

**ANIMAL JUSTICE CITIZEN ACTIVISM
AND
THE POLITICS OF SIGHT**

Annie Bernatchez

Thesis submitted to the School of Sociological and Anthropological Studies
Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Ottawa
in partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Doctorate of Philosophy in Sociology

© Annie Bernatchez, Ottawa, Canada, 2023

Cette thèse est dédiée à ma mère, Linda.

I also dedicate this thesis to those who passed away, leaving great sadness in my heart,
My cats Bob, Princesse Jeanne, Minette, Swancé, Chico, and M. Charles.
And my grand-mothers, Annette and Rachel.

Finally, this thesis is for every animal who suffers because of human greed and
to everyone who relentlessly tries to make this world a better place for them.

Summary

This thesis examines the social phenomenon of farm occupations enacted by Animal Justice Citizen Activists (AJCAs). Farm occupations are a strategy of civil disobedience that make visible the animal violence behind the scenes in the animal-industrial complex; they enact a politics of sight that receives substantial pushback. Informed by two bodies of literature, Critical Animal Studies and Social Movements Studies, the thesis focuses on the socio-political context and on the emotional dimension of undertaking a politics of sight. An analysis of the mainstream media and provincial governments representations of four Canadian farm occupations and the legislative response in two provinces where ag-gag laws have been passed reveals a general tendency of political suppression. That is, representations of farm occupations tend to deprecate the politics of sight and eschew its goal of achieving full visibility of animal violence on farms. Moreover, while investigating the politics of sight with the analytical lens of critical substantivism, where farm occupations are seen as an ethico-political practice, further perils become visible, including the silencing of the practice of giving voice to animals, but also the societal disposition towards misunderstanding and being indifferent to the suffering of animals on farms. In addition to these structural challenges of making visible what is hidden in plain sight, the analysis of in-depth interviews with 15 AJCAs across Canada reveals an idiosyncratic, yet collective, form of emotionality manageable through reflexivity, when activists are confronted with and bear witness to the reality of animal violence in their efforts to enact a politics of sight.

Thus, the empirical fieldwork provides an original understanding of Animal Justice activism in Canada, enabling a pragmatic and evaluative understanding of the politics of sight and a dynamic understanding of sociological concepts. Conceptually, the thesis seeks to contribute to the development of key explanatory terms such as political suppression, moral shock, emotional habitus, and bearing witness. Although these concepts provided the analytical starting point, the fieldwork advances their understanding and proposes new strategies for future usage. First, mainstream media and provincial governments echo one another in suppressing a politics of sight, paradoxically referring to peaceful farm occupations as violence. Second, moral shock occurs when activists are immersed in animal violence, which is likely due to the limit of their emotional repertoire. In such conditions, emotional reflexivity is the mechanism that allows activist to sustain the performance of a politics of sight. Emotional reflexivity is thus a crucial component of moral shock and emotional habitus. Lastly, to understand the scope of a politics of sight, this research suggests that critical substantivism can be an essential evaluative tool to identify the tasks and perils of bearing witness against the horizon of political suppression and audience (non)response. This thesis, therefore, provides a critical reflection on the structural and emotional dynamics of performing a politics of sight in the context of Animal Justice activism.

Résumé

Cette thèse examine le phénomène social des occupations de ferme par des militants citoyens de Justice Animale. Les occupations de ferme sont une stratégie de désobéissance civile pour rendre visible la violence faite sur les animaux dans les coulisses du complexe animal-industrie, une politique de la vue fortement combattue. Informée par deux corpus de littérature, les Études Critiques Animales et les études sur les mouvements sociaux, la thèse se concentre sur le contexte socio-politique et sur l'émotivité de cette forme de politique de la vue. En regardant la représentation des médias populaires de quatre occupations de ferme et des gouvernements provinciaux où deux législations « ag-gag » ont passées, une tendance générale de suppression politique a émergé. En fait, les représentations tendent à déprécier la politique de la vue et évitent de rendre visible la violence faite sur les animaux gardés sur les fermes. L'enquête sur la politique de la vue sous l'angle analytique du substantivisme critique ainsi que la considération des occupations de ferme comme un pratique éthico-politique de témoignage rendent visible une série de périls additionnels. Ces préoccupations en l'occurrence la dénégation d'une voix propre aux animaux et une réalité sociétale qui relèvent de l'incompréhension et de l'indifférence de la souffrance animale sur les fermes. En plus de ce défi structurel, des entretiens avec 15 citoyens canadiens concernés a montré qu'une immersion dans la violence animale est une forme d'émotivité idiosyncrasique, mais collective, gérable par la réflexivité émotionnelle.

Ainsi, ce terrain empirique se veut une contribution originale à l'activisme pour la Justice Animale au Canada, puisqu'il offre une vision pragmatique et évaluative à la politique de la vue et une compréhension dynamique de concepts sociologiques. Conceptuellement, la thèse contribue aux concepts de répression politique, choc moral, à l'habitus émotionnel et au témoignage. Bien que ces concepts soient le point de départ analytique, le terrain contribue à leur compréhension et suggère d'autres angles d'utilisation. Premièrement, les médias grand public et les gouvernements provinciaux se font écho en supprimant la politique de la vue, paradoxalement ils réfèrent à la violence lorsqu'ils traitent des occupations de fermes pacifiques. Deuxièmement, la plongée dans la violence animale produit un choc moral, ce qui est probablement dû à la limite de ce qu'un habitus émotionnel peut transmettre. Dans de telles conditions, la réflexivité émotionnelle est le mécanisme qui permet d'accomplir une politique de la vue. La réflexivité émotionnelle est donc une composante cruciale du choc moral et de l'habitus émotionnel. Enfin, pour comprendre la portée d'une politique de la vue, le substantivisme critique se présente comme un outil évaluatif essentiel dans la mesure où il permet de regarder les tâches et les périls du témoignage en saisissant l'horizon de la répression politique et une (ir)réponse du public. Par conséquent, cette thèse propose une réflexion critique sur la dynamique structurelle et émotionnelle de la réalisation d'une politique de la vue dans le contexte du militantisme pour la Justice Animale.

Table of contents

<i>Summary</i>	<i>iii</i>
<i>Résumé</i>	<i>iv</i>
<i>Table of contents</i>	<i>v</i>
<i>Acknowledgement</i>	<i>viii</i>
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Why Should this Thesis be Written?.....	4
1.2 Personal Reflection.....	5
1.3 Thesis Structure.....	6
2. Research Problem	8
2.1 Bearing Witness as a Politics of Sight	8
2.1.1 Bearing Witness	8
2.1.2 Politics of Sight.....	10
2.2 The Rise and Fall of an Erstwhile Politics of Sight	12
2.2.1 The Animal Liberation Front	14
2.2.2 “Terrorists or Freedom Fighters”	15
2.2.2.1 Extraordinary Laws in the United States.....	16
2.2.2.2 Canada in the Footsteps of Curbing Civil Rights and Liberties.....	17
2.3 The Contemporary Politics of Sight	19
2.3.1 Independent Farm Investigator	19
2.3.2 Vigil.....	20
2.3.3 Farm Occupation	21
2.4 Situating the Current Study	23
2.4.1 Animal Justice Socio-Philosophies	23
2.4.1.1 The Quintessence of Speciesism.....	24
2.4.1.2 Core Ideas of Classical Moral Debates	26
2.4.1.3 The Abolitionist and Critical Animal Studies Perspectives	26
2.4.2 Theoretical Framework Part 1: Actors of Political Suppression	29
2.4.2.1 Criminalizing Concerned Citizens: State Power	29
2.4.2.2 The Media Power’s to Frame Public Perception.....	32
2.4.3 Theoretical Framework Part 2: Emotions and Social Movement Studies	33
2.4.3.1 Emotional Habitus.....	36
2.4.3.2 Emotional Reflexivity	37
2.4.3.3 Moral Shock	38
2.4.3.4 Coping Strategies	39
2.5 Research Objectives	40
2.6 Method	43

3. Article 1 – Animal Justice Citizen Activism in Canada: Paradox in the Politics of Sight.....	45
3.1 Introduction	46
3.2 Data and Method	49
3.3. Media Representations and the Politics of Sight.....	49
3.3.1 Devaluing the Vision of AJCAs	50
3.3.1.1 Disregarding the Occupation	50
3.3.1.2 Disregarding the Evidence	50
3.3.2 Reinterpreting the Evidence.....	51
3.3.3 AJCAs as Threats.....	52
3.3.3.1 Criminality	52
3.3.3.2 Biosecurity.....	54
3.4 Legislative Representations of the Politics of Sight	54
3.4.1 Erasure of the AJCAs’ Vision.....	54
3.4.2 AJCAs as a Threat.....	55
3.4.2.1 Economic Threat.....	55
3.4.2.2 Rural Criminality.....	56
3.4.2.3 Threat to Security	56
3.5 Concluding Discussion	57
 4. Article 2 - Emotional Reflexivity in the Politics of Sight: Embodied Moral Shock and Limit of the Emotional Repertoire	60
4.1 Introduction	61
4.2 Moral Shock and Emotional Habitus.....	62
4.3 Emotional Reflexivity.....	63
4.4 Data and Method.....	65
4.5 Emotional Reflexivity and the Politics of Sight.....	66
4.5.1 The Shades of Moral Shock	66
4.5.1.1 Bearing Witness: The first Encounter	66
4.5.1.2 The “Torture Chamber”: A Sensorial Experience.....	67
4.5.2 Coping with Unanticipated Emotions.....	70
4.5.2.1 Detachment as a Survival Mechanism	70
4.5.2.2 Objectivity in Documenting Injustice	72
4.5.2.3 Trauma and Coping Post-action: Abiding Effects	72
4.6 Discussion	73
4.7 Conclusion	75

5. Article 3 – The Politics of Sight and Bearing Witness to Animal Suffering: Lessons from Human Rights	77
5.1 Introduction	78
5.2 The Animal Rights Debate	79
5.3 Human Rights Beyond Normativism, Political Legal Institutionalism, and Empiricism.....	82
5.4 Bearing Witness	84
5.5 Bearing witness as mode of practice in the context of AJCA actions.....	86
5.5.1 Voice against Silence	88
5.5.2 Interpretation against Misunderstanding.....	89
5.5.3 Empathy against Indifference	91
5.6 Conclusion	92
6. Synthesis and Additional Reflections.....	94
6.1 Political Suppression and the Animal-Industrial Complex	95
6.1.1 What is Behind the Mainstream Media Narrative Scenes?.....	95
6.1.2 Do Group-Interests Oversee Ag-Gag Laws?.....	97
6.2 Managing the Embodiment of an Emotional Unknown	99
6.2.1 Moral Shock as the Embodied Experience of Animal Violence	99
6.2.2 When the Emotional Repertoire Breaks Off a Moral Shock Erupts	102
6.2.3 What Are the Experiences of AJCAs Teaching Us?	104
6.3 Is a Politics of Sight a Civil Duty or Is Empathetically Understanding a Human Responsibility?	105
6.3.1 Revisiting the Politics of Sight.....	106
6.3.2 Socio-psychological Factors in the Interpretative Gaps.....	108
6.3.3 Can Response-Ability Be Achieved with a Politics of Sight?	112
7. Conclusion.....	115
7.1 Contribution of the Thesis.....	115
7.2 Limits of the Thesis	117
7.3 Future Research	118
8. References.....	120
<i>Appendix 1: Ethics Approval</i>	<i>135</i>
<i>Appendix 2: Consent Forms.....</i>	<i>136</i>
<i>Appendix 3: Interview Guide.....</i>	<i>140</i>

Acknowledgement

First and foremost, I would like to thank Canadian Animal Justice activists. Advocating for animals is the most challenging form of advocacy. Animals may be oblivious to human efforts geared towards the abolition of their oppression, and most of those animals encountered on farms will probably have departed in pain and suffering. Nonetheless, I am convinced this ephemeral meeting has brought them commiseration. Because of everything you do for the animals, I am grateful to anyone who has put their freedom on the line to make a difference.

I am thankful for my mother, Linda. She has taught me to be determined, no matter what obstacle was put in the way of achieving a worthwhile goal. I admire the wonderful woman that you are.

I do not doubt that the discussion in thesis has been achieved with the exceptional support from my thesis supervisor, José López. I am grateful for every minute you spent working with me and for pushing my reflection much further than anyone would have done. I am blessed that you agreed to work with me on this controversial but necessary moral, cultural, and political subject. I am also in the debt to my committee members, Anne Vallely, Nathan Young, Brieg Capitaine, and John Sorenson, for your examining this thesis.

Another human I deeply respect is my friend and veterinarian, D^{re} Hristova. Animals need loving and respectful veterinarians just like you to care for them in their best interests. You are a role model in the global veterinary industry. I am thankful for all the care and advice you addressed to my cats. I am confident they are grateful too to have met you more than ten years ago. I am also in the debt of my friends Kathleen, Dominic, Sabrina, Lyne, Suzanne, Jean-Bernard, Josianne, Bernard-Simon, Ayy, Manny, Mathieu, Denise and Pierre, and Denise for their support throughout my PhD journey.

Here, I thank my cats, who are still with me and those who have departed. They may not be able to read but is it my way of saying that our companion animals offer unconditional love and support that is often invisibilized by the shield of things we take for granted or do not want to be responsible for. Every time one of you walks on my keyboard, meows to get my attention, or asks for a cuddle, it reminds me that life is about harmony, not rational choices to fulfill one's interests.

Lastly, I would like to thank the School of Sociology and Anthropology for offering me a place in the PhD program and for their financial support. I also appreciate the Fond de recherche Société et culture, Quebec, and the Ontario Graduate Scholarship for making this research possible.

I. Introduction

This thesis explores the socio-political context and the emotional dimension of a politics of sights whose goal is to achieve animal rights and liberation in Canada; it, also, offers a sympathetic evaluative perspective. Activism tactics such as education, legal mobilization, demonstrations, civil disobedience, and direct action are enacted to raise awareness and, for many, to dismantle the normalization of animal violence in the food system. These tactics are constitutive of a *politics of sight*. As Pachirat (2011) explains, the aim of a politics of sight is to make visible what is hidden to produce socio-political transformations. In this thesis, farm occupations, a form of civil disobedience protest involving activists' bodily immersion in animal violence, are conceptualized as enactments of a politics of sight. The goal of such actions is to document and expose the lawful misery of animals ensnared in physically or spatially distant industrialized farms. Farm occupations, seek to expose an invisible reality to which most humans (in)directly contribute. After some vicissitudes of activism, contemporary *Animal Justice Citizenship Activists* (AJCAs) have turned to peaceful and non-violent civil disobedience protest that has been, for the most part, ignored and deprecated by the mainstream media and provincial governments. In addition, farm occupations involve the negotiation and management of unwanted emotional states while empathically bearing witness firsthand to animal suffering behind the scenes in the animal-industrial complex.

What does the *animal-industrial complex* (AIC) mean? In her book, *Humans and Other Animals: Beyond the Boundaries of Anthropology*, Noske coined the concept, referring to practices, organizations, and industries that have commodified animals' bodies and where animals "have become reduced to mere appendages of computers and machines" (1989, p. 20), akin of zootechny (Dardenne, 2020). The analogy to the military-industrial complex, in Noske's coining, was taken up by Adams (1997) and later by Critical Animal Studies (CAS) scholar-activists, for instance, Boscardin (2018), Porter (2018), and in the collective volume, *The Rise of Critical Animal Studies*, edited by Taylor and Twine (2014). Twine's version of Noske's concept refers to "a partly opaque and multiple set of networks and relationships between the corporate (agricultural) sector, governments, and public and private science. With economic, cultural, social and affective dimensions, it encompasses an extensive range of practices, technologies, images, identities and markets" (2012, p. 23). This time, the analogy invokes the prison-industrial complex, the entertainment-industrial complex, and the pharmaceutical-industrial complex. In the edited volume, *The Global Industrial Complex: Systems of Domination* (Best et al., 2011), Nibert (2011) refers to a global "massive network" in which animals' bodies are born, raised, slaughtered; their body parts are packaged, and distributed to restaurant and grocery stores. All of this is supported by the state. In fact, the AIC

not only inflict agonies and death on individual animals but devastate the environment, destroying the habitat of other animals, leading to extinction of entire species, as well as endangering the future of human life, through pollution of air, soil and water, global warming, production of new pathogens and global pandemics (in addition to epidemic levels of obesity and a host of serious health threats among those who consume animals as food) (Sorenson, 2011b, p. 70).

The media-state nexus influenced by AIC corporations mould the rules that govern the exploitation of and the profits that are made from animal violence.

Industrial and legitimized abuse occurs in this massive network of legal exploitation of animals' bodies. Agnew (1998) defines animal abuse as "any act that contributes to the pain or death of an animal or that otherwise threatens the welfare of an animal;" he adds, "[s]uch abuse may be physical (including sexual) or mental, may involve active maltreatment or passive neglect, may be direct or indirect, intentional or unintentional, socially approved or condemned, and/or necessary or unnecessary (however defined)" (p. 179). In this thesis, *animal violence* is preferred over animal abuse because violence conveys a sense of intentionality in action (e.g., power and physical force) that results in physical and psychological harm and/or death. Animals are victims of human violence. This is an undeniable fact: their bodies are genetically manipulated, controlled, mutilated, pumped with medication and unnatural food, and massively murdered. In practical terms, the AIC deprives animals of rights and freedom by manipulating public opinion with speciesist-capitalist marketing strategies that naturalize and normalize animal exploitation for food consumption. In this thesis, animal violence is (re)produced by what I call *Animal Exploiter Authorities* (AEA)—farmers, veterinarians, unions, associations, and lobbyists—who have the epistemic power to influence public opinion and governments by participating in animal violence or regulating "acceptable standards" of such exploitation (Bernatchez, 2022b). The power structure (re)producing animal violence is what AJCAs are attempting to dismantle with a politics of sight.

Animal Rights activism is a generic term for a broad array of tactics, while Animal Liberation refers to the pursuit of animal rights rooted through underground strategies or tactics for the sake of animal liberation. Animal Liberation also has a figurative meaning, much like other social justice movements, liberation from systemic oppression and exploitation. Closely interconnected with liberation, the anti-speciest stance holds that human's imagined moral rights to dominate animals should not prevail. Some activists called themselves "concerned citizens," meaning they have the right, as citizens, to protest social injustices even though it means "breaking the law" by trespassing on private property where animal violence occurs to document and rescue animals. The epistemological shift attempts to legitimize and politicize civil disobedience, drawing attention to civil rights and liberties to

help and to rescue animals. Therefore, AJCAs seek justice by openly participating in non-violent protests enacting a politics of sight by which they willingly put their freedom on the line to contest and transform an oppressive and exploitative system. Animal Justice activism is thus an umbrella term with a politics of sight at its core, confronted with political suppression that overshadows its success.

Political suppression refers to subtle strategies enacted by democratic states, and supported by mainstream media, to raise the cost of participation in social protest by framing public opinion in a way that favours dominant economic interests (Boykoff, 2007). From a CAS perspective, it means framing strategies that are aligned with the corporate interests of the AIC. Considering that this is the socio-political context in which a politics of sight is performed, I have sought to answer the questions: *how does a politics of sight operate and shape Animal Justice Citizen activism? And how do concerned citizens emotionally respond to a politics of sight?* Thus, this thesis has three objectives: (1) to examine the media-state nexus looking for evidence of political suppression, (2) to examine the emotional dimensions of AJCAs' participation in a politics of sight, and (3) evaluating the politics of sight from a critical substantive perspective. This research is exploratory because, to my knowledge, little research has hitherto addressed this topic in this manner. Also, in Canada, the practice of a politics of sight on farms is relatively new. Therefore, analyzing how a politics of sight is unfolding on the ground and the political attempts to blunt it while proposing critical avenues for this emerging activism, makes this research thesis original.

In this thesis, I have tried to use inclusive language and to break with speciesist vocabulary. However, I use the word¹ "animal" instead of "nonhuman animal," a term commonly used in the Human-Animal relationship and CAS literatures. Why? The use of nonhuman animals implicitly points to an ontological and imagined hierarchy that connotes the superiority of humans over animals; nonhuman animals are "Other" than humans though humans are animals. Of course, it is a fact that humans are biological animals. Nevertheless, for a symbolic interpretation and comprehensive account, I believe the word animal is apropos. The goal is not to turn animals into human. Rather than reforming a binary category that complexifies one's understanding, the point is to respect, genuinely and legally, animals as they are, in the expression of their emotions, interests, cultures, and social life, no matter the form that their exogenic traits take. I also prefer to use the word "human" to counterbalance my previous premise instead, and when logically possible, of person-people and individual as they, respectively,

¹ Although recognizing the complexities associated with making a conceptual decision, the ethical employment of the concept of animal versus nonhuman animals holds significance when examining the exploitation of animals in agricultural settings, necessitating a meticulous examination of the principles of respect for animal autonomy and justice. Nonetheless, a profound philosophical inquiry must be undertaken to thoroughly contemplate further utilization of the nonhuman animal concept.

convey a sense of personhood and political rights, something human imagination still culturally and legally denies to animals.

1.1 Why Should this Thesis be Written?

I grew up with compassion and respect for animals. Still, like most humans I was socialized by a speciesist education; I ate, wore, and indirectly supported experimentation on animals. I was never really entertained by shows or spectacles featuring animals, though I did attend some. When I was an undergrad student, I took a supervised reading course; I wanted to work on the animal question. I remember the professor at the time laughing at me, saying we do not talk about animals in sociology. His ignorance did not stop me, and I was successful in convincing him to allow me to undertake such a reading course. The compromise was that I look at animals in the food industry. I cannot remember which book I read, but the author used the word “flesh.” Something “clicked” in my mind, looking at my arm I understood that I was also made out of flesh. This powerful word made me stop eating animals’ body parts, but not their bodily secretion. It is shameful to admit that it was only during the second year in the PhD program that I fully stop aligning myself with a speciesist ontology.

At that time, I was increasingly interested in Animal Liberation activism, something I had never really read about before. By the end of 2016, I started to read about what was going on among activists in the United States (U.S.), especially the state suppression and persecution of some members of the Animal Liberation Front (ALF). I was outraged that these humans were being harassed and criminalized by the state when their sole goal was to liberate animals from exploitation. While reading about the American context, I wondered what was going on in Canada. At the time, there were no ag-gag laws but there was an extremist-terrorist narrative targeting ALF-driven strategy and undercover work. This discovery made me reframe my thesis topic. I started to investigate animal rights activism in Canada and came across the activist, Jenny McQueen, who is known worldwide. Specifically, I came upon a video of her narrating the suffering of a mother pig. This seeded a question: how can this person who fights against animal violence be there with these animals objectively documenting and narrating... without crying? This reflection had to become the second core interest of this thesis. In 2019, not too long after I started to write my research project, the first farm occupation occurred in Canada. This new Canadian social phenomenon had to be addressed.

My need to grapple with how the system that (re)produces animal violence could also oppress humans opposing systemic animal oppression instilled in me the moral obligation of using my academic privilege to give a voice to both the animals and the activists. In her book *Critical Ethnography: Method,*

Ethics, and Performance, Soyini Madison (2019) explains that critical researchers feel a sense of ethical responsibility by which she means a moral obligation to tackle unjust and taken-for-granted assumptions underlying power structures. This grounds our need to resist domestication and use our privilege to make humans' stories accessible and to contribute to emancipatory knowledge for social justice. Of course, this means that we have a political positionality intersecting our habitus as researchers while doing fieldwork, analyzing data and writing papers. It also entails taking an activist stance, a positioning against hegemonic practices and offering alternative practices. It is advocating for social justice by exposing a hidden reality.

I was inspired by Pachirat's sense of moral obligation in the same manner. In his book *Every Twelve Seconds: Industrialized Slaughter and the Politics of sight*, Pachirat (2011) introduces the theoretical perspective of a politics of sight, discussed in chapter 2, but also states that his book enacts its own politics of sight, revealing the industrialized slaughterhouse behind the scenes. As such this thesis, also enacts a politics of sight by making visible a distant reality that AJCAs have to confront in their practice of witnessing and producing audio-visual documents of animal violence by bodily immersing themselves in what some of them call a *dungeon*. In consequence, this thesis cannot avoid focussing its attention on the conflictual dynamic of exposing animal violence and how it is emotionally managed. That is why this thesis had to be written, to take animal and activists' stories out of the shadow and to shed light on the hegemonic overpowering of the politics of sight that constitutes the subject of this thesis.

1.2 Personal Reflection

The initial motivation for this thesis was to investigate the hidden emotional dynamics of activists' immersion in the sites of animal violence and the structural mechanisms of suppression. Like most research, mine reveals interesting findings that I have turned back on myself. Researcher reflexivity means acknowledging our own power, privileges, and bias. I am a French-Canadian, vegan, anti-speciest, and PhD candidate in sociology. In this thesis, my identity is expressed from an anti-speciest standpoint. I grew up in a small town located in the province of Quebec. Thirty years ago, "isms" were not as contested as they are today, mainly because the information era was only at its beginning—I only obtained regular access to Internet when I was 23 years old. Back then, school curricula and mainstream media were comfortably diffusing a state agenda. Consequently, my understanding of the world and even my dreams were set up to enable me to become an alienated taxpayer. I only recently aligned my intuitive values with my everyday practices, allowing me to tackle the mechanisms of cognitive dissonance that had prevented me from respecting the lives of animals.

Why anti-speciesism? For the same reason that discrimination among humans based on exogenic features, cultures, religions, and socio-economic status is ethically and morally wrong. There is no natural indication, outside human imagination, that one is superior to the other. This is also true for animals. On this small planet in a vast universe, equality among beings should prevail not only theoretically but in reality. As Harari (2014) writes in his book *Sapiens*, beliefs do not exist in the natural world; we live in an imagined world order because we believe in it. Therefore, my anti-speciesism stance is a repudiation of human superiority over animals in this imagined world, an ethical and rational choice that makes me equal to every human and animal. This point of view transcends this thesis and steers my critical reflection about the media-state nexus, and guides my ambition to understand exposure to animal violence from eyewitnesses' perspectives.

1.3 Thesis Structure

This research and thesis address the structural and embodied experience of witnessing animal violence. Due to the distinctive nature of the subject in Canada, I have separated my thesis into three articles, each addressing a specific aspect. Before presenting the articles, I begin with the research problem. **Chapter 2** begins with a description of bearing witness and a politics of sight, and then presents the historical background of Animal Justice activism, providing the context for the politics of sight discussed in this thesis. First, I address the rise and fall of an earlier politics of sight, then the ALF tactics, and their subsequent legislative suppression. I then turn to look at the tactics of the contemporary politics of sight before briefly reviewing the literature pertaining to Animal Rights socio-philosophies, political suppression, and core concepts in social justice activism. In each research article, or in chapters 3-4-5, I expand the literature specific to the topic addressed. Finally, I present the research objectives and the method.

Chapter 3 is the first thesis article and focuses on the political suppression of the politics of sight in Canada. While examining the mainstream media representation of four farm occupations and how members of Legislative Assemblies (MLA) frame the need for ag-gag laws, something became apparent. The tactics of AJCAs are implicitly compared to those of the ALF, a politics of fear around farm occupations is being engendered. This creates a treacherous paradox not least because AJCAs are committed to non-violence, openly live-stream their protest actions, and ask the mainstream media to tour the farm. If the social movement studies (SMS) literature points to state influence of the mainstream media, the CAS literature shows this also holds true for the corporate-state relationships. As I show in this thesis, it is in the Hansards of Legislative Assemblies that evidence of this emerges: a network of

influence coming from the AIC. The first thesis article is thus a sociological contribution to ag-gag laws studies and explores how Canadian authorities attempt to suppress the politics of sight of AJCAs.

In **chapter 4**, I tackle the emotional dimension of the politics of sight as experienced by concerned citizens. This second article attempts to analyze what happens when activists go to farms and how they cope with the emotions of bearing witness to violence in situ and thereafter. Weaving together the concepts of emotional reflexivity with emotional habitus and moral shock has led me to expand these two concepts and shed light on an unexplored dimension of a politics of sight. This is something that emotional habitus and moral shock do not adequately convey if considered separately from emotional reflexivity. Even though every protest, and social movement, has an emotional habitus, the moral shock that follows bodily immersion on a farm when documenting animal violence shows the limitations of a pedagogy of conventional feelings and forms of emoting. In fact, a moral shock emerges from immersion in animal violence and is foremost embodied as an emotional unknown. Therefore, the second thesis article is an examination of feelings associated with the politics of sight and a sociological contribution to essential concepts in SMS and the sociology of emotions.

Chapter 5 is the third article, coauthored with my thesis supervisor Dr. José López. We seek to understand the politics of sight through the lens of critical substantivism, drawing attention to the tasks and perils associated with bearing witness on farms. To do so, we first examine the animal rights debates to establish the material and symbolic orientation of farm occupations. Then we draw on common analytical patterns in Human Rights activism studies through which Kurasawa (2007) establishes his critical substantivist perspective. Contrasting the tasks of voice, interpretation, and empathy with the associated threats of silence, misunderstanding, and indifference, we argue that a politics of sight may be successful, but important challenges must be overcome. Investigating the politics of sight from another angle reveals that critical substantivism offers an analytical lens that provides a thick understanding of the vicissitudes of bearing witness in Human and Animal rights activism. Before I conclude with the contributions of the thesis, its limits and how this thesis provides openings for future research, I present in **chapter 6** a synthesis of the three articles and provide additional reflections that emerged in the writing process.

2. Research Problem

2.1 *Bearing Witness as a Politics of Sight*

2.1.1 Bearing Witness

[As a provisional possibility of] media practices of producing testimony [... it] conjures an explicitly moral practice [...] central to journalism's legitimation [... in a normative exposure of suffering ... it] provides a rationale for journalistic presence (a more noble purpose than the quest for ratings) and moralizes the inability to act directly to alleviate the suffering one is proximate to [... it] ostensibly justifies intrusion into the suffering of others; of making demands of powerless subjects who are perhaps not in a position to consent to being represented. The concept renders the observation of suffering in order to report it as not only morally acceptable, but a moral imperative, and this in turn makes sense of the risks journalists may take. Bearing witness thus conceptually organizes what journalism does, and names a subject position for audiences other than voyeurism (p. 1221).

This excerpt from Sue Tait (2011) tells us that bearing witness consists in documenting suffering and entails a moral responsibility to communicate atrocity even though the risks of doing so might outweigh what might be accomplished. Tait asks, “what [does] bearing witness actually mean?” Pointing out the ambiguity of the term², Tait argues that the moral engagement of *response-ability* toward suffering, and its exceptionality and sense of urgency, is more efficient if voice is stressed over vision (p. 1222). Thus, bearing witness is undertaking a responsibility, involving the production of words and images—though never complete. It requires a dual emotional and moral resonance—objective producer (i.e., impartiality and detachment), a receptive audience, and a public response to the imperfect visibility of suffering, *will they do something?* The last criterion indicates the failure or success of bearing witness as a moral practice. Tait's conception echoes Kurasawa's (2007) definition of bearing witness as an ethico-political labour, discussed in chapter 5. Consequently, to bear witness necessitates engaging with the burden of another's suffering, a burden that comes with a moral, and agential, responsibility.

In the context of contemporary Animal Justice activism, bearing witness means a moral responsibility, a civic obligation to document and expose the AIC behind the scenes by using social, and mainstream, media to convey audio-visual stories of animal suffering. In her essay, Krajnc (2017),

² Tait claims that “[c]entral to the lack of clarity within this literature is the conflation of eye-witnessing and bearing witness, the truncation of ‘witnessing’ to refer to either concept, and the polysemy of the term to ‘bear’. To ‘bear’ can mean to produce, endure, suffer or be burdened. The term can thus qualify witnessing as an instrumental, passive or objective practice or, conversely, one that is affected, partial, active and committed” (2011, p. 1222). Eye-witnessing and bearing witness are, respectively, passive and active responses. Bearing witness is also the embodiment of suffering, an affective experience to use Tait words.

originator of Toronto Pig Save and the Save Movement who was criminally accused for giving water to pigs during a slaughterhouse vigil, argues that *compassion is not a crime*, bearing witness to animal suffering, instead, is a civic duty. As she recalls, the criminalization of compassion was also part of the attack on other socio-historical justice movements. She concludes that

[w]e must never avoid or turn away from the truth. The Save Movement is working to promote a shift in societal norms and laws so that bearing witness is seen as a duty practiced by everyone. Every social justice movement in history has succeeded when enough people stand up. Seeing the pigs' suffering firsthand changes everything. By bearing witness to their suffering and helping to create a new cultural norm where people see it as their duty to not look away, we discover the unity of life [...] The cruelty inflicted in factory farms, in transport, and at the slaughterhouse touches all of us. Bearing witness and helping animals in need as a daily practice will help save animals, our fragile environment, our health, and, ultimately, our conscience (pp. 497-498).

Such civic responsibility is a mean of countering the “legal invisibilization” of animal ensnared on farms (Deckha, 2018) and the anthropocentric legislation that is crafted to keep a disturbing reality hidden because “[i]n terms of advocacy, bearing witness resists, but also in important ways subverts, the ideologies sustaining the animal-industrial complex” (Deckha, 2019, p. 29). In media studies, Almiron et al. (2015), promoting ecological responsibility, claim that the lives of animals are “indirectly affected by media coverage” (p. 203) in terms of who “gives them a voice” and what type of terminology they use. Bearing witness is a multi-dimensional task that activists need to tackle.

For concerned Animal Justice citizens, bearing witness entails the strategic production of audio-visual communication of animal violence, or as Gillespie (2016, p. 578) puts it, bearing witness is an act of resisting while “shar[ing] the plights of those whose lives are otherwise erased.” Lockwood (2018, p. 118) further emphasizes that bearing witness “is about being present at conflicts where the truth of a situation requires people to be present, to hold power to account,” by giving a voice to those who are *seen* with moral attention. As discussed below, audio-visual communication also aims to provoke a moral shock (Jasper, 1997; Jasper & Poulsen, 1995) as a recruitment tactic and a means to maintain advocates motivated (Fernández, 2021; Hansson & Jacobsson, 2014). Such strategic audio-visual communication has the potential of mobilizing an uninformed audience if properly contextualized and explained with an ethico-political approach (Fernández, 2019). Thus, the role of emotion in bearing witness to explicit animal violence is a means for raising awareness about the practices of AIC and the suffering it causes behind the scenes. More importantly, bearing witness is an emotional and empathic direct bodily encounter that may transform our relationships with animals as it forces us to reflect on ourselves (Gillespie, 2016; Lockwood, 2018). This is an experience that is difficult to undergo through a distant audio-visual communication, for instance via a screen. Directly bearing witness is thus a way to hinder

willful anthropocentric blindness, to use the words of the ethologist Frans de Waal. Therefore, bearing witness to factory farming³ reveals the power of civic activism (Kirchhelle, 2021), as Hill (2019) puts it

[w]e may no longer be able to claim that we did not know, but seeing on its own is no substitute for responding, *being aware is not necessarily to be responsible*, and so bearing witness must do more moral work than mere observation or recognition if we are to say that contemporary media have brought about any sort of useful change in the way that we exist in relation to suffering (p. 28, emphasises added).

Bearing witness is an attempt to narrow the gap with respect to distant suffering, but it also represents an emotional burden for the activists and a hope of a public response, as discussed in chapters 4 and 5, respectively.

2.1.2 Politics of Sight

In his book *Every Twelve Seconds*—referring to the killing and processing rhythm of cows per working day—Timothy Pachirat (2011) studies a contemporary American industrialized slaughterhouse, where he spent five and a half months working undercover, reporting on his experience and the perspective of the “killing workers.” Slaughterhouses are zone of confinement: “physically hidden from sight by walls and socially veiled by the delegation of dirty, dangerous, and demeaning work to others tasked with carrying out the killing, skinning, and dismembering of living animals” (pp. 3-4). In these legal, and violent, spatio-temporal spaces hidden human and, primarily, animal suffering occurs, a social phenomenon inaccessible, thus invisible, for most of society, where remote surreptitious activities generate large profits.

Pachirat argues that, in contemporary society, mechanisms of power operate through *distance* (i.e., physical, social, linguistic, and methodological) and concealment. Drawing on Elias’ book, *The Civilizing Process*, Pachirat reminds us that the primary relationship between power and sight is to make invisible what triggers moral sensibilities instead of eliminating or transforming what makes us socially uncomfortable. This power relation is expressed in what Pachirat calls “legally demarcated states,” in other words, legislation that reinforces warlike isolation of violence in zones of confinement: “physical barriers receive a special legal status that supersedes the legal status of other, less socially fraught fences and enclosures” (p. 8). Bills—like ag-gag laws—and their associated penalties are

³ The term was coined in the 1960s by the Britain activist, Ruth Harrison, who presented herself as a “concerned ordinary citizen” about ethics, health and environmental impact of factory farming, in her book *Animal Machines* (2013) that advocated for animal welfare in the midst of industrialized farming practices growth.

indicators of the deep fear held by slaughterhouse owners and other financial beneficiaries of animal-production facilities about what might result if the work of industrialized killing and other contemporary animal-production practices were made visible [...] its overt targeting of those who intentionally reveal what is hidden in plain sight signals the existence of power relations characterized by confinement, segregation, and invisibility (p. 8).

Therefore, those who benefit from the killing—I would suggest the label of organized murder—of animals also gain legal protection that criminalizes unauthorized access to the production and distribution of visual and audio records of the AIC practices behind the scenes. While such scenes are hidden and inaccessible to most of society, Pachirat also illustrates how *surveillance* and concealment occurs within the walls of slaughterhouse, “shield, sequester, and neutralize the work of killing even” (p. 9) by building configurations (space) and division of tasks (labor). In this thesis, only the first dimension, social segregation, is pertinent to an activism context where the zone of confinement is conceptualized as a pre-slaughterhouse process, i.e., industrial animal exploitation practices in transportation and on farms.

Using Foucault’s work, this time, Pachirat claims that making visible what triggers moral sensibilities is an alternative formulation, resting on the assumption that the power of transparency will lead to illumination: “a central mechanism of power in the contemporary era works by *removing* barriers to sight, by eradicating obstacles that creates possibilities for darkness and concealment, and by installing instead [...] a ‘continuous and permanent system of surveillance’” (p. 11, emphasis in original). Therefore, making visible what is hidden in plain sight is a powerful tool that “operates by collapsing distances and exposing concealed spaces” (p. 14). In order to conceptualize this process, Pachirat coins the label *politics of sight* to describe “organized, concerted attempts to make visible what is hidden and to breach, literally or figuratively, zones of confinement in order to bring about social and political transformation” (2011, p. 236). In the context of Animal Justice activism, farm occupations are political actions with the goal of making animal violence visible, breaking public ignorance, with the ultimate aim of abolishing animal exploitation. AJCAs attempt to link the imaginary zone of human privilege to the concrete zones of confinement to generate cultural and political transformations. Therefore, AJCAs attempt to take animal violence outside of farm and transport truck walls into a realm of civic visibility.

This power of transparency, Pachirat argues, is a mechanism of power to make visible inglorious realities and acts as a counterforce, referring to Foucault’s work, he refers to physical isolation as follows:

this is the strategy characterizing diverse movements across the political spectrum that seek to make visible what is hidden in zones of confinement as a catalyst for political and social transformation. It is a strategy that seeks to invert the ‘power through transparency’ formula in the service of transformation rather than control and domination (p. 243).

Referencing the academic-journalist Michael Pollan's contention that slaughterhouses should be glass-walled if humans are to stop eating animal products and have a "right to look," Pachirat argues that this form of subversion of distance and concealment also assumes that seeing changes one's actions; if one dares to gaze in the first place, moral sentiments such as "emotions [of pity, disgust, and shock] carry the burden of transformation" (p. 248). In fact, social movements, like Human and Animal rights activists

share a common politics of sight insofar as they deploy words, images, and social media to breach zones of confinement on the implicit and explicit assumption that once those breaches are created, a 'reign of opinion' rooted in outrage, pity, disgust, sympathy, compassion, solidarity, shock, horror, or some other emotive response will lead to political action in the service of their desired goals. For who could stand the sight? But as the demonstration of the potential for sequestration and sight to work in conjunction with each other suggests, it is a risky strategy and one that always yields imperfect results. 'For photographs to accuse, and possibly to alter conduct, they must shock,' writes Susan Sontag—to which we could add that if shock, like many other emotions, requires increasing stimuli to maintain itself, then we are not far from a strategy that demands increasing intensification of its representations of suffering, pain, and the repulsive in its effort to reduce their actual occurrences in the world. This intensification, in turn, would reduce the shock level of subsequent representations in yet another iteration of the symbiotic relation between sight and concealment (p. 253).

That is, the core assumption to any politics of sight, as is the case with bearing witness: *if one sees, one will do something*; does this assumption reflect reality? However, as Pachirat claims, the same power of transparency, ambiguous in essence, motivates those who benefit from animal violence to counteract a politics of sight "seeking to create and maintain zones of concealment and areas of darkness around contemporary practices of food production. By criminalizing the production, possession, and distribution of records of such hidden work" (pp. 247-248). Ironically, Pachirat says, such laws also draw attention to the transformational power of a politics of sight. In this thesis, ag-gag laws constitute the key weapon for confronting a politics of sight, by seeking to ensure that animal violence remains hidden from the public. This point is developed in chapter 3. Mainstream media are usually the preferred platforms through which activists attempt to convey representations of suffering, as they have a broader reach in society. If AJCAs make use of such platforms, they must be aware of the risks of being silenced, misunderstood, and the indifference of an audience as discussed in chapter 5.

2.2 The Rise and Fall of an Erstwhile Politics of Sight

In the Western world, contemporary Animal Justice activism⁴ has its roots in the early XIX^e century. In his book *Animal Radical*, Jérôme Segal (2020) provides a socio-historical perspective of the

⁴ A complete story can be found in Dardenne (2020) for a general overview, in Ryder (2000) for an historical perspective, and Segal (2020) for an anti-speciest angle.

anti-speciesism movement. The first Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) emerged in England. Protection against public abuse and cruel treatment was aimed at domestic animals such as horses, a species widely exploited for labour at the time. In 1850, a French criminal law enshrined animal protection for the first time. The Grammont law⁵ criminalized abusive treatment with the intention of causing harm. Street activism and public disruption kicked in about 30 years later with Marie Huot, a French woman who originated the *Ligue Populaire Contre l'Abus de la vivisection*. Huot's tactics of investigation and civil disobedience protests opposed both the SPCA's mission—paradoxically administered by vivisectionists—and gruesome medical practices. Huot politicized animal advocacy through the introduction of animal justice in the public imaginary as she unfolded a politics of sight.

This strategic shift transformed animal protection into the defence of animals, or animal rights. As the medical complex of the early XX^e century had their cruel practices on animals exposed to the public, the first attempt of political suppression arose to manipulate public opinion. For instance, alienists, i.e., psychologists, changed the meaning of the word *zoophilia* (Segal, 2020, p. 41). Initially, zoophilia echoed philanthropy; zoophiles were animal rights protectors and defenders. Today, the word conveys the meaning of a paraphilia: humans who practice or prefer sex with animals. This is what Wrenn et al. (2015) call the medicalization of activism, a common practice to discredit opponents based on allusion to mental health issues. For Louise Michel, a French anarcho-feminist and animal advocate, the linkage of her activism to insanity almost led to incarceration in a mental health institute following a public speech. As Foucault's (1964) analysis shows, humans non-compliant with social norms were often categorized as mentally ill and delivered into the hands of medical power. Therefore, depicting animal advocates as deviants was a successful tactic to raise the cost of participation and prevent public support as many advocates retreated to isolated communities (Segal, 2020, p. 45) leaving the animals victims of depraved scientific fantasies.

These two forms of animal advocacy correspond to welfarism and pragmatism. Jasper and Nelkin (1992) explain, in their book, *The Animal Rights Crusade*, that welfarists (e.g., SPCA) believe in

⁵ The law's main argument had three implications: (1) it was bad for the economy because mistreated horses would die earlier, (2) death of animals in transportation posed a risk to human health, and (3) trivializing violence against animals could be related to human-to-human violence. The right-wing Catholics opposed this law by arguing that conceding human-to-animal crimes would minimize the severity of human-to-human crimes. It was meant to maintain human domination over animals. As a result, punishment for animal cruelty ended with preposterous low fines and a short prison sentence. In the English context, Ryder (2000) identifies two modern laws: Thomas Wentworth, Ireland 1635, passed a law "prohibiting the pulling of wool off sheep and the attaching of ploughs to horses' tails" (p. 49) and in 1641 in the U.S., Nathaniel Ward originated the first legal code, "[n]o man shall exercise any Tirranny or Crueltie towards any brute Creature which are usuallie kept for man's use" (p. 50). As Ryder explains, restriction existed long before these two laws, but were inscribed in religious tradition and the ancient world.

compassion and the protection of animals from cruelty. They strive to improve animal laws, educate the public, and offer shelter for unwanted animals. Pragmatists, instead, believe that animals deserve moral considerations and that a balance in human-animal interests should prevail. The end goal is to eliminate every form of animal suffering and the use of animals for economic purposes. They usually organize public protests and negotiate with the AIC for “better treatment” if AEA foreclose the possibility of the non-animal use. The work of pragmatist (e.g., PETA) has led to labels such as “free-range eggs,” “humanly killed,” and tarps around slaughter trucks during the winter. Welfarist and pragmatic animal advocates do not fundamentally seek to dismantle the imagined hierarchical dichotomy between human and animal that is responsible for systemic animal violence.

Jasper and Nelkin identify another theoretical category, fundamentalism. Advocates of this approach believe that animals have fundamental rights echoing human rights, such as the autonomy to live their own lives without human interference with their bodies. Fundamentalism has no connection to religious fundamentalism; it refers to a deontological philosophical position where animals are understood as having inherent rights that whose curtailment cannot be ethically or morally valid. Advocates of this approach secure safe places, called sanctuaries, where animals can be free from human violence. Humans who adhere to this ideal participate in animal rescue, investigations, and civil disobedience protests while demanding the abolition of animal exploitation with the aspiration of ending speciesism. For the authorities, a fundamentalist commitment to the inviolability of animal rights and dignity is synonymous with radicalism, extremism, and terrorism because of this groups insistence on the necessity of “immediate revolutionary change” (Dominick, 2015, p. 27). The rise of this ethical and political position in Animal Justice activism is often associated with the underground tactics, but AJCAs are also fundamentalists in this philosophical and political sense.

2.2.1 The Animal Liberation Front

In the 1970s, animal advocacy saw another strategic shift; animal defence was transformed into animal liberation. As Segal (2020, p. 57) explains, the ALF emerged in England as a leaderless resistance movement. ALF members covertly liberate animals from places where violence occurs and, with only a small number of activists causing economic and physical damage to what they understand as instruments and places of violence. The ALF has grown worldwide⁶ through underground activities. The undercover tactics of liberation are in some senses the predecessor of the contemporary politics of sight enacted by AJCAs.

⁶ On the ALF website, recent stories of animal liberation from across the world can be found: animalliberationpressoffice.org

It is important to note, however, that the ALF is an ideological platform. It is not a group per se; it is made up of clandestine cells: anyone who adheres to the guidelines and acts upon its principles can designate themselves as members of the ALF. Best and Nocella II (2004, p. 8) reprinted the guidelines from the ALF primer:

- 1) to liberate animals from places of abuse, i.e., laboratories, factory farms, fur farms, etc., and place them in good homes where they may live out their natural lives, free from suffering;
- 2) to inflict economic damage to those who profit from the misery and exploitation of animals;
- 3) to reveal the horror and atrocities committed against the animals behind locked doors, by performing nonviolent direct actions and liberations; and
- 4) to take all necessary precautions against harming any animals, human and nonhuman.

Although economic damage is encouraged, nonviolent liberation activities are also promoted. For the ALF, violence is what happens to the animals and not to the materials, equipment, tools, and buildings used to perpetuate violence against animals. However, as discussed below, the ALF has been tarred by an extremist, almost terrorist, narrative in Canada.

2.2.2 “Terrorists or Freedom Fighters”

In the early 2000s, the political landscape changed dramatically; as we entered a post-9/11 era where authorities started to foster a politics of fear. These new counter-threat policies impacted animal liberation activities (Sorenson, 2016). In the first CAS collective book, *Terrorists or Freedom Fighters? Reflections on the Liberation of Animals* (Best & Nocella II, 2004) the authors criticize the criminalization of and the use of the terrorist rhetoric to describe the American activists who spared no effort to save animals’ lives via nonviolent liberation tactics. Although few ALF cells undertook economically destructive activities like arson and vandalism, it was, nonetheless, enough for the authorities to categorize the entire liberation movement as violent despite no evidence of direct violence against humans or animals. Here it would be interesting to address a philosophical reflection on the meaning of “violence,” though it is beyond the scope of this thesis, one may wonder if vandalism against inanimate buildings and infrastructure involves more violence than the torture of animals on farms, slaughterhouses, and laboratories? Is there a species-capitalist hierarchy of violence?

The frame of violence is often used to discredit opponents. For Sorenson (2011b) the characterization of concerned citizens as terrorists is a myth constructed by AIC propaganda, a semantic manoeuvre that associates citizens with mass terror and violence, delegitimizing, demonizing, and

dehumanizing action through deceitful “narratives to justify their power over others and to make exploitation of other beings seem natural, normal and acceptable” (p. 70). The CAS question remains: are radical animal advocates terrorists or simply freedom fighters and acting heroically for animals? Even though Canada has not enacted exceptional terrorist laws, as in the U.S., subtle suppression strategies (i.e., harassment arrests and surveillance) are deployed (Walby & Monaghan, 2011, p. 24) and more recently, ag-gag laws have appeared to deter AJCAs from enacting a politics of sight. In the following section, I briefly examine suppressive laws in the U.S. that wrote animal advocates into a terrorist narrative. Moreover, because Canada has a political tendency to follow this country, I, then, turn to suppression strategies in Canada.

2.2.2.1 Extraordinary Laws in the United States

In order to counter “political violence,” the state usually increases the power of law enforcement agencies, introduces extraordinary laws, and strategically enforces existing legislations. In the U.S., the politics of fear post 9/11 cast a shadow on liberation activists through multiple legislative layers, such as the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA), 2006, previously the Animal Enterprise Protection Act, 1992, and ag-gag laws in the 1990s. Ag-gag laws enable authorities to pursue, charge, and convict undercover, and more recently overt, activists who go onto farms, mostly industrial farms, to record images of animal violence and broadcast them on social media and other channels to expose the cruelty of the AIC while also sharing images of “lucky” rescues. Although ag-gag laws, to some extent, deter documenting and exposing animal violence at the sites of animal exploitation, many states have deemed these legislations unconstitutional (Drake, 2021).

Another form of suppressive legislation identifies animal advocates as national security threats or terrorists under the AETA⁷; a legislation that borrowed the terrorist rhetoric from the Patriot Act of 2001 (Black & Black, 2004). Whereas the FBI Counterterrorism Division acknowledges that activists do not engage in actions that could harm both animals and humans, the ALF and Stop Huntington Animal Cruelty (SHAC) campaign are nonetheless considered domestic threats (Lewis, 2005). Formed in England in the late 1990s and ended in 2014, SHAC tactics were quite different from those of the ALF: public protests at Huntington Life Sciences laboratories, home demonstrations, pressures on business partners (i.e., secondary and tertiary companies), and campaigning using the then-fledgling internet. Nonetheless, the ALF and SHAC were criminalized due to the millions of dollars of economic damage

⁷ For instance, the AETA guarantees legal protection of what it is called the “value or enjoyment of the animal” and protects the institutional and industrial property owners. See alec.org/model-policy/the-animal-and-ecological-terrorism-act-aeta/

they may have or did cause to animal exploiters. As SHAC organizers did not protest covertly, it was easier for the authorities to convict them. Sorenson's (2014) analysis of the underlying AETA financial interests highlights that it was written by corporations (and lobby groups) to counter politically motivated activities aiming at liberating animals from suffering. In the collective book, *Terrorization of Dissent: Corporate Repression, Legal Corruption, and the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act*, it is persuasively argued that this legislation was a political and economic attempt to secure the profits made from animal exploitation and a threat to democracy itself as it violated the rights and liberties of citizens (Del Gandio & Nocella II, 2014).

2.2.2.2 Canada in the Footsteps of Curbing Civil Rights and Liberties

Canada appears to follow its “political twin” in suppressing activists by using extremist-terrorist narratives. In the *Terrorism and Violent Extremism Awareness Guide*⁸ published in 2016, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) identify the ALF as an “organization [that] often engages in illegal actions to promote its convictions and is therefore considered as a terrorist group by some governments. The organization rescues and liberates animals, but also carries out acts of vandalism by destructing equipment and property” (p. 58). The guide refers to the FBI classification, and the liberation of minks from a fur farm in Quebec and British Columbia, also stating that activists had attacked hunters while others vandalized a laboratory in Ontario. In addition, the 2015 Anti-Terrorism Act⁹ gives intelligence and law enforcement agencies broad powers to engage in surveillance (i.e., information sharing about humans) and mandates the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) to identify potential dissent and to take measures against it. Canada does not explicitly categorize animal justice activists as terrorists, but their characterization of radical animal advocates as violent extremists is an important discursive step towards doing so, and a helpful narrative to enact surveillance campaigns against them and to crush them¹⁰.

Although Canada has legislative tools to deter animal advocates, Walby and Monaghan (2011) show that the authorities commonly use subtle suppression tactics to deter them rather than laws to explicitly label activists as terrorists, criminalizing their activities. For instance, local police were tipped off by private security agents in the case of SHAC Montreal (p. 26). We can presume that this is what happened in October 2021 in Ontario when Meat the Victims activists were prevented from undertaking an occupation at a Turkey farm. An informant from my field work confided that six organizers were

⁸ See publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.826357/publication.html

⁹ See laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/AnnualStatutes/2015_20/

¹⁰ The ATA has hitherto not been used against animal advocates.

violently arrested early in the morning, and when the group headed to the farm, the entrance was already surrounded by police officers. Those who were arrested were not asked to identify themselves at the police station as the officers already knew who they were. A judge was also on standby to process them, on a Sunday.

Farm occupations have triggered ag-gag laws in Canada. Although the first farm occupation occurred in the province of British Columbia in 2019, Alberta was the leader in passing an ag-gag law the same year, Bill-27 *Trespass Statutes (Protecting Law-Abiding Property Owner) Amendment Act*. The bill was introduced and passed a few weeks after a Turkey farm occupation occurred in the province. The second province to pass an ag-gag laws is Ontario, the *Security from Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act*. Bill-156 was introduced in 2019 and received assent in June 2020. Two days after, the activist Regan Russel, was run over and killed at the entrance of the Burlington slaughterhouse by a slaughter truck driver who did not stop while she was holding a sign, indicating that other activists wanted to bear witness to pigs before their murder. More details about Bill-156 and Bill-27 are given in chapter 3. Though, a farm occupation has not taken place in Manitoba, the province passed its ag-gag law in 2021 amending the Animal Diseases Act¹¹, prohibiting the entering into a “biosecurity zone” and interfering with animals on sites of exploitation or in transport under the umbrella term of “biosecurity.” The Manitoba ag-gag law is not part of the discussion in this thesis as it received assent after data collection. The province of British Columbia (Bill M 227), and the federal government (Bill C-205) introduced Bills that are still at the debate stage in their respective Legislative Assemblies and the province of Quebec has introduced a motion.

Members of Legislative Assemblies have the power to propose a legislative motion : “a proposal moved by a member for the House or a committee to do something, to order something to be done, or to express an opinion about some matter.”¹² When a motion is voted and carried, it becomes either an order that gives some direction to committees, members, or officers, or regulates its proceedings, or a resolution. In the latter case, no action is required. Another way to propose new legislation is through a bill, “a proposed law submitted to Parliament for its consideration and approval” (ibid). A motion, but more specifically a bill, has the purpose of becoming law or amending laws already in place.

When a member of the Parliament proposes a bill, a “government bill” is numbered 1 – 200. A second way to introduce new legislation is through a “private member’s bill” (or public bill), numbered 201 – 1000, which can be introduced by either a member of the opposition party or a backbench member

¹¹ See Bill-62: web2.gov.mb.ca/bills/42-3/bo62e.php

¹² See <https://www.ourcommons.ca/About/Glossary/Index-e.html#LetterB>

of the Parliament. Another type of bill is called a “private bill,” numbered 1001 and up, which aims at protecting the interests of a specific human, group, or corporation. The elected government does not officially sponsor this type of bill. A bill has to go through a linear process: first reading (introduction at the House of Common), second reading (debates among members on the principles of the bill and vote), committee stage (examination of the bill), third reading (debate on the final bill), and the Royal Assent by the Governor-General whom closes this process, at which point the bill becomes a statute or an Act of Parliament (new law or amendment of existing law). As a result, this legislative process enters the legal system and criminalizes specific activities and punishes dissidence. Alberta and Ontario ag-gag laws are government-initiated extraordinary laws to deter animal agriculture whistleblowers but, as I illustrate in chapter 3, they may be better understood as private bills.

2.3 The Contemporary Politics of Sight

For some years, the labelling of underground activists as extremist-terrorists chilled animal advocacy. However, AJCAs came up with another tactic: openly rescuing animals and nonviolent civil disobedience protests. It is these kinds of actions that ag-gag laws were crafted to primarily target in Canada. Because AJCAs engage in a politics of peaceful protest and live-stream their actions, it is harder for the state to deploy the terrorist narrative and crush their attempts to raise awareness about animal violence on industrial farms. Although a politics of sight also involves the use of media such as documentaries, online videos, and social media channels, I focus on the images that are taken by humans who put their freedom on the line by accessing the sites where animal violence occurs. This section presents three tactics associated with the politics of sight enacted by contemporary AJCAs, independent investigations, vigils, and farm occupations. In this thesis, I focus on the collective experience of farm occupations and the structural response that they trigger.

2.3.1 Independent Farm Investigator

What is an independent investigator? There are many farms and slaughterhouses in the Canadian countryside. One needs to drive some time outside of a city to come across a building that looks like a dark prison from the outside and a dungeon from the inside. Farm investigators, also known as whistleblowers, usually “visit” random farms or are informed about horrific practices of a specific one. They can undertake secret or overt investigations. There is no way to identify the whistleblower when an investigation is done secretly, and the footage is released anonymously. On the other hand, open investigators reveal their identity with the footage and they may produce an investigative journalism video, commenting on what they are witnessing. Independent investigators may also

participate in vigils and farm occupations. These practices are far from being unique to Canada but tracking down every independent investigator is a task beyond the scope of this thesis. Here, I have chosen two key Canadian figures because of their investigations and their trials, though, of course, many Canadian AJCAs are doing valuable work.

Starting in 2017, Malcolm Klimowicz, known for the *Mink Trial*, secretly investigated fur farms in Ontario in the context of the campaign *End Fur Farming*. He released footage documenting appalling mink abuse and cruelty on five farms. Klimowicz also formally filed complaints, endorsed by a lawyer, to the Ontario SPCA and contacted elected members of the Parliament. In response, Klimowicz was criminally charged with break and enter. Klimowicz's charges were dropped, and in 2020 he won his last trial.

Jenny McQueen is the face of *Pig Trial 2* and the originator of the *Right to Rescue* campaign. In 2018, McQueen eye-witnessed and documented depraved abuse of pigs on an Ontario farm and saved two piglets who needed medical care. As Klimowicz had done, McQueen issued formal complaints to Ontario authorities. The authorities ignored these and also refused to engage in legal action against the pig farm corporation. Instead, McQueen's house was raided. McQueen was then charged with break and enter and mischief. The charges were dropped in 2019.

2.3.2 Vigil

Vigils are usually performed at the truck entrance of slaughterhouses. AJCAs come together and bear witness to animals on their way to be killed, documenting their last moment, and giving them water. In 2010, Anita Krajnc started the Toronto Pig Save, and then the Animals Save Movement, an animal justice grassroots movement with more than 900 groups worldwide and about 48 chapters in Canada. In addition to being in solidarity with animals on death row, the "demands are to replace animal agriculture, fields used for feed crops and slaughterhouses with wild spaces, forests and animal sanctuaries."¹³

In 2015, during a vigil at an Ontario pig slaughterhouse, Krajnc was criminally charged with mischief for giving water to pigs detained in a slaughter truck. Krajnc is known for the *Pig Trial 1*; two years after being accused of committing mischief, she was found not guilty. Why? As the Globe and Mail journalist Hui (2017) reports, the judge decided that giving water to the pigs did not constitute

¹³ See torontopigsave.org/about-us/

interference “with the operation, enjoyment or use of” the pigs by those who own them; put in other words, interference with property. In addition to the decision, it was determined that Krajnc did not put human health at risk through possible contamination as the pigs were killed and their body parts sent to the grocery stores and restaurants. For Krajnc, *compassion is not a crime* (2017, p. 496). Like independent investigators, activists who participate in vigils are now subject to ag-gag laws in Canada because these laws make the act of documenting animal violence and helping the animals a criminal offence.

2.3.3 Farm Occupation

Vigils are places where it is possible to get a glimpse of animal violence, while a farm occupation¹⁴ entails a collective immersion in the very site of animal violence. The leading worldwide grassroots Animal Justice group for farm occupation is called Direct Action Everywhere (DxE). In 2013, DxE emerged in the U.S. with the slogan “Until every animal is free.” Their mission was to challenge the normalization of violence toward animals in cultural and political institutions. The nonviolent tactics of DxE include open rescues, public disruptions, and civil disobedience protests. DxE echoes a politic of sight endorsed by the ALF. However, investigation, documentation, and liberation are openly executed and live streamed to collect evidence of the nonviolent nature of their activity. Contrary to the ALF, DxE activists aim to get mainstream media coverage and are willing to face the judicial system to fight against animal violence on farms. DxE’s strategy and legacy are distinct from that of the ALF in four crucial ways, in addition to the common goal of pleading for animal justice:

- 1) they rescue, document, and expose animal exploitation without concealment;
- 2) they live-stream their actions to publicize their nonviolent civil disobedience strategy;
- 3) they sit in solidarity with the animals until farmworkers show up and the police are called; they are willing to be arrested as they want their disobedience and their trials to reach a broader public;
- 4) they ask for some animals to be freed and for the media to come on to farms and broadcast footage of the rarely visible behind the scenes production processes that underpin animal consumption and use.

¹⁴ Another tactic similar to farm the occupation is a farm lockdown; the difference is that during a lockdown, AJCAs attach themselves together or to an object that would take longer for the authorities to dismantle. Farm occupation necessitates a mass protest; if the number of participants is too low, the farm lockdown becomes the best next option.

DxE has extended its challenging of the normalized violence on animals' bodies into the Rose's Law campaign. As posted on the Facebook account: "[a]sking for reforms and improvement in treatment isn't enough. Asking for empty cages isn't clear. Animals need legal protections; they need inalienable rights." Thus, the proposed Animal Bill of Rights¹⁵ is a clear political vision that urges legal protection and absolute rights and freedom for animals:

- 1) the right to be free, not owned, or to have a guardian acting in their best interest;
- 2) the right to not be exploited, abused, or killed by humans;
- 3) the right to have their interests represented in court and protected by the law;
- 4) the right to a protected home, habitat, or ecosystem; and
- 5) the right to be rescued from situations of distress and exploitation.

These legislative demands are enacted and transmitted through media coverage of nonviolent civil disobedience activities to ignite a national debate about animal exploitation, disrupting everyday exploitation, and insisting that politicians implement legislative changes in favour of animal's rights to live a natural life. DxE's strategic vision has inspired many worldwide. For instance, Liberation Lockdown in Alberta, Canada, and Meat the Victims (MTV), a campaign initiated in 2018 in Australia with the famous slogan from Martin Luther King Jr. "One has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws." No matter the group or campaign, the goal is to abolish animal violence and hammer through the social acceptance of fundamental rights for animals.

In April 2019, the Canadian farming industry was challenged with the first farm occupation. An MTV mass protest gathered about 65 activists inside an industrial pig farm in British Columbia, while more than 100 protesters were outside. This protest has led to the *Pig Trial* 3 or the *Excelsior* 4, in which four AJCAs were on trial for break and enter, mischief, and trespassing. Their pre-trial started in March 2022, but the police appeared to have lost key evidence (Cheeseborough, 2022). Nonetheless, on October 12th, 2022, Amy Soranno and Nick Schafer were sentenced to 30 days in prison, a probation of 12 months, and forced to provide DNA samples to the national database. In September of the same year, in Alberta, 35 activists from Liberation Lockdown occupied a turkey farm while about 90 activists supported them outside the farm. Four AJCAs, including one minor, were charged with break and enter to cause mischief but later received conditional discharges for what became known as the *Turkey Trial*. Three months later, 12 activists, including one American citizen and one minor, occupied a pig farm in Quebec for the Roses' Law campaign. They were arrested and charged with mischief, obstructing a police officer and

¹⁵ See roseslaw.org/

break and enter. The *Pig Trial* ⁴ verdict was delivered on April 14th, 2022, they were found guilty of mischief and obstructing police officers¹⁶. They will be sentenced in April 2023. In February 2020, 15 activists occupied Canada's largest duck farm operation, located in Ontario, while over 50 protested outside against Bill-156; no one was arrested on that day but three participants, identified through live-streamed videos posted on social media, were charged with theft and break and enter but were issued peace bonds for the *Duck Trial*.

These farm occupations are a sample of what Canadian AJCAs have done. They also protest at dairy farms, sled dog operations, and slaughterhouses across the country. What is common to these groups and their campaigns is their commitment to nonviolence and peaceful protest and the willingness of citizen activists to be arrested for their championing of Animal Justice. As mentioned above, ag-gag laws were introduced in Canada not too long after the first farm occupation. Considering the continuation of farm occupations post-ag-gag laws, it raises questions about the adaptation and persistence of personal and collective commitment to Animal Justice, and how the media-state nexus is reacting to this new form of politics of sight.

2.4 Situating the Current Study

This thesis is rooted in two fields of study, CAS and SMS. Addressing a politics of sight on behalf of animals requires, first, a brief overview of the moral debates underlying Animal Justice to clarify the cultural and politico-legal system under which AJCAs work and which they strive to transform, namely, a system (re)producing oppression for both animals and AJCAs. In legal terms, much like human rights activists (HRA), AJCAs are concerned citizens who courageously, and despite legal and emotional consequences, confront unjust systemic oppression that discriminates against animals. Following this, I review the literature relating to political suppression and the emotional dimension of animal justice activism. Considering the novelty of AJCAs' politics of sight, little is known about the social and personal effects of a commitment to a politics of sight via the tactic of farm occupation. This is the gap that this thesis seeks to fill.

2.4.1 Animal Justice Socio-Philosophies

The duality of a social movement is expressed through philosophical and everyday critical narratives. For this reason, I begin with a short overview of the core socio-philosophies that animate

¹⁶ Cour du Québec, criminal and penal division. #750-01-057154-204, May 4th, 2022.

Animal Justice activism. The historical background gives insights into how activism has evolved and why and for what concerned citizens are advocating. The ethical and moral basis of animal rights and liberation literature is well-established and abundant; it is beyond the scope of this thesis to review it all. Thus, the core debates are presented to situate the reader in the ideal of Animal Justice. A more detailed overview is to be found in chapter 5.

2.4.1.1 The Quintessence of Speciesism

In 1970, Richard Ryder, a clinical psychologist and philosopher, coined the term speciesism in the Oxford Group leaflets *Speciesism* (See Ryder, 2004, pp. 85–86 for the original) and further developed the term a year later in the collective book *Animals, Men and Morals*. The term was later made popular by the philosopher Peter Singer in his book *Animal Liberation*, first published in 1975. Ryder

use[s] the word “speciesism” to describe the widespread discrimination that is practiced by man against the other species, and to draw a parallel with racism. Speciesism and racism are both forms of prejudice that are based upon appearances—if the other individual looks different then he is rated as beyond the moral pale. Racism today is condemned by most intelligent and compassionate people and it seems only logical that such people should extend their concern for other races to other species also. Speciesism and racism (and indeed sexism) overlook or underestimate the similarities between the discriminator and those discriminated against and both forms of prejudice show a selfish disregard for the interests of others, and for their sufferings (Ryder’s book *Victims of Science* (1975) in Garner & Okuleye, 2020, p. 68).

We can understand that speciesism is a form of discrimination, probably the last one to be structurally lawful and socially normalized, making animals inherently inferior to humans. This form of belief somehow justifies animal exploitation and violence, in its worse expression. But where does the ideology of speciesism come from?

In Western society, the lawful discrimination of animals has its origin in a distant spatio-temporal culture and history. In his book *Animal Revolution*, first published in 1989, Richard Ryder (2000) provides a detailed sociohistorical perspective of speciesism; here I highlight some prominent milestones. Greek philosophers not only established the foundation of contemporary ethico-political thought, but, as Ryder explains, defined our understanding of human-animal relationships. Reflecting on how humans differ from animals, Aristotle stressed the action of speaking and rational thinking as two qualities unique to human consciousness and ethical existence (DeMello, 2012, p. 37). Animals to the extent that they were only capable of “bodily sensation” were necessarily subservient to humans, much like human servants of the time were to their masters. Early Christianity reinforced Aristotle’s premises by accentuating an anthropocentric ontology:

[m]en and women definitely were *not* animals, they claimed; they alone were made in the image of God and alone possessed immortal souls. The differences between human and nonhuman were thus exaggerated. Indeed, humankind's superiority over the other animal creation came to be regarded as almost synonymous with civilization itself, and those who behaved in an uncivilized way were dismissed as beast-like (Ryder, 2000, p. 28, emphasize in original).

Immanuel Kant also went along with this mode of reasoning by arguing that the lack of rational capacity did not allow animals to make moral choices (DeMello, 2012, p. 39). Hence, they should not be granted moral status. Such an anthropocentric ontology, positioning humans higher on a hierarchical order of earthly value, known as human exceptionalism, has underwritten speciesism, against which contemporary Animal Justice activism struggles.

René Descartes' claim that animals were machines without consciousness (i.e., they could neither feel pain nor pleasure) raised some concerns among his contemporaries. For instance, Henry More questioned the murderous doctrine and John Locke maintained that "compassion was natural and cruelty unnatural" (Ryder, 2000, p. 49); cruelty should not be naturalized and normalized. As a result, in cartesian dualism, animals are mere mechanisms and experimenting upon them is made acceptable. Such beliefs refer to what I shall call "ethical cruelty," by which I mean that cruelty against animals is embedded in a moral narrative in which animal violence is acceptable if it brings some benefits to humans. But Descartes seemed to be concerned with solving an ethical problem for humanity as Ryder reports with respect to Descartes' reply to Henry More in 1649: "[m]y opinion is not so much cruel to animals as indulgent to men... Since it absolves them from the suspicion of crime when they eat or kill animals" (p. 53). Greek philosophy and the Christian theology of soul/consciousness provided a exculpatory rationale for (in)direct participation in animal violence that was reinforced by Descartes.

In the late XVII and XVIIIth centuries, ethical concerns over animal suffering became central to moral debates on human-animal relationships. As Ryder reports, the utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham questioned the Greek philosophers and Christian ontology by asking the question: It is not, can they reason? Nor, can they talk? But can they suffer? (p. 44). In a similar manner, John Stuart Mill advocated for legislation to ethically protect animals that he compared to children (p. 44). With Charles Darwin, animals were attributed similarities to humans, i.e., a continuum of mental and emotional capacities, but "[h]is central message, that the species are related through evolution, was not widely recognised as being of ethical importance in this context until the 1970s" (Ryder, 2000, p. 61). Therefore, Darwin, also called into question the ideal of human exceptionalism through a theological and scientific critique. More importantly, it was the denial of animal suffering that was contested, or, for the ethologist Frans de Waal et al. (2009), an anthropodenial that operates as a "willful blindness," by which he means the rejection of similarities between humans and animals (p. 65). This brief overview of Western

perspectives of human-animal relationship illustrates a long-lasting contentious debate that is still at the core of contemporary Animal Justice activism.

2.4.1.2 Core Ideas of Classical Moral Debates

Since the 1970s, many contemporary philosophers have debated the moral and legal status of animals, and animals' entitlement to rights, including Peter Singer's utilitarian and Tom Regan's deontological approaches. Although Ryder played a key role in modern moral debates, classical perspectives on animal rights are attributed to Singer and Regan, who emphasized sensitivity and sentience¹⁷ in animal suffering. In his book *Animal Liberation*, Singer argues that the value of mental states (pleasure and pain) is independent of body appearance. Every sentient being is on a quest for pleasure and to avoid pain. Thus, as animals feel pain, this criterion is enough for them to be granted moral consideration and for their interests to be considered in a universal moral community. Regan also elaborates on the principle of the equality of sentient beings in his book *The Case for Animal Rights*, published in 1983. Animals' inherent value is reflected through their being what he calls "subjects-of-life" rather than by having similar mental states to humans. Animals are conscious of their experience and have a unique biography. This inherent value is, for Regan, the justification for animals' claims to absolute rights. Singer's utilitarian perspective has been criticized, as we will see with Gary Francione, because of his claim that industrial farming is too intensive and widely spread to be abolished now, thus the need to focus on reducing the current amount of suffering (Singer, 2015). Singer's abolitionist critics have criticized him for promoting a new-welfarism.

2.4.1.3 The Abolitionist and Critical Animal Studies Perspectives

Gary Francione is a prominent critic of the classical approaches. Francione reminds us that we should not only question how we treat animals and consider the value of animals' life experiences, we should, also, call into question how humans use animals and address the complexity of animal interests because their capacity to feel pain is also a form self-consciousness. Francione rejects welfarist politics, including Singer's and Regan's philosophy of *new-welfarism*¹⁸ (1996, p. 209), because such politics keep

¹⁷ It is essential to specify that sensitivity means the capacity of a body to feel external stimuli, and sentience means a cognitive and subjective capacity to experience life, including body sensations.

¹⁸ New-welfarism "promotes the continued oppression of domesticated animals and the underlying global injustices and dangers that accompany it" (Nibert, 2013, p. 259). Why? As explained by Nibert (2013), this narrative of "humane" production (e.g., free-range, cage-free, grass-fed, humanly killed) of animal products makes no fundamental difference to how animals live and die but has moral implications for those who want to have a good conscience when chewing someone's flesh or swallowing some stolen secretion from a baby cow or goat. In addition, regulatory reforms are meant to ameliorate injustice rather than abolish it. Welfare policies only do good

animals in a state of being “things” (i.e., property status), which constitutes an obstacle to granting them moral status and legal rights (2000, 2007). For him, animals are still considered legal “property,” and consequently their value remains similar to material merchandise, i.e., mere commodities. This social status as property makes it impossible to protect animals’ natural interests. Instead, Francione’s abolitionist approach suggests that a moral frontier between human and animal worlds should be established, and a conceptual and pragmatic dismantlement of domesticated animals should be implemented by ending their forced reproduction. Francione advocates for animal rights via the socio-legal avowal of animal personhood. However, Deckha (2021) posits that animals should be granted a legal status, and subjectivity, that correspond to their state of *beingness*, the legal consequences of which would be that “the law would conceptualize beings as embodied, relational, and vulnerable. The law would value embodiment and relational experience and recognize that these attributes of living experience create vulnerability to which the law must respond” (p. 121). As she explains, a state of beingness would subvert the labels of property (exploitative) and personhood (anthropocentric) in the legislative apparatus if oriented toward a multispecies subjectivity in legal interpretation, or, what she calls, a new transformative legal subjectivity.¹⁹

When it comes to Animal Justice, which, in this thesis, is an umbrella term for Animal Rights and Animal Liberation, speciesism is the lawful system of oppression that needs to be dismantled. It also acknowledges animal agency; animals *should*, and *must*, be considered agents of their own life as humans are (Allen & von Essen, 2018). For political philosophers such as Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicka (2011), animals, specifically domesticated animals, are co-citizens (p. 73). Using a liberal theory and the premises of cultural pluralism, they propose that animals are in interdependent relationships with humans and should be integrated into our political communities because they are forced to live in our houses and farms, thus, co-exist in our civil societies (p. 74). Therefore, we should grant them relational and differential rights and liberties to allow them to participate and cooperate based on their capabilities (p. 101). This is a controversial approach as they divide animals into three political categories: citizenship for domesticated animals, denizenship for liminal animals, and sovereign nationhood for wildlife animals. Only domesticated animals are co-citizens for which humans are directly responsible, for example, for authorizing access to essential services and providing a safe environment (p. 123). Critics of this theoretical approach argue that animals should be treated in a species-appropriate way (Stein, 2015)

for human moral consciousness. Finally, ostentatious animal welfare reforms do not weigh against the AIC and animal violence but rather increase the economic cost of eating animal products (pp. 259-260).

¹⁹ As Deckha explains, the current Canadian legal system is oriented toward “white, male, property-owning” and emphasizes “independence, wealth maximization, disembodiment, and rationality” (pp. 121-122). Therefore, she proposes that beingness, instead of personhood, would turn animals as legal subjects and protect them from exploitation as well as from being commodified as property.

rather than relationally and differentially. In any case, animal agency is integrated into these moral debates, animals are understood as making their own choices and resisting their exploitation.

CAS²⁰ is rooted in eco-feminism and anarchism, the latter particularly in the U.S. branch. In this field of study, capitalism is a mode of oppression of animals (Nibert, 2013; Nocella II et al., 2014, 2019; Torres, 2007); also animal oppression echoes scholars who write about humans' marginalized experiences (Brueck, 2017; Harper, 2010; Ko, 2017; Wrenn, 2019), and animal rights is connected to the struggle for human rights (Nibert, 2002). CAS has a unique abolitionist approach focused on dismantling the species-capitalist system through the project of total liberation: humans and animals should be freed from hegemonic capitalist exploitation and oppressive cultural, political forms of discrimination. CAS also proposes a project of co-liberation: (1) the acceptance of animal agency and its resistance to oppression, and (2) a human responsibility to engage in political action to condemn the normativity of animal violence and to actively engage in abolishing oppressive institutions (Allen & von Essen, 2018). The politics of sight discussed in this thesis is a project of co-liberation as it testifies to animal agency and captures animal violence with the goal of abolishing the species use of animals as profitable

²⁰ In the book *Defining Critical Animal Studies*, Nocella II et al. (2014b) provide ten principles of CAS, here I reprint them altogether as they are found in the book (pp. xxvii-xxviii): (1) Pursues interdisciplinary collaborative writing and research in a rich and comprehensive manner that includes perspectives typically ignored by animal studies such as political economy. (2) Rejects pseudo-objective academic analysis by explicitly clarifying its normative values and political commitments, such that there are no positivist illusions whatsoever that theory is disinterested or writing and research is nonpolitical. To support experiential understanding and subjectivity. (3) Eschews narrow academic viewpoints and the debilitating theory-for-theory's sake position in order to link theory to practice, analysis to politics, and the academy to the community. (4) Advances a holistic understanding of the commonality of oppressions, such that speciesism, sexism, racism, ableism, statism, classism, militarism and other hierarchical ideologies and institutions are viewed as parts of a larger, interlocking, global system of domination. (5) Rejects apolitical, conservative, and liberal positions in order to advance an anti-capitalist, and, more generally, a radical anti-hierarchical politics. This orientation seeks to dismantle all structures of exploitation, domination, oppression, torture, killing, and power in favor of decentralizing and democratizing society at all levels and on a global basis. (6) Rejects reformist, single-issue, nation-based, legislative, strictly animal interest politics in favor of alliance politics and solidarity with other struggles against oppression and hierarchy. (7) Champions a politics of total liberation which grasps the need for, and the inseparability of, human, nonhuman animal, and Earth liberation and freedom for all in one comprehensive, though diverse, struggle; to quote Martin Luther King Jr.: "*Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.*" (8) Deconstructs and reconstructs the socially constructed binary oppositions between human and nonhuman animals, a move basic to mainstream animal studies, but also looks to illuminate related dichotomies between culture and nature, civilization and wilderness and other dominator hierarchies to emphasize the historical limits placed upon humanity, nonhuman animals, cultural/political norms, and the liberation of nature as part of a transformative project that seeks to transcend these limits towards greater freedom, peace, and ecological harmony. (9) Openly supports and examines controversial radical politics and strategies used in all kinds of social justice movements, such as those that involve economic sabotage from boycotts to direct action toward the goal of peace. (10) Seeks to create openings for constructive critical dialogue on issues relevant to Critical Animal Studies across a wide range of academic groups; citizens and grassroots activists; the staffs of policy and social service organizations; and people in private, public, and non-profit sectors. Through—and only through—new paradigms of ecopedagogy, bridge-building with other social movements, and a solidarity-based alliance politics, it is possible to build the new forms of consciousness, knowledge, and social institutions that are necessary to dissolve the hierarchical society that has enslaved this planet for the last ten thousand years.

commodities. This short overview of animal rights socio-philosophies shows the importance of shifting the debate from rights and liberation to justice when examining AJCAs' politics of sight, as when Carrie P. Freeman proposes that justice should be imbedded in "global interpretive frame" to accentuate resonance and an efficient communication of animal suffering (2014, p. 253).

2.4.2 Theoretical Framework Part I: Actors of Political Suppression

In this section, I provide a brief overview of the literature on state suppression and its mainstream media support. I emphasize the Canadian political context because the mechanisms of a politics of fear and suppression are spatio-temporal and contextually situated.

2.4.2.1 Criminalizing Concerned Citizens: State Power

In Gramsci's view, the political ruling class maintain hegemony, and capitalism, through ideology and by exercising power by "means of a combination of coercion and persuasion," akin to the "organisation of consent" (Simon, 2015, p. 17). Hegemony is thus upheld by norms and values, or an ideological contention, to use Carley's (2016) term, to which ordinary humans consent; a social order that benefits those in power. In the context of AJCAs' politics of sight, speciesism and the commodification of animal bodies by AIC corporate interests are part of the hegemonic status quo that the state works to preserve, and to which most humans silently acquiesce. How does the state do this?

In the book *Regimes and Repertoires* (2006) and in the collection of texts *Collective Violence, Contentious Politics, and Social Change* (2017, p. 80), the well-known historical sociologist, Charles Tilly depicts how state repression is achieved, among other strategies, by increasing the cost of participation in protest actions. However, the word repression is misleading; it generally refers to direct violence from state actors and can often be counterproductive as the public may disapprove of state violence against protesters (Kurtz & Smithey, 2018, p. 53). In a democratic society, direct violence is often frowned upon, and subtle ways of invalidating state opponents are preferred instead. Thus, state suppression is a more appropriate term. In his book, *Beyond Bullets: The Suppression of Dissent in the United States*, Jules Boykoff (2007) argues that suppression is composed of subtle strategies that the state, supported by mainstream media, performs to stifle social justice movements. Boykoff identified six modes of state suppression:

- 1) infiltration, badjacketing, and agent provocateurs: collecting information from the inside and damaging public image;
- 2) surveillance and break-ins: collecting and processing personal data;

- 3) harassment and harassment arrests: arrest for minor charges and legal prosecution;
- 4) public prosecutions and hearings: so-called criminals are publicly questioned or punished;
- 5) employment deprivation: threat of losing a job; and
- 6) extraordinary rules and laws: use when the status quo is challenged at the most.

Authorities can implement one or multiple modes of suppression to increase the cost of participation depending on how effectively the status quo is contested. Boykoff's analytical framework was developed based on social justice movements in the U.S., but Walby and Monaghan (2011) applied it to SHAC Montreal, Quebec, and Rodgers (2018) to various Canadian movements (p. 148-152).

For effective suppression to be undertaken, a narrative of fear must be constructed; public opinion must be framed to approve the state's strategies of suppression. When animal advocates successfully challenge corporate interests, the extremist-terrorism narrative is often mobilized. CAS scholar-activists have called this *modus operandi* the "terrorization of dissent" (Del Gandio & Nocella II, 2014), referring to a strategy of the "Green Scare" (Potter, 2011). Dissidence on behalf of animals is thus framed as a violent (Sorenson, 2016) and the state enacts laws and policies to protect the political economy that uses animal bodies as resources, while vilifying activists (Nocella II et al., 2014). For Shirley (2014), this rhetorical politics reveals a conflict between the group interests associated to the AIC and animal advocates. As a result, animals' bodies are forgotten, and protest actions are depoliticized. The rhetoric of violence and the framing of advocates as extremists or terrorists legitimates police action by giving them new powers and intensifying surveillance (Walby & Monaghan, 2011, p. 30). However, as Monaghan (2013) reminds us—although she asserts that the ALF enacts political violence similar to terrorist campaigns—radical advocates should be labelled as extremists, not terrorists, because they do not threaten the state (p. 934). This suggests that the state framing of advocacy actions as violent not only instills fear among the public, but it defines the extent of state agents' counteractions to deter activists in their endeavour.

When the status quo is seriously challenged, extraordinary laws are useful for the maintenance of hegemonic power. As Monaghan and Walby (2012) put it, the production of threat identities by security and intelligence agencies also creates a threat matrix that helps to associate existing threats with newly identified ones. For instance, the ALF actions are labelled as instances of extremism or terrorism—though they are not known for committing crimes against humans or animals—and portrayed, even by scholars, as such based on "violent" acts committed against property, mostly arson and vandalism (Cordeiro-Rodrigues, 2016; Monaghan, 2013). The tactics may be radical, but the question arises: why is property morally and legally more valuable than animals' lives? If the ALF commits

“crimes” to raise the cost of insurance for the AIC businesses, should we not look at the problem of lawful animal violence instead of the tactics enacted by activists to deal with the problem? Consequently, the use of a politics of fear to justify erratic suppression of concerned citizens blurs the line between activism, extremism and terrorism (Johnston & Johnston, 2020; Sorenson, 2016; Stanescu, 2014).

Not only does linking animal advocates to violence misrepresent their tactics and goals, the rhetoric of violence also marginalizes and silences them, contributing to keeping animal violence invisible. To use Sorenson’s words: “ [d]espite the fact that so many prominent activists and academic advocates of animal rights have rejected violence, it remains the near-exclusive focus of discourse produced by media, corporate lobbyists, and police, the lens through which all actions are seen” (2016, p. 86). The use of violence also frames how scholars discuss more radical tactics. For instance, Nagtzaam (2017) claims that the ALF commits political violence to achieve their goal and by engaging in “‘terrorist’ actions against humans” reveal a “crisis of legitimacy” (p. 106). Albeit, the SHAC campaign was also caught up in the net of a politics of fear despite openly and legally performing tactics such as street activism and home demonstrations in elites’ neighbourhoods. By no means are the ALF’s and SHAC’s tactics analogous, but, for the state and corporations taking advantage of animal bodies, they are kindred acts to be crushed.

In Canada, private security agents (e.g., corporate security and detectives) were important actors in policing and suppressing the SHAC campaign—some participants “were thrown into jail, harassed, intimidated, and made subject to resource depletion, all for the purpose of incapacitation” (Walby & Monaghan, 2011, p. 32). In fact, private security functioned as the “reporting eyes” to intelligence actors such as CSIS and the RCMP. The SHAC campaign that opposed animal testing had a short life – about 15 years, but due to the secretive nature of the ALF, few were arrested, and today undercover documenting practices and animal rescues still occur. This private-public authority that regulates animal exploitation is also efficient in neutralizing activists’ international campaigns by constraining political opportunities. For Boghossian and Marques (2019), this is the role played by the industry’s political allies by sheltering economic interests through what they call a standard-setting multi-stakeholder initiative. The allusion to violence is, obviously, part of the ag-gag law narrative, which many argue infringes on freedom of speech and civic liberties (Drake, 2021; Gelber & O’Sullivan, 2021; Labchuk, 2020; Lazare, 2020; Shea, 2015). In Chapter 3, I elaborate on ag-gag laws.

2.4.2.2 The Media Power's to Frame Public Perception

The studies above indicate that the AIC relies upon state power; AEA actors exercise power in the legislative organs to push their economic interests. We have little access to the unofficial private-public network and the “behind closed door” negotiations, thus making the “real” power of suppression almost invisible. The mainstream media would seem to support these invisible interest-driven partnerships, often deprecating social justice movements by steering public opinion with a media frame that “presents” a certain version of reality. However, what goes into the media frame is not simply decided by the media; “its framing is struggled over by political actors who have competing interests in how an issue is represented” (McCurdy, 2012, p. 246). This suggests that how activists frame their demands and grievances may be distorted by mainstream media. In addition to a state mode of suppression, Boykoff describes two modes of suppression enacted by the mainstream media:

- 1) negative framing (p. 216-247): building up a “concerted conspiracy” and defaming message and action and/or deploying press censorship; and
- 2) bi-level demonization (p. 191-215): representing concerned citizens as enemies in an *us-them* relationship; sometimes referring to extremism and terrorism to accentuate a narrative of fear.

In their effort to deprecate activists, mainstream media use various frames when relaying information, often biased. Drawing on extent scholarship, Boykoff claims that there are tactics that the media can deploy to deprecate activist and their action: underestimating the number of participants to make a protest less relevant, creating a false balance in voice accentuating the voices of corporations, or simply disregarding a protest. In addition, Boykoff (2007, pp. 222–241) shows five standard frames used by the mainstream media to symbolically suppress activists and sway public opinion in the direction of state-corporate interests:

- 1) violence is used to present activist as violent, even in cases where there is little or no violence;
- 2) disruption, often dovetails with violence, implying that protestors want to disrupt the lives of law-abiding ordinary humans;
- 3) characterization of protestors as freaks implies judgements of values and opinions, sometimes of appearance, portrayed as disconnected from mainstream social norms;
- 4) representation of activists as being ignorant or uninformed, suggesting that goals and demands do not correspond to reality;
- 5) identification of an amalgam of grievances in the protest to suggest that activists do not have a clear message.

Sorenson (2016, p. 70) identifies a correspondence of media misrepresentation of radical animal advocates, especially with respect to alleged violence, in the Canadian context that reminds us that as Boykoff claims, falling under the “media spotlight” can be more harmful than helpful under such framing circumstances (2007, p. 246).

In such instances, media coverage, and the narrative it conveys, is essential to authorities as fear and deflection of sympathy can be manipulated to control the meaning of, and support for, AJCAs’ politics of sight. Because the stigmatization of concerned citizens through AIC propaganda campaigns emphasizes fear of more radical forms of animal advocacy (Sorenson, 2009), in the end, it becomes a contemptuous rejection of compassion (Sorenson, 2011a), in a kind of marketing of fear to maintain the institutionalization of animal violence through propaganda campaigns (Sorenson, 2016). Unlike underground activists who, Dawn (2004) claims, were reluctant to use mainstream media due to their focus on the direct liberation of animals, AJCAs deploy a politics of sight to make animal violence visible through social and mainstream media. However, the media coverage, and the underlying narratives, and the perspectives of the authorities on the radical tactics impede public sympathy for activists’ actions (Lovitz, 2010; Sorenson, 2009). If, for Sorenson and Matsuoka (2021), the corporate-driven propaganda aims to counteract animal advocates’ message, motivation, and tactics in a form of denialism, for Boykoff, the media-state nexus offers an interesting avenue to look at representations of a the contemporary politics of sight. Based on previous research on ALF and SHAC, what does the mainstream media say about AJCAs’ politics of sight in Canada?

2.4.3 Theoretical Framework Part 2: Emotions and Social Movement Studies

As explained by Goffman (1959, 1974), the idea of performance draws on a theatrical metaphor to describe figurative spaces in which people interact and interpret the world. Thus, the dramaturgy in collective action suggests that every performance has two metaphorical dimensions, the front and backstage, offering a political horizon to sway people into action. The former is where emotion is strategically used to provoke a reaction among the public during a protest; this is the visible part of activism’s use of emotion. Activists’ framing strategies involves identifying a problem, outlining a message, and making demands and proposing solutions by engaging in meaning/emotion-making processes to provoke resonance. This framing procedure is an active (Jasper, 2014; Jasper & Polletta, 2019) and dialectical process shaped by cultural and socio-political structures. It represents the creation of a motivational “frame alignment” between a political horizon (i.e., activities, goal, and ideal) and interests, values, and beliefs (Snow et al., 1986). While the emotional resonance is meant to sway people into action and to maintain activist commitment (Gaarder, 2011; Gould, 2009; Jasper, 1997).

In SMS, early theories of collective behavior (i.e., crowd psychology and social strain models) emphasized emotion, thus irrationality and pathology, as a dismissal of protestors in crowds and riots. In the post-second World War, along with socio-psychology research concerned with ordinary human submission to authority, for instance Milgram's and Zimbardo's work, theories explaining social movements and protests began to stress the rationality of engaging in protests as opposed to their emotional origins. Theories such as the social movement organizations by Mayer Zald and Roberta Ash (1966) and resource mobilization with John McCarthy and Mayer Zald (1977) sought to explain the development of social movements by focusing attention on mobilizing structures such as resources, organizations, actors, and networks. However, these theories were tended to overshadow the dynamism of the polity in the emergence of protests. The political process theory thus added the institutional opportunities, and constraints that protestors had to contend with or could take advantage of, for instance, Tilly (1978), McAdam et al. (1996), Tarrow (1994; 1996), and Meyer and Minkoff (2004) for a critique.

In the 1980s, the cultural turn focused on the creation and expression of meaning. Based on Goffman's famous frame analysis study (1974) and the resource mobilization theory, Snow and Benford (1986) emphasized the framing of collective action by explaining how protestors created shared meaning (i.e., beliefs and ideology) to mobilize bystanders and sympathizers in creating a frame-alignment or a frame resonance. Later they developed the term master frame by which they meant a generic and influential collective action frame in cycle of protest (1992), the actual development of a master frame, however, was a contingent process (Benford, 2013). Tarrow (1994) also introduced the idea of the cycle of protest in the political process model claiming the variability of framing strategies. At this stage, emotions in the framing strategies were overshadowed and as a result the dilemma between emotion and rationality (i.e., cognitive) as two opposite entities in human behavior and political action remains.

Although cognitive alignment with a framed social issue is important, emotion has made a return in explaining how and why protests occur and evolve. In the edited book *Passionate Politics*, the authors reconceptualize previous explanatory approaches to social movements by emphasizing the emotional dynamics at the core of the understanding of the world and framed issues. The editors argue, in the introduction, that emotions are relevant in political action because they "are collective as well as individual, and they permeate large-scale units of social organization, including workplaces, neighborhood and community networks, political parties, movements, and states, as well as the interactions of these units with one another" (Goodwin et al., 2001, p. 16). Consequently, emotion is the cornerstone of every dimension of protest. In fact, different types of protest events appeal to different emotions; for instance, direct action evokes a different set of emotions than rallies (Juris, 2008, p. 66).

Moreover, protest is also where confrontation may occur because it is “a place where frontstage performances can be blatantly contradicted” (Embrick & Henricks, 2015, p. 167). In a democratic society, direct violence can be extremely divisive. As Shulziner (2018) argues, protests where resistance is enacted, and repression is exerted, can lead to “transformative events,” meaning that sympathizers may feel a sense of injustice and be motivated to join the protest (p. 53). This suggests that the state or authorities would favour subtle tactics to suppress activism.

In the article *Frontstage and Backstage emotion management in civil resistance*, Sørensen and Rigby (2017) claim that activists manage emotion “off-stage” before going “on-stage.” In off-stage spaces, activists give and receive support to and from others and ensure personal well-being. In addition, activists prepare and organize public performances and strategically choose the emotions that they expect will resonate with the public. This backstage is a private space where activists socialize (Picca & Feagin, 2007) and a safe space where emotional reflexivity unfolds (Brown & Pickerill, 2009) and stories of hope circulate as an inspiring and motivational political horizon (Sørensen & Rigby, 2017), though fear may dwindle away hope (Jarymowicz & Bar-Tal, 2006). Therefore, “involvement in backstage activities which appear mundane but are essential for survival and fulfilment of basic needs, can reinforce participant commitment, build trust and loyalty with the wider community” (Sørensen & Rigby, 2017, p. 230). Such safe places allow activists to create and sustain a culture of resistance, rest from frontstage performance, learn personal empowerment and how to strategize and manage emotions.

It is essential to acknowledge such figurative activist spaces when we look at the politics of sight. When AJCAs document and expose animal agriculture, their strategies are collectively planned and organized in affective groups. Still we can ask, what happens behind the scenes if the frontstage of activism is too emotionally challenging? Can we still refer to a collective experience? Are there any exceptions, some hidden and non-collective emotional consequences? Or are humans’ emotional experiences on the frontstage a collective yet hushed emotional experience? This thesis is an attempt to build a bridge between the emotional frontstage and emotional backstage, examining what AJCAs feel during a farm occupation and what happens thereafter. Below²¹, I review some fundamental concepts in

²¹ Although the gender dimension of the movement is not the focus of this thesis, it is interesting to mention that women welfare activists is likely the consequence of a propensity for caring activities and empathic views toward male dominated animal abuse; motivated by a sense of moral duty, women were animal protection or welfare policies pioneers (Gaarder, 2011). Although outright biologism is less common now to explain gender roles and animal advocacy activism, Gaarder identifies among the women she interviewed such a disposition for caring activities and empathy for the downtrodden due to socialization and experiences of abuse or gender racial discrimination. Though it is beyond the scope of this thesis, it would be interesting to draw a gender portrait of current activists, especially those who engage in civil disobedience protests.

SMS, and I emphasize animal advocacy studies. This conceptual framework is used to examine the emotionality of a politics of sight, presented in chapter 4.

2.4.3.1 Emotional Habitus

Deborah Gould's (2009) compelling ontological perspective introduces emotion as a form of understanding—she does not exclude rationality but emphasizes the affective dimension of how one makes sense of a framed issue. Instead of a frame resonance, which refers to a cognitive process, Gould stresses an emotional resonance²² with messages, situations, or events shaping political responses. In addition, Gould proposes that activist groups have an emotional habitus, referring to the shaping of perception and expression of feelings by emotional conventions fashioning the expression of feelings and ways of emoting in a particular setting. More specifically, Gould defines the concept of emotional habitus as “a social grouping’s collective and only partly conscious emotional dispositions, that is, members’ embodied, axiomatic inclinations toward certain feelings and ways of emoting” (p. 32). She also explains that the emotional habitus of social groups structures activists’ feelings and how they are expected to emote. She defines five characteristics: (1) emotional disposition, (2) a sense of what and how to feel, (3) labels for their feelings, (4) schemas about what feelings are and what they mean, and (5) ways of figuring out and understanding what they are feeling (p. 34). Finally, Gould reminds us that emotion has three components: affect (i.e., nonconscious and unnamed bodily responses to stimuli), feeling (i.e., the process of identifying effective states), and emotion (i.e., concrete expression of affect that corresponds to socio-cultural conventions) (pp. 18-22). To simplify, an emotional habitus is an “interpretive schema” providing a way to identify and explain feelings and respond to a situation; it is an acquired and unconsciously embodied knowledge (p. 33).

In order to understand on-stage political action, or protest, Gould proposes two dimensions for her concept of emotional habitus: emotional pedagogies and political imaginaries and horizons. The former interconnects activists’ emotions to the collective emotion during an event, feelings’ expression, and how and what to emote (p. 34). Animal rights activism scholars have identified a similar pedagogy as activists learn how to feel from the group dynamics (Gaarder, 2011; Groves, 1995; Hansson & Jacobsson, 2014; Jacobsson & Lindblom, 2012, 2013, 2016; Pieslak, 2015). Activism pedagogy gives meaning to affective state and provides norms regarding feelings and expression. Emotional pedagogy is key to an emotional habitus as it sways and maintains political responses. Such a pedagogy is bound to the political horizon;

²² Polletta (2006) studies civil resistance movements and the emotional resonance of stories that lead to powerful sit-ins, a direct-action tactic. She found that people participate because they perceive injustice and identify with the message, experiencing an obligation to protest.

what is politically thinkable, and the future of possibilities (p. 32). Therefore, an emotional habitus suggests that AJCAs would know how to feel and how to emote during a politics of sight.

2.4.3.2 Emotional Reflexivity

Scholars of animal rights activism seem to prefer the concept of moral reflexivity (Jacobsson & Lindblom, 2013), referring to what is good or wrong rather than what is felt, though they acknowledge that activists manage emotions to maintain their engagement to a moral ideal and to cope with emotional stress (Jacobsson & Lindblom, 2013). Jacobsson and Lindblom (2016) explain that reflexivity influences activists' emotional life as they manage emotions and cope with their everyday lives. Emotional reflexivity occurs every day; it creates tension in a continuum of emotion management to the extent that activists' moral ideals go against mainstream norms. Sadly, the emotional costs of political resistance may result in de-integration: an "emotional dissonance, cynicism and withdrawal due to a constant feeling of being different and apart from society which adds an emotional pressure to activism and requires a high degree of emotional reflexivity in order to overcome or cope with this dissonance" (Brown & Pickerill, 2009, p. 28). Moral or emotional reflexivity necessarily raise some challenges for concerned citizens.

As Jasper (2018) explains, moral commitment involves processes by which reflexive emotions are hardened into stable emotions and ingrained into an activist's identity; yet the same emotions operate in the processes of joining, maintaining, or quitting activism. In a phenomenological study about animal rights activism experience, Feigin et al. (2018) found that activists may have ambivalent feelings ranging between negative feelings (e.g., guilt, compassion fatigue, anger, powerlessness, desensitisation, detachment, and being overwhelmed) and positive feelings resulting from the perceived effectiveness of activism and community belonging. Activists, in general, invest considerable amounts of time in emotion management (Gould, 2004; Ruiz-Junco, 2013) as they need to cope with the trauma of knowing about animal violence (Jones, 2007). Clare Mann (2018), a psychologist specializing in animal rights activism counselling, suggests that activists experience a *vystopia*: an existential crisis experienced by vegans after discovering systemic animal abuse, which results in a kind of dystopia they do not feel they belong to. In an interview, Mann also claimed that "honestly, I'm surprised there isn't more suicide. I've heard a lot of vegans say they want to kill themselves, but they can't leave animals behind."²³ Knowledge about animal violence and the collective struggle of envisioning a better world for animals, and humans, is thus a moral burden.

²³ Retrieved from [vice.com/en_ca/article/3k9n9y/vegans-are-traumatized-and-need-help-says-vegan-psychologist](https://www.vice.com/en_ca/article/3k9n9y/vegans-are-traumatized-and-need-help-says-vegan-psychologist)

Whereas Gould argues that emotional conventions mobilize sympathizers and shape the course of a protest event, Holmes (2010) argues that emotional reflexivity helps humans understand what they are, socially and collectively, in an interactional embodied process (p. 149). Reflexivity is known to operate through internal conversations (Burkitt, 2012), interstitial events²⁴ (Ruebottom & Auster, 2018), and conversational identity work (Sela-Sheffy & Leshem, 2016). But Holmes stresses the relational dimension of reflexive commitment because feelings about and connections to others are key to reflexive practices. Thus, she emphasizes the dynamism in feeling and opens a reconceptualization of the emotional habitus insofar as it is related to the intersubjective interpretation of emotions rather than a static emotional convention, which is also influenced by the reaction of authorities (Fitzpatrick & Olson, 2015; Iedema & Carroll, 2015). Consequently, emotional reflexivity is helpful for capturing the individual dynamics of managing in situ emotions of a protest action, something moral reflexivity cannot convey.

2.4.3.3 Moral Shock

Compassion for animals elicits moral considerations. While Gould claims that a moral shock sways sympathizers into political action, Jasper and Poulsen (1995) coined the concept of moral shock to refer to “an event or situation [that] raises such a sense of outrage in people, [that] they can become inclined towards political action, even in the absence of a network of contacts” (p. 498). Scholars of animal rights activism have used the concept primarily to refer to a recruitment strategy. As an activist tactic, moral shock is meant to engender socially produced emotions that triggers responses such as guilt, shame, embarrassment, empathy, outrage, pride, and compassion, to name a few. When activists strategize to produce moral shock, it has to be framed with a cultural meaning and the use of visual and verbal rhetoric, i.e., graphics and messages, to point to new principles of living (Jasper, 1998, p. 399). Thus, moral shock is key for attracting potential humans into activism but also maintaining commitment to activism.

Although group identity and positive self-esteem are motivational elements of engaged activism, moral shock and public outrage influences public perception of, for instance, repressive regimes (Shultziner, 2018, p. 55). It is how a framed issue resonates emotionally that indicates whether or not a moral shock will occur. This points to the personal dimension of a moral shock. In fact, it is the emotion with a moral component that operates as a motivator (Brown & Pickerill, 2009; Jacobsson & Lindblom, 2013; Wrenn, 2013b) and triggers subsequent emotional work (Goodwin et al., 2001; Jasper,

²⁴ The authors define it as “temporally and spatially bounded social settings that bring together actors from diverse fields around an organized, (partially) structured and common activity” (p. 471).

1997; Pieslak, 2015). Beyond the collectively produced moral shock and the personal response, activists also self-generate moral shocks, micro-shock or re-traumatization, to maintain their motivation (e.g., watching animal abuse videos) (Hansson & Jacobsson, 2014; Jacobsson & Lindblom, 2016). Lastly, as Gould (2009) argues, experiencing more than one significant shock may intensify commitment or turn activism into radicalism, which for Blee (2002) is a consequence of affective relationships. Therefore, we can assume that AJCAs have experienced a moral shock and attempt to recruit sympathizers by producing one with a politics of sight. However, what about their own experience on a farm?

2.4.3.4 Coping Strategies

Activism is often seen as emotionally rewarding, but there is also an emotional cost of the perceived benefits for animal advocates (Gaarder, 2011; Groves, 2001). Activists often express a sense of urgency to act, resulting in burnout from feelings of defeat and powerlessness (Feigin et al., 2018; Fournier & Mustful, 2019; Gorski et al., 2019). In order to counter burnout, some argue that activists need to diversify activities and strategies (Downton Jr & Wehr, 1998; Feigin et al., 2018). For Brown and Pickerill (2009, p. 28), burnout is a consequence of emotional reflexivity: “a state of mental and physical exhaustion brought on by over-work or trauma.” For Herzog (1993), this is a struggle over “moral consistency” to maintain coherence between beliefs and everyday practices. Incoherence often turns into feelings of carrying a burden in an attempt, as Gaarder puts it, of living a meaningful life (2011, p. 56).

For Animal Justice activists, resisting animal violence also means dealing with microaggression, which, according to LeRette (2014), denotes subtle and perfidious insults (i.e., derogatory, sarcastic, and rude comments) and assaults (i.e., bullying, jokes, intimidation, name-calling, and non-verbal behaviour). How do activists deal with such vystopia and everyday aggression? At a collective level, Jacobsson and Lindblom (2013) investigated the emotional work of animal rights activists and found that such work involves containing emotion to reduce the effects of norm transgressions, and ventilating, which is a means of rendering emotion more abstract or to create a sense of detachment from feelings that build-up towards anger. In addition, emotional work involves a ritualization where a sort of emotional energy is generated within a group to maintain unity and cohesion. A key element of collective emotion is a culture of guilt, a generalized experience of the normalization of emotions of guilt by which activists feel they do not do enough for the animals—also identified by Gaarder (2011), Groves (1997), and Jamison and Lunch (1992). This feeling of guilt results from moral shock and estrangement from a society in which systemic animal violence continues to exist.

At a personal level, Gaarder (2011, p. 66) found that animal rights activists develop coping strategies—or engage in emotional labour to negotiate complex emotions. Activists manage their feelings to achieve mental balance. Coping skill strategies described by Gaarder include recharging by occasionally turning off, acknowledging one’s emotional threshold to block out some issues and work on perceived benefits for the animals, meeting with a counsellor to manage emotional fallout, and scaling back to manageable work. Such findings are consistent with other animal advocate stories—see Best and Nocella II (2004, p. 345), Foer (2011), and Young (2019)—but tells us little about the residual effects of a politics of sight. What does it feel like to witness firsthand animal violence on farms? How does one cope in situ and thereafter?

2.5 Research Objectives

When I wrote my research proposal, I had planned to do a critical ethnography based on Madison’s (2019) core principle: a researcher has an ethical responsibility to address unjust situations within a lived domain, indeed, “a compelling sense of duty and commitment based on moral principles of human freedom and well-being, and hence a compassion for the suffering of living beings” (p. 4). Such an approach is also implicit in Pachirat’s work. This methodological orientation echoes CAS principles and postulates of intersectionality and total liberation. Unfortunately, however, the global pandemic unfolded when I was ready to travel across Canada and legally attend farm occupations, which were subsequently postponed and, then, cancelled. This unexpected and inconvenient situation had me adjust my approach to data collection.

In the book *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design*, Creswell (2013, p. 30) states that a critical approach is a means to speak, thus, stand out against domination and power—the authority that produces and reproduces oppression—to achieve social justice. As a scholar-activist, I tried to fulfill my ethical responsibility with a critical narrative study. Hence, the purpose was to critically reflect on the socio-political dynamics of AJCAs’ politics of sight and provide a comprehensive understanding of the emotional experience of such a dauntless contemporary strategy. In addition to document analysis to describe the political and mainstream media context, I adopt an affective ontology for data collection and interpretation, though I do not exclude the rational dimension of activism. Whereas a complete ethnography would have allowed me to examine the sociocultural dimension of AJCAs’ activism and describe and interpret shared and learned patterns, I was able to collect enough subjective stories to draw emotional patterns.

At the core of this thesis is the strategy of farm occupation that has not been explicitly and sufficiently examined by scholars. The lack of knowledge about the structural management (i.e., mainstream media and polity) of this contemporary strategy and the emotional consequences of participating in a farm occupation provided an opening for investigating an (in)visible avenue oriented towards the abolishment of systemic animal oppression and exploitation, as well as filling some conceptual sociological gaps. When an investigation about an overlooked topic is undertaken, many dimensions must be examined. In this thesis, I first explore the structural suppression of farm occupations in Canada. The methodological approach is detailed below and in chapter 3, but to summarize, based on Boykoff's (2007) typology on the suppression of social justice movements, the task was to look at the media representation of farm occupations that occurred in four provinces at the time of data collection in order to identify patterns in media narratives. It is important to note that my goal in doing so was not to provide an exhaustive media frame analysis of all mainstream media responses to the actions or Animal Justice activism. This would have constituted a doctoral research project in itself. Instead, I tried to replicate the kinds of searches that might have been undertaken by individuals who might have been interested in the farm occupations. The media analysis is thus exploratory. Using the same typology, another task was to retrieve legislative debates underlying the enactment of ag-gag laws, understood as suppression in the making and examining legislative representations. This political response to farm occupation has led to interesting findings regarding how agricultural lobbying appear to be intertwined with the polity, how political discourses echo mainstream media framing, and a representative paradox. However, this echo represents a first approximation; the level of resonance between the media sampled in my study and the legislative debates needs to be explored through a full-scale media analysis as well as an actual mapping of the networks of people, ideas and influence that might explain the echo chamber between media and polity.

This oppressive structural context through which AJCAs' politics of sight is enacted contributes to understanding the current socio-political dynamic and opens up further research about the emotional consequences of activism on behalf of animals in a context of what my exploratory research suggests we might call suppression. In addition, I explored another dimension, more crucial at this point, indeed, the emotional consequences of participating in farm occupations. I detail the data collection and the method of analysis below and in chapter 4. My approach²⁵ for this topic involved conducting semi-structured in-depth interviews with AJCAs across Canada to identify emotional patterns associated with voluntary exposure to witnessing animal violence firsthand. I took a chronological approach, by which

²⁵ As previously said, the initial methodology of this thesis was a critical ethnography. Although I had to conduct most of my interviews through the online platform Zoom and Facetime, I also attended two farm occupations, remaining on the outside, in Quebec and Ontario.

I mean exploring the process of becoming an AJCA, the subjective experience of facing suffering ensnared animals on farms when they could not be rescued due to the nature of the politics of sight and the intensity of exploitation, and coping strategies during and post-action. Investigating the emotional management of firsthand experience of animal violence opened up the opportunity to enrich the understanding of two key sociological concepts in SMS, namely moral shock and emotional habitus. The collection of three different but complementary data sets has been fruitful in expanding the understanding of the contemporary politics of sight. Chapter 5, thus, initiates a critical reflection on the challenges with which a politics of sight contends. Consequently, this thesis follows Pachirat's suggestion for future research: i.e., the ambiguity of the

ideal of transparency opens up a vast empirical research agenda in political movement that enact a politics of sight [... the] aim of such research would include a close specification of which conditions, contexts, and types of making visible are likely to be more politically transformative and which are likely to result in renewed forms of sequestration and concealment (p. 255).

Beyond opening up to the research potential of this topic, this thesis offers insight into the Canadian context in which AJCA enacts a politics of sight: has the endeavour of making animal violence visible resulted in societal transformation or foregrounded distance and concealment? And does it offer a comprehensive understanding of emotionality from the point of view of AJCAs?

I hope the critical narrative, and part-ethnographical, study reported in this thesis is able to fulfill the ethical responsibility that comes with my privileges and contributes to prompting a critical reflection amongst the readers about (in)direct human participation in animal violence, and encourages a debate about the consequences of the ties of the media-state-AIC nexus upon both animals and AJCAs. The ties suggest that public opinion is being steered to secure economic interests by fostering public ignorance, comforting humans in their violent consumption habits, and contributing to making animal violence hidden. Though the focus of this thesis is a politics of sight on farm related settings, it is likely pertinent to other oppressive and exploitative contexts such as private and public laboratories. Mis- and dis-information from official authorities is one, or should be recognized as one, of the biggest of humanity's challenges a problem identified by Plato, Étienne de la Boetie, and Marx, to name a few, as it has concrete consequences on the lives of humans and animals. Ultimately, with this thesis, I hope that I will somehow contribute to abolishing lawful animal violence, which for most humans it is more comfortable not think about than to deny.

2.6 Method

The empirical investigation in this doctorate thesis entails the analysis of three types of qualitative data; these data were complemented with watching live-streamed videos of farm occupations on Facebook, post-protest videos on YouTube, photographs on activists' Facebook and Instagram account, and by (legally) observing two farm occupations, in Quebec and Ontario. First, I answer the question of *how a politics of sight operates and shape animal justice citizen activism* by examining the representation of the media-state nexus (chapter 3) and evaluate the politics of sight with a critical substantive approach (chapter 5). To examine the mainstream media representations of four Canadian farm occupations (2019 and 2020) that took place in the provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Quebec, and Ontario, I collected a sample of media coverage through an online search and local and national news site archives. The underlying logic of this type of data collection was to capture what most humans would access with a quick online search if they had heard about a farm occupation and wanted to get some details. This Google search, of course, has some limitations. For instance, Google optimization is based on previous research. More importantly, the search and analysis are not meant to be a stand-in for a rigorous keyword search in media databases. As a result, it obviously, does not seize the full scope of the mainstream media narrative. However, the goal was to track down what a curious member of the public might have accessed through a personal search.

A total of 48 text media news items were collected from April 2019 to August 2020. Local sources for British Columbia are the Abbotsford News, Chilliwack News, Fraser Valley News, and Maple Ridge News; sources for Alberta are the Calgary Herald, Calgary Sun, My Lethbridge Now News, and High River News; sources for Ontario are the New Market Today and York Region; and sources for Quebec are the Journal de Montréal, La Presse, Radio-Canada, and TVA Nouvelles. For the province of Quebec, only French news were collected as the majority is French speakers, though there are many English speakers in and around Montreal. I also searched and collected national news items from CBC News, CTV News, Global News, The Intercept, National Post, Toronto Star, and The Canadian Press. In addition, coverage by agriculture journals and press releases were collected from the Western Producer, Alberta Farmer, Canadian Poultry, Real Agriculture News, Union des Producteurs Agricoles, and La Terre de chez nous. Doing so allowed me to identify and illustrate broad tendencies in the mainstream media corpus by using Boykoff's analytical framework of mode of suppression by media as a starting point.

Second, I examined the narrative underlying the making of ag-gag laws in two provinces that had passed the legislation at the time of data collection, namely Alberta and Ontario. I collected a total

of four Hansards items (introduction of Bill-27 and debates, exchanges, and interventions) retrieved from the online archive of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. Bill-27 was introduced on November 19th, 2019, and came into force on December 5th, 2019. I also collected seventeen Hansards items (introduction of Bill-156 and debates, exchanges, and interventions) retrieved from the online archive of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Bill-156 was introduced on December 2nd, 2019, and received Royal Assent on June 18th, 2020. This corpus allowed me to identify and illustrate key themes in the legislative narrative that were used to justify provincial ag-gag law and their proponents. Again, Boykoff's framework of political suppression was used as a starting point for coding.

The third analysis sought to answer the question, *how do concerned citizens emotionally respond to enacting a politics of sight?* To examine the emotional dimensions of participating in a politics of sight (chapter 4), I conducted 15 in-depth semi-structured interviews with AJCAs across Canada. One AJCA had not participated in farm occupation but was an independent investigator, others were either associated with DxÉ, MTV, or the Roses' Law campaign. As some AJCAs wished to maintain anonymity, I do not disclose specific numbers from each group; moreover, no matter the type of protest AJCAs were involved with, the main criterion for recruitment was that they had experienced firsthand bearing witness to violence against animals on farms. The exclusion of AJCA supporters who were never in close contact with animal violence on farm was to ensure that the study participants shared a distinct subjective and collective experience. Consequently, all AJCAs constitute one sample as I focus on the subjective experience of firsthand encounters with animal violence.

The interviews took place in 2020 (13 interviews) and 2021 (2 interviews). Participants were aged between 17 to 60, 4 were men and 11 women. The interviews ranged from 45 minutes to 2 hours. During the interview I explored emotions by focusing on how they became activists, the experience of direct action, and the maintenance of commitment. Recruitment of the participants was done by advertising the study on Facebook and directly contacting some activists through social media networks. Examining emotional patterns among AJCA's stories, I compared and coded narratives based on emotional state, such as before/during/after a farm occupation. These three types of analysis were also used to evaluate the Canadian politics of sight, this time, with Fuyuki Kurasawa's analytical framework that allows one to further explore sociologically the practice of bearing witness. Chapter 5 draws on the findings presented in chapters 3 and 4 to develop and illustrates the explanatory potential of conceptualizing bearing witness as a mode of practice and contributes to the type of self-reflection that one AJCA highlighted during an interview in terms of refining the tactic.

3. Article 1 – Animal Justice Citizen Activism in Canada: Paradox in the Politics of Sight

Author: Annie Bernatchez

Abstract: Animal Justice Citizen Activists (AJCAs) enact a politics of sight to shed light on animal violence and to reach the broader public by facilitating the media's access to the targeted farms and engaging in visible forms of civil disobedience. This paper examines mainstream media representations of farm occupations in four Canadian provinces and political representations in two provinces where ag-gag laws have been passed. The analysis shows that the media-state nexus converges around the tactics of demonization and negative framing, undermining AJCAs' politics of sight. This suggests a paradox in the politics of sight: AJCAs efforts to make the suffering of animals visible are invisibilized through the derogation of the politics of sight. The article contends that mainstream media and ag-gag legislation discourage public discussions about animal violence and justice.

Keywords: activism, animal rights, citizenship, farm occupation, politics of sight, social justice

Below is the final version published in the Journal for Critical Animal Studies in 2022.

3.1 Introduction

On April 28, 2019, Canada experienced its first farm occupation with the Meat the Victims (MTV) campaign, followed by Liberation Lockdown and Direct Action Everywhere's (DxE) Rose's Law campaigns in 2019 and 2020. Farm occupation is an overt form of a peaceful civil disobedience tactic that strives to draw public attention to animal violence on industrialized farms and to contribute to dismantling speciesism. To do so, concerned citizens enter a farm, live-stream, and gather photographic and video evidence to bear witness to the pitiful conditions in which the animals find themselves. The documentary evidence is shared on social media channels. Activists also sit in solidarity with the animals until the police are called. They sometimes rescue animals by providing them with care and safe homes. Additionally, Animal Justice Citizen Activists (AJCAs) invite the mainstream media to visit the farms during the occupation to publicize the animals' dire situations beyond activist circles. (Un)Surprisingly, as we will see below, this new form of protest has almost immediately been met with ag-gag laws.

The animal violence that AJCAs endeavor to make visible is what the animal-industrial complex (AIC) desperately wants to remain invisible. The AIC is a robust "partly opaque and multiple set of networks and relationships between the corporate (agricultural) sector, governments, and public and private science" (Twine, 2012, p. 23). In a compelling argument against carnism, Joy (2010) reminds us that the AIC's systemic violence and invisibility are a prerequisite for its profits. Equally, its ongoing profitability is secured by AIC actors operating in the political shadows on behalf of the food sector (Sorenson, 2014). Consequently, farm occupations are organized efforts to shine the light of publicity on the AIC practice; by enacting a politics of sight (POS), activists endeavor to make visible, hidden animal violence to produce socio-political transformation (Pachirat, 2011, p. 236). More specifically, using media to expose animal suffering on industrialized farms is a tactic to stand up against the normalization of animal violence for human food guided by the underlying ethical principle that *if people perceive the reality of food production, they will change their food habits*.

How is animal violence kept hidden behind the AIC walls? In the 1990s, ag-gag laws emerged in the United States seeking to criminalize open and secret investigations of sites where animal exploitation was taking place; though, in many states, these laws have been overturned due to their infringement of the First Amendment (Drake, 2021). Generally, ag-gag laws are characterized by the goal of protecting the AIC from direct and reputational damage through the prohibition of gathering video and photographic evidence without the property owner's consent, entering a premise under false pretense, or misrepresentation for undercover work (Shea, 2015, p. 337). In Australia, "interference" with agricultural businesses is also prohibited (Gelber & O'Sullivan, 2021), and special attention is focused on

the biosecurity risks activists may cause (Whitfort, 2019) while trespassing on the sites where animals are exploited.

In Canada, ag-gag laws arrived in 2019. At the time of data collection, only two provinces had passed ag-gag legislation. Four months after a protest action took place on a turkey farm in Alberta, the province passed Bill-27, *Trespass Statutes (Protecting Law-Abiding Property Owner) Amendment Act* (SA 2019, C23), in December 2019. Elements of the legislation include retroactivity to January of 2018, emphasizing the criminality of entering “private land” and working under false pretense. Furthermore, due to this Act, property owners do not “owe a duty of care” and are not liable for damage, injury, or even death of trespassers. As the Alberta ag-gag law title states, it is oriented towards “protecting property owners,” showing no regard for the lives of animals.

Alberta would have inspired the Ontario Bill-156, *Security from Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act*, 2020 (SO 2020, C 9). The legislation prohibits anyone from documenting animal violence on private property (i.e., farms, slaughterhouses, and in transport vehicles), providing false or misleading information, or being hired under false pretenses. In addition, it authorizes the property owner to arrest anyone without a warrant with “reasonable force” while not being liable for loss, damage, and injuries that may be caused in doing so. Police officers are also authorized to arrest without a warrant based on a presumption of property interference, i.e., someone can be detained even if not on the property. Paradoxically, Ontario seeks to protect, as the bill’s name suggests, “farm animals from trespass and interference to prevent contamination of food supply,” as if animals on farms were safe in the hand of those who see their bodies as a source of profit. Thus, in both instances, the laws seek to prevent activists from making animal violence visible by significantly raising the cost of enacting a POS, in a speciesist manner, with financial penalties starting at \$15,000.

Canadian law professor Jodi Lazare’s analysis of the case law in Alberta and Ontario, concludes that both ag-gag laws are designed to render invisible the AIC’s horrific practices and constitute an infringement on the freedom of expression, a right guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (2020, p. 104). This is consistent with other scholars and lawyers who have identified ag-gag laws as attacks on civil liberties (Drake, 2021; Gelber & O’Sullivan, 2021; Labchuk, 2020). As Sorenson (2016) argues, “[a]g-gag laws would not only affect activists but would stifle journalists investigating agribusiness, including those who are less concerned with animals than about public health” (p. 184), thus protecting AIC corporate profits instead of nonhuman animals. Ag-gag laws are a way to maintain ignorance about animal suffering and the surreptitious legal activities of the AIC (Broad, 2016; Fiber-Ostrow & Lovell, 2016; Wrock, 2016). This is precisely what a POS seeks to overcome by documenting

violence against animals and encouraging the mainstream media to tour the farms hoping that the images will reach a wider public with sympathetic coverage and responses.

Boykoff (2007), a social justice movements scholar, argues that mainstream media, influenced by governments, tend to negatively frame protests by deprecating activists' messages and actions, demonizing justice activists, or ignoring them altogether. Protesters are frequently portrayed as enemies, extremists, or terrorists and commonly framed as disruptive, freaks, ignorant, violent, and communicating confused grievances. Under these circumstances, Boykoff claims that the "media spotlight" is sometimes more harmful than helpful (p. 246). Moreover, as Sorenson (2016, p. 165) argues, images of institutionalized animal abuses are often shunned by media because they are "too graphic and disturbing" or, if they do publicize images, they are typically characterized as being exceptional, drawing attention away from the underlying violence of the AIC. Paradoxically, public awareness of ag-gag laws reduces trust in animal exploitation on farms (Robbins et al., 2016). A similar effect is known for undercover investigations (Schulze et al., 2021). Therefore, it is pertinent to examine the media-state representations of farm occupation and gauge if a POS has the desired effect on speciesism.

Although visual representations of animal suffering may be a successful strategy (Fernández, 2019, 2021; Laine & Vinnari, 2017), the interpretation of distant suffering and the moral responsibility to act in accordance cannot be reduced to just "seeing" as human rights scholars argue (Hill, 2019; Tait, 2011). Evans' (2016, p. 47) analysis of the *New York Times* coverage of animal activism campaigns shows that reformist or welfarist actions are presented more positively than more radical abolitionist ones. This is consistent with Sorenson's (2009) claim that radical tactics are more likely to be misrepresented and used to arouse public fear deliberately. In addition, Evans' study shows that the quality of media framing is more likely to result from a group's identity or reputation than from the concrete actions undertaken (2016, p. 54). Consequently, mainstream media would be more likely to applaud or belittle a POS based on AJCAs' reputation rather than the motivation underlying farm occupations.

This empirical article examines Canadian media-state representations of farm occupation in media coverage and legislative debates of ag-gag laws. This article contributes to critical and social movement studies and Canadian AJCAs who wish to adapt their POS. The first part outlines the data and method. The second part identifies critical themes in the media-state narrative. The last section discusses the POS paradox: despite the nonviolent tactics of concerned citizens, the media-state nexus frames AJCAs in terms of threat, building a narrative of fear and, above all, obfuscating animal violence.

3.2 Data and Method

This paper's empirical findings and analysis draw on a sample of texts from mainstream media coverage of four farm occupations in Canada: British Columbia, Alberta, Quebec, and Ontario. I performed a general online search (keywords: activist, protest, farm, name of the province) to build a corpus of news stories that ordinary curious people would get access to with a simple Google search. An additional investigation of local and national news sites archives created the corpus with a total of 48 news items collected from April 2019 to August 2020. Only French news stories were collected for the province of Quebec, which has the most French speakers. In addition, coverage by independent media, agriculture journals, and press releases was collected. I also watched live-streamed videos and post-action publications on AJCA's social media accounts to get a sense of the immersive experience of farm occupation.

The second part of the analysis focuses on ag-gag laws passed in two Canadian provinces at the time of data collection. I collected four Hansards items (introduction of Bill-27 and debates, exchanges, and interventions) from the online archive of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. I also collected seventeen Hansards items (introduction of Bill-156 and debates, conversations, and interventions) from the online archive of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Although the findings and analyses draw on the two corpora described above, I also draw on in-depth interviews from fieldwork. I used Boykoff's typology of media frames, discussed above, used to discredit justice movements to perform an initial thematic analysis of the media and legislative corpus. Boykoff's categories were the analytical starting point, enabling the identification of key themes in the media-state representation of farm occupations.

In this article, farmers, veterinarians, agricultural unions and associations, and lobbyists are collapsed together under the rubric of Animal Exploiter Authorities (AEA) as they have the socially legitimate epistemic power to influence public opinion and governments. They (in)directly participate in animal violence and regulate exploitation standards.

3.3. Media Representations and the Politics of Sight

The analysis of media coverage shows a general tendency towards representing AJCAs' POS negatively. I identified two main tendencies that overall lead towards the suppression of AJCA actions. First, the mainstream media in the corpus gravitate towards not covering farm occupation or emphasizing AEA voices, though there are some instances of reporters questioning the epistemological power of AEA. Second, the mainstream media are more likely to frame AJCA actions as violent, disruptive, and ignorant while mistaking anti-speciesism for veganism and AJCAs with those of

underground activities. As a result, the POS enacted by AJCAs is categorized as criminal and poses a risk to farm biosecurity. Moreover, when the mainstream media in the corpus cover farm occupations, they usually favor the economic interests behind animal exploitation instead of promoting a public debate centering on animal violence, which is the goal of the AJCAs' farm occupations.

3.3.1 Devaluing the Vision of AJCAs

3.3.1.1 Disregarding the Occupation

The most extreme form of disavowal of the POS is ignoring attempts to make violence against animals visible. Not covering farm occupation deprecates AJCA's work and limits potential public support. However, this denial only occurred in Ontario, where most mainstream media disregarded a duck farm occupation. AJCAs documented, via live-streamed video, horrific animal abuse: ducks walking on a bare wire mesh covered in feces, some with their bills and wings stuck in the wire mesh floor. While some ducks were injured, others were dead. As the violence occurring on this farm was made visible on social media, the conspicuous contrast between AJCAs' footage and the farm's claim about animal welfare prompted Animal Justice—a Canadian Animal Law firm—to file a complaint of false advertising and of illegally misleading consumers with the Competition Bureau of Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

3.3.1.2 Disregarding the Evidence

When documented evidence of animal abuse in the standard practice of on- farm animal exploitation is disregarded by authoritative organizations such as the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), the impact of the media attention secured via the enactment of a POS is curtailed. The British Columbia protest took place four days after undercover footage revealing appalling animal abuse was released by PETA. The media coverage reported that the local SPCA investigated the evidence of animal abuse from the publicly released footage. However, because the undercover investigator in the PETA video obtained the footage illegally, the SPCA did not press charges due to the impossibility of talking with the investigator. Consequently, the SPCA also disputed what was subsequently documented during the protest by participating AJCAs and the five media platforms allowed to tour the farm operation.

In Alberta, the media were allowed to film inside a turkey farm due to the farm's occupation. In a video filmed onsite by a support activist, the owner is seen holding a conscious and injured turkey by the legs and throwing the turkey in a homemade incinerator, clearly illustrating the normalization of

animal violence and the trivialization of animal suffering. After the protest, a reporter from CTV news outlines the SPCA statement:

[w]e require recent information from an eyewitness in order to open an investigation. Social media posts or video posted online without corroborating information from a witness does not give us reasonable and probable grounds to go onto private property to investigate the circumstances of the animals. (Hunt, 2019)

Once again, it is the SPCA's disavowal of the evidence of animal abuse that is reported in the media rather than the gruesome images documented by AJCAs. This illustrates how animal welfare authorities have the power to redefine "witnessing" to undermine the form of witnessing in which the POS is grounded.

3.3.2 Reinterpreting the Evidence

As with the SPCA, AEAs are in a position to define the scope and legality of animal violence on farms. Consequently, their presence in most media reporting can reinterpret the evidence of animal abuse. In the Quebec action, the live-streamed video shows a repulsive reality: pregnant sows confined in crates not much bigger than their bodies, pigs coughing, and piglets knee-deep in feces. Although there was clear evidence of abuse, in a news report, an AEA actor disregarded the evidence of cruelty and framed the protest action as an object of scorn and condemnation instead (Tremblay, 2019). In the Alberta action, some turkeys were injured, some sick, and others dead. Nonetheless, an AEA actor claimed that "[t]hose birds were in great condition. They were clean. They were dry. The bedding looks good. You can tell they were happy" (Alberta Trade Magazine, Western Producer, 2019). Such claims draw on the epistemological authority AEAs have to create a hierarchy of evidence where the footage obtained by AJCAs is discredited and judged inadmissible in the court of public opinion by undermining the quality and objectivity of AJCA's live-streamed videos. This is, of course, further reinforced by the speciesist culture of contemporary and mainstream Canadian society.

British Columbia media also used AEA voices to explain away the released undercover footage, undermining the value of the evidence produced via the protest action. An AEA actor claims that "[t]he video was taken by a trespasser at night, it has been edited and lacks context and understanding, but some of the scenes are of concern" (Lehn, 2020). When a reporter interviewed the farm owner, he insisted that "[s]ome of those pictures could not have even been from our farm. We are not sure" (Kane, 2019). Five months later, he claimed otherwise: it "was shot in secret by someone trespassing at night, and suggested that some of the images may have been staged" (CBC, 2020). When a reporter from an independent media, The Intercept, contacted the owner for further explanation, no details were given

about which part of the footage was staged and what “would explain the many corpses and illnesses” (Brown, 2019).

A key AEA actor used by the British Columbia media is the farm veterinarian. According to one such veterinarian, the footage might have come from the “hospital area” of the farm, a section to which media was refused access. However, when interviewed by a reporter, he contradicted himself while seemingly defending his contribution to animal abuse: “[a]fter watching the [undercover] video, he said he spoke with the operators about removing some animals from their pens sooner” (Kane, 2019), and said to another one, “[t]here were some animals that might have been removed from the pen a little earlier” (Brown, 2019). He finally admitted that “the video shows ‘the worst light of the farm,’ but added the pigs shown in the video suffering from injuries and illness are confined to the farm’s hospital area, and those animals are being treated” (Boyton, 2019). His comments following the release of the undercover footage might explain why a section of the farm was off limits to media, and what one independent reporter who was on the bus with AJCAs noticed when comparing the undercover and media footage, the place appears the same “but lacked the cobwebs, corpses, and severely ill-looking animals” (Brown, 2019).

In addition to having their evidentiary claims undermined, AJCAs are frequently portrayed as endangering animals. Most media coverage highlights farm owners’ claims that AJCA protests cause stress, injure animals, and breach biosecurity measures. In the Quebec protest, less than a month after the occupation, the farm owner claimed that the pigs were infected by a “rotavirus” (Cameron, 2020). This disease is common among herds and quickly spreads through contaminated feces, a fecal-oral transmission mainly causing diarrhea. As documented on AJCAs’ live-streamed videos and social media posts, some pigs were knee-deep in feces indicating that the disease was probably in the herd long before AJCAs entered the farm. In one media report, the farm owner also claimed that the higher mortality rate was due to the protest: “[t]he noise and stress experienced by the sows had caused them to stand up suddenly. When they lay back down, they killed their piglets” (Cameron, 2020, personal translation). This dubious statement highlights the extent to which AEA actors will go to deflect public criticism of their activities.

3.3.3 AJCAs as Threats

3.3.3.1 Criminality

In most media coverage of the Alberta protest, trespassing on private property (i.e., farm buildings) was stressed and likened to breaking into a private home. In this way, AJCA protest is yoked

to public fear of high criminality rates in rural Alberta (e.g., thefts on farms). For instance, a reporter quotes the executive director of Alberta Pork:

most farmers also live where they work, making the issue one of basic personal security [...] protesters are “criminals” who should be charged. “Not only is someone stealing from you, now they’re standing on your property, putting you on the news, calling you a bad person – and your family has to go through all that.” (Stephenson, 2019)

Linking theft and harassment to the AJCA protest is a way of backgrounding AJCA claims, igniting public fear, and invoking the need for extraordinary legislative measures. Moreover, not only does farm occupation become conflated with rural criminality, AJCA protests are depoliticized by their association with vandalism. Following the Quebec occupation, two restaurants were vandalized in the province’s metropole. AJCA did not claim those acts as opposed to vandalism, but one media source subtly linked the vandalism to the farm occupation (Cameron, 2020).

It is expected that AJCAs are framed as violent protesters who intimidate, harass, and threaten farmers; the latter, rather than the animals, are represented as being the victims of violence. For instance, the Quebec farm owner stated that she felt criminalized and victimized by an ideology. She claimed that there was no good reason for her farm to be targeted. She added that her family and farm workers were fearful during the night of the occupation. However, a personal informant said the police were called just before 8 a.m. when the workers entered the farm. Nevertheless, the Quebec Minister of agriculture claimed that farmers were anxious and scared as they “feel attack[ed]” under their own “roof” (Perreault, 2020). It is essential to highlight that farmers do not live in buildings where animals are exploited, and AJCA has never been known to have entered a farmer’s house.

Public sympathy directed towards farmers and away from animals is often cultivated. As the British Columbia Mayor, quoted in Olsen (2020), said: “he wanted to see charges laid, saying the children of the farm’s owners were ‘terrified’ by the incidents.” Moreover, a police spokesperson linked AJCA protests with undercover activism exaggerating farmers’ fear: “[i]t’s the extremists who, more covertly, they go at night and let animals out, or they take pictures of the conditions inside farms” (Brown, 2019). Ironically, farmers often communicate their willingness to engage in violence, as reported in the Albertan agriculture journal, the Western Producer (2019): “there’s a lot of us that are very fed up with this. And I and many others are worried that someone will snap at some point and take drastic measures against protesters.”

3.3.3.2 Biosecurity

Media demonization of AJCAs also includes labeling them as biosecurity threats. Yet, in every farm occupation, AJCAs wear biohazard suits. However, AEA actors still claim in all media reports that AJCA, “put the livestock at this farm at serious health risk,” as in the case of Lypka’s coverage (2019). In Quebec and British Columbia, AEA claims about “terrorism” and “agroterrorism” were conveyed by two reporters (Brown, 2019; Perreault, 2020). For example, the British Columbia farm veterinarian stated that a breach in biosecurity was worse than what was revealed in the undercover footage (Brown, 2019). In the same province and referring to the AJCA trial, Lehn (2020) reports that activists are “waiting to hear if ‘break and enter to commit an indictable offence’ will be determined to be ‘break and enter to commit terrorism.’” Trespassing on a farm to expose animal violence somehow implies terrorism. For AEA, biosecurity is key to discrediting farm occupation, as contact with animals is claimed to threaten their health, while AJCAs document evidence of diseases.

3.4 Legislative Representations of the Politics of Sight

The analysis of the ag-gag law corpus shows similarities with the mainstream media’s tendency to devalue AJCAs’ concerns and to portray a POS as criminal. This section shows provincial governments’ propensity to legislatively suppress AJCAs’ POS. With examples from the corpus, I illustrate a tendency to demonize and negatively frame AJCAs while supporting animal agriculture interests through ag-gag laws. First, Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) are inclined to leave unnoticed the purpose of a POS by emphasizing AJCA’s lack of knowledge about farming practices. Second, it is stressed that a POS threatens nonhuman animals, humans, the food system, and the economy. Even rural criminality is used to discredit AJCAs’ POS in one province. Labelling AJCAs a threat is a means to propagate fear. This justifies securing the hidden side of animal exploitation behind a legislative wall, keeping it out of public sight. Such a narrative of fear echoes counterterrorism framing and depoliticizes the legitimate concerns raised by a POS, leaving animal violence unseen and undebated.

3.4.1 Erasure of the AJCAs’ Vision

A key strategy for undermining AJCAs’ POS is positioning them as ignorant of farming activities. Some MLAs emphasize farmers’ “special knowledge” regarding animal welfare ruled by AEA’s standards. Farmers whose farms are occupied are framed as victims of illegal occupations and “slander through false narratives.” This focused attention on ignorance serves, ironically, to position AJCAs as

the sources of potential harm for animals and society, as the Progressive Conservative member (PCM) claims, they “may not be aware of or follow rules that are designed to ensure animal welfare and food safety” (Pettapiece, 2019, p. 6796), insinuating breaches in biosecurity, not the issue raised by AJCAs.

In addition to imperiling human and nonhuman animal security and the safety of the food supply, AJCAs are frequently portrayed as disconnected from reality. For instance, as when a PCM claims that factory farming is only found in the United States: “we have factory farming, but the reality is that over 97% of Canada’s farmers have small farms, and they’re family-owned farms, and they’ve been in business for generations. Factory farming does not exist in Canada” (Ghamari, 2019, p. 6818). However, as Sorenson and Matsuoka (2021) explain, “family and factory farms are not mutually exclusive. The term family farm simply designates those owned by their operators and relatives, specifying nothing about size or practices” (p. 155). All the modalities above of framing the ignorance of AJCAs serve to strip legitimacy from their POS.

3.4.2 AJCAs as a Threat

3.4.2.1 Economic Threat

The provincial economy is a pervasive theme among MLAs’ discussions. The agriculture sector contributes billions of dollars to the economy and provided more than 100,000 jobs in 2020 on about 77,000 reported farms in 2016 (Government of Canada, 2021). In the Alberta Legislature, farm occupations are portrayed as holding the economy “hostage,” damaging the province’s reputation nationally and internationally. In Ontario, a PCM draws attention to the impact of AJCAs’ protest on the farming industry’s profits: “trespassing [is] disruptive to regular business operations, and that impacts not only individuals but our entire economy. People’s lives, incomes, and families depend on business operations to continue safely and uninterrupted” (Barrett, 2019, p. 6799).

Hyperbolically, some MLAs equate domestic food production to national sovereignty, which is put at risk by AJCAs’ protests. Thus, securing animal exploitation becomes an essential justification for ag-gag laws a PCM claims, “this legislation is needed to protect and support our thriving agriculture industry” (McDonell, 2020, p. 7023). Consequently, the threat to the agricultural economy, when not the nation’s sovereignty, provides a persuasive justificatory umbrella to locate the needs of profits over the respect of animals’ lives.

3.4.2.2 Rural Criminality

Chiming with the mainstream media narrative, farm occupations are conflated with rural crimes. An Alberta MLA identifies rural crimes, such as stealing tools and breaking and entering into a private residence, as a significant social issue. AJCAs' POS is folded into the modus operandi of rural crime; for the United Conservative Party member, "[t]he strategy of criminals when they're doing these crimes is to send people out to trespass. They case properties, they record what's there to be stolen, and they leave" (Sigurdson, 2019, p. 2576). What is categorized as rural crimes by the MLA is different from AJCAs' POS. However, conflating rural crimes with AJCAs' actions accentuates a sense of insecurity among animal exploiters who are framed as victims.

3.4.2.3 Threat to Security

The term private property in ag-gag laws conflates the meaning of commercial and residential property: farm and home, two different entities often located on the same land. For instance, Toby Barrett romantically frames farming as an ancient agricultural model, as opposed to the industrial model to which AJCAs are attempting to draw attention: "[t]hey live together on farms with their children, with seniors. The workplace is truly the home; the home is truly the workplace" (2020, p. 7631). MLAs repeatedly claim that farmers live where they work, implicitly considering a farm where nonhuman animals live as a human home, as in this example: "[f]or so many farmers, these farms are their homes; they live and work in the same place. Just as I would not want someone entering my home without my consent" (Ghamari, 2019, p. 6818). This framing entirely ignores that AJCAs target buildings where animals are kept for exploitation and where farmers are unlikely to live. Conflating the meaning of farm and home also accentuates a sense of insecurity requiring a response.

While security in Alberta is constructed around private residential property, MLAs equate security with biosecurity in Ontario. A breach in biosecurity by trespassers can endanger farmers, employees, families, nonhuman animals, and the food supply. Conversely, MLAs draw attention to potential risks for AJCAs from farmers who are entitled to defend themselves against the "criminal offence." For example, a New Democratic Party member claims he "got one really interesting tweet. It said, 'I need some training because my reaction would be to take my tractor and turn over their cars'" (Vanthof, 2020, p. 7637). Ag-gag laws also provide a sense of protection to animal exploiters. The death of activist Regan Russell at an Ontario slaughterhouse two days after Bill-156 passed is a troubling example of how an escalated discourse of security and fear can lead to tragic consequences.

3.5 Concluding Discussion

The first farm occupation occurred in the Canadian province of British Columbia, but Alberta, followed by Ontario, has led the charge toward ag-gag legislation. Abandoning covert strategies, AJCAs have turned towards an overt POS, organizing to make animal violence on farms visible while seeking mainstream media coverage. Despite its open and peaceful nature, the analysis shows a media-state representation that converges on demonizing AJCAs and negatively framing farm occupations, attempting to stoke fear among the public rather than opening up a space for the public to “see” and debate animal exploitation practices. Under these circumstances, graphic violence against animals remains, for most, invisible.

Examining the mainstream media and provincial governments’ representations of farm occupations reveals similar rhetorical strategies that depoliticize the POS. Though the framing of AJCAs as freaks with muddled grievances (e.g., veganism, animal rights, and speciesism) was less present in the corpus analyzed here, an ignorance frame continues to distort AJCAs’ motivations while simultaneously backgrounding the issue of animal violence. By either disregarding a farm occupation or reinterpreting evidence of animal violence, the message conveyed is that AJCAs do not understand “animal farming” practices, animal welfare, or biosecurity measures. When AEA excludes AJCAs’ documentation from a speciesist hierarchy of evidence, it undermines credibility, without which a POS cannot work. The reality of animal violence is subverted and presented counterfactually—as if animals had agreed to their lifelong bodily exploitation and eventual killing. Framing AJCAs and their actions in this way damage their reputations invalidates their motivations, and undermines the efficacy of a POS, contributing to maintaining the politico-cultural status quo of disregard for animal lives.

AIC actors often intervene in the media and vilify animal activists as a socio-economic threat (Sorenson, 2016, 2019) while also framing activists as irresponsible and negligent (Laine & Vinnari, 2017). Accentuating AEA voices secures what Mitchell (2011) calls moral disengagement towards animals ensnared on farms, maintaining a psychological and physical distance between civil society and AIC violent practices. The frame of economic disruption not only deprecates AJCAs’ visions and goals but unites most mainstream media and MLA representations in presenting AJCAs as a threat to the economy, human and nonhuman animal safety, private property rights, and biosecurity. Ironically, Jason, an undercover investigator, and respondent from my doctoral fieldwork, who worked in many Canadian farms, insists that farmworkers represent a higher biosecurity risk than any AJCA. For example, he noted that on a “broiler chicken farm,” an unsanitized tractor would be used to clean manure in different locations, and farmers typically visit other farms without wearing biosecurity suits.

Framing farm occupations as violent acts and associating them with underground activities is likely to confuse an uninformed speciesist audience. When MLAs conflate farm occupation with rural crimes, they fuel fear and foster a narrative where animal exploiters are the victims. Such form of victimization and criminalization of activists is identified by Sorenson (2019) as an AIC propaganda strategy. Journalists reporting AEA voices and MLA using a violence frame subtly or explicitly associate AJCAs with imagined fear associated with clandestine activities and, ironically, endangerment of animal welfare and safety. Not only does this blur the line between activism, extremism, and terrorism by rendering a peaceful POS as a provincial and national security threat, but it also dehumanizes AJCAs. It depoliticizes the bearing witness that they undertake. This is where the paradox of a POS is revealed: AJCAs overtly expose animal agriculture, but the mainstream media and especially politicians are nonetheless building a narrative of fear around farm occupation. They draw on rhetorical threats to justify ag-gag laws and deter public support without addressing the core issue raised by AJCAs, animal violence in the farming industry, and speciesism.

More alarming is that examining the institutionalized representations of farm occupations points to a powerful network of influence or what Sorenson (2014) calls a corporate shadow while investigating AIC actors in making AEA-oriented laws. The analysis of MLA debates shows that AEAs are well established in the Canadian political arena, suggesting a possible explanation for why media and legislative representations of the POS echo one another. Although AEA lobbies were not visibly involved in consultation for ag-gag laws, MLAs often express affinity with animal businesses, supports their “farmer friends,” participate in recreational killing like fishing and hunting, or are personally involved in animal exploitation. For example, an Ontario MLA proudly admitted he drove a slaughter truck while the PCM Hon. Ernie Hardeman, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and originator of Bill-156, and his nephew, the Chief Opposition Whip, John Vanthof, both avowed coming from a farming family and having a “vested interest” in “animal farming.” Another MLA’s statement supporting ag-gag laws shows the links between AEA and political power:

[p]rior to being elected, I was an international trade lawyer, so I actually represented a number of farms, including some dairy farms, on a lot of trade matters. So, even though I’m not a farmer myself, it’s an industry that I have been intimately familiar with. (Ghamari, 2019, p. 6821)

MLAs’ networks are intertwined with the AEA’s, which raises concerns about the political motivation driving ag-gag laws. One may wonder if it is ethical for family members in the legislative arena to debate legislation for which they seem to have a personal interest in protecting. Consequently, speciesism is bolstered by those with the epistemic and political power to do so. As a result, it narrows the scope of credibility for those who resist the most normalized form of systemic oppression.

As demonstrated in the analysis of the MLA debates, it is clear that ag-gag laws are built on the agriculture sector's concerns and their frustration over trespassing and "other interruptions" and the lack of legal convictions. For instance, one PCM captures the AEA's distress and concern: "this legislation has been developed in response to the real concerns of Ontario farmers and business operators. Given the urgency of the circumstances expressed by the agriculture sector" (Barrett, 2019, p. 6799). The cardinal position of AEA in MLA debates is legible through multiple and repetitive supportive quotes. In Ontario, for instance, often quoted AEAs were the Ontario chicken farmers, dairy farmers, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, ROMA, Food and Beverage Ontario, Ontario Pork chair, and the Ontario Livestock Transporters' Alliance. Such pervasive networks and lobbying raise the question of the extent to which provincial legislatures are captured by the agriculture sector and how powerful AEA interests overshadow the interests of other citizens—and nonhuman animals. If Robbins et al. (2016) show that a majority of citizens disapprove of ag-gag laws, as it seems to reduce trust in farming practices, what would they think of AIC corporate actor's shadows hovering over political legislative decisions?

To draw on Deckha's (2018) words, animal suffering is overshadowed by legal invisibilization. While Dawn (2004) claims that the media is crucial for generating discussion about animal violence, the analysis presented here suggests that the narrative of fear that is used to represent farm occupations is likely to prevent potential sympathizers from engaging in and supporting actions that make visible animal violence on farms and critically reflecting about speciesism; not to exclude the high cost of participation imposed by ag-gag laws. Legal invisibilization of animal violence maintains a social structure of denialism of animal suffering. Sorenson and Matsuoka (2021) explain that institutionalized denialism is a discursive tactic that disavows animals as victims, vilifies animal activists, and negates human moral duties towards nonhuman lives. For Anita Krajnc (2017), originator of Toronto Pig Save and the Save Movement, bearing witness to violently exploited animals is a civil and moral obligation; it "brings the individuality of the animals into the foreground" and compassion is not a crime (p. 480). While critical animal studies agree with Krajnc, bearing witness is usually met with greater public sympathy when exposed to human-to-human violence. Bearing witness to human violence against nonhuman animals does not seem to achieve the same empathetic reaction, leading to indifference and misunderstanding (Bernatchez & López, under review). Consequently, at this stage of the POS, it is uncertain if the strategy is effective or counterproductive, and more research is needed. However, this article demonstrates that the broad public does not truly "see" animal violence occurring in the AIC behind the scenes and is unlikely to reflect on their speciesist participation in animal suffering.

4. Article 2 - Emotional Reflexivity in the Politics of Sight: Embodied Moral Shock and Limit of the Emotional Repertoire

Author: Annie Bernatchez

Abstract: Farm occupation is a recent tactic and enacts a politics of sight, which makes visible hidden animal violence by the animal industry complex. Animal justice citizen activists (AJCAs) identify and enter farms to protest lawful violence against animals by documenting and sharing images from the inside. This article examines activists' subjective experience of immersion in animal violence. The analysis shows that a politics of sight requires and introduces extreme, conflicting emotional demands on AJCAs, requiring a level of emotional reflexivity and negotiation that is sufficiently grasped by existing conceptions of emotional habitus and moral shock. The empirical study seeks to contribute to filling this gap. To do so, I investigated the role of emotional reflexivity during, and after, AJCAs' bodily immersion in the context of animal violence. The latter is also at its core of an unexpected moral shock for which there is not an established emotional repertoire among AJCAs. Thus, I explored the conflictual tension and the emotional consequences that AJCAs must manage during and after immersion in animal violence.

Keywords: activism, animal rights, emotional habitus, moral shock, politics of sight

Acknowledgement: I am thankful of Anita Krajnc for commenting on this article and my thesis supervisor, José López, for his constant support and encouragement. I am appreciative of every Animal Justice activist who participated in my Ph.D. research project and work relentlessly to end animal exploitation.

Below is the pre-final version published in the *Emotions and Society Journal* in 2023.

4.1 Introduction

The first Canadian farm occupation took place in 2019; it was followed by 3 more occupations and one unsuccessful attempt²⁶. Animal Justice Citizen²⁷ Activists (AJCAs) identify a location, organize, and enter a farm (when doors are unlocked) to document and expose lawful violence against animals. AJCAs share photographs, videos, and live-stream videos on social media, and invite mainstream media to tour the farm and broadcast the footage. AJCAs are non-violent and engage in open civil disobedience. In his book about industrialized slaughterhouse behind the scenes, *Every Twelve Seconds*, Pachirat (2011) coined the concept of politics of sight (POS): “organized, concerted attempts to make visible what is hidden and to breach, literally or figuratively, zones of confinement in order to bring about social and political transformation” (p. 236). As a protest tactic, a farm occupation enacts of a POS involving bodily immersion in animal violence and immediacy to suffering.

In the social movements literature, a conceptual focus on emotion has contributed to our understanding of recruitment, the maintenance of commitment, and the unfolding of internal movement pedagogy (Jasper, 2011). Collective emotions enacted during a protest are strategically conceived to move sympathisers towards political action (Gould, 2009). But what about the activists? Farm occupations are emotionally challenging; AJCAs oppose speciesism, thus animal exploitation, but nonetheless consciously commit to a POS in which they are cognitively, emotionally, and physically confronted with distressing forms of violence against animals. Frequently, they do so, without a full understanding of the associated emotional consequences. Because this POS is recent, we know little about AJCAs’ collective experience in agricultural settings and the emotion management processes that these experiences trigger.

This article investigates the emotional dimension of engaging in a POS. To do so, I qualitatively analyse AJCAs’ stories of immersion in sites where violence against animals occurs, i.e., vigils²⁸ and farms. This exploratory research builds on the call, in social movement studies, to address embodied experiences (Groves, 1995; Gaarder, 2011; Hansson & Jacobsson, 2014; Jasper et al., 2017; Villanueva, 2019; Bond et al., 2020). The first part of the paper reviews two important concepts in the study of activism, moral shock and emotional habitus. Then, I present some key findings on animal activism and discuss the concept of emotional reflexivity. The second part outlines the data and method. The third part

²⁶ The second Meat the Victims protest in Canada was scheduled for 3 October 2021 but was disrupted by the police.

²⁷ In 2019, activists who occupied a pig farm in the province of Quebec identify themselves as concerned citizens for whom citizenship involves a duty of care to protest injustice. In this article, Animal Justice Citizen Activists follow this appellation.

²⁸ The initial research project focuses on farm occupation, but the interviews with AJCAs indicated that vigils are turning point in animal activism journey.

reports on AJCAs' stories and explores how the embodied experience of violence, an inescapable outcome of engaging in a POS, triggers emotional reflexivity in situ and after a farm occupation. In doing so, the discussion contributes to understand how AJCAs' emotional habitus shapes their emotional reflexivity in the intense embodied circumstances of farm occupation.

4.2 Moral Shock and Emotional Habitus

Essential to activism, emotions motivate people to act (Jasper, 1997; Goodwin et al., 2001) and keep people committed to a cause (Jasper, 2018). This is particularly clear for animal activists (Jasper, 1997; Groves, 2001; Herzog & Golden, 2009); moral shock is a common reason why people turn to activism. Jasper and Poulsen (1995, p. 498) coined the concept and give the term a double meaning: "when an event or situation creates a sense of outrage in people such that they become motivated to engage in political action, even in the absence of a network of contacts." Although research consistently shows that graphic images do raise awareness (Tulloch & Judge, 2018; Fernandez, 2019; Marcus, 2019), little is known about the emotional response of activists who actually record the images of or bear witness to violence, in situ of animal suffering. That latter is a constituent, yet not sufficiently discussed, component of moral shock.

Hansson and Jacobsson (2014) explain that animal activists often self-generate moral shocks in the form of micro-shocks (or re-traumatization) to renew their motivation (e.g., watching videos of animal abuse). Their work not only draws attention to the role of moral shock in activism beyond recruitment and initial engagement, but, also, to how focusing on moral shock opens up the possibility of exploring moral sensibility as a corporeal experience. For AJCAs, farm occupations involve proximity to and bodily immersion in animal violence. Gillespie (2016) and Lockwood (2018), who study animal activism vigils claim that the emotional and empathic bodily encounter can lead not only to an enhanced reflexivity, but also to the possibility of emancipation from speciesism. While a POS also targets the broad goal of dismantling speciesism, does immediacy to suffering produce a moral shock?

Collective emotions are understood as part of a shared register that shapes how people should feel and emote during a protest event. To use Gould's (2009) term, an emotional habitus is an emotive convention that coaches individual emotional response and utterance; it is an acquired and unconsciously embodied knowledge (p. 33) based on affect, thus feeling, and expressed through cultural emotion. It presupposes an often, implicit, emotional pedagogy, shaping how and what to emote (p. 34). Inscribed in animal activism dynamics (Herzog & Golden, 2009; Gaarder, 2011; Jacobsson & Lindblom, 2016; Veia, 2020), such a pedagogy provides activists with some degree of emotional cohesion. AJCAs'

POS however relies on activists, themselves, becoming the conduits for collective moral shock through their bodily immersion at the sites of violence, that is to say, at the animal industrial complex (AIC). What does this require of activists themselves? What are the emotional consequences of frequent immersion in violence? Does intense corporeal immersion bring AJCAs' emotional habitus to a bewildered emotional plight?

In Hochschild's (1997) work, emotions are biological events triggered by social context and relations. Emotions, she writes, can emerge from "newly grasped reality [...] as it clashes against the template of prior expectations" (p. 5), or a transformation of emotional rules, meaning that emotions are the medium through which we (re)learn about social context. Social context entails prior expectations and emotion management comes into play as "an effort by any means, conscious or not, to change one's feeling or emotion" (p. 9). Such management is often a means for contextual self-protection. As a result, one may limit emotional connection or self-control by *surface acting* (altering the expression/inward feeling), *deep acting* (self-talk to feel one's emotion), and/or *method acting* (seeing the world differently) (p. 11). Consequently, Jasper and Poulsen's, Gould's, and Hochschild's work provide an avenue to examine the role, and management, of emotion in the enactment of an immersive POS.

4.3 Emotional Reflexivity

Although commitment to a social issue provides emotional benefits (Goodwin et al., 2001), animal activism remains costly, and demanding from the perspective of emotion management (Jacobsson & Lindblom, 2016) as activists often struggle with ambivalent feelings such as guilt, anger, powerlessness, compassion fatigue, and detachment (Feigin et al., 2018). The negotiation of conflicting feelings refers to emotional reflexivity, it involves acknowledging emotion (i.e., being consciously aware and paying attention to it) and mastering emotional self-management (Brown & Pickerill, 2009, p. 25). For sociologists of the senses like Vannini et al. (2013), somatic experience²⁹ is mediated by reflexivity because "senses emerge through a process of objectification of one's sensations" (p. 19); the use of sense and sense-making is a social experience of collective embodiment of sensory experience (p. 17), an ecology of affective relations. Thus, it is through constructed senses, contextually situated, that we experience the world and make it intelligible and navigable.

²⁹ Vannini et al. (2013, p. 19) define somatic work, a negotiation of somatic rules, as "the range of linguistic and alinguistic reflexive experiences and activities by which individuals interpret create, extinguish, maintain, interrupt, and/or communicate somatic sensations that are congruent with personal, interpersonal, and/or cultural notions of moral, aesthetic, and/or logical desirability."

According to Mann (2018), a psychologist specializing in animal activism counselling, internal conflicts, which can lead to PTSD, range from the trauma of knowing about systemic animal violence to the full blown existential crisis of vystopia (i.e., vegan dystopia). Clearly, immersion in the actual setting of animal violence is likely to be costly for AJCAs. Moreover, knowledge of the scale of the violence against animals engenders a sense of urgency among activists that can result in burnout and feelings of defeat and powerlessness (Gorski et al., 2019). For Brown and Pickerill (2009, p. 28), burnout is a consequence of intense emotional reflexivity: “a state of mental and physical exhaustion brought on by over-work or trauma.” It can be connected, as Herzog (1993) shows, to the struggle to maintain coherence between beliefs and everyday practices.

Complex emotions are negotiated both at an individual and a collective level. For example, coping strategies include recharging by occasionally turning away from animal activism, acknowledging one’s emotional threshold, meeting with a counsellor, and scaling back to manageable work (Gaarder, 2011). At a collective level, animal activists manage emotion in safe places where they socialize to engender well-being (Sørensen & Rigby, 2017). Activists also cope by venting their emotions, and work on emotional energy to maintain unity and cohesion in the group dynamic (Jacobsson & Lindblom, 2016). Such findings on emotional reflexivity and coping strategies are consistent with other stories found in the Critical Animal Studies literature, but tell us little about the emotional experience of an immersive POS.

While scholars have focused on mainstream animal activism, the enactment of a POS to document and expose the violence of the AIC is recent. Unlike “animal work” (e.g., animal shelter caretakers, farmers, veterinary staffs) who often rationalize a caring-killing paradox (i.e., those who have the responsibility to care for the animals may also be involved in their killing) (Arluke et al., 2022), a POS is also enacted to dismantle such a speciesist paradox. Therefore, the Animal Justice activism considered here is not animal work per se, instead it is a punctuated moment of exposure to intense violence in solidarity with animals that is also subject to legal sanction³⁰.

The notion of moral shock, as developed thus far by scholars, does not address how activists emotionally reflect on and manage their immediate experience of such an emotionally taxing strategy. AJCAs, of course, embody an emotional habitus. However, when it comes to the immersive experience

³⁰ In 2022, Quebec AJCAs were found guilty of protesting in a local farm, they are waiting their sentence as I was writing this article. On 12 October 2022, two British Columbia AJCAs, participants of the Meat the Victims campaign of 2019, were sentenced to 30 days in prison, a probation of 12 months, and forced to provide a sample of their DNA to the national data bank (R. v. Soranno, 2022).

in violence, the emotional conventions, as I show below, do not suffice because of the required direct negotiation of the somatic experience. AJCAs need to make sense, in situ, of their immediate encounters with violence and manage a conflictual internal response in a convincing manner to make it corresponds to the emotive convention of neutrality associated with the objective credibility of documenting violence. They must maintain neutrality when the response they try to provoke in others is outrage, corporeally working against the required emotional display for the public view and an unanticipated way of negotiating the experience that is of farm occupation.

4.4 Data and Method

This study reports on 15 in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted with AJCAs across Canada. AJCAs were either independent investigators or associated with Direct Action Everywhere (DxE), Roses' Law campaign, or Meat the Victims (MTV) campaign. As some AJCAs wished to maintain anonymity, I do not disclose specific numbers from each group. Founded in 2013, the grassroots platform DxE sparked a new form of activism in the United States, focusing on non-violent mass actions like farm occupations and open rescue. Roses' Law campaigns for animal rights and MTV continues DxE's legacy of activism. In this article, all AJCAs is one sample. I focus on the subjective experience of enacting a POS.

The interviews took place in 2020 (13 interviews) and 2021 (2 interviews); interviews were recorded, and transcribed. The study participants are aged between 17 to 60, 4 were men and 11 women. The interviews ranged from 45 minutes to 2 hours, exploring AJCAs' emotion by focusing on how they became activists, the experience of a farm occupation, and the maintenance of their commitment. A condition for inclusion in the study was the experience of a farm occupation. Recruitment of the participants was done by directly contacting them through social media channels. All of the study participants came from Canadian provinces where farm occupations took place in 2019 and 2020; British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, and Quebec.

The qualitative analysis examined emotional patterns. I compared and coded narratives based on emotional state, before/during/after a farm occupation to identify recurrent themes among participants. The need to emotionally manage the experience of corporeal immersion in animal violence, on which I report below, emerged as a recurrent theme among my respondents. Initially, the study focused solely on farm occupation, including investigations. However, respondents' narratives frequently alluded to bearing witness at vigils as an emotional turning point in their Animal Justice activism. As shown below, vigils and farm occupations trigger the need for emotion management.

However, the latter entail bodily immersion in animal violence and generate an intense moral shock. The shock produces a number of emotional management strategies that I report in the sections that follow.

4.5 Emotional Reflexivity and the Politics of Sight

4.5.1 The Shades of Moral Shock

4.5.1.1 Bearing Witness: The first Encounter

It's like a punch in the heart.
Jenny

In 2010, one of my respondents, Anita, started Toronto Pig Save and then the Save movement for which the main tactic is to bear witness to animals on slaughter trucks. Walking her dog, Anita, for the first-time, saw pigs looking out from a truck. While seemingly a trivial incident, this encounter sparked outrage that such violence should occur in her “backyard.” Adopting her dog and going for a walk early in the morning made her come across slaughter truck traffic, which would have never happened without Mr. Bean. She recalls:

I went up to the pig and a pig looked at me and the pig was so precious but all dirty like in a dungeon and looking at me and pleading for help. I couldn't believe it, I felt so responsible to do something [...] There's a difference between watching a movie and bearing witness first-hand, it changes your priorities in life.

As Anita explains, she was transformed by the “power of observation,” described by Tolstoy: observing other living beings first-hand makes them part of your life as they become a part of your experience. Also inspired by Gandhi, Anita confided, “in life you have a choice you either look or you look away; we all know it's cowardly, wrong and immoral to look away.” As Jenny says, “acknowledging even for just a moment the existence of the value of these beings that were on their way to being slaughtered was meaningful.”

For my respondents, the experience of the first vigil was emotionally impactful, more than a distant moral shock. Sydney, for instance, reported it “just wrecked me, I mean man, I went home after that and I just cried in the bath.” The empathetic connection with animals sentenced to death is made through eye contact. The shock provokes sentiments of anger, sadness, powerlessness, and helplessness:

vigils do not involve rescuing animals. Feelings of helplessness ignite a sense of guilt and responsibility. In Emily's words,

I felt a pit in my stomach it's very overwhelming. I think even when we are vegan, and we are aware of these different issues that are happening to animals, and we have seen documentaries or footage. It just becomes very real when you see it in person [...] Meeting those animals is just something else because they look at you and you can interact with them and it's just heart-breaking, but you can't do anything.

Amongst my respondents, the emotional shock following the first encounter sparked a strong desire to "do more" as Jenny reported:

you've looked at a real animal in the eye and it was a fleeting moment, but it really cemented out solidified my activism and it kind of gives more of a push to try and get the word out and to work even harder.

Activists who document the last moments of animals' lives echoed that of Anita's emotional reaction in her first encounter with pigs. Exposure to the darkest side of the AIC through video and online content turns some people into activists. Bearing witness, typically, works as a traumatic but motivational moral shock that is corporeally immediate rather than distant as in the case of documentaries or images. The violence connoted by slaughterhouse vigils enjoins activists to learn how to self-regulate emotions over repeated exposure. For all of my respondents, vigils were also a turning point towards farm occupation.

4.5.1.2 The "Torture Chamber": A Sensorial Experience

It's like you step into a different world like we're no longer on earth.
Emily

It's sensory overload and these are traumatizing images topped with everything that's coming in through the senses and further behind it is an awareness of the massive machine.
Winnie

Farm occupation provide AJCAs with a bodily front seat to animal violence. The emotional habitus of farm occupation, however, insists on enacting objectivity (i.e., being collected and rational) to credibly document injustice. But at a corporeal level, activists undergo an acute shock, more intense than in vigils. As explained by Winnie, "it's a 3-dimensional physical space; it's completely immersive, there is a degree of shock however you try to intellectually or spiritually or emotionally prepare for it, I think you can't help but be faced with a massive shock." Farm occupation are where you feel what you already knew, when knowledge loses its abstraction and becomes real. It triggers overwhelming feelings

of anger, despair and disgust.

The first farm occupation is associated with feelings of stress and anxiety. Although every respondent had mentally prepared their documenting strategy, emotional preparation for the yet unknown physical experience is difficult to plan. Group solidarity gets AJCAs to the door; an experiential and emotional shift occurs when the doors open and it's time to walk in. In Sydney's words, it's "an overload of sense, to see something like that in person was unreal." Patricia explains the sensorial experience of entering a pig farm operation, thus:

It was a complete shock, it was so different than what I've been seeing in pictures, and I thought, well now I have all my senses really sharp because the smell is awful I can kind of feel the dust and all the filth. I can really see the conditions for myself I can hear all the screams. I just could not believe how thick the air was, it was just completely unbreathable and then how tight the crates were and everything, and these big mammals they were maybe three times bigger than my dogs and it was so easy for me to just put myself in their shoes, it was really awful.

Patricia's somatic experience precedes her emotional reflection; moreover, the shock of that moment has never left her, as she explains in the next section.

Although some places are worse than others, the shocking sensorial experience of immersion in animal violence can be broken down into visual, olfactory, and auditory sensations, and in empathetic feelings. Entering a farm and seeing animals suffering disconnects AJCAs from worldly reality: "I don't even know how to describe it, I thought I walked into hell, it felt like I stepped into a torture chamber, in some dungeon" (Emily). Knowledge of a hidden reality becomes real while simultaneously seeming unreal: "it was a complete shock; I could not believe that this is possible" (A. Regan). For Jenny, it was a "horror show," "we've got in and then you realized that thousands of animals around you are crammed into and then it kind of hits you, it's almost like it takes your breath away." This sense of disbelief, feeding hope that knowledge of the hidden plight cannot in fact be true is an experience of acute shock and is found in the majority of the narratives in the sample.

The overload of sensing violence is emotionally and mentally shocking; for Carrie: "it is hard to process everything." Another overstimulated sense is that of smell. As Lison notes, "at the beginning that's just what you're trying to manage." For Winnie, the smell accentuates the shock:

The sheer filth and as you move further into the farm, there was not a single window and there were no lights on, it was a dungeon. There's no word for, it's absolute torture and you're breathing in ammonia, so your senses are taking in all of these things.

The auditory experience is conveyed by Pamela: "I had chills hearing pig screams. The sound mixed

with metal bars mixed with little babies mixed with mothers, there is a whole macabre atmosphere.” For Valerie, it was like a “slap in the face”: “something you’ve never seen or heard, I’ve never heard these noises before.” The enactment of an immersive POS triggers a traumatic sensorial experience for which most of my respondents were unprepared.

Feelings of empathy are at the root of AJCAs’ POS. As Sydney muses “how do you not get claustrophobic living your whole life where you can’t even stand up or move.” He also feels for a mother pig: “when I saw her trying to push her face through the bars, you can’t go through them just to get her dead piglet, just the desperation of that I was rocked.” For Kassia, sitting with the animals was a disturbing revelation “the whole time we’re just thinking, this is how they live you know this is their entire lives, they never get to breathe fresh air, they never get to leave here and see some light.” Winnie expresses how difficult it is to be there with the animals and the need to self-regulate:

I just remember feeling incensed and I think the best way for me to describe it, I just felt like I wanted to just shake everything like I wanted to tear it all down, but there’s a lot of despair. I remember feeling extremely panicked and claustrophobic, I was witnessing what I was seeing in front of me and it was very real like confinement is so real that I felt trapped. I was fighting every instinct to turn around and just leave and say I’m out. That was the initial feeling and then I talked to myself through it and reason with myself that I’m here for a reason. If I’m feeling like this, this is every single moment, every single day of these beings that are here, so I had to suck it up. There was a period of sort of stabilizing, but the first few minutes were intense.

As noted above, despite similarities with vigils, farm occupations produce more significant emotional consequences and require an advance emotional reflexivity process as it is an all-encompassing sensorial traumatic moral shock. As Emily puts it, “I experienced trauma going into every farm some of them definitely hold a certain weight.” This traumatic experience is of importance because it indicates that the emotional convention they carried into the protest were not sufficient to enable them to cope.

When it is time to leave the farm, on a voluntary basis or forced by the police, another set of emotions arises, the guilt of leaving without having done enough. As Kassia states, “that was 100% the worst part, leaving them behind because we know what gruesome fate awaits them. Much less just the day in day out torment of their lives.” As Jenny explained, leaving a farm is like bearing witness at a vigil when the truck moves away, the only thing you can do is to be sorry and produce a video knowing they are still there:

I connected with this one mother pig which is biting the bars and I look at her eyes, ah she’s so sad. The adult animals know that life is miserable; they are in a cage they can’t move they can’t turn around and then you just have to walk out, you’ve got your pictures, video, and then you just leave them behind and you remember the eyes looking up at you.

The last moment is poignant as Valerie recalls, “I didn’t want to leave because I knew I was leaving them behind and they were just going to continue on living like that. It’s such a weird experience, you tell the pig I’m sorry we’re trying to help you.” This feeling was also shared by Emily: “it was heart-breaking to see them recognize that we weren’t danger to them. They were scared at first and then they realized we were good, but we weren’t helping them and it’s just so awful.” There is a shock in processing suffering and leaving animals behind, a shock where the farm’s door is central: it starts when it opens and stops when it closes, the in-between sensorial experience composes the moral shock of documenting and exposing the AIC behind the scenes.

4.5.2 Coping with Unanticipated Emotions

4.5.2.1 Detachment as a Survival Mechanism

They don’t want you to cry they want you to fight.
A. Regan

As is evident from the above, AJCAs intensely experience the moral shock they aim to produce because of an emotional unknown situated in the shadow of their emotional habitus. However, they must also learn to self-regulate their emotions, and protect themselves, to accomplish the goals of a POS. For Winnie, “it’s an erosion of spirit to be going into these places regularly or repeatedly and that has a different impact than doing it once and dealing with the shock of that one time.” To be able to manage the intensity of sensing animal violence, reducing the connection with animals is strategically vital but also unintended.

The intensity of the sensorial experience can make AJCAs disconnect from their actual experience. My respondents commonly noted that despite being inside a farm for hours, it felt like mere minutes, or that they did not later remember saying things they had recorded. The sensorial experience can be so intense that an emotional shift occurs. As Valerie shares: “after you see like every different thing it’s kind of well, I guess I just become numb you know, like I’m here, I’m just walking around taking video [...] not numb like I didn’t care but I was on autopilot.” Emily tries to “switch off the emotions” to “get the job done” postponing, but not precluding, the necessary emotional processing.

This “autopilot mode” following intense emotion translates into detachment (depending on AJCAs, dissociation and desensitisation were also referred to), especially through repetitive exposure to animal violence. For A. Regan, becoming detached was a self-protective response to avoid falling apart. She had to coach herself through deep acting: “I was telling myself there’s no sense giving up, you have to fight more. It’s like resolved to fight more.” Detachment is an internal empathetic negotiation of limiting emotional connection and self-control as a necessary response to cope with the scope of violence embodied first-hand. Of course, it also intensifies with repetitive exposure to violence.

For Jason, who also worked as an undercover investigator in farms and slaughterhouses, what was psychologically the hardest was his association with animal cruelty: “to grab an individual and hang them upside down, in my head I was apologizing to the animal. That lasted for a week and a half or two weeks of feeling bad for the chickens and then it stopped.” This feeling when working undercover is shared by Sydney during a farm occupation: “you’re at work and you’re just like how do I get the footage, what’s the best angle, keep the camera rolling.” This feeling of detachment is for Jason a survival mechanism:

The human brain kind of calibrates and that becomes the new normal seeing this amount of suffering and then your brain adjusts to. I think the way desensitisation works, in my experience, it’s not like I see some type of suffering and then I’m desensitized to everything. I think I’m selectively desensitized to things that I’ve been repeatedly exposed to. That’s not to say I stopped caring about those animals, I still understand that these animals are suffering and their suffering matters, but that emotional feeling that is associated with seeing another being suffer isn’t there.

Jason, however, emphasizes that empathy and sadness toward the animals remain, but a “selective desensitisation” occurs as a way of coping. Detachment occurs during the first encounter but intensifies after repetitive bodily immersion in animal violence. However, this response of detachment, in situ, can be reversed when AJCAs reconnect with what is going on around them:

The only time I’ve lost it [...] is when I was verbally describing for the camera. I think the different senses affect people differently like what I’m hearing even when I’m hearing myself speak about what I’m seeing to me it’s kind of more upsetting and when I’m describing what I’m seeing it’s more upsetting. I think somehow there’s an emotional filter that protects us but when I was standing in front of a mother pig who had this massive prolapse, it was like this big hanging out of her like all bloody, and that there was blood all over the wall and it was caked on and there was like piles of feces and she was miserable [...] and that’s one time I just completely lost it (Jenny).

Jenny’s experience indicates that it is possible to empathically reconnect with the animals when the shield of self-protection fades away, narrowing the gap of emotional detachment and making POS activists more vulnerable to the consequences of a moral shock.

4.5.2.2 Objectivity in Documenting Injustice

*You're not connecting emotionally in those moments you're
focused on doing your job trying to do what you came here to do.*
Jason

Emotional detachment and self-regulation are crucial for successfully enacting a POS. This internal struggle is hidden behind a mask of objectivity required to successfully document the violence. The fact that AJCAs themselves are experiencing, in an intense corporeal and sensory form, the experience they are trying to provoke in others through their objective documentation of animal violence has to be hidden. Moreover, as my respondents make clear, despite the group nature of the protest, activists usually manage their emotions individually. My respondents sometimes relativized their own feelings with reference to the animals whose suffering they were documenting. As Pamela shared:

it's really uncomfortable to be here but it's nothing compared to what they live, I have to do the maximum of this action, I have to be focused and collected, if I start crying or being too emotional, I could not share as much information as possible.

The objective practice of documenting is far from easy, as A. Regan reported, “we stayed calm because that’s what we were supposed to be as non-violent but sometimes it’s shocking to stay calm.” This state of non-violence while documenting violence is extremely gruelling, especially when the cruelty is intensified: “there were some emotional moments because while we were sitting, two workers grab lot of birds by the neck and there’s an incinerator outside and in front of us they threw the [conscious] birds in the incinerator” (Max). Yet, it is by denying in themselves, what they expect others to feel, that AJCAs are able to enact a POS.

4.5.2.3 Trauma and Coping Post-action: Abiding Effects

Every experience kind of holds a different trauma for me some worse than others.
Emily

You can't let yourself get too angry.
Jenny

Witnessing first-hand animal violence while enacting a non-violent POS action can have devastating emotional consequences. Patricia, at first, reports PTSD but then, “my perspective changed a lot and then it’s just easy to get desensitized overall and to block your emotions.” AJCAs’ emotion

transforms, “you do not come back normal” (A. Regan). Winnie confided, “the aftereffects in the weeks was unexpected,” while for Max there is “a lot of those things I can never get out of my mind.”

PTSD is an internal response to trauma. Common symptoms identified by my respondents are depression, tiredness, isolation, irritability, claustrophobia, crying for no apparent reason, anger, flashbacks, panic attacks, and intolerance with speciesist friends, family members and acquaintances. AJCAs, also, reported reliving traumatic experiences in the form of nightmares, night terrors and sleep deprivation. Some, still hear the screams of animals and see their faces. Memories and the feeling of being in those places are triggered by grocery stores, online or personal videos, encounters with speciesist individuals (e.g., discussion, fur coat), social media adds and posts, and driving by farms. This suggests that the emotional consequences of the corporeal moral shock of an immersive POS may be permanent, to some degree, it imprisons one’s mind in animal suffering and violence.

My respondents identified various coping mechanisms. Emotional self-control is as important during as it is post-action to “survive” and offset the pain. Avoidance, frustration, repressing emotion, not talking about the experience, and drinking to mute the visions are negative ways of coping. More positive ways of coping include taking time to recover, healthy habits (e.g., proper sleep, eat well, exercise, journaling, and meditation), stepping back from activism and engaging in self-care (e.g., nature, art, and outdoor activities), setting boundaries and cutting off triggers (e.g., refusing to meet with speciesists and hear about animals in distress), and talking through the experience. Though therapists who understand such trauma and the associated survivor guilt are scarce. Animal sanctuaries are said to be safe places for both animals and AJCAs, and focusing on good work and maintaining a sense of hope is another way of coping. As Jenny notes: “we really don’t know if the stuff we do makes a difference, you have to feel as though you are making a difference somehow.” It is how AJCAs emotionally manage to escape the bodily imprinted sensorial experience of farm occupation that produces variable, in intensity, abiding effects.

4.6 Discussion

For more than three decades, social movement literature has emphasized the role of emotions in activism and protest, but as Hansson and Jacobsson (2014, p. 264) state, it “seldom connects emotions explicitly to corporeal registers.” AJCA’s POS actions provided an opportunity to explore these registers. In this article, I have explored the embodied experience of farm occupations, in contrast to vigils, framing emotions as subjectively conflicting and individually negotiated, what Hochschild would call a surface acting method. This is especially the case when a POS involves bodily immersion in violence:

the unfolding of one's feelings does not necessarily correspond to emotional conventions for public view. AJCAs feel themselves overwhelmed and negotiate the situation as it unfolds. The bodily immersion in violence results in a moral shock that must be responded to in situ. This suggests a bewildered emotional plight that *may be* part of the emotional habitus but is, surely, absent of its repertoire.

Moral shock has long been conceptualized as a self-recruitment process or an activist education and recruitment strategy, for most it leads to political action when associated to an emotional habitus (Gould, 2009). However, in the research reported here³¹, moral shock understood through the lens of emotional reflexivity points to an additional dimension not addressed by Jasper and Poulsen (1995). While my respondents had developed an emotional habitus through exposure to books, documentaries, photographs, and videos, as well as through interaction with other animal activism emotional conventions, the experience of enacting a POS produces, itself, a moral shock. This required AJCAs to engage in urgent forms of emotional reflexivity of the somatic experience to ensure and pursue farm occupations.

AJCAs share an understanding of what they will see when they participate in vigils, but the intimate feelings provoked by the contextual proximity to animal violence does not appear to be part of this “knowing.” Vigils are spaces where most AJCAs meet exploited animals for the first time. These spaces not only motivate AJCAs “to do more,”³² they are also sites where the need for emotional reflexivity kicks in. Salih (2014) argues that *how* we know is more important than what we know. In this line of thought, vigil breaks down the abstraction of knowledge about animal violence and moves activists toward farm occupation, where any abstraction wanes into an impellent reflexive somatic conflict as the emotional rules change. AJCAs need to manage conflictual feelings between what they intimately feel and the expectation of objectively documenting the violence upon which the success of the protest relies. Consequently, vigils and, to a greater extent, farm occupations are sensorial trauma.

Farms, and slaughterhouses, are the appalling dark side of human society, characterized by AJCAs as torture chambers. When we view images captured by AJCAs, it is easy to agree that they belong to the genre of the horror movie. Lawful and standard human practices that occur in these spaces are legal crimes against animals and, most of the time, when someone wants to share such images, a warning

³¹ This research also supports previous finding in regard to ambivalent feelings, emotional cost, and the challenges of maintaining meaningfulness in a speciesist world.

³² Similarly to Blee (2002) who argues that radicalism is a consequence of relationships, my research shows that activism tactics may have a similar effect.

is required. In fact, as Mitchell (2011) explains, most people are still morally disengaged from the animals kept on industrialized farms, not least because the AIC works at maintaining a physical and psychological distance by ensuring that animal exploitation occurs behind the scenes. A POS is an attempt to break down such distance, in doing so, AJCAs have to witness first-hand the violence, its smells and its sounds.

A farm occupation is somatic work, with untidy emotional conventions, where moral shock is embodied. Emotional reflexivity in these violent social settings involves processes of emotional detachment and self-control. Although AJCAs' emotional habitus conveys dispositions towards how to feel and to emote, my findings suggest that the emotional experience of an immersive POS is not an accessible part of the register as the described sensory overload indicates. In addition, senses have a spatio-temporal dimension (Vannini et al., 2013, p. 213). When AJCAs avow that, for instance, the smell of driving by a farm or seeing animal flesh at the grocery store triggers the trauma that follow a POS, it suggests that they might have never cognitively and emotionally left the torture chamber—the lasting sensory-ensnared experience.

Despite this, the first-hand experience of violence itself, rather than the representations of violence that have tutored their habitus, significantly challenges emotional conventions. It is not clear if this is because a pedagogy of the “on-the-spot” internal-negotiation of the immersion in animal violence is not yet a part of the repertoire that constitutes their habitus, or because the existential encounter of what activists' experience, as pure violence, is beyond the scope of any emotional habitus to convey through conventions, dispositions, and rules. What my analysis makes clear, however, is that it is individual emotional reflexivity that keeps them documenting while experiencing a shocking sensory overload that burns through their emotional habitus. Emotional detachment emerges in the early stage of a POS but is amplified after repetitive immersion in animal violence. It is important to recall that emotional detachment does not mean that AJCAs stop caring for the animals; it is rather a necessary response in face of a new reality, a method of self-protection to use Hochschild's words, that is documenting injustice. Consequently, it may be suggested that the emotional repertoire does not sufficiently address the “how you will corporally feel” during the enactment of an immersive POS.

4.7 Conclusion

Documenting animal injustice requires objectivity, a neutral eye. Following from the discussion above, I suggest that an embodied moral shock occurs because the existing emotional repertoires about “how you will feel” may not convey the embodied experience of the actual encounter with violence.

Indeed, AJCAs' emotional reflexivity reveals an additional dimension of Gould's (2009) theory in relation to immersion in violence. For Gould moral shock motivates people to engage in collective action—an emotional repertoire identifies a situation as outrageous, for which political action is needed. However, my empirical findings suggest that, if an embodied moral shock occurs, it is likely due to either the absence of an emotional repertoire or the limit of what an emotional repertoire can truly convey. In both cases, AJCAs are not emotionally prepared to bear witness in the hidden reality of the AIC. They are confronted with a raw corporeal feeling that needs to be addressed in situ and managed in the aftermath.

When a protest action is organized, motivation and the end goal are frequently the focus rather than the reality of a potential traumatic experience. Veá (2020) explains that the Animal Justice movement has its own emotional configuration evoking moral emotions. This configuration guides an understanding of emotions and teaches how to feel and emote during a protest. This emotional pedagogy, in Gould's words, suggests a collective instrumentalization of feelings:

experienced practitioners engage in a provision of opportunities, along with normative pressure, for others to participate in particular ways of feeling. By eliciting affects, which may be ambiguous in their meaning, and shaping them into emotional configurations that have strategic value, activists targeted emotion for learning (Veá, 2020, p. 332).

It intimates that AJCAs are taught how to feel and emote for the public view, not how they will corporally feel during the enactment of a POS, and seemingly how to cope with the embodied trauma. This draws attention to the theoretical limit of the framing of feelings via an emotional habitus when immersion in violence is at stake, and accounts for the embodied moral shock. Despite the potential tactical advantage of this form of engagement for Animal Justice, managing the intense corporeal experience of this form of bodily immersion might exceed the capacity of any emotional repertoire to channel. Whether this limit can be successfully overcome or not remains to be seen. However, it is difficult to abandon the notion that an immersive POS is the embodiment of animal violence, something that can't really be taught... only corporeally experienced.

5. Article 3 – The Politics of Sight and Bearing Witness to Animal Suffering: Lessons from Human Rights

Co-authorship: Annie Bernatchez and José López

Abstract: Bearing witness is a strategy used by both Human and Animal rights activists: it makes visible what is often hidden in plain sight with the hope that *if one sees one will act*. However, the efficacy of bearing witness is not without challenges. For Animal Justice Citizen Activists (AJCAs), bearing witness is linked to a politics of sight enacted through farm occupation where they document and expose animal violence on social media channels and mainstream media. The analysis draws on previous analysis of the Canadian context: text media coverage of four farm occupations, two provincial ag-gag laws, and in-depth interviews with AJCAs. Using Kurasawa's (2007) critical substantive approach, we conceptualize this politics of sight as a mode of ethico-political practice. First, we draw the outlines of the animal rights debates and then look at what a critical substantive approach brings to the current analytical frameworks of normativism, politico-legal institutionalism, and empiricism in Human rights activism. Finally, analyzing the tasks and perils of bearing witness, we argue that human and animal rights debates are better understood through the lens of critical substantivism as it reveals challenges otherwise concealed with other analytical frameworks.

Keywords: animal rights, bearing witness, critical substantivism, human rights, politics of sight

Submitted to the *Canadian Review of Sociology* in July 2022.

5.1 Introduction

[W]e were unashamed we were challenging the fact that this is normalized and the fact that the public doesn't know they're sold all of these lies a mess about the industry and what they're contributing to and they truly do not know the realities of what happens to these farm animals and so we wanted to show them [...] after a few hours I managed to negotiate with the farmers and with the police to let the accredited media who showed up inside the farms that was our goal as we wanted mainstream media to bring their cameras inside the farm and see for themselves they were more likely to publish that than our images.

I think we need to keep up [...] the same activism that we're doing for years and years that you know hasn't really changed a whole lot; I think that we need to reassess those tactics. I do think in the animal liberation movement we do need to be a little bit more critical of our activism and not just do the same things over and over again.

Both of the preceding excerpts are drawn from our interview with Emily, an Animal Justice Citizen Activist (AJCA), whom, in the pursuit of animal rights and liberation, is engaged in a new form of activism. As the first excerpt illustrates, it draws on a long tradition of public disobedience and of bearing witness to the suffering of others, most frequently associated with human rights. This emerging form of activism, based on the politics of sight (Pachirat, 2011), has attracted the attention of scholars who have provided an account of its underlying philosophy and organizing methods (Krajnc, 2017; Purdy & Krajnc, 2018), the phenomenological exigences that bearing witness to the suffering of beings “other than humans” elicits (Gillespie, 2016), its dual activation of sense-making and affect (Vea, 2019), the intersection of emotions, empathy in this developing form of activism (Lockwood, 2018), and how law itself might also learn from bearing witness (Deckha, 2019). While the foregoing scholarly works make important contributions to our understanding, and inform part of our analysis of this new form of activism, we argue for a different approach in this paper.

Drawing on the understanding of bearing witness as a mode of ethico-political practice in the field of human rights (Kurasawa, 2007), we focus on its patterned nature, identifying its socio-political tasks and perils. Conceptualizing bearing witness to the suffering of “farm animals” in this way, draws attention, we argue, to the ethical, political, and social conditions and processes that are necessary for its success. When these are met, bearing witness offers an “opportunity for radically reimagined relationships with those species we identify as food” (Lockwood, 2018, p. 107). However, as we argue below this is an extremely fragile process and failure is as likely as success.

This paper draws on our analysis of four farm occupations in Canada, debates on farm occupations in two Canadian provincial legislatures, and fieldwork and interviews with AJCAs. Elsewhere, we report on the political and media context for this new form of activism in Canada

(Bernatchez, 2022a), and on the emotional exigencies confronted by activists concerned citizens engaged in this form of politics of sight (Bernatchez, 2023). Here, drawing on these analyses we develop and illustrate the explanatory potential of conceptualizing bearing witness as a mode of practice. In this sense, we wish to contribute to the type of self-reflection that Emily points too in the second excerpt.

We proceed by briefly locating our approach, which we adapt from bearing witness in the field of human rights, in the context of the animal rights debate. We, then, following Kurasawa (2007), argue for the need to go beyond the philosophical normativism, political legal institutionalism, and civil society empiricism that currently frame debates on human and animal rights. Following this we introduce Kurasawa's conception of bearing witness as an ethico-political mode of practice, and drawing on our reported findings and our fieldwork, identify the tasks and perils associated with bearing witness to the suffering of animals in the context of farm occupations and vigils. We conclude by highlighting some of the insights that can be gleaned from conceptualizing AJCAs' bearing witness as a mode of practice, and how it might contribute for the struggle to secure the rights and liberation of ensnared animals.

5.2 The Animal Rights Debate

While historically many philosophers have critically reflected on humans' relationships with animals (Clark, 2011; Garrett, 2011), concrete efforts to mobilize public opinion and support around animal welfare date back to the 19th century (Donaldson & Kymlicka, 2011, p. 1; Guither, 1998). However, it was in the 1970s when the modern animal rights movement emerged at the intersection of the publication of Peter Singer's seminal *Animal Liberation* and the energy released by the new social movements of the epoch (Guither, 1998; Munro, 2012, p. 141). Singer's book triggered a fundamental and contested debate on the nature of, and the philosophical grounds, for animal rights. The utilitarian approach, defended in his pioneering book (1975) and in subsequent contributions (Singer, 2015; Singer & Mason, 2006), argued that human beings were speciesists insofar as they required "the sacrifice of the most important interests of members of other species in order to promote the most trivial interest of our species" ([1975] 1975, p. 9). In other words, the (trivial) pleasure to be obtained by eating members of other species could not justify the pain and suffering, and the loss of life thus required. In doing so, he redefined the notion of speciesism that had been coined by the Oxford philosopher Richard Ryder earlier in the decade, along utilitarian lines (McCance, 2013, p. 22).

Though championed by some, Singer's utilitarian calculus attracted criticism: its perceived pragmatism, some argued, opened up the possibility of relativizing the suffering and killing of animals

(Munro, 2012, p. 171), leading to what would later be called the new (legal) animal welfarism (Francione, 1995, p. 4). Indeed, in another early and seminal text of the animal rights movement, *The Case for Animal Rights* (1983), the philosopher Tom Regan criticized Singer's utilitarianism, insisting, in a challenging and densely argued philosophical prose, that (many) animals satisfy "the subject-of-a-life criterion." Consequently, he claimed, they possess an "inherent value" that is "logically independent of their utility for, and the interests of, others" (1983, p. 243). Subsequently, he would claim that we should think of animals as bearing "'No Trespassing' signs" entailing that "we are never to take the life, invade or injure the body, or limit the freedom of any animal just because we personally or society in general will benefit. If we mean anything by the ascription of rights to animals we mean this" (Cohen & Regan, 2001, p. 213).

Seeded by these seminal contributions, the animal rights debate flourished and expanded beyond the contest between utilitarian and deontological approaches to include virtue ethics, and contractarianism, to name but a few (Beauchamp & Frey, 2011; Rowlands, 2009). Equally, given the substantive focus on "rights," the field, non-surprisingly, attracted legal scholars. The legally trained animal rights activists Steven Wise advocated, in his pioneering book, *Rattling the Cage* (2000), for the extension of basic common law legal – and not merely moral – rights to chimpanzees and bonobos, and perhaps, in the future, to other animals. Taking a different tack, but resonating with Wise's critique of the reduction of animals to "things" the legal theorist Garry Francione has argued that it is because we continue to treat animals as legal property that we are caught in a moral schizophrenia whereby what we say about valuing animals is belied by the way we actually treat them (2000). Moreover, the participation of legal theorists, or scholars drawing on legal rationalities, has also brought to the fore debates regarding the (un)enforceability of rights, the design of animal welfare institutions, and the virtue of the regulation of the human treatment of animals, i.e. new welfarism, versus the abolition of all forms of human instrumentalization of animals (Francione & Garner, 2010; Sorenson, 2003; Sunstein & Nussbaum, 2004; Verborra, 2015).

Carol J. Adams gave the discussion of animal rights a feminist perspective in her pathbreaking book, *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory* (2010) – first published in 1990. Therein she argued, with great historical and cultural detail, that the treatment, and the oppression, of women and "meat animals [sic]" are semiotically and in practice intertwined in intersecting relations of patriarchal power. In patriarchal society, meat eating is highly sexualized, argues Adams, making the consumption of meat semiotically the "consumption" of women, while women themselves are rendered as "slabs" of meat. Women and the flesh of animals exist as "absent referents," she claimed, reinforcing the oppression of both (2010). Other scholars have argued that the rightlessness of animals can be read as a harbinger of (Patterson, 2002), or as morally comparable to sexism, racism, eugenics, classism, etc.

(Nocella II et al., 2014)—that are themselves intertwined with capitalist relations of exploitation (Sorenson & Matsuoka, 2021). Finally, the sociologist Piers Beirne maintains that the contemporary animal-industrial complex, seen through a nonspeciesists criminological lens, exposes the mass suffering and killing of animals as a chilling theriocide (Beirne, 2014).

In a recent contribution, the political philosophers Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicka have argued that “the animal advocacy movement [has] increasingly taken root in public consciousness” (2011, pp. 1–2). However, this veneer of success is immediately tarnished by the realization that today violence against animals remains constitutive of contemporary agricultural, industrial, and other modern systems (Donaldson & Kymlicka, 2011, p. 2). Said differently, legitimated by the epistemological, i.e., zootechnics (Dardenne, 2020), and political power of Animal Exploiters Authorities³³ (AEA), animals overwhelmingly continue to be deemed as comestible and disposable property, lacking moral worth and dignity (Bernatchez, 2022a).

The Italian philosopher, Paola Cavalieri, argues that the fact that today “[b]illions of nonhuman animals are tortured, confined and killed for our benefit” (2001, p. 142) rests on the institutional denial of “fundamental rights to beings that are entitled to them” (2001, p. 143). Such denial, she contends, not only deprives animals of rights to which they are morally entitled, but also represents “a direct attack” on human rights and “the very idea of justice” (2001, p. 143). The link, foregrounded by Cavalieri, between animal and human rights threaded the animal rights debates of the 1970s. For instance, Singer argued that when human rights are understood as being grounded on the “the moral principle of equal consideration of interests [...] it is even more difficult to find some basis for excluding animals from the sphere of equality” inaugurated by human rights ([1975] 1975, p. 237). Similarly, Regan, in his preface asserted, “[t]o be ‘for animals’ is not to be ‘against humanity.’ To require others to treat animals justly, as their rights require, is not to ask for anything more nor less in their case than in the case of any human to whom just treatment is due. The animal rights movement is a part of, not opposed to, the human rights movement” (1983, p. xiii).

Indeed, the resonance between human rights and animal rights has been constant throughout the development of the animal rights debate (Pietrzykowski, 2020, p. 244), though of course not uncontested (Stein, 2015; Wrenn, 2013a). In fact, Donaldson and Kymlicka, in their ambitious *Zoopolis*, see the philosophical and political arguments for the extension of human rights to animals, “universal

³³ This nomenclature subsumes farmers, veterinarians, unions, associations, and lobbyists that are actors in the animal-industrial complex. AEA have the legitimated epistemic power to influence public opinion and governmental decisions as they apply or regulate standards of exploitation (Bernatchez, 2022a).

basic rights” in their terms, as already compellingly established (2011, p. 23), providing a necessary springboard for imagining a new era of positive rights and non-exploitative social and political relations between humans and animals beyond human rights (2011, p. 49). Elsewhere, Kymlicka actually proposes a conceptual reconstruction of human rights without “human supremacism” to prevent their complicity in the “ongoing and ever-increasing violence against animals” (2018, p. 780).

As noted in our introduction, our goal in this paper is not to parse the merits of the debate briefly summarized in this section. Instead, we want to use the resonance between human and animal rights to explore what the animal rights/and or justice activists might learn from a sociological framing of human rights that focuses not on their conceptual or institutional coherence but on their enactment as forms of ethico-political practice. However, before doing so, we need to briefly explore the penchant within the field of human rights for philosophical and legal normativism, political legal institutionalism, and civil society empiricism, and how a critical sociology might introduce new perspectives.

5.3 Human Rights Beyond Normativism, Political Legal Institutionalism, and Empiricism

The notion that rights can be extended from members of one category to another, and/or expanded to include new rights, implicit in the animal rights debate – i.e., from humans to animals – is also central to how political sociologists think about the rights of humans. Thus, sociology’s canonical text on rights, T.H. Marshall’s *Citizenship and Social Class* (1950), identified both types of processes, i.e., extension and expansion, in its historical analysis of the development of (citizenship) rights in the English context. Marshall’s thinking developed a mould that has shaped much subsequent scholarship. Of course, his work has drawn significant and merited criticism. However, the notion that rights, when facilitated by adequate social, political and historical conditions, exhibit a normative momentum towards inclusive growth is accepted by many scholars, though not all, who are critical of Marshall’s substantive analysis. This, of course, does not exclude the reverse, i.e., the very real retrenchment of rights, but rather points to the fact that the universalism frequently attached to rights almost always falls short, hence the need for social and political struggle to attempt to fulfill, retain, or regain their universalist potential.

The same explanatory trope (López, 2018, p. 232) can also be observed in accounts that understand human rights as the product of the expansion and/or extension of citizenship rights to human rights and the latter’s subsequent global spread (Held, 2010; Shafir & Brysk, 2006; Soysal, 1994; Turner, 2006). Indeed, the notion that human rights are the rights required for a global and cosmopolitan world, at first blush, would seem justified to the extent that, as the political philosopher

Michael Ignatieff has argued, human rights have become “the lingua franca of global moral thought” (2001, p. 53), and the essential syntax of contemporary political and ethical claims (López, 2018, p. 15; Moyn, 2010).

Nevertheless, despite the success of the global extension and expansion of human rights, it is clear that human rights have not put an end to unspeakable human suffering, much like the spread of awareness of animal rights and welfare has not halted their contemporary Calvary. In the field of human rights, advocates push for more human rights enforcement and the development of more binding human rights instruments; philosophers attempt to find ever more secure ethical and moral anchors for human rights; and institutions concerned with promoting human rights attempt to extend their scope and reach. Nevertheless, such efforts, fueled by a “legal naiveté” typically overestimate the social power of (human rights) laws (López, 2018, p. 319), and the efficacy of the international human rights system (Hafner-Burton, 2013). Indeed, among human rights’ strongest advocates, it is recognized that human rights fail those who need them the most (Turner, 2006, p. 19). Much the same could be said regarding existing animal protection legislation with respect to the animals ensnared in the cruelty of modern industrial and agricultural practices.

The sociologist Fuyuki Kurasawa, has usefully grouped existing approaches to the analysis of the promotion and implementation of human rights, or, in his terms, the work of global justice, as falling under three broad strategies: philosophical normativism, political legal institutionalism, and (global) civil society empiricism (2007, p. 7). The first focuses on providing human rights with solid ethical or moral foundations with the hope that this will facilitate the spread and uptake of human right values and principles. The second, political legal institutionalism, pays attention to the design and functioning of the legal and institutional structures tasked with the promotion and implementation of human rights to optimize their operation. The first and second strategies can also be used to group the animal rights, or justice, movements, briefly discussed above: Singer and Regan, and Wise and Francione, respectively. The third, civil society empiricism, often associated but not exclusively with social movements and/or ethnographic work, concentrates on providing accounts of human rights or global justice activists, actions, networks, campaigns, resources, tactics, etc. While not discussed here, this genre of rich empirical research can also be found in the animal rights/justice movement literature (Munro, 2012).

While the three broad explanatory strategies produce valuable insight, there are also important limitations associated with each. As Kurasawa, persuasively argues, both philosophical normativism and political legal institutionalism provide top-down perspectives leading to culturally and socially thin accounts of the reality of the patterning of ethical and political activity associated with justice activism

(2007, p. 8). In this sense his claims resonate with other work that draws attention to the need to develop thick sociological accounts of the rights (Alexander, 2006; López, 2018; Woodiwiss, 2005). While the third strategy, civil society empiricism, does not suffer from the thinness of the first two strategies, its rich focus on the particular ignores patterns and regularities that might be seen across different localities and circumstances, providing insights on what works, what does not, and why (Kurasawa, 2007, p. 8). In response, Kurasawa proposes a “critical substantivist” approach that draws attention to the “ethico-political labour” undertaken by human rights activists, “what needs to be understood”, he argues, “are the belief-systems that groups and individuals hold and the cultural and socio-political rituals they perform” (Kurasawa, 2007, p. 8).

A key conceptual component of his critical substantivism is his model of a “mode of practice,” which he defines as “a pattern of materially and symbolically oriented social action that agents undertake within organized political, cultural, and socio-economic fields, and whose main features are recognizable across several temporal and spatial settings” (2007, p. 11). He identifies five modes of practices that are crucial to the work of global justice, namely *Bearing Witness*, *Forgiveness*, *Foresight*, *Aid* and *Solidarity* (2007). We argue that a similar shift towards a conceptual terrain between the formalism of philosophical normativism and political legal institutionalism, and the empiricism of accounts focusing on movement actions in the field of animal rights and justice could be productive. In the remaining sections of this paper, we focus on bearing witness because, as we show below, this is a crucial dimension of how the struggle for animal rights and justice gets enacted. Consequently, it constitutes, we believe, a first step towards building a critical substantivist position in the field of animal justice.

5.4 *Bearing Witness*

Kurasawa identifies five tasks associated with bearing witness as a mode of practice, arguing that each of these tasks confronts a peril that threatens to undermine it. Consequently, he pairs each of the five tasks with their corresponding threats: “voice against silence,” “interpretation against incomprehension,” “empathy against indifference,” “remembrance against forgetting,” “prevention against repetition.” However, only the first three are pertinent to our own fieldwork. This is not to say that remembrance and prevention are irrelevant, indeed annual remembrance of violence against animals mobilise not only memory but yearning for prevention in the future.

The first task, voice against silence, involves a victim’s ability to speak about the injustice or suffering to which they are subject. Sometimes victims can speak for themselves, others they cannot because they have been, or are being, silenced. In the latter case, someone must speak on their behalf.

Voice may refer to a victim's audible utterances, but it most often refers to highly stylized textual and audio and/or visual representations of their suffering. Such representations, which have developed as a specific genre amongst human rights organizations and activists (Moon, 2012; Wilson, 2009), aim for objectivity, to anchor their credibility, and to attract the attention of listeners with the hope that they will be moved to act. They are part of the "pattern of materially and symbolically oriented social action" that unifies disparate instantiations of the work of global justice.

The perils, however, are considerable: many of the voices of suffering are never heard because of their enforced seclusion; if heard for a moment, they are likely to be immediately extinguished by authorities. Finally, even if the foregoing obstacles are overcome, those who listen might not be driven to action. Kurasawa introduces the metaphor of a message in a bottle to draw out what is at stake in bearing witness (2007, p. 29). With respect to the question of voice, sending a message in a bottle does not guarantee that anyone will receive the message, or that if they do they will act on it.

The second task and concomitant peril, interpretation against incomprehension, is related to the challenges of representing the, inherently unrepresentable, experience of violence and suffering so that it might be legible to its intended audience. The addressee of the message must be willing to engage in an "interpretive labour that strives to [...] make sense of these injustices, which exist at the thresholds and in the recesses of language, speech, writing and image" (Kurasawa, 2007, p. 37). Kurasawa identifies a number of gaps that might prevent addressees from arriving at an interpretive understanding. The first one is experiential; the violence that is being represented is too distant from the addressee's horizon of experience preventing them from making sense of it. The second is historical and cultural, the injustice might be perceived as too distant in time, culture, or place to engage the recipient's interpretive understanding of the message. A third involves the overlay of an "authoritative interpretation" that subverts the intended interpretation. Lastly, oversimplification by the media may draw on stereotypical tropes, obviating the need for interpretive understanding. Returning to the figure of the message in the bottle, a message might be received but it might be written in a language or a style that its recipient cannot, or does not, want to understand, or is mediated by someone who discourages understanding.

The third task is empathy, its peril indifference. Kurasawa lists a number of factors that can, and do prevent, an addressee from developing the moral imagination necessary to recognize themselves in the suffering of others. The latter is crucial for the development of empathy (2007, pp. 43–44), provoking the need to act. These include moral individualism (or moral distancing), self-interest, the fragmentation of social life, and different forms of cognitive, cultural, and institutional denial. To take up the message

in the bottle image one last time, it is possible that a message might be received and understood, but nonetheless provoke no response.

The discussion of these three tasks, and associated perils, of bearing witness highlights the dialogical nature of the ethico-political practice of bearing witness. It is not sufficient for the victim to speak, explain, and seek to elicit a response: addressees must hear, understand, and act. This is a fragile process without guarantees. Bearing witness will only be successful insofar as it can create an ethico-political community (López, 2018, p. 155) that listens, comprehends and has the capacity to act in an efficacious matter. Seen from the perspective of bearing witness as a mode of practice, the question of conceptual coherence, legal and institutional infrastructure, and thick descriptions of campaigns, though not irrelevant become less central. The focus is on the conditions that make possible the formation of the ethico-political community that has the capacity to listen, understand and act. It is this lens that we use to analyze our field work amongst AJCAs in the next section.

5.5 Bearing witness as mode of practice in the context of AJCA actions

AJCAs are the modern “radical” branch of the Animal and Liberation movement. They seek justice for animals by enacting a politics of sight: “organized, concerted attempts to make visible what is hidden and to breach, literally or figuratively, zones of confinement in order to bring about social and political transformation” (Pachirat, 2011, p. 236). In this context, the politics of sight involves bearing witness at vigils (i.e., documenting the last moment of animals’ lives before they are murdered) and farm occupation (i.e., entering a farm, documenting the conditions in which animals live, and requesting that media tour the premises). Undercover investigations also meet the politics of sight criteria, the difference is that AJCAs openly rescue animals and do not conceal their identity while participating in civil disobedience protests (Lockwood, 2018; Purdy & Krajnc, 2018).

The analysis that follows draws on our fieldwork and subsequent analysis. First, we collected and analyzed a corpus (n=48) of mainstream local and national text media coverage (April 2019 to August 2020) of four Canadian farm occupations. Secondly, we collected and analyzed Hansard items retrieved from the online archive of the Legislative Assemblies of Alberta and Ontario, two provinces that passed ag-gag laws at the time of data collection. Respectively, Bill-27: *Trespass Statutes (Protecting Law-Abiding Property Owner) Amendment Act 2019*, and Bill-156: *Security from Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act 2020*. Finally, in addition to mainstream media representation and the legislative response to farm occupation, we conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews primarily exploring emotions with 15

AJCAs, 4 men and 11 women aged between 17 to 60. Every participant had witnessed animal violence first-hand on farms and only one participant had not been part of a farm occupation.

Elsewhere, we report on the political and legal context for these types of actions in two Canadian provinces, Alberta and Ontario (Bernatchez, 2022a), and analyze the challenging emotional demands that activists engaged in this form of activism must negotiate (Bernatchez, 2023). Here, we continue to draw on our field work and our previously reported findings to analyze this instantiation of a politics of sight as a mode of bearing witness that has striking similarities with modes of bearing witness in the sphere of human rights. We draw attention to important resemblances, but also significant differences that must be borne in mind in the process of developing an understanding of animal rights/justice activism as a mode of practice.

The ethico-political work undertaken by HRAs (Human Rights Activists) and AJCAs is anchored in a moral responsibility (Hill, 2019) to bear witness (Gillespie, 2016, p. 577) to know what we would rather not know (Cohen, 2001). This takes the form of documenting violence and suffering via a “truth register”: legal, statistical, and testimonial (Moon, 2012), giving voice to victims. Although worldwide, AJCAs document their claims with statistics (e.g., the contribution of industrial farming to climate change, mass murder of terrestrial and aquatic animals) and work for the adoption of anti-speciest legislations, the focus on testimonials, as in the field of human rights, remains crucial. As a privileged mode of truth, testimonials aim to evoke a response, often of moral outrage but, more importantly, of compassion and empathy. As Moon reminds us, the indispensable assumption held by HRAs is that “*if only people knew they would act*” (2012, p. 877 italic by the author). This knowledge-action nexus is also shared by AJCAs (Purdy & Krajnc, 2018).

Having described these broad similarities between bearing witness in HRAs and AJCAs, there are three important differences worth noting. As we will show below, these have a significant impact on how the tasks and perils of bearing witness in the context of AJCA actions are negotiated. First, it is important to note that the documenting activities undertaken by AJCAs to give voice to animals necessarily involve contravening the law by non-violently, yet illegally, entering farm premises to document and expose animal violence. A second distinction is that while HRAs’ testimonials (i.e., visual or written) involve both victims and witnesses of abuse; in the testimonials facilitated by AJCAs, animals do not tell their stories. A third, and crucial distinction, arises from the fact that the documentation of the suffering of animals is live-streamed, and even though footage is edited in post-action videos it cannot be reworked to the same extent as human right reports are (Moon, 2012). AJCAs can be overwhelmed by their immersion in the sites of animal violence and the simultaneous necessity of

reporting what is occurring, i.e., narrating the voices of suffering animals (Bernatchez, 2023). For instance, Jenny, an informant, recounts, “when I’m hearing myself speak about what I’m seeing to me it’s kind of more upsetting” she adds “it’s on a whole other level when you’ve actually had direct experience taking an animal out of misery and looking at animals who are going through terrible experience.” Thus, unlike most HRAs, AJCAs produce accounts of violence against animals that they experience in situ while having to “figure out how this can be portrayed [perceived] by the general public” (Emily) in real time.

5.5.1 Voice against Silence

One of our informants, Anita, spoke to us about the importance of sight in bearing witness drawing on Tolstoy and Gandhi respectively, “observing other living beings first-hand makes them part of your life as they become a part of your experience,” adding, “in life you have a choice you either look or you look away; we all know it’s cowardly, wrong and immoral to look away.” Bearing witness, as presented above, focuses on voice instead. However, both “sight” and “voice” should be understood in a synesthetic manner, i.e., within a politics sight “hearing” is also a mode “seeing”, and vice versa in the context of bearing witness. Equally important, both voice and sight are subject to similar dialogical dynamics whereby certain perceptions open up the (im)possibility of understanding and empathy.

Animals, of course, are not voiceless; they do have a voice through which they can express and communicate their pain and suffering. However, animals in industrialized settings cannot be heard, or seen, by the broader public as a result of their legal (as someone’s private property) and spatial (on farms, labs, etc.) isolation. At first blush this would appear to make them very different from human victims. However, it is worth noting that Amnesty International, which developed and institutionalized the contemporary genre of human rights reporting and documentation, pioneered the strategy of “bearing witness [to] the private suffering of nonviolent innocents, to demand [their] release on the sole ground that such suffering was unjust” (Hopgood, 2006, p. 62). It sought out “the most marginal of individuals,” abject, forgotten, and without voice to create a sense of moral responsibility that any ethical individual, despite their politics, would find difficult to reject (Hopgood, 2006, p. 62). Thus, the voices of the prisoners of conscience, “adopted” by Amnesty International are, not unlike the animals on whom AJCAs focus, silenced via their (il)legal and physical isolation in remote prisons and hidden dungeons, where the flickering light of the Amnesty International candle might shed some light and provide some succour (López, 2018, p. 282). Moreover, even though human rights organizations have expanded the focus of individuals and groups on whose behalf they advocate, the focus of vulnerability and marginality remain to this day (López, 2018, p. 280; Merry, 2007; Meyers, 2011).

The first task of bearing witness, then, requires AJCAs to enter those spaces where the voices of suffering animal are sequestered by legal-institutional and spatial design. The perils associated with this first task, in the Canadian context and elsewhere are significant (Del Gandio & Nocella II, 2014; Gelber & O’Sullivan, 2021; Lovitz, 2010; Shea, 2015). They include laws related to private property, trespass, biosecurity – what some scholars have called “ag-gag” laws (Lazare, 2022), and the broader figure of eco/agro-terrorism (Sorenson, 2003), that make it difficult, as well as legally and personally costly, for AJCAs to enter the places of animal suffering and disseminate evidence of such. These laws, as shown in some details elsewhere are the product of the active collaboration of AEA, agricultural lobbies, and provincial governments, i.e., the animal-industrial complex (Bernatchez, 2022a; Noske, 1989). They raise the cost of conveying the voices of animal suffering. What is more, even when activists accept the risks and costs associated with contravening such laws, in the case of the four occupations that we have analyzed in our fieldwork, the mainstream media is reluctant to amplify such voices, limiting the number of addressees to whom the message of suffering and injustice can reach. Or, as we argue in the next section, when they cover AJCA actions they often do so from the perspective of AEA. Indeed, it seems appropriate to speak about an organized “media-state nexus” of suppression (Boykoff, 2007).

5.5.2 Interpretation against Misunderstanding

In those cases where, despite significant obstacles, AJCAs are able to collect and disseminate evidence of suffering beyond the activist community, they nonetheless have to contend with a number of perils that make it difficult for their potential addressees to interpret and understand the voices of animal suffering. In the context of the four case studies in our fieldwork, these include a variety of interpretive gaps, as well as the epistemic power of experts and AEA quoted in media stories, that frequently subvert the interpretations advanced by AJCAs on behalf of suffering animals. As we noted above, bearing witness cannot be reduced to merely hearing or seeing. What is “heard” and “seen” needs to be understood as triggering a potential dialogic fusion of horizons between the experience that is being represented and the embodied, cultural, and historical experience of the addressee.

Animals are not voiceless; however, the way they communicate their experience is not, as far as we know, structured by the narrative logics that underpin human understanding. This constitutes an experiential gap that is difficult to overcome, as our respondent, Pamela, noted when confronted by her family’s inability to react as she had hoped to the suffering of animals portrayed in an AJCA farm occupation in which she participated:

My first thought was, I take part in this action and my family wouldn't have excused and tell me that the videos I show them are from the United States or Europe. I wanted to show people I know that the same thing happens here. Unfortunately, the result wasn't what I expected, my parents continue eating animal products.

The extremely limited knowledge that the general population has of the practices of contemporary industrial animal farming (Sorenson & Matsuoka, 2021), and their physical, psychological, ethical, and temporal separation from these (Mitchell, 2011) do little to help close the interpretive gap. What is seen occurs in a distant "then and there," eschewing the possibility of interpreting the experience of injustice and suffering as occurring "here and now" (Hansson & Jacobsson, 2014).

The burden of overcoming these interpretive chasms falls on the filmed cries of pain of animals and on the narrating capacity of the activists witnessing their suffering. AJCAs must, whilst immersed in a multisensorial experience of violence (Bernatchez, 2023), not only make sense of the experience for themselves in real time, but must simultaneously narrate it as something that can be comprehensible to individuals of conscience. However, effort to do so, frequently falls short as conveyed by one of our respondents, Emily,

I think that's why so many people probably don't believe us because even as an animal rights activist even with someone who's seen the suffering, I still cannot believe it, it's so shocking [...] I struggled to put it into words like I just can't describe the feeling the sounds the smells like the whole experience. They often say this to activists that watching the footage isn't enough you don't get the full scope you have to be there.

Indeed, as shown elsewhere (Bernatchez, 2023), the embodied and multisensorial experience of immersion in the actual spaces of violence against animals, produces a phenomenologically overwhelming interlocking sensorial encounter that cannot be fully captured by images, sound or narration (Gillespie, 2016; Lockwood, 2018). As Winnie, another respondent, intimated,

[the] sheer filth and as you move further into the farm, the facility, there was not a single window and there were no lights on, it was a dungeon. It is so far removed from anything that could be considered, forget Humane, but like even there's no word for it, it's torture, it's absolute torture and you're breathing in ammonia like, so your senses are taking in all of these things but you're also thinning these stories and realization. So, I think the best way to describe it is just sensory overload and these are traumatizing images topped with everything that's coming in through the senses and further behind it is an awareness of the massive machine that exists.

The second type of perils to interpretation in the context of AJCAs' activism is related to the epistemic contest between the testimonials enacted by activists and the institutionally sanctioned knowledges, quoted in the media of AEA, policy makers, and provincial politicians. Drawing on our

fieldwork, as we have reported elsewhere (Bernatchez, 2022a), veterinarians, animal welfare officers, and farmers will interpret away violence and suffering, claiming that what is portrayed in the testimonials should not be interpreted as such; is not reliable because it is ideologically biased; it is caused by the presence of the activists themselves; or it represents situations not typical of the sector. In addition, the broader political context of ag-gag laws, resulting from the close collaboration between the farm lobby and provincial governments in the Canadian context, links AJCAs and their activism to ignorance, rural criminality, biosecurity risks, ideological radicalism, threats to food security, economic disruption, and eco/agro-terrorism (Bernatchez, 2022a). These strategies contribute to the misinterpretations of the voices of suffering animals by pushing them to the background, while drawing to the foreground the “threats” posed by activists. This, of course, makes it less likely that addressees will empathize with the suffering of animals, thus remaining in a species logic.

5.5.3 Empathy against Indifference

Empathy is only possible if one has the capacity and moral imagination to experience the suffering of another being: it involves the psychologically enabled but socially and culturally shaped ability to see oneself in the plight of another. However, the kind of knowing that is targeted by bearing witness does not merely entail knowing about and understanding the plight of another, but, also, knowing that such knowing requires one to act if not collectively at least individually. The perils associated with the first two tasks does much to cultivate indifference rather than empathy when individuals are confronted with evidence of animal violence in the form of testimonials. The general invisibility of the treatment of animals in contemporary industrial settings, and the silencing of their voices of pain, makes it difficult for the public to empathize with the suffering of these animals (Mitchell, 2011). As does the prevalence of speciesism (Horta & Albersmeier, 2020) and carnism (Joy, 2010). Moreover, the coding of the activism undertaken by AJCAs as cultural, political and economic threats disseminated by the media, and echoing the farm lobby and provincial politicians, encourages their audience to see the farmers, the economy, the food chain, or even themselves as the real victims, as the suffering of the animals recedes from view (Sorenson, 2003, 2019; Sorenson & Matsuoka, 2021).

The situation in which one knows, but does not know that one is obligated to act as result of what one knows, leads to a variety of forms of denial, which Stanley Cohen identified in his seminal work, *States of Denial*: interpretive denials such as the denial of injury [The animals are not really suffering!] or the denial of the victim – [They are just animals!], or implicatory denials such as the denial of responsibility [I am not doing it!], the condemnation of the condemners [The activists are responsible for panicking the animals or staging inaccurate representations!], or the appeal to higher loyalties [There

is no other way of producing affordable food] (2001, pp. 60–61). These forms of denial, of course, are supported by broader cultural frameworks that normalize animal violence (Dhont & Hodson, 2019) because they are unlike us, and frame animal bodies as commodities to be treated as things (Sorenson, 2019; Sorenson & Matsuoka, 2021) rather than sentient beings that suffer and experience pain.

In addition, Moon (2012, p. 486) suggests that it is not always indifference, or a lack of empathy, that prevents ordinary humans from acting against injustice or to alleviate the suffering of others. Rather, it is a feeling of helplessness that makes them passive bystanders because they feel that their “contributions will not change anything” (Cohen, 2001, p. 70). The form of bearing witness undertaken by AJCAs projects the possible benefits of their activism, and the responses of their addressees, into an unknowable future, forsaking the possibility of remedying the immediate suffering in the present. In this sense, it is different from much human rights work where the focus was initially, and still largely remains, on stopping the suffering of individuals in the present, and where concrete responses, letter writing, dissemination of information, and pressuring specific individuals or organizations can lead to the release of a prisoner of conscience. To return to Amnesty International, it offered individuals a form of moral (apolitical) action whose focus was not on the radical social-structural transformations of society, but rather on “saving the world one individual at a time” (Moyn, 2010, p. 132).

5.6 Conclusion

Much of Amnesty International’s early success, on which the subsequent achievements of human rights rest (López, 2018), was related to its ability to develop strategies to document suffering that had “the normative power of the factual” (Hopgood, 2013, p. 39). This, as the anthropologist Richard Wilson has argued, rested on an “unflinching realism” (Wilson in Hopgood, 2006, p. 73) structured by a genre from which all emotive and political language was purged, and a commitment to an exhaustive verification of facts, and an unflinching fidelity to radical impartiality (López, 2018; Moon, 2012). These strategies contributed to the development of a novel form of ethico-political practice, oriented towards bearing witness by exposing and documenting wrongs, that no moral individual, despite their political and ethical commitments, could sanction (López, 2018, p. 1). Moreover, though until recently rarely acknowledged, but is increasingly becoming clearer, Amnesty International’s success, was in no small part due to the fact that faith in the broader transformative political projects of the postwar era – i.e., liberal capitalism, socialism, postcolonialism – faded, creating a space for a new form of minimalist politics, some would say apolitical politics, that Amnesty International, and other human rights organizations, were able to harness through a novel practice of bearing witness to human rights violations (López, 2018; Moyn, 2010).

To look at bearing witness in the context of human rights as an ethico-political mode of practice is to realize that “seeing” and “hearing” involve not only visibility and audibility but also understanding, and empathy, not only knowing but knowing that one must act. As we have seen, it is an extremely fragile dialogic process, constantly undermined by ongoing perils. This is the case even in the context of human rights that pioneered a form of bearing witness that has subsequently tutored all of our moral sensibilities. Today, those of us who have been raised, or even those who have not, in societies that value human rights know how we should act when confronted with testimonials and reports of human rights violations. It might be linked to some basic human capacity and necessity to mirror the feelings of others, but it is formed and enacted by bearing witness as a socially and historically situated mode of practice.

Looking at the AJCAs’ politics of sight as a mode of ethico-political practice for bearing witness draws our attention to the tasks it must set itself and the perils that it must foil. What kinds of practices and beliefs can be nurtured to break the legal and physical isolation of suffering animals in industrial settings? Visibility and audibility of animal suffering are not enough. What forms of bearing witness might close the phenomenological experiential gap of the experience of pain between animals and humans? What kinds of representations and narrative logics might make interpretable the animal experience of pain and suffering? How might the evidence of the reality of animal suffering be collected and shaped to contest the epistemic power of AEA? What kinds of actions can those who know they must act be able to undertake to nurture a sense of confidence that the world can be changed, that we can look at animals as full beings?

It is of course not the case that these types of questions have not been posed before, or that there are not already some possible answers to some of them. However, posing them in an organized framework of bearing witness as form a practice has the potential to stimulate critical reflection on existing practices and strategies, and how they might be transformed to become more socially and politically efficacious. Elsewhere (López, 2018, p. 414) one of us has argued that the great world historical achievement of human rights does not lie in its having eliminated human rights violations but in convincing us that it is indisputable ethical obligation to try. Animal justice advocacy has the same potential but it is not likely to achieve it without critically reflecting on the specificity of the tasks to be achieved and the threats to be thwarted in bearing witness to animal pain and suffering as a mode of practice.

6. Synthesis and Additional Reflections

This section provides a synthesis and an additional discussion on how the three research articles contribute to understanding the suppression and emotionality of AJCA's politics of sight and the perils that bearing witness confronts. In this thesis, as noted in the introduction, I have sought to answer *the questions: How does a politics of sight operate and shape animal justice activism? And, how do concerned citizens emotionally respond to a politics of sight?* The critical analysis and reflection in this thesis lead me to three arguments:

- 1) the mainstream media and the provincial state foil the potential associated with the politics of sight by discrediting and misrepresenting the tactics and goals of AJCAs, thus protecting the economic interests of the AIC;
- 2) a politics of sight is, above all, an attempt to produce a moral shock among the public as a first step towards abolishing the systemic oppression and exploitation of animals. However, AJCAs experience a moral shock of their own through their bodily immersion in sites of animal violence. This suggests that an emotional repertoire does not properly convey "how one will feel" in a farm, and the success of a politics of sight depends on AJCAs personally managing such experiences via emotional reflexivity;
- 3) the efficacy of a politics of sight is fragile because AJCAs do not have control over animal testimonies in mainstream media coverages: they are mostly silenced, evidence may be misunderstood, thus the triggering of an empathetic reaction is challenging to achieve. A politics of sight is a perilous "message in a bottle" for which AJCAs must also put their freedom on the line. In addition, using a critical substantive perspective to examine the politics of sight, as a mode of ethico-political practice, not only reveals the tasks and perils AJCAs must address while bearing witness, but highlights the usefulness of Kurasawa's analytical framework for the investigation of Animal Justice activism tactics.

These three arguments have contributed to the main claim of this thesis. Unless someone *knows* about animal exploitation and then is *immersed* in such contextual violence, there is little chance of understanding, cognitively and emotionally, the full scope and depth of animal violence on farms. In addition, unless mainstream media is not influenced by economic actors, an open politics of sight will remain contingent of the media and the state's ability to engage in suppression rather than authentic communication about animal violence behind the scenes of the AIC. It does not mean that a politics of sight is ineffective: according to a personal informant, the farm in Quebec closed down after the protest action as did, in 2022, a sled dog operation after a documentary-style undercover operation was released

on W5 channel. Instead, it means that a politics of sight is strongly fought back by the AIC, a fight supported by what would appear to be allies in the media and in the provinces, leading to the imperilment of AJCAs' reputation and freedom, but also the continuation of lawful animal violence. This suggests that AJCAs should consider adjusting the enactment of their politics of sight.

Addressing these three fundamental dimensions of a strategy that aims to make visible animal violence in agricultural settings was better done by articles than with a traditional thesis. Each article addresses a specific dimension of the phenomena: the state-media context, the emotional experience of activists, and a broader sociologically informed appraisal of the tasks and perils of this type of strategy. However, writing a thesis by articles requires following the restrictions of academic journals, and does not permit the same exploration of topics, nor does it provide space for the type of critical reflection that a traditional thesis does. Consequently, below, I synthesize the three thesis articles and engage in additional reflections on the politics of sight.

6.1 Political Suppression and the Animal-Industrial Complex

When we address the topic of civil disobedience protest, it is helpful to look at media representations and political responses in order to draw the baseline of what circulates publicly in terms of information and which state mechanisms are deployed to maintain the status quo of a political economy. In this sense, the first article, chapter 3, sheds light on what we might describe as an eye-catching resonance between mainstream media and provincial government's portrayals of animal justice activists to the benefit of the AIC.

This striking alignment between lawmaking, at the provincial level, and the interests of the AIC demands further exploration. Following Boykoff, we might understand this resonance between mainstream media and polity as a form of political suppression against the AJCAs' politics of sight in Canada. These findings are in line with Sorenson (2014) and Sorenson and Matsuoka's (2021) account of the powerful influence of hidden AIC actors on political decision making and public opinion.

6.1.1 What is Behind the Mainstream Media Narrative Scenes?

As Goffman would say, everyday life is akin to a theatrical experience. I agree with this statement, and the most exciting part lies behind the scenes of this interactive theatre in which we take part. Who writes and directs the performances and selects the props is not easy to ascertain? Given that we are talking about a large and powerful industry, it makes sense to "follow the money." Although this

inquiry goes beyond the scope of this thesis, it is still relevant to briefly look at some backstage mechanisms to enrich our understanding of the findings reported in chapter 3.

Mainstream media's attempts to steer public opinion, be this conscious or structural, often raises the cost of participation and alienates sympathizers from participating important social causes. In my empirical research, I first looked at the mainstream media representations of AJCAs' politics of sight. Although as noted above, my media analysis is exploratory and does not claim to have provided an extensive framing analysis, there are still two main tendencies that point in the direction of efforts, conscious or not, to suppress AJCAs' efforts to make visible the animal violence on farms. First, negative framing is oriented toward the devaluation of the vision of AJCAs. Although some reporters did question the epistemic power of AEAs, most coverage damaged the reputation of AJCAs and undermined the meaning of the protest action, leaving the question of animal exploitation for human food consumption undebated. If the mainstream media did not disregard the protest, as it did in the case of the duck farm occupation, they were likely to dismiss and reinterpret evidence of animal violence. More importantly, the way evidence of animal violence is disregarded, using the voice of the SPCA, and reinterpreted by AEA actors such as veterinarians and animal exploiters reveals a hierarchy of evidence that undermines the authenticity of bearing witness as an ethico-political practice. In a book chapter, *The V-Stamp as an Indirect Crime Against the Animals* (2022b), I explain how the AIC has co-opted veterinarian expertise to legitimize violent practices on animals under an unempathetic species-capitalist umbrella.

Second, my analysis illustrates how AJCAs are demonized, portrayed as extremists, sometimes alluding to terrorism, mostly associated with biosecurity risks even though evidence of AJCAs wearing biohazard suits is captured on live-streamed videos. They are represented as endangering human and animal safety; the latter is rather ironic insofar as these animals are on a life-trajectory towards execution to stock the shelves of grocery stores after their bodies are entirely violated. If Beirne (2014) argues that eating animals' body parts is a theriocide, it is clear that the mainstream media is a key player in keeping this reality hidden. Here, I assume that, for most ordinary humans, the way animals are treated on farms would be understood as crimes if companion animals were treated in this manner. But in the case of AJCAs, the message conveyed by mainstream media is that it is concerned citizens that commit crimes, not the farmers. For instance, when a reporter uses the voice of the executive director of Alberta Pork, it reframes the politics of sight as theft and harassment; in Quebec it was subtly linked to vandalism and farmers were victims of AJCAs endeavour to make visible gruesome animal violence. Equating peacefully bearing witness to a crime, and sometimes referring to violence, as most AEA do, can be understood as a mean to demonize a live-streamed politics of sight where evidence of violence is recorded. Consequently, a rhetoric of violence instills public fear and arguably has the sole purpose of

dehumanising and depoliticizing the act of documenting and exposing animal violence. As a result, public sympathy falters and animal violence remains publicly undebated while a speciesist and capitalist order is preserved. Consequently, the psychological and physical distance that a politics of sight seeks to narrow does not occur at it might. But who benefit from these damaging and one-sided representations of a politics of sight?

It is well known that the mainstream media present a narrative that does not always correspond to the reality of a given situation (Boykoff, 2007; Sorenson, 2016, 2019). One might argue that there might be economic interests at play? However, the nature of these interests in the context of the form of activism analyzed in this thesis need to be further explored. The fact that Canadian society is organized around the AIC, of course, is a strong reason for framing the protests negatively. This, however, does not explain the actual decisions made by editors and journalists. More analyses focusing on the structural intersection between the reporting of news and the politics of sight need to be undertaken. It is clear, from the sample analyzed in this research that there is an institutionalized bias towards representing the farm occupations extremely negatively. However, the existence of the bias does not explain its origins in the everyday lives of the journalists and editors who make decisions about how to cover animal activism.

6.1.2 Do Group-Interests Oversee Ag-Gag Laws?

Boykoff's framework was as revealing for the analysis media representations of the politics of sight as it was for analyzing the framing of legislative responses. The strategic mode of state suppression, ag-gag laws in this case study, shares, as noted above, many similarities with the media narrative in terms of the negative framing and demonization of farm occupations. A narrative of fear permeates the MLA's debates, supporting and reinforcing the need for extraordinary laws to overpower a politics of sight and maintain the invisibility of animal violence for the audience. How did it unfold? First, a devaluation of AJCAs' concerns was established by erasing their vision; AJCAs were portrayed as ignorant and committed to treacherous actions endangering human and animal safety: this despite that fact that no AJCA engaged in a violent act toward humans or animals in the four occupations studied in this research. From an objective point of view, it is animal exploiters who pose a threat to animals' welfare and lives. In addition to frames identified by Boykoff's typology, the uniqueness of the response to this form of activism is the deployment of a property rights frame, eliding commercial and residential property, to support farmers in their violent practices against animals and to present AJCAs' actions as threats. The rights of farmers to legally exploit animals reveals how speciesism and capitalism normalize and legitimize animal exploitation. From the perspective of Critical Animal Studies, criminalizing a

politics of sight protects an economy based on animal violence by suggesting that AJCAs are intent on doing harm to animals. Another dimension of the fear associated with AJCAs' actions is the economic one; people will lose their jobs and the financial stability of provinces will be threatened. Consequently, MLAs draw on narratives of fear, risk and ignorance to justify the passing of ag-gag laws, often subtly echoing anti-terrorism laws and other ag-gag laws in the U.S. and Australia to depoliticize the legitimacy of a politics of sight. Such (mis-)disinformation leaves animal violence in the shadow of the AIC power dynamics.

So why must animal violence be kept hidden from public eyes? This is an essential area of study. Equally important is to understand what are relationships and processes that produce such a strong consensus on the legitimacy of violence-based agriculture in the provincial legislatures. Can we identify concrete networks of influence? How are they created and how are they maintained? Who funds them? Perhaps, by investigating such financial-interest networks of relationships and partnerships, we might get to the root of a politics of fear that demonizes and depoliticizes organized concerned citizens. Analyzing the Hansards of Legislative Assemblies, revealed that AIC corporate and personal interests are advanced. For instance, the instigator of the ag-gag law in Ontario was a former farmer and his nephew, the Chief Opposition Whip, too. In addition, among supporters of ag-gag laws is a former slaughter truck driver and a former international trade lawyer closely connected to the dairy industry. We can see here a revolving door from the agriculture industry into politics. Should we be concerned by its influence on how laws governing the treatment of animals are developed? In a similar manner, building a narrative of fear around a politics of fear by dehumanizing and delegitimizing protestors propagates misleading information to the public. Put in other words, it is a subterfuge to keep animal violence invisible. Is the provincial passing of ag-gag laws focused on public safety? These are important questions that raise societal concerns and require extensive research.

If those who previously studied the media-state nexus conclude that the AIC deprecates and suppresses concerned citizens through propaganda tactics, we can assume that corporations are a third power, that unofficially regulates what can and cannot be made visible. Democratic rules are about civil rights and liberties, but if the AIC shadows political decision-making to protect economic interests with ag-gag laws drafted by elected officials, we are witnessing a weakening of civil rights and freedom, not to mention an endless intensity of lawful animal violence. The question of the acceptability of the suffering and abuse of animals in the grips of the AIC is a legitimate one. It raises the possibility of a form of politics and economic life that is not speciest. Why should peaceful attempts to introduce these questions into the public space for debate be tarred by the brush of criminality and security concerns? Civil liberties are at play in the context of a politics of sight. If the provinces legislate to defend the

interest of the powerful corporations and actors that part of the AIC while excluding alternative non-speciesist world views there is cause for concern.

6.2 Managing the Embodiment of an Emotional Unknown

In chapter 4, I explored AJCAs' subjective experience with exploited animals: direct and close contact with animals in vigils and farm occupations. It reveals an emotional and motivational enigma: how do AJCAs manage to be with exploited animals while also opposing animal exploitation, especially when they cannot save them all? Documenting and exposing animal violence is a brave commitment to a politics of sight because it involves cognitive, emotional, and bodily interactions with distressing forms of lawful violence. Yet, as shown in the findings, AJCAs do so without a full understanding of latent emotional consequences. My analysis entails theoretical and empirical contributions. First, it allows us to expand our understanding of moral shock, and it warns concerned citizens that immersion in animal violence can have irredeemable long-term embodied effects. Second, it suggests that the notion of an emotional habitus has some limits, and it draws attention for organizers of farm occupation to address "how you will feel" with potential participants. Lastly, the findings highlight the work of emotional reflexivity that is undertaken to manage feelings in situ and post-action.

6.2.1 Moral Shock as the Embodied Experience of Animal Violence

Moral shock is one of the most significant concepts in SMS, especially for animal rights activists (ARAs) studies. Moral shock is understood as having a socio-psychological effect; it motivates humans to change their lifestyle and, ultimately, to engage in activism. My findings are consistent with previous research on how ordinary humans become activists, i.e., experiences that detach humans from engaging in normalized speciesism. Of course, AJCAs are before all ARAs, but the distinction lies in their willingness to put their freedom on the line and in the emphasis they put on justice. Thus, before explaining the important turning point that turn ARAs into AJCAs, I identify similar patterns of the experience of moral shock.

Documentaries and online videos showcasing open and undercover investigations are the final product of the politics of sight that seek to instigate a sense of outrage and a "need to do something" for those who empathetically understand injustice in animal stories. Graphic content is, for most, shocking and the accompanying narratives have the potential to trigger self-reflection on humanity's ethical

principles. For example, Valerie reported that “I watched the documentary³⁴ once, and it was something that I didn’t even know about, and I never knew even existed.” AJCAs come across such animal stories either through someone close to them or by accident, for example, on social media or YouTube. Besides footage of animal violence, for some reading articles in magazines or books had the same effect. But for Jason, who was born and raised on a family farm, a kind of “crisis of faith” engendered by human rights work made him reconsider his Christian beliefs and develop a new sense of morality toward animals.

Sydney conveyed his emotional reaction, shared by many, when he became aware of misinformation broadcasts by the school system and the government with respect to the health benefits of eating animals’ bodies and secretions. Emily and Max expand on this disappointment of being lied to, respectively:

It’s almost like you just wake up, like something clicks. Of course, like absolute heartbreak and you’re shocked that we’ve all been so incredibly deceived our whole lives by this industry for multiple industries it’s just horrific and awful and I knew that I couldn’t participate in that anymore and I knew that I had to do something to try and end this.

Eventually the spark grew in me, and the passion grew in me for something that I’ve ignored for most of my life because like many people we just repress the information. I’ve decided like one day I had to confront it head on [...] in my conscience, in my heart and my soul and my knowledge in my ethical framework how I view the world I thought that I have to do something about this.

In fact, a growing number of health scientists have raised concerns about eating animal body parts and cancer (Ferro et al., 2020; Huang et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2019) and the benefits of a plant-based diet (Dinu et al., 2017; Marrone et al., 2021). When we think about it, there should be little to no health benefit from eating animal flesh which is diseased, the flesh contaminated with feces, or milk production regulated by pus and feces quotas (see the Physicians Committee of Responsible Medicine website for more details). Two years ago, I had an informal conversation with a Quebec “chicken” slaughterhouse inspector; she admitted that when the birds arrive at the slaughterhouse to be murdered, all of them have respiratory problems. She reassured me by claiming there is a “safe way” to kill them without contaminating the flesh. Her claim raised despair in me, not reassurance. Henceforth, a glimpse into the AIC behind the scenes, may raise concern about the safety of animal products while also being a turning point for many humans on their trajectory to becoming AJCAs.

³⁴ Earthling, Fast Food Nation, Dominion, Forks over Knives, Cowspiracy are compelling videos that have produced a moral shock among AJCAs prior to any involvement in animal advocacy. Others mentioned that videos produced by PETA, Gary Yurofsky, Anonymous for the Voiceless, and the WeAnimals web platform also had a moral shock effect.

After going through a first moral shock that slowly orients them towards activism, AJCAs usually experience a second moral shock, that is, during their first encounter with exploited animals. Vigils allow activists a moderate experience of the physical shock of animal violence. Bearing witness provokes outrage in eyewitnesses as Jenny conveys: “somehow it touched and up inside I don’t how but [...] it is another window into another world but the world of the truth of what animals are going through, of animal suffering.” This can be interpreted as a transformative sensorial experience where abstract knowledge about animal violence seen in pictures and videos becomes “more real.” In this context, animal violence is inseparable from bodily experience. However, this embodied experience of eye-witnessing violence has heterogeneous effects: why does exposure to animal violence turn only some humans into AJCAs? To answer this question, phenomenological research is needed to identify emotional patterns and biographical background.

The politics of sight examined in this thesis first focused on farm occupations, but as I was interviewing AJCAs, I soon realized that vigils were also significant events. More specifically, participation in a vigil was a turning point in the lives of AJCAs. Anita Krajnc initiated this practice of bearing witness in Canada after adopting her dog, M. Bean. Together they have changed the practices of Animal Justice activism by unveiling the potential of the contemporary politics of sight. Every AJCA interviewed had gone to at least one vigil prior to openly or secretly investigating farms and participating in a farm occupation. Unlike vigils, farm occupations evoke a more profound moral shock in a corporeal register because of the full bodily immersion in the site of animal violence. In chapter 4, I draw attention to the emotional consequences of making visible legal standard practices on farms, which would be considered cruelty in other contexts and deemed criminal.

It is clear that AJCAs recognize animal agency and repudiate the AIC, but what makes someone go from a vigil to a farm occupation? For some, it is a promise made to themselves, a need to help the animals or as A. Regan states: “I said to myself if I don’t do it, who’s gonna do it?” Winnie also conveys a sense of moral obligation attuned to moral values:

I think there was a sort of a collision of where I was in and seeing what was going on around me and the more I became aware of particularly DxE in Berkeley [...] I think I started to clue into why they were doing direct action and I think that kind of aligned very much with what I was, I guess coming to what was coming to bubble up for me.

Thus, taking a further step in animal advocacy is expressed as a mission, a civic duty. What AJCAs were unaware of is the emotional dynamics of a farm occupation. Farm occupation caused a moral shock that

is inseparable from the embodied experience of in situ animal violence that is managed via emotional reflexivity.

As demonstrated in chapter 4, the corporality of a moral shock is particularly intensified when immersion in violence occurs—as in Hansson’s and Jacobson’s (2014) study, that stress the connection of emotion to corporeal registers. This conceptual connection sheds light on our understanding of moral shock. The embodied experience of a politics of sight executed on a farm requires emotional reflexivity to negotiate a subjectively conflicting reality. When bodily immersion in animal violence occurs, AJCAs have to calibrate, in situ, unexpected feelings. I suggest that these feelings emerge because of the limit of what the emotional repertoire conveys, namely, the “how you will feel” in the form of conventional feelings and emoting. The radical unknown nature of this experience is likely the reason why AJCAs embody their experience of confrontation with animal violence in the form of moral shock. Consequently, the achievement of a politics of sight rests partly on AJCAs’ capability to reflect on their emotional state and manage unprecedented emotions.

In research, extreme cases are sometimes helpful in pushing the limits of a concept. In chapter 4, I looked at moral shock from an emotional reflexivity perspective. Moral shock is usually used to explain self-recruitment, motivation processes, and recruitment strategies, but investigating its role in the context of immersion in animal violence certainly pushed the concept’s limit. As a result, emotional reflexivity enriches our understanding of moral shock. As discussed below, the concept of emotional habitus was also supplemented by emotional reflexivity, which allows us to better understand how it is possible to objectively bear witness while internally feeling distressed.

6.2.2 When the Emotional Repertoire Breaks Off a Moral Shock Erupts

At a collective level, Gould (2009) suggests that moral shock is produced by an emotional habitus, which sparks mobilization as humans are emotionally drawn to a message that makes sense to them. The social context in which the concept was developed, and its usage, does not refer to a context of actual immersion in violence. Instead, it was used to explain “regular” protest action and how people feel and react to a message and consequently emote. However, in the second article, interviews with AJCAs revealed that an emotional habitus does not convey an important dimension of collective action: the internal state, by which I mean, the abyss of objectively and collectively emoting practices while feelings otherwise. It is clear that moral shock pushes ordinary humans into activism and protest action, but the protest action itself may produce a moral shock, as demonstrated in chapter 4. This suggests the highly individual nature of bearing witness to achieve a politics of sight because little can prepare

someone for the internal negotiation they will undertake while immersed in violence. More research is necessary into the consequences of these initial findings on collective action.

The netherworld of an emotional habitus reveals a (dis)solidarity with both the group and the animals. I raise this idea of (dis)solidarity because a politics of sight is, above all, a collective action and a moment of solidarity with animals lawfully tortured. As my findings suggest, it is common for AJCAs to detach themselves from the immediate situation, something that was referred to as a survival mechanism. Protest action with emotional conventions is, thus, only relevant at a collective level because conflictual emotion arises inward. For AJCAs who had been on multiple farms, not paying much attention to the animals is the result of a natural response to trauma, or PTSD as some self-diagnosed themselves. This cognitive-emotional response also suggests another tension. The emotional and empathetic human-animal connection that triggers AJCAs' participation in a politics of sight is also what they need to abandon in order to succeed in a farm occupation. Consequently, emotional reflexivity orders, or represses, unfamiliar emotions and allows for the emotional management of a violent situation. Put in other words, I would argue that it is because AJCAs can reflect and manage their emotion in situ, and not the existence of emotional conventions, that the collective action can be carried out.

Although an emotional habitus is cognitively and emotionally understood, and embodied at an affective level, in chapter 4, I shed light on the limit of emotional conventions. The emotional unknown of farm occupation draws the line between what an emotional habitus conveys and what it cannot articulate. Vigils are the first place where AJCAs engage in the work of emotional reflexivity; this work culminates in a farm occupation where the abstraction of animal violence vanishes as a result of the reality of a traumatic embodied experience. This disrupts the emotional habitus and foregrounds its limit. As suggested in chapter 4, it remains unclear if emotional reflexivity is triggered because there is a lack of pedagogy about "how you will feel" or if this pedagogy cannot be channelled through emotional habitus conventions, rules, and dispositions at all. This could also result from an unwillingness or an emotional incapacity to talk about a potential trauma; as Jenny mentioned, "this is not somewhere I want to go" when asked about how she copes with every form of animal violence she witnessed. As a result, I suggest that the limit of an emotional repertoire, in the context of in situ emotional reflexive negotiation, is the reason why an embodied moral shock is experienced.

6.2.3 What Are the Experiences of AJCAs Teaching Us?

I refer here to Winnie when she states that a farm is a 3D environment where an overload of the senses occurs. The 3D analogy draws attention to the fact that a moral shock synchronizes conventional feelings and forms of emoting, an immersion in animal violence that disrupts such conventions, and an emotional reflexivity that externalizes expected emotional conventions during a farm occupation. In terms of theoretical implication, it recalls what scholars of SMS have advocated for the past forty or so years, emotions are central to collective action. However, this thesis points to the fact that activists' management of emotion cannot be neglected, especially when a corporeal register is involved.

AJCAs' experiences guide us to the emotional dimension of a civic duty of care: the need to document and expose injustices; even though it involves "breaking the law," it is a human responsibility. While human rights activists are generally praised for divulging human-to-human forms of exploitation, AJCAs' politics of sight seems to be its antithesis in our current cultural and socio-political context. The difference between HRAs and AJCAs lays in the societal transformation in mentalities about human discrimination and exploitation, thus a shared humanity. In our society, for instance, racism and sexism are, theoretically, no longer accepted. However, such societal transformation, that also includes an ontological barrier, has yet to be achieved for speciesism. As the finding in chapter 4 suggests, dismantling speciesism with a politics of sight would be more efficient if indirect supporters of the AIC could experience for themselves a bodily immersion in animal violence as most humans may have less empathetic feelings for those being who do not, externally, look like them.

AJCAs might have to develop strategies to legally achieve this task, for instance, encouraging school directors to organize student groups to visit industrial farms and slaughterhouses, much like is done for water treatment plants. Learning where animal flesh and secretions come from is as important as learning how wastewater is returned "clean" through tap water, is it not? Also, I suggest that using virtual reality technology with bystanders and potential sympathizers may have some positive effects. For instance, immersive journalism³⁵ uses the 3D technology, with a head-mounted display (HDM), to visually and emotionally immerse an audience in documentaries and news reports (Hardee & McMahan, 2017). In addition to haptic technology (i.e., communication of touch), developers of virtual reality devices have invented a smell simulator that can be added to an HDM (e.g., the sensory mask from FEELREAL or the scent technology from OVR). As we have seen, eye-witnessing and smell are

³⁵ In the TED Talk, *The Future of News? Virtual Reality*, Nonny de la Peña addressed this topic. And Chris Milk's TED Talk, *How Virtual Reality can Create the Ultimate Empathy Machine*, for an introduction to the potential of provoking an empathetic response through storytelling.

both sensory yet traumatic experiences for AJCAs. In fact, the virtual reality researchers, Maister et al. (2014), have shown how bodily resonance and ownership, resulting in empathy, can be produced through the illusion of self-association in reducing social bias and changing one's attitude about gender, age, and race. Such technology has great potential and may be a useful asset to AJCAs because they would be able to bodily, and legally, immerse bystanders and sympathisers into a hidden reality that most humans (in)directly support. Therefore, melding visual and olfactory senses to immerse speciesist humans into the AIC behind the scenes may provoke an empathetic response and, somehow, supports AJCAs in their endeavour to walk them through their own experience. Arguably the technology of photography contributed much to the expansion of spatial empathy. As the title of Maister's et al. article states, *changing bodies changes minds: owning another body affects social cognition*, I suggest that the politics of sight could reach some new horizons by using this technology to make humans responsible for their action toward animals by countering mainstream media manipulation of public opinion and the high risk associated to ag-gag laws.

6.3 Is a Politics of Sight a Civil Duty or Is Empathetically Understanding a Human Responsibility?

The research presented in this thesis began around the core idea of conceptualizing farm occupations as a politics of sight; however, comparing HRAs to AJCAs tactics of making visible hidden suffering and violence led to a reconceptualization: bearing witness as a mode of ethico-political practice. Kurasawa's (2007) analytical framework of critical substantivism was crucial in providing a framework for exploring the potential failure and success of farm occupations. As a co-authored reflection between my thesis supervisor and I, we argue, in chapter 5, that the current form of politics of sight has a fragile transformative potential. First, we draw attention to the difficulty of fair representations, of giving voice to animals resulting from the silencing of mainstream media and ag-gag laws. Second, interpretation of animal suffering is highly subject to incomprehension, given the difficulty of providing the in-situ context. This highlights interpretative gaps because the animal justice debate may be too remote for a speciesist audience; this adds to the physical distance from the sites of violence. Third, arousing empathy is one of the most challenging tasks in overcoming indifference, empathy being link to how we interpret issues and how they emotionally resonate with us. In this section, I expand our argument by reinterpreting Pachirat's concept of a politics of sight, adding some socio-psychological insights into the interpretative gaps, and propose how bearing witness could move people towards moral response-ability.

6.3.1 Revisiting the Politics of Sight

In the article *The Politics of Sight: Revisiting Timothy Pachirat's Every Twelve Seconds*, English and Zacka (2021) offer a critical analysis of Pachirat's ethnographic work on visibility as a vector for political change. As the authors put it:

our newspapers, social media accounts, and television screens are replete with stories that seek to reveal, expose, unveil, or unmask what lurks behind the smooth patina or ordinary life. These strategies rest on the transformative potential of sight: the belief that making a society's 'shameful and disturbing' practices visible will stir the moral sentiments of those of us who were previously shielded from the sight and awaken us from slumber. Visibility would thus loosen the hold of modes of power that operate by hiding, masking, or mystifying (p. 1).

This excerpt shows three implicit premises central to Pachirat's work that the authors argue are "mistaken or misspecified" because "more sight is not always better and visibility can at times imperil the very transformative goals that proponents of the politics of sight seek to advance" (p. 1). Such socio-psychological critique³⁶ can also be understood as an appraisal of the core assumption of bearing witness: *if one sees, one will do something*. Here I describe English's and Zacka's critique that helps to propose the idea of a *response-ability* as proposed by Tait; though their argument focuses on the psychology of industrial killing workers, I adapt it for a sociological perspective.

Exposing violence will make humans see it (p. 6). Although a politics of sight aim at making visible the unbearable, Pachirat claims that seeing socially uncomfortable practices, or participating in them, can also be concealed even in cases of structural and spatial proximity. However, as the authors claim, the power dialectic between putting up and removing barriers to sight is also made of emotions, not just physical and legislative walls. They propose that humans cognitively distract themselves and engage in emotional avoidance responses, or cognitively retreat into denialism, as a coping mechanism to create an emotional distance from the violence in industrialized slaughterhouses. If we look at the society-slaughterhouse relationship, distance conveniently allows one to "plead ignorance" (p. 7). This then raises the question of whether humans are prevented from seeing or if they do not want to see, and if overexposure to violence makes humans callous? In a closing remark, they propose that "[p]erhaps in order to be successful, the politics of sight must not just remove obstacles to sight, but also force people to see—prevent them from looking away" (p. 7).

³⁶ It is important to note that Pachirat's analysis is a political structural approach, not of a socio-psychology of "dissonance cognitive, emotion regulation, and motivated cognition" (p. 2) as English's and Zacka's alternative interpretation of industrialized slaughterhouse account suggests.

Seeing violence will break off acquiescence and motivate socio-political action (p. 7). For Pachirat, a politics of sight “relies for its transformative potential on moral sentiments: people feel appalled and shocked by what they see that they will be motivated to reform their institutions and practices” (p. 7). Resulting from a civilization process, moral sentiments are why most violent practices are out of sight of the everyday lives of ordinary humans. English and Zacka contest this argument. Segregation of violence does not expand moral sentiments (e.g., pity and compassion) because aversion toward killing practices is not a function of distance. Instead, reducing the distance to violence would result in tolerance, and aversion to violence can be diminished through coping mechanism. The authors illustrate this argument by saying that a politics of sight may result in the abandonment of industrialized slaughterhouses but shift to other forms of killing instead of its abolishment (p. 8). Therefore, if violence becomes (in)tolerable, practices may change, but not socially fade out. In this respect, I would add here that new-welfarism policies are likely a result of acceptable violence through improved techniques of exploitation.

This leads English and Zacka to identify another problem in Pachirat’s politics of sight: the power of sight is underdetermined, i.e., humans either resist aversive practices or legitimate them. The apathy-action dilemma in Pachirat’s work reveals two responses: fascination with killing practices could turn into spectatorship, or repetitive exposure could turn into a “numb moral response,” both diminishing the transformative potential of sight, and its “shock value” (p. 8). For the authors, fascination with violence is a historical, social phenomenon, but numbness is more of a form of cognitive protection rather than of apathy.

How, then, do killing workers accomplish their tasks? Using the theory of cognitive dissonance, the authors argue that conflicted humans either change their behaviour or their belief system to align them with their actions. Most killing workers have no other employment options, thus, focusing on holding on to their jobs, is a form of looking away or being distracted from the reality of the tasks they undertake. Participating in the cruelty and killing process is, for Pachirat, a result of desensitization, here synonymous with indifference, but for English and Zacka, is it the objectification, or reduction of animals to a status of things in their words, that “paves the way for desensitization” (p. 9), not indifference. This results in a soothing cognitive effect while causing harm and death. This echoes René Descartes’ answer to Henry Moore, previously mentioned in section 2.4.1.1, while defending the idea that animals are unconscious machine. The authors also add that a degradation of animals protects humans from the discomfort of causing harm when someone is visibility suffering. On the contrary, when suffering is spatially concealed, the degradation of animals is not required, as suffering is not fully visible. Consequently, the authors argue that the success, and peril, of a politics of sight rests on

forcing people to see *and* blocking the pernicious adaptive responses toward which they may gravitate [...] If people cannot change their participation in repugnant practices, on pain of losing their job, and if they cannot look away, they may reach instead for ways to legitimate their participation in these practices [...] it could in fact generate other, *more dangerous ways* of confining it. Without attention to these dynamics, the politics of sight may end up inadvertently fueling the very practices it sets out to challenge (p. 9, emphasis in the original).

Distance from violence and concealment is a cognitive shield (p. 9). If a politics of sight aims at socio-political change, humans must own their (in)direct support for animal suffering instead of keeping these practices out of sight. In response to this last premise of Pachirat's politics of sight, the authors advocate against the "hypocrisy and self-delusion" (p. 9) of humans who benefit from the killing work that is socially concentrated and a moral burden for those who carry it on behalf of distant consumers. If the myth of the "knocker"³⁷ is the symbolic labour of killing within a slaughterhouse, the myth seems to function to obscure the reality of the killing process as it "shields the vast majority of workers from moral injury" (p. 10). Thus, the mystification of an act tends to reduce cognitive dissonance, a cognitive mechanism comparable to space concealment. To this, the authors add that desensitization is only selective, never complete, in and out of slaughterhouses, especially if we assume that violent practices are a social fact: "[m]itigating the force of dissonance, by exposing oneself only selectively to the suffering of others, is one way to resist the drift toward desensitization" (p. 11). Thus, the authors invite us to reflect on and resist selective concealment instead of making visible concealed practices as Pachirat proposes; we should think about walls in terms of "which ones deserve to stay and how thick or porous they should be" (p. 11). In other words, how should we strategically and socially reduce tolerance towards hidden animal violence without having humans recoil in cognitive complacency by making them responsible for what they are (in)directly participating in? This balance between seeing and accountability would, arguably, move humans towards doing something.

6.3.2 Socio-psychological Factors in the Interpretative Gaps

If Pachirat demonstrates that distance and concealment are powerful social mechanisms for hiding violent practices and English and Zacka show that cognitive and emotional coping mechanisms reduce visibility *within*, and to some extent *outside*, the walls of the socially segregated building, what would it take for concerned citizens to make animal violence visible and understandable and for humans to *see* and *be responsible* for the suffering they inflict to animals? In chapter 5, we looked at interpretative gaps associated with the task of making animal victim's stories comprehensible to an audience. Here I

³⁷ A knocker is the label attributed to the work of humans "who delivered the blow that knocked each creature unconscious" (Pachirat, 2011, p. 238). As Pachirat says, it is never clear when the animals are conscious or unconscious at the beginning of the killing process. It is hardly possible to identify the moment of death.

discuss these interpretative gaps with a socio-psychological viewpoint to understand common cognitive mechanisms at work in distancing one from animal suffering.

In his book *Voir son steak comme un animal mort* (translation *See Your Steak as a Dead Animal*), Gibert (2015) digs into the cognitive world of those who resist anti-speciesism. Connecting his argument to the meat paradox³⁸ and the ideological apparatus of carnism,³⁹ Gibert provides eight excuses for avoiding veganism in order to justify the consumption of animal products knowing that animals suffer. (1) More often, selective empathy is at play; some animals are eaten, and others wear a winter jacket and go to the spa. (2) Denial of animal consciousness, thus they cannot suffer, and (3) equating flesh to proteins also contributes to not aligning one's value to action; most people reject animal cruelty still they encourage it through the consumption of their body parts and secretions. (4) Moral disengagement comfortably takes away responsibility for one's practices. The last four mechanisms to reduce cognitive dissonance are (5) pairing veganism with extremism, often conveyed by mainstream media, (6) relativizing animal suffering with the argument that some problems are more worthy of consideration than others, and (7) making counterfactual comparisons as if eating mother cows' secretion induces less suffering than eating their flesh. Many scholar-activists refute such forms of reasoning as we know that, for instance, hens and cows are murdered for their flesh when they become useless in their production of secretions, resulting in even more suffering. Finally, (8) cultural and traditional exploitation practices make humans comfortable with respect to their contribution to animal violence. Any anti-speciesist will have heard them all, frequently. I would add that in the same conversation, multiple excuses are used altogether to ease the internal discomfort of interacting with someone who refuses to support animal violence in the food industry.

A socio-psychological framework to examine (in)direct support in animal suffering and violence offers another explanation, this time on how cognitive dissonance is socially manipulated. Les Mitchell's (2011) analysis in his article *Moral Disengagement and Support for Nonhuman Animal Farming* comes in handy in here. Focusing on moral disengagement—as identified by Gibert and Sorenson (2019) and implicit in Pachirat's and English and Zack's work—Mitchell explains that the AIC creates a sense of

³⁸ Similar to moral schizophrenia as explained by Francione: an ambivalent attitude where human say they love animals while also loving to eat them. Such a paradox is where people mobilize excuse mechanisms to diminish cognitive dissonance and justify the incoherence between their disapproval of animal suffering and their consuming animal suffering.

³⁹ Joy (2010), who coined the term carnism, explains that the meat paradox is an invisible and violent ideology that normalizes, naturalizes, and makes necessary the eating of animals' bodies and secretions. As a result, the invisibility of this conviction in animal violence encourages very few people to question their alimentary behaviours that are often alienated from their abhorrence for animal violence. Consequently, humans have no direct contact or exact knowledge about animal violence and can, thus, perpetuate a murderous ideology that denies animal rights.

redemption in the participation, and perpetuation, of animal mass suffering through six mechanisms. (1) Roles (e.g., farmers and butchers) are positively portrayed by mainstream media; (2) multiple channels facilitate exploitation (e.g., financial incentives and legislation); (3) and justification—though animal exploitation is normalized to the point that often, no justification is needed, and if needed a theological ontology putting humans above animals is advanced—and comparisons emphasizing that humans suffer more than animals. (4) Important in the context of a politics of sight is creating a physical and psychological distance to conceal animal suffering on farms and slaughterhouses, keeping violence invisible to a broader audience of consumers. (5) The manipulation of language by semantic modification and using euphemistic labelling also contribute to ordinary support for animal violence. For instance, the AIC promotes “chicken” menstruation as eggs, bee vomit as honey, and dismembering someone’s body as harvesting/processing. Furthermore, the use of deceitful words is a means of preserving human sensibilities and the AIC image. (6) Lastly, the deindividuation of animals—the AIC refers to a group, herd, or mass—largely contributing to breaking the connection with animals as beings and to severing humans from their responsibility in the suffering and death of billions of animals, trillions if we add aquatic animals to the theriocide⁴⁰. These two readings of ordinary excuses and support for animal violence complexify the understanding of the efficacy of a politics of sight, especially in its interpretation and resistance.

As argued in chapter 5, giving a voice to animal victims of human violence is not an easy task for those who dare to bear witness. Hearing and seeing do not necessarily result in understanding and in empathetic response towards vulnerable and marginal social groups. Instead, the task of giving a voice is imperilled by silence. Ag-gag laws do the trick of raising the cost of “illegally” bearing witness and silencing AJCAs’ and animals’ testimonies. Though legislative measures are a direct obstacle to making animal violence visible, mainstream media and the AIC collaborate in what appears as an organized manipulation of public opinion, sometimes legitimating a false narrative of normalization and animal welfare with farm veterinarians and what I called elsewhere, administrative veterinarians co-opted by the AIC (Bernatchez, 2022b). Consequently, even though the walls of farms are breached with photographs, videos, and live-streamed videos, they usually go as far as the community members and followers on social media and seems to rarely make it to the audience to which it is addressed; thus, unlikely to expose the reality of live animal violence. However, if the audio-visual communication reaches the targeted audience, can humans see it, or do they prefer to look away? As mentioned above, there are various ways of enacting a politics of sight, for instance, through documentaries. Do most humans willingly watch *Earthling*, *Dominion*, or *Cowspiracy*? If they do, how are animal stories

⁴⁰ For Beirne (2014), a theriocide is for the animals what homicide and genocide are for humans.

interpreted? Mainstream media and ag-gag laws are distinct obstacles to sight, but human volition and a willingness to understand animal injustice maybe also be, as a socio-psychological perspective suggests. This raises an important question: how to break the walls of a false ontological interpretation of the human-animal relationship with a politics of sight when it is most likely to be silenced?

Interpreting and understanding a distant reality concealed by the walls of legally demarcated states, using Pachirat terms, and a dishonest narrative regarding animal violence by the AIC-media-state nexus requires moral imagination for a speciest audience. As we noted in chapter 5, the experiential gap may comfort humans into the denial of AJCAs' embodied experience and animal suffering. Psychological and social distance may make animal violence elusive to ordinary humans, but proximity seems to work in the same way. This is a quandary that needs to be overcome in the ethico-political practice of bearing witness. While Pachirat illustrates that participating in animal violence results in desensitization, English and Zacka demonstrate that it is the objectification of animals that opens one up to desensitization. From the analysis in chapter 4, AJCAs also tend to be desensitized when overexposed to animal violence, a cognitive mechanism identified as a mode of survival to enable activists to continue documenting on-site where violence occurs. However, in strong contrast to killing workers and, to some extent, ordinary humans, AJCAs are not desensitized in the sense of indifference; they still care for the animals, and they do not harm them as a result of the cognitive and emotional shut down. They resist selective concealment. In this case, apathy is far from desensitization. AJCAs may be numb to animal suffering in situ, but the same suffering drives their endeavour to produce socio-political transformations. Of course, triggering an empathic response in a context where indifference is socially cultivated may be a major task for a politics of sight, which is also a form of empathy-outrage dialectic in disseminating the same emotions AJCAs have toward the animals. Desensitization may be central to socio-psychological interpretations of animal suffering, but denial is to be found in both a cognitive mechanism, as argued above, and structural mechanism diminishing the sense of animal violence on farms, as illustrated by Sorenson and Matsuoka (2021). Nonetheless, how can a politics of sight overcome experiential desensitization to deconstruct the denial of animal violence?

As noted by Gibert, culture and tradition trigger excuses to justify consuming animal products. This cognitive mechanism may come to play when interpreting the representations of injustices. A politics of sight is a breach in a spatio-temporal distance between the "then and there" and reveals a stark challenge: how to contextualize and provide a detailed explanation of animal suffering in real-time, while audio-visual communication is insubstantial, if not absent, in a mainstream media broadcast. Mainstream media is often an interpretation obstacle to understanding suffering; it oversimplifies violence and rarely engages in an honest portrayal of injustice (Hill, 2019). This is something that, we

have argued, is reinforced by provincial governments and the AIC who strategically misinterpret the voice of animals, if not casting them in the shadow, while shifting the narrative toward the threat that “illegally” bearing witness poses.

In the AIC, positive roles such as veterinarians and farmers strengthen the misunderstanding of animal suffering because they have the symbolic and legal authority to exploit animals. As with the knocker myth, positive roles mystify animal violence and reinforce a human myth. Sorenson explains that the human myth “find[s] ways to make the violent exploitation of others seem acceptable and aligned with higher moral principles. Thus, we see the construction of elaborate and disingenuous narratives of justification and self-deception, designed to provide absolution for these harmful actions” (2019, p. 211). He adds that corporate media reinforce this myth, but it is more specifically the AIC propaganda campaign—misrepresenting exploitation activities and using animal welfare discourse to shift the meaning of compassion into violence through a welfarism discourse—and its advocacy for the criminalization of concerned citizens while also framing animal exploiters as the “victims.” Put in other words, the human myth is a useful AIC invention that allows humans to think positively about themselves, not as animal exploiters but as animal lovers. It disempowers one instead of enabling one to recognize one’s participation in animal violence. Fighting the “ready to think” fantasy served by the AIC is an additional interpretative task of a politics of sight. If most AJCAs claim that it is hard to believe that standardized practices of violence on animals’ bodies occur in our society, how could a distant audience believe in, and trust, representations of suffering and make sense of them? Particularly, if at the same time, authorities establish a narrative of fear that deflects from animal suffering on farms.

6.3.3 Can Response-Ability Be Achieved with a Politics of Sight?

In this thesis, the politics of sight serves as an avenue to expose animal violence on farms in the hope of breaking an audience’s acquiescence and triggering a political horizon towards action. However, the analysis has shown that in the current form, enacting a politics of sight in Canada may be more perilous than expected, the hoped-for results remaining, for now, a distant political horizon. In chapter 3 and in the additional reflection, it was suggested that a media-state nexus in the shadow of the AIC produces deceitful representations of animal suffering through an intentional engendering of a politics of fear. This is a form of silencing through misrepresentation, but ag-gag laws are a more obvious form of silencing. In chapter 5, we demonstrated that, overcoming these structural challenges of giving a voice to animals, does not mean that the audience will comprehend short excerpts of animal testimonies, if they are ever broadcasted, and empathetically respond beyond, I assume, an ephemeral disgust. Such a response may be even more difficult to trigger in a culture of indifference to animal suffering. In this

section, I have offered a socio-psychological explanation of why a politics of sight may be more challenging than expected, recalling humans' excuses, desensitization, and denial mechanisms, all of which are reinforced by an AIC epistemology of justified violence on farms. These elements of understanding are in conflict with the embodied experience of bearing witness shown in chapter 4 and the cognitive and emotional cost of this practice.

As English and Zacka propose, forcing people to see is also a means to breaking a cognitive shield; this means deconstructing an ontology where animals are less than humans and dismantling the epistemic power of the AIC. The endeavor is much more than breaching the physical walls where violence occurs. In the words of Laine and Vinnari (2017),

[i]t appears however that the activists placed considerable trust on the broad ranks of citizens, whom they assumed would be mobilized by the alternative information into changing their dietary habits. Based on our research material, we would however argue that such a decision to trust the citizens did not necessarily further the activists' cause. Although the activists rearticulated the nodal point of animal production with their counter accounts, their articulation left several questions unanswered, including those concerning their proposed alternative [pp. 1500-1501].

Such a claim contrasts with Hill (2019), who argues that moral responsibility does not emerge from media coverage of human-to-human violence, if the story is not emotionally moving "the moral value of narrative order in media presentations of suffering has been overstated, which results in placing the weight of responsibility on media producers rather than on audiences" (p. 28). This echoes Freeman's (2014) claim that concerned citizens identify the main responsibility for animal violence in the food industry lies in agribusiness but also in consumers when they are made aware of animal suffering. Therefore, the problem is not to identify humans or businesses as responsible but to acknowledge that humans who consume animal products are as responsible as the AIC. Hill also claims that seeing may results in a "spectatorish inertia" if suffering is too distant; sometimes, the killing of animals is even "marketed as a spectacle" (Sorenson, 2019, p. 216). On this matter, Fernández (2019) suggests, by comparing environmental and animal liberation campaigns, that visual communication strategies such as those that seek to produce a moral shock of explicit animal violence on farms may be effective in changing human attitude if contextualized in a broader approach and images underwritten by ethical-political discourses (p. 1149-1150). A fair representation also conveys the possibility of an anti-speciest opening. In media studies, Almiron et al. (2015), promoting ecological responsibility, claim that the lives of animals are "indirectly affected by media coverage. The lives and habitats of the world's NHAs [nonhuman animals] are largely dependent on human cultural values and worldviews promoted in the media, such as the need to encourage humans to identify as animals ourselves" (p. 203). They add that

animals have a voice, and the human responsibility for a fair media representation would be to select the right spokesperson and to use non-objectifying terminology. This may break the cognitive shield.

AJCAs do not propose a vague alternative message; the abolition of animal exploitation is clear. The strategic way to achieve it is not conveyed in live-streamed videos but on the organization's websites (see The Save Movement and DxE). Thus, requiring one to do some research. With unclear strategies to achieve a goal, the AIC animal welfare discourse⁴¹ takes over to make animal exploitation morally acceptable (Laine & Vinnari, 2017; Sorenson, 2019). If Polletta (2006) demonstrated that the civil rights movement in the U.S. was successful because of its use of an ambiguous message that attracted many, the enigma that a politics of sight poses is that it seems to require the opposite as if humans would need to be convinced that they could survive on the income of farm crops and eating healthy plant-based food. Or, as no MLA would not, the food economy is unlikely to crash; and people will not die from a lack of nutrients if dead body parts are not part of a meal. Successful stories can be seen despite the ambiguity or absence of strategy conveyed by a politics of sight and the fierce cognitive, emotional, and structural opposition, as mentioned above in the pig farm occupation and sled dog operation in Quebec.

Nevertheless, such “small-scale societal effects” depicted by Laine and Vannari (2017) can contribute to the reinforcement of the misleading AIC narrative as in the case of “happy meat” reasserting animal welfare and well-being to legitimize cruelty, and the “do-it-yourself killing” to counter industrialized slaughterhouse (Sorenson, 2019). Exposure to animal violence can also trigger new regulations in the sense of animal welfare breakthroughs. For instance, at the time of writing this section, in Quebec, the SPCA of Montreal (2022) released, with enthusiasm, a new draft of welfare regulations by the “Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec” for companion animals and equines including the “prohibition of the use of gas chambers for euthanasia,” an essential feature in the undercover investigation of the sled dog operation. Animals on farms are obviously excluded from consideration.

To conclude, a politics of sight can, or should, be considered a human responsibility of understanding animal suffering and a civic duty to do something, even though it leads to small changes

⁴¹ Many reformist groups also use a discourse of welfarism, thus promoting dishonesty about animal rights but resonate with the idea that an audience in making a “humane choice” instead of actively transforming their food habits (Freeman, 2014). In her book *Framing Farming: Communication Strategies for Animal Rights*, Freeman (2014) recommends creating transformative frames with a message that should be clear, and authentic, about the goal of anti-speciesism and its implications, using meta-narrative of justice to increase resonance, problematizing unjustifiable worldview (human superiority), promoting flexibility not to fall in the extremist trap by reminding that veganism does not equate to purity but “about making daily food choices that reduce as much suffering” as possible (p. 260), and promoting a solution frame emphasizing collective action and personal responsibility.

like the closure of sites of violence. Breaking the cultural misconception of human dominion over animals is a task that may go beyond the politics of sight discussed in this thesis; nonetheless, it challenges the ideology of speciesism that allows horrific things to happen to animals in the capitalist food industry and elsewhere. Its derivative, carnism and concomitant excuses, may be dismantled with the recognition of animals' status of beingness must provide equity in terms of their value of lives. Rooted in an anthropocentric Western religious ontology, speciesism has flourished, but, as in every religious ontology, humans have a responsibility toward the animals (Kemmerer, 2012). In religious or political contexts, a human response-ability is to bear witness, not to look away, and to (de)conceal empathetic understanding of distant suffering as we (almost) do among humans. As Tulloch and Judge (2018) argue, what is needed is a "pedagogy of conscientization" to overcome the powerful ideology of speciesism and welfarism. This is why the politics of sight discussed in this thesis is crucial, as it is for HRAs, because it opens the possibility of making abstract knowledge about animal violence more real, expanding our understanding of systemic oppression. A politics of sight can contribute to humans' response-ability, but it has to breach the hazardous margins of the dishonest AIC-media-state nexus in a broad cultural-socio-political context.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Contribution of the Thesis

By way of conclusion, I review the main contributions of the thesis before mentioning some limitations and suggesting avenues for future research. The goal of this thesis was to examine the media-state representations of AJCAs' politics of sight, its emotionality from AJCAs' perspective, and to provide an evaluative perspective. Data from local and national media and Hansards from Legislative Assemblies were used to identify both representations of the politics of sight and the legislative response in an attempt to suppress AJCA's from successfully showing the public the AIC behind the scenes, what AIC corporations desperately want to keep hidden. After all, these corporations make a profit out of animal violence. In addition, this thesis explores the emotional consequences of participating in a politics of sight, 15 activists across Canada shared their collective firsthand experience of animal violence. Based on the findings and critical reflection in chapter 3 and 4, AJCAs' politics of sight was evaluated with a critical substantive perspective in chapter 5. In the additional reflection, I emphasize interpretative and experiential barriers. The two data sets provided rich material to contribute to sociology and pragmatic insight for activists.

Adopting a critical perspective from CAS and SMS made visible how the media and the state, as sampled in this research, frame a politics of sight as a threat to the security of humans, animals, and the economy, thus, depoliticizing farm occupations and maintaining animal violence in the shadow of society. Shedding light on the epistemic power of AEA is fruitful as it highlights their interest in suppressing a politics of sight to keep horrific animal violence hidden from the public view, a public steered away from such violence by mainstream media. Some additional insights from the findings and the analysis indicate that media and MLAs both frame the politics of sight in similar ways, revealing a possible, concerted efforts to favour a species-capitalist order seemingly controlled by the AIC that this thesis identifies but does not explain. Alluding to the ALF tactics while representing AJCAs' strategy to make visible hidden violence and justifying ag-gag law is a means of rekindling a narrative of fear of a radical branch of Animal Justice activism that has likely never completely left the collective memory. The relationship between this three-fold power of animal violence and AJCAs' politics of sight points to the paradox of this strategy. While AJCAs are committed to non-violence and peacefully enacting civil disobedience protests, they are portrayed as violent and ignorant criminals. The media-state suppression strategy has serious consequences; it deters potential sympathizers from supporting AJCAs and raises the cost of participating in a politics of sight. Consequently, it means that using mainstream media to reach the public may be more challenging because AJCAs have little control over the narrative. This paradox in the politics of sight adds to Boykoff's typology by pointing to how the "recycling" of previous narrative of fear are used to justify ag-gag laws.

Such structural barrier to the success of a politics of sight is complexified further when we look at the politics of sight from the angle of bearing witness as a mode of ethico-political practice. Adopting a critical substantive perspective, we were able to identify the tasks of bearing witness and their associated threats. Bearing witness is foremost accessing a site where violence take place to document and expose gruesome human practices. Contrary to human rights, the animals are lawfully exploited as speciesism make invisible the wrongdoing involved in exploiting them. Once AJCAs physically breach the wall of the zone of confinement, they are confronted with the task of giving voice to animals, something that is strongly limited by the AIC-media-state nexus. However, if the documented images are broadcast and mainstream media addresses the topic of animal exploitation, another task remains, facilitating the audiences' interpretation of animal suffering. A task that may likely sink into misunderstanding as interpretation gaps are also a matter of one's responsibility to be open to understanding animal suffering and doing something about it: not to eat their body parts and secretions, and advocating to abolish animal violence. A task that meets another structural barrier, speciesism, but also the socio-psychological mechanisms that comforts humans in supporting animal suffering. Considering structural and socio-psychological barriers, empathy toward animal violence on farms is

more likely to be shadowed by a culture of indifference, itself reinforced by speciesism. Consequently, the fragility of a politics of sight rests on the AIC-media-state nexus suppression but also on the response-ability it can(not) trigger. Is the current form of a politics of sight capable of political transformations? Yes, with small-scale effects but with high-risks for concerned citizens. Is the politics of sight resulting in renewed forms of concealment and distance? In part yes, with ag-gag laws and a narrative spreading (mis-)disinformation.

A comprehensive understanding of AJCAs stories helped examine the politics of sight from an emotional dynamic. The concept of emotional habitus was expanded with emotional reflexivity, indicating that collective action may be more personally experienced when a protest requires immersion in violence and results in the embodiment of a moral shock. A moral shock is manageable though the same emotional reflexivity that keeps activists emoting in the way their emotional repertoire requires. These findings have significant sociological implications because concepts that explain a collective experience may fail to notice an intimate, subjective experience that does not necessarily match emotional conventions. Moreover, emotional habitus does not explicitly allow us to understand the conflictual embodiment of a collective experience. Though some researchers have found that re-shocking tactics result in an embodied experience of animal violence, from a perspective of a politics of sight, immersion in violence is a sensorial experience that goes far beyond viewing animal violence through a TV or a computer screen. Such bodily immersion results in trauma, a consequence that AJCAs have to manage in situ and after a farm occupation. Paradoxically, the moral shock AJCAs seek to produce is the one they need to repress in situ for the politics of sight be successful. Therefore, sociologists of SMS should be careful about using concepts that only enable the examination of a collective experience, especially for civil disobedience protests that necessitate immersion in violence. For AJCAs communities, this has important pragmatic implications. It might be helpful to reframe the emotional habitus pedagogy by explicitly addressing the question of the emotional challenges of participating in farm occupations. These theoretical findings could help future activists to cope more appropriately and know what to expect when bearing witness of a direct experience with animal violence.

7.2 Limits of the Thesis

A limitation to this thesis is that of the current unfolding nature of the politics of sight. This means that information has to keep being updated; my fieldwork has never really stopped. Nevertheless, the main limitation of this thesis is AJCAs' collective experience of bearing witness to animal violence. Their civil disobedience protests are illegal, and so are farm occupations, as it means entering a farm

without the property owner's permission. Weighing the pros and cons of going to a farm during a collective action had occupied my thoughts before I decided not to pursue this ethnographic research feature. Therefore, I could not experience for myself the documenting practices, the solitude of collectively immersing myself in the context of animal violence, the desire to help the animals without being structurally and collectively allowed to do so, and the emotional consequences of such experience. As a result, I had to be an outsider, a researcher who could not fully experience, and thus understand, the collective emotional patterns. In addition, what seemed to be a simple examination of feelings ended up pointing out a different reality; sharing repressed emotions is a demanding endeavour, and some AJCAs may not have been able to go in depth into their emotions. Therefore, the comprehensive understanding of the emotionality of a politics of sight is thus an interpretation of distant subjective experiences. A story told is not a story felt by the listener; it keeps an emotional understanding gulf accessible through the proxy of words and memories.

7.3 Future Research

A sociologist's responsibility is to investigate social phenomena and sometimes bring some socially uncomfortable realities to light. In chapter 3 and the additional reflection, I raised questions of the potential capture of the media and the provincial legislatures by the AIC corporates that seem to contribute significantly to making the rules around animal violence in Canada and foreclosing the possibility of non-speciest visions of food systems. Political and media mechanisms lack transparency in legislative responses and representation of the politics of sight. With this empirical research about two complementary narratives, i.e., media and legislature, I gave an account of the media representation of AJCAs' politics of sight that propagate a politics of fear where (mis-)disinformation is rampant. And by looking at the political narrative in the legislative response to ag-gag laws, I was able to identify similar rhetorical mechanisms used by MLAs.

It is insidious that the politics of sight has not been uncoupled from the previous framing of underground activism. Such a media-state nexus framed response prevents a public debate about animal violence, which is the desired effect of a politics of sight. This research points out to a potential (un)official network of the AIC interests; a hidden, not so hidden, network of influence that needs to be addressed theoretically, empirically, and methodologically in future research. SMS scholars who focus on social justice movement should prioritize this political backstage in order to uncover another level of power dynamics in suppressing those who attempt to transform systemic oppression and exploitation, indeed, violence.

In addition, AJCAs must be made aware of the potential in situ and long-term emotional consequences, not to discourage potential participants but to better prepare them by engaging in an honest conversation about the “how you will feel.” Chapter 3 shows how the media-state nexus structurally enact suppression mechanisms; in chapter 4, suppression mechanisms are collectively and personally enacted through emotional repertoires and detachment. This is why Jones (2007) stresses that emotions should be externalized and channelled into a powerful collective tool instead of being repressed. Such a claim opens the door to future research: how will structural oppression and conflictual emotional states impact the capacity of AJCAs to be successful with a politics of sight? What is the phenomenological experience of AJCAs? Another future research topic relevant to civil disobedience protest action would focus on police arrests and police surveillance. In my fieldwork, I was made aware of police dismantling of protest and police brutality during some arrests; this draws attention to another challenge AJCAs encounter when they enact a politics of sight.

With respect to the experience of activism, it would be essential to examine the emotional habitus more carefully, beyond the objective feeling and emoting during a protest. Is there more? Also, future research should emphasize emotional reflectivity in collective protest, especially if it entails illegal modes of protest and immersion in any kind of violence, such as in laboratories or for HRAs who document human violence. It would also be interesting to do collaborative research with activists to see how an alternative narrative, such as anti-speciesism, could be socially legitimized using the mainstream media with the goal of ensuring that a politics of sight can be successfully undertaken.

8. References

- Adams, C. J. (1997). "Mad cow" disease and the animal industrial complex: An ecofeminist analysis. *Organization & Environment*, 10(1), 26–51.
- Adams, C. J. (2010). *The sexual politics of meat: A feminist-vegetarian critical theory* (20th anniversary ed.). Continuum.
- Agnew, R. (1998). The causes of animal abuse: A social-psychological analysis. *Theoretical Criminology*, 2(2), 177–209.
- Alexander, J. C. (2006). *The civil sphere*. Oxford University Press.
- Allen, M., & von Essen, E. (2018). Animal resisters: On the right of resistance and human duties of non-return and abolition. *Journal for Critical Animal Studies*, 15(6), 3–28.
- Almiron, N., Cole, M., & Freeman, C. P. (2015). *Critical animal and media studies: Communication for nonhuman animal advocacy*. Taylor and Francis.
- Arluke, A., Sanders, C. R. and Irvine, L. (2022). *Regarding Animals* (Second edition). Temple University Press.
- Barrett, T. (2019, December 10). Security From Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act, 2019. Canada. Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Official Report of Debates, no. 139. 42nd Parliament, 1st session. https://www.ola.org/sites/default/files/node-files/hansard/document/pdf/2019/2019-12/10-DEC-2019_L139.pdf
- Barrett, T. (2020, March 10). Time Allocation. Canada. Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Official Report of Debates, no. 154. 42nd Parliament, 1st session. https://www.ola.org/sites/default/files/node-files/hansard/document/pdf/2020/2020-03/10-MAR-2020_L154.pdf
- Beauchamp, T. L., & Frey, R. G. (2011). *The Oxford handbook of animal ethics*. Oxford University Press.
- Beirne, P. (2014). Theriocide: Naming animal killing. *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, 3(2), 49–66.
- Benford, R. D. (2013). Master Frame. In *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of social and political movements*. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.
- Bernatchez, A. (2022a). Animal justice citizen activism in Canada: Paradox in the politics of sight. *Journal for Critical Animal Studies*, 19(2), 4–26.
- Bernatchez, A. (2022b). The V-Stamp as an indirect crime against the animals. In N. Poirier, A. J. Nocella II, & A. Bernatchez (Eds.), *Emerging New Voices in Critical Animal Studies: Vegan Studies for Total Liberation*. Peter Lang.
- Bernatchez, A. (2023). Emotional reflexivity in the animal justice politics of sight: Embodied moral shock and limit of the emotional repertoire. *Emotions and Society Journal*, 1–16.

- Bernatchez, A. & López, J. J. (under review). The politics of sight and bearing witness to animal suffering: Lessons from the sociology of human rights. *Canadian Review of Sociology*.
- Best, S., Kahn, R., Nocella II, A. J., & McLaren, P. (Eds.). (2011). *The global industrial complex systems of domination*. Lexington Books.
- Best, S., & Nocella, A. J. (2004). *Terrorists or freedom fighters?: Reflections on the liberation of animals*. Lantern Books.
- Black, J., & Black, J. (2004). The rhetorical “terrorist”: Implications of the USA Patriot Act on animal liberation. In S. Best & A. J. Nocella II (Eds.), *Terrorists or freedom fighters?: Reflections on the liberation of animals* (pp. 288–299). Lantern Books.
- Blee, K. M. (2002). *Inside organized racism: Women in the hate movement*. University of California Press.
- Boghossian, J., & Marques, J. C. (2019). Saving the Canadian fur industry’s hide: Government’s strategic use of private authority to constrain radical activism. *Organization Studies*, 40(8), 1241–1267.
- Bond, S., Thomas, A., & Diprose, G. (2020). Making and unmaking political subjectivities: Climate justice, activism, and care. *Transactions - Institute of British Geographers*, 45(4), 750–762.
- Boscardin, L. (2018). Greenwashing the animal-industrial complex: Sustainable intensification and the Livestock Revolution. In *Contested Sustainability Discourses in the Agrifood System* (1st ed., Vol. 1, pp. 111–126). Routledge.
- Boykoff, J. (2007). *Beyond bullets: The suppression of dissent in the United States*. AK Press.
- Boyton, S. (2019, April 28). *Animal rights activists occupy B.C. pig farm over abusive conditions allegedly caught on video—BC*. Global News. <https://globalnews.ca/news/5213986/abbotsford-hog-farm-protest-animal-cruelty/>
- Broad, G. M. (2016). Animal production, ag-gag laws, and the social production of ignorance: Exploring the role of storytelling. *Environmental Communication*, 10(1), 43–61.
- Brown, A. (2019, May 12). *Testing the line: As animal rights activists push legal boundaries, Canada considers what makes a terrorist*. The Intercept. <https://theintercept.com/2019/05/12/animal-rights-activism-canada/>
- Brown, G., & Pickerill, J. (2009). Space for emotion in the spaces of activism. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 2(1), 24–35.
- Brueck, J. F. (2017). *Veganism in an oppressive world: A vegans-of-color community project*. Sanctuary Publishers.
- Burkitt, I. (2012). Emotional reflexivity: Feeling, emotion and imagination in reflexive dialogues. *Sociology*, 46(3), 458–472.
- Cameron, D. (2020, January 29). *Occupation d’une porcherie: «Nos truies sont fiévreuses et malades»*. La Presse. <https://www.lapresse.ca/actualites/2020-01-29/occupation-d-une-porcherie-nos-truies-sont-fievreuses-et-malades>
- Carley, R. (2016). Ideological contention: Antonio Gramsci and the connection between race and social movement mobilization in early twentieth-century Italy. *Sociological Focus*, 49(1), 28–43.

- Cavalieri, P. (2001). *The animal question why nonhuman animals deserve human rights*. University Press.
- CBC news (2020, September 3). *Animal rights activists stage protests outside Abbotsford courthouse and SPCA*. CBC News. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/animal-rights-activists-stage-protests-outside-abbotsford-courthouse-and-sPCA-1.5710819>
- Cheeseborough, K. (2022, March 23). *Abbotsford Police Lost Key Evidence in Animal Cruelty Case*. Change.Org. https://www.change.org/p/bcspca-charge-animal-abusers-at-excelsior-hog-farm/u/30362508?fbclid=IwAR2tO8_UbCMhLrAAP3liP-RpVwaweYLivNLmd2HZRcPX5B5dy5Xoo_aMcoA
- Clark, S. R. L. (2011). Animals in classical and late Antique philosophy. In T. L. Beauchamp & R. G. Frey (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of animal ethics* (pp. 35–60). Oxford University Press.
- Cohen, C., & Regan, T. (2001). *The animal rights debate*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Cohen, S. (2001). *States of denial: Knowing about atrocities and suffering*. Blackwell Publishers.
- Cordeiro-Rodrigues, L. (2016). Is the Animal Liberation Front morally justified in engaging in violent and illegal activism towards animal farms? *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 9(2), 226–246.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design. Choosing among five approaches*. Sage publications.
- Dardenne, É. (2020). *Introduction aux études animales*. Presses Universitaires France.
- Dawn, K. (2004). From the front line to the front page – An analysis of ALF media coverage. In S. Best & A. J. Nocella II (Eds.), *Terrorists or freedom fighters?: Reflections on the liberation of animals* (pp. 213–228). Lantern Books.
- de Waal, F., Macedo, S., & Ober, J. (2009). *Primates and philosophers: How morality evolved*. Princeton University Press.
- Deckha, M. (2018). The “Pig Trial” decision: The Save Movement, legal mischief, and the legal invisibilization of farmed animal suffering. *Ottawa Law Review*, 50(1), 65.
- Deckha, M. (2019). The Save Movement and farmed animal suffering: The advocacy benefits of bearing witness as a template for law. *Canadian Journal of Comparative and Contemporary Law*, 77(5), 77–110.
- Deckha, M. (2021). *Animals as legal beings: Contesting anthropocentric legal orders*. University of Toronto Press.
- Del Gandio, J., & Nocella II, A. J. (2014). *The terrorization of dissent: Corporate repression, legal corruption, and the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act*. Lantern Books.
- DeMello, M. (2012). *Animals and society: An introduction to human-animal studies*. Columbia University Press.
- Dhont, K., & Hodson, G. (Eds.). (2019). *Why we love and exploit animals bridging insights from academia and advocacy*. Routledge.

- Dinu, M., Abbate, R., Gensini, G. F., Casini, A., & Sofi, F. (2017). Vegetarian, vegan diets and multiple health outcomes: A systematic review with meta-analysis of observational studies. *Critical Reviews in Food Science and Nutrition*, 57(17), 3640–3649.
- Dominick, B. (2015). Anarcho-veganism revisited. In A. J. Nocella II, R. J. White, & E. Cudworth (Eds.), *Anarchism and animal liberation: Essays on complementary elements of total liberation* (pp. 23–39). McFarland.
- Donaldson, S., & Kymlicka, W. (2011). *Zoopolis: A political theory of animal rights*. Oxford University Press.
- Downton Jr, J., & Wehr, P. (1998). Persistent pacifism: How activist commitment is developed and sustained. *Journal of Peace Research*, 35(5), 531–550.
- Drake, I. J. (2021). Free-speech rights versus property and privacy rights: “Ag-gag” laws and limits of property rights. *The Independent Review*, 25(4), 569–592.
- Embrick, D. G., & Henricks, K. (2015). “Two-faced -isms: Racism at work and how race discourse shapes classtalk and gendertalk.” *Language Sciences*, 52, 165–175.
- English, J., & Zacka, B. (2021). The Politics of sight: Revisiting Timothy Pachirat’s Every Twelve Seconds. *The American Political Science Review*, 1–13.
- Evans, E. M. (2016). Bearing witness: How controversial organizations get the media coverage they want. *Social Movement Studies*, 15(1), 41–59.
- Feigin, S., Owens, R. G., & Goodyear-Smith, F. (2018). A clean, green New Zealand? An in-depth look at the personal experiences of Animal Rights activists. *The Qualitative Report*, 23(3), 616–635.
- Fernández, L. (2019). Using images of farmed animals in environmental advocacy: An antispeciesist, strategic visual communication proposal. *The American Behavioral Scientist*, 63(8), 1137–1155.
- Fernández, L. (2021). Images that liberate: Moral shock and strategic visual communication in Animal Liberation activism. *The Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 45(2), 138–158.
- Ferro, A., Rosato, V., Rota, M., Costa, A. R., Morais, S., Pelucchi, C., Johnson, K. C., Hu, J., Palli, D., Ferraroni, M., Zhang, Z.-F., Bonzi, R., Yu, G.-P., Peleteiro, B., López-Carrillo, L., Tsugane, S., Hamada, G. S., Hidaka, A., Zaridze, D., ... Lunet, N. (2020). Meat intake and risk of gastric cancer in the Stomach cancer Pooling (StoP) project. *International Journal of Cancer*, 147(1), 45–55.
- Fiber-Ostrow, P., & Lovell, J. S. (2016). Behind a veil of secrecy: Animal abuse, factory farms, and Ag-Gag legislation. *Contemporary Justice Review*, 19(2), 230–249.
- Fitzpatrick, P., & Olson, R. E. (2015). A rough road map to reflexivity in qualitative research into emotions. *Emotion Review*, 7(1), 49–54.
- Foer, J. S. (2011). *Faut-il manger les animaux?* Édition de l'Olivier.
- Foucault, M. (1964). *Folie et Dérason: Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique. Les Études Philosophiques*.
- Fournier, A. K., & Mustful, B. (2019). Compassion fatigue: Presenting issues and practical applications for animal-caring professionals. In *Clinician’s Guide to Treating Companion Animal Issues* (pp. 511–534). Elsevier.

- Francione, G. L. (1995). *Animals, property, and the law*. Temple University Press.
- Francione, G. L. (1996). *Rain without thunder: The ideology of the animal rights movement*. Temple University Press.
- Francione, G. L. (2000). *Introduction to animal rights: Your child or the dog?* Temple University Press.
- Francione, G. L. (2007). Reflections on “Animals, property, and the law” and “Rain without thunder.” *Law and Contemporary Problems*, 70(1), 9–57.
- Francione, G. L., & Garner, R. (2010). *The animal rights debate abolition or regulation?* Columbia University Press.
- Freeman, C. P. (2014). *Framing farming: Communication strategies for animal rights*. Brill.
- Gaarder, E. (2011). *Women and the animal rights movement*. Rutgers University Press.
- Ghamari, G. (2019, December 11). “Security From Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act, 2019.” Canada. Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Official Report of Debates, no. 140. 42nd Parliament, 1st session. https://www.ola.org/sites/default/files/node-files/hansard/document/pdf/2019/2019-12/11-DEC-2019_L140.pdf
- Garner, R., & Okuleye, Y. (2020). *The Oxford Group and the emergence of Animal Rights: An intellectual history*. Oxford University Press.
- Garrett, A. (2011). Animals and ethics in the history of modern philosophy. In T. L. Beauchamp & R. G. Frey (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of animal ethics* (pp. 61–90). Oxford University Press.
- Gelber, K., & O’Sullivan, S. (2021). Cat got your tongue? Free speech, democracy and Australia’s “ag-gag” laws. *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 56(1), 19–34.
- Gibert, M. (2015). *Voir son steak comme un animal mort: Véganisme et psychologie morale*. Lux Éditeur.
- Gillespie, K. (2016). Witnessing animal others: Bearing witness, grief, and the political function of emotion. *Hypatia*, 31(3), 572–588.
- Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Garden City, N.Y.
- Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. Harvard University Press.
- Goodwin, J., Jasper, J. M., & Polletta, F. (2001). *Passionate politics emotions and social movements*. University of Chicago Press.
- Gorski, P., Lopresti-Goodman, S., & Rising, D. (2019). “Nobody’s paying me to cry”: The causes of activist burnout in United States animal rights activists. *Social Movement Studies*, 18(3), 364–380.
- Gould, D. B. (2004). Passionate political processes: Bringing emotions back into the study of social movements. *Rethinking Social Movements: Structure, Meaning, and Emotion*, 155–176.
- Gould, D. B. (2009). *Moving politics: Emotion and ACT UP’s fight against AIDS*. University of Chicago Press.

- Government of Canada. (2021). *Overview of Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector*. Overview of Canada's Agriculture and Agri-Food Sector. <https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/canadas-agriculture-sectors/overview-canadas-agriculture-and-agri-food-sector>
- Groves, J. M. (1995). Learning to feel: The neglected sociology of social movements. *The Sociological Review*, 43(3), 435-461.
- Groves, J. M. (1997). *Hearts and minds: The controversy over laboratory animals*. Temple University Press.
- Groves, J. M. (2001). Animal rights and the politics of emotion: Folk constructs of emotions in the animal rights movement. In J. Goodwin, J. M. Jasper, & F. Polletta (Eds.), *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements* (pp. 212-229). University of Chicago Press.
- Gruen, L. (2013). Entangled empathy: An alternative approach to animal ethics. In R. Corbey & A. Lanjouw (Eds.), *The Politics of Species: Reshaping our relationships with other animals* (pp. 223-231). Cambridge University Press.
- Guither, H., D. (1998). *Animal Rights: History and scope of a radical social movement*. Southern Illinois University Press.
- Hafner-Burton, E. M. (2013). *Making human rights a reality*. Princeton University Press.
- Hansson, N., & Jacobsson, K. (2014). Learning to be affected: Subjectivity, sense, and sensibility in Animal Rights activism. *Society & Animals*, 22(3), 262-288.
- Harari, Y. N. (2014). *Sapiens: A brief history of humankind*. Signal.
- Hardee, G. M., & McMahan, R. P. (2017). FIJI: A framework for the immersion-journalism intersection. *Frontiers in ICT*, 4.
- Harper, A. B. (2010). *Sistah vegan: Black female vegans speak on food, identity, health, and society*. Lantern Books.
- Harrison, R. (2013). *Animal machines*. CABI.
- Held, D. (2010). *Cosmopolitanism: Ideals and realities*. Polity.
- Herzog, H. A. (1993). "The movement is my life": The psychology of animal rights activism. *Journal of Social Issues*, 49(1), 103-119.
- Herzog, H. A., & Golden, L. L. (2009). Moral emotions and social activism: The case of animal rights. *Journal of Social Issues*, 65(3), 485-498.
- Hill, D. W. (2019). Bearing witness, moral responsibility and distant suffering. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 36(1), 27-45.
- Hochschild, A. R. (1997). The sociology of emotion as a way of seeing. In G. Bendelow and S. J. Williams (Eds.), *Emotions in Social Life* (pp. 3-15). Taylor & Francis.
- Holmes, M. (2010). The emotionalization of reflexivity. *Sociology*, 44(1), 139-154.
- Hopgood, S. (2006). *Keepers of the flame: Understanding Amnesty International*. Cornell University Press.

- Hopgood, S. (2013). *The end times of human rights*. Cornell University Press.
- Horta, O., & Albersmeier, F. (2020). Defining speciesism. *Philosophy Compass*, 15(11), 1–9.
- Huang, Y., Cao, D., Chen, Z., Chen, B., Li, J., Guo, J., Dong, Q., Liu, L., & Wei, Q. (2021). Red and processed meat consumption and cancer outcomes: Umbrella review. *Food Chemistry*, 356, 129697.
- Hui, A. (2017, May 4). Judge acquits woman who gave water to pigs headed to slaughter. *The Globe and Mail*. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/judge-acquits-woman-in-pigs-water-case/article34893404/>
- Hunt, S. (2019, September 3). *Animal rights activists occupy turkey barn to protest treatment*. CTV News. <https://calgary.ctvnews.ca/animal-rights-activists-occupy-turkey-barn-to-protest-treatment-1.4576885>
- Iedema, R., & Carroll, K. (2015). Research as affect-sphere: Towards spherogenics. *Emotion Review*, 7(1), 67–72.
- Ignatieff, M. (2001). *Human rights as politics and idolatry*. Princeton University Press.
- Jacobsson, K., & Lindblom, J. (2012). Moral Reflexivity and dramaturgical action in social movement activism: The case of the plowshares and animal rights Sweden. *Social Movement Studies*, 11(1), 41–60.
- Jacobsson, K., & Lindblom, J. (2013). Emotion work in animal rights activism: A moral-sociological perspective. *Acta Sociologica*, 56(1), 55–68.
- Jacobsson, K., & Lindblom, J. (2016). *Animal Rights activism: A moral-sociological perspective on social movements*. Amsterdam University Press.
- Jamison, W. V., & Lunch, W. M. (1992). Rights of animals, perceptions of science, and political activism: Profile of American Animal Rights activists. *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 17(4), 438–458.
- Jarymowicz, M., & Bar-Tal, D. (2006). The dominance of fear over hope in the life of individuals and collectives. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 36(3), 367–392.
- Jasper, J. M. (1997). *The art of moral protest: Culture, biography, and creativity in social movements*. University of Chicago Press.
- Jasper, J. M. (1998). The emotions of protest: Affective and reactive emotions in and around social movements. *Sociological Forum*, 13(3), 397–424.
- Jasper, J. M. (2011). Emotions and social movements: Twenty years of theory and research. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 37(1), 285–303.
- Jasper, J. M. (2014). Feeling-thinking: Emotions as central to culture. In B. Baumgarten, P. Daphi, & P. Ullrich (Eds.), *Conceptualizing culture in social movement research* (pp. 23–44). Springer.
- Jasper, J. M. (2018). *The emotions of protest*. University of Chicago Press,.
- Jasper, J. M., & Nelkin, D. (1992). *The animal rights crusade: The growth of a moral protest*. Free Press.

- Jasper, J. M., & Polletta, F. (2019). The cultural context of social movements. In D. A. Snow, S. A. Soule, H. Kriesi, & H. J. McCammon (Eds.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (pp. 63–78). John Wiley & Sons.
- Jasper, J. M., & Poulsen, J. D. (1995). Recruiting strangers and friends: Moral shocks and social networks in Animal Rights and Anti-Nuclear protests. *Social Problems*, 42(4), 493–512.
- Jasper, J. M., Zomer, M. van, & Louis, W. R. (2017). The doors that culture opened: Parallels between social movement studies and social psychology. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 20(3), 285–302.
- Johnston, G., & Johnston, M. S. (2020). “Until every cage is empty”: Frames of justice in the radical animal liberation movement. *Contemporary Justice Review*, 23(4), 563–580.
- Jones, P. (2007). *Aftershock. Confronting trauma in a violent world: A guide for activists and their allies*. Lantern Books.
- Joy, M. (2010). *Why we love dogs, eat pigs, and wear cows. An introduction to carnism: The belief system that enables us to eat some animals and not others*. Conari Press.
- Juris, J. S. (2008). Performing politics: Image, embodiment, and affective solidarity during anti-corporate globalization protests. *Ethnography*, 9(1), 61–97.
- Kane, L. (2019, April 28). *One person arrested at protest at B.C. hog farm at centre of PETA video*. CTV News. <https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/one-person-arrested-at-protest-at-b-c-hog-farm-at-centre-of-peta-video-1.4398779>
- Kemmerer, L. (2012). *Animals and world religions*. Oxford University Press.
- Kim, S. R., Kim, K., Lee, S. A., Kwon, S. O., Lee, J.-K., Keum, N., & Park, S. M. (2019). Effect of red, processed, and white meat consumption on the risk of gastric cancer: An overall and dose-response meta-analysis. *Nutrients*, 11(4), E826.
- Kirchhelle, C. (2021). *Bearing witness: Ruth Harrison and British farm animal welfare (1920-2000)*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ko, A. (2017). *Aphro-ism: Essays on pop culture, feminism, and black veganism from two sisters*. Lantern Books.
- Krajnc, A. (2017). Bearing witness: Is giving thirsty pigs water criminal mischief or duty. *Animal Law*, 23(2), 479–498.
- Kurasawa, F. (2007). *The work of global justice: Human rights as practices*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kurtz, L. R., & Smithey, L. A. (2018). *The paradox of repression and nonviolent movements*. Syracuse University Press.
- Kymlicka, W. (2018). Human rights without human supremacism. *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 48(6), 763–792.
- Labchuk, C. (2020). U.S.-style “ag gag” laws come to Canada. *CCPA Monitor*, 26(6), 10.

- Laine, M., & Vinnari, E. (2017). The transformative potential of counter accounts: A case study of animal rights activism. *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal*, 30(7), 1481–1510.
- Lazare, J. (2020). Ag-gag laws, animal rights activism, and the constitution: What is protected speech? *Alberta Law Review*, 58(1), 83–105.
- Lazare, J. (2022). Animal Rights activism and the constitution: Are ag-gag laws justifiable limits? *Osgoode Hall Law Journal*, 59(3), 667–706.
- Lehn, D. (2020, October 1). *Update – Abbotsford Excelsior Hog Farm Court Case – Four accused back in court Monday November 2*. Fraser Valley News. <https://fraservalleynewsnetwork.com/2021/08/09/back-to-back-thursday-protests-in-abbotsford-re-excelsior-hog-farm/>
- LeRette, D. E. (2014). *Stories of microaggressions directed toward vegans and vegetarians in social settings*. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.
- Lewis, E. (2005, October 26). *Investigating and preventing Animal Rights extremism*. FBI. <https://www.fbi.gov/news/testimony/investigating-and-preventing-animal-rights-extremism>
- Lockwood, A. (2018). Bodily encounter, bearing witness and the engaged activism of the global save movement. *Animal Studies Journal*, 7(1), 104–126.
- López, J. J. (2018). *Human Rights as political imaginary*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lovitz, D. (2010). *Muzzling a movement: The effects of anti-terrorism law, money, and politics on animal activism*. Lantern Books.
- Lypka, B. (2019, April 30). *Meat The Victims animal rights group invade Abbotsford farm*. The Abbotsford News. <https://www.abbynews.com/news/meat-the-victims-animal-rights-group-invade-abbotsford-farm/>
- Madison, D. S. (2019). *Critical ethnography: Method, ethics, and performance* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Maister, L., Slater, M., Sanchez-Vives, M. V., & Tsakiris, M. (2014). Changing bodies changes minds: Owning another body affects social cognition. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 19(1), 6–12.
- Mann, C. (2018). *Vystopia: The anguish of being vegan in a non-vegan world*. Communicate31 Pty Ltd.
- Marcus, H. (2019). How visual culture can promote ethical dietary choices. In A. Linzey & C. Linzey (Eds.), *Ethical vegetarianism and veganism* (pp. 265–275). Routledge.
- Marrone, G., Guerriero, C., Palazzetti, D., Lido, P., Marolla, A., Di Daniele, F., & Noce, A. (2021). Vegan Diet Health Benefits in Metabolic Syndrome. *Nutrients*, 13(3), 817.
- Marshall, T. H. (1950). *Citizenship and Social Class*. Cambridge University Press.
- McAdam, D., McCarthy, J. D., & Zald, M. N. (1996). Opportunities, mobilizing structures, and framing—toward a synthetic comparative perspective on social movements. In *Comparative perspectives on social movements: Political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and cultural framings* (pp. 1–20). Cambridge University Press.
- McCance, D. (2013). *Critical animal studies: An introduction*. State University of New York Press.

- McCarthy, J. D., & Zald, M. N. (1977). Resource mobilization and social movements: A partial theory. *The American Journal of Sociology*, 82(6), 1212–1241.
- McCurdy, P. (2012). Social movements, protest and mainstream media. *Sociology Compass*, 6(3), 244–255.
- McDonell, J. (2020, February 20). “Security From Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act, 2019.” Canada. Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Official Report of Debates, no. 144. 42nd Parliament, 1st session. https://www.ola.org/sites/default/files/node-files/hansard/document/pdf/2020/2020-02/20-FEB-2020_L144.pdf
- Merry, S. E. (2007). Introduction: Conditions of vulnerability. In M. Goodale & S. E. Merry (Eds.), *The Practice of Human Rights* (pp. 195–203).
- Meyer, D. S., & Minkoff, D. C. (2004). Conceptualizing political opportunity. *Social Forces*, 82(4), 1457–1492.
- Meyers, D. T. (2011). Two victim paradigms and the problem of “impure” victims. *Humanity*, 2(2), 255–275.
- Mitchell, L. (2011). Moral disengagement and support for nonhuman animal farming. *Society & Animals*, 19(1), 38–58.
- Monaghan, J., & Walby, K. (2012). Making up ‘terror identities’: Security intelligence, Canada’s integrated threat assessment center and social movement suppression. *Policing and Society*, 22(2), 133–151.
- Monaghan, R. (2013). Not quite terrorism: Animal Rights extremism in the United Kingdom. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 36(11), 933–951.
- Moon, C. (2012). What one sees and how one files seeing: Human Rights reporting, representation and action. *Sociology*, 46(5), 876–890.
- Moyn, S. (2010). *The last utopia: Human Rights in history*. Harvard University Press.
- Munro, L. (2012). The Animal Rights movement in theory and practice: A review of the sociological literature. *Sociology Compass*, 6(2), 166–181.
- Nagtzaam, G. (2017). *From environmental action to ecoterrorism? Towards a process theory of environmental and Animal Rights oriented political violence*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Nibert, D. (2011). Origin and Consequences of the animal industrial complex. In S. Best, R. Kahn, A. J. Nocella II, & P. McLaren (Eds.), *The global industrial complex systems of domination* (pp. 181–191). Lexington Books.
- Nibert, D. A. (2002). *Animal rights/human rights: Entanglements of oppression and liberation*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Nibert, D. A. (2013). *Animal oppression and human violence: Domesecration, capitalism, and global conflict*. Columbia University Press.
- Nocella II, A. J., George, A. E., & Lupinacci, J. (2019). *Animals, disability, and the end of capitalism: Voices from the eco-ability movement*. Peter Lang.

- Nocella II, A. J., Sorenson, J., Socha, K., & Matsuoka, A. (Eds.). (2014). *Defining critical animal studies: An intersectional social justice approach for liberation*. Peter Lang.
- Noske, B. (1989). *Humans and other animals: Beyond the boundaries of anthropology*. Pluto Press.
- Olsen, T. (2020, August 6). *Four activists face charges linked to 2019 Abbotsford hog-farm protest*. Maple Ridge News. <https://www.mapleridgenews.com/news/four-activists-face-charges-linked-to-2019-abbotsford-hog-farm-protest/>
- Pachirat, T. (2011). *Every twelve seconds: Industrialized slaughter and the politics of sight*. Yale University Press.
- Patterson, C. (2002). *Eternal Treblinka: Our treatment of animals and the Holocaust*. Lantern Books.
- Perreault, L.-J. (2020, January 26). *Avant d'ériger nos fermes en forteresses*. La Presse. <https://www.lapresse.ca/debats/editoriaux/2020-01-26/avant-d-eriger-nos-fermes-en-forteresses>
- Pettapiece, R. (2019, December 10). "Security From Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act, 2019." Canada. Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Official Report of Debates, no. 139. 42nd Parliament, 1st session. https://www.ola.org/sites/default/files/node-files/hansard/document/pdf/2019/2019-12/10-DEC-2019_L139.pdf
- Picca, L. H., & Feagin, J. R. (2007). *Two-faced racism: Whites in the backstage and frontstage*. Routledge.
- Pieslak, J. (2015). *Moral emotions and social activism: The case of Animal Rights*. Wesleyan University Press.
- Pietrzykowski, T. (2020). Animal Rights. In A. von Arnould, K. von der Decken, & M. Susi (Eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of New Human Rights* (pp. 243–252). Cambridge University Press.
- Polletta, F. (2006). *It was like a fever: Storytelling in protest and politics*. University of Chicago Press.
- Porter, P. (2018). The personal as political in the animal industrial complex. *Society & Animals*, 26, 2018(5), 545–550.
- Potter, W. (2011). *Green is the new red: An insider's account of a social movement under siege*. City Lights Books.
- Purdy, I., & Krajnc, A. (2018). "Face us and bear witness!" Tolstoy, bearing witness and the Save Movement. In A. Matsuoka & J. Sorenson (Eds.), *Critical Animal Studies: Towards Trans-species Social Justice* (pp. 46–72). Rowen and Littlefield.
- R. v. Soranno (2022). BCSC 1795. Retrieved from www.bccourts.ca/jdb-txt/sc/22/17/2022BCSC1795.htm.
- Regan, T. (1983). *The case for animal rights*. University of California Press.
- Robbins, J. A., Franks, B., Weary, D. M., & von Keyserlingk, M. A. G. (2016). Awareness of ag-gag laws erodes trust in farmers and increases support for animal welfare regulations. *Food Policy*, 61, 121–125.
- Rodgers, K. (2018). *Protest, activism, & social movements*. Oxford University Press.
- Rowlands, M. (2009). *Animal rights: Moral theory and practice*. Palgrave Macmillan.

- Ruebottom, T., & Auster, E. R. (2018). Reflexive dis/embedding: Personal narratives, empowerment and the emotional dynamics of interstitial events. *Organization Studies*, 39(4), 467–490.
- Ruiz-Junco, N. (2013). Feeling social movements: Theoretical contributions to social movement research on emotions. *Sociology Compass*, 7(1), 45–54.
- Ryder, R. D. (2000). *Animal revolution: Changing attitudes towards speciesism*. Berg Publishers.
- Ryder, R. D. (2004). Speciesism revisited. *Philosophy for Everyone*, 2(6), 83–92.
- Salih, S. (2014). Vegans on the verge of a nervous breakdown. In N. Taylor & R. Twine (Eds.), *The rise of critical animal studies: From the margins to the center* (pp. 72–88). Routledge.
- Schulze, M., Risius, A., & Spiller, A. (2021). Public perceptions of undercover investigations in livestock farming: An end that justifies the means? *Animal Welfare*, 30(1), 39–47.
- Segal, J. (2020). *Animal radical: Histoire et sociologie de l'antispécisme*. Lux.
- Sela-Sheffy, R., & Leshem, R. (2016). Emotion-identity talk in aggressive interactions and in reflexive accounts. *Culture & Psychology*, 22(3), 448–466.
- Shafir, G., & Brysk, A. (2006). The globalization of rights: From citizenship to Human Rights. *Citizenship Studies*, 10(3), 275–287.
- Shea, M. (2015). Punishing Animal Rights activists for animal abuse: Rapid reporting and the new wave of ag-gag laws. *Columbia Journal of Law and Social Problems*, 48(3), 337–371.
- Shirley, W. (2014). Interest group politics, the AETA, and the criminalization of Animals Rights activism. In J. Del Gandio, & A. Nocella II (Eds.), *The Terrorization of Dissent: Corporate Repression, Legal Corruption, and the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act* (pp. 139–160). Lantern Books.
- Shultziner, D. (2018). Transformative events, repression, and regime change: Theoretical and psychological aspects. In L. R. Kurtz & L. A. Smithey (Eds.), *The Paradox of Repression and Nonviolent Movements* (pp. 52–73). Syracuse University Press.
- Sigurdson, R. J. (2019, November 26). “Bill 27 Trespass Statutes (Protecting Law-Abiding Property Owner) Amendment Act, 2019.” Canada. Legislative Assembly of Alberta. Alberta Hansard, day 47. 30th Legislature, 1st session. https://docs.assembly.ab.ca/LADDAR_files/docs/hansards/han/legislature_30/session_1/20191126_1930_01_han.pdf
- Simon, R. (2015). *Gramsci's political thought: An introduction* (Third edition.). Lawrence & Wishart.
- Singer, P. (1975). *Animal liberation: The definitive classic of the animal movement*. Harper Perennial.
- Singer, P. (2015). *The most good you can do: How effective altruism is changing ideas about living ethically*. Yale University Press.
- Singer, P., & Mason, J. (2006). *The way we eat: Why our food choices matter*. Rodale.
- Snow, D. A., Benford, R. D., Morris, A. D., & Mueller, C. M. (Eds.). (1992). Master frames and cycles of protest. In A. D. Morris, & C. M. Mueller (Eds.), *Frontiers in social movement theory* (pp. 133–155). Yale University Press.

- Snow, D. A., Burke-Rochford, E., Worden, S. K., & Benford, R. D. (1986). Frame alignment processes, micromobilization, and movement participation. *American Sociological Review*, 51(4), 464–481.
- Sørensen, M. J., & Rigby, A. (2017). Frontstage and backstage emotion management in civil resistance. *Journal of Political Power*, 10(2), 219–235.
- Sorenson, J. (2003). Some strange things happening in our country: Opposing proposed changes in anti-cruelty laws in Canada. *Social & Legal Studies*, 12(3), 377–402.
- Sorenson, J. (2009). Constructing terrorists: Propaganda about animal rights. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 2(2), 237–256.
- Sorenson, J. (2011a). Constructing extremists, rejecting compassion: Ideological attacks on animal advocacy from left and right. In J. Sanbonmatsu (Ed.), *Critical theory and animal liberation* (pp. 219–247). Rowman & Littlefield.
- Sorenson, J. (2011b). The myth of “Animal Rights terrorism.” *The Brock Review*, 12(1).
- Sorenson, J. (2014). Terrorism, corporate shadows, and the AETA. In J. Del Gandio & A. J. Nocella II (Eds.), *The terrorization of dissent: Corporate repression, legal corruption, and the animal enterprise terrorism act* (pp. 161–174). Lantern Books.
- Sorenson, J. (2016). *Constructing ecoterrorism: Capitalism, speciesism & Animal Rights*. Fernwood.
- Sorenson, J. (2019). Humane hypocrisies: Making killing acceptable. In K. Dhont & G. Hodson (Eds.), *Why We Love and Exploit Animals*. Routledge.
- Sorenson, J., & Matsuoka, A. (2021). Political economy of denialism: Addressing the case of animal agriculture. In T. Grušovnik, R. Spanning, & K. Lykke Syse (Eds.), *Environmental and animal abuse denial: Averting our gaze* (pp. 145–168). Lexington Books.
- Soysal, Y. N. (1994). *Limits of citizenship: Migrants and postnational membership in Europe*. University of Chicago.
- SPCA Montreal. (2022, May 11). *Une avancée majeure pour les animaux de compagnie au Québec*. SPCA de Montréal. <https://www.sPCA.com/une-avancee-majeure-pour-les-animaux/>
- Stanescu, V. (2014). Kangaroo court: Analyzing the 2006 “hearing” on the AETA. In J. Del Gandio & A. J. Nocella II (Eds.), *The Terrorization of Dissent: Corporate Repression, Legal Corruption, and the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act* (pp. 51–67). Lantern Books.
- Stein, T. (2015). Human Rights and Animal Rights: Differences matter. *Historical Social Research*, 40(4), 55–62.
- Stephenson, A. (2019, September 7). *Ag groups calling for better law enforcement in aftermath of Alberta turkey farm protest*. Calgary Herald. <https://calgaryherald.com/business/local-business/ag-groups-calling-for-better-law-enforcement-in-aftermath-of-alberta-turkey-farm-protest>
- Sunstein, C. R., & Nussbaum, M. C. (Eds.). (2004). *Animal rights current debates and new directions*. Oxford University Press.
- Tait, S. (2011). Bearing witness, journalism and moral responsibility. *Media, Culture & Society*, 33(8), 1220–1235.

- Tarrow, S. (1996). States and opportunities: The political structuring of social movements. In D. McAdam, J. D. McCarthy, & M. N. Zald (Eds.), *Comparative perspectives on social movements: Political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and cultural framings* (pp. 41–61). Cambridge University Press.
- Tarrow, S. G. (1994). *Power in movement: Social movements, collective action, and politics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Taylor, N., & Twine, R. (Eds.). (2014). *The rise of critical animal studies*. Routledge.
- Tilly, C. (1978). *From mobilization to revolution*. Addison-Wesley Pub.
- Tilly, C. (2006). *Regimes and repertoires*. University of Chicago Press.
- Tilly, C. (2017). *Collective violence, contentious politics, and social change* (E. Castañeda & C. L. Schneider, Eds.). Routledge.
- Torres, B. (2007). *Making a killing: The political economy of Animal Rights*. AK Press.
- Tremblay, J. (2019, December 8). *Des activistes véganes s'invitent dans une porcherie*. Le Journal de Montréal. <https://www.journaldemontreal.com/2019/12/08/des-activistes-veganes-sinvitentdans-une-porcherie>
- Tulloch, L., & Judge, P. (2018). Bringing the calf back from the dead: Video activism, the politics of sight and the New Zealand dairy industry. *Video Journal of Education and Pedagogy*, 3(1), 1–20.
- Turner, B. S. (2006). *Vulnerability and human rights*. Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Twine, R. (2012). Revealing the 'animal-industrial complex' – a concept & method for critical animal studies? *Journal for Critical Animal Studies*, 10(1).
- Vannini, P., Gotschalk, S., & Waskul, D. D. (2013). *The senses in self, society, and culture: A sociology of the senses*. Routledge.
- Vanthof, J. (2020, March 10). "Time Allocation." Canada. Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Official Report of Debates, no. 154. 42nd Parliament, 1st session. https://www.ola.org/sites/default/files/node-files/hansard/document/pdf/2020/2020-03/10-MAR-2020_L154.pdf
- Vea, T. (2019). The ethical sensations of im-mediacy: Embodiment and multiple literacies in Animal Rights activists' learning with media technologies. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 50(4), 1589–1602.
- Vea, T. (2020). The learning of emotion in/as sociocultural practice: The case of Animal Rights activism. *The Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 29(3), 311–346.
- Verbora, A. R. (2015). The political landscape surrounding anti-cruelty legislation in Canada. *Society & Animals*, 23(1), 45–67.
- Villanueva, G. (2019). 'Animals are their best advocates': Interspecies relations, embodied actions, and entangled activism. *Animal Studies Journal*, 8(1), 190–217.

- Walby, K., & Monaghan, J. (2011). Private eyes and public order: Policing and surveillance in the suppression of Animal Rights activists in Canada. *Social Movement Studies*, 10(1), 21–37.
- Western Producer. (2019, September 12). *Turkey protest ruffles feathers*. The Western Producer. <https://www.producer.com/news/turkey-protest-ruffles-feathers/>
- Whitfort, A. S. (2019). Animal welfare law, policy and the threat of “ag-gag”: One step forward, two steps back. *Food Ethics*, 3(1–2), 77–90.
- Wilson, R. A. (2009). Representing human rights violations: Social context and subjectivities. In M. Goodale (Ed.), *Human Rights: An Anthropological Reader* (pp. 134–160). Wiley Blackwell.
- Woodiwiss, A. (2005). *Human rights*. Routledge.
- Wrenn, C. L. (2013a). Abolition then and now: Tactical comparisons between the Human Rights movement and the modern nonhuman Animal Rights movement in the United States. *Journal of Agricultural & Environmental Ethics*, 27(2), 177–200.
- Wrenn, C. L. (2013b). Resonance of moral shocks in abolitionist Animal Rights advocacy: Overcoming contextual constraints. *Society and Animals*, 21(4), 379–394.
- Wrenn, C. L. (2019). Black Veganism and the Animality Politic. *Society & Animals*, 2019, 27(1), 127–131.
- Wrenn, C. L., Clark, J., Judge, M., Gilchrist, K. A., Woodlock, D., Dotson, K., Spanos, R., & Wrenn, J. (2015). The medicalization of nonhuman Animal Rights: Frame contestation and the exploitation of disability. *Disability & Society*, 30(9), 1307–1327.
- Wrock, R. K. (2016). Ignorance is bliss: Self-regulation and ag-gag laws in the American meat industry. *Contemporary Justice Review*, 19(2), 267–279.
- Young, P. (2019). *Liberate. Stories and lessons on the Animal Liberation above the law*. Warcry Communications.
- Zald, M. N., & Ash, R. (1966). Social movement organizations: Growth, decay and change. *Social Forces*, 44(3), 327–341.

Appendix I: Ethics Approval

28/07/2020

Université d'Ottawa

Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche

University of Ottawa

Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

CERTIFICAT D'APPROBATION ÉTHIQUE | CERTIFICATE OF ETHICS APPROVAL

Numéro du dossier / Ethics File Number	S-12-19-5254
Titre du projet / Project Title	Everyday Activism of Animal Liberation Activists
Type de projet / Project Type	Thèse de doctorat / Doctoral thesis
Statut du projet / Project Status	Approuvé / Approved
Date d'approbation (jj/mm/aaaa) / Approval Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	28/07/2020
Date d'expiration (jj/mm/aaaa) / Expiry Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	03/02/2021

Équipe de recherche / Research Team

Chercheur / Researcher	Affiliation	Role
Annie CÔTÉ BERNATCHEZ	Département de sociologie et d'anthropologie / Department of Sociology and Anthropology	Chercheur Principal / Principal Investigator
José LOPEZ	Département de sociologie et d'anthropologie / Department of Sociology and Anthropology	Superviseur / Supervisor

Conditions spéciales ou commentaires / Special conditions or comments

This certificate is issued with the understanding that the Principal Investigator is responsible for the following:

1. ensuring that the research protocols comply with the most up-to-date advice, recommendations, directives, orders, advisories, guidelines about the spread of COVID-19 from government and public health officials and with those from institutions, organizations or funding agencies relevant to the research; and
2. establishing, maintaining and implementing an up-to-date continuance plan that includes reasonable precautions to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 to participants, research team members and ensure safe research practises, for example, training of research team members, use of personal protective equipment, standards of sanitization, handwashing and physical distancing.

550, rue Cumberland, pièce 154 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154
Ottawa (Ontario) K1N 6N5 Canada Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5 Canada

613-562-5387 • 613-562-5338 • ethique@uOttawa.ca / ethics@uOttawa.ca
www.recherche.uottawa.ca/deontologie | www.recherche.uottawa.ca/ethics

Appendix 2: Consent Forms



uOttawa

Faculté des sciences sociales
Faculty of Social Sciences

Département de sociologie et
d'anthropologie
Department of Sociology and
Anthropology

Consent Form

Title of the Study: The Everyday Life of Animal Liberation Activists

Contact information

Annie Bernatchez, PhD candidate School of Sociological and Anthropological Studies University of Ottawa Ottawa, ON CANADA	José López, Full Professor School of Sociological and Anthropological Studies University of Ottawa Ottawa, ON CANADA
--	---

This research project received funding from
Fond de Recherche du Québec – Société et Culture (2018-2022)
Ontario Graduate Scholarship (2018-2019)

Invitation to Participate: I am invited to participate in the above-mentioned research study conducted by Annie Bernatchez, in the context of a PhD thesis, under the supervision of Dr. López.

Purpose of the Study: This project aims to reflect on the criminalization of Animal Liberation activists in Canada through an understanding of the effects of direct action activities in the everyday life, in particular:

- ◆ How do we become an Animal Liberation activists
- ◆ What happens during and after direct action activities
- ◆ What does state repression and media coverage mean
- ◆ How do direct action activities impact life

Participation: My participation will consist of attending one digitally recorded interview session for approximately 60 minutes at a location and time that is convenient. During the interview, I will be asked a series of open-ended questions related to my own experiences in direct action activities.

☐ I agree with the digitally recorded interview session.

Risks: My participation in this study will entail that I volunteer personal information. I have received assurance from the researcher that every effort will be made to minimize any risk, particularly ensuring that all responses are confidential and no identifying information will be disclosed in any publication of the results of this research, unless I wish it to be so disclosed.

Benefits: My participation in this research can benefit me, the communities of Animal Liberation activists, and the animals by providing an opportunity to contribute my experience. My participation will also contribute to the advancement of knowledge.

Confidentiality and anonymity: I have received assurance from the researcher that the information I will share will remain strictly confidential. I understand

that the contents will be used only for academic purposes. Unless I waive my right to confidentiality, my confidentiality will be protected by the researcher by not including identifying information in her study, by using a pseudonym in place of my name, and by storing the data on a password-protected computer and iPad. Thus, my identity will be kept anonymous to all external readers of the material and my identity will be known only to the research. I acknowledge that I have been informed that even if I choose to be named my confidentiality is protected.

Conservation of data: The data collected will be audio recorded and then transcribed by the researcher and will be kept in a secure manner through password protected files on password protected computers and iPad. The data will be conserved for 7 years, after which computer files will be deleted using a secure file wiping utility.

Voluntary Participation: I am under no obligation to participate and if I choose to participate, I can withdraw from the study at any time and/or refuse to answer any questions, without suffering any negative consequences. If I choose to withdraw, all data gathered until the time of withdrawal will be omitted from the study. I understand that it is not possible for me to withdraw data that has already been published. However, I have been informed that even after publication I can ask for the destruction of my data so that it cannot be used for other publications or for secondary use of data.

Acceptance: I, _____, agree to participate in the above research study.

☐ I choose to remain anonymous under the pseudonym _____.

☐ I waive the right to be anonymous and allow the researcher to identify me. I understand, however, that I am still entitled to identify specific information as confidential.

If I have any questions about the study, I may contact the researcher. There are two copies of the consent form, one of which is mine to keep.

☐ I choose to have my signed consent form by this e-mail _____.

☐ I choose to have a hard copy of my consent form.

If I have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, I may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall, 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5 Tel.: (613) 562-5387 Email: ethics@uottawa.ca

Participant's signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's signature: _____

Date: _____



uOttawa

Faculté des sciences sociales
Faculty of Social Sciences

Département de sociologie et
d'anthropologie
Department of Sociology and
Anthropology

Parental Consent Form

Title of the Study: The Everyday Life of Animal Liberation Activists

Contact information

Annie Bernatchez, PhD candidate School of Sociological and Anthropological Studies University of Ottawa Ottawa, ON CANADA	José López, Full Professor School of Sociological and Anthropological Studies University of Ottawa Ottawa, ON CANADA
--	---

This research project received funding from
Fond de Recherche du Québec – Société et Culture (2018-2022)
Ontario Graduate Scholarship (2018-2019)

Invitation to Participate: I am invited to give permission to my child _____ to participate in the above-mentioned research study conducted by Annie Bernatchez, in the context of a PhD thesis, under the supervision of Dr. López.

Purpose of the Study: This project aims to reflect on the criminalization of Animal Liberation activists in Canada through an understanding of the effects of direct action activities in the everyday life, in particular:

- ◆ How do we become an Animal Liberation activists
- ◆ What happens during and after direct action activities
- ◆ What does state repression and media coverage mean
- ◆ How do direct action activities impact life

Participation: My child's participation will consist of attending one digitally recorded interview session for approximately 60 minutes at a location and time that is convenient. During the interview, he/she/they will be asked a series of open-ended questions related to he/she/they experience in direct action activities.

☐ I allow the digitally recorded interview session for my child.

Risks: My child's participation in this study will entail that he/she/they volunteer personal information. My child and I have received assurance from the researcher that every effort will be made to minimize any risk, particularly ensuring that all responses are confidential and no identifying information will be disclosed in any publication of the results of this research, unless my child wishes it to be so disclosed.

Benefits: My child's participation in this research can benefit him/her/they, the communities of Animal Liberation activists, and the animals by providing an opportunity to contribute him/her/their own experience. My child's participation will also contribute to the advancement of knowledge.

Confidentiality and anonymity: My child and I have received assurance from the researcher that the information he/she/they will share will remain strictly confidential. I understand that the contents will be used only for academic purposes. Unless I waive he/she/they right to confidentiality, his/her/their

confidentiality will be protected by the researcher by not including identifying information in her study, by using a pseudonym in place of my child name, and by storing the data on a password-protected computer and iPad. Thus, my child identity will be kept anonymous to all external readers of the material and his/her/their identity will be known only to the research. My child and I acknowledge that we have been informed that even if he/she/they choose to be named his/her/their confidentiality is protected.

Conservation of data: The data collected will be audio recorded and then transcribed by the researcher and will be kept in a secure manner through password protected files on password protected computers and iPad. The data will be conserved for 7 years, after which computer files will be deleted using a secure file wiping utility.

Voluntary Participation: My child is under no obligation to participate and if he/she/they choose to participate, he/she/they can withdraw from the study at any time and/or refuse to answer any questions, without suffering any negative consequences. If he/she/they choose to withdraw, all data gathered until the time of withdrawal will be omitted from the study. My child and I understand that it is not possible for he/she/they to withdraw data that has already been published. However, my child and I have been informed that even after publication he/she/they can ask for the destruction of his/her/their data so that it cannot be used for other publications or for secondary use of data.

Acceptance: I, _____, legal parent of my child _____, agree that he/she/they participate in the above research study.

- ☐ I choose my child stays anonymous and uses the pseudonym_____.
- ☐ I waive my child's right to be anonymous and allow the researcher to identify he/she/they. I understand, however, that he/she/they is still entitled to identify specific information as confidential.

If my child and I have any questions about the study, we may contact the researcher. There are two copies of the consent form, one of which is mine to keep.

- ☐ I choose to have my signed parental consent form by this e-mail _____.
- ☐ I choose to have a hard copy of my parental consent form.

If I have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, I may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall, 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5 Tel.: (613) 562-5387 Email: ethics@uottawa.ca

Parent's signature: _____

Date: _____

Participant's signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 3: Interview Guide

Hello, my name is Annie. I'm a PhD candidate in sociology at the University of Ottawa. I'm interested in the effects in the everyday life of doing Animal Liberation activism and I hold to a critical approach towards the authorities' efforts to suppress and silence activism in Canada.

The interview touches on various topics pertaining your personal experience as an AL activists, for instance, the meaning of animal activism and repression, how do we become an activist, participate in investigation, protest, and rescue, and maintain such emotional commitment.

Before we start, I want to explain some terms I will use throughout the interview.

Animal exploitation

Force use of animals' body and labour including entertainment and sport, hunting, domestic breeding, factory farming for food-clothes-material, and laboratories.

Everything related to the use and commodification of animals' body and labour.

Direct action (open and secret)

Investigation (place of exploitation), animal rescue, and protest (vigil-occupation).

Activists must be in contact with the animals during activities.

Suppression or repression (state and media)

Everything related to legislation, laws, policies, and extremist discourses.

Media coverage of activities.

Person name or pseudonym: _____

Date of the interview: _____

Role in the movement: _____

Organizations/Affiliations: _____

Number of years as an activist: _____

Number of years as an AL activist: _____

Number of years as a vegan: _____

Section 1: Becoming an Animal Liberation Activist

We will first talk about the meaning of animal activism, your personal experience and the reasons that have led you to advocate for the animals.

1. CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT HOW YOU BECAME INTERESTED IN ANIMAL ADVOCACY?
 - ◆ When was it?
 - ◆ Was there something specific that inspired you?
 - ◆ Are there any key events (e.g., books, movies, etc.) or peoples?
2. WAS THERE A MOMENT THAT YOU DECIDED YOU WERE NOT DOING ENOUGH?
3. WHEN YOU FIRST BECAME INVOLVED DID THIS CHANGE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEOPLE AROUND YOU – FAMILY, FRIENDS, COWORKERS?
4. BEFORE YOU BECAME AN ACTIVIST, HAD YOU THOUGHT ABOUT ANIMAL EXPLOITATION?
 - ◆ What was the worse for you?
 - ◆ Do you feel the same today?
5. HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN ANIMAL LIBERATION ACTIVISM AND WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE WITH OTHER TYPES OF ANIMAL ACTIVISM?
 - ◆ What is the difference with someone who works at the human society?
 - ◆ How does AL differ from Animal Rights and Animal welfare?
6. IN YOUR OPINION, IS THERE A BEST WAY TO BE AN ANIMAL LIBERATION ACTIVIST?
 - ◆ What is most important for you to achieve?
 - ◆ Do you have to be vegan?
 - ◆ What does that mean to be vegan?
 - ◆ What does speciesism mean to you?
7. HOW WOULD ANIMAL LIBERATION BE ACHIEVED?

Section 2: Direct Action

I am now interested in how you went from being concerned about animals to taking action.

8. TELL ME ABOUT THE FIRST TIME YOU GOT INVOLVED IN DIRECT ACTION?
 - ◆ Why have you decided to get involved in direct action and pursue it?
 - ◆ You could have worked in SPCA, why have you chosen direct action?
 - ◆ Has this experience changed something for you? (people, philosophy, activism)
 - ◆ Don't you think it is hard to put yourself in the face of suffering?
 - ◆ Don't you think it is overwhelming to put your freedom on the line?
9. HAVE YOU EVER PARTICIPATED IN...? Can you give me an example of one that was particularly powerful, in a traumatic sense of the term?
 - ◆ Industry investigation?
 - ◆ Animal rescues?
 - ◆ Protest events like vigil or occupation/lockdown?
10. WALK ME THROUGH THE MOST POWERFUL DIRECT ACTION, THE ONE THAT STANDS IN YOUR MIND?
 - ◆ Tell me about your feelings and what you were thinking at the moment.
11. WHEN YOU MADE THE CHOICE TO GET INVOLVED IN A DIRECT ACTION...?
 - ◆ What were you thinking? Did you have any expectation?
 - ◆ A couple of days before the action, what were you thinking and feeling?
 - ◆ The morning of the action, what were you thinking and feeling?
 - ◆ Have you thought not to go and stay at home?
12. DURING THE ACTION...?
 - ◆ What were you thinking and feeling while being there with the animals?
 - ◆ How was the smell, sound, interaction with the animals?
 - ◆ What happened with on-site workers and/or property owners when they saw you?
 - ◆ What happened with the law enforcement when they arrived and made arrestation?
 - ◆ Have you been arrested?
 - ◆ What was the event?
 - ◆ Was it your first time being arrested? How was it feeling the handcuff on your skin and being in the car on the way to the police station?
 - ◆ Have you had a pre-hearing or a trial?
 - ◆ Is there any anecdote you would like to share?
13. AFTER THE ACTION...?
 - ◆ What happened when you debriefed with other activists, went back home, and at work?
 - ◆ What happened the days after?
 - ◆ Did you have any regrets?
14. IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YOUR YOUNG SELF-ACTIVIST AND NOW?
 - ◆ I mean take me back to when you were XX years old at your first XX action and then compare it the most recent event you got involved into.

Section 3: Maintaining Commitment

I now want to know about your life when you are not doing animal activism.

15. DO YOU SOMETIMES THINK ABOUT BEING THERE WITH THE ANIMALS?
 - ◆ How this make you feel?
16. SO OBVIOUSLY THIS KIND OF WORK CAN REALLY HAVE AN EMOTIONAL IMPACT ON PEOPLE. WHAT KIND OF THINGS DO YOU TO DEAL WITH THAT STRESS?
 - ◆ I have heard from some people that... is that something you have witnessed?
17. HOW DO YOU COPE WITH...
 - ◆ Animal suffering you witnessed?
 - ◆ You being there, in the action?
 - ◆ People around you who might judge you or push you back?
18. DID YOU DEVELOP ANY ADDICTION OR FELT INTO DEPRESSION?
 - ◆ People feel this way... is this something that you saw?
19. GIVEN THAT IT IS SO STRESSFUL, HOW DO YOU KEEP UP YOU MOTIVATION TO PARTICIPATE IN DIRECT ACTION?
 - ◆ Are you involved in other forms of activism? What is the difference?
 - ◆ Have you ever thought to give up and stop advocating for the animals?
 - ◆ Is there a forthcoming event you will be participating?
20. WHAT IS THE EXTENT OF YOUR RELATIONSHIPS?
 - ◆ Do you rely on other activists more than your family?
 - ◆ Is your support coming from online or face-to-face interaction?
21. DO YOU TALK ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE AND FEELING WITH PEOPLE WHO WERE INVOLVED WITH YOU IN DIRECT ACTION ACTIVITIES?
22. WHAT DO YOU THINK AND FEEL ABOUT...
 - ◆ Law enforcement during protest?
 - ◆ Legislation covering direct action and the state discourses of extremism and ecoterrorism?
 - ◆ Are the media coverage of events accurate?
23. WHAT WOULD YOU ADVISE ANY BEGINNER IN DIRECT ACTION ACTIVISM?

Section 4: Sociodemographic Profile

Before we finish, I'd like to ask some questions to draw a general profile of the respondents.

24. Do you use animal products of any kind?
25. What language do you speak?
26. Where are you born and live now?
27. What is your level of education?
28. What do you do for a living?
29. What is your marital status?
30. Do you have religious beliefs?
31. How old are you?
32. What is your gender?

Section 5: General Comments

Finally, do you have any additional information you would like to add?

I sincerely thank you for sharing your story with me and for the work you do.