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THE FRAMING OF ANIMAL CRUELTY BY ANIMAL ADVOCACY
ORGANIZATIONS

by

Cary Williams

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for a Degree with Honors
(Sociology)

The Honors College

University of Maine

May 2012

Advisory Committee:

Amy Blackstone, Ph.D. Chair and Associate Professor, Department of Sociology

Steve Cohn, Ph.D. Professor, Department of Sociology

Kimberly A. Huisman, Ph.D. Associate Professor, Department of Sociology

Clare E. Thomas, Part-time Faculty, Department of Animal & Veterinary Science

Sharon Tisher, J.D. Lecturer, School of Economics

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Abstract

The purpose of this research project was to explore similarities and differences in framing activity of animal cruelty by animal advocacy organizations and to fill some of the gaps within the current literature. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, Humane Society of the United States, and American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals were selected for study, as they are the largest and most widely recognized animal advocacy organizations. Sections of the organizations' websites (about us, positions, and frequently asked questions) and pamphlets from the organizations were analyzed using content analysis to see how the organizations define the concept of animal cruelty. Coding the websites and pamphlets led to the appearance of five major themes: animal cruelty, suffering and sentience, necessity, exploitation, and harm to humans. These themes were identified as frames through which the organizations identify and present animal cruelty. Findings from PETA, an animal rights organization, were largely consistent with current literature. Data illustrate a perspective that the majority of animal use is cruel and a reliance on strategies such as celebrity involvement, moral shocks, animal to human comparisons, and movement-to-movement comparisons. Findings from HSUS and ASPCA, animal welfare organizations, contribute to the lack of literature on framing activities of animal welfare organizations. Data collected from HSUS and ASPCA show a perspective that cruelty arises from practices that expose sentient animals to unnecessary suffering or exploitation and focus on legislation and programs to create a humane world. My findings provide a foundation of the differential definitions of animal cruelty by animal advocacy organizations that further research can develop from.

Acknowledgements

I'd like to thank my family for giving me the tools to follow my passions. Mike, thank you for always supporting and encouraging me to pursue my interests. Thank you to Amy Blackstone for all your guidance and truly invaluable help. Lastly, thank you to my committee members Steve Cohn, Kim Huisman, Clare Thomas, and Sharon Tisher for your help and support throughout the thesis process. Without all of you this thesis would not have been possible!

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Introduction

Animals have been a part of my life since the beginning. I have always been an animal lover and grew up in a town where almost everyone else was too. It was not until an internship at a shelter during high school that I was confronted with the tragic reality of animal cruelty. I arrived at the shelter one day to find everyone discussing one particular dog who after appearing sick upon his entrance to the shelter went to the vet and was found to have a grill skewer in his chest cavity. Since I am the type of person to sleep on the very edge of my bed due to one or two dogs sprawled out in the middle, I could not understand how someone could insert a grill skewer into a dog's chest. From then on I have been very active in researching and reading about animal cruelty. From my interactions with shelter workers and reading, I realized that one of the main problems confronting animal cruelty is that there are no concrete definitions. What is cruelty to one individual, for example having a dog that lives outside in a doghouse, is normal to another. Animal advocacy organizations are one of the primary ways the public is educated about animal issues. However, even they cannot seem to agree on what is animal cruelty!

This research project is aimed at clarifying how animal advocacy organizations define animal cruelty by looking at the ways in which they frame animal issues. I will begin with a review of the current literature on framing activity in social movement organizations, and then more specifically in animal advocacy organizations. Next I will discuss my methodology including the collection and analysis of data. Then I move on to what I found through my analysis, and discuss how those findings relate back to the

literature. Finally, I will conclude by discussing the strengths and weaknesses of my project and directions for future research.

Literature Review

Introduction

In this section I will begin by discussing the theoretical concept of framing in social movement organizations. This discussion will be divided into sections on what framing is and why it is important, how frames are developed, and lastly the effectiveness of framing activity. Next I will discuss framing as it applies to social movement organizations involved in the animal protection movement. Here, I will first talk about the history of the animal protection movement, the ideologies underlying the movement, and two of the major framing strategies (human-animal comparisons and movement to movement comparisons) animal advocacy organizations use.

Framing in Social Movement Organizations

Definitions and Importance

Social movement theorists apply the concept of framing to understand how social movement organizations accomplish their goals. The theory of framing gained widespread attention with Erving Goffman's (1986) work "Frame Analysis." The foundational element of this theory is a frame. A frame is a conceptual structure that allows individuals to understand and categorize their experiences in relation to a broader context. Social movement theorists have furthered Goffman's concept of a frame by turning it into an action:

"This [framing] denotes an active, processual phenomenon that implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction. It is active in the sense that something is being done, and processual in the sense of a dynamic evolving process. It entails agency in the sense that what is evolving is the work of social movement organizations or movement activists. And it is contentious in the sense that it involves the generation of interpretive frames that do not only differ from existing ones but may also challenge them" (Benford and Snow 2000:614)

Throughout the process of framing, social movement organizations create collective action frames. As defined by Benford and Snow, “collective action frames are action-oriented set of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social movement organization” (2000:614). Essentially, a frame is a “schemata of interpretation” (Goffman 1986), while a collective action frame is a frame with a purpose (promoting its interpretations). It is important to mention that while collective action frames may represent an ideology, they are not the same. As stated by Benford and Snow (2000:613): “collective action frames function as innovative amplifications and extensions of, or antidotes to, existing ideologies or components of them.” Ideology becomes a major factor later on in the discussion of framing by animal advocacy organizations.

Collective action frames are representative of their social movement organization. Therefore, studying the framing activity of social movement organizations such as those in the animal protection movement gives insight into how the organization thinks about and acts upon animal issues. Consequently, the way an organization defines animal cruelty will be reflected in the way it frames issues surrounding animal cruelty. Since the purpose of animal advocacy organizations is to eliminate animal cruelty, the organizations beliefs and actions will illustrate their definition of animal cruelty.

Creation of Frames

When members of a social movement organization gather to negotiate collective action frames, they must address three core framing tasks: diagnostic framing, prognostic framing, and motivational framing (Snow and Benford 1988).

Broadly, diagnostic framing functions to identify the problem. Often this leads to the creation and use of an injustice frame, which emphasizes victims of an unjust act (Benford and Snow 2000; Jasper and Paulsen 1995). Identifying a problem inevitably leads to a designation of blame. The designation of blame is frequently a source of tension within and between social movement organizations (Benford and Snow 2000). The designation of blame is closely linked to the important concept of boundary framing. Boundary framing occurs during diagnostic framing. Through boundary framing social movement organizations create in-group and out-group distinctions (Silver 1997).

Prognostic framing is where a plan to rectify the problem is developed through the use of different strategies. As one might expect prognostic framing is the primary source of difference between social movement organizations (Benford and Snow 2000). For example, the use of techniques such as protest, a strategy organizations use to educate or promote opposition to an issue, vary when looking at different social movement organizations. In terms of animal advocacy organizations, one organization may protest by making signs and marching outside a legislative office, another organization may dress up as animals and place themselves in cages outside of a fur retail store. Essentially, prognostic framing is the path an organization takes to provide a solution to an issue of concern.

The final core framing task is motivational framing, which focuses on gaining and maintaining participation of individuals not currently involved in the organization. Mobilization is the commonly used term for recruiting participants to join an organization. Motivational framing is most prominently explored through vocabularies of motive (Benford 1993). Benford (1993) identifies four main vocabularies of motive:

severity, urgency, efficacy, and propriety. Diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing are the core elements of all collective action frames as they lay a foundation to expand from. The table below outlines the core framing tasks and provides examples of how each of these processes plays out for social movement organizations.

Table 1: Function and Examples of Core Framing Tasks

Framing Task	Diagnostic	Prognostic	Motivational
Function	Identification and definition of problem	Strategies for solving the problem	Rationale for the organization's definition, strategies, and recruitment of others to participate
Example	Environmental destruction due to green house gases	Promote and support driving hybrid cars, buy produce and meat from local farmers instead of large industries	Green house gases must be reduced soon or the environment will be damaged for future generations

Development of Frames

Collective action frames further evolve and develop through three processes: discursive, strategic, and contested.

Discursive processes consist of interactions, such as conversations and written communications, which occur within the context of movement activities (Benford and Snow 2000). Frame articulation and frame amplification are the two primary processes. Frame articulation is the unique way social movement organizations connect events and experiences surrounding a particular issue. As explained by Benford and Snow, "What gives the resultant collective action frame its novelty is not so much the originality or newness of its ideational elements, but the manner in which they are spliced together and

articulated, such that a new angle of vision, vantage point, and/or interpretation is provided” (2000:623). Basically, frame articulation is the distinctive manner in which a social movement organization packages and presents an issue. Frame amplification occurs in both discursive and strategic processes. As a discursive process, frame amplification is used by social movement organizations to identify specific beliefs or events that are more important than others in order to use the “punctuated” elements to emphasize similarities to and differences from other frames or movements. Frame amplification directly shows how social movement organizations rank the various issues surrounding the problem they are attempting to solve.

Strategic processes consist of four frame alignment processes that are deliberative and goal oriented (Benford and Snow 2000). Frame bridging is used to link “two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a particular issue or problem” (Snow, Rochford, Worden, Benford 1986:467). Frame bridging is a primary and frequently used process. It can occur at an organizational level, such as between social movement organizations, or at an individual level where it is generally focused at recruiting “immobilized participant pools.” An example of frame bridging would be making connections between the civil rights movement and the women’s rights movement. As a strategic process, frame amplification “involves the idealization, embellishment, clarification, or invigoration of existing values or beliefs” (Benford and Snow 2000). The process of frame amplification is especially important for social movement organizations that rely on either participation from individuals who are different from the movement’s beneficiaries (Paulsen and Glumm 1995), or are stigmatized due to the contradiction between the movement’s values or beliefs and those

of the dominant culture (Berbrier 1998). Frame extension occurs when a social movement organization extends the boundaries of its frame to include issues or concerns that are important to potential members in an effort to recruit new participants (Benford and Snow 2000). Internal conflict frequently arises as already devout members of a social movement organization question the necessity of a newly expanded frame. Frame transformation involves a changing of old or current understandings or the creation of new understandings. The need to restructure and adapt meanings within a frame further underscores the notion that frames, like society, are constantly evolving.

Contested processes deal with the challenges social movement organizations face throughout various framing activities. Social movement organizations take into account perspectives of their opponents and even use them in their framing processes.

Counterframing occurs when opponents, from bystanders to the media, of a social movement organization attempt to deny, weaken, or dismiss an organizations' interpretive framework. The process of counterframing itself often leads to reframing activity by social movement organizations (Benford and Snow 2000). Internal conflict over a social movement organization's interpretive framework is referred to as frame disputes. Frame disputes typically are centered on diagnostic and prognostic framing (Benford 1993). The final contested process consists of the dialectic between frames and events. Ellingson (1995) found an interactive relationship between collective action frames and collective actions. The discourse of collective action frames affects collective actions; consequently those actions then go on to affect the basic premises of the discourse and thus affect the frame itself. Discursive, strategic, and contested processes

work to fine tune and adapt the interpretations and goals of a social movement organization that were created through the core framing tasks.

Resonance/ Effectiveness

Collective action frames differ in their ability to function as a master frame, their effectiveness, and their cultural relevance.

A master frame is a larger interpretive frame shared by multiple social movement organizations (Jasper and Paulsen 1995). Frames that are more inclusive, flexible, and focus on a broad range of issues surrounding a particular problem are more likely to function as master frames (Benford and Snow 2000). While not all collective action frames are meant to function as master frames, there are benefits of master frames. “The larger the range of the problems covered by a frame, the larger the range of societal groups who can be addressed with the frame and the greater the mobilization capacity of the frame” (Gerhards and Rucht 1992:580). Master frames are able to resonate with more people; however they may do so at the expense of being too broad. A prime example of the benefits and drawbacks of a master frame is the occupy movement. The recent occupy movement had a lot of participants due to the range of issues it considered, however its downfall could be attributed to the inability to address all of the issues in detail. Master frames are an important tool to increase participation; however having other more detailed frames as well may be necessary in the overall success of a movement.

In order for a social movement organization to be effective in its mission, the interpretive frames of the organization must be credible. If the public does not believe a frame is credible, the organization may suffer a lack in participation as well as more

attacks by opponents. Credibility is achieved through frame consistency, empirical credibility, and credibility of frame articulators (Benford and Snow 2000). Frame consistency refers to the coherence of a social movement organization's actions to their stated beliefs. Essentially, the organization should practice what they preach. Empirical credibility involves whether the evidence used by an organization to make claims is appropriate and believable in cultural context. For example statistics used by an organization should be valid and come from a reliable source. Individuals chosen by a social movement organization represent the organization's beliefs, therefore if such an individual is seen as incredible the claims of the organization become so as well. In an extreme example, an individual speaking on behalf of an organization against drunk driving, but later that night has a few drinks and then drives home, jeopardizes the organization as a whole. Credibility is important as it directly affects the way an organization's beliefs are perceived by the public and those they are trying to recruit.

Presently, the world is filled with different issues all of which are seen as having more or less importance depending on whom one is speaking to. Saliency, the scholarly term used in the literature meaning prominence or importance, of a frame to individuals is assessed through centrality, experiential commensurability, and narrative fidelity (Benford and Snow 2000). The concept of centrality articulates the above-stated notion that individuals are more or less likely to participate in a social movement organization depending on how significant the organization's beliefs are to that individual. Experiential commensurability affects mobilization by dealing with the relation of a social movement organization's beliefs and claims to an individual's daily experiences. If an individual has never interacted with an animal they are not likely to participate in an

animal advocacy organization. The closer the relationship of experiences to beliefs, the more likely an individual is to participate. Lastly, narrative fidelity incorporates the organization's beliefs with the dominant beliefs occurring in cultural context. If an organization's beliefs are closely tied with the dominant societal beliefs, narrative fidelity occurs and leads to an increased possibility of mobilization. Resonance and effectiveness of an organization are accomplished through the use of master frames, credibility, and importance all of which have major implications for participation in an organization and therefore completion of an organization's mission.

Framing in Animal Advocacy Organizations

History of the Animal Protection Movement

Interaction between humans and animals has led to growing concern over animal welfare as well as animal rights. The animal protection movement developed primarily after the Civil War (Unti 2004). Unti (2004:1310) maintains that the animal protection movement emerged from the anti-cruelty movement of the second half of the nineteenth century: "the abolition of slavery seems to have been a necessary precondition for the emergence of organized animal protection in the United States." The concern over animal issues coincided with the growth of urban housing and industry. Urban living brought with it problems such as using horses for transportation, fear of rabies, concerns over food quality, and removal of dead animals (Unti 2004). The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was the first animal protection organization in the United States and its first cases dealt largely with horses pulling carriages (Broom 2010). Humane societies at this time largely incorporated the welfare of both animals and children. Following World War I the movement declined and picked up again after World

War II, resulting in the founding of the Humane Society of the United States (Unti 2004). This period saw a growth of legislation around animal welfare issues. Starting in the 1950s there was a lot of scientific interest in animal consciousness (Unti 2004), which can be seen as ultimately leading to the emergence of the two fields of animal rights and animal welfare.

Animal Welfare versus Animal Rights

The discussion of animal rights came into play during the 1960s, largely due to the publication of Peter Singer's *Animal Liberation* (Unti 2004). At this point, the overall animal protection movement broke down further into those who advocate for animal welfare and those who advocate for animal rights.

Both animal rights and animal welfare advocates agree that animals should be protected, and that animals are sentient creatures. There is no single satisfactory definition of sentience. However, in terms of animal welfare and animal rights ideology, sentience suggests that animals are able to feel and react to stimuli, and furthermore these reactions are governed by previous experience. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, the feelings of animals matter and deserve respect and protection (Webster 2010). Stress and suffering are often discussed concepts within this field. Sentient animals are able to experience both suffering and pleasure. Stress is a natural experience that animals are equipped to deal with, however when an animal finds it difficult or impossible to deal with such stress, they are said to be suffering (Webster 2010). Animal advocates want to reduce or eliminate stress while promoting pleasure.

The difference between animal rights and animal welfare boils down to the issue of human use. Current animal welfare ideology focuses on relieving the suffering and

cruelty of animals while promoting humane practices. The Five Freedoms are the foundational elements of animal welfare ideology. The Five Freedoms are outlined in the table below.

Table 2: Five Freedoms (Broom 2010)

1. Freedom from Hunger and Thirst by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigor.
2. Freedom from Discomfort by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area
3. Freedom from Pain, Injury, or Disease by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
4. Freedom to Express Normal Behavior by providing sufficient space, proper facilities, and company of the animal's own kind.
5. Freedom from Fear and Distress by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.

Animal rights ideology argues against any human use of animals. For example, an animal welfare advocate would push for laws enacting humane slaughter practices of cows while an animal rights advocate would push for the eradication of slaughtering cows. Despite differences in ideology, both animal welfare organizations and animal rights organizations have similar beliefs and strategies they employ to obtain their goals and that can be identified through using the theoretical concept of framing.

Human-animal Comparisons and Animal-animal Comparisons

Comparing animals to humans in order to evoke sympathy and understanding is widely used by animal advocacy organizations. Humans are scientifically classified as a type of animal, however in popular discourse humans are almost always referred to as being separate from animals. Bringing animal and human similarities to the foreground can have positive or negative impacts on human concern for animals. Animals that are perceived as evolutionarily and characteristically similar to humans elicit concern (Corbett 2006). However when humans are forced to face the fact that they, like animals,

are inevitably going to die, their concern changes. This forced confrontation is referred to as mortality salience. When mortality is made salient (humans face the fact that they will die), humans feel uncomfortably vulnerable and try to distance themselves from animals resulting in less concern for animal welfare (Beatson, Loughnan, and Halloran 2009). The literature shows a paradigm that human- animal comparisons can encourage animal concern, however if the similarities elicit a feeling of vulnerability, human concern for animals may diminish.

In the article “Language, Power, and the Social Construction of Animals,” Arran Stibbe (2001) illustrates how language works to place animals in an inferior position thereby allowing them to be exploited. Society separates humans from animals in many linguistic ways including referring to the killing of animals as slaughter, not murder as well as popular idioms like “flogging a dead horse” (Stibbe 2001). The normality of these linguistic differences further serves to separate humans from animals. Linguistics has implications for boundary framing, and therefore diagnostic processes, because it helps in the creation of in-group and out-group categories. Further distinction occurs within the category of animals between companion animals and other animals such as wildlife and farm animals.

Grouping companion animals as separate from farm animals often acts as a rationale for deciding which animals to eat and which animals to love (Cherry 2010). Animal rights organizations advocate for the elimination of all animal use, which includes consuming animal products. In order to accomplish their goal of eliminating animal use, animal rights organizations must break down the boundaries between companion animals and farm animals. This is done through the strategies of boundary blurring and boundary

crossing (Cherry 2010). Boundary blurring focuses on erasing the distinction between an in-group and an out-group. Here, an animal rights organization may describe farm animals as having emotions much like people describe their pets. Boundary crossing occurs when an individual crosses between in-groups and out-groups without changing the boundary itself. An example would be when animal rights advocates protest an issue by using the human body as an animal body (Cherry 2010). Human-animal comparisons as well as animal-animal comparisons are important concepts for animal advocacy organizations to keep in mind when presenting animal issues to possible participants.

Movement-to-Movement Comparisons

Comparing animal protection movements to other successful social movements is a beneficial frame bridging strategy. A wealth of literature focuses on the effects of linking the animal rights movement to other such as the women's movement and anti-cruelty movements. Rights based movements have provided the animal rights movement with a master anti-cruelty frame (Unti 2004), as well as the use of shared oppression as a motivator for movement participation (Berry 2004). From his survey study of residents in Ohio, Nibert (1994:122) found that support for animal rights "is related to other social issues, notable issues regarding gun control, acceptance of violence, and acceptance of diversity and rights for women, persons who are homosexual, and persons of color." Animal rights organizations link their goals with those of other movements in order to increase participation and sympathy for their cause. Frame bridging is a major way animal advocacy organizations increase participation and further their missions.

Summary

This section has provided an overview of the literature on the theoretical concept of framing as well as how it is applied in the animal protection movement. The majority of the literature concerned with the framing of animal advocacy organizations focuses on the activities of animal rights organizations. However, with the knowledge of theoretical framing I will apply the concept to animal welfare organizations as well.

Methodology

Introduction

I used the method of content analysis to answer the broad question of how animal advocacy organizations define animal cruelty. Content analysis is a type of unobtrusive research. Essentially, these methods that do not disturb or come into contact with the subjects that are under study. This is an asset of unobtrusive research because it avoids the Hawthorne effect. The Hawthorne effect occurs when subjects alter their behavior because they are being studied (Blackstone 2012). Specifically, content analysis involves the study of human communications (Blackstone 2012). Human communications can include newspapers, television shows, even the wording on the binding of a book. The process of content analysis typically uses code sheets to analyze data. Blackstone (2012) defines a code sheet as “an instrument used by an unobtrusive researcher to record observations.” The researcher then goes through their code sheet to identify patterns and see what those patterns suggest about the subject(s) of study. In this section I will discuss the sample I chose, data collection, and finally how the data were analyzed.

Sample

I analyzed communications written by three animal advocacy organizations. Specifically, my sample is comprised of the websites and pamphlets from: People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). I chose these organizations because they are the largest, and most widely recognized animal advocacy organizations in the United States. The ASPCA and HSUS are mainstream organizations

that advocate for the welfare of all animals. PETA is a more radical organization that advocates for the rights of animals.

Ingrid Newkirk and Alex Pacheco founded People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals in 1980. The non-profit organization, which continues to be led by Ingrid Newkirk, is based in Virginia but has international affiliates. PETA's core belief is: "animals are not ours to eat, wear, experiment on, use for entertainment, or abuse in any way" (PETA All About PETA). Their website states that they are the largest animal rights organization in the world having three million members and supporters (PETA About PETA). While the organization is involved in all types of animal issues, their focus is on issues surrounding food, clothing, experimentation, and entertainment because they believe those areas have the largest amount of cruelty and suffering. PETA accomplishes its work through "public education, cruelty investigations, research, animal rescue, legislation, special events, celebrity involvement, and protest campaigns" (PETA About PETA). The website is updated quite often and is very interactive with lots of public comments and chats. PETA's pamphlets reflect the major issues the organization is concerned with. The oldest pamphlet dates back to September of 2004, and the most recent pamphlet was made in November of 2011. PETA's target audience is those who support or love animals and their literature aims to convert that audience into individuals who live in a cruelty-free way.

The Humane Society of the United States was established in 1954 by Fred Meyers, Larry Andres, Marcia Glasser, and Helen Jones (HSUS 2005). The organization is based in Washington, D.C. and currently headed by Wayne Pacelle. HSUS' mission statement focuses on "Celebrating animals, confronting cruelty" (HSUS 2011). Their

website states that they are “the nation’s largest and most effective animal protection organization backed by eleven million Americans” and “America’s most mainstream force against cruelty, exploitation and neglect, as well as the most trusted voice extolling the human-animal bond” (HSUS 2011). HSUS focuses on all issues affecting animals and has many programs including animal rescue teams, mobile veterinary clinics, sanctuaries, and training programs for local humane societies. The website is updated frequently, and the positions sections were updated in 2009 or 2012. The dates the pamphlets were created range from 2007 to 2011 with the majority in 2008. HSUS’ target audience is those who care for animals and want to create a more humane and sustainable world.

The American Society for the Protection of Animals was founded in 1866 by Henry Bergh. It is the first humane organization established in North America as well as the first to be granted legal authority to investigate and make arrests for crimes against animals (ASPCA About Us). ASPCA continues to uphold Henry Berg’s mission “to provide effective means for the prevention of cruelty to animals throughout the United States” a statement founded on the idea “that animals are entitled to kind and respectful treatment at the hands of humans, and must be protected under the law” (ASPCA About the ASPCA). The organization recognizes itself as an animal welfare organization and has the support of over one million people. ASPCA focuses on all animal issues, however they are particularly specialized in companion animals. There are a vast number of programs run by the ASPCA including humane law enforcement, mobile spay and neuter clinics, animal poison control center, and mobile adoption centers. Unlike PETA, and HSUS, ASPCA does not run large campaigns or distribute free literature such as pamphlets. All of the information regarding positions on issues are on the website which

is updated frequently. ASPCA's target audience consists of animal lovers whom they reach through their programs and advocacy.

These three organizations were chosen because they represent the spectrum of animal advocacy beliefs. Each organization produces a large amount of literature devoted to furthering their cause. For my sample I chose the "About Us," "Positions," and "Frequently Asked Questions" sections of the organizations' websites as well as an assortment of pamphlets produced by the organizations. The sections of the websites and the pamphlets were chosen because they represent the organizations' fundamental beliefs and therefore their positions.

Data Collection

Separate code sheets were created to analyze the websites and pamphlets, which can be found in Appendix A and Appendix B. All of the data from websites and pamphlets represent primary sources as they are directly from the organizations and have not already been analyzed. Since the organizations work on a variety of animal issues I used seven categories (wildlife, research/experimentation, farm animals, dietary/food choice, companion animals, entertainment/sports, and other) to identify the positions. The wildlife category contained positions dealing with wild animals including predator control and fur trapping. Research and or experimentation dealt with positions such as dissection and cosmetic product testing. The categories of farm animals and dietary/food choice are closely related, if a specific diet such as veganism is mentioned that is included under dietary/food choice while abuses on factory farms are included under farm animals. The category of companion animals includes positions such as puppy mills and spay/neuter. Entertainment/sports category is comprised of issues such as greyhound

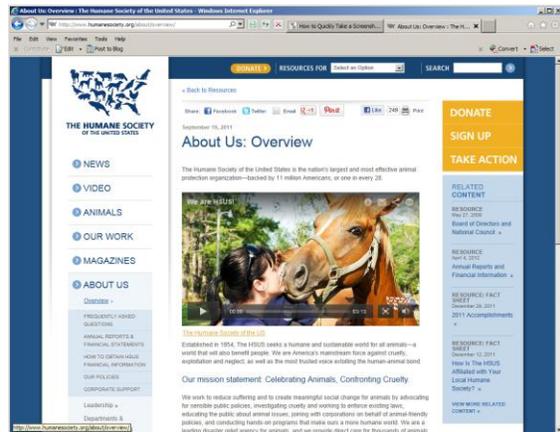
racing and cockfighting. The category of other was created for issues that were not included in any of the above categories yet were important enough for the organizations to include for example HSUS has a position on climate change, and PETA has a statement on why they support animal rights.

The code sheet for websites (Appendix A) represents a more qualitative type of content analysis as it required information to be written down and described. Before looking at any codes there is a space to identify which organization the code sheet represents. The first code that I looked for was a mission statement, which defines the organizations goals in one or two sentences. The mission statements for the organizations are included in the “About Us” sections of the website, a screen capture of which is shown on the following page. Mission statements are explicitly stated by the organizations and therefore are easy to find. Next, I coded for the positions each organization has which fall in to one of the seven categories. Included in these codes are an issue that the organization opposes and sometimes why that issue is opposed. For example under the entertainment/sports section for HSUS I wrote: “opposes blood sports (dogfighting, cockfighting, etc), unjustifiable, causes acute suffering, and survive because of weak laws and enforcement.” The language section on the code sheet is aimed at the wording organizations use to talk about issues as well as other factors they may mention. In keeping with the idea of diagnostic framing, placement of blame is considered by the organizations. Placement of blame is noted as being on corporations, the public, or other (an example of other would be weak law enforcement). The way organizations talked about the subject of the issue was coded for by looking at the use of words such as animal, nonhuman animal, or other. Actions as well as the way they are described are

noted particularly looking for the word murder, slaughter, or others such as killing, or drowning. Coding for mention of other social movements and mention of human benefit is used to identify if the organizations employ strategies typically used by advocacy organizations.

Lastly, the category of other included any words or phrases that stood out as relevant. For example on this section of PETA’s code sheet I wrote down “value their life, and commodities.” I also looked at the number and type of frequently asked questions. Categories for type of frequently asked questions consisted of: mission, policies, strategies, animal care, programs/ services, membership, literature/products, monetary, organizational, and other. This section of the code sheet gives insight into the public’s view of the organizations by illustrating what questions the organization

typically has to deal with. The final section of the website code sheet contains an area for notes which is where I would put down information regarding the history of the organization, or anything that stood out to me while reading.



(Humane Society of the United States 2011)

The code sheet for pamphlets (Appendix B) is comprised of sections on category, images, and other in addition to identical identifying organization, language and notes sections as mentioned in the discussion on website code sheets. Only PETA and HSUS have pamphlets therefore the ASPCA is absent in this section. The categories were coded for in the same way as on the website’s code sheets, however pamphlets often reflected

more than one category. For example, PETA's pamphlet "Fur: There's no excuse" is both under the category of wildlife and companion animals as the organization includes dogs as well as foxes in the pamphlet. The category of other on this code sheet is used for pamphlets such as HSUS' animal rescue team pamphlet. I also considered how imagery is used in the pamphlets. Imagery is an important organizational tool with implications for framing activity, for example pictures of animals with lots of blood, open wounds, or dying represent the framing concept of moral shocks. To classify images, I looked for certain elements present in the image, such as blood or cages, which make an image negative, or a natural environment, which makes an image positive. This section also represents a quantitative type of content analysis as the numbers of positive and negative images were counted.



(People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, 2011)

Analysis

As a process, coding involves two steps: open coding and focused coding. Open coding refers to recording categories or themes as they arise while focused coding involves narrowing down categories identified in open coding (Blackstone 2012).

Open coding for both the websites and pamphlets occurred as I read through the literature and recorded the major positions, language, frequently asked questions, images, and anything else that jumped out at me. For example under the ASPCA experimentation/research category I wrote: "animal use only when research produces information to help human and animal health." During this process I kept an open mind

and made sure to record what the organizations thought was important, not what I thought was important.

Focused coding began as I went through all my code sheets looking at differences and similarities between the organizations. When I found a code that was held by all three organizations I placed into the category of a master frame of animal cruelty. I underlined these pieces of data in the color red. As I reflected on the differences between the organizations four major themes stood out, suffering and salience, necessity, exploitation, and harm to humans, which I decided functioned as frames and underlined each one with a different color. Continuing with the ASPCA example in the above paragraph, that statement was put into the category of necessity during focused coding. These four frames represent organizational variations that contribute to differential definitions of and positions on animal cruelty.

Coding is done multiple times in order to ensure the data are reliable. Reliability refers to the correctness, and dependability of a research project and is comprised of stability, reproducibility, and accuracy (Blackstone 2012). Stability is an important part of reliability that “refers to the extent to which the results of coding vary across different time periods” (Blackstone 2012). In order to ensure stability I coded the data multiple times, leaving a day or so between coding sessions. Reproducibility requires multiple coders to code the same data and come up with similar results. Since I was the only one coding my data, this part of reliability was unable to be addressed. Accuracy requires that one’s coding procedures coincide with a standard coding strategy (Blackstone 2012); in order to be accurate I looked at the coding procedures of projects similar to mine and tried to replicate those procedures to the extent possible.

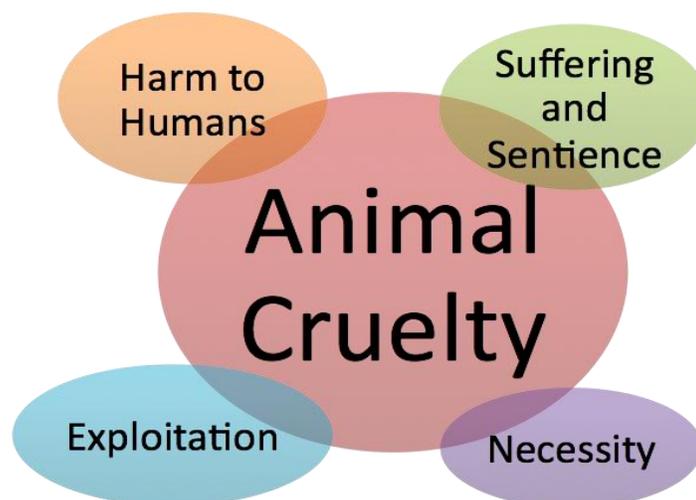
Summary

This section has provided a brief outline of content analysis in general, which three animal advocacy organizations are included in the sample and why, what data were collected and detailed the coding procedures used for my analysis. In the next section I turn my focus to my findings.

Findings

Introduction

Analysis of the data from PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA illustrate a master frame of animal cruelty, and four sub-frames of suffering and sentience, necessity, exploitation, and harm to humans. The four sub-frames stand out as smaller frames within the master frame of animal cruelty. Each organization differed in what categories of animal issues received the most attention, their scope, as well as the strategies they used to achieve their mission. Aside from scope and strategy, the differences between the organizations revolved around three of the sub-frames: necessity, exploitation, and harm to humans. As shown in the figure below, each of the sub-frames partially comprise the master frame of animal cruelty, resulting in similarities between all three organizations, as well as contribute to differences between the organizations. In this section I will discuss the scope and strategies of each organization, the master frame of animal cruelty, and the smaller frames of suffering and sentience, necessity, exploitation, and harm to humans.



Scope and Strategies

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

True to their statement in the “About PETA” section, PETA’s focus is on what they believe to be the most pressing animal issues, which are those surrounding food, clothing, experimentation, and entertainment. Website position sections on these issues are not formatted in a typical statement way but are more extensive requiring visitors to click through many links. However, positions that focus on wildlife and companion animals are given in statement form.

PETA accomplishes its mission (animals are not ours to eat, wear, experiment on, use for entertainment, experiment on, or abuse in any way) most prominently through the strategies of campaigns, legislation, celebrity involvement, and mention of other social movements. Pamphlets and websites frequently had quotations or pictures from celebrities or well-known figures such as Pamela Anderson, Mahatma Gandhi, and Jeffrey Dahmer.

The overwhelming majority of frequently asked questions (105 of 238) were focused on the positions PETA maintains. Answers given by PETA to submitted questions frequently mention other social movements such as women’s and African American’s rights. The language and images used by PETA are quite severe. Their pamphlets contained many images of animals that were dead, bloodied, or skinned alive. Instead of mentioning a practice, such as castration, PETA describes it. For example, rather than simply using the term “castration,” PETA uses the phrase “testicles ripped out of the scrotum” (PETA Animals Used for Food). On the other hand, language used to

describe animals was full of emotions, family ties, and comparisons to humans or animals with a higher societal status.

Humane Society of the United States

The Humane Society of the United States is a large animal welfare organization that accomplishes its mission (a humane and sustainable world for all animals) through education, advocacy, and public policy reform. HSUS focuses on broad issues affecting animals. There is also a substantial focus on programs such as animal rescue teams, and disaster preparedness. Position statements on the website were concise and grouped together by category (wildlife, entertainment, etc). The pamphlets went into more depth about specific issues, and also provided resources for more information. Images on the pamphlets were mild, typically showing images of healthy looking animals and rarely showing death, blood, or wounds. The ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ section of the website is rather small, totaling 36 questions, and focuses on questions involving monetary aspects of the organization (such as finances and donations) and literature/products the organization produces or sells. Language used is also mild: for example, it may mention practices such as clubbing seals with metal tipped hooks, but does not go into further detail. There is no mention of any other social movements and emphasis is placed on creating a humane world for nonhuman and human animals alike.

American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is an animal welfare organization largely focusing on protection. Their mission is “to provide effective means for the prevention of cruelty to animals throughout the United States” (ASPCA About Us). Consequently, there is specific mention of the five freedoms, an important

animal welfare concept outlined in Table 2, in the ASPCA's guiding principles. All animals are seen as deserving of respectful treatment that is protected by law and position statements reflect a wide array of animal issues. Issues surrounding companion animals are given the most attention. There are position statements specifically dedicated to defining responsible guardianship, as well as what types of dog chews are most appropriate.

The ASPCA was the first humane organization to be granted legal authority to investigate and make arrests for crimes against animals, which continues to be a large focus of the organization (ASPCA About the ASPCA). The organization is not involved in large campaigns like PETA and HSUS, but focuses on maintaining programs like animal poison control centers, mobile spay/ neuter clinics, humane law enforcement. Position statements on the website typically give a background summary of the issue at hand, the organization's position, and then suggest actions to remedy the issue. Frequently asked questions were overwhelmingly concentrated on animal care, totaling 29 out of 65 questions. Similar to HSUS, the language used is mild. There is no mention of any other social movements. The ASPCA is involved with protecting all animals from cruelty; however there is a definite focus on the area of companion animals and programs involved with such issues.

Master Frame: Animal Cruelty

Due to the shared goal of eliminating animal cruelty, some positions regarding animal issues are held by all three organizations. Positions that are consistent between PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA comprise a master frame of animal cruelty.

Positions in the wildlife category that reflect a master frame of animal cruelty consist of those on hunting, fur, and exotic pets. Hunting for sport or fun, especially the use of methods such as steel-jaw and body gripping traps, is considered animal cruelty. Closely related to hunting is the opposition to the killing of animals for their fur, including wild animals as well as animals raised on fur farms. Poor living conditions along with ineffective killing methods are the main reasons for organizational opposition. The majority of images on the pamphlets by PETA and HSUS about fur depict animals in small, dirty cages. Obtaining and keeping of wild animals or exotic pets is seen as cruel due to the typical inability of people to provide these animals with proper care.

In terms of experimentation and research the only continuity between organizations is the desire to end harmful tests on animals. Perspectives are similar for experiments testing cosmetics or household products; however that is the only similarity in this category. Differences in experimentation positions will be discussed in the sub-frame of necessity.

Despite different perspectives on farm animals and dietary choices, PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA all consider intensive confinement and the inability to express natural behaviors as invariably cruel.

There are many consistencies between organizations' positions regarding companion animals. The issue of puppy mills has received wide attention from the public as well as animal advocacy organizations. All three organizations oppose large-scale commercial breeders. Cramped, filthy living conditions are a major reason for why the organizations oppose such operations as illustrated by multiple images of dogs in dirty, rusty cages on HSUS' pamphlet. Large-scale commercial breeders contribute to the

problem of pet overpopulation. Because of the overpopulation issue, many shelters have to euthanize animals, a practice which is supported by PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA. The practice is supported because the alternatives to euthanasia, for example being sent to research laboratories, or spending the rest of their life “warehoused” in a shelter, are seen as the worse of two evils. However, the organizations emphasize that euthanasia must be done in a humane method, such as injection, by a professional. In order to remedy the problem of pet overpopulation the organizations strongly support spaying and neutering companion animals. Other cosmetic surgeries, tail docking and ear cropping, which provide no benefit to the animal, are vehemently opposed. Hoarding is another concept that has gained popularity even resulting in television shows on the topic. Animal hoarding is considered cruelty by PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA.

Issues revolving around entertainment or sports were the most agreed upon by all three organizations. Any event in which animals are forced to fight each other or humans is cruel according to all three organizations. The use of animals in circuses is opposed largely due to the challenges circuses face in being able to meet the physical and behavioral needs of the animals as well as cruel training methods. Images used in PETA’s pamphlets opposing circuses consist mostly of young elephants being forced into positions with bull hooks. The use of cruel practices in horse and greyhound racing, especially drugs to enhance performance or minimize pain, are widely contested.

PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA all invoke the concept of the Five Freedoms (Table 2) in their discussion of basic animal needs. ASPCA is the only organization to specifically mention the five freedoms but PETA and HSUS maintain policies that coincide with the five freedoms. The idea of family is also widely considered to be a basic need by the

organizations. PETA frequently mentions that wild animals used in entertainment are torn away from their families. PETA states: “lucky animal companions are treated as members of the family (as they should be!)” (PETA Companion Animals). In their pamphlet on puppy mills, HSUS includes “[animals are] without human companionship and with little hope of ever becoming part of a family” (HSUS 2010). As an addition to the freedom from pain, injury, or disease, PETA and ASPCA view the absence of painkillers during procedures as cruelty. The five freedoms, as well as membership to a family, and necessity of painkillers are viewed as basic needs of animals by PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA.

One of the most importantly agreed upon concepts is the link between human and animal violence. All three organizations mentioned the link between human and animal violence. Accordingly, the organizations argue that the penalties for individuals convicted of animal abuse should reflect the severity of the link. The above positions comprise a master frame of animal cruelty because the beliefs regarding issues or practices are held by all three organizations.

Sub-Frame: Suffering and Sentience

Suffering and sentience are two related and controversial concepts in animal welfare and animal rights literature. The ability of an animal to suffer is often based upon their sentience. Animal advocacy organizations work to alleviate suffering in all types of animals. All the animals discussed in the positions and pamphlets of PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA are noted as having the ability to suffer. The concept of sentience is often vague, yet is of importance to the mission of animal advocacy organizations. Simply, the concept of sentience holds: “a sentient animal has feelings that matter” (Webster 2010).

Because their feelings matter, their suffering should be reduced or completely eliminated. Language around this concept involves emotions.

PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA all use emotions to describe animals. PETA uses emotional descriptors the most frequently. The frequency of emotional descriptors increases in position statements dealing with farm animals, and wildlife including birds and fish. The use of emotional descriptors for companion animals does not occur in position statements for companion animals but instead when PETA is comparing companion animals to farm animals. For example they describe the emotional ability of a cow as comparable and equal to that of a dog. . HSUS uses emotional descriptors of animals more frequently in the areas of experimentation, entertainment, and wildlife. Education of individuals “emphasizes animals as living, sentient creatures” (HSUS 2012). ASPCA uses emotional descriptors the least frequently, however they use more scientific terms such as emphasizing animals’ physiological, behavioral, social, and emotional needs. They also compare procedures on animal anatomy to human anatomy: “removing a cat’s claws would be comparable to removing your own fingernails, along with the bones to which they are attached” (ASPCA Policy and Position Statements). As a sub-frame, suffering and sentience primarily uses emotional descriptors to identify animals as sentient and therefore capable of suffering.

Sub-Frame: Necessity

Often opposition and the degree of opposition to certain issues depend on whether the practice is necessary or not. As each organization has differential views largely based on ideology, necessity plays an important role in providing boundaries as to what is cruel and what is acceptable. Language identifying the necessity of a practice

typically invoked concepts of justice, and whether it is beneficial to the animal. The promotion of alternatives also indicates that a practice is not necessary due to other ways of accomplishing the same task, sometimes even in better ways.

Opposition to certain practices consist of reasoning that there is no reason to engage in such practices. Language of these positions is largely comprised of words such as unjust, beneficial, and convenience. As discussed in the section on the master frame of animal cruelty, all three organizations consider the killing and production of wild animals for fur to be unjust. PETA and HSUS both use the term unjust in their discussion of fur. HSUS also has a pamphlet on shark tournaments stating that the practice is “senseless” and an “unjustifiable waste” (HSUS 2008).

Practices involving companion animals were also widely considered to be unjust. Many of the opposed practices are those done for human convenience and without benefit to the animal. PETA opposes feather clipping, debarking, and declawing all due to the harm they cause animals for the sake of human convenience. HSUS opposes the practice of soring, which is done “to produce a high-stepping gait in the Tennessee Walking Horse show circuit” (HSUS 2010) and results in animal suffering for human entertainment. ASPCA invokes the concept of justice when discussing the keeping of companion animals. The organization also mentions that military animals should not “be unnecessarily put at risk or sacrificed in the service of our country” (ASPCA Policy and Position Statements). Invoking the concept of justice is a powerful tool that PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA use when defining cruel practices.

The practice of eating animal products is no longer necessary for human subsistence. PETA strongly emphasizes this when promoting a vegan diet, and many of

the questions in the ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ section revolve around the ability to maintain a well balanced diet without animal products. HSUS believes that certain groups of animals, threatened or endangered species, and marine mammals, should be protected from subsistence hunting. However, while they mention: “the legitimate needs of human subsistence may also sometimes necessitate the killing of wildlife” (HSUS Our Policies), their pamphlet on dietary choices contains quotes from the U.S. Department of Agriculture saying: “Vegetarian diets can meet all the recommendations for nutrients” (HSUS 2008).

Each organization uses the existence of alternatives to encourage people to stop or reduce practices that harm animals. Alternatives are especially emphasized in the wildlife, experimentation/research, and entertainment categories. Lethal wildlife control is seen as cruel for multiple reasons including the existence of alternatives.

PETA maintains that all experimentation is unnecessary because experiments done on animals are not applicable to humans. Experiments are therefore seen as pointless suffering. HSUS advocates for the use of the Three R’s (reduce, refine, replace) in experimentation as a way to help end research that is harmful to animals. ASPCA maintains that experiments using animals to develop medical treatments “only when alternatives do not exist, and when the research is of very significant humanitarian value” (ASPCA Policy and Position Statements).

PETA also brings up the concept of alternatives when discussing animals in performance acts. The use of great apes in film-settings as well as forcing wild animals to perform is seen as needless due to the existence of animal- free shows that are

entertaining. Overall, PETA views more practices as unnecessary than HSUS and ASPCA.

Sub-Frame: Exploitation

The Merriam- Webster Dictionary defines exploiting as “1: to make productive use of 2. to make use of meanly or unfairly for one’s own advantage” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary 2012). PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA consider certain animal practices or actions to be exploitative. Language used to identify exploitative practices typically consists of nouns such as products, commodities, or machines. Animal advocacy organizations work to change the widely held view that nonhuman animals are under the possession of humans.

PETA’s use of exploitative language occurs throughout the array of positions they hold. Exploitative language is typically employed when talking about industries but occurs elsewhere as well. The organization states that nonhuman animals should not be treated as “disposable commodities”, criticizing for example the pet industry for “mass producing” animals, hunting for being profit driven, and greyhound racing for treating dogs “like running machines.”

HSUS includes the eradication of exploitation as one of its main goals. In their “About Us” section, the organization describes itself as “America’s mainstream force against cruelty, exploitation, and neglect” (HSUS About Us). HSUS uses language of commodities and profit to demonstrate exploitation illustrated by their statement that puppy mills treat animals “like production machines” (HSUS 2012). HSUS opposes cloning of animals for commercial purposes and further goes on to state that cloning experiments “treat animals as commodities alone” and such treatment is “an abuse of

humanity's power over the animal world" (HSUS Our Policies). The use of language indicating an abuse of power is especially consistent with the definition of exploiting.

The discussion of exploitation by the ASPCA takes place largely in the area of companion animals. Breed-specific legislation aims to prevent dog-related injuries, mainly bites, by making it against the law to have a certain breed of dog. This issue is discussed extensively by the ASPCA who oppose it for many reasons including: "As certain breeds are regulated, individuals who exploit aggression in dogs are likely to turn to other, unregulated breeds" (ASPCA Policy and Position Statements). Exploitation here is not done in the context of profit but instead human entertainment. ASPCA supports the use of pet guardian rather than pet owner. The objection here is to change the view of companion animals from property whose "owner has title to and dominion over the animal for the owner's enjoyment and benefit as he/she sees fit" (ASPCA Policy and Position Statements). A change in such terminology is thought to lead to reflection on how humans use and exploit the animals that we have a responsibility toward.

Sub-frame: Harm to Humans

Animal use or abuse affects people in multiple ways. Harm to humans is largely discussed through the link between animal and human violence, disease, climate change, and performance settings.

Cruelty to animals is considered by PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA to be harmful to humans, as it has been shown to lead to other violent crimes. Despite this shared belief, each organization discusses the issue in depth differently. PETA specifically mentions other violent crimes in their discussion of the link including: family violence, murder,

arson, and rape. In their pamphlet PETA provides a large amount of scientific evidence as well as quotes from individuals ranging from attorneys to criminals themselves.

HSUS discusses the link between animal and human violence in positions and pamphlets on animals in entertainment specifically animal fighting and captive wildlife zoos or aquariums. While no specific violent crimes against humans are mentioned, HSUS does mention the concurrence of animal fighting with illegal drugs and firearms. While HSUS does not oppose zoos or aquariums they emphasize that such facilities must place priority on the welfare of the animals, not entertainment. Conditions that do not appropriately care for animals have consequences for visitors' views of animals: "inhumane conditions viewed by an impressionable public provide a negative learning experience by seeming to condone indifference or cruelty" (HSUS Our Policies). The ASPCA does not have a separate statement for the link between animal and human violence but they do mention it in their Guiding Principles Statement.

A major, yet often less recognized, way that animal use can harm humans is through disease. PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA all assert that the keeping of exotic pets can lead to the exposure of disease. Occurrences of diseases like mad-cow or avian flu spark nation wide panic, however the focus is typically on how to avoid certain foods or situations rather than on how the use of animals contributes to such events. PETA mentions disease the most frequently, especially in their positions on farm animals and dietary choices. In keeping with animal rights ideology, PETA promotes a vegan diet, which is devoid of all animal products. HSUS also mentions the dangers of disease stemming from diet. They cite research from the American Dietetic Association about the benefits of vegetarianism as well as cautioning that: "Research has also indicated that

eating excessive quantities of meat, eggs, and dairy can be detrimental to human health” (HSUS Our Policies). The ASPCA does not mention any specific dietary plan or disease associated with eating animal products.

Global climate change has come to be recognized as an important issue that will affect the lives of all Earth’s inhabitants. The animal agribusiness industry has been identified as a significant contributor to environmental destruction. PETA maintains that a vegan diet will help alleviate the negative impacts of climate change. HSUS recognizes the impact of animal agribusiness on climate change and has a statement dedicated to the issue, however they take a less severe approach to it. Instead of cutting out animal products complete, the approach of the Three R’s (reduce, refine, replace) is supported. The ASPCA does not mention climate change in their positions.

Harm to humans is an especially important concept because it is one of the major strategies used by animal advocacy organizations to promote their mission.

Summary

The scope, strategies, and frames illustrated by all three organization’s literature provide a clear picture of their definitions and positions on animal cruelty. PETA defines the majority of animal use as cruelty while HSUS and ASPCA define practices or issues as cruel depending on whether they are necessary or exploitative. Content analysis provides the data necessary to analyze the use of frames by PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA.

Animal advocacy organizations assert their differences from and similarities to other organizations by framing activities including interpretation, and presentation of issues. In the next section I will discuss the specific framing activities of PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA as well as their implications for efficacy.

Discussion

Introduction

The most important outcomes from my research are the existence of a shared master frame of animal cruelty, and the sub-frames of suffering and sentience, necessity, exploitation, and harm to humans. In this section I will discuss my findings in relation to current literature on the application of framing theory to social movement organizations, including the framing activity of my sample, consistency with the literature, and contribution to the literature.

Framing Activity

Collective action frames of the organizations studied consist of the master frame of animal cruelty and the sub-frames of suffering and sentience, necessity, exploitation, and harm to humans. While data reflect that all the organizations use these collective actions frames, the content and application of the frames differs. In the next sub-sections I will discuss the creation¹, development, and effectiveness of each organization's framing activity. A table outlining key highlights of the organizations' framing activity follows each sub-section.

Creation of Frames

The creation of collective action frames entails the diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational processes outlined in Table 1. Beginning with diagnostic processes, PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA all identify animal cruelty as a problem deserving of the public's attention. PETA defines the consumption, wearing, experimentation on, use for entertainment, and abuse of animals as cruelty. The organizations all utilize the master

¹ Despite being a part of the core framing tasks for creating frames, prognostic processes (strategies to rectify a problem) will not be discussed in this section as they have already been discussed in Scope and Strategies of the Findings section.

frame of animal cruelty, as well as the sub-frames of necessity and exploitation. HSUS and ASPCA both use the ideology of the Five Freedoms (Table 2) to identify practices that are cruel. As illustrated by the sub-frames, practices that expose sentient animals to suffering unnecessarily and exploitatively are cruel.

According to PETA, blame for the issue of animal cruelty is placed upon corporations (for example the meat industry), the public, legislation, and law enforcement. The placement of blame by HSUS is almost identical to that of PETA, with the addition of a lack of knowledge and definitions (for example there is no clear cut definition of animal cruelty). ASPCA places some amount of blame on the public (for example irresponsible pet guardians), however they are more likely to provide suggestions on how to make things better rather than place blame.

Also, as part of diagnostic framing, the organizations create an in-group of animals that consists of both humans and nonhuman animals. As mentioned by Cherry (2010), discussion of the link between animal and human violence, animal- human comparisons, and movement-to-movement comparisons reinforce this type of in-group. While the content of sub-frames differs, all three organizations use the two same sub-frames, suffering and sentience, and harm to humans, to create and perpetuate in-group distinctions. The harm to humans sub-frame emphasizes the link between human and animal violence while the suffering and sentience frame maintains that just like humans, nonhuman animals are capable of feeling pain and suffering.

Motivational processes consist of vocabularies of motive. PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA all use the vocabularies of motive as outlined by Benford (1993). Benford (1993) identified four vocabularies of motive: severity, urgency, efficacy, and propriety. All of

the collective action frames (animal cruelty, suffering and sentience, necessity, exploitation, and harm to humans) use language that exemplifies Benford’s vocabularies of motive. The harsh language and images PETA uses throughout its literature demonstrates the vocabularies of severity and urgency, which are meant to convince the public that animal cruelty is a serious issue worth their time. HSUS and ASPCA exemplify these vocabularies of motive through the frames of animal cruelty, suffering and sentience, and harm to humans. Vocabularies of efficacy and propriety deal with a sense of accomplishment by organizational members. All three organizations illustrate these two vocabularies of motive by mentioning how individual action can help, providing resources, and mentioning success stories. While all three organizations use Benford’s vocabularies of motive, they employ them in different ways. For example, PETA uses harsh language and images to convey a sense of severity and urgency while HSUS and ASPCA use more mild language.

Table 3: Creation of Frames

	PETA	HSUS	ASPCA
Identification	Animal Cruelty, Suffering and Sentience, Harm to Humans		
Definition	Animal Cruelty, Necessity, Exploitation		
Boundary Framing	Suffering and Sentience, Harm to Humans		
Blame	Corporations, public, legislation, law enforcement	Corporations, public, legislation, law enforcement, lack of knowledge	Small amount on public

Development of Frames

PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA further develop the collective action frames of animal cruelty, suffering and sentience, necessity, exploitation, and harm to humans through discursive, strategic, and contested processes. The discursive processes of frame articulation and frame amplification result in the unique way each organization presents their beliefs to the public. In terms of my findings, these processes resulted in the contents of the collective action frames. The data analyzed from each organization demonstrate the beliefs each organization amplifies or sees as of great importance. For example, for PETA, the catch phrase “animals are not ours to eat, wear, use in experimentation, use for entertainment, or abuse in any way,” is the amplified set of beliefs.

Strategic procedures consist of the frame alignment processes frame bridging and frame extension, which are meant to recruit participants. PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA all demonstrate frame bridging and frame extension through the sub-frames of suffering and sentience and harm to humans. Suffering and sentience shows how nonhuman animals are capable of suffering just like humans, while concepts such as climate change and disease connect issues concerning animals with issues concerning humans.

Counterframing is the main contested process shown in the data I collected. PETA separates and challenges animal welfare organizations by framing all use of animals by humans as cruel, and rejecting the idea of allowing practices to exist even if they are humane. The ideology of animal rights and the protest strategies PETA uses are highly controversial (perhaps due to the blunt stance and delivery of their beliefs). PETA

counters criticism in these areas by providing position statements on why they support animal rights ideology and why they use strategies such as radical protests. The data collected do not illustrate any counterframing tactics in use by HSUS. One particularly interesting aspect held by some animal rights advocates is the opposition to pet keeping. ASPCA, an animal welfare organization, criticizes this animal rights concept by having position statements on how the human animal bond is beneficial for both humans and animals.

Table 4: Development of Frames

	PETA	HSUS	ASPCA
Frame Alignment	Suffering and Sentience, Harm to Humans		
Frame Articulation	Animal Cruelty, Suffering and Sentience, Necessity, Exploitation, Harm to Humans (All Frames)		
Vocabularies of Motive	All Frames, harsh language	All Frames	All frames
Counterframing	Necessity, Exploitation	None	Necessity

Efficacy

PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA are all large and well-recognized organizations, which illustrates that the results of their framing activity are well received by at least some portion of the public. The number of supporters and assets of each organization illustrates their status as widely influential organizations. PETA has over three million supporters and their 2011 financial statements show over eighteen million in assets. As of their 2010 Annual Report, HSUS has over twelve million members and supporters and over two-hundred-and-five million dollars in assets. ASPCA has over one million followers and its

2010 financial statements illustrate over two-hundred-and-nine million in assets.

Judgments regarding the efficacy of the organizations were made by comparing my findings to the previous literature regarding the influence of framing activity on efficacy. Therefore, such judgments are based on how the data from PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA reflect the aspects efficacy discussed in previous literature. As discussed in the literature review, efficacy of framing activity typically depends on whether frames are credible and resonant.

Credibility begins with whether the actions of social movement organizations are congruent with their actions (frame consistency). The actions taken by all three organizations are consistent with their collective action frames. For example PETA is more proactive in supporting a vegan diet due to their belief that animal products are unnecessary for human dietary needs as shown in the sub-frame of necessity. Conversely, the sub-frame of necessity found in HSUS and ASPCA promote dietary choices that consider humane treatment of animals raised and killed for food.

The study of animal consciousness, which affects their welfare, has been widely examined. This means that there is a large amount of valid evidence from which organizations can base their beliefs and achieve empirical credibility. PETA especially cites evidence and studies throughout their website and pamphlets. HSUS and ASPCA are very aware of the need for valid evidence and mention in their positions the necessity of gaining knowledge in the animal field. For example, the sub-frame of suffering and sentience of PETA and HSUS include fish as animals that are capable of feeling pain. ASPCA does not give a definite position on the cloning of animals because they feel that there is not enough evidence to make a decision for or against the practice.

Credibility of frame articulators is particularly important for PETA to consider, as celebrity involvement is one of their main strategies for recruiting participants. PETA mentions individuals who are widely respected such as Barack Obama and Paul McCartney. The data I collected does not illustrate HSUS' or ASPCA's use of celebrities or other frame articulators, however this does not mean that they do not consider the credibility of frame articulators.

Frame resonance deals with how important the beliefs illustrated in collective action frames are to potential members. Strategies such as boundary framing (as discussed in the above creation of frames section) are important to link the beliefs of the organizations to the beliefs of the public. Experience plays a role in how individuals view animals. If personal experiences are not congruent to the beliefs of PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA then an individual is not likely to support the organizations. For example if an individual has never had a pet, they are not likely to understand or appreciate the bond between someone and their pet. Experience and importance of beliefs to a possible participant are both individual factors that affect frame resonance.

On the other hand, narrative fidelity deals with the relation of an organization's collective action frames to the broader culture. If the collective action frames are in keeping with the dominant societal views, individuals are more likely to participate in those social movement organizations (Benford and Snow 2000). This particularly presents a problem for PETA, as the ideology of animal welfare is more acceptable to the public than animal rights. Discourse and mortality salience are two concepts that provide insight into how PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA deal with dominant societal beliefs.

Language constructs and perpetuates how animals are treated. Scholars such as Stibbe (2001) and Freeman (2010) emphasize the necessity of eliminating oppressive discourse and emphasizing human- animal similarities in order for animals to be treated humanely. For example, Stibbe and Freedom would encourage the use of the term nonhuman animal instead of just animals. However, none of the organizations use this term, which indicates that emphasizing human- animal similarities may not always be the best strategy.

Beatson, Loughnan, and Halloran (2009) found that when humans are confronted with their mortality they are more likely to desire separation from nonhuman animals. Beatson et al. (2009:86) suggest “when animal welfare campaigns make death salient, it may be beneficial to avoid emphasizing human-animal similarities and, instead, to focus on how humankind is uniquely positioned to show kindness and generosity to the creatures who are dependent on us.” The frames of animal cruelty, suffering and sentience, and harm to humans illustrate that all the organizations emphasize human-animal similarities. Images in the pamphlets from PETA and HSUS provide the most prominent examples of how the organizations deal with mortality salience. Pamphlets from HSUS and PETA on wildlife issues, especially animals used for clothing, show images of bloodied or dying animals and humans are portrayed not as similar to animals but as being in a position to solve the problem. It is these types of pamphlets that are more likely to create moral shocks; for example there has been a lot of outrage towards the Canadian government regarding the killing of seals. Perhaps the lack of mortality salience factors in these pamphlets plays a role in how likely an individual is to be upset by a situation and desire to change it.

Conversely, some of PETA's pamphlets ("Animal Abuse & Human Abuse: Partners in Crime" and "Dog Attacks") show images of dying, bloodied animals as well as emphasize human and animal similarities. Issues such as the link between human and animal violence and the acceptability of chaining dogs are more controversial than issues such as the killing of seals. Mortality salience could be a factor in why issues differ in terms of being controversial. In HSUS' pamphlets on animal fighting, human- similarities are emphasized, and there are some graphic pictures, however the majority of pictures depict the animals being rescued or cared for. In this case, HSUS finds a way to balance the benefits of animal-human similarities and the consequences of mortality salience.

Being effective is particularly hard for animal rights organizations such as PETA since their ideology is drastically different from dominant societal beliefs. Data from HSUS and ASPCA illustrate that animal welfare organizations are effective due to their maintenance of frame credibility, empirical credibility, and narrative fidelity. Data from PETA illustrate that the organization is effective in terms of credibility; however they may struggle to be resonant due to the difference between PETA's views and dominant societal beliefs. Overall, the content and presentation of the frames animal cruelty, suffering and sentience, necessity, exploitation, and harm to humans determines whether the beliefs of PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA are viewed as credible, and important by the public.

Table 5: Efficacy

	PETA	HSUS	ASPCA
Credibility	All frames, frame articulators	All frames	All frames
Resonance	Low narrative fidelity, low experiential commensurability	High narrative fidelity, average experiential commensurability	High narrative fidelity, average experiential commensurability

Consistency and Contribution

There is consistency between my findings and the literature on animal rights organizations. PETA’s underlying ideology of animal rights calls for severe restrictions on animal use. Therefore, the organization must rely on attention grabbing strategies such as animal- human comparisons, movement-to-movement comparisons, moral shocks, and celebrity involvement. Achieving resonance is a particular issue for PETA since their beliefs contrast with dominant societal beliefs.

My findings on animal welfare organizations, exemplified by HSUS and ASPCA, contribute to the field, as there is currently little on framing activity in such organizations. Both animal rights and animal welfare organizations share a master frame of animal cruelty and sub frame of suffering and sentience. Differences between organizations in other sub-frames are most likely due to differing ideologies. Strategies such as movement-to-movement comparisons, and celebrity involvement are less present in animal welfare organizations, possibly due to the consistency between the beliefs of animal welfare organizations and dominant societal beliefs.

Summary

This section has provided an in-depth look at the specific framing activities done by PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA. Despite differing definitions of animal cruelty and placement of blame, the processes of boundary framing and vocabularies of motive are similar for all three organizations. In terms of the development of frames, the discursive processes resulted in different outcomes for PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA. PETA and ASPCA actively engaged in counterframing while HSUS did not. However, the strategic processes by all three organizations are achieved through the sub-frames of suffering and sentience, and harm to humans. Lastly, PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA are all effective in terms of credibility; however, PETA is less effective than HSUS and ASPCA in the area of resonance. In the next and final section I will conclude my research by discussing its strengths and weaknesses as well as directions for future research.

Conclusion

Introduction

In this final section I will first discuss the strengths and weaknesses of my research. Next, I will provide suggestions for further research and lastly, highlight the important implications from the research project.

Strengths and Weaknesses

The scope of this research project is both a strength and a weakness. Typically, literature about the framing activity of animal advocacy organizations focuses specifically on one piece of framing activity. For example, a journal article on boundary framing of animal advocacy organizations focuses on one element of diagnostic framing which is just one aspect of framing activity. I was able to look at multiple aspects of framing activity in multiple organizations, which provides a great foundational overview on the subject. Conversely, since the scope of the research is large, I was less able to go into detail about some aspects.

Along with scope, the sample is also a strength and a weakness. The sample in this study is small. Due to time constraint only the three most recognized animal advocacy organizations were included. Also, two of the organizations represented animal welfare while only one represented animal rights, perhaps distorting the prevalence of animal rights or animal welfare positions. There are many more animal advocacy organizations whose framing activity affects the public's view of animal cruelty. The inclusion of more organizations could have yielded a more representative sample. On the other hand, limiting the sample to three organizations allowed me to have an in-depth focus on the organizations.

The type and amount of data I collected has the potential to be a weakness. American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals does not distribute any pamphlets. All of their information is on their website. I included them in the study as they are an influential organization, however the lack of pamphlets may have resulted in an under representation of the organization. Conversely, due to the layout of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals' website, PETA may have been over-represented. While HSUS and ASPCA have position statements in one, organized section, to get PETA's positions I had to look at many more web pages. Therefore, there was more information from PETA than from HSUS and ASPCA.

Future Research

The inclusion of animal and human interactions is relatively new in the field of Sociology. Therefore, there is a massive amount of potential research to be done in the future.

The study of demographics and their relation to support for animal issues and participation in animal advocacy organizations has been a main focus in the area of animal and human interactions. Literature reveals that women who are white, middle class, middle age, and educated are most likely to participate in animal advocacy organizations. However, literature has not yet addressed how such demographics impact the framing activity of animal advocacy organizations. Would the data I collected be the same if a typical animal advocate were a young, Asian, working class individual?

More research should also be done to gauge the effectiveness of PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA. My findings of the organization's efficacy are based exclusively upon their websites and pamphlets. Combining methods such as content analysis of legislation, and

surveying individuals could give a more in-depth perspective how the organizations are viewed. While my study illustrates the framing activity of organizations, it does not address how that framing activity is received. Content analysis enabled me to look at the efficacy of PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA in the context of literature on framing activity; however does this provide the same findings as surveying a group of individuals?

Since animal advocacy organizations are heavily influential in the knowledge and understanding of animal issues, their framing activity and rationale for such activity are important indicators of how the larger society views animal issues such as animal cruelty. The incorporation of animals in the lives of humans necessitates an understanding of how such animals are viewed and therefore treated. Future research in all areas of the field of human and animal interactions will produce a deeper understanding of not just animals, but humans as well. Hopefully my findings provide a foundation of how animal advocacy organizations define animal cruelty from which further research can develop.

Summary

In conclusion, the animal advocacy organizations PETA, HSUS, and ASPCA use the frames of animal cruelty, suffering and sentience, necessity, exploitation, and harm to humans to view the issue of animal cruelty, present it to the public, and motivate people to join their organization. These collective action frames give credibility to all three organizations; however HSUS' and ASPCA's frames are more likely to resonate with the public than PETA's, which gives them an advantage in terms of efficacy. Animal cruelty is an important issue for our society and understanding the foundational framing activities through which organizations define animal cruelty can provide a deeper understanding of how society views both human and nonhuman animals.

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Appendix A

Website Code Sheet

Website Code Sheet

Organization:

PETA HSUS ASPCA

Mission Statement:

Positions:

Wildlife

Research/ Experimentation

Farm Animals

Dietary/ Food

Companion Animals

Entertainment/ Sports

Other

Language:

Rights Welfare

Placement of Blame: Corporations Public Other_____

Subject: Animal Nonhuman Animal Other_____

Actions: Murder Slaughter Other_____

Mention of Other Social Movements: No Yes

If yes, which one(s) _____

Mention of Human Benefit: No Yes

If yes, describe _____

Other _____

Frequently Asked Questions:

Total Number of Questions:

Most Frequent Types of Questions Asked:

Mission Strategies Animal Care

Programs/Services Membership Literature/ Products

Monetary Organizational Other Positions

Notes:

Appendix B

Pamphlet Code Sheet

Code Sheet: Pamphlets

Organization:

- PETA HSUS ASPCA

Category:

- Wildlife Research/ Experimentation Farm Animals
 Dietary/ Food Companion Animals Entertainment/ Sports
 Other

Images:

Negative Images-

Number of images:

Description: Blood Wounds Death Cages

Restraints Scars Emaciated

Other _____

Positive Images-

Number of images:

Description: Natural Environment Healthy Appearance

Other _____

Language:

Rights Welfare

Placement of Blame: Corporations Public Other _____

Subject: Animal Nonhuman Animal Other _____

Actions: Murder Slaughter Other _____

Mention of Other Social Movements: None Yes

If yes, which one(s) _____

Author's Biography

Cary H. Williams was born in Seattle, Washington on May 17, 1990. She was raised in Greenwich, Connecticut and graduated from Greenwich High School in 2008. Majoring in Sociology, Cary is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Alpha Kappa Delta, the National Society of Collegiate Scholars, and the American Sociological Association.

This coming Fall Cary will be going to Tufts University for a Masters Degree in Animal and Public Policy. After completing the one-year program, she plans on beginning a career in animal advocacy.