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Veganism, Organisational Considerations and Animal Advocacy Campaigns

Abstract

This paper will investigate animal advocacy campaigns, which can either be anti-systemic (working to oppose the system that leads to inequality) or integrationist (striving for gains within the existing system). The animal rights ideology fundamentally challenges the property status of non-human animals, instrumentalism, and speciesism. In contrast, animal welfare is a more conservative and widely accepted ideology that attempts to minimise the harm caused by these forms of inequality. A case study will use the theory of resource mobilisation to demonstrate the manner in which integrationist campaigns promoting animal welfare or focussing on less accepted forms of non-human animal exploitation are more consistent with creating and maintaining large animal advocacy organisations than anti-systemic campaigns promoting veganism.

Key Words

Animal rights, animal welfare, veganism, resource mobilisation, social movements, social movement organisations.

Introduction

Animal advocacy campaigns can either be anti-systemic (working to oppose the system that leads to inequality) or integrationist (striving for gains within the existing system). The animal rights ideology fundamentally challenges the property status of non-human animals,ⁱ instrumentalism, and speciesism (these terms are defined below). Veganism is a lifestyle that puts animal rights into practice on the individual level. This lifestyle avoids the use of animal products for food and clothing, as well as avoiding other forms of animal exploitation such as

animal testing and entertainment involving non-human animals. In contrast to campaigns promoting animal rights and veganism, animal welfare campaigns attempt to minimise the harm caused by the inequalities between humans and non-human animals. Focussing on animal welfare or unpopular forms of animal exploitation has much more public support than promoting veganism, which challenges all animal use.

Journalist Victor Schonfeld and animal rights lawyer Gary Francione have both criticised animal advocacy organisations (AAOs) for focussing on getting companies to make welfare improvements, rather than on the public's contribution to animal exploitation, which is primarily made through creating the demand for animal products. Both argue that these organisations should promote veganism, which would reduce the demand for animal products and animal exploitation. There are organisational reasons why this is unlikely to happen amongst large organisations. Prominent resource mobilisation theorists John McCarthy and Mayer Zald (2001, p. 543) argue that from an organisational perspective, it is best to promote actions such as 'giving money and signing a petition' which 'require little effort.' These actions are much more compatible with encouraging businesses to reform their practises towards non-human animals than promoting veganism to the public, as adopting this lifestyle takes more effort and commitment than signing a petition or donating, so is not likely to gain the organisation as much support or resources.

Finally, a case study will investigate the online campaigns of some key AAOs. The case study will analyse the actions promoted in emails sent out by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), Humane Society International (HSI), and Animals Australia to examine the extent to which these emails are consistent with the "little effort paradigm" suggested by McCarthy and Zald, as well as the critiques by Schonfeld and Francione. This case study forms a part of a broader project analysing the different forms of activism in the animal advocacy movement (AAM) and the way in which these different forms of activism are consistent with various organisational forms. Using sociological theories on social movements and organisations, this case study and broader project will apply these theories to a movement that has been neglected in sociology (Groves 1999, p. 347; Bryant 1993, p. 557), contributing to a greater understanding of these theories, as well as this important social movement.

Anti-systemic and Integrationist Social Change

Progressive social movements can be anti-systemic, seeking to destroy the existing system which has led to inequality. Such movements can also be integrationist, working to speed up progressive gains within the current system (Wallerstein 2003, pp. 653, 658). The AAM, as is typical of social movements (Soule and King 2008, p. 1568), is made up of a diverse range of individuals and organisations with different objectives and tactics. It is therefore neither an anti-systemic or integrationist movement but has elements of both.

But what is the “system” that animal advocates can either work within or oppose? There are several significant characteristics of humans’ interaction with non-human animals. The first is the property status of non-human animals. Under the law, there are two categories, persons and property, and ‘animals are legally classified as property’ (White 2009, p. 97). Another key concept is instrumentalism; the ideology and practise that views non-human animals as merely means to human ends, which is only possible due to the property status of non-human animals (Francione 1996, p. 25, 10). Finally, the concept of speciesism is fundamental to understanding humans’ relationship with non-human animals. Speciesism is ‘a concept similar to racism and sexism but applied to animals’ (Beers 2006, p. 4). In his text *Animal Liberation*, Peter Singer drew on liberation sociology to understand that through a process of “othering” oppressed groups, dominant groups assume the primacy of their interests. This fundamental dynamic is useful in understanding racism and sexism, as well as speciesism. Non-human animals are sentient, meaning that they are capable of experiencing suffering and pleasure, yet, due to speciesism, non-human animal interests are denied simply due to their species (Wicks 2004, p. 269). To summarise, the existing “system” is one in which humans use non-human animals as property and a means to human ends, while non-human animal interests are overlooked due to speciesism. This is the system that animal advocates can either oppose or work within.

Animal welfare is an integrationist way to understand and address humans’ relationship with non-human animals, and is a conservative ideology (O’Sullivan 2006, p. 3). An animal welfare ideology accepts non-human animals being used for human ends in most cases, as

long as certain “safeguards” are put in place to ensure that they are treated “humanely” (Francione 1996, p. 1). Animal welfare accepts the property status of non-human animals (Best and Nocella 2004, p. 26) and instrumentalism but attempts to place constraints on how this property may be treated through animal welfare legislation (White 2009, p. 97; Francione 1996, p. 10). Animal welfare does not reject instrumentalism, but rather promotes welfare regulation that is in place to provide standards that ensure a basic level of protection for non-human animals used as “products” and to ensure that non-human animals do not suffer “unnecessarily” beyond what is required to use them for human resources in an economically efficient manner (Francione 1996, p. 10; Francione, cited in Torres 2007, p. 67). Finally, animal welfare does not oppose speciesism, but attempts to limit the damage caused by speciesism. Welfare regulation accepts and reinforces the socially constructed hierarchies that promote human superiority over all non-human animals (Beers 2006, p. 3; Best and Nocella 2004, pp. 12, 27). As a result, despite animal welfare regulations, ‘animals are largely unprotected from harm, so long as an overriding human interest can be identified’ (White 2009, p. 97). Animal welfare is an integrationist element of the AAM, working within human superiority as well as non-human animals as property and means to human ends, but advocating for some level of protection for non-human animals.

The animal welfare ideology has been taught to children in schools from as early as the 1940s (Beers 2006, p. 148) and could be classified as the “default” position in society, or ‘the status quo position’ (White 2009, p. 97). It is widely viewed as a ‘moderate and respectable’ position (Francione 1996, p. 163) and is accepted by ‘almost everyone – including those who use non-human animals in painful experiments or who slaughter them for food’ (Francione 1996, p. 1). In fact, it was the only ideology that had existed in any meaningful way for the last few hundred years until animal rights theory emerged in the late 1970s (Francione 1996, p. 1).

Animal rights is an anti-systemic approach and is the most progressive ideology in the movement (O’Sullivan 2006, p. 3). It involves a total rejection of instrumentalism, the use of non-human animals as “things”, and demands the abolition (rather than regulation) of animal exploitation (Francione 1996, pp. 25-26). This is why veganism, a lifestyle that puts this theory into practice on the individual level, is central to animal rights (Francione 2010, pp.

22, 62-64, 75). Veganism is a lifestyle which avoids the use of animal products for food and clothing, as well as avoiding other forms of animal exploitation such as animal testing and entertainment that involves non-human animals. Animal rights rejects the property status of non-human animals and humans' hegemony over non-humans (Francione 1996, p. 1). Animal rights challenges human-imposed hierarchies (speciesism), rather than attempting to limit the harm caused by this inequality (Beers 2006, pp. 3-4). The animal rights ideology and vegan lifestyle rejects the property status of non-human animals, instrumentalism and speciesism.

Rejecting the everyday exploitation of non-human animals that most Western people participate in regularly through the consumption of widely socially accepted products such as meat, dairy, eggs and leather is certainly an anti-systemic approach to animal advocacy. However, when it comes to certain uses of non-human animals, taking a rights approach (aiming to abolish the use rather than regulate it) can actually be integrationist, even though an anti-systemic approach of animal rights and veganism would also reject these uses. Advocating a rights position on specific unpopular uses of non-human animals such as dog fighting, the dog meat trade, cock fighting, seal clubbing, whaling, and so on, while not condemning all animal use, is actually consistent with prevailing attitudes, rather than challenging them. Such campaigns reinforce the dominant notion that some forms of animal exploitation are acceptable, while others are not (Francione 2010, p. 79). Most people in Western countries do not participate in these unpopular forms of animal exploitation and already believe in abolishing such uses rather than regulating them (unlike the use of many non-human animals for food and clothing).

For example, in an article titled 'Selling Our Story' in *Beef Magazine*, feedlot consulting veterinarian Dave Sjeklocha, defended the use of non-human animals for food at the same time as praising HSUS for their work in attempting to stop cock fighting (Sjeklocha 2009). Just as those directly involved in the killing non-human animals for food, clothing or experimentation generally support the idea of "humane" treatment, they also generally join the public in completely objecting to (rather than attempting to regulate) certain uses of non-human animals. Rejecting all uses of non-human animals is an anti-systemic belief, but aiming to abolish only less popular and less accepted forms of exploitation which most

people are not participating in, while remaining quiet about, or attempting to regulate more common and mainly unquestioned uses and abuses of non-human animals that most people participate in regularly, is more of an integrationist approach to animal advocacy.

Veganism and Organisational Considerations

Schonfeld directed the influential 1981 documentary *The Animals Film*, which explored the way humans exploit non-human animals for purposes such as food, entertainment, and research. He recently did a follow-up to this with a BBC radio documentary, *One Planet: Animals & Us*, which investigated what has changed for non-human animals in the thirty years since he made *The Animals Film*. Soon after Schonfeld's radio program, he wrote an article on the same topic, which appeared in the *Guardian*. This article, titled 'Five Fatal Flaws of Animal Activism', argued that veganism has not been promoted enough in the AAM and instead AAOs have tended to focus on animal welfare. The fourth flaw that he identified in the movement was:

Instead of animal rights organisations promoting a clear “moral baseline” that individuals should become vegans to curb their own demands for animal exploitation, groups have given their stamp of approval to deeply compromised marketing concepts such as “happy meat”, “freedom foods”, “sustainable meat”, and “conscientious omnivores” (Schonfeld 2010).

While total objectivity is impossible (Parenti 1993, p. 54), Schonfeld's analysis is about as close as possible to this principle. Schonfeld has not been involved in the AAM since he made *The Animals Film* in 1981 (Schonfeld 2010) and has come back to the movement with “fresh eyes” to see what the movement has done to address the exploitation that he highlighted in his 1981 documentary. As he has not been involved in the movement, he is not likely to be influenced by “movement politics” and likes or dislikes for certain individuals or organisations in the movement. This paper will examine animal advocacy campaigns and the way in which the promotion of veganism that Schonfeld advocates clashes with

organisational considerations. An integrationist approach is the most logical from an organisational perspective.

Historically in progressive social movements, radicals realised they needed long-term organisation to make a real difference. This led to the creation of bureaucratic organisations with members, offices, and financial concerns. The prominence of such organisations in progressive movements limited the degree to which these movements continued to be anti-systemic. Previously radical individuals began to work within organisations that no longer threatened existing social structures (Wallerstein 2003, pp. 659-661). An increase in organisational size, resources and professionalisation often leads to this moderation in the message. For example, large donations from the Ford Foundation played a role in civil rights organisations such as the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and the Metropolitan Applied Research Centre (MARC) attempting to integrate black people into corporate capitalism rather than attempting to challenge this system of inequality (Allen 1969, pp. 53-62).

Many AAOs are very large and professional, in terms of aspects such as membership, finances, and paid staff. For example, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) has a revenue of over 31 million dollars and their assets are worth nearly 20 million dollars (Economic Research Institute 2009). They also have over 300 paid employees (Home Box Office 2009) and over 2 million members (PETA n.d.). HSUS is a similarly large and wealthy organisation, with over 10 million members, 438 paid staff, and over 120 billion dollars in revenue in 2007 alone (HSUS 2007).

In the Australian context, Animals Australia has 9 full-time, paid staff (Oogjes 2010) and an office in central Melbourne. This sounds fairly small, but in contrast to other AAOs in Australia primarily focussed on promoting veganism such as Animal Liberation Victoria and Uproar, who are totally run by volunteers (Hannibal 2010; Mark 2010) and have no physical office, this is a much more large-scale and professional operation. While a welfarist message seems to be consistent with large organisations, vegan-focussed activism tends to take place at a more “grassroots level” (Francione 1996, p. 5), relying on small, local organisations and individual online activism.

The theory of resource mobilisation sheds some light on why integrationist campaigns are more consistent with large organisations than anti-systemic campaigns promoting veganism. Resource mobilisation theory has become the dominant theory for analysing social movements in sociology (Buechler 1997, p. 193) and, as the name suggests, is focussed on the role of resources in explaining the activities of social movements and social movement organisations (McCarthy and Zald 1997, pp. 151-152; Soule and King 2008, p. 1572; McCarthy and Zald 2001, p. 557). A central assumption of the resource mobilisation perspective is ‘that SMOs [social movement organisations] operate like any other organization, and consequently, once formed, they operate as though organizational survival were the primary goal. Only if survival is ensured can other goals be pursued’ (McCarthy and Zald 1997, p. 159). According to this theory, a desire for resources (primarily financial) that is needed to maintain organisations is central to explaining the activities of social movement organisations.

The two most prominent resource mobilisation theorists, John McCarthy and Mayer Zald (2001, p. 537) argue that careers often develop in social movements. Many AAOs have a large number of paid staff, with HSUS even advertising ‘a career working to protect animals’ and ‘humane careers’ (HSUS 2011a). Careers in social movements may influence organisational aspects such as ‘programs, tactics, and goals’ (McCarthy and Zald 2001, p. 537). Those with a career in a certain social movement are likely to strive for actions that are consistent with maintaining their career and the organisation they are involved with, even if this is for the most noble of reasons, such as wanting to continue to work full-time advocating for non-human animals rather than working in another career that they are less passionate about. Careers in social movements may influence the actions that social movement organisations promote to the public. Actions such as ‘giving money and signing a petition require little effort’ (McCarthy and Zald 2001, p. 543), and are therefore likely to be favoured to maximise participation in, and resources for, the organisation. Promoting such actions are consistent with career benefits, resources to the organisation, and organisational survival (McCarthy and Zald 1997, p. 159) – they make the most sense from an organisational perspective.

Although not framed in the terms of resource mobilisation, animal rights lawyer Gary Francione's analysis of AAOs is certainly compatible with this theory. Similarly to Schonfeld, Francione (2010, pp. 64, 74), who is a prominent critic of welfarist activism, argues that large AAOs have attempted to shift the blame for animal exploitation away from the public (who create the demand for animal exploitation through what they buy, eat, wear, and so on) and put the blame elsewhere, for example, on the industries that exploit non-human animals. He believes that large AAOs strive for the largest donor base possible by asking people to do as little as possible and making them feel as good as possible about doing it:

'...It is clear that the welfarist rejection of veganism as a moral baseline is also related to the purely pragmatic self-interests of large, wealthy animal organizations that are more concerned with the size of their donor bases than with the moral message they promote. For example, according to PETA, half of the PETA membership is not even vegetarian. An organization whose membership is half non-vegetarians and half vegetarians (but not necessarily vegans) is not likely to respond favorably to the position that veganism is a moral baseline. This may account, at least in part, for why PETA's campaigns are welfarist and why it gives awards to sellers of "happy" meat and animal products and to slaughterhouse designers...[This] allows PETA to seek a donor base that includes people who eat at McDonald's or buy "Animal Compassionate" meat at Whole Foods. This may make terrific business sense for PETA, but it does nothing to stop animal exploitation' (Francione 2010, p. 74).

According to Francione, it is much better from an organisational point of view for these organisations to encourage their members to support welfare campaigns, which 'are easy for advocates to package and sell' and 'do not offend anyone' (Francione 2010, p. 64). These campaigns mean that people can "take action" on issues concerning non-human animals while not changing what they eat, wear, buy, and so on. Although there are debates in the movement as to the extent that a vegan lifestyle is difficult, with views ranging from 'pretty damn easy' (Torres and Torres 2010, p. 104) to not 'all that easy in a speciesist society' (Gier 2011), it is clear that advocating veganism is asking people to do far more than actions such as donating money or signing petitions.

Case Study

Methodology

Four organisations have been chosen for this case study: PETA, HSUS, HSI and Animals Australia. HSI is the global arm of HSUS (HSI Australia n.d.), campaigning on various issues around the world, rather than being focussed on the U.S. These organisations have been chosen because they are all run by vegans (see, for example: Oogjes 2010; Driver 2003; Iowa Politics 2010) meaning that there is at least the potential for them to promote veganism. This is in contrast to traditional animal welfare groups such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Animals (RSPCA) which ‘is not a vegetarian or vegan organisation’ (RSPCA n.d.) and is not run by vegans.ⁱⁱ These organisations have also been chosen because there are many examples of these organisations promoting an integrationist, animal welfare approach rather than veganism, as Schonfeld identified (see, for example: Animals Australia n.d.; HSUS 2011b; Torres 2007, p. 92).

There have also been analyses linking organisational considerations to integrationist activism by HSUS and PETA from animal rights advocates as well as those opposed to animal rights (see, for example: Francione 2010, p. 74; Sjeklocha 2009). PETA has had a moderation in their approach as they have grown larger and more professional. In the 1980s, animal advocate Henry Spira began to attempt to regulate animal testing and poultry raising and slaughter. His biggest critic was PETA, which rejected his efforts to work with companies carrying out animal testing to reduce the number of non-human animals they used and to make their testing more “humane.” PETA also criticised his attempts to improve the treatment of poultry raised and slaughtered for food (Francione 1996, pp. 64-65). In contrast, PETA, now a much larger and more professional organisation, have worked with KFC Canada to alter its treatment of the chickens they use, for example, changing slaughter methods to controlled-atmosphere killing where the birds are gassed rather than being killed by other methods such as having their throats slit. This change in slaughter method has been labelled a ‘historic victory!’ by PETA (Prescott 2008). Finally, these organisations have also been chosen due to their large size in terms of membership and finances, at least compared to organisations primarily focussed on veganism (as is discussed earlier).

Content analysis has been chosen as the method for this study, as it gives “real-life” examples in which to investigate more abstract theories such as resource mobilisation (Carragee and Roefs 2004, p. 228). The content that will be analysed is the actions promoted by these organisations in their emails to subscribers. Great importance is attached to online campaigning in the AAM, as is acknowledged by key figures of AAOs (see, for example Mark 2010; Hannibal 2010; Oogjes 2010; Pearson 2011) as well as individuals pursuing animal advocacy without being directly involved in a specific organisation (see, for example, Fox 2011; Yates 2008; Pendergrast 2010). The current importance of online campaigning is not specific to the AAM, but applies to social movements and social change generally (Trumpbour 2010, pp. 3-4). For example, the recent downfall of the Egyptian President has been partly attributed to online campaigning and networking.

The emails for the entire year of 2010 from the four major organisations selected will be analysed. This is because it is the most recent full year and analysing the whole year means the data will not be skewed by the over-representation of certain times of year. For example, there is often a surge in emails around Christmas time focussed on buying gifts from these organisations.

Some emails contain a range of actions and these may be discussed in the analysis, however, only the main action being promoted will be analysed statistically. This is the one that is “framed” by the organisation as being the most important. Framing shapes how people evaluate the action they should take (Carragee and Roefs 2004, p. 216). The action being promoted as most important is the one that is most likely to be carried out by those receiving the email. Framing includes aspects such as placement, visual effects, and labelling (Parenti 1993, p. 201). Such aspects were considered when deciding the main action being promoted in each email. Where two or more actions were framed as being equally as significant, they were all included in the results.ⁱⁱⁱ

These results will be analysed in both a qualitative and quantitative manner, with statistical analysis as well as a discussion of these statistics to give some context and explanation of the data. Both the statistics and explanation will be based around McCarthy and Zald's explanation of the preferred form of activism from a financial and organisational point of view, which is petitions and donations, and more generally, actions that require little effort.^{iv} How these emails fit with the critiques by Schonfeld and Francione will also be considered. Beyond the abbreviations already mentioned, the organisation Animals Australia will be referred to as 'AA' in the table with the results of this study.

Results

Main Suggested Action in Emails to Subscribers – 2010

Organisation	Petition/ pre-written Letter	Phone	Donate	Buy	Send to Friends	Change Lifestyle	Other	Totals
AA	7	0	7	3	0	3	0	20
HSUS	10	1	34	9	4	2	18	78
HIS	23	0	8	5	0	4	1	41
PETA	12	1	5	0	6	3	5	32
Totals	52	2	54	17	10	12	24	171

Discussion

The main actions promoted by these organisations are broadly consistent with McCarthy and Zald's explanation of the actions that are most consistent with attracting resources to organisations. Over thirty percent of the main actions promoted by these organisations were petitions, or much more commonly, pre-written letters. These are letters to an official (generally a politician or other political figure, or business leader) requesting some form of change. The letter is pre-written by the organisation but the individual can personalise the letter and add whatever they like. However, as the individual only has to add their name to the pre-written letter and hit 'send' – these actions are very similar to petitions, in that it requires very little effort to carry out the action. Very rarely, people were asked to phone an official rather than adding their name to a pre-written letter (HSUS 2010j; PETA 2010d). Although this takes slightly more effort than adding a name to a pre-written letter, it is still is

an action that can be done very quickly, and is fairly similar to petitions or pre-written letters, and broadly consistent with the “ideal type” activism put forward by McCarthy and Zald.

Even more commonly, the main action promoted was donating to the organisation in question, another one of the actions suggested by McCarthy and Zald. Over thirty-one percent of the main actions were to donate. Furthermore, nearly ten percent of the time the main action was to buy something, generally from the online shops of these organisations. Much like donating, this requires little effort. Overall, a clear majority, nearly sixty-two percent, of the actions promoted by these organisations are directly compatible with the two forms of actions that McCarthy and Zald argue are optimal for attracting resources to an organisation. If the similar actions of phoning an official and buying something are included, over seventy-three percent of actions are consistent with their description.

Just fewer than six percent of actions were included under ‘send to friends.’ Four of these came from HSUS, where people added the email address of their friends to send a pre-written message on issues such as puppy mills, protecting wildlife, and dog fighting (HSUS 2010i, 2010h, 2010d, 2010e). The other six emails that fell under this category were from PETA. Some related to new social networking sites, including reposting “tweets” and updating your *Facebook* status to oppose seal clubbing in Canada (PETA 2010b, 2010k), as well as joining a *Facebook* page opposing Chinese fur farms (PETA 2010g). One email from PETA encouraged people to tell others about the cruelty involved in animal testing (PETA 2010j) and another encouraged people to write their own “anti-McDonald’s” message on an online sign and send it to their friends (PETA 2010h).

PETA’s campaign against McDonald’s is being run because the restaurant, unlike KFC Canada, has not yet changed to the controlled-atmosphere killing of their chickens (PETA 2010l). While some of these actions went well beyond just adding email addresses to a pre-written message (for example, one email from PETA asked people to take picture of themselves with a sign opposing circuses to post on *Facebook*) (PETA 2010m), overall, actions in this category did not significantly depart from McCarthy and Zald’s little effort

paradigm and certainly did not challenge the criticisms of AAOs made by Schonfeld and Francione.

Emails in the ‘change lifestyle’ category focussed on the lifestyle of the people receiving the email, for example, what they eat, wear, buy, support, and so on. Not only did less than seven percent of the actions provide some challenge to the activities of the people receiving the email, but the activities that they focussed on was also significant. From HSUS and PETA, these mainly concerned the issue of pets. In one email, HSUS encouraged people not to buy pets from pet shops or the Internet (HSUS 2010f), while PETA encouraged people to adopt a pet and spay and neuter, rather than breeding or buying pets (PETA 2010i).

When it came to food, only the consumption of caged eggs was challenged (once) but not eggs in general (HSUS 2010c), dairy consumption was not challenged even once, and meat was only rarely challenged. A couple of emails challenged the consumption of factory farmed products (Animals Australia 2010c), but this does not mean ruling out the consumption of animal products such as meat, dairy and eggs, but rather, changing to differently produced and labelled versions of these products. A few emails promoted vegetarianism for the environment (PETA 2010e) and for animals (Animals Australia 2010b) but sometimes the organisations framed vegetarianism in quite a “soft” way – promoting vegetarianism as a positive action for people to take, but not a necessity for anyone concerned about non-human animals (Animals Australia 2010a; PETA 2010f).^v Veganism was never promoted, with the closest being a mention of ‘a plant-based diet’ once in a link from an email from Animals Australia (Animals Australia 2010d), but even with this one the focus was more on meat and vegetarianism.

In terms of other uses, one email challenged fur (HSI 2010c), but there was no mention of more commonly worn animal products such as leather. As far as entertainment was concerned, only “inhumane” animal attractions were ruled out (HSI 2010b, 2010a), not entertainment involving non-human animals regardless of the treatment. Overall, there was little challenge to the choices concerning non-human animals that the people receiving the

emails make, when it comes to their consumption of animal products for food or clothing, or their support for entertainment involving non-human animals.

Finally, fourteen and a half percent of the actions promoted by these organisations did not fall under the categories discussed above. Many of these actions are consistent with the “little effort” model, such as joining an email list concerning puppy mills (HSUS 2010k, 2010l); watching videos on animal issues in the media (HSUS 2010g), rescued dogs (HSUS 2010a), or an explanation of PETA’s tactics and campaigns (PETA 2010n); reading an article by HSUS President Wayne Pacelle on HSUS’s electoral victories on puppy mills and wildlife, and defeat on the issue of “canned hunts” (HSUS 2010b); and fundraising activities such as creating a fundraising page online. Other fundraising activities promoted by these organisations would take more time and effort, such as organising a vegan bake sale (PETA 2010a). However, the focus is still on raising money rather than making changes to the individuals own lifestyle to ‘curb their own demands for animal exploitation’ (Schonfeld 2010). Requesting an action kit to stop dogs suffering in hot cars implies some activism being carried out by the individual (PETA 2010c), rather than just donating to an organisation or requesting someone else make a change through a petition. However, like all emails in this category, it does not challenge what people buy or consume.

Conclusion

This paper has explored the way in which certain animal advocacy campaigns are more favourable from an organisational perspective than others. The examination of the four AAOs selected has illustrated that the actions they advocate in their email campaigns fit the expectations of resource mobilisation theory. The case study found that a vast majority of the actions promoted by the AAOs studied are consistent with McCarthy and Zald’s description of the type of actions that require little effort and are therefore likely to maximise involvement in and resources for the organisations. Nearly sixty-two percent of the actions are directly compatible with these actions (petitions and donating), with that figure rising to over seventy-three percent if similar actions such as phoning and buying products are included. For the remaining twenty-six to twenty-seven percent of actions, very few depart

from the little effort paradigm and even fewer encourage people to make significant changes to their own lifestyle.

The heavy focus on petitions and donations means that people are often asking businesses or politicians to reform a form of animal exploitation, representing some form of animal welfare. Where people were encouraged to request the abolition of a certain use (animal rights), this was usually a more “unpopular” form of animal exploitation (such as seal clubbing, dog fighting or fur) that is not supported by most people in Western countries anyway. Individuals were generally only being asked to push for welfare changes or the elimination of certain forms of animal exploitation that they are not participating in themselves. When it comes to donations, individuals are donating mainly to support these organisations making such requests themselves, for example, people donating to PETA so the organisation can perform negotiations like they did with KFC to minimise the suffering involved in raising and slaughtering chickens.

What is less consistent with the actions described by McCarthy and Zald is a more extensive animal rights position that does not merely attempt to abolish some already unpopular forms of animal exploitation, but strives to work towards the abolition of all animal exploitation through the promotion of veganism. Organisational considerations such as the need for funding may help to explain why the promotion of veganism and the challenging of widely accepted forms of animal exploitation such as the consumption of meat, dairy, eggs and leather is generally missing in the actions promoted by the AAOs studied.

Despite the resource mobilisation perspective being useful in explaining the campaigns of AAOs, it is important to avoid reducing ‘complex social processes to economic questions’ (Sinclair 2006, p. 19). The resource mobilisation perspective has been critiqued for privileging the material and organisational, while ignoring ideological and cultural factors (McCarthy and Zald 2001, p. 555). The activism of these organisations certainly cannot be solely reduced to financial and other organisational considerations. For example, PETA President Ingrid Newkirk (2010) has recently responded to Schonfeld’s criticisms of PETA’s integrationist, welfarist activism and justified this approach using the philosophy of ethicist

Peter Singer. Other factors beyond economic and organisational considerations that explain the activism of AAOs will be investigated elsewhere.

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ⁱ Throughout this article, the terms 'non-human animals' and 'animals' will be used interchangeably, however, the importance of the term 'non-human animals' rather than 'animals' is certainly accepted, as using the term 'animals' to refer to non-human animals reinforces the idea that humans are somehow separate to other animals, rather than simply being one species of animal. For more on the term 'animals' and speciesist language, see Roger Yates's (2010, pp. 15-16) article 'Language, Power and Speciesism.'

ⁱⁱ For example, Patty Mark, President of Animal Liberation Victoria, contacted RSPCA Victoria requesting that they serve only vegan food at their events. In response, Maria Mercurio, Chief Executive Officer of RSPCA Victoria, stated 'a vegan or vegetarian lifestyle is not what the RSPCA is all about' and 'we are not vegans or vegetarians' (Mercurio and Mark 2006) – this is in contrast to organisations such as PETA, HSUS, HSI, and Animals Australia.

ⁱⁱⁱ Often the main action the email was promoting was watching a video or reading about some form of animal abuse. This was not counted as the "main action", as this is more part of drawing people's attention to a certain issue, rather than asking them taking action on it. In their emails, HSUS often have a video that they are asking people to watch, but it was the action that accompanied the video that was what was counted as

the action, whether it was adding your name to a pre-written letter, donating, or whatever else. Many of the emails from HSI had something similar, with either a video or a photo. Others had a 'take action' section, so the two actions in this section of those emails were included. In Animals Australia's emails, some contained a section titled 'campaign action of the month' – making the main action in these emails particularly obvious. The main action PETA were promoting was clear from the text and title of their emails.

^{iv} McCarthy and Zald (2001, p. 543) differentiate between one-off donations and membership because donations imply 'no long term involvement' whereas membership and leadership do imply longer-term involvement. While leadership in an AAO certainly would move away from the "little effort" paradigm, emails promoting membership will be counted interchangeably with those calling for one-off donations. These organisations themselves basically use the terms donation and membership interchangeably, for example, PETA (2011) refers to their membership as an 'annual donation.' As membership is very similar to one-off donations in terms of the "little effort" paradigm, with the only real difference being that members will be given a reminder in case they want to donate to become a member the following year, for the purposes of this case study, annual donations or membership will not be differentiated between one-off donations.

^v For example, an email from Animals Australia (2010a) promoting vegetarianism opened with a quote from Jamie Oliver, which read: "Vegetarian as a general concept is a brilliant thing... We've got to stop eating so much meat. We are eating too much meat." This same email encouraged people 'to go meat-free for the week.' So while vegetarianism was promoted, reducing meat consumption and eliminating meat for the week were also framed as meaningful actions that people could take without becoming vegetarians.