the subject-and the object. Encounters do not produce harmonious wholes... Meetings make us who and what we are in the avid contact zones that are the world (2008, 287).

As for that first encounter, that relationship between Haraway the human dog trainer and Cayenne the dog in training, Haraway states “she enriches my ignorance” (301). This relationship is about both parties learning to communicate and be with the other as other. In doing so, these companionships work towards reshaping and redefining domestication (207).

I now return to the last person I have positioned in the posthumanist strand of theory, Cary Wolfe, with whom I began. Wolfe directly discusses posthumanism as a concept that makes connections between human and nonhuman animal others. He does so by

beginning *Animal Rites: American Culture, The Discourse of Species, and Posthumanist Theory* (2003) with a discussion surrounding “the discourse of species a discourse that, in turn, reproduces the *institution* of speciesism” (2003, 2). As he states in his introduction:

[B]ecause the discourse of speciesism... can be used to mark *any* social other, we need to understand that the ethical and philosophical urgency of confronting the institution of speciesism and crafting a posthumanist theory of the subject *has nothing to do with whether you like animals*. We all, human and nonhuman alike, have a stake in the discourse and institution of speciesism; it is by no means limited to its overwhelming direct and disproportionate effect on animals (Wolfe 2003, 7).

In this Wolfe recognizes the intersections between speciesism and other forms of prejudice. He states:

“as long as it is institutionally taken for granted that it is all right to systematically exploit and kill nonhuman animals simply because of their species, then the humanist discourse of species will always be available for use by some humans against other humans as well, to countenance violence against the social other of *whatever* species – or gender, or race, or class, or sexual difference” (8).

Wolfe is also highlighting the necessity for humanism, as a way of thinking, to “generate its own deconstruction” in order to enable the questions surrounding the animal, and our human selves, to flourish to their “full complexity” (42-43). What Wolfe is specifically implying is that we must begin to think posthumanly not just for the nonhuman beings of the world but also for the human beings because speciesism affects us all negatively.

One of the main areas of Wolfe’s focus is language. Language, as is acknowledged by all unsanctioned discourses, is partially responsible for constructing the circumstances under which animals have been denied rights and respect via being denied language, or, more aptly, denied the ability to communicate. Wolfe also holds language responsible for enabling humans to soar towards human exceptionalism via their own praise of human language over

other forms of communication. Wolfe believes we human “beings with vastly different phenomenologies,” participate in the shared building of life worlds through our “participation in a language game” (Wolfe 2003, 47-48). Here Derrida’s emphasis on response (74) becomes central and this response can come in a plurality of forms including “kinesics and paralinguistic communication” (86). Even “languageless creatures,” in the human centric sense of language, are “conscious” (88) and can participate in the social process of communication since meaning is what needs to be communicated and human language is only one “second-ordered phenomenon” that enables this transfer (Wolfe 2010, 19-22). As Dr. Fischer notes (in Wolfe): “You don’t have to be able to speak to understand” (33).

Wolfe refutes the Cartesian attempt at maintaining the human/animal divide by reinforcing the reaction/response dichotomy that puts all its weight on human language as the only means of response (Wolfe 2010, 40), a language ingrained with species based prejudices that predefine what personhood can morally mean (55-56). Creatively manipulating human language is a crucial posthumanist step that works towards “disarticulation” (60), the deconstruction of human language. According to Wolfe we must be wary of “how forms of [human] language (what we say, what we write, how we ask philosophical questions) open up certain lines of thought – indeed, the imagining of whole worlds – and foreclose others” (60-61). Instead of focusing on what we do not share, the ability to communicate in human linguistic ways, Wolfe encourages us to focus on what we do share, for example finitude and vulnerability (73-74), with our “fellow creatures” (62, 77). Echoing Derrida and his “fundamental compassion” (82) as well as Naussaum’s “sympathetic imagining,” an imagining that makes animals and the lives they lead “real to us

in a primary way, as potential subjects of justice” (Naussaum in Wolfe, 78), Wolfe asks the questions: “what *should* we do?,” “what *will* we do?,” and what are our “*possibilities of response*”? (95).

In *Animal Rites*, Wolfe provides us with a posthumanist cultural studies analysis of the film *The Silence of the Lambs*, Ernest Hemingway’s *Garden of Eden* and of Michael Crichton’s *Congo*. Wolfe understands that “the discourse of species, and with it the ethical problematics of our relations to nonhuman others, continues to be treated largely as if species is always already a counter or cover for some other discourse: usually gender..., sometimes race... or ethnicity..., still more rarely, class... What [he] insist[s] on here...is the *irreducibility* of species discourse and its problematics” (Wolfe 2003, 124).

Although Wolfe explicitly recognizes the connections between different forms of prejudice (as alluded to above) he particularly wants to emphasize the “deep-seated prejudices... based on species” (191), which he believes are “irreducible” and must be considered both singularly and as interconnected with other prejudices such as gender, sexual difference, race, and class. In his posthumanist interrogation of the works, Wolfe highlights cross-species identification, often linked to cross-gender identification (99, 148-151), implying that certain cross-species interactions are often gendered. A prime example for both these forms of cross identification is hunting: man becomes animal in the act of stalking and killing; and the refusal to hunt, or being sympathetic to the creatures being hunted, often results in a cross-gender identification of masculine male(hunter) versus feminine male(animal lover).

In his posthumanist interrogation, Wolfe also underscores “carnophallogocentric” connections, a Derridean concept that combines carnivorous consumption with an already

phallic and language centered position in which others are made into objects to be consumed physically, visually and otherwise (Wolfe 2003, 132; 2010, 95).

Within the fictional works, Wolfe finds “animalized animals,” “humanized animals,” “animalized humans,” and “humanized humans” (Wolfe 2003, 101, 187), all beings often complicated by gender or race. For example, in *The Silence of the Lambs* the poodle is humanized (103), while the woman in the dungeon is animalized by Buffalo Bill, who is also animalized as “mothlike,” and cross-gendered; Starling is named after a bird (107). Lector is animalized but remains at the same time a humanized specimen in his manners and intellect also creating a “monster,” a hybrid between human and animal (107). In Hemingway, “speciesist sacrifice” in the form of bullfighting and elephant killing “secures manhood... a perverse *expression* of that violence driven by a desperate humanism and a panicked heterosexism” (141). Here Wolfe highlights the role of animalizing animals in order to humanize humans. And in Crichton’s *Congo*, the “discourse of speciesism” is revealed as “a chief strategy for making and exploiting other human subjects,” demonstrating the animalized human as a racialized subject (188-189). Looking at these texts from a posthumanist perspective allowed Wolfe to discover different, otherwise hidden, meaning that reinforces speciesism.

In the second half of *What is Posthumanism?* Wolfe moves us into the interdisciplinary field of animal studies (Wolfe 2010, 99), claiming that “it is only in and through disciplinary specificity that we have something specific and irreplaceable to contribute to this ‘question of the animal.’” Wolfe is emphasizing the importance of each discipline or area of expertise on their own and as part of interdisciplinarity. He therefore argues that “what we need...is...*multidisciplinarity* or perhaps *transdisciplinarity*... a kind of distributed reflexivity

necessitated... by the fact that (by definition) *no* discourse, no discipline, can make transparent the conditions of its own observations” (115-116).

Through this “investigation of the condition of possibility for posthumanist theory” (2003, 193) ultimately what Wolfe wants is for all of us to “take seriously the question of the animal” (190). This can only be accomplished if we think our way through the question(s) of the animals, plural, as Derrida would have it, using posthumanist theory. Posthumanism allows us to understand differently from other human and animal perspectives, giving us multiple avenues to venture down. This results in different ways of knowing and opens up diverse possibilities; “the only way out is through... plurality” (207).

Wolfe believes posthumanism is the theoretical move towards embracing an ethical pluralism that includes animal others (Wolfe 2003, 207). He “think[s] it entirely possible, if not likely, that a hundred years from now we will look back on our current mechanized and systematized practices of factory farming, product testing, and much else that undeniably involves animal exploitation and suffering-uses that... Derrida compare[s] to the gas chambers of Auschwitz with much the same horror and disbelief with which we now regard slavery or the genocide of the second world war” (190). For Wolfe, “posthumanism means not the triumphal surpassing or unmasking of something but an increase in the vigilance, responsibility, and humility that accompany living in a world so newly, and differentially inhabited” (2010, 47).

CHAPTER FIVE: DECONSTRUCTION, RECONSTRUCTION, HYBRIDIZATION

Section 5.1

Introducing the process

It is in the unsanctioned discourses (those that attempt to be considerate of the other, animal, and re-consider the self) that I have found the pieces to be woven into a theory-in-process. Here I engage, as has been outlined in the ‘Theory and Methodology’ chapter, in a deconstructive and reconstructive bricolage. This involves borrowing terminology and concepts from the unsanctioned discourses that I investigated in the previous chapter, asking deconstructive feminist questions of the texts and finding, as well as making meanings with, and connections between, the texts. The hybrid theoretical framework that is the result of this process will enable me to move onward academically, in terms of future research, and has challenged and changed my perspective in many ways, especially in the way I consider other beings. In the following sections I ask many questions, gather answers, and from them I piece together a theory that is compassionate, respectful, responsible and posthumanist: a vegan eco-feminist critical care theory.

The questions I have asked the unsanctioned discourses come from my initial deconstructive ecofeminist theoretical stance. These questions are central to the critical discourse analysis that I employ for this thesis which investigates alternative discourses, in this case the unsanctioned discourses, taking from them what I see as their “positive” or “affirmative” aspects (Derrida 2004 ch.13, 154), highlighting what is useful rather than

criticizing what is not (Alba-Juez 2009). Although there are undoubtedly many problematic issues with the theories and discourses that address “the animal question,” I have chosen to challenge myself by taking the pieces that connect and that work together rather than focusing on the former. It is these pieces that I transform into a theory that, although initially in pieces, comes together and allows tensions and “differences” to also be transformative. My aim was to deconstruct, pick up the pieces, and reconstruct, selectively putting them back together again as a hybrid, as a sort of “monster” (Wolfe 2003, 107-108).

The main questions I asked of the texts were first and foremost linguistic since I was looking at theory as a conceptual and linguistic tool box: what terms and concepts enable me to (re)think “the animal.” I then shifted my attention to the connections between the theoretical strands and to tensions within these connections that arose out of the questions I posed. These questions were: i) Are attempts made to question or explode the human/animal binary? ii) Is there a context disclosed situating the text in a time and place? iii) Is space left for the making of multiple meanings, ways of understanding and knowing? Does the text encourage expansion and/or theory as process? iv) Does the author attempt to make the text accessible through language, style, diversity of examples, etcetera? v) Are there suggestions for possible forms of actions/praxis to move the reader beyond the text, beyond theory and into action?

Section 5.2

Asking Questions and Gathering Answers

The first terms I (re)considered were the labels that designated who “animal” is and from there who “human” is in relation to alternatively conceptualized “animals.” I then turned to other concepts and terminology I wanted to include in this hybrid theory under construction. And finally I investigated the interconnecting themes that linked the unsanctioned discourses to each other via the feminist deconstructive questions outlined above which served to maintain a connection between this hybridized theory and those that came before.

Section 5.2 a)

Concepts and Terminology

Before I asked any of the above outlined questions it was first necessary to look at the “who” of who I am creating this theory for, and the “who” of who this theory allows me to alternatively think about. By “who” I mean both myself, because it is I who will be employing this theory to do future research, and “the animals,” not the “general singular” (Derrida 2008) animal but a diversity, a plurality, a multitude of different beings that we all come into contact with, as they do with us, in different contexts. To think about these creatures I needed to make their differences significant; in order to do this I needed more than one word to call “the animal” or “animals” about which I am thinking, theorizing and will eventually be doing research. In order to find more appropriate ways to name “who” *not* “what” is as the centre of this work, I went through each strand of the unsanctioned discourses and identified those terms that the theorists of the unsanctioned discourses had

ascribed. Following the deconstructive and feminist roots of the theory that underlies this research, I can no longer justify using human-centered and dichotomous terms such as “nonhuman” or “nonhuman animal”. Although many theorists alternate and often use terms like “nonhuman animal” versus “human”, with the “animal” conveniently left aside, they also attempt to say who these creatures are differently and some even attempt to say who we humans are differently. On another level I too must re-think who I am or how I want to think of myself in order to become who I need to be to do this work both now and in the future. Using words differently aids the process of thinking and living differently.

Of the names gathered many overlapped from theory to theory and some were unique to a particular strand of theory or to a particular theorist. Below is a table indicating the strand of theory, from which the alternative names stem, abbreviated for use in all tables in this chapter:

AR = Animal Rights

FCD = Feminist Care/Defense

EF = Ecofeminist

AS = Anti-Speciesist

LIB = Liberationist

PH = Posthumanist

I created these tables in order to demonstrate the overlap of naming as well as to show the unique naming that stems from each discourse. Following my methodology, I chose not to include those namings I have issue with, or those that I do not intend to employ within the theory I am building. Examples of such excluded names are “victims” (Davis 1995, 202;

Kappeller 1995, 321) which has long been problematized by feminists and, as mentioned above, those human centered terms such as “nonhuman animal.”

TABLE 1: Naming “Animal” Something Other

AR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -“Living beings” (Singer 1975, 248) -“different beings” (Singer 1975, 2) -“subject-of-a-life” (Regan 1983) -“species” (Regan 1983, xxxix) -“moral agents, patients”(Regan 1983) -“individuals”(Regan 1983, xxxix)
FCD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -“lifeforms” (Adams & Donovan 1995, 3) -“living creatures” (Donovan 2007, 309) -“anymal” (Kemmerer 2011, 39) -“embodied individuals” (Luke 1995, 296) -“absent referent” (Adams 2007, 1991, 1994)
EF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -“lifeforms” (Donovan 1993, 184) -“inhabitants on earth” (Gaard 1995, 10) “earthlings” (Gaard 2010, 658) -“people” (Gaard 2010, 652)
AS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -“inhabitants” (Dunayer 2004, 146) -“persons” (Dunayer 2004, xii) -“unique individuals” (Dunayer 2004, 99) -“sentient beings” (Dunayer 2004, 123)
LIB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -“life” (Watson 2006, 100) -“cohabitants of earth” (Best & Nocella II 2004 , 180) -“fellow passengers” (Scarce 2006, 10)
PH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -“living beings” (Derrida 2004, 63) -“general singular” (Derrida 2004, 2008) -“animot” (Derrida 2008) -“moral agents, patients, subjects” (Wolfe 2010, 58) -“fellow creatures” (Wolfe 2010, 77) -“monster” (Wolfe 2010, 9-10) -“infrahuman” (Wolfe 2003, 17) -“posthuman lifeforms” (Wolfe 2003, xii) -“lifeforms” (Haraway 2003, 31) -“knotted beings” (Haraway 2003, 5) -“significant others” (Haraway 2003, 2008) -“Companion species” (Haraway 2008, 134) -“Critters” (Haraway 2008)

To categorize and name all the creatures on this planet using one name: animals, even if in the plural, is, as Derrida once wrote, “one of the greatest and most symptomatic *asinanities* of those who call themselves humans” (2008, 41). Naming another limits the one being named but it also limits the one doing the naming because with categorization comes expectations which in turn influence one’s perspective on who said other can be. It is therefore a core element of this hybrid theory I am building to maintain a multiplicity in naming, to leave space for a name that can always change, a naming that encourages linguistic and perceptual transformation. From this theoretical stance it is possible to say “animot” (Derrida 2008) or “cohabitants of earth” (Best and Nocella II 2004, 180) or “fellow creatures” (Wolfe 2010, 77) or “individuals” (Regan 1983) or “significant others” (Haraway 2003, 2008) or “absent referents” (Adams 1991). Table 1 demonstrates a number of these possibilities; the list not being exhaustive.

It is important when maintaining open, multiple namings that context and content be kept in consideration. One must be aware, knowledgeable and acknowledging of who one is naming and of the space in which that name is spoken to insure that names are respectful and applicable to the situation. For example, if we are discussing animals that are labelled as “meat” living in factory farm conditions, the naming “absent referent”(Adams, 1991) is suitable; however naming these creatures “companion species”(Haraway, 2003 & 2008) may not be applicable considering the realities of that context.

Naming “different beings” (Singer 1975, 2) is one aspect of this hybrid theoretical paradigm; naming one’s self is another. Again, we must keep in mind that naming changes according to context. Some of the names for human beings invested in altering the human world to re-think and re-consider “anymal” (Kemmerer 2011, 39) are “caring beings” (Luke 1995, 313), “human representatives” (Kelch 2007, 232), and “human advocates” (Donovan

2007, 362). Those names that suit humans who take action to physically defend “life” (Watson 2006, 100) are “guardians” (Kelch 2007, 245), “animal defenders” (Adams 1994, 39, 61), “eco-warriors” (Scarce 2006), “vigilantes” (Watson 2006, 106), “freedom fighters” (Best & Nocella II 2004, title), and from another perspective “terrorists” (Best and Nocella II 2004, title). For what I am attempting to accomplish here, I would like to consider myself a *caring advocate* (a hybrid name) for those creatures existing under human despotism and perhaps a *thought activist* for those humans existing as tyrants over those that ought to be (re)considered as “fellow creatures”(Wolfe 2010, 77). I have chosen these two namings for myself because these are the type of person I strive to be in both the way I think and act: caring, active, thoughtful and with voice.

Each unsanctioned discourse has concepts and key terms that I have chosen for the hybrid outcome of this theoretical breakdown. Here I begin with animal rights theory and move through to end with posthumanist theory, taking time to define those concepts and give mention to those terms that become fundamental to the theory I am building here. Table 2 is a broad and always incomplete list of some of the terminology that I incorporate into the general, always growing, vocabulary of the hybrid theory I am building. What Table 2 shows is the evolution of the language used across theories and over time, from animal rights theory with its roots in the 1970’s and 1980’s, to feminist care/defence and ecofeminist theory stemming from the 1980’s and 1990’s, to anti-speciesist and liberationist theory largely written in the early 21st century, through to posthumanist theory with its strikingly different perspective and emphasis on “life forms” (Haraway 2003 & 2008; Wolfe 2003).

Much of the language crosses the theoretical boundaries outlined above, since these boundaries are permeable and not fixed. These theories evolved out of one another and

continue to evolve into alternatives for each other in this, their hybrid form. Those terms that cross theoretical boundaries are highlighted in bold to demonstrate language as a point of connection between them. Table 2.1 and 2.1 b) rearticulates and clarifies these highlighted, overlapping terms.

I do not include here terms and concepts I am not in agreement with or am critical of. My intention here is to take those that are useful to thinking differently and move away from repetitive criticisms, such as the criticisms that surrounds “animal *rights*” or those that dwell on the emotion vs. reason debate. The terms included in the tables below are not an exhaustive list since I have not read every text under each strand of theory. They are, however, those I found within the range of my study that work together to create this hybrid theory. Those in Table 1 are not repeated here.

Table 2.1: Piecing Together a Terminology

AR	FCD	...FCD	EF	AS	LIB	...LIB	PH	...PH
Interests	False dichotomy	Solidarity	Dualisms	Speciesism	Anarchy	Abolition	Compassion	Embodied
Deprivation	Respect	Human centeredness	Praxis	Experience	Care	Cooperation	Bordercrossing	communication
Equal consideration	Care	Vulnerability	Coalition building	Consideration	Responsibility	Coordination	Possibility	Response
Speciesism	Reciprocity	Pluralism	Diversity	Respect	Praxis	Communication	Impossibility	Acknowledgement
Responsibility	Taking seriously	Consciousness	Plurality	Compassion	Honesty	Coalition	Multiplicity	Nonhumanist
Respectful treatment	Anthropocent-rism	Destabilize	Voice	Sentience	Preservation	Creativity	Response Responsibility	Entangle
Respect	Relationships	Interruptions	Respect	Self-interest	Biological diversity	Experience	Obligations	Obligation
Difference	Friendships	Justice	Interdisciplinary	Emancipation	Consciousness	Awareness	Anthropomorphism	Imagine
Abolition	Positionality	Interrelationships	Responsibility	Rescue	Ecocide	Empathy	Anthropocentrism	Lifeworlds
Duty Obligation	Attentiveness	Continuity	Inclusive	Abolition	Radicals	Unlearning/ relearning	Relations	Subjectivity
Justice	Compassion	Activism	Border-crossing	Accountability	Ecology	Necessity	Intertwined	Anti-anthropo- centrism
Misconceptions	Responsibilities	Praxis	Misrepresentations	Guilt	Sabotage	Obligation	Abyssal	Complexity
Sentience	Subjectivity	Human superiority/ exceptionalism	Animalized	Vested interest	Civil disobedience	Positionality	Difference	Plurality
Autonomy	Agency	Transformation	Feminized	Utopia Sanctuary	Fluidity btw movements	Misconception	Differance	Creativity
Opportunities	Autonomy	Dialogic	Hybridity	Personhood	Decentralization	Adaptable	Respect	Undecideability
Reflective equilibrium	Possibilities	Education	Attentive listening	Action	Difference	Resistance	Radically/ infinitely other	Animalized Humanized
Possibilities	Creativity	Radical	Holistic	Holistic	Acknowledgement	Reinterpretation	Experience	Reciprocity
Revolution	Humanization	Resistance	Eco justice	Eco justice	Consequences	Affirmative action	Solidarity	De-centering
	Animalization		Reciprocity	Reciprocity	Commitment	Cohabitation	Co-constitution	Irreducibility
	Feminization		Self-critical	Self-critical	Liberation	Co-evolution	Co-constitution	Localism
	Normative		Femicide Biocide	Femicide Biocide	Rescue	Relationships	Co-evolution	Multidisciplinarity
	Diversity		Care	Care	Anonymity	Respect	Co-evolution	Transdisciplinarity
	Experience		Experience	Experience	Education	Trust	Relationships	Posthumanism
	Imagination		Context	Context	Moral community	Attention	Respect	Justice
	Sympathy Empathy		Contextualization	Contextualization	Tactics	Listening	Trust	Care
	Accountability		Personhood	Personhood	Non-violence	Disarticulation	Attention	Personhood
	Self-criticism		Compassion	Compassion	Confrontation	Vulnerability	Listening	Disarticulation
	Racism		Relation-ships	Relation-ships	Duties	Alterability	Possibilities	Vulnerability
	Ageism				Discussion	Encounter	Taking seriously	Alterability
	Sexism Speciesism				Social transformation	Flourishing	Flourishing	Encounter
	Difference					Knots	Knots	

Taking the overlapping highlighted words from table 2 above, below is a Venn diagram to demonstrate the interconnecting language between the unsanctioned discourses.

Table 2.1 b) clarifies which theories each term/concept is found within.

TABLE 2.1: Overlapping Terminology



Table 2.1: b)

AR	FCD	EF	AS	LIB	PH
Consideration			Consideration		
Responsibility	Responsibility	Responsibility		Responsibility	Responsibilities
Duty/Obligation	Accountability		Accountability	Obligation/Duties	
Respect	Respect		Respect		Respect
Difference	Difference	Diversity		Difference/Diversity	Difference
Justice	Justice	Eco-Justice			Justice
Possibilities	Possibilities				Possibilities
Revolution	Resistance	Action		Resistance	
Autonomy	Autonomy				
	Compassion		Compassion		Compassion
	Reciprocity	Reciprocity			Reciprocity
	Care	Care		Care	Care
	Praxis	Praxis		Praxis	
	Imagination				Imagine
	Creativity			Creativity	Creativity
	Experience	Experience	Experience	Experience	Experience
		Relationships			Relationships
	Taking Seriously				Taking Seriously
				Communication	Communication

These terms/concepts highlight what it takes to build relationships across difference, across boundaries, across species and across theories. Inter-species relationships begin with respect, sincerity, care and compassion that develop, through communication, into relationships of reciprocity, accountability, and consideration. The relationships that this language envisions open up multiple possibilities, require creativity and imagination, expand one's experiential boundaries, and are relationships of resistance that strive for justice.

Drawing on some of the key words from above, the theory I am building challenges *anthropocentrism*, *human exceptionalism*, *false dichotomies* and *misconceptions*. It demonstrates *care* and *respect* and *takes seriously different life forms* in all their *diversity*. This is a theory that takes on the *responsibility* to strive for *justice* and develop *reciprocal relationships* and does so using *imagination* and *creativity*. This is a theory that is based in *experience*, a theory that is *compassionate*, one that focuses on *praxis* and, because of this, is *radically revolutionary*.

The conceptual repertoire of the theory I am building is always expanding. Each concept enables me, or any other who chooses to embrace a similar paradigm, to conceptualize this world and any encounters with individuals differently. Having a conceptual tool box that has space to grow enables a fluid and shifting way of thinking and knowing that encourages personal growth as well. This hybrid theory thrives on the diverse possibilities that emanate from alternative conceptualizations.

Each unsanctioned discourse contributes terms and concepts creating a hybrid form of theory applicable for a diversity of future research topics. The theory I am building enables me to do research in a number of areas including, for example, delving into the personal relationships humans share with critters. Here the obvious point of departure would be the vocabulary lent to the theory I am building by posthumanism, especially by Haraway

(see Table 2, PH section). If investigating environmental connections to animal industries the eco-feminist terminology would be a place from which to start (see Table 2, EF section).

I may choose to *start* here, that is with the unsanctioned discourse that makes sense to the research question being asked; however, my hybrid model will offer me other avenues to explore, additional ways and concepts from which to approach the research question at hand. For example, to return to the research on inter-species relationships from Haraway, and her concepts of “significant otherness,” “companion species,” and “encounter value,” I could shift to Wolfe and his idea of “sympathetic imagining” to rethink, or re-imagine, what it is to be in these relationship from another perspective. To shift out of a posthumanist perspective I could take Dunayer’s definitions of speciesist, old speciesist and nonspeciesist to reflect on how these relationships are being approached and consider how they have impacted the identities of those in them, using Gaard’s concept of “relational identity” as a means to understand and accept that we become together.

Table 3 (below) takes some of the key terms and concepts outlined in the above tables, and offers meanings for the words via definitions and explanations. The concepts listed and defined in Table 3 come from different contexts and theories and make up the conceptual toolbox of the theory I am building. I chose concepts that I thought would be most applicable to a wide variety of future research and to a shifting perspective and outlook on life. The majority of the definitions or explanations come from the texts themselves; however in certain cases I have opted to contribute to the definition in order for the concept to better suit the hybrid theory being constructed here.

TABLE 3: Concepts and Definitions

CONCEPT	THEORY/ THEORIST	DEFINITION/EXPLANTION /EXAMPLE
Boycott	AR-Singer	“To engage in a concerted refusal to have dealings with (as a person, store, or organization) usually to express disapproval or to force acceptance of certain conditions” (Merriam-Webster’s 10 th ed.2000, 137). “Vegetarianism” is a “permanent” boycott of meat and “other products of animal factories” or industries (Singer 1975, 162).
Inherent Value	AR-Regan	“Inherent value is not reducible to the intrinsic values of an individual’s experiences” (Regan 1983, 235). It is a “categorical concept” meaning “one either has it or one does not” (Regan 1983, 240). “All those who have inherent value have it equally” (Regan 1983, xxii, 240,263) and those who have it are not means to an end but “ends in themselves” (Regan 1983, 239).
Subject-of-a Life	AR- Regan	“Individuals are <i>subjects-of-a-life</i> if they have [any of the below:] beliefs and desires; perception, memory, and a sense of the future, including their own future; an emotional life together with feelings of pleasure and pain; preference- and welfare-interests; the ability to initiate action in pursuit of their desires and goals; a psychophysical identity over time; and an individual welfare in the sense that their experiential life fares well or ill for them, logically independently of their utility for others and logically independently of their being the object of anyone else’s interests.” Subjects-of-a-life have “inherent value- and are not to be viewed or treated as mere receptacles” (Regan 1983, 243) or resources.
Body-mediated knowledge	FCD-Adams	A way of knowing that is rooted in bodily experience (Adams 1990, ch.8). A way of knowing that acknowledges lived experience and the diversity of knowledge created and obtained from these experiences. As Dunayer notes: “Other animals have other ways of knowing” (1995, 23). This is because each of us experiences the world from ourselves; our bodies impact the ways we experience and know.

Interconnected, Intersecting, Interlocking, Mutually Reinforcing Oppressions	FCD- Adams FCD- Kappeler FCD-Donovan FCD-Kemmerer EF- Gaard	A way of understanding oppression that focuses on connections between oppressions and oppressive consequences. It acknowledges that oppressions are not easily divisible and often intersect and reinforce each other, meaning they are complex and interwoven (Kappeler 1995, 323-324). Examples of this is the animalization of women, the bestialization of people of color, and the feminization, sexualisation and bestialization of animals (Adams 2010, 304). This necessitates “an interdisciplinary field of inquiry” (Gaard 1993, vii) and solidarity across movements.
Linguistic Abuse	FCD-Antonio	The use of language as a means to misrepresent and/or fabricate a misconception of another that can lead to real life consequences for said other. Ex. Wolves- “the big bad wolf” (Antonio 1995, 219-221)
Absent Referent	FCD-Adams	“The absent referent is that which separates the meat eater from the other animal and that animal from the end product” (Adams 2007, 23). In other words “animals are absent referents in meat eating” (Adams 2010, 303).
Mass Term	FCD-Adams	“Objects referred to as mass terms have no individuality, no uniqueness, no specificity, no particularity” (Adams 2007, 23). It works as a “distancing device” that enables “dissociation” from those that the mass term works to erase (Adams 1994, 27-28). Example: “meat” (Adams 2007, 23-24)
Sympathetic Understanding	FCD- Shapiro	A way of attempting to understand the realities of another using one’s imagination of and fellow feeling for another. (Donovan 2007, 177).
Intersubjectivity	FCD- Adams (Neither Man Nor Beast, 1994)	Intersubjectivity is the refusal to abide by the subject/object dichotomy by refusing to objectify another in order to be(come) subject. It involves acknowledging that the “object” can look back as subject (Kappeler in Adams 1994, ch.2)
De-humanization/ De- animalization	FCD- Adams	Viewing humans as less than human, as “animals” (via “animalizing”- Adams 1994, 76). Viewing animals as less than animals, as “meat”. This process involves the non- acknowledgment of individuality, relationality, and/or sociality; it involves decontextualization. (Adams 1994, 57-58).

Re-membering	FCD- Adams	Re-membering is the “acknowledgement of the structure of the absent referent”, the making present of who was absent by writing or speaking “the vegetarian word” (Adams 1990, 143-148). Animals are dis-membered in multiple ways, literally via slaughter and butchering and symbolically by being considered lesser-than-human as members of this world. In order to re-member these creatures they must be acknowledged for who they are and what they face. One way of re-membering those dis-membered and forgotten is to express the realities so many creatures face by writing or speaking the “vegetarian word;” bringing those made absent into the present and into immediate existence.
Relational Identity	EF-Gaard	“A feminist relational identity is developed in conjunction with connections not just to humans but also to place, plants, and species alike” (Gaard 2010, 653). Our identities rely on our surrounding relationships for development. We are nothing without the “others”.
Localism	EF- Gaard PH-Wolfe	Localism is seeing opportunity within ones community. It is striving towards creating and providing what we need as a community, from food to education, on a local level, which, in turn, supports the local economy, giving back and investing in the community we live in (www.localism.co).
Somatophobia	EF- Adams	“Hostility to the body” that is “symptomatic of sexism, racism, classism, and speciesism” (Adams 1994, 145). “One could argue that environmental abuse is a form of somatophobia, that abuse of the earth is an expression of the hatred of the earth’s body” (Adams 1994, 157).
New Speciesist, Old Speciesist, Nonspeciesist	AS- Dunayer	“New-speciesists advocate rights for only some nonhumans, those whose thoughts and behaviour seem most human-like.” They “accord greater moral consideration and stronger basic rights to humans than to any other animals. [And] they see animalkind as a hierarchy with humans at the top. In their view, ‘some animals are more equal than others’” (Dunayer 2004, 77, 98). “New-speciesist law would accord legal rights to only some nonhumans, based on their apparent similarities to humans. Relatively few nonhumans would become legal persons (rights-holders)” (Dunayer 2004, 99). “Old-speciesist advocacy includes appeals to human self-interest, language that trivializes or legitimizes abuse of nonhumans, and ‘welfarism,’ which seeks to modify, rather than end,...speciesist

		<p>exploitation” (Dunayer 2004, 51).</p> <p>A Nonspeciesist approach to advocacy is abolitionist, promotes boycotts, veganism, direct rescue and sanctuary for animals (Dunayer 2004, 151-152) while advocating rights and calling “for an end to enslavement and slaughter” (Dunayer 2004, 157).</p>
Direct Action	LIB-Best & Nocella II	<p>“Direct action includes only activist tactics that, like boycotts and sabotage, are intended to have immediate impact on a problem or its causes.” It “is best understood by example.” Examples of direct actions for animals are interfering with hunts, providing “sanctuary to escaped and rescued animals” and destroying property or blocking entrances to interfere with the animal industry’s business as usual (Jones in Best and Nocella II 2004, 137-138).</p>
Critical Pedagogy/Critical Compassion	LIB- Nocella II	<p>“Critical pedagogy...is that form of education which emerges from critical compassion; a transcendence of the emotional and the intellectual; the heart and mind learn to see and know in new ways” (Ledwith quoted by Nocella II 2004, 198). It involves becoming aware of “one’s own position on an issue” in order to understand from alternative perspectives and lenses. It is to fully <i>experience</i> understanding. (Nocella II 2004, 198).</p>
Animot	PH- Derrida	<p>“Ecce Animot. Neither a species nor a gender nor an individual, it is an irreducible living multiplicity of mortals” (Derrida 2008, 41).</p>
Carnophallogocentrism	PH- Derrida	<p>Logocentrism is the philosophical belief in or pursuit of “the undestructible origin of meaning of being, the rationality of thought, the absolute interiority of truth” (Lucy 2004, 71). Adding the phallo “designates that operation by which logocentrism constructs binary, hierarchical categories whose dominant terms are marked as masculine and whose masculine terms are marked as dominant” (Feder et al. 1997, 47). And adding the carno acknowledges that: “We are all mixed up in an eating of flesh—real or symbolic.” Adding “the prefix carno- (flesh)” we get “carnophallogocentrism” which means “we are all—vegetarians as well—carnivores in the symbolic sense” when we are creating meaning via the consumption (or construction) of the “other” (Derrida 1990, www.e-flux.com).</p>
General Singular	PH- Derrida	<p>There are two general singulars “the animal (l’animot) and the ‘I’” (Derrida 2008, 50). It speaks in the</p>

		singular of something that in general exists in the plural. “The animal” is a general singular because it is said “as if there were only one, and of just one species” (Derrida & Roudinesco 2004, 159) when the very opposite is the reality.
Nature cultures	PH- Haraway	Nature cultures are the places where human cultures and history meet those of nature and animals forming nature cultural contact zones of co-habitation (Haraway 2008, 6-7; Haraway 2003, 82).
Companion Species	PH- Haraway	“Companion species is a permanently undecidable category, a category-in-question that insists on the relation as the smallest unit of being and of analysis” (Haraway 2008, 165). Humans are companion species just as much as dogs are companion species.
Infantilization	PH- Haraway	Infantilization is the “misidentification” of adult companion species as “babies.” It involves treating adult animals as humanized infants (Haraway 2003, 95-96).
Contact Zones	PH-Haraway	Contact zones consist of the spaces and places we make communicative contact with another different from ourselves. Contact zones are often discussed in colonial and postcolonial contexts (Haraway 2008, 216) where humans are those making contact with other humans on colonized territory between colonizers and colonized. Contact zones here is extended to include cross species encounters; the places where different species meet and attempt to communicate (Haraway 2008, 217). For example, a dog and a human’s contact zone may be inside a house/apartment or outside in a park or forest. Each contact zone requires different behaviour and results in different communications. Histories of domestication (Haraway 2008, 207-208) and the realities of colonization both impact the potential relations within specific contact zones.
Encounter Value	PH-Haraway	Beyond use value and exchange value there is encounter value: “Trans-species encounter value is about relationships among a motley array of lively beings, in which commerce and consciousness, evolution and bioengineering, and ethics and utilities are all in play” (Haraway 2008, 46).
Monster	PH- Wolfe	A monster has “a hybrid status”, is a “category mistake” and is therefore often an “[object] of alarm” (Wolfe 2003, 107). “The monster represents disorder, confusion of identity, social havoc” the function of which is normally, within fiction, to “secure, as inverse image of his own pure otherness,

		the wishful coherence and purity of the humanist social and ideological order”(Wolfe 2003, 108). It can also be used to destabilize and make insecure, to raise questions about, what is perceived as the non-monster.
Sympathetic Imagining/ Sentimental Education	PH- Wolfe	Sympathetic imagining is a central tool to sentimental education; it involves “imagining the lives of animals [to make] them real to us in a primary way, as potential subjects of justice (355).” This stirs “in us identifications, empathetic responses, and projections that may then be readily formalized in analytical propositions (411)” (Nussbaum in Wolfe 2010, 178-179).

Interconnections and Feminist Deconstructive Questions

As Tables 2, 2.1 and 2.1 b) show there are many interconnections across the unsanctioned discourses. Language as “a tool for oppression and [/or] a resource for liberation” (Kemmerer 2011, 40) is one overarching theme the unsanctioned share. This was established in Section 1.3, and re-established in this chapter via the focus on terminology and concepts. Other interconnecting themes are expanded on here, arrived at through a feminist deconstructive questioning of each theoretical strand.

Working with theory involves working with the texts not only to find but also to create meaning. Each text deserves a critical and “affirmative” (Derrida 2004, 154) review as a way of interrogating the words and ideas that become part of the theory I am building. There are a number of questions important to ask through the lens I began this project with, a feminist deconstructive lens, discussed in chapter 2 and in section 5.1. These questions, aimed towards the unsanctioned discourses, are responded to here.

i) *Are attempts made to question or explode the human/animal binary?*

If it is not the intention of the text to necessarily *explode* the human/animal binary, it is the intention of each text to challenge this binary as it was at the time of the writing constructed. Some texts, Regan (2004) and Singer (2002) most notably, work to question and redefine what one side of this dichotomy means (i.e. what is animal). Animal rights theory works to re-define the animal in relation to the human; however in doing so both Singer and Regan, perhaps unwittingly, reinforce the dichotomy they insist they are questioning by maintaining human as the basis of comparison and by advocating for rights for animals who

most resemble/imitate humans. The other side of the human/animal divide is left wholly uninterrogated; “human” remains the norm by which other creatures are judged.

Other texts work to bring these two binary categories into alternative relationships with one another, challenging the clear cut divide between them and creating more complex intersecting relationships by considering other binaries and challenging the assumptions ingrained within dichotomous relationships. Feminist care/ defense theory and ecofeminism analyze gender, race, nature, age, sexuality and more as they intersect with both sides of the human/ animal dichotomy in their interrogation of the relationships and connections between animals and women (Adams & Donovan 1995). Ecofeminism and feminist care/defense further complicate the human/animal divide by obscuring and multiplying the identities available to those on either side of the man/woman, culture/nature, white/black, and other binaries, blurring the apparent clarity of these dualities. These two unsanctioned discourses together interrogate the feminization of animals, the animalization of women, the animalization of other-than-white people, the feminization of nature (i.e. “mother earth”) (Gaard 1993, 5) as well as the bestialization of animals and people of color (Adams 1994, 81). If not successful at exploding the human/animal binary, or any other binaries for that matter, these feminisms have pushed their boundaries and expanded their limits by acknowledging differences, connections, and complexities that result in structurally significant alterations to how these binaries are constructed. For example, human is no longer perceived as a general singular but as raced, classed, gendered, and impacted by speciesism as it intertwines with all of these aspects of human identity.

Dunayer, advocating for an anti-speciesist theory, labels Singer and Regan as “new speciesists” in that they maintain a hierarchy where humans are at the top, “requiring that nonhumans demonstrate human-like traits” and “ranking nonhumans accordingly” (2004,

98,110-111). In criticizing this stance, Dunayer instates a human/nonhuman dichotomy in place of the human/animal dichotomy. Dunayer challenges the relationships that stem from the human/nonhuman divide advocating for non-speciesist advocacy (2004, 151-152) but fails to see that the non*human* relies on the human for definition, further solidifying the divide between “us” and “them” and maintaining human centrism. Interpreted otherwise, this reinforcement of the divide may have been Dunayer’s intention in order to highlight that animals need not be like humans, but the opposite or very other than human, to be accorded with respect and allowed to live their lives without human interference. Dunayer, however, does not indicate her reasoning for this choice of term.

Liberationism similarly *appears* to leave the human/animal divide unchanged. Being liberators of animals may be interpreted as a means to maintain this divide, whereby humans are always in control and therefore superior to animals, whether as oppressors, consumers, or liberators. However, direct actions taken by liberationists may also be interpreted as a means to shift human outside the boundaries of this dichotomy and into different relationships with animals that do not rely on power over but perhaps on power together. The powerlessness of the animals that these actions are inspired by, actions through which these creatures in some instances, depending on post-liberation circumstances, gain more control (power) over their own lives, are mirrored in the powerlessness often felt by animal rights and liberation activists in their everyday life as they struggle to take on the powerful institution of speciesism. Taking action opens up alternative possibilities for those involved. If interpreted in this way, taking action can be a means of challenging the “human” side of the human/animal dichotomy, a realization that we must work with each other, not as superior to each other, in order to better all of our lives. Having “masked” vigilantes also

challenges the gendered aspects of such a divide (Keith, 2006). Anyone can be a liberator when anonymity affords them that courage.

Posthumanist theory aims to de-center, de-stabilize, complicate and “disarticulate” dichotomous relationships (Wolfe 2010, 60) resulting in a “radical reinterpretation” (Derrida 2008, 160) of the human and the animal as well as what divides them. Posthumanism not only works to explode this and other dichotomies but to implode them by removing what divides them. An example of this is Haraway’s “nature cultures” (2008, 82), which combines two sides of a dichotomous relationship with the result of changing how we conceptualize both nature and culture and pushes us to think anew. “Posthuman” as a term itself shifts human out of centre and requires us to rethink our entire existence as anthropocentric humans on the human side of the human/animal divide; “animot” (Derrida 2008, 41,57) alters what “animal” is and opens up possibilities for who animals can be, enabling animals to be multiple.

In each of the unsanctioned discourses discussed here, attempts are made to question and explode the human/animal dichotomy. However, much work remains to be done. Elements of the human/animal dichotomy remain entrenched in many layers of what we call life. The theory I am building attempts to disengage this dichotomy beginning with its influence in language. It is one step to explode binaries theoretically and quite another to do so in our everyday life.

ii) *Is there a context disclosed within the text, situating the text?*

Each text has a context whether it be explicitly stated, hinted at, or reflected in the year of publication. Singer’s book *Animal Liberation* is said to be the beginning of the animal rights movement, as it is known today (2002, back cover). First published in the 1970’s, it came into existence at a time when many of the issues animals faced were largely going

unnoticed or unacknowledged. It was a time when factory farming was on the rise and “the family farm” was beginning its slow decline. It is from the ignorance surrounding the realities animals are encountering that speciesism is perpetuated (Singer 2002, 217). It is in this context, of ignorance surrounding the lives animals live, that Singer chose to tackle ignorance.

Regan (2004) responded to Singer, as did many theorists within feminist care/defense theory and ecofeminism. They responded from another time and context addressing issues relevant to those circumstances, challenging, for example, Singer’s utilitarianism (Regan 2004) and the animal rights approach itself which “nullifies differences by arguing similarities,” which ignores “interdependence” and connections, and which discounts emotion and embraces universalizable rules (Donovan & Adams 2007, 5-6). Many feminist and ecofeminist works come out of specific contexts of personal experiences and relationships such as, for example, women working in and with science (Birke 1995, 32-54).

For liberationist theory, context is important on another level because it shifts perspectives and definitions that can ultimately impact the law and alter the ways in which direct actions can be taken. For example, post 9-11 the term “terrorist” shifted to incorporate a diverse group of people who advocate for social justice, often defined as “domestic terrorists” in Best and Nocella II’s text where a “post-911” context (2004, 9-10) is declared. Context influences the meanings of certain labels but also the realities and consequences of certain actions.

Claiming one’s context is important to the theory I am building. Context refers to both the personal, micro level, situation and perspective each individual brings with them, and the macro level environment within which we exist. Haraway offers such an example of acknowledging context. Haraway writes from her experiences, announcing her relationships

with others who influence her work, like most feminist work demands. However, Haraway takes this process of contextualization further by connecting herself and her relations to the “expropriated Native land” (2008, 16) upon which she and these relationships persist.

Although Haraway acknowledges this context, she does not thoroughly integrate it into her analysis. This is a further and crucial step that ought to be taken.

Most of the unsanctioned discourses offered a context in some form whether it was disciplinary, such as Regan and Singer’s *philosophical* work; experiential; a feminist situating, or interconnected, such as that Haraway laid out, encompassing the place, history and relationships that surround one’s writing. It is in Haraway’s footsteps that this theory I am building follows. Integrating one’s context into the work being done requires a historical understanding of where the place the work takes place. It also requires the explicit recognition of one’s own limitations in terms of both understanding and aptitude in that understanding. For instance, acknowledging that the work being done is within the context of expropriated Native land is crucial, however, it must also be made explicit that, although I recognize this, I am not entirely versed in what this means for and how this interconnects with people of all genders, or different species for example. I can only attempt to understand from my own positionality. Acknowledging one’s context within the text rather than leaving the reader guessing and reading a text out of context is important for both understanding the intended meaning of the text and for making meaning with the text.

iii) *Is space left for the making of multiple meanings, ways of understanding and knowing? Does the text encourage endless expansion or theory as process?*

Theory by definition involves thought and thought is not something that necessarily stops once a theory is established. By each of these texts existing as theory that is being re-

interpreted and re-appropriated for the purposes of my project they exist in process. Some are more open to this process than others.

Regan (2004) and Singer (2002) for instance give prerogative to theoretical principles that are to be applied universally. This stunts their theoretical texts and does not work to encourage ongoing development. The remainder of the unsanctioned discourses however encourage imagination, creativity, and possibilities (see tables 2, 2.1 and 2.1 b)), including the impossible. Multiple meanings are not only acceptable but are encouraged to be created rather than maintaining strict universal rules; alternative ways of knowing are incited, which in turn inspires endless expansion of how we can see and understand the world through these theoretical lenses. This, as opposed to universal and general tenets, keeps theory in process.

Feminist care/defense and ecofeminism encourage incorporating experience into theory, creating “body-mediated knowledge” and lived theory (Adams 1990; Dunayer 1995), which by definition requires theory to exist in process as life and experience is ongoing. Feminist care/defense and ecofeminism, as well as posthumanism, also encourage interdisciplinarity or transdisciplinarity, which multiplies places for theory to venture and by doing so encourages possibilities for theories to change accordingly. Liberation theory recognizes that “[o]ngoing unlearning and relearning” (Jones 2004, 150 in Best and Nocella II) is a key process that keeps theory in motion.

iv) *Does the author attempt to make the text accessible through language, style, diversity of examples, etcetera?*

Accessibility has many meanings and is indefinitely limited. For the purposes of this project, accessibility means making academic work accessible to a non-academic audience.

One common element of Feminist Care/Defense theory, Ecofeminist theory and Liberationist theory is the very structure of some of the texts themselves, such as Adams and Donovan's *Animals and Women* (1995), Donovan and Adams' *Feminist Care Traditions in Animal Ethics* (2007), Gaard's *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature* (1993), Best and Nocella II's *Terrorists or Freedom Fighters?* (2004) and Scarce's *Eco-Warriors* (2006), which are all compilations. This format allows for a diversity of topics and voices to be included in a single volume, which can and I believe does, in these instances, create a more accessible text. This accessibility stems from the pieces written by multiple authors in multiple styles, which may function to attract a multiplicity of different readers and create a more readable text in light of their stylistic range.

On the other hand, many of the texts are single authored. Regan and Singer write philosophically, which can be difficult at times to digest because of the difficulty of the language and long winded arguments. However, they do employ a diversity of examples to forward their arguments and employ situational arguments, such as "lifeboat" scenarios (i.e. "if you were on a lifeboat and you could only save one being would you save? a) the human or b) the animal?"), to include the reader in the text. Adams in *The Sexual Politics of Meat* (1991) and *Neither Man nor Beast* (1994), covers a diversity of topics, sites numerous examples and uses language, and sometimes image, that make the text's content easily accessible. Liberationist theory (Scarce 2006; Best and Nocella II 2004) and Joan Dunayer's *Speciesism* (2004) employ straight-forward language, getting the reader to the point without complicating the text with academic jargon.

The least accessible of the unsanctioned discourses would appear to be posthumanist theory. The language in these texts (Haraway 2003, 2008; Wolfe 2003, 2010; Derrida 2008) is thoroughly academic and theoretical and so more inaccessible. Haraway,

however, does employ scenarios/stories that can function as a means to fabricate ease of access to the texts but the language outside of these narratives is very complex. This is not to say that this is necessarily negative. The ideas posthumanist theorists are exploring, although complex, are very important. They work to challenge the humanist's entire way of thinking which is a bold endeavour and bound to be difficult for most humans, as humanists, to understand. As these theories pass through a multiplicity of readers with different re-interpretations and explanations, these ideas will become more accessible. Therefore, the accessibility of these theorists is in process; posthumanism requires discussion and re-articulations to become more accessible.

The theory I am building will allow me to create texts that are accessible, written in language that is comprehensible and elaborating on terms and concepts that at first may appear unclear. Although there are always limits to accessibility, it is my intention to bring these unsanctioned discourses forward, put them together differently and put them out into the world for whoever may want to read or see them. Examples, scenarios, and imagery are all tools that can improve accessibility. Alternative copies, such as the zine format of this theory I am building (see chapter 6 and appendix A), are a means of creating accessible versions of academic texts. What is the point of writing a text if no one can read it? Or if only those who are privileged enough to understand it can access it? It is crucial to make a text accessible to a wide array of readers if raising awareness is a part of the goal.

v) *Are there suggestions for possible forms of actions/praxis to help move the reader beyond the text?*

Vegetarianism/veganism is one form of praxis encouraged across the unsanctioned discourses. There are also other ways to practice theory, such as direct action tactics embraced by liberationist theorists (Best and Nocella II, 2004) or writing alternative animal inclusive narratives promoted by feminist care/defense theory (Vance 1995) in particular.

Beyond this, there is the consciousness raising and awareness promotion that is central to theory as practice. However, veganism/vegetarianism as a form of praxis is a theme that permeates all six strands of the unsanctioned discourses and is critical to the theory I am building, critical in my sense of its importance and critical in the sense that it is a thoughtful and analytical stance to hold.

A vegan is defined by the Merriam-Webster's Dictionary as "a strict vegetarian who consumes no animal food or dairy products; [or] one who abstains from using animal products" (2000, 1304). Veganism, often referred to in older texts as vegetarianism, is a boycott of products that are animals or contain animal parts/ingredients and, arguably, is an entire way of life. Veganism, in the theory I am building, not only challenges a carnivorous diet in a flesh consuming culture but also challenges other forms of consumption that unnecessarily or inconsiderately devour living beings. These forms of consumption range from what we eat, wear, the products we rely on for our skin care, the medicine we are prescribed as well as the entertainment we visually consume. Veganism is critical of those industries that thrive off the incarceration, suffering and death of irreducible creatures en masse, for example the animal agricultural industry and animal experimentation, but also pay heed to those industries that have disastrous effects on the environment and result in the suffering and death of many creatures, such as deforestation which destroys habitats and those existing within these habitats.

Veganism is more than a "lifestyle," it is a way of life. By this I mean that veganism is not, for me nor for the theorists of the unsanctioned discourses, part of a "healthy" lifestyle, which I would consider a bourgeois understanding of veganism because the central theme of that type of veganism is the "me." Veganism is a way of living every aspect of one's life as a being considerate of other-than-human animals, which leaves one open to possibilities. As

Adams notes, “the word vegan explicitly incorporates concern for all [animal beings]” and is a “stance based on compassion” (Adams, 1990, 113). It involves the use of our “imagination” (Adams 1990, 232) to conceive of a world without such slaughter and disrespect.

When Regan speaks of veganism, he speaks of it as “morally obligatory” (2004, 351) with the “total dissolution of commercial animal agriculture” as the purpose behind it (2004, 351). In his argument, Regan makes it clear that the utilitarian rationale of Singer, the greatest good for the greatest number, relies too heavily on the numbers of animals and the amount of suffering rather than on individual beings’ inherent worth. Singer stands behind the “sheer numbers” of animals killed and made to suffer in order to become food for humans, using them as proof of the great suffering that animal industries endorse, advocating for veganism because it causes less suffering (2002, 95, 175-176). He understands veganism as “a form of boycott” (2002, 162). Veganism in animal rights theory comes from rational calculation and philosophical argumentation.

In feminist care/defense theory, veganism is contextual and “comes from within us” as a result of women’s ability to empathize (Gruen 2007, 339). For Adams, this ability to empathize stems from the “association between attractive human female bodies and delectable, attractive flesh,” a connection that makes both human females and animals consumable from a male and human-centered lens (1994, 30-31). This connection between women and animals runs deep. There is the double exploitation of female animals for their reproductive abilities and for their bodies, similar to the “double shift” worked by women in the workplace, and then, unpaid at home. As another illustration of these deep interconnections, Adams investigates that between animal abuse and the abuse of women in the form of “domestic violence” where the lives of animals are threatened or taken as a

means to assert control by an abusive partner (1996, ch.3). Veganism is a “rebellion against male structures. It resists the structure of the absent referent, which renders both women and animals as objects” (Adams 1990, 217).

Ecofeminist theory also embraces a contextual veganism with the understanding that veganism is not always possible in certain situations or environments. If veganism is not possible, ecofeminists advocate for a “compassionate attitude” to take its place (Curtin 2007, 98), an attitude that considers the feelings of other living beings making, for example, death quick and as painless as possible and only killing if it is necessary for survival. Praxis and making connections are at the core of ecofeminist theory (Gaard 1993, 3), and veganism is praxis (Adams 1994, 88-89) that challenges both the environmental degradation and the appalling treatment of creatures that results from animal industries (Adams 1994, 130-131).

Dunayer, an anti-speciesist theorist, believes that “except under extraordinary circumstances, humans don’t need to eat any food” from animal beings (Dunayer2004, 53). This is a more hard lined abolitionist (Dunayer 2004, 151-152) stance on veganism that acknowledges that “the problem is the whole system” not just the method of slaughter (Dunayer 2004, 63). Liberationist theory is focused on the liberation of animals imprisoned within the animal industrial complex, which involves direct action as praxis. Direct action involves diverse tactics (see chapter 4, section 4.6 for discussion), and adopting “a cruelty-free way of life” is encouraged (Spira 2006, 127).

Posthumanism regards veganism from a different perspective than the other five unsanctioned discourses discussed here. Derrida for one does not “believe in absolute ‘vegetarianism,’ nor in the ethical purity of its intentions nor even that it is rigorously tenable, without a compromise or without a substitution. [Derrida] would go as far to claim that, in a more or less refined, subtle, sublime form, a certain cannibalism remains unsurpassable”

(Derrida 2004, 67). By this I think he is indicating that meat eating, or the consumption of the animal other in one way or another, is something we cannot entirely escape. He acknowledges that animals suffer because “we feel it ourselves” (Derrida 2004, 70), not only what it is to suffer but also empathetically or sympathetically if we watch another animal suffering.

Derrida believes that there is a need to “reduce” or “limit” the violence done to animals and that we cannot “continue to treat animals as we do today” even “if only because of the image of man that it reflects back to him” (Derrida 2004, 73). Derrida does not wholly stand behind veganism because he believes “forms of ecologism or vegetarianism are *insufficient* to bring [this violence against animals] to an end.” He does, however, admit that these forms of veganism and ecologism are “more worthy...than what they oppose” (Derrida 2008, 101 –emphasis mine).

Haraway claims that “vegetarianism, veganism, and opposition to sentient animal experimentation can be powerful feminist positions” but are not “Feminist Doxa” (Haraway 2008, 80). According to Haraway, it is “making beings killable” that is the root of the issue; if we must kill it ought to be done responsibly and we ought to be able to respond, or give an adequate rationale, for our killing (Haraway 2008, 80). I think what Haraway is expressing here is that killing, especially of specific “killable” creatures such as chickens, cows, rodents, “pests,” etc, is done without consideration of those beings killed and without having to account for one’s actions, which is problematic in that it enables humans to kill en masse without being held accountable, whether legally or personally, for what is ultimately murder when done unnecessarily. Haraway states that “eating means also killing, directly or indirectly, and killing well is an obligation akin to eating well. This applies to vegans as much as to a human carnivore” (Haraway 2008, 296). If we must consider the other whom we

consume, whether plant or animal, the ways in which we kill, and in which life forms die, would drastically change, altering the human/animal, and plant, divide while also altering our relationships to each other.

I would argue that Derrida's thoughts about veganism seem human centric and support welfare or reform rather than revolution. If he is advocating veganism, it is because humans feel like animals feel, because we are all sentient and because the *image* of ourselves treating animals the way the animal industrial complex does is appalling and perhaps disastrous to us, humans. I want to attempt to shift away from a human centered viewpoint, a step, which for the purposes of my thesis, incorporates and considers animal others and only begins to contemplate other-than-animal life forms, such as insects, plants, bacteria, etc. Haraway focuses on the animal industrial complex's creation of killable beings; to this I would add that it is the making of animals as *consumable* beings, a consumption that vegans avoid, that permits the creation of killable beings in the first place. By this I mean, we kill to consume and we create animals as consumable before they are killed, therefore these two, consumable and killable, go hand in hand and ought to be considered together, in relationship to one another. So although it is vital that my theory adopts a vegan stance in the capitalist consumerist context within which it exists, and although Derrida and Haraway abstain from fully adopting veganism into their posthumanism, I still include what Derrida and Haraway offer. I do so to retain a diversity of opinion and to add some tension to the theory I am building that may potentially propel this theory onward by encouraging discussion and debate. According to all the unsanctioned discourses then it is crucial that we be vegan or acknowledge veganism as resistance to the animal industrial complex. For this theory I am building, it is critical that we be vegan and that we remain critical of our veganism. This will ensure that we do not become complacent within our veganism and that

we continue to expand what and who our veganism encompasses, while also acknowledging that there is always more work to be done to dismantle a Euro-, anthropocentric, capitalist, colonial dominant discourse.

In chapter 7, the concluding chapter, I piece together the hybrid theory I am building from the above discussed namings, concepts, and questioning of the unsanctioned discourses. A key aspect of this theory, however, is praxis; before I move on to my concluding thoughts I must first deliberate on a key piece of this thesis: a zine alternative to the academic thesis (appendix a). In the following chapter I touch on the importance of the zine to my thesis, discuss what a zine is and consider its contents, process, and dissemination.

CHAPTER SIX: AN ALTERNATIVE TO ACADEMIA

Section 6.1

What is a Zine?

A zine is a self-published magazine. According to Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, a zine is "a noncommercial often homemade or online publication usually devoted to specialized and often unconventional subject matter" i.e. "a punk *zine*" or "a feminist *zine*" (www.merriam-webster.com, 2013). Zines can be said to have historically stemmed from what "pamphleteers," such as civil rights advocates and social justice activists, self-published (pamphlets) to spread information and raise awareness (ZineWiki, 2014). The zine however has been used for spreading a diversity of interests, punk, and the 'do it yourself' (D.I.Y) ethic being among them (ZineWiki, 2014). Now a days a comparison might be made between a blog and a zine because both can be written by individuals who have varying levels of expertise in, or experience with, the subject matter about which they choose to write or "blog." These outlets enable people who are non-professionals to discuss issues important to them and to have, at least on some level, their voices heard. Just about anyone can create a zine or a blog. As part of my thesis I have chosen to create a zine.¹⁰

Zines come in many formats and span many topics, sometimes in numerous issues. I spent a lot of time restoring zines while volunteering at an alternative library in Peterborough, Ontario. Zines still often stem from the D.I.Y ethic, offering knowledge gained from experience, sharing stories as well as skills from sewing to gardening to cooking to building, all the way to reviews discussing music genres, bands, books, or other zines.

¹⁰ See appendix A for the word version of the zine.

They are often creative works with an artistic touch whether they are poetically written, drawn as a comic book, use images or are literally stitched together.

Zines commonly come with a political undertone and played a crucial part in making the personal political during the riot grrrl days – a feminist underground punk movement that “confronted music scene sexism... and upheld the anti-consumer do-it-yourself ethic of punk” beginning in the 1990’s (British Library, 2014). Zines are made to be accessible. They are sold cheap, traded, given away for free and are often photocopied with the intention of being redistributed. Although zines may have been largely usurped by the blog, zines are still relevant today as an alternative way of sharing knowledge and expressing oneself and even as an alternative to the blog. In fact, zine libraries and zine fairs still persist.

Zines offer a space to voice alternative and controversial issues that, unlike a blog or the use of the internet more generally, cannot as easily be tracked or traced. Because of the topic of this thesis, creating a zine alternative over a blog was a crucial consideration. The animal rights and liberation movements, organizations, advocates and activists have been labelled and targeted as terrorist post-9-11 (Best and Nocella II 2004, 9-11) so although my name will be affiliated with this thesis, those who wish to learn more about the theory I am forwarding can do so by accessing it in a zine library or through person to person dissemination, without necessarily being connected to the potential consequences of searching a blog with the words vegan, eco, feminist and posthumanist in the title and animal liberation as the subject.

Beyond these reasons, I chose to do a zine because I am familiar and comfortable with creating zines. I have produced zines in the past and thoroughly enjoy the hands on, cut and paste, crafty and creative process this entails. The format of a zine also suited my thesis because a zine is a work that is pieced together, glued together, and/or stitched together. The

method of creating a zine reflected the process that resulted in the hybrid vegan ecofeminist care theory.

The fact that zines are meant to be duplicated (not copyrighted) and disseminated makes them radical – they share alternative and controversial knowledge and experiences in an untraditional (“traditional” ways being published books or attending school) and unconventional way. I wanted to create an alternative to my thesis that would escape the boundaries of academia and that would also allow me to express the theory I am building differently and artistically using my imagination and creativity.

Section 6.2

The Methodological Process

Many things had to be taken into consideration before I created the zine. The first consideration was language, as it has been throughout much of my thesis. Since the aim of the zine is to be accessible to an audience outside of academia (although it may be of interest to those situated within academia as well), those with *varying* degrees of familiarity with the “animal question(s),” it was crucial that I pay attention to *how* I explained some of the main ideas of the vegan ecofeminist critical care theory I have been developing. Throughout the zine I made an effort to write in a more conversational tone, asking questions to engage the reader. Some of the main ideas, terms and concepts that I included in the zine, ones that came directly from the unsanctioned discourses, outlined in chapter 4 and investigated in chapter 5, had to be explained in different ways to simplify ideas that might at first appear complex, such as dichotomous, us vs. them relationships and complicate or expand on others that might at first appear straightforward, such as “de-humanization.” Examples were

key to these explanations. For example, on page 9 of the word version of the zine I give numerous examples of “alternative and multiple ways of naming” such as “lifeforms” and “significant others” to demonstrate the diversity of possibilities to replace “animal” in the general singular (Derrida 2008).

The images included were also chosen with accessibility in mind. As discussed in chapter 2, I wanted to appeal to people’s emotions and encourage them to think differently using imagery, which I felt could help people “understand more imaginatively and more emotionally” (Eisner 2006, 10) the realities of speciesism. The images had to speak to the realities the theory described in order to connect the reader to the theory. On page 4 of the word version of the zine, for example, I used an image that exhibits human “mis-valuations” in a triangular hierarchy with words in each rung, highlighting the way that money or god[s] are placed above humans, humans are placed over environment, and animals are placed at the bottom. On page 12 a circle of “life valuations” offers a “new mindset” and way of understanding difference, which includes animals, the environment, and humans swirled together. These two “figures,” which I took from Kemmerer’s *Sister Species: Women, Animals, and Social Justice* (2011, 148-149), give a visual explanation of speciesism and an alternative way of thinking that leaves “no room for discrimination” (Garcia in Kemmerer ed. 2011, 149) because it re-considers the way we are connected in a non-hierarchical fashion. These images help to explain, visually, the way this theory attempts to think.

Another key set of images found on page 8 of the zine visually demonstrates parallel oppressions by depicting the similar ways women are animalized, animals are feminized and sexualized as well as how other-than-white women are animalizable: a PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) advert depicts a sexualized, nude and on all fours, women in a cage painted as a tiger (animalized) with Spanish writing underneath (exoticized or potentially

racialized) (Gaarder 2011, 119), a cow standing upright as a woman (humanized and feminized) (Adams 1994, cover), and a feminized pig depicted in an overtly sexualized manner (Adams 1991, 41).

I chose to take images from the texts of the unsanctioned discourses because these images also inform the hybrid theory my thesis' purpose was to build. Each text brought different images to the accumulated collection I pieced together for the zine, some more brutal than others. I took images from Singer's *Animal Liberation* (1975) depicting the realities animal others face to encourage readers to consider *why* it is important for us to shift our anthropocentric ideology. By showing a few creatures' realities, such as being a test subject like many rabbits, a calf caged to become veal, or a sow behind bars nursing her piglets, perhaps our hearts will help us think about and understand the impacts of our actions.

Amongst the six unsanctioned discourses there was a vast array of images to be discovered. Interestingly, each theoretical strand contributed unique imagery. It was very rare that image content, for example of a specific type of creature, overlapped, and never was there an overlap of the same image from one discourse to the next. Each author discussed in my thesis used different creatures, for example, on their front covers. These varied from an insect (Wolfe 2010) to women cleaning the earth (Gaard 1993), to chickens both presumably dead and alive (Kemmerer 2011; Adams & Donovan 1995), to a masked vigilante (Best and Nocella II 2004), to a womanized cow (Adams 1994), to a dog (Haraway 2008), a rabbit (Regan 2003), all the way to a cat's eye (Derrida 2008). I questioned if the authors chose such vastly diverse animals intentionally and if so, why? Perhaps each theorist holds some connection to the particular creature on their cover or to the species more generally. Or, perhaps it was an image missing from the discourse surrounding the "animal question(s)." For example, insects are not obviously discussed within any of the unsanctioned discourses,

however by depicting the insect, as Wolfe does on the cover of his book, that life form is brought into consideration.

The image I chose to contribute for the front page of my thesis and the cover of the zine, one I stumbled upon outside of the unsanctioned discourses, is a black and white photo of an empty dairy farm. This image holds multiple meanings for me as the author of my thesis and the zine. The dairy farm in this picture, although empty, represents a place I knew well as a child, a place full of cows chained by the neck, hooked up to machines, a place where I witnessed abuse, where I felt despair, but also a place I was fond of because of the cross species connections it made possible for me. The empty dairy farm is also an image I found to be lacking in the unsanctioned discourses. Places of oppression for animals such as farms, factory farms most specifically, slaughterhouses, laboratories and the like are often depicted full of beings living in filth, being neglected, or already dead and being dismembered. I chose this picture of an empty dairy farm because, to me, it fills a gap in the unsanctioned discourses in that it offers a utopic imagining and demonstrates possibilities. This image offers a reminder that there is hope for what is often considered to be the impossible: the de-industrialization of and an eventual end to farming other creatures and the de-institutionalization of speciesism as ideology and an end to speciesist practices.

Another connection this image makes, for me, stems from the lack of color and the decrepit building, it is reminiscent of the holocaust death camps, another space that I am somewhat familiar with, being Polish, having been to Berkeleyn and Auschwitz and holding an intergenerational connection to this atrocity. Derrida and others have also recognized the similarity between factory farming, mass slaughter, animal experimentation, scientific torture, and the brutality and mass murder that defines the holocaust (Derrida in Wolfe 2003, 190;

Schnurer in Best and Nocella II 2004, 106-127) and other genocides. This image is that of an oppressive place, one, I think, we would all want to escape if escape was even a possibility.

Section 6.3

Why a Zine?

The zine itself came together like the pieces of the hybrid theory, cut and pasted from the unsanctioned discourses. Images of the front covers of the academic texts I used for the writing of my thesis were dispersed throughout the pages of the zine. I did this in part for reference since I hope this zine might be a stepping stone, for my readers, to deeper contemplation of and reading into the issues so many beings face and that often go ignored. I hope this zine encourages the praxis that my thesis advocates. I included a list of possible actions that readers might take and concluded with a discussion of veganism and living, what is often referred to as, a more “cruelty free” way of life; cruelty free in the sense that vegans make an effort to abstain from forms of consumption, such as meat eating or purchasing cosmetics that are tested on animal beings, that require the exploitation and the taking of the lives of others to exist. These suggestions are offered as ways to actively engage the vegan ecofeminist critical care theory I have built. I also included images of a few cookbooks too so as to assist readers with cooking and eating differently.

Beyond attempting to create a more accessible version of my thesis, the zine gives the theory my thesis pieced together an alternative way to exist, in a space where a different, if not wider, audience can access it. The way in which a zine is disseminated is from one hand to the next. I will distribute my zine initially to those who have asked to read my thesis, making it clear that the intention is for them to re-direct, photocopy and re-distribute it after

they have read it. Leaving copies at zine libraries as I find them, in public spaces such as coffee shops and perhaps even attending the next zine fair are other ways I can disseminate the vegan ecofeminist critical care theory outside the institutional walls. *Think: Crafting Another Way* is the open ended work in process, form of praxis that my vegan ecofeminist critical care theory forwards. This zine is me putting my theory into practice and I hope this zine leads others to take their own forms of action.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS AND (IM)POSSIBILITIES

When I began this project I was unsure of what its outcome would be. What I knew was that in the course of my education, I had not been exposed to the kinds of theories I needed in order to continue as an academic in my many fields of interests, all of which encircle and emanate from speciesism's impacts on some of the inhabitants of this earth. Although I am specifically addressing animal beings for the purposes of this thesis, this theory I have built is a place from which I could, in the future, work towards addressing other questions surrounding inhabitants and life forms such as insects, plants, bacteria, etc. Without a suitable theory that leaves room for expansion to enter into that research I would not be able to continue on the research paths I sought to follow. I was in need of a theory that fused other-than-human animals into its way of knowing, understanding and being in the world. So I began looking for theories that could help me accomplish this. This is how I stumbled upon the six strands of theory that became central to my thesis: 1) animal rights/moral philosophy, 2) feminist care/defense, 3) ecofeminism, 4) anti-Speciesism, 5) liberationism, and 6) posthumanism. As I immersed myself in what I began to call "the unsanctioned discourses," I came to realize that we, meaning myself and the theorists whose work I was reading, had thought in common to consider other-than-human beings, beginning with other-than-human animals.

As I read my way through these unsanctioned discourses I realized that selecting one seemed too limiting for what I wanted to do in terms of research, the diverse projects I had in mind, and what I wanted research to do, the impacts I wanted my future research to make. The research projects I imagined myself embarking on were somewhere outside the limits of

the so-called “humanities,” quite literally because they did not put humans at the centre of inquiry. They also pushed the boundaries of the individual unsanctioned theories I visited in my thesis because of the layers they each contributed and the interconnections and relationships they made possible to intertwine. For example, animal rights theory excluded emotion from its paradigm which feminist care/defense theory made sure to include; ecofeminism integrated nature/environment; liberationist theory contributed additional layers of potential action to theoretical praxis. I therefore decided that from the theories under consideration I would stitch together a theory that incorporated pieces of them all. This is how I arrived at my thesis: a project that concludes with a vegan eco-feminist critical care theory that is compassionate, responsible, respectful and posthumanist.

One of my thesis’s initial aims was to outline these theories on their own, as alternatives to anthropocentric ways of thinking. This then transformed into highlighting their connections to one another by acknowledging their points of overlap and their aptitude to expand each other’s boundaries. By piecing the unsanctioned discourses together based on both their similarities and their crucial differences I crafted a hybrid theory. A vegan ecofeminist critical care theory is another paradigm through which to do research and look at the world. Different lenses offer different ways of knowing and understanding which are beneficial to those both academically invested and not. The lens I have produced can potentially allow us to imagine a world where we think of ourselves and others, most specifically animal beings, differently, encouraging respect and compassion across difference which I hope can begin to translate into taking, not only living beings, but all life forms and aspects of the earth seriously.

My thesis contributes to Women and Gender Studies specifically by filling a gap I found to exist throughout my undergraduate and graduate studies. Not only does this

compassionate, responsible, respectful, posthumanist paradigm reflect feminist theoretical objectives, it also creates another space within academia, diversifying what is considered as diversity by including the multiplicity and complexities that exist amongst human beings and other animal species, including their histories, contexts, and realities. Bringing these theories in their singular and hybrid forms to Women and Gender Studies multiplies the interdisciplinary possibilities of this field of study by encouraging a shift beyond the human, sanctioning the discussion of other creatures and other connections.

The zine version of this thesis transfers this knowledge outside of the institution. It is an alternative method to disseminate an alternative theory. It is not enough to complete a thesis according to my vegan eco-feminist critical care theory, it is praxis that makes perfect; as defined by the requirements of the theory I have built: an openness, a continuation, a continual striving for what will never come but which is always its aim, justice (see discussion on Derrida's justice in Chapter 2).

Section 7.1

Putting the Pieces Back Together Again: A Hybrid

Beginning with alternative ways of naming brings us to alternative ways of knowing and thinking about one's self, others and the environments within which we living beings exist. My hybrid theory:

- 1) Embraces a multiplicity in naming complicating who humans and animals can be and expanding our relational possibilities.
- 2) Borrows concepts from multiple contexts to build an alternate lens from which to do diverse alternative research.

3) Asks questions to find meaning in text that can become meaningful beyond text; advocates theory as practice.

This hybrid theory has much in common and much in tension with those that came before it, those I took pieces from in order to create something different. This is a theory whose evolution will be “ongoing” (Regan 1983, LIV; Best and Nocella II 2004, 49-50), a theory that is in process (Adams 1994, 103) and will continually work towards “unlearning and relearning” (Jones 2004, 150, in Best and Nocella II) even those “truths” it, as a way of thinking, promotes. It is dialogic (Donovan 2006, 313, 317) both theoretically and practically, a place in which to argue for and imagine alternative ways of communicating and a place from which to attempt to engage in dialogue with fellow creatures even if this means learning different ways of communicating. It encourages discussion about the difficult realities that many animal beings face even if this discussion involves asking “uncomfortable questions” (Birke 1995, 33-34) in order to encourage us to become “uncomfortably conscious” (Kemmerer 2011, 25).

This theory is not only a way of thinking about life, it is intended to become “a way of life” (Scarce 2006, 42), a way of living, a “lived theory” (Gaard 1993, VIII). This is “engaged theory” (Adams 1991, 2) with an emphasis on experience, with room for imagination, with reason for emotion and emotionally motivated reasons. It goes beyond being in transformation to being transformative by pushing humans to think outside the limits of self. It is radical, works for the resistance and would not be complete without being put into practice. It is active and constantly adapting to a changing and diversifying self, other, environment, and world.

The theory I finish this project with is one I call a vegan ecofeminist critical care theory, one that is compassionate, respectful, responsible and posthumanist. It is a theory that encourages an alternative way of understanding and knowing ourselves and the other-

than-human animals we face. This theory requires us to explore ourselves, our human centric, essentialist, exceptionalist, and anthropocentric position and question the human superiority complex that these give rise to and that, in turn, give rise to speciesism. This theory advocates that we shift ourselves accordingly, beginning with asking ourselves who we think we are, who we want to be, and what kinds of relationships we want to have with the many cohabitants of this earth. In this sense it requires us to self-reflect and self-criticize. A crucial part of this process is acknowledging that oppression is shared across animal species and that these oppressions, although different, are mutually reinforcing, intersecting, interlocking and interconnected.

Once we have re-thought our human selves, the next step is to analyze and re-adjust how we conceptualize and actually name ourselves. For example, instead of researcher we might choose to consider ourselves “caring advocates” or “thought activists” as I discussed in chapter 5. At the same time we need to shift our conceptualization of “animals” and change the labels we plaster “them” with. This is especially important if we are going to re-consider the relationships between “us” (humans) and “them” (animals) and take these relationships and those who make up these relationships seriously. By this I mean not taking them lightly, not mocking or ridiculing them, and not considering them less worthy than those relationships we share with other human beings, but rather respecting them on the level we would like to be respected on because they are sincere beings. Partaking in multiple re-namings across contexts is key to re-considering ourselves and others because it involves acknowledging both species and irreducible differences among and between them and how contextual shifts, which often involve power shifts, impact cross species or interspecies relationships. For example, if I am working with creatures that humans typically live with, such as dogs or cats, I might think to shift from using the term “pet” to the concept of

“companion species.” This may help to shift the relationship from an “owner” and “property” relation to one of “companionship” as a more respectful relationship. If instead I am working on a project discussing veganism, the beings I will most commonly be talking about will be chickens, cows, and pigs for example. Instead of naming them “agricultural animals” or “meat” I might problematize these namings and choose a concept such as “absent referent.” To emphasize their lives rather than their deaths I might refer to them as “living beings.” If I am speaking of these same creatures in the context of sanctuary, I might instead choose to speak of our relationships as “companionships” because the circumstances are drastically different.

Different animal beings cannot be so narrowly confined to one side of the very generalized human/animal divide. We can begin to break out of these confines by paying attention to the words we use, by speaking with words that encourage us to think about who we are talking about and to re-think ourselves, using our imagination to come up with other possibilities for how we conceptualize others and our relationships across difference. This is why this theory amasses a vocabulary, a terminology, a conceptual tool box that is vast. We might think in terms of “boycotts” for one research projects praxis, “direct action” for another, and “sentimental education” emphasizing “sympathetic imagination” for yet another. It might be necessary to speak of “intersubjectivity” or “relational identity” in one context and “body mediated knowledge” in another (see Table 3 in Chapter 5 for definitions/explanations). The vast and always potentially expanding terms and concepts of this theory reflect the research questions and other queries to be addressed from this theoretical perspective, which, at this point, are open to possibility.

Section 7.2

Future Research Possibilities: A Theory in Action

The resulting hybrid theory may be the end of this thesis but it is also the beginning of my, hopefully many, future research projects. At this time the possibilities for future research seem endless. From this theory I have built, I may choose to investigate the criminalization of certain creatures in news media, or the link between “criminality” and humans’ abusive treatment of other-than-human beings in specific criminal cases. I could also investigate the language surrounding the pet industry, or any other animal industry, and how language constructs the beings involved in very specific and limiting ways, or I could pursue research into the ways in which veganism is constructed as illegitimate in popular culture. These are all potential research paths with possible praxis oriented outcomes. For example, demonstrating that veganism is constructed as illegitimate in mainstream media might lead to awareness campaigns that work to re-construct veganism as sincere and legitimate.

For those, if any, following in my footsteps, this theory I pieced together is far from complete, there are other unsanctioned discourses to be considered and others already under construction. As a hybrid, this theory is open to continual expansion; it is still missing many potential pieces and perspectives. The limits of this theory are therefore also points of potential expansion.

A main limitation of this theory I have built is its focus on other-than-human animals and the lack of discussion surrounding other-than-animal life forms including insects, plants, bacteria, etc. The purpose of my thesis was not to investigate theories that consider these others however I do believe the theory I have constructed, with the addition of other unsanctioned discourses, could become considerate of these other life forms as well. A second serious limitation to my theory is based in the unsanctioned discourses I selected to

create this hybrid with and also stems from my own position as white and privileged. This set of limitations means that there is serious work yet to be done on the multiple interconnections and intersections among human inequalities especially those involving racial and economic inequities, and the impacts of colonialism and those inequalities experienced by animal beings. In this sense incorporating other theories and/or lived experiences into this hybrid could be a next step for the vegan critical care theory. Approaching research with these intersections in mind is another means to engage with and change this unsanctioned bricolage.

Vegan ecofeminist critical care theory is an alternative way of seeing, knowing and promotes different ways of being with other beings, with ourselves and as part of the world. With this theory comes alternative ways of teaching, learning and researching. Often, these alternatives oblige us to imagine posthumanly, to imagine a world that could be a better place for all earthlings, a better place than we once found it, with certain humans at the centre and everyone else on the margins.

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APPENDICES

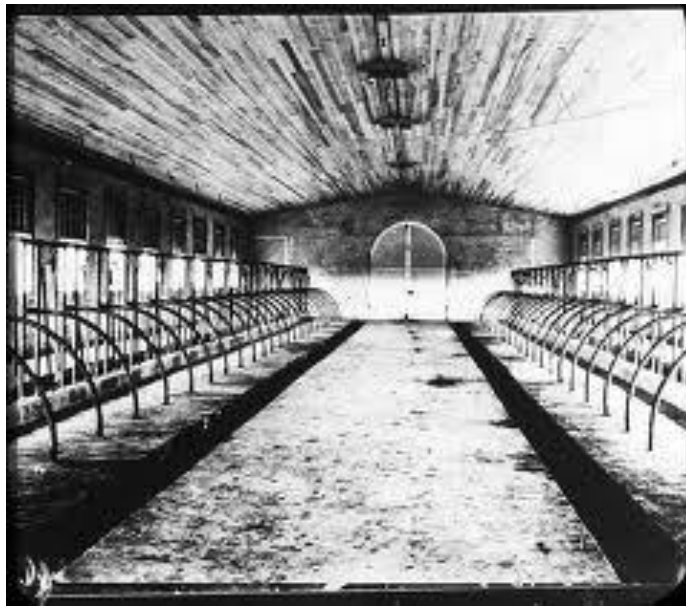
Appendix A – Zine – Think: Crafting Another Way (word/electronic version)

Think:

Crafting Another Way
A VEGAN

ECO-FEMINIST

CRITICAL CARE THEORY



A compassionate,

responsible,

respectful,

posthumanist

paradigm

THINK:

How do we think? Not scientifically in terms of how our brains function but socially or about the world around us?

The answer to this question is that we think as though *the world revolves around us*. As “individuals,” and also as members of a species operating from a Euro-centric, liberal, and capitalist point of view, humans tend to think this way, to be human centered and look out at the world from a human place, our selves. This wouldn’t be such a bad thing if we didn’t also see, from this human-centered perspective, ourselves as supreme beings and the world and all other creatures in it as revolving around us and existing for us, justifying our treatment of the earth and other animals by the mere fact that we are **us**, human.

In theory, we have rights as humans whether we imagine them to be god given, legal or something else entirely and we call them “human rights.” These rights include most fundamentally, according to the UN declaration, the right to life and liberty (article 3 of 30), and from these rights we extend to ourselves more “rights.” While even basic “human rights” are not equally experienced by all humans one right that does seem to cross human hierarchical boundaries such as race, class, gender, age, etcetera is the human right to use animals for our own purposes: whether to own them, eat them, wear them, use them for entertainment, fashion statements, for product testing, whether they are dead or alive, for profit making.

A common right I hear humans commonly endow themselves with in capitalist Canada is a right to eat whoever and whatever we want. This most often excludes humans because humans have “human rights” which presumably includes the right to not be eaten since this interferes both life and liberty. We also give ourselves the right to exploit and abuse animals in all sorts of other ways beyond eating their dead bodies and manipulating their menstrual and reproductive capacities in order to eat their eggs, their young, and exploit their lactating post pregnant bodies for milk. We exploit animals and we exploit the earth as long as it benefits **us**: humans, or at least some of us humans. These benefits are often used interchangeably as justifications for allowing some humans to do whatever we want, even if these justifications consist of something as absurd as “tasting good,” which I have heard said of almost every animal part and their bodily, reproductive, functions such as their milk and eggs. We justify our “rights” to use and abuse the living beings we choose to by the mere fact that we are human with human given human rights.

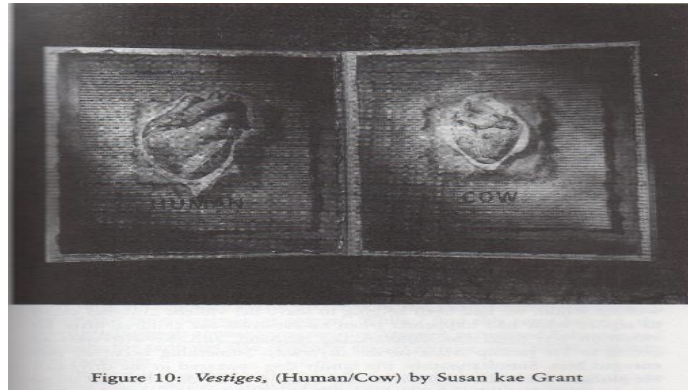


Figure 10: *Vestiges, (Human/Cow)* by Susan kae Grant

I think it is time we get over ourselves and consider the reality that too many humans make humans the centre of the world and that with humans in the centre we have forced the many other living, feeling, complex, unique beings out there, revolving around us (according to our perspective), not for us, to suffer tremendously on the margins. Think about eating meat and dairy from factory farms alternatively known as mass incarceration, mass suffering, mass rape and mass slaughter of other creatures which creates mass pollution for mass human consumption. Those are TWO realities, of many, that are justified by anthropocentric (or human centered) thought that *affect* animals and the globe and that also *effect* many, often marginalized, human animals. For example, if we consider the meat industry, those who can afford organic meat potentially fair better, health wise, then those who can only afford hormone and antibiotic ridden flesh. The animals who are raised for mass consumption as cheap meat often live in terrible confined conditions only to be slaughtered. And the pollution linked to this style of farming affect all creatures and the earth, no doubt, negatively. Whether we like to admit it or not human well-being is linked to environmental health which is linked to other species' conditions. Our relationships with the environments we exist in and the animals we exists with matter for our sake and theirs.

US VS. THEM

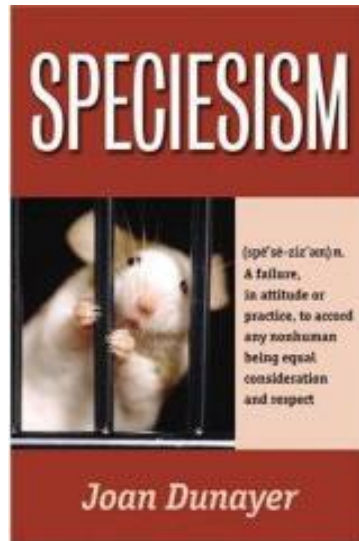
Us vs. Them is how most of “us,” humans operating from a human-centered and euro-centric worldview, think about our relationships to those who are different from us, human or animal. Breaking beings up into two categories creates a divide: us vs. them, human vs. animal, white vs. black, men vs. women, rich vs. poor, hetero vs. homo, young vs. old, self vs. other and this list can go on and on. One side of each of these divides is typically thought of as normal and better than the other side, which is deemed inferior, abnormal and ultimately other.

This type of reductionist, us vs. them, thinking can and often does lead to homophobia, racism, sexism, and ageism to name just a few forms of prejudice. When it comes to the human vs. animal dichotomy this type of thinking perpetuates something called **speciesism**. Have you heard of it?

SPECIESISM

“Speciesism refers to the widely held [human] belief that the human species is inherently superior to [all othered] species and so has rights [and] privileges that are denied [, by humans,] to [all] other sentient animals. Speciesism... also...describe[s] the oppressive behaviour, cruelty, prejudice and discrimination... associated with such a belief.”

-Richard Ryder



Think about it...

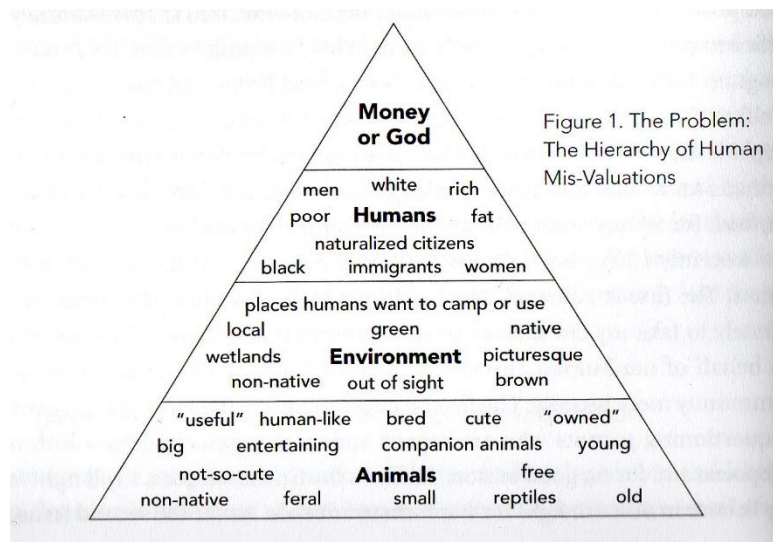


Figure 1. The Problem: The Hierarchy of Human Mis-Valuations

This diagram depicts the warped hierarchical view of the world from a capitalist, Euro-centric, liberal humanist perspective in which money is at the top of the hierarchy of mis-valuations. Animals fall to the bottom of this hierarchy and are hierarchically organized here

from useful and cute to old, and therefore not so useful, and ugly. Humans are put as second to God and money but not all are equal; white rich men remain closer to god and money and black, immigrants and women are positioned closer to Environment. Environment is below all other human beings. This category interestingly, includes the terms native and non-native. Native can be interpreted in at least three ways here. By non-native/native the diagram, I believe, is referring to animal and plant specimens. However, it remains unclear where native people are positioned within this warped hierarchy. Perhaps they are intentionally left out. By placing native/non-native in the two categories below Human demonstrates either the erasure of native people from this analysis or the positioning of native people as lesser-than-human, both of which are very problematic.

Hopefully those reading this have at least questioned sexism, racism, homophobia, classism, ageism and any other prejudices we may harbour against other humans. It is just as important to **unlearn** our prejudices as it is to learn new ways of thinking, knowing, and being in this world. But a large number of us humans don't question our speciesism. We are blind to it because human reign over animals, and the earth, is so normalized, it is often legally justified and has been god given, at least according to some interpretations of the bible; it is so overtly accepted that we often don't even think to think about it.

Humans have largely entrenched themselves at the centre of the universe and made it so that we don't think to consider those who are "other than human" unless it is for our own benefit. If we think, for one moment, about the lives a vast majority of non-human animals are forced to live under the control of humans for the purposes of say, pleasing our palates, we have some serious unlearning and relearning to do for their sake and, I would argue, for ours.

WE?

An us vs. them way of thinking only perpetuates prejudice over other animals. How about thinking instead as "we?" We need to challenge the typical us vs. them hierarchy by attempting to dissolve it by altering it. Thinking in terms of a continuum of differences is one way to shift our two-sided divided way of thinking. "We" can be inclusive of anyone. "We," as a continuum of beings, understands that we all exist together rather than separately, as humans vs. animals, as an us vs. them way of thinking insists.

Thinking along a continuum broadens the possibilities of who we can be and how we can be together in terms of our relationships to one another. We don't have to think of ourselves as one or the other, human or animal, in a dichotomous relationship to one another. We can respect each other for our differences instead of building relationships based on human superior/animal inferior assumptions. And in this way we can build different, respectful relationships that will potentially re-shape who we are and how we exist.

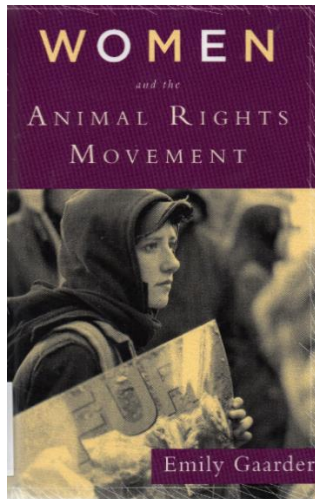
We can also challenge this human-centered Euro-centric way of thinking by multiplying each side of the divide, adding more layers to each side, and complicating who exists on each side of the divide. I might be human but this is not all I am; "human" is not all that defines

me. Just as I don't associate with being a "greedy", "self centered" human I am sure many dogs wouldn't identify themselves as "dumb" or wolves as "big and bad." Not limiting animals to stereotypes and broad species generalizations can push us to get to know animals as irreducible living beings instead of who we determine they should be. It can also challenge the limits we put on ourselves.

We can make connections between "us" and "them" instead of dividing ourselves with a /. These connections make it possible to admit to ourselves that relationships are feasible across species difference. I think it is time we start to imagine and build these relationships.



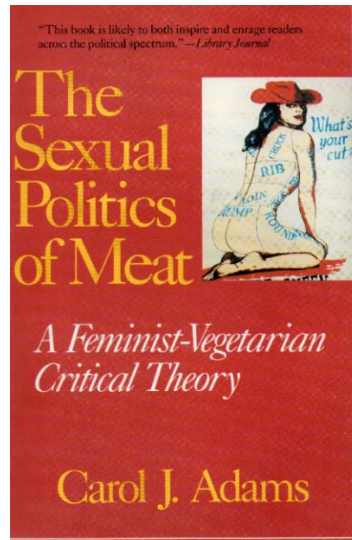
Of course, considering animals and making these connections does come with consequences. Often people who give a shit about animals and advocate for them are mocked and ridiculed. For example, animal rights is a social movement that struggles to end the brutal use of animals by advocating for animal rights and against animals as property; the animal welfare movement is a faction of the animal rights movement that advocates to make the use of animals by humans more "humane" through reforms to aspects surrounding animals lives such as the size of their cages. Both have been feminized because the majority of their activists are female. Within a sexist society the feminization of the movement has led to the de-legitimization of the movement's struggles. Those humans and industries opposed to "animal rights" because they profit or benefit from animal oppression attempt to de-legitimize the movement using name-calling as one of their tactics. They name activists of rights and welfare groups "overly emotional" and "irrational." On the other hand, those involved in animal liberation are labelled "extremists" and "terrorists." This name-calling de-legitimizes causes and connections animal rights and animal liberation movements are fighting for.



MAKING CONNECTIONS

Humans would be very different creatures and this world a different place if we worked on shifting our ways of thinking about and relating to other-than-human beings, life forms, and environments. For example, if we shifted our respect for animals and cared enough to take them into consideration the many creatures that live in the forests we cut down for resources and development would potentially be left to live; less forests, plant life, and habitats would be destroyed, which would help maintain healthy populations and diversity of species and life forms, and minimize endangering and extinguishing species, including but not limited to animal species. Imagining possibilities like this one may seem utopic, yet they are not impossible and it helps to start somewhere. Beyond imagining possible realities we can also start making connections and building respectful relationships across differences. We can begin to do this by dismantling and deconstructing the connections and relationships that uphold our own human superiority complex.

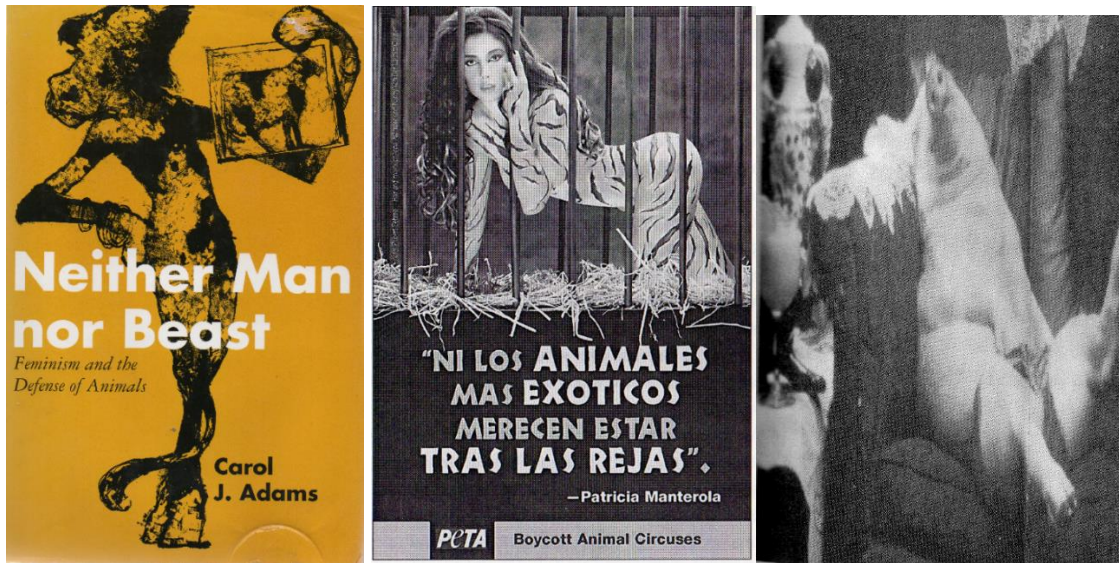
Oppressions are mutually reinforcing, they rely on connections and relationships between inequalities such as racism, speciesism, sexism and ageism. What this ultimately means is that vying for another way of thinking that challenges speciesism also means we need to challenge racist assumptions, sexist behaviour, ageist comments, etc.; this means we need to make an effort to change, drastically.



If prejudices work together to perpetuate oppression then we need to work together to challenge these interconnections and make our own mutually reinforcing opposition to oppression. We need to see oppression in a new light and challenge it in connection with race, class, gender, sexuality, age **and** species, if we want to even begin to imagine the world as a better place for all living beings. We need to acknowledge the complexity, overlap and intersections of oppressions that are experienced differently by different human and animal beings.

SPECIES

Speciesism often goes unacknowledged because it is taken for granted that humans make up the superior side of the human/animal divide. Yet speciesism participates in the maintenance of other forms of prejudice and oppression. For example, de-humanization (which can come in the form of animalizing humans as other than and less than human) has serious implications for how people are treated, just as de-animalization (making animals less than animal or other than animal, or reducing them to “animal” defined anthropocentrically) results in brutal realities for many living beings. For example, being considered meat instead of an animal has serious consequences for how you are treated and what your life is seen to be worth if you are an animal. Being treated like meat if you are human means being de-humanized. Although not the same as being meat, being treated like meat is not how anyone, including animals, want to be treated. Often, for example, people who have been raped report having felt like a piece of meat, as *something*, non-existent, not as someone.



If we think of oppressions as mutually reinforcing, even from an anthropocentric (human centered) stance, speciesism is crucial to challenge alongside sexism, racism, or any other form of prejudice with oppressive consequences. They all work together to oppress us all.

RE-LEARNING/UN-LEARNING

How can we rethink what “human” is and what “animal” is in order to challenge oppression?

One way is to re-consider the ways we name both ourselves and others because this has an impact on the ways we think about ourselves and others.

THE NAME GAME

“Animal” is too simplistic a way of naming animals. There is no way one word can encompass all the species, and individuals within these species, on this planet. There are too many. In fact, this way of naming perpetuates the prejudices against and the treatment of animals as resources for humans to exploit and consume. “Animal” is, in a sense, a “mass term,” like the word meat, because it categorizes all creatures into one category that erases them as unique, irreducible, living beings. Being absent when being referred to, as animals are when they are called “meat” or as women are when they are called “a piece of ass” has consequences. The outcome of being an “absent referent” is that *you*, as an individual, are not acknowledged, which means your wants go unheard. This can mean many things, and has meant horrible treatment of all different creatures, being treated like and turned into meat rather than being treated as living beings.

To challenge the way we look at and understand “animals,” and the ways we think about and treat animals, we can begin by changing the way we name them. Instead of “animal” we can say, for example:

Living beings or creatures,

Lifeforms or Earthlings,

Cohabitants or Inhabitants,

Fellow creatures or Companions species,

Significant others or Critters.

And we can say these different names in all sorts of contexts, talking about companions we know personally or lifeforms more generally, a category to which humans, plants, insects, bacteria and animals also belong.

There is no need for a general singular term for naming the creatures of this world. Another single term that is generalizable to so many different beings like the word “animal” gives us no room to imagine anything different. There is, however, a need for multiplying the names we have to name others and our relationships to others differently. If we want to think differently and acknowledge the fact that we have many different relationships with many diverse creatures.

HUMAN BEINGS

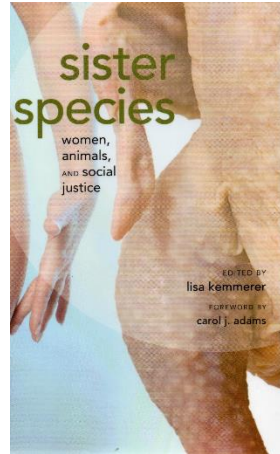
Naming animals something else can shift how we think about “them,” but how can we shift the way we think about our human selves?

We have to challenge the anthropocentric, human centered, and human exceptionalist attitude that influences the way we think. To challenge our own superiority complex I think we need to first ask ourselves: “who do we *want* to be?” I, for one, do not want to be the type of “human” being who thinks I am better than every other life form on this planet, superior and exceptional, justifying the use and abuse of all sorts of critters, the exploitation of lands and waters, forests and the earth beneath them, based on the fact that I am “human.” This attitude doesn’t foster the relationships I want to have with myself, with others, with cohabitants of this earth, or with the multiple and diverse environments I exist in and with.

I want to think of myself as a caring advocate, not a self-centered humanist. I want to be an activist in the way I think; thinking outside myself, challenging what I have been taught, and making a difference by refusing to perpetuate the speciesist, sexist, racist, heteronormative, ageist attitudes that have gotten us nowhere I want to be.

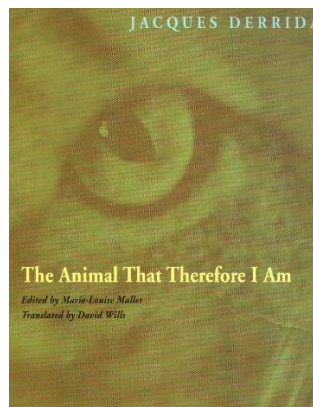
RETHINKING RELATIONSHIPS

Our identity is relational, meaning it depends on connections to places, creatures, plants and other human beings. So, what kinds of relationships do we want to have with those who are different from us? Those who ultimately shape us? Those whom we (barely) share the world with?



The relationships I want to build are not ones based on misconceptions perpetuated by the fabricated distance between us – whether that be distance created by difference, physical distance such as that which often lies between us humans and the places many creatures live (farms) and die (slaughterhouses), or that fostered by linguistic abuse: the misdirected ways we learn to think and then speak about others we do not in fact know. The “big bad wolf” is one of these misleading misconceptions about a creature that has had serious consequences, in this case a species wide death sentence, for wolves.

It might take work but we should be building relationships based as much on our differences as on our similarities.



We can begin to do this by building reciprocal relationships, understanding that there must be *give* and take, not just take. We can start building these relationships with those animals we have in our lives already. For example, for those of us who live with so-called “pets,” becoming good companion species to those creatures we share our lives with already would be a good place to start. Thinking of them as companion species alters the human as owner/animal as pet relationship. Humans must also be a companion species in a two-

creature companion species relationship. Humans can start by attempting to be good companions. For those of us who know no animal beings, we can perhaps begin by building respectful relationships with the birds we see, acknowledging their presence is a place to start.

To build relationships across differences it is important to recognize the places where we can meet and start to communicate respectfully, the places we are in contact with other beings (contact zones). For our companions one of these contact zones might be our home. For other creatures these contact zones may be a forest or a lake and the type of contact in these places is bound to be quite different.

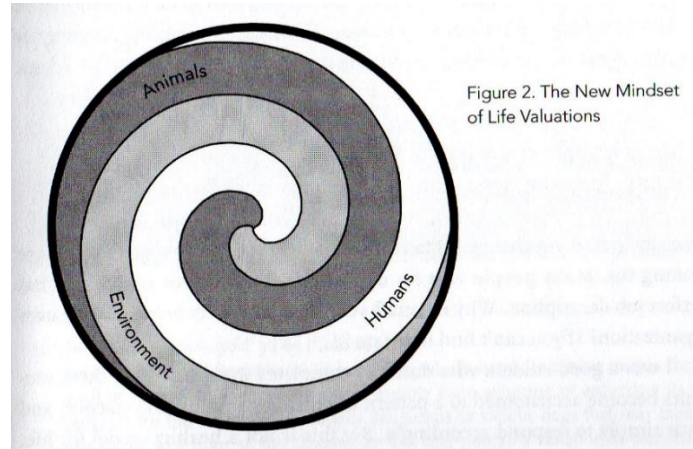
There is value that comes from encounters with irreducible beings different from ourselves. We can learn a lot from other creatures not only about their lives and the realities they face but about ourselves as well.



IMAGINE

There are so many creatures, so many species, so many individuals, with whom we cross paths, with whom we have all sorts of relationships, and whom we (can barely claim to) share this world with. We need to use our imaginations to try and understand each other because it is critical that we become compassionate, that we learn to think with both our hearts and our minds and unlearn the apathy and ignorance entrenched in us. As it stands the mass relations humans have with inhabitants of this earth and with the environments we exploit and exist in are unhealthy, to say the least, for all of us.

We need to be thinking in terms of our responsibilities to others, thinking in terms of respect for other life. We need to rethink what it means to care and be compassionate. What does “humane” even mean? Imagining what it might be like to be someone else other than yourself, in a different body, without a human voice that will be listened to, existing in an oppressive situation. This is one way of shifting our human self out of centre and learning to consider and be considerate of others.



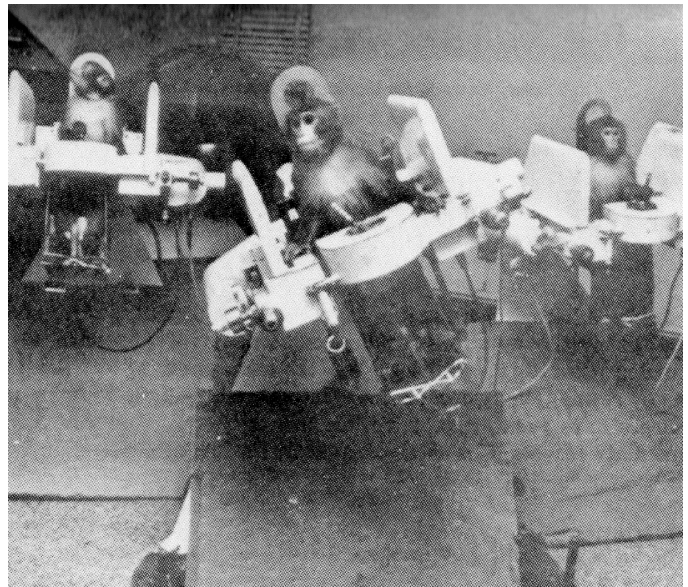
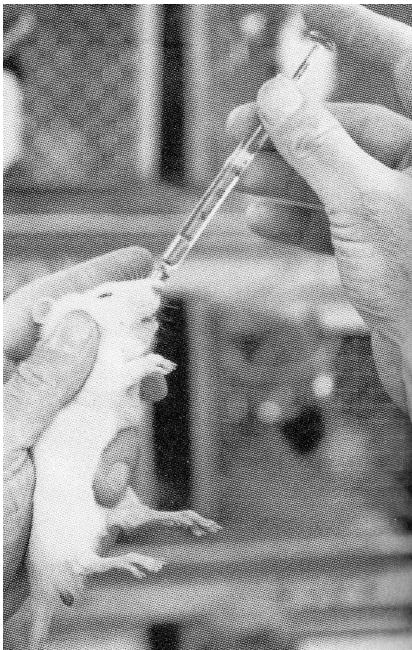
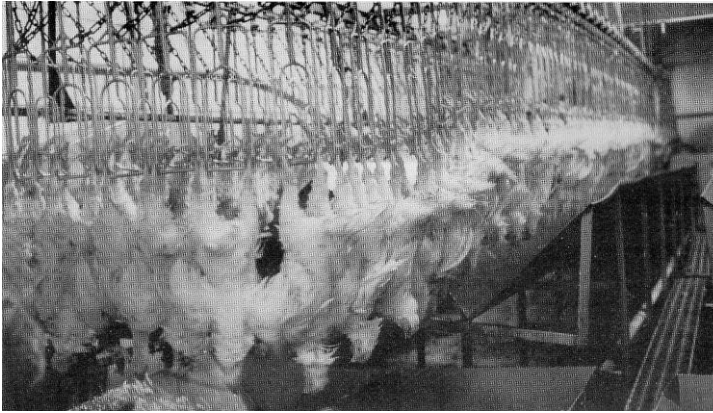
The diagram depicting life valuations swirls together all humans and other creatures, and under environment incorporates land, plants, etc. Taken together these three categories are intended to demonstrate a “new mindset” that is structured as **intertwined** rather than hierarchically, an alternative to the Euro and anthropocentric, and capitalist worldview.

We can think about it, contemplate it, mull over what it would mean to take our fellow creatures seriously, to consider them as significantly other rather than as insignificant and exploitable because they are “other than human”; but to make an impact we have to act.

WHAT WAS I THINKING?!

We should be outraged, appalled, disgusted, horrified, experiencing all sorts of emotions and having all sorts of thoughts surrounding the treatment of other-than-human beings by human beings.....





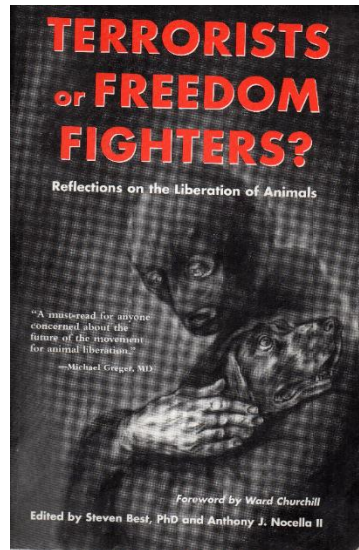


We should also be appalled by the ways humans treat other humans, as animals, and the other disastrous impacts humans make through what they “rightfully” take.

ACTION

This zine attempts to think differently regarding other-than-human animals and in doing so begins to consider other life forms and human impacts on environments. In this context transforming thought into action can mean a number of things:

- Altering the way we speak with the intention of shifting other humans’ ways of understanding or thinking about other creatures as we shift our own.
- Raising awareness by researching issues and having real conversations about uncomfortable realities.
- Volunteering our time to help beings in need and to build relationships across species and other forms of difference.
- Boycotting animal industries.
- Providing sanctuary to rescued abused beings.
- Partaking in sabotage to hinder animal industries.
- Liberating creatures from places of oppression.
- Becoming vegan and attempting to live a life free of cruelty to animals.

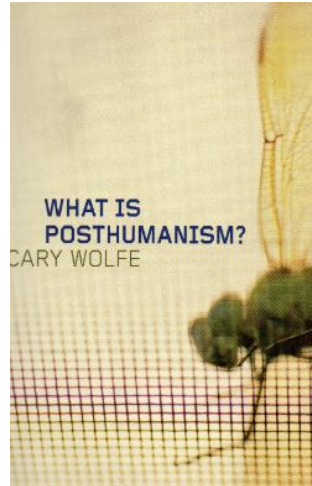


VEGANISM

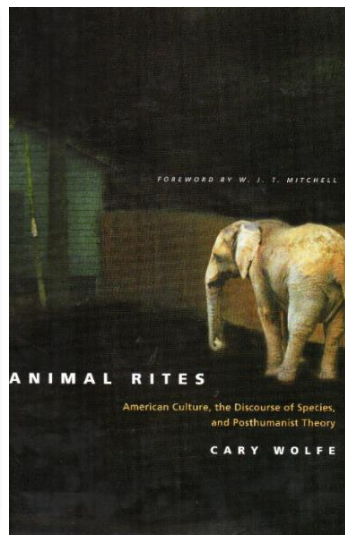
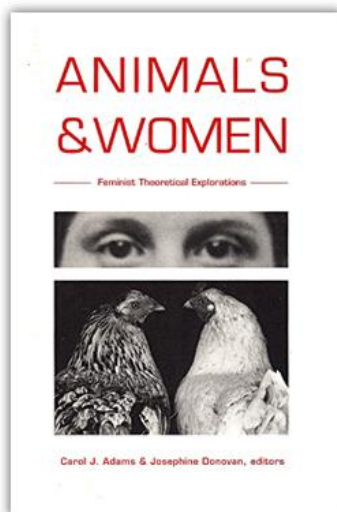
Veganism is a boycott of all industries that use living and dead animal beings to make a profit. Being vegan means taking responsibility for your dietary actions by not consuming animals, their bi-products or their bodily and reproductive secretions and excretions like milk and eggs. Veganism is a direct challenge to our anthropocentric speciesist capitalist system because it challenges not only carnivorous consumption but unnecessary consumption that directly impacts the lives of other living beings. These forms of consumption range from what we eat, wear, the products we rely on for our skin, hair and body care, the medicine we are prescribed as well as the entertainment we visually consume. Veganism is critical of those industries that thrive off the incarceration, suffering and death of singular irreducible creatures en masse, i.e. the animal agricultural industry, animal experimentation, fur farms. It is also critical of those industries that have disastrous effects on diverse environments that result in more suffering and death, such as deforestation which destroys trees, plant and insect life, habitats and those who call these habitats home, as well as the ability for the soil of the earth to mitigate pollution from industries such as factory farming, which pollutes water, air, earth and all beings' bodies (humans included). Veganism is more than a "lifestyle", it is a way of life. Veganism is a compassionate way of living that puts animal others before profit. It involves refusing to make beings killable and not consuming the dead but seeing them instead as animals whose lives have been intentionally taken for profit, as an unnecessary and non-consensual taking of life not for sustenance but often only because we "like the taste." Veganism requires us to take action by not consuming animals and to use our imagination to conceive of a world where all creatures are given respect, a place where mass slaughter for mass conspicuous consumption can come to an end.

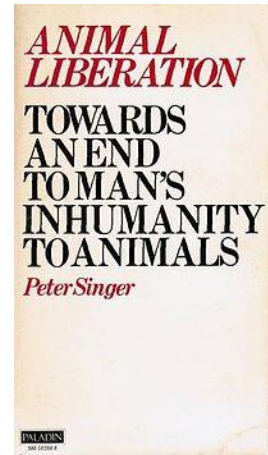
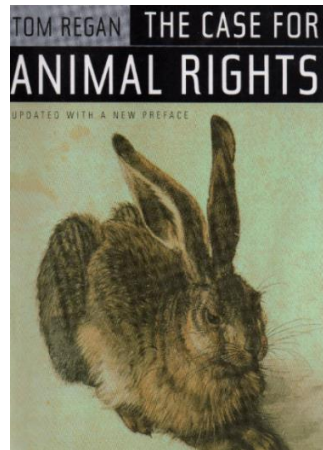
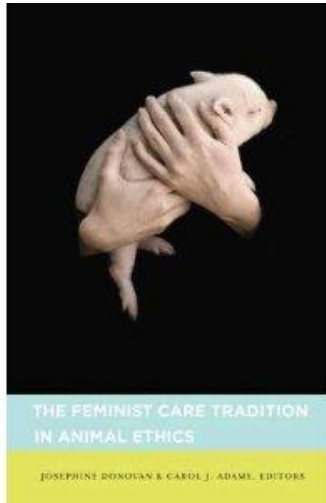
To be vegan is to unlearn our human superiority complex, and relearn how to think outside ourselves. Becoming uncomfortably conscious about the realities humans impose on other living beings can help us to build alternative relationships, based on alternative ways of communicating and might leave us with alternative ways of knowing and understanding the

world we live in that is considerate of animal others. By shifting our human selves out of the center we can start thinking in the post-human and begin crafting a post-human world. If we can begin to imagine it, this might be a better world than the one we now find ourselves in with humans at its centre and everyone else on the margins.

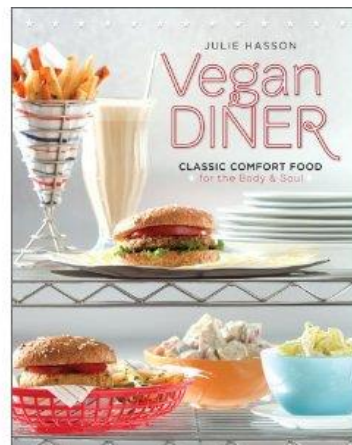
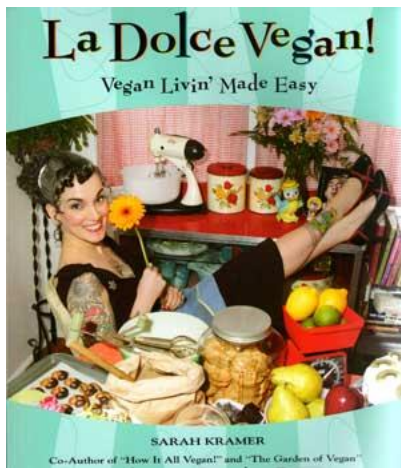


Here are some other books to read if you want to know more about how this zine came to be....





and a couple of vegan cookbooks....



...If you are hungry for change.