

Charities, Computers, and Capitalism:

How Animal Rights Entered
Its Third Wave and What the
Future Holds

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Jess Kay, @flawzy.draws

Objectives

- ❖ Overview of the Western animal rights movement and its three waves
- ❖ Identify the structural shifts associated with the 3rd wave
- ❖ Outline a contemporary theory of change



Three Waves of Animal Rights

Three Waves

❖ 1st – Victorian

- ❖ Vivisection
- ❖ Dog and cat homelessness
- ❖ Humane education
- ❖ Vegetarianism distinct movement

❖ 2nd – 70s-2000s

- ❖ Vegetarianism and AR combine
- ❖ Dogs and cats, vivisection, and farmed animals

❖ 3rd – 2000-today

- ❖ Veganism and farmed animals
- ❖ Animal welfare
- ❖ Professionalism

2nd Wave Origin Story

- ❖ Reemerges in 1970s
- ❖ Inspired by academic developments
 - ❖ Oxford Group
 - ❖ *Animal Liberation*, *Animal Machines*, *The Rights of Animals*, *Diet for a Small Planet*
- ❖ And the civil rights movement
- ❖ World Vegetarian Congress opened at the University of Maine 1975



2nd Wave Campaigns

- ❖ Fur
- ❖ Vivisection
- ❖ Pet homelessness
- ❖ Vegetarianism
- ❖ Harms to freelifving animals



2nd Wave Strategies

- ❖ Marches
- ❖ Sit-ins
- ❖ Open rescues
- ❖ Literature distribution
- ❖ Magazines
- ❖ Clubs
- ❖ Tabling
- ❖ Food samples and cooking demos
- ❖ Violent direct action
- ❖ Welfare legislation



3rd Wave Campaigns

- ❖ All of the above but...
- ❖ More emphasis on farming
- ❖ Veganism
- ❖ Sensitivity to cultural variation
- ❖ International outreach
- ❖ Technological developments



3rd Wave Strategies

- ❖ Direct action
- ❖ Bearing witness
- ❖ Petitions
- ❖ Films
- ❖ Welfare legislation
- ❖ Humane parties
- ❖ Vegan 30-day challenges, cookbooks, and celebrity chefs
- ❖ Social media
- ❖ Professionalisation



3rd Wave Factionalism

- ❖ Abolitionist/Welfarist
- ❖ Professionals/Grassroots
- ❖ Direct action
- ❖ Feminist
- ❖ Food justice
- ❖ Dog 'n cat people





Charities

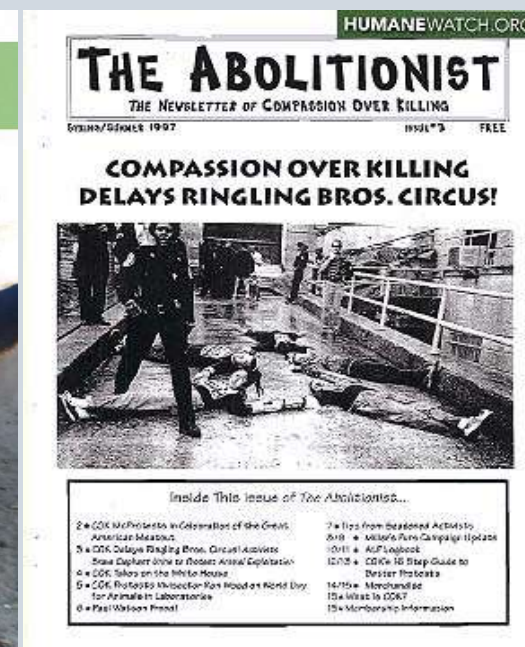
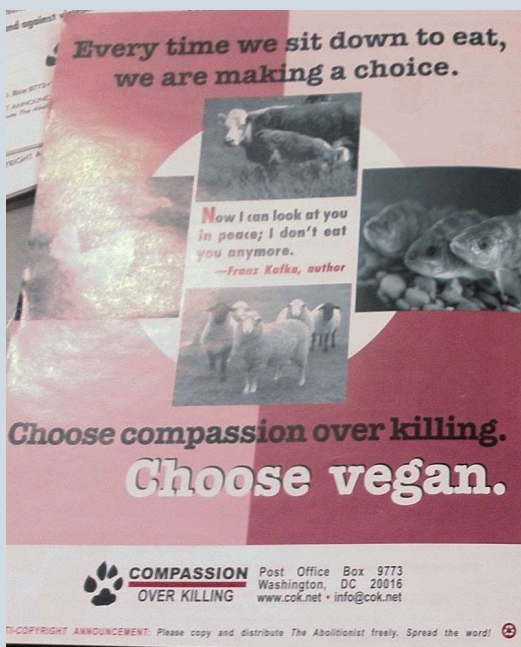
Nonprofits & Neoliberalism

- ❖ West enters era of austerity in 80s-90s
- ❖ Nonprofits cheap solutions
 - ❖ And quell radical protest
- ❖ Nonprofits rational solutions
 - ❖ Offer stability, predictability, and efficiency
- ❖ Nonprofit industrial complex



Trends in Animal Rights Nonprofitization

- ❖ Claimsmaking and tactics moderate
- ❖ Increased wealth
- ❖ Increased reliance on fundraising
- ❖ **No defense given for these shifts; taken for granted as appropriate**



A quarter century later, we're still brimming with that youthful ambition and passion, yet we've also grown up and grown wiser. [...]

While our founding name has served us well, its time has come and gone...

- Animal Outlook. 2019. [“A New Era: Compassion Over Killing is Now Animal Outlook”](#)
(Accessed April 18, 2021)

Big Animal Rights

- ❖ Animal rights as a professionalized, hegemonic collective
- ❖ Wields immense power over the social movement space
 - ❖ Targets young people and university students
 - ❖ Socializes emerging and aspiring groups
 - ❖ Exploits colonial relationships
- ❖ Strongly shaped by financial interests
 - ❖ Economic logic of growth



Making Big Animal Rights: Isomorphism

- ❖ Similar structures
- ❖ Teamwork
- ❖ Very rarely speak ill of one another
- ❖ One hegemonic voice
- ❖ Control over aspiring grassroots groups
 - Supplies
 - Street teams & leadership workshops
 - Grants



The background is a black and white photograph of an animal rights protest. A semi-transparent light blue rectangular box is centered over the image, containing the title and a bulleted list. The text in the box is in a dark, sans-serif font. The background image shows a crowd of people, some holding signs. One visible sign reads "KILLING ANIMALS IS THE WAY OF THE WHOLE HUMAN BEING." Another sign partially visible says "JUNE 10 ANIMALS".

Making Big Animal Rights: Erasure

- ❖ Factionalism is **largely ignored** in professionalized claimsmaking
- ❖ In 1996 . . .
 - 2nd “March for Animals” in D.C.; only 3,000 attendees
 - *Rain without Thunder* published
 - Direct action faction routinely reporting disgruntlement
 - FARM reports that the movement: “[. . .] enjoys **uncommon ideological unanimity**”

Making Big Animal Rights: Diminishment

❖ “Diversity” &
need for “unity”

❖ “False
dichotomy”



Our Voices, Our Movement: How Vegans Can
Move Beyond the “Welfare-Abolition Debate”

Posted on October 1, 2012 by Melanie Joy: Social Psychologist & Author



For years I have remained silent on the “welfare-abolition debate,” believing that my limited time and energy as an activist were best directed elsewhere. But recent events have compelled me to witness the profound anger, confusion, guilt, weariness, and despair this issue triggers in vegans – vegans whose commitment and compassion never cease to astound and inspire me. So I could not, in good conscience, avoid contemplating this issue and sharing my reflections.

Making Big Animal Rights: Disparagement

- ❖ More rarely, dissent addressed as a problem
- ❖ Groups may exploit factionalism in order to appear “practical” & less threatening
- ❖ Also framed as wasteful & negative

Making Big Animal Rights: Symbol Mining

- ❖ Power of prof. orgs allows them to mine images, concepts, & ideas as they gain resonance
- ❖ Then manipulate them to protect hegemony
 - Identifying as “abolitionist” or “grassroots”
 - Using footage obtained by direct action



MEET OUR GRASSROOTS GANG!

Who's behind these attention-grabbing animal actions? These guys are! Meet the crack team that makes it all happen.

9:30 a.m. on Tuesday and PETA's International streets Campaigns (I) staff is immersed in weekly planning. The agenda is a stack of four cloudy-d pages of demon, or "demon," mailings, paper ads, debates, and a star-studded event as will take place all he would during the ahead.

11:00 a.m. Inquiries and volunteers like Agnes Gullapali from Connecticut and Carrie Kramer from Pennsylvania staff envelopes, activate the phone tree, pass signs, staff information tables, march in picket lines, and occasionally get hauled away in handcuffs. Meet the those free vegan lunches that keep 'em coming back!

11:30 a.m. Avalanche! The postal carrier gives, and Sander Pym, IGC's administrative secretary, takes away and distributes. Hundreds of letters pour into IGC every week from all over the world.

9:30 a.m. Fearless leader, Lisa Lange, consults her troops. Cam MacQueen (Promoter Campaign), Judy Sweetland (Activist Liaison), Peter Wood (Gillies), and Fun Campaign, and Tracy Reiman (Vegetarian Campaign) map out their action.

10:30 a.m. "Sometimes I wish I had three ears!" says Account Liaison Judy Sweetland. Judy's job: helping callers organize in their communities.

1:00 p.m. IGC staffers suit up Dutch mess, Mariken Tyhuis (some of our interns come from as far away as Kenya) for a Gillette event. Self-confessed publicity seekers, IGC is always looking for ways to grab people's attention. Using eye-catching costumes and generally misbehaving are favorite modus operandi. (See page 22 for the results)

2:30 p.m. Faster than a streetcleaner, stronger than the punch of an overflowing dumpster, this to sweep tall buildings without passing out from exhaustion—it's the IGC clean-up crew. When cities and companies propose killing animals they consider "pests," IGC is always willing to dive in and clean up the problem, as they did recently when Baltimore, Md.'s trash-filled alleys spurred an attack on rats.

3:30 p.m. Whoopee! Looks like Judy forgot to schedule a day off.

4:30 p.m. What do a megaphone, a giant chicken and a spare tire have in common? An IGC road trip! Today's destination: the Virginia Poultry Festival in Harrisonburg, Va. (We can't believe we weren't invited!)

Making Big Animal Rights: Exclusion

- ❖ FARM hosts the annual Animal Rights Conference in the U.S.
- ❖ Radical factions barred
- ❖ Direct action advocates in the U.K. also reporting exclusion
- ❖ Radicals are silenced & cut off from resources



We select presenters and leaders for each component on the basis of their qualifications to handle the specific task (and availability). That judgment is grounded in our own sixteen years' active participation in the movement, including arranging or presenting at 15 animal rights conferences, as well as consultation with our cosponsors and other people whose judgment we respect. We acknowledge a slight bias in favor of emerging leaders and an overwhelming bias against those who would use the convention as a forum to put down other movement activists or organizations.

We look forward to an informative, inspiring, and harmonious convention in June, and we hope to see you there.

- *Alex Hershaft*

FARM newsletter (1997)

❖ Movement-wide events are spaces where **power is concentrated . . .**

❖ And radical factions are **marginalized and disempowered**

YOU'RE INVITED TO SPONSOR AR2015

Here's your opportunity to support the world's largest and longest-running animal rights gathering and to increase your visibility within the movement! We offer three levels of options for non-profit organizations, as well as a commercial sponsorship option for vegan businesses. The Conference welcomes any organization that shares our vision of a world where animals are not exploited by humans. We are open to discounts in exchange for promotion.

View the [AR2015 Sponsor Contract](#).

Gold Sponsorship Package (\$7,500)

- Three prime exhibit tables (or equivalent space)
- Ten full registrations & banquet tickets with VIP seating
- Full-page full-color ad in the AR2015 program booklet
- A welcoming slot at the opening plenary
- Placement of up to three qualified speakers in appropriate sessions
- Arrangement of a special lunch session organized by you
- One evening networking reception hosted by you
- Prominent link throughout the AR2015 website
- Listing in all printed AR2015 promotional materials
- Display of your logo during plenary sessions
- Promotion on FARM's social networking sites and newsletters:
 - Three customized images on AR2015 Facebook event page
 - Three customized images on FARM's Facebook fan page (200,000 followers)
 - Tag on FARM's Instagram & Twitter (35,000 followers)
 - Feature of two of your speakers in FARM's e-newsletter (25,000+ subscribers)

<http://www.arconference.org/sponsoring-opportunities.htm>



Activism in the Digital Age

Slactivism?

- ❖ A lot of online activism is dead-end
- ❖ Potential of information overload
- ❖ But unprecedented reach
 - ❖ Low-cost
 - ❖ Global potential
 - ❖ Eases organization for on-ground campaigning
 - ❖ Network building
 - ❖ Information sharing
- ❖ Fuels the discourse...

Democraticizing Activism

❖ Inequalities still exist online

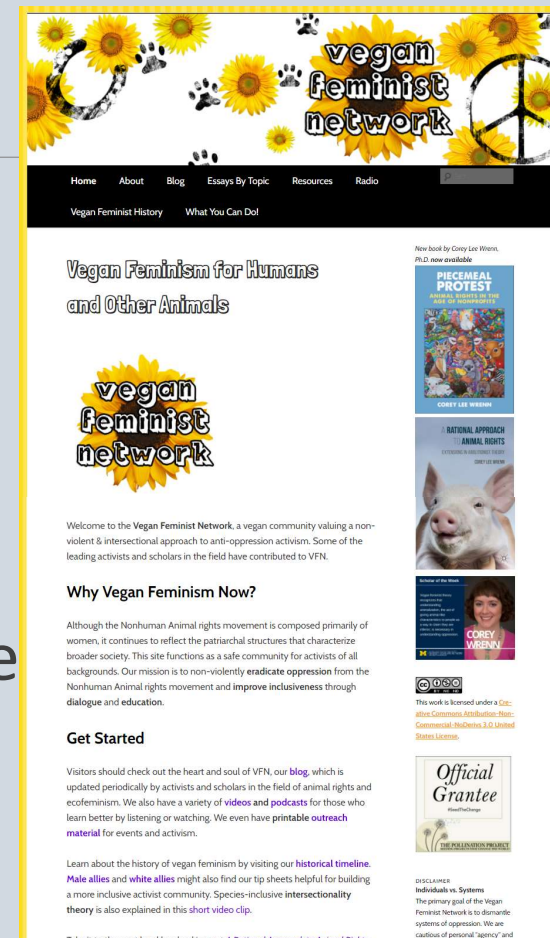
- ❖ Pay to play
- ❖ Internet access is not yet universal
- ❖ Digital skills not universal

❖ Yet, Internet democratizes access

- ❖ Challenge to Big Animal Rights hegemony

❖ Feminist, critical race and other marginalized can access (and create their own) platform

- ❖ Holding mainstream AR accountable



Trying to keep peace in the
online vegan community

@INCOGNEATO_VEGAN



Importance of Factionalism

❖ Thought to impact success . . .

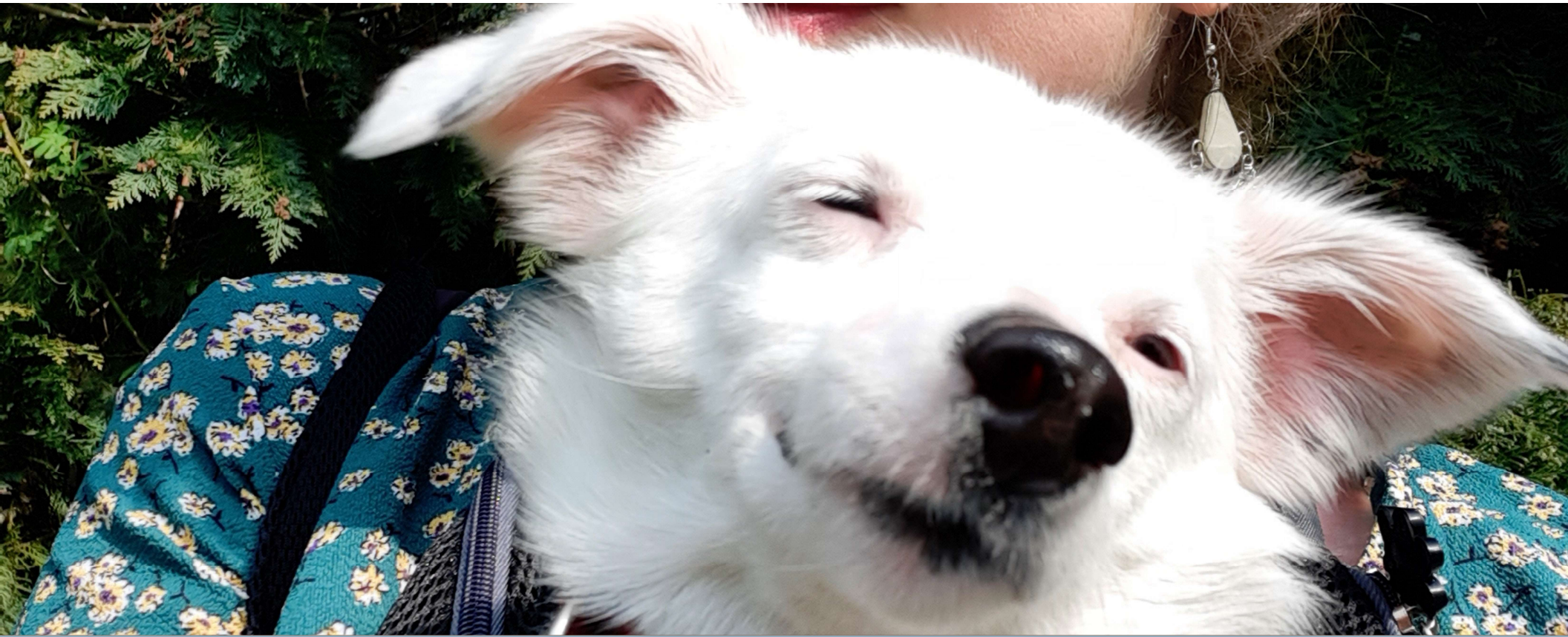
❖ **Negatively**

- Drains energy & resources
- Reduces resonance (Frey, Dietz & Kalof 1992)
- Reduces credibility with public (Snow 1993)

❖ **. . . And Positively**

- Maintains goal integrity
- Tactical innovation
- *Increases* resonance (Cress & Snow 2000)
- Increases support for moderate groups (Haines 1984)





Conclusions

Conclusions

- ❖ Prof. orgs put economic & political capital towards the formation of **symbolic capital**
- ❖ Prof. orgs control the social movement field: the “**common sense**” of **activism** is created here
- ❖ This capital is wielded to **maintain and increase power** in the social change space
- ❖ **Aggravates factionalism**, but also **neutralizes resonance** of radicals

Conclusions

- ❖ Big Animal Rights correlated with greater **power** and **presence**
- ❖ But also **compromise** and **state collaboration**
- ❖ Hegemony of Big Animal Rights can be checked by **radicals**
- ❖ **Factionalism as a healthy mechanism, rather than hindrance**

Conclusions

- ❖ Today's 3rd Wave characterized by an absorption into the **capitalist system**
- ❖ As well as a new **democratization** of activism and discourse via online channels
- ❖ This **creative dynamism** may create a 4th wave that is better equipped to aid other animals, challenging the system rather than streamlining it

Animal Rights Future?

- ❖ Can a movement that protects and feeds capitalism ever liberate other animals?
- ❖ Interrogate Big Animal Rights
 - ❖ Professionalization as a conscious strategy, not common sense
 - ❖ How to fund activism and not the machine?
 - ❖ Collective action unchained
- ❖ Systems over symptoms
 - ❖ Redirect subsidies
 - ❖ Solidarity across movement boundaries



Evgeny Rodygin