Kerstin Jacobsson and Jonas Lindblom

Animal Rights Activism

A Moral-Sociological Perspective
on Social Movements

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Protest and Social Movements

Recent years have seen an explosion of protest movements around the world, and academic theories are racing to catch up with them. This series aims to further our understanding of the origins, dealings, decisions, and outcomes of social movements by fostering dialogue among many traditions of thought, across European nations and across continents. All theoretical perspectives are welcome. Books in the series typically combine theory with empirical research, dealing with various types of mobilization, from neighborhood groups to revolutions. We especially welcome work that synthesizes or compares different approaches to social movements, such as cultural and structural traditions, micro- and macro-social, economic and ideal, or qualitative and quantitative. Books in the series will be published in English. One goal is to encourage non-native speakers to introduce their work to Anglophone audiences. Another is to maximize accessibility: all books will be available in open access within a year after printed publication.

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Preface

This book is the result of a productive and inspiring five-year long collaboration between us, and one to which we equally contributed. Our friendship, however, as well as our mutual interest in Durkheim, dates back more than 20 years. Without our continual dialogues this book and its theoretical endeavor would simply not have been possible. We can only wish that you, the reader, will find the book just as stimulating to read as it was for us to write.

Kerstin Jacobsson and Jonas Lindblom
Gothenburg and Västerås, May 2016

1   Introduction: A Moral-Sociological Perspective on Social Movements

> I am engaged in many different things, but I sense a special responsibility for animals. Maybe it matters here that animals are so helpless. Of course there are humans needing help from us who are privileged and well-off, but animals need this to an even greater degree. They don't even have a theoretical possibility of achieving their theoretical liberation (Swedish animal rights activist).[1]

As this Swedish animal rights activist stated, social movements make it their responsibility and task to challenge and transform institutionalized morality. Historically, social movement activists proved to be a reflexive force in the development of novel moral ideals, making possible the theoretically improbable. The women's movement, the environmental movement, the civil rights movement, the peace movement and the animal rights movement have all radically changed our sensibilities and conceptions of moral reality. The animal rights movement is particularly interesting as it invites us to extend our moral concern to encompass a new category of beings – animals. By viewing animals as helpless and unprivileged, yet as individuals with intrinsic value and rights, animal rights activists seek to change dominant social practices and moral codes. In this book, we develop a moral-sociological perspective, stressing the role of moral reflexivity in social movements. As the quoted animal rights activist displays, activists think, work, and act rather than responding routinely on moral matters. Social movements, such as the animal rights movement, provide society with moral tests and "an opportunity to plumb our moral sensibilities and convictions, and to articulate and elaborate on them" (Jasper, 1997: 5).

While the moral aspects of contemporary forms of collective action were frequently acknowledged in previous research (e.g. Touraine, 1981; Cohen, 1985; Gusfield, 1986; Jasper & Nelkin, 1992; Jasper, 1997; Crossley, 2002; Smelser, 2011/1962 to name some of the best-known works), in this book we examine social movements as essentially moral phenomena. The moral-sociological perspective draws on an original reading of Émile Durkheim's reflections on morality in *Moral Education* (2002/1925). An insight throughout Durkheim's production is that social life and moral life

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1   All translations from the original Swedish by the authors.

are intertwined and cannot be comprehended separately. As Durkheim already noted in *The Division of Labor in Society*, co-operation between individuals cannot be explained in terms of economic contracts alone as these presuppose the existence of moral trust and understanding in order to be respected: "In reality, moral life permeates all the relationships that go to make up co-operation, since it would not be possible if social sentiments, and consequently moral ones, did not preside over its elaboration" (Durkheim, 1984/1893: 221). While these insights were fundamental for the development of sociology as a discipline (e.g. Shilling & Mellor, 2001), they have not been systematically used in theorizing social movements.

According to Durkheim, it is morality that keeps social groups internally together (Durkheim, 2002/1925: 85). Morality, in this perspective, has two components: first an element of obligation that prescribes or proscribes certain behaviors or types of behaviors and are backed up by sanction. Although Durkheim generally spoke of "rules of conduct" rather than "norms" when describing this element of morality, we employ the term norms throughout this book (see also Hall, 1987: 47-48). Second, there is also the element of ideals, denoting a conception of what the world should be like, which are internalized and perceived as desirable (Durkheim, 2002/1925: 96). Collective ideals are vested with prestige because they belong to the sphere of "the sacred" (Durkheim, 2001/1912; see also Emirbayer, 1996). To this realm Durkheim assigned societal phenomena that he saw as having intrinsic value – such as, first and foremost, moral ideals – as distinct from objects that only have instrumental value, which belong to the sphere of "the profane". All societies, including modern societies, have ideals that are perceived as sacred and inviolable. They form part of the self-identity of the group. Indeed the ideal aspect of morality is essential to Durkheim's concept of society. "Society", Durkheim noted, "is above all a composition of ideas, beliefs and sentiments of all sorts that realize themselves through individuals. Foremost of these ideas is the moral ideal which is its principle *raison d'être*" (Durkheim, 1993/1887: 20). Thus, morality is both external and internal to the individual; it is both imposed through social pressure and internalized as embraced ideals. Ideals and norms are the mechanisms that give rise to social solidarity, constituting the moral order in society.

The distinction between ideals and norms is important for our analysis. Ideals tend to be unrealized and as yet un-translated into social obligations. The role of activists, we suggest, is to interpret and pursue these ideals to achieve social change. Seeking to realize and embody moral ideals, activists thus draw their sustenance from the burning fire of the sacred; the closer they stay to the sacred ideals, the hotter that fire that fuels their passion.

This is something that is reflected even in everyday language: English speaks of highly energetic activists as "balls of fire", and in Swedish, they are often described as "souls of fire" (*eldsjälar*), or persons who "are afire" for a cause, driven by burning enthusiasm. Drawing on Durkheim's ideas, we conceptualize social movement activists as *pursuers of moral ideals* as they interpret and formulate new societal visions about the environment, peace, democracy, animal rights, etcetera. It is the sacred ideals and the sentiments that these ideals evoke that are the driving force that propels social movement activists to social change.

However, as pursuers of ideals, activists readily come into *conflict with established social norms*. This resonates with common understandings of social movements, such as Diani's definition of movements as consisting of "a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in political or cultural conflicts, on the basis of shared collective identities" (Diani, 1992: 1). Social movements seek to challenge and transcend the present order (Melucci, 1985, 1989). As pursuers of sacred ideals, activists tend to have an ambivalent relationship with institutional politics built on compromise, pragmatism, and a piecemeal approach to change. Even though there are variations in the degree to which social movements challenge mainstream society, they should, therefore, analytically be distinguished from such entities as companies, interest groups, or political parties (see also Melucci, 1989; Diani, 1992; Eder, 1993).

Social movements' conflicts with established social norms have wide-ranging significance for the analysis of moral reflexivity in protest. Melucci has importantly pointed out that social movements play a reflexive role as mirrors, enlightening "what every system doesn't say of itself, the amount of silence, violence, irrationality which is always hidden in the dominant codes" (Melucci, 1985: 811), at the same time announcing that something else is possible (see also Melucci, 1989). Or, as put by Eder: "The collective moral protest follows the logic of the ritual reversal of official reality" (Eder, 1985: 879). Thus, "[t]he difference between moral ideal and social reality becomes the motivating force of collective protest" (Ibid). In Eder's analysis, what characterizes a social movement in contrast to pressure groups, as well as moral crusades, are the ongoing collective learning processes, whereby moral issues also become the subject of argumentative debate (Eder, 1985: 886). This is in line with our notion of the moral reflexivity in social movement activism.

However, more than these previous approaches we stress, and explore the consequences of, social movement activists' *inherently ambiguous moral standing* in relation to the moral order of society. On the one hand,

social movement activists may be seen as defending important ideals (the sacred). Being in conflict with established social norms, on the other hand, activists may *also* be perceived as outsiders, threats, villains, and/or criminals by the general public (the profane). And typically, they oscillate between these positions, performing both the "angelic" role and the role of "the illegitimate" in the moral order of society. As will be shown in the following chapters, this ambiguous moral position is consequential for social movement activists in a variety of ways. It carries implications for activists' lifeworlds, including their emotional life, their group life and their social relationships. We suggest that a Durkheimian understanding of morality is particularly enlightening for exploring activists' equivocal moral position in mainstream society as pursuers of sacred moral ideals as well as norm transgressors, which prompts and fosters moral reflexivity in social movement activism.

Furthermore, moral reflexivity in social movements is promoted by the cultural modernization process. In Durkheim's terms, this development forms part of the "secularization of morality" in modern societies (Durkheim, 2002/1925: 1-14). As shown by Giddens (1991) and others (e.g. Moore, 2006; Adkins, 2003) today's societies are characterized by institutional reflexivity. By this they emphasize actors' capacity to continually examine and interpret the past in light of new knowledge, with increasingly more areas of life being opened up for reflexive questioning and choice. The focus is on the break with tradition as more dogmatic and ritualistic. Reflexivity theorists stress the widespread significance of self-conscious self-monitoring, individual identity formation and lifestyle choices in society. This transformation is stimulated by innovative technologies, and social movements are at the forefront in engaging in new moral issues, such as those related to reproduction, gene-modification, and nano-application. And, as pointed out by social movement researchers, reflexivity is further increased by activists' questioning of the structures of domination existing in the present age (Cohen, 1985: 694; Melucci, 1985; see also Touraine, 1981, 2000).

However, approaches such as Giddens', which emphasize the role of self-fashioning, run the risk of reinstating voluntarism. While modernity opens for moral reflexivity, this always takes place within the confines of the moral order of existing norms and ideals. As Alexander puts it: reflexivity can only be understood "within the context of cultural tradition, not outside it" (Alexander 1996b: 136). Furthermore, reflexivity is embodied and demands a different moral practice. This means that reflexivity is not only an individual but also a collective endeavor, as it takes place among

fellow actors within groups (e.g. Adkins, 2003). Social movements are a case in point. Here reflexivity is deeply social in nature, arising from clashes between activists' novel ethical orientations and the various norms of society; to reach their desired goals activists need to habitually and collectively reflect over the institutionalized meanings.[2] The activist community provides, we suggest, a community of thinking and arguing on moral issues. This point is supported by King (2006), who argues that activists need to distance themselves from traditional norms in order to transform social conditions. Similarly, as Pallotta well described, animal rights activism implies a turning away from "dominant cultural ideologies", normalizing concern and empathy for animals (Pallotta, 2008: 150; see also Hansson & Jacobsson, 2014).

What is needed is a perspective on morality, which reconciles structure and agency. Thus far actor-oriented approaches have been more developed in the study of social movements. Typically, morality is seen as a cultural resource that actors interpret and use (following Swidler, 1986; see e.g. Williams, 1995; for a critique, see Alexander, 1996a), rather than focusing on the structural dimensions of morality. For instance, it has been pointed out that social movement activists are often fuelled by their moral principles, intuitions and emotions (e.g. Jasper, 1997), or that activists may harbor altruistic motives (Melucci, 1996). Yet, having elaborated their models within the cultural tradition of social movements, there has been less focus on how morality imposes constraints on social movements' conduct.

We suggest that the actor-oriented models of morality need to be complemented with a conception of morality as social fact. Moral reflexivity, as exerted by activists, is structurally conditioned by the moral order. Morality

2   A moral-sociological understanding of moral reflexivity thus differs from moral philosophy. Firstly, a moral-sociological perspective is exclusively oriented towards an empirical inquiry of activists' moral beliefs, providing no normative theory. A focus on observable moral realities in social movements thus replaces the philosopher's elaboration of, and arguments for, moral principles. Second, a moral-sociological perspective is historical in its nature. It pays attention to the development and alterations in moral beliefs across different societies over time. Moral philosophy is, on the other hand, usually ahistorical as it relates to history as an intellectual source of accurate or erroneous ideas. Finally, and consistent with the aforementioned differences, a moral-sociological perspective takes a relativist stance towards moral reflexivity. When developing, what he called, "the science of moral facts", Durkheim criticized the moral philosophers who establish their own idealist conceptions without reference to the actual moral state of society. As Durkheim noted: "One hears it said today that we can know something of economic, legal, religious, and linguistic matters *only* if we begin by observing facts, analyzing them, comparing them. There is no reason why it should be otherwise with moral facts" (Durkheim, 2002/1925: 23, original italics).

imposes constraints on activists when they go against societal norms and ideals. For instance, norm transgressions are met with social sanctions, whether in the form of legal punishment, public opinion reactions or waves of indignation (Durkheim, 1982/1895). Indeed, Durkheim's sociological method encourages us to capture morality by studying responses to norm-breaking. A Durkheimian understanding of morality carries important implications for the study of social movements. First, as social fact, morality restricts activists in their striving for social change; activists have to take existing norms into account when carrying out actions. Second, morality is not something that can simply be "used" and "traded" instrumentally as more actor oriented and voluntaristic models on protest would have it (such as Snow et al., 1986; Benford & Snow, 2000). In other words, activists are constrained by norms as well as being a prominent force in changing norms. And this necessitates moral reflexivity.

A Sociology of Morals and the Research on Social Movements

For a long period, social movement researchers tended to shun Durkheim, associating him with the "collective behavior" tradition along with authors such as Gustave Le Bon (1960/1895) and Neil Smelser (2011/1962). Collective protest here readily became associated with unruly crowds or deviant behavior. Durkheim was also commonly identified with the heavily criticized structural functionalism of Talcott Parsons. Since then there has been a renewed interest in Durkheim generally, focusing *inter alia*, on the symbolic dimensions of social life (e.g. Alexander, 1988), micro-sociological analysis of emotions (e.g. Collins, 2001, 2005/2004) and social network and relational analyses (e.g. Emirbayer, 1996, 1997). Prominent authors such as Alexander (e.g. 1988) and Emirbayer (1996) have explicitly attempted to bridge the structure and agency divide.

All these neo-Durkheimian approaches are highly relevant for, and have been used in, the study of social movements over the last decades. However, few if any of the previous studies have taken Durkheim's sociology of morality as developed in *Moral Education* (2002/1925) as their point of departure. Rather, Durkheim's contribution to the study of activism has been viewed variously through the lenses of "a symbolic framework" (e.g. Alexander, 1996a; Olesen, 2015), "a network theory" (Segre, 2004), "a relational theory" (Emirbayer, 1996), "a functionalist approach" (Tamayo Flores-Alatorre, 1995), "a disintegration theory" (Traugott, 1984), "a theory of moral economy"

(Paige, 1983), "an interaction ritual theory" (Collins, 2001) or in terms of "symbolic crusades" (Gusfield, 1986/1963), to mention but a few alternatives.

Instead, it is Durkheim's sociology of religion (Durkheim, 2001/1912) that has been the main source of inspiration, and understandably so, given the importance of symbols (Olesen, 2015) and rituals in movement life. Activists' participation in rituals, such as demonstrations, sit-ins, acts of civil disobedience, meetings, and the like, can have the function of developing and strengthening the moral ties between them. Indeed, rituals have been shown to have a positive effect on the level of engagement in political action and social movements (e.g. Tiryakian, 1995; Barker, 1999; Peterson, 2001; Casquete, 2006; Gasparre et al., 2010). Rituals create a heightened sense of awareness and aliveness, or what Durkheim (2001/1912) called *collective effervescence*, without which activists would not be able to transcend individual self-interest and produce norms, symbols, heroes, villains, and history.

Many critics of Durkheim, such as Tilly (1981),[3] focused on his early and arguably more structuralist conception of morality. *The Division of Labor in Society* (1984/1893) and *Suicide* (1951/1897) may invite such macro-oriented and determinist readings. In contrast, *Moral Education* allows for a decidedly less structuralist reading of Durkheim. His analysis here is located at the micro- and meso-levels focusing on the social group as the main unit of analysis. Here, it is useful to recall Durkheim's views on society, which refers to all kinds of social groups. Durkheim was well aware of our simultaneous membership in many different groups, such as family, occupational/professional organization, company, political party, nation, even humanity (Durkheim, 1984/1893: 298, 1993/1887: 100, 2002/1925), and, we might add, activist group. Thus, as Collins has put it in his discussion of

3   Few authors have been more merciless against Durkheim than Tilly (1981) in his piece with the telling title *Useless Durkheim*. Tilly's interest was the link between large-scale social change and collective action. Thus, like most of Durkheim's critics, Tilly took his point of departure in *The Division of Labor in Society* and *Suicide*. He derived three hypotheses for which he found no historical validity: (1) Weakened social control (as a consequence of anomie) leads to heightened levels of social conflict; (2) Periods of rapid social change increase levels of social conflict and protest; and (3) Different forms of social disorder, such as suicide, crime and protest, tend to coincide since they stem from the same reason (lack of moral regulation due to social change). Emirbayer (1996) questioned this one-dimensional reading of Durkheim. In his reply to Tilly entitled *Useful Durkheim* he pointed to the relevance of Durkheim's sociology of religion for historical-comparative analysis of collective action. Taking into account both the structural contexts for action and the "dynamic moment of *human agency*" (Emirbayer, 1996: 111), his conceptualization aimed to bridge the structure and agency divide, just as our perspective in this book aims to do (see also Olesen, 2015).

Durkheim's notion of society; "when he speaks of the principles of a 'society' and its integration, we should not take this to mean that *empirically* this necessarily refers to a 'whole society' as conventionally defined (which in practice usually means a political unit, especially a nation state)". Instead, Collins adds, we should "take 'society' in its generic sense, as any instance of prolonged sociation, whatever its boundaries in time and space" (Collins, 1988: 109).

Moreover, Durkheim's sociology of morality (Durkheim, 2002/1925) is less consensus-oriented than his more functionalist works (cf. Durkheim, 2001/1912). Being "at once complex and a single whole" (Durkheim, 2002/1925: 111), Durkheim also acknowledged the tensions and contradictions of moral reality. Indeed, Durkheim's approach to morality is compatible with moral consensus as well as conflict. As morality is group-specific, and groups exist at different levels, there will be competing ideals and norms in a pluralist world. If anything, Durkheim was aware that social diversity means moral diversity. Thus, an individual is not embracing only one ideal since she belongs to many different social groups that all exert pressure on her. We even have several collective consciences operating within us (Durkheim, 1984/1893: 67). Collins also emphasizes this point: "'Collective conscience' can exist in little pockets rather than as one huge sky covering everybody'" (Collins, 2005/2004: 15). This is why Collins is able to read Durkheim as a contribution to conflict theory (e.g. Collins, 1988; see also Collins, 1975). The parallel focus on conflict and consensus that such a moral-sociological perspective provides, opens new venues for social movement theorizing.

Furthermore, Durkheim's sociology of morality allows for agency and reflexive action. Few authors have acknowledged that Durkheim identified, alongside ideals and norms, a third element of morality, which he called *autonomy* (Durkheim, 2002/1925). The modernization process – secularization, the development of modern science, and, especially, individualization – increases the autonomy of the individual in relation to collective imperatives:

> Society is continually evolving; morality itself must be sufficiently flexible to change gradually as proves necessary. But this requires that morality not be internalized in such a way as to be beyond criticism or reflection, the agents *par excellence* of all change (Durkheim, 2002/1925: 52).

In modern society, discipline and authority must be based on a critical rational individualism. Morality can thus no longer be endorsed blindly, Durkheim claimed, but must be accepted voluntarily and be open to criticism

(Durkheim, 2002: 52, 118 ff). It is for this reason that we can claim Durkheim has provided a point of departure for an analysis of moral reflexivity, even if he did not himself develop his views on this aspect much further. More than Durkheim himself, but consistent with his outline of morality in modern societies, we emphasize social actors' potential awareness of discrepancies between ideals and norms – in other words their moral reflexivity.

A pluralist understanding of a Durkheimian framework calls for an examination of the relation between ideals and norms. As Jacobsson and Löfmarck (2008) pointed out, some norms are spread throughout vast geographical and social areas; they are generalized social facts. Other norms operate more locally; they are localized or, as we prefer to put it, contextual social facts. Furthermore, many contextualized ideals are group-specific interpretations of more generalized ideals. For instance, Wahlström and Peterson (2006) argued that, in Sweden, there is "an open cultural opportunity structure" in that people in general are inclined to listen to, and be affected by, the message of the animal rights movement. This may indeed be true concerning animal welfare, as it is a widely shared ideal in Sweden that animals should be treated well. However, this is much less true of animal rights proper, as the animal rights activists regularly encounter resistance from the public in their actions and daily life. Even so, the ideas that animal rights activists promote are not alien to the public at large. Other movements, in contrast, may operate in an environment where the cultural opportunity structure is more closed and their contextualized ideals clash with more generalized ones. The neo-Nazi movement is a case in point; its notions and values are usually viewed as undemocratic and dystopian (Cooter, 2006). While some social movement activists evoke not only annoyance but also sympathy among the general public, the neo-Nazi activists are seen as "evil" and as a threat to their fellow citizens and society at large.

A pluralist view on morality in contemporary society should not be equated with decreased salience of social norms. There is a tendency in postmodern sociology to talk about a nihilistic or anomic state in today's societies. Yet, there is an erroneous reasoning in the postmodern view of moral reality. The fact that social norms become outdated does not imply that morality disappears and disbelief enters (cf. Bauman, 1993). Instead, other social norms arise replacing the older ones.[4] For instance, corporal

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4   Joas, too, stresses "how false it would be to characterize our contemporary moral situation through terms such as 'liberalization' or 'value loss'. The relaxation of norms in certain areas often contrasts with greatly increased sensitivity in others", such as the growing awareness of sexual molestation in general and child abuse in particular (Joas, 2013: 57).

punishment in the classroom is replaced by a new respect for the pupil's needs and talents. Ever-increasing demands to respect the rights of the individual spouse substitute the moral imperatives of marriage, illustrating the sacrality of individualism in modern societies (Durkheim, 2001/1912, 2002/1925; Goffman, 1967). Similarly there are societies where the ideals highlighting the value of democracy and equality are accepted by the majority of people. Put differently, rather than the sacred being abolished, we can, with Emirbayer, speak of a "developmental history of the sacred" and the rise, more intensely in some periods than others, "of conflicts over the very meaning and legitimate definition of sacred ideals" (Emirbayer, 1996: 115; see also Alexander & Mast, 2006: 7 ff.). It is precisely in such conflicts that social movement activists engage.

Rethinking Concepts in the Study of Social Movements

Our moral-sociological perspective puts morality at the heart of social movements, showing how the social grammar of social movements is morally based. Without denying the analytical relevance of other aspects of social movements, such as their resource mobilization or their political or discursive opportunities, we argue that it is the moral dimension that is constitutive of social movements. This carries implications for the understanding of key concepts in social movement studies.

Collective identity

Collective identity is one of the most important concepts in theorization of social movements. Most often it has been used to refer to shared meanings, understandings of the world, stories and narratives, identifications, symbolic allies and enemies, which constitute the activist group (e.g. Melucci, 1996; Della Porta & Diani, 1999; Jasper, 2007; Johnston & Klandermans, 1995; Davies, 2002; Polletta, 2006; Flesher Fominaya, 2010). Theorists, especially within the "New Social Movement" paradigm, have pointed out that identity formation in social movements involves non-negotiable demands, as Cohen put it (1985: 692; see also Pizzorno, 1978). Yet, the cultural approaches in general have come to concentrate more on the cognitive and symbolic rather than the moral aspects of culture (e.g. Eyerman & Jamison, 1991; Johnston & Klandermans, 1995; Davies, 2002; Baumgarten et al., 2014). Even if it has been recognized that shared moral dedication is an important aspect of activist identity (Jasper, 1997; Polletta & Jasper, 2001), we would take this

one step further. In viewing morality as constitutive of social movements we are saying that morality is at the top of the salience hierarchy of the activist identity to agree with Sheldon Stryker (1980). This means that the collective identity of protesters cannot be reduced to common lifestyle markers and interests, for instance. As a thought-experiment, take away activists' moral convictions, principles and sentiments, and all the cultural elements referred to above lose their meaning. As Downton and Wehr pointed out, "all movements which have high levels of community will also have high levels of agreement about 'core beliefs'. In short, they will be moral communities" (Downton & Wehr, 1991: 119). Protests depend on activists' shared identification with moral convictions that then create bonds between them.

Framing

What would a distinct moral-sociological perspective add to the framing approach to protest? In response to structural-functionalist theorizing, the post-1970s development of studies on activism has largely been influenced, explicitly or implicitly, by the rational actor theory (as noted by e.g. Alexander, 1996a; Udéhn, 1996; Crossley, 2002). These theories place instrumental rationality and strategic decision-making at the core of social movements. Different versions of this theory are found, among others, in the "classical approaches" of resource mobilization (following McCarthy & Zald, 1973) and political process theory (e.g. Eisinger, 1973; McAdam, 1982, 1988; Tarrow, 1998). For resource mobilization theorists, for instance, moral resources are simply one type of resource, among others, to be exploited to reach one's ends (Edwards & McCarthy, 2007), a component among others in the "tool-kit" that culture provides (e.g. Williams, 1995, drawing on Swidler, 1986). Thus, the cultural models, too, often exhibit features of the rational actor theory, as may be most clearly visible in the highly influential "framing approach" (following Snow et al., 1986).[5] Frames are externally oriented tools developed and deployed to recruit new members, to mobilize adherents, and to acquire resources (Benford & Snow, 2000). According to Snow, Rochford, Worden and Benford (1986), activists need to display their messages in

5   Indeed, as Alexander has argued, "this instrumentalization of the cultural approach" shows "the extraordinary influence that the classical model has come to exercise over contemporary social science" (Alexander, 1996a: 210). This analytical approach undermines the relative autonomy of, in Alexander's vocabulary, the symbolic patterns of representations (Ibid), and, in our conceptualization, the moral domain.

a favorable light and use the right rhetoric to resonate with the public. Here social movement activists are depicted as salesmen concerned with formulating and packaging their message in such a way that it can appeal to a wider audience, but without giving enough attention to how morality as a social fact limits the manner in which this can be done. Moreover, the precise object of resonance remains under-theorized. By concentrating mostly or even exclusively on the rhetoric or narrative level of analysis, framing theorists tend to overlook the weight of the target audiences' moral convictions and sentiments, and thus "the depth and richness of that which must be connected to" (Crossley, 2002: 142-143). In our terms, it is "moral resonance" that is at stake.

Emotions

A moral-sociological perspective sees value in the (re-)emergent interest in the role of emotions in social movements. For instance, research on emotions has shown the mobilizing capacity of moral emotions, and the significance of moral batteries (e.g. Jasper, 1997, 2011; Collins, 2001). As Jasper (1997), among others (e.g. Gamson, 1992), pointed out, many of the different emotions that trigger protests are intertwined with activists' moral beliefs. Activists' righteous anger, discontent, and indignation, represent deeply moral reactions, evoked by transgression of normative boundaries. Moreover, this branch of research has emphasized the role of rituals which, as do protests in general, produce emotions (e.g. Peterson, 2001; Goodwin et al., 2001). Two of the most important contributions in this area are *Passionate Politics*, edited by Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta (2001), and *Emotions* and *Social Movements*, edited by Flam and King (2005). Both volumes point out, alongside a manifold of other themes, the intimate link between activists' emotions and moral life, much along the same lines as the moral-sociological perspective advocated in this book. Yet our perspective also differs from these sociology of emotions approaches in perceiving morality as constitutive of social movements; this implies that morality is more fundamental than emotions. On the one hand, it is in the light of the burning fire of their sacred ideals that activists' emotional responses can be understood; for instance, violating the sacred prompts strong reactions of righteous anger or resentment. On the other hand, being transgressors of norms, activists experience emotions such as anger, hostility and guilt, and otherness and estrangement are common. Therefore, activists need to actively perform emotion work (cf. Hochschild, 1983) to deal with the entailed emotional costs. This is another instance of moral reflexivity in a social movements' activism.

Deviance

The understanding of activists' norm-breaking requires a rethinking of the concept of deviance. Traditionally, a deviance perspective has been associated with a negative view of social movement protest, equating activism with crowd behavior and unfounded emotionality. Protest has been explained in terms of individual as well as societal pathology by authors such as Le Bon (1960/1895) and Smelser (2011/1962). Even though Durkheim (1951/1897) did not focus explicitly on protest, authors have used his concept of anomie to associate protest with other types of deviant behavior such as crime (e.g. Tilly, 1981). The criticism put forward by social movement scholars of the early deviance perspective has, in many ways, been justified (e.g. Goodwin et al., 2001; Jasper, 2007). Nevertheless, by making deviance an area of taboo in social movement studies scholars risk throwing out the baby with the bathwater.[6] By not taking into account the central importance of social norms as a building block of the moral order, researchers fail to grasp the wide-ranging significance of activists' oftentimes minority or outsider position in society. Animal rights activists are a case in point. As will be illustrated later, there is a need to conceptualize animal protesters' frequent experiences of social exclusion and victimization in relation mainstream society (see also Pallotta, 2008). This calls for a new way to theorize deviance in social movements.

A deviance perspective needs to encompass both structure and agency. This can be illustrated with reference to Smelser's (2011/1962) classic approach to collective behavior. This is where the actor is defined by her institutional affiliation, and the focus is on her conforming to norms and roles (cf. Parsons, 1951). In Smelser's view, social movements arise from conditions of social strain, and in response, protesters form "generalized beliefs" that have a strong effect upon the behavior that will follow (Smelser, 2011/1962: 31-42, 51-82). Yet, these generalized beliefs "short-circuit" the social system, meaning that social movements fall short of a proper solution to the systemic problems. Not taking all relevant aspects of the situation into account, activists are instead prone to magical thinking and primary psychological processes, basing their protest on emotions, such as hysteria and hostility (Ibid: 51-82). This lack of agency in Smelser's model means that his theory does not allow for moral reflexivity, which is of critical

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6   For instance, in general deviance has been excluded as a topic in overviews of social movement research (see e.g. Crossley, 2002; Snow et al., 2007; Goodwin & Jasper, 2009).

importance in our framework.[7] Instead of being overwhelmed by their emotions, activists reflexively work with their emotions to underpin their moral agenda; instead of being imprisoned by an assigned role, activists actively reflect on their identity and social expectations. Moreover, in contrast to Smelser's approach, the moral-sociological perspective on deviance advocated in this book incorporates a life-world perspective. This means that it is not the analyst who attributes deviance to protesters; deviance arises from processes of social definitions and labeling (Becker, 1963). Activists' own experiences of being perceived as deviant become crucial here.

Social status

Social status in activist communities has been an important topic in previous research (e.g. McAdam, 1988; Friedman & McAdam, 1992; Peterson & Thörn, 1994). In one of the most influential studies of the political process approach, *Freedom Summer*, McAdam (1988) examined how white students from American universities joined black civil rights activists to assist in political undertakings in the south. One important conclusion was that those who participated could use their involvement to become rising stars and leaders of the new social movements that later emerged, such as the student movement, the women's movement, and the environmental movement. Yet, while it is well-known that activist identities generally involve claims to social status (see also Friedman & McAdam, 1992), we need to know more about the criteria that lie behind this. The moral-sociological perspective put forward here provides a novel angle, taking on the task of investigating how activists' moral distinctions also produce social effects. Durkheim and Mauss (1963/1903) called attention to the fact that in social life people and things are frequently classified according to a moral affective rather than descriptive rationale. This means that the very categories and divisions that make up activists' moral world of rightness and goodness are also manifested in status distinctions. These are manifested in clear divisions between in-group and out-group members as well as influencing the informal positions within the activist-community. Thus, we investigate

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7   Smelser makes a distinction between norm-oriented and value-oriented movements (Smelser, 2011/1962: 159-218). Yet this distinction is untenable as all movements draw on moral ideals. Even a professional group that seeks to raise the employees' salary, to use one of Smelser's examples of norm-oriented movements, base their collective behavior on ideals; for instance the ideal of equality.

how activists in the same movement establish "moral hierarchies" among themselves.

A Moral-Sociological Study of Animal Rights Activism

> The moral ideal is not fixed: it is alive, it evolves, it transforms itself endlessly in spite of the respect with which it is surrounded. Tomorrow's ideal will not be that of today. There are always new ideas and aspirations springing up which necessitate modifications, and at times there are even deeper revolutions in the existing morality (Durkheim, 1979/1920: 81).

To illustrate the usefulness of the moral-sociological perspective advanced above, we apply it to an empirical study of Swedish animal rights activists. It is well-known that many social movement activists burn for their cause. Activists' convictions are invested with strong moral and affective force, fueling their public actions and guiding them in their everyday lives (e.g. Jasper, 1997; Goodwin et al., 2001). Rarely is this more evident than in the case of animal rights activists. Conversion to an animal rights universe of meaning has implications for both the public and private dimensions of a person's life. Animal rights activism involves "a totalizing life-style" pervading every aspect of the lives of activists and making the members' confrontations of social norms more thorough than observable in most other social movements (see e.g. Pallotta, 2005). Historically, other social movements have pursued radically new ideals. However, the animal rights movement provokes us to extend our moral concern and obligation to animals as sentient beings, as individuals with intrinsic value and entitled to rights. By viewing meat consumption as murder and modern insemination practices as institutionalized rape, and by drawing parallels between industrial meat production and the Holocaust, they seek to radically transform social practices and moral codes. The movement has been characterized as bringing "a Copernican revolution into Western moral discourse" (Kochi & Ordan, 2008). The animal rights case, therefore, effectively illustrates not only how social movements are pursuers of ideals, but also how this readily leads them into conflict with existing social norms. This makes moral reflexivity salient in animal rights activism.

Several scholarly contributions on the animal rights movement exhibit similarities with the approach presented here. The moral nature of the animal rights activists' protest was explored earlier (e.g. Jasper & Nelkin, 1992; Jasper, 1997). The fact that activists diverge from the meat-normative order of mainstream society and thus require de-socialization in relation to the dominant

norms, and re-socialization into the animal rights community has been highlighted (Pallotta, 2005; Hansson & Jacobsson, 2014). Likewise, aspects of the lifeworlds of activists (e.g. Herzog, 1993; Shapiro, 1994; McDonald, 2000; Pallotta, 2005) have been investigated, along with their protest repertoires and tactics (e.g. Munro, 2001, 2005). However, our Durkheimian interpretation allows us to provide coherence to these findings. We understand these findings as interdependent rather than separate from one another, examining them in terms of the relationship between ideals and norms; in other words, as social facts of the moral order. What our moral-sociological perspective adds to earlier research on animal rights activism is thus an overall frame for otherwise diverse results and conclusions. In addition, in novel ways it explores the role and consequences of moral reflexivity in the animal rights movement, illuminating activists' moral performances, symbolic boundary-drawing, emotion work and deviance management.

The focus on animal rights protesters in Sweden serves to redress the Anglo-Saxon focus in existing research, as most animal rights movement studies were conducted in Anglo-Saxon countries, in particular the US, Great Britain, and Australia (see e.g. Herzog, 1993; Shapiro, 1994; Einwohner, 1999, 2002; Jamison et al., 2000; Pallotta, 2005; Gaarder, 2011; Groves, 1997; Jasper, 1997; Munro, 2001, 2005; Taylor, 2004; Metcalfe, 2008; Upton, 2011; Monaghan, 2013).

In Sweden, as in many other countries, animal protection organizations were developed in the latter part of the 19th century, and, similar to other countries, there were two branches: anti-vivisection societies and animal protection societies. The Swedish General Animal Protection Association (*Svenska Allmänna Djurskyddsföreningen*; unofficial translation) was inaugurated as a national organization in 1875, though some local groups already existed at that time. In 1897, a number of animal protection organizations formed a joint umbrella organization, *De svenska djurskyddsföreningarnas centralförbund*, which has been called Animal Welfare Sweden (*Djurskyddet Sverige* since 2004). In 1957, The Swedish General Animal Protection Association, together with two other organizations with origins in the 1880s, decided to build a joint organization, The Swedish Animal Protection Organization (*Svenska Djurskyddsföreningen*).

The anti-vivisection society, the Nordic Society against Painful Experiments on Animals (*Nordiska Samfundet mot plågsamma djurförsök*), was founded in 1882 with inspiration from Britain (Carlsson, 2007). It has become the most important animal welfare organization in Sweden. In 1999, its name was changed to Animal Rights Sweden (*Djurens Rätt*), reflecting a

radicalization of the organization's claims, as well as a widening of the agenda from anti-vivisectionism to animal rights more broadly.

Following international trends, the Swedish animal rights movement had a revival period in the 1970s and 1980s, with animal ethics and vivisectionism debated more in the public sphere (Carlsson, 2007). Animal rights activism in its more radical form developed during the 1970s in many countries, under the intellectual influence of thinkers such as Peter Singer and later Tom Regan (e.g. Garner, 2004). More recently, Gary Francione (1996; see also Francione & Garner, 2010) also served as a source of inspiration for the Swedish movement. While animal welfare activism focuses on improving animal protection, animal rights activism takes a more radical position questioning the power relations underlying the exploitation of animals by humans and the instrumental use of animals for human needs. While the distinction between animal welfare and animal rights is very important for activists, it is not always easy to classify organizations along these lines. For instance, Animal Rights Sweden today tries to combine animal-welfare activism (pleading for the humane treatment of animals and improving animal protection) with more radical animal-rights claims (challenging animal oppression and human superiority in a more fundamental way). Its name change in 1999 reflected that move. Today Animal Rights Sweden has a membership of approximately 36,000 (in 2014). Just as in the U.S. and Britain, the Swedish animal rights movement had its peak in 1990 when Animal Rights Sweden had almost 65,000 members. Its official policy is to work within the boundaries of existing law, engaging in a broad range of activities. This includes lobby work and awareness-raising campaigns against animal experiments, fur farms, the industrial production of meat, excessive meat consumption, and the like.

In 2005, the Animal Rights Alliance (*Djurrättsalliansen*) was founded as a more activist and radical alternative to Animal Rights Sweden. It conducts mainly traditional public opinion work in combination with undercover filming of animal farms (pigs, minks), but also gives its explicit moral support to other types of illegal action.

During the 1980s, actions of animal liberation started in Sweden, first in the form of rescuing animals from research laboratories and, from the 1990s onwards, frequently in the form of releases from fur farms (minks). A Swedish version of ALF (Animal Liberation Front) actions started in 1985, with inspiration from Britain where the organization was established in the mid-seventies. Typical of ALF is their use of illegal methods such as breaking into laboratories, poultry farms and fur farms to free animals. ALF represents a form of "militant activism" since the actions of the organization regularly feature elements of violence; e.g. threats, stalking, harassment,

physical assaults, destruction of material property and even bombings (see e.g. Tester, 1991; Best & Nocella II, 2004; Garner, 2004; Liddick, 2006; Donovan & Timothy Coupe, 2013). Sweden is one of the countries where illegal actions in the ALF-manner are more frequent (as self-reported by activists on the Bite Back site). Occasional actions performed under the label of the Animal Rights Militia (*Djurrättsmilisen*) have also taken place in Sweden. This grouping is even more militant than ALF, not shunning violence against humans (which according to the ALF code of conduct should be avoided).[8]

In this study we focus on animal rights activism rather than the activities performed by animal protection organizations.[9] We have examined animal rights activism over three different periods – late 1990s, mid 2000s and late 2000s. Despite the fact that the movement was more active and salient in the first period, our results point to a continuity when it comes to activists' lifeworlds; involving their outlooks, experiences and social relationships (cf. Dahlberg et al., 2008).

Our study is based on 23 open-ended, in-depth interviews with activists involved in various networks of the wider animal rights movement, carried out over a period of 12 years. Five of the interviews were conducted in 1998, four of which were with activists affiliated with Animal Rights Sweden and one interviewee representing the Animal Liberation Front. An additional ten interviews were conducted in 2004, with activists engaged in Animal Rights Sweden. The remaining eight interviews took place in 2010 with activists belonging to the Animal Rights Alliance and a local network of animal rights activists in Gothenburg. The Gothenburg group is a local network with an approach similar to the Animal Rights Alliance. Some of these interviewees also had experience with ALF actions. Indeed, the majority of activists studied for this research belonged to several networks, or had been engaged in them in the past, thus not limiting their commitment to only one group. This means that our sample includes both activists who only work within the boundary of the law (who were in majority) and militant as well as non-militant activists who carried out illegal actions.[10] Regarding the latter difference, the

8   For instance, in 2014 a couple of animal rights activists were sentenced to long prison terms for actions such as arson and defilement of graves directed at fur-farmers and their families.

9   In this research we have thus excluded animal welfare organizations, such as Animal Welfare Sweden (*Djurskyddet Sverige*) and the Swedish Animal Protection Organization (*Svenska Djurskyddsföreningen*).

10   The concept of militancy is not applied here to animal rights activists who perform non-violent forms of illegal actions (cf. Peterson, 2001 who operates with a wider definition of militancy and violence including such actions in her understanding of militant action). Typically, in Sweden non-violent protesters have been influenced by the Plowshares-group

sample includes both activists who follow the Gandhian principles of civil disobedience and carry out their actions (such as the rescue of hens) in the open, informing the farmer and the authorities about the action afterward, and activists who have been engaged in violent forms of animal liberation and sabotage. However, in this book we are not primarily interested in the activists' preferred forms of action but their outlooks, experiences, and social relationships. Since these are notably similar regardless of organizational affiliation, we will treat them as one sample and only make distinctions between the different groups of activists if relevant. As we will show, the animal rights groups share a common moral worldview, and the forms of moral reflexivity mentioned can be found among animal rights protesters in general.[11]

Furthermore, the lifeworld research-method employed here seeks to encompass the actor-structure nexus. Following the traditional formulation of the method, which solely focuses on the actor-level of analysis (e.g. Moustakas, 1994), we also study morality through animal rights activists' explicit descriptions and statements about their lives and their motivations. As social fact, however, morality also needs to be studied through *the effects* it has, *inter alia* on friendships, work, family life, education, relationships with the public, and experiences of the media. As pointed out by Durkheim (1982/1895: 53-56), often we are not aware of social forces operating, until we notice the reactions when we go against the stream. Thus, morality is consequential and it also operates through feelings and experiences. Put by Durkheim, "social pressure makes itself felt through mental channels" (Durkheim, 2001/1912: 211). Following Durkheim, a methodological device to capture norms is to study norm transgressions and the reactions that they evoke (see also Jacobsson & Löfmarck, 2008). This idea has most clearly been taken up in the legacy of ethnomethodology and its use of "breaching experiments" (e.g. Garfinkel, 2002). Here we study reactions to, and experiences of norm transgressions, as self-reported in the activist interviews.

(see chapter 2) and its use of civil disobedience. This is also the case with another animal rights group, The Rescue Service (*Räddningstjänsten*), which was formed in 1999 and specialized in freeing animals and placing them in caring sanctuaries. Two of our interviewees had previous experiences of activism in The Rescue Service.

11   However, this world-view is not necessarily shared by so-called animal welfarists. The internal cleavages and differences in outlooks between the animal rights and animal welfare groups, as two branches of the wider animal rights movement, are well documented in international research (e.g. Groves, 2001; Jacobsson, 2012). Drawing on Munson's vocabulary, we may speak of an animal rights stream and an animal welfare stream. Being "together but not one" (Munson, 2008: 96-131), the animal rights groups usually perceive animal welfare activities as morally insufficient or even condemnable.

To select our interviewees we adopted the approach of "intensity-sampling", focusing on information-rich cases that clearly manifest the phenomenon of interest (e.g. Patton, 2002). Against this backdrop the selection criteria were that all interviewees were vegans (eat no animal products for ethical and political reasons) with distinct animal-rightist and activist identities, which means that we have only interviewed the most dedicated activists. We contacted the key figures in the respective groups at the times when the interviews took place, either those holding formal leading positions or those who functioned as informal leaders. The remaining participants were then recruited through the activists' social networks, with the aim of securing diversity in terms of age and gender. We interviewed 13 women and 10 men aged between 20 and 60. Most of the activists worked professionally, although some of the younger ones were students, and a few were unemployed or on sick leave. For all of them, the animal rights issue was a priority concern in their lives and paid work more of a necessity. The participants came from the two largest cities in Sweden, Stockholm and Gothenburg.

After establishing a relationship of mutual trust with the key-figures of each group, nearly all activists immediately accepted when asked about participating in the study. The interviews lasted between one-and-a-half and five hours, exploring the activists' lifeworlds. As a consequence of the open-ended approach we employed, talk about outlooks, experiences and social relationships not only came up in connection with our pre-formulated questions but also featured spontaneously in the interviews as the activists shared information about their biographies. The recurrent stories of activists' thoughts and feelings led us to conclude that the 23 interviews were enough to reach saturation. Our findings are also well in line with the research findings of the studies of animal rights activism in the Anglo-Saxon countries (see above), indicating that the animal rights movement is in many ways a transnational movement and that the moral universe of activists does not differ much across countries. However, their concrete action strategies may differ depending on the specific context (see, for instance, Jacobsson, 2012, 2013 on animal rights activism in Poland).

Outline of the book

Using animal rights activism as a case study, this book is intended to illustrate the fruitfulness of a moral-sociological perspective on social

movements. The various chapters explore different aspects of moral re-flexivity in activism.[12]

In chapter 2, we illustrate empirically how moral reflexivity is exerted both in the internal movement life and the movement's outwards strategies and the staging of collective action. It is argued that it is in the light of the relationship, and clashes, between ideals and norms, that the need for moral reflexivity should be understood. For comparative purposes, we compare animal rights activism with peace-activists engaged in the Plowshares movement in Sweden. Moral reflexivity, we argue, is prominent in both movements but plays out in partly different ways in the two activist-communities. Moreover, we show how morality permeates both the inner life of the activist groups and the outward strategies, which leads us to speak of the moral grammar of strategy.

In chapter 3, moral reflexivity is illuminated by the emotion work per-formed by social movement activists. In this chapter we explain both the activists' need for emotion work and the ways in which this is conducted. The chapter identifies five types of emotion work frequently performed by animal rights activists; that is, what we name, "containing", "ventilation", "ritualization", "micro-shocking" and "normalization of guilt".

In chapter 4, we explore moral reflexivity in terms of the symbolic boundary drawing performed by activists, showing that animal rights activ-ists challenge established boundaries between sacred and profane when dismantling the symbolic boundary between humans and animals. Fur-thermore, the chapter investigates the implications of the sacred character of moral ideals, analyzing animal rights activism as an instance of "secular religion". Here we identify a number of elementary forms and experiences of religious life in animal rights activism: "conversion experiences", "dedication and commitment", "moral community building", "protection of the sacred", and "rituals".

In chapter 5, we further explore moral reflexivity, developing a deviance perspective on social movements. As social movement activists challenge established social norms, they are frequently defined as norm transgressors or outsiders by their social environment. Relating to Howard Becker's (1963) classic theory, the chapter conceptualizes activists as "entrepreneurial devi-ants", showing both similarities and differences with traditional deviant groups. Empirically, the chapter presents the ways in which animal rights

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12   This book draws on earlier formulations of our moral-sociological perspective published in a number of journal-articles (Jacobsson & Lindblom, 2012, 2013; Lindblom & Jacobsson, 2014; Jacobsson, 2014).

activists counter stereotypes, which is interpreted as a form of deviance management. We identify six such strategies: "passing, "confronting", "neutralization", "idealization", "group cohesion" and "group transformation".

Finally, in chapter 6 we summarize our moral-sociological framework and give some suggestions for further research.

2   Moral Reflexivity

> When I meet people at the information stall or meet friends and comment
> something on animal rights, I have often noticed that people move into
> a defensive position. Sometimes it is enough that I say that I am a vegan
> for them to start defending themselves. I think this is because they know
> deep down that it is wrong to eat meat (Swedish animal rights activist).

> Even if it will end badly for me personally, I know that I have acted in the
> right way. If we would enter and disarm weapons for millions of crowns
> and the justice system wouldn't react, that would give the wrong effect.
> The sentence to prison must be seen as a self-evident part of the action
> (Swedish Plowshares activist).

In this chapter, we demonstrate the fruitfulness of our moral-sociological
framework by comparing two activist communities operating in a Swedish
context: animal-rights activists and the Plowshares group. The comparison
is interesting as it uncovers similarities as well as differences in the moral re-
flexivity exercised by social movements. Both activist communities pursue
moral ideals built around a common credo – animal rights and non-violence,
respectively – which are translated into behavioral norms. However, while
the Plowshares promote a widely shared ideal, namely peace, the animal
rights activists challenge existing modes of thinking more radically still.
The animal protesters advocate a historically recent idea, one for which no
consensus exists in society as yet, according to which animals are entitled
to rights. Also in other ways, moral reflexivity is exercised differently by
animal rights activists and the Plowshares, both internally within the
groups and externally in relation to their surroundings.

The Plowshares movement was founded in the US in 1980, and became
established in Sweden in the mid-1980s. Being part of the broader peace
and solidarity movement, it is known for its advocacy of pacifism and civil
disobedience, with the overriding aim of disarming the military (Nepstad,
2004, 2008). The activists employ illegal action following the classical
Gandhian principles of civil disobedience (openness and preparedness to
face the legal consequences of one's actions). Plowshares typically perform
high-risk actions, like breaking into prohibited military areas to damage
weaponry by beating it with household hammers, to provide a symbolic
and moral example for others to follow. The actions are carried out openly
and they are intended to trigger a process of reflection and dialogue, with

the Plowshares usually informing the authorities of where and when an event is going to take place and then waiting to be arrested once the action is over. The Plowshares interviewed for this research have all taken part in the planning and exercise of at least one high-risk action. In total, we interviewed 10 activists (with an equal share of women and men) in 2004. As the Plowshares group in Sweden has always been of a small-scale, all the group's key activists at the time were included in our study. Since the time of the interviews, the Swedish Plowshare activist group has had an increasingly "slumbering" existence, and it has not been engaged in many actions of late. However, some (former) members have performed direct actions in the context of other peace groups (such as the direct action group *Ofog*).

Sources of Moral Reflexivity

A recurring theme in the theorizing of modern societies is the notion of reflexivity (Giddens, 1991; Beck, 1992). The role of reflexivity has also been a theme in social movement studies (e.g. Melucci, 1985, 1989; Peterson & Thörn, 1994). However, there has been less recognition of the critical importance of moral reflexivity as a key-aspect of contemporary social movements. In this chapter, we draw attention to some prominent ways in which social movement activists exert moral reflexivity.

Applying our moral-sociological perspective, we identify an elementary source of moral reflexivity in social movements. It might be termed the activist's dilemma of norms and ideals. Since activists are pursuers and followers of ideals, they are frequently compelled to transgress norms in society as their visions and ideas of how society ought to be come into conflict with judicial and informal norms reflecting how society, in fact, is. Being dependent on public reactions for the advancement and success of their cause, social movements nonetheless must make an effort to downplay the prominence and importance of their norm breaking while underlining the ideal-conforming aspects of the actions they perform. As put by Eyerman, "To be recognized as a movement, rather than a 'terrorist organization', for example, can confer a degree of legitimacy on a group and its actions in that they impute political and in that sense popular, rather than merely criminal, motivations. Part of a group's representational struggle may indeed be to achieve recognition as a movement" (Eyerman, 2006: 204). In the absence of reflection over methods, forms of communication, and learning structures through which to resolve this dilemma, the activist

group is doomed to be perceived as deviant, facing the peril of alienating its audience (on "the dilemmas of activism", see also Jasper, 2006: especially 70-71, 106-107; Maddison & Scalmer, 2006).

In the life of movements, this dilemma of norms and ideals plays out in several different ways. First of all, it helps to explain the public's unstable definitions of activists' moral status. When Plowshares activists dismantle a nuclear weapon, for example, the incident might be perceived as action in fulfillment of the ideal of non-violent, diplomatic means to solve world conflicts; at the same time, however, it also involves illegal entry into a military area and destroying expensive property. When the public focus is on law and legality, Plowshares will consequently be looked upon as "criminals" and even as "terrorists"; at other times, when the ideal component of the action is successfully brought to the fore, Plowshares may be seen as "moral heroes", having accomplished what ordinary citizens may consider unachievable. Reflecting over moral definitions and awareness of the moral signals communicated to outside audiences are thus necessary in all activism. As one Swedish woman activist interviewed for this study described her experiences upon being released from a UK prison where she had served time for her role in a Plowshares action on a nuclear submarine:

> It wouldn't be incorrect to say that I was regarded as a hero. For one thing, I am a woman. Second, I was in prison in another country. Moreover, I had participated in dismantling nuclear weapons, which, everyone agrees, are something they don't like. I'm sure the reaction would have been different if it had been about ordinary Swedish arms exports. People have told me, "You are really someone who has the courage to do things" and "You are prepared to sacrifice yourself to stand up for your views". They think what I did was very brave.

Secondly, to connect to the public activists also need to position themselves vis-à-vis other activist groups in the same field, as pointed out in the research on radical flank effects (e.g. Haines, 2013). Protesters frequently have difficulties in distancing themselves from circles and networks whose ideals they might share but whose norm-breaking activities make them dangerous to be associated with. The attitude of Animal Rights Sweden towards non-legal activist groups, such as the Animal Liberation Front, provides a case in point. Since Animal Rights Sweden makes a conscious effort to look "clean" and acceptable to the general public, it must condemn every faction that attacks animal laboratories, releases minks and hens, blackmails farmers, and so on. Yet, the argument put forth by the organization in these

connections is not that these groups are morally wrong, but rather that their methods are politically ineffective.[13] Some of the most committed activists in Animals Rights Sweden come with a substantial background in non-legal activism, having meanwhile arrived at the conclusion that legal activism provides a more effective means to bring about social change. Similarly, the Plowshares are careful to distance themselves from activists who do not follow the Gandhian principles of civil disobedience, not wanting their sacred core "polluted" through association with groups not living up to their own standards of moral reflexivity. It is for this very reason that the Plowshares movement in Sweden refuses to build alliances with other activist groups.

Thirdly, the dilemma of norms and ideals is vital for our understanding of the dramaturgical aspects of actions. To begin with, it influences the staging of the low-risk actions typical of activist groups like Animal Rights Sweden. For example, in propagating ideals that many find controversial and provocative, animal rights activists transgress ceremonial norms, such as etiquette around meals (cf. Goffman, 1967). In contrast to substantive norms anchored in tradition, law, and ethics, which were Durkheim's primary object of interest, ceremonial norms involve rules governing manners and etiquette vital to people's self-presentation (Goffman, 1967: 53-56). Also when staging public performances they have to take into account ceremonial norms prescribing calm and balanced comportment in public. If protesters maintain their self-composure, showing deference and demeanor, passers-by are more likely to acknowledge them as being committed to moral ideals regarding the improvement of animals' life-conditions and well-being. For this reason, animal rights activists frequently work in groups providing enough support from the team for them to stay calm even when provoked. Animal Rights Sweden even provides training for its members in how to meet the public, alongside opportunities to attend international activist camps offering trauma management training to help activists improve their emotional management skills.[14]

The Plowshares have demonstrated an advanced form of reflexivity in this sense, with activists frequently developing and rehearsing action

13   Previous research on the public's attitudes in the UK toward the ALF confirms that this, moreover, may reflect a general pattern in society. Those who, in fact, support the aims of the organization (mainly young people aged between 16 and 25) also usually reject its methods (Garner, 2004).

14   There are also books available to help activists get over traumatic experiences (such as Jones, 2007).

scripts and practicing role-play in preparation for actions. Such preparations are necessitated by the extensive norm breaking that high-risk actions frequently imply. It has become part and parcel of the Plowshares' culture to offer security guards coffee and biscuits once the action is over, to talk to the police as if they were friends, to try to negotiate with representatives of the weapons industry, and so on. All this is practiced beforehand, by playing the various roles and placing oneself in the position of the security guard, the police officer, and others to be confronted on the scene of the action. Besides demonstrating an ability to engage in creative planning, such reflexive measures are also resorted to in order to counteract the distinct possibility of becoming labeled as a "menace to society".

A fourth aspect of moral reflexivity in movement actions is revealed in activists' communicative efforts to reach out and recruit new members and supporters. As noted above, the sacred quality of the ideals that a movement presents itself as standing for, may lead to activists' being defined as "moral heroes", something that might be thought of as obviously preferable to attracting pejorative responses. Being conceived of as a moral superman, however, does not necessarily provide a more favorable position from which to convince an audience of one's cause. Very often the response of being looked up to as a moral giant will prevent the intended receivers of the message from being able to identify themselves with the activists enough to commit to their cause. The distance between what the activists try to achieve and the lifeworlds of ordinary persons remains too great. A Plowshares activist who travelled around Sweden to talk about an action to disable aircraft, for which he and two fellow activists had served long sentences, described this problem as follows:

> After our meetings where we talked about our actions were over, we used to go and eat something with those who had come there to listen to us. There it, of course, became obvious that we were vegetarians as well. I felt that that was just too much. I hadn't just made the great sacrifice where I risked imprisonment and huge fines; I felt that it just made up one more barrier between me and ordinary people. So I decided to give up being a vegetarian.

In conclusion, moral reflexivity manifests in various ways in protest, in relation to activists' identity, in connection to other activist groups, in the staging of actions, and in the recruitment of new members.

Reflexive Performance in Activism

As indicated above, an analysis of moral reflexivity in social movements needs to take into account what Goffman called ceremonial norms. Activists' pursuit of ideals requires the staging of successful public performances. Importantly, as Alexander and others have shown, collective action in contemporary society has increasingly come to take an overtly performative cast (see Alexander, 2004, 2006, 2011; Alexander et al., 2006; Eyerman, 2006). Today the public space could equally well be understood as a public stage, a symbolic forum in which actors have increasing freedom to create and to project performances of their reasons, dramas tailored to audiences (Alexander, 2004).

To draw on Goffman's (1990/1959: 203ff.) terminology, ideals are pursued by means of dramaturgical control. This requires that activists act as a team. Goffman defined a teammate as someone whose dramaturgical co-operation one is dependent on to foster a given definition of the situation before the audience. There is then a bond of reciprocal dependence linking teammates to one another, but also the risk that someone in the team will "give away the show" or disrupt it by inappropriate conduct (Goffman, 1990/1959: 88). Activists who stage a collective action constitute this kind of a team, with their effort requiring collaboration as well as social control. Movement actions can thus be understood as dramas (e.g. Benford & Hunt, 1992) having to achieve what framing theorists have termed "frame resonance" with their target constituency (e.g. Snow et al., 1986).

Dramaturgical control also entails the exertion of dramaturgical loyalty, discipline, and circumspection in the staging of performances (see also Benford & Hunt, 1992). In the context of activism, exercising dramaturgical loyalty often means that members of the team must not exploit their presence in the front region to stage their own show. The Plowshares activists, for instance, do not accept their members' engagement in acts of civil disobedience on their own, since this may lead to a reputation as a solitary maniac. Dramaturgical loyalty also entails not revealing secrets (like future actions) between performances. Social movements carrying out high-risk actions have typically developed practices and routines to preserve secrecy (Peterson, 2001). Dramaturgical discipline requires that activists remember their respective roles. They are expected not to behave inappropriately while performing action, and that participants exercise expression control (face, voice, etc.). Dramaturgical circumspection entails that the team members in the activist group decide in advance how to best stage the show. Foresight is exercised in all planning and preparations, and

practice prudence when acting out their plan. In other words, protests are reflexively performed.

It is for the purpose of dramaturgical control that activist groups use scripts (Benford & Hunt, 1992). As noted above, the activists in Animal Rights Sweden are trained to stay calm and rely on scientifically based arguments when faced with an antagonistic or aggressive audience. They work in teams in order to better handle potential disruptions. Following an action, activists often have coffee together, which allows them an opportunity to review and debate the events that just transpired. In Goffman's terminology, they thereby leave the front stage for a backstage where suppressed feelings can be let out. As one animal rights activist described it:

> It doesn't give a serious impression if I lose my temper. If there is a quarrel at the end, it's because people get angry and yell at us. But we don't shout back; we respond with arguments or just shrug our shoulders. Only when the people have left and no one is around listening we might express what we really feel.

The Plowshares' actions are even more carefully choreographed. The action scripts are clearly articulated. They are learned, rehearsed, and internalized using repetitive role-plays that prepare the activists for the public staging of the action with no room left for improvisation. Unpredictability is viewed as dangerous, since other actors may resort to violence when feeling threatened. For this reason, to be able to adhere to the script no matter what happens during the action, the activists practice poise under pressure. The Plowshares always have designated persons on hand to provide emotional support for those performing a high-risk action.

The scripts are also reflexively applied within the Plowshares movement itself. As noted earlier, internal meetings and decision-making processes are monitored by designated facilitators and/or "vibe-watchers" (Peterson & Thörn, 1994). In addition, activists receive training in emotion management, to be able to better understand and talk about their own emotional reactions. The group members openly criticize and challenge one another, for instance by questioning their fellow activists' motives for their engagement.

Several of the interviewed Plowshares members had, before this study was carried out, lived together in shared accommodation. In such an environment of strict social control, reflexivity at times turns into mutual accusations of rule breaking as well as informing and reporting on alleged rule breakers. Monitoring can thus be a source of conflict and uneasiness. Some interviewees expressed personal frustration and impatience with

the degree to which interactions and individual behaviors were regulated within the group. Rigid rules concerning how teammates were to talk about one another, for instance, had even led to some activists' being expelled from the movement, as reported by one Plowshares activist:

> We've had a system of rules, lots of explicit guidelines concerning non-violence, about how you are to express yourself. You may not insult another person or speak about someone else when this person is not present. In practice, however, many people have been unable to follow these rules. This has led to their becoming excluded, which has caused serious rifts among the group members.

Goffman characterized the familiarity among teammates as "a kind of intimacy without warmth". This is a familiarity that is not of an organic kind but rather a formal relationship (Goffman, 1990/1959: 88). In the internal culture of the Swedish Plowshares, where most informal interactions are monitored according to the scripts, there seems to be no backstage region where the teammates can withdraw to vent their suppressed feelings, relax, and shed their role characters. Thus, the Gandhian notions of non-violence and openness that guide the Plowshares can lead to harmful consequences when transformed into rules and behavioral dictates within their group. The social control function overrides the role of the group as an emotional support structure for the individual activists.

Furthermore, it should be underlined that dramaturgical control is not confined to the activist groups who adhere to non-violent actions. It is also employed in militant protest. In this connection Juris (2005) has called attention to what he calls "performative violence", which militant activist groups use to generate visibility, particularly in the mass media, for their cause. In addition to the physical element implied, performative violence refers to "symbolic ritual enactments of violent interaction with a predominant emphasis on communication and cultural expression" (Ibid: 415), for instance when protesters wear masks when confronting the police. In our sample, activists who have performed ALF actions exemplify this while the Plowshares and Animal Rights Sweden exert what we could name "performative non-violence".

Finally, Goffman's framework is frequently employed to illuminate the rhetorical effects of performances (cf. Snow et al., 1986; Benford & Hunt, 1992). However, according to the moral-sociological framework put forward here, specific attention needs to be paid to the fact that performances have to be experienced as authentic presentations. In order to convey their

message successfully, social movements must be able to connect with the ideals of the audiences they address. In Bernhard Giesen's neo-Durkheimian formulation, activists perform "moral dramas":

> Moral drama is a mode of performance that shares many features with symbolic events, constitutive rituals, and theatrical performances, but it adds to their basic structure the reference to the inner state of the actor. Dramas are driven by the question of whether the actor's performance expresses his true inner feelings, convictions, and intentions or whether it is faked intention, deceitful behavior, and feigned feelings (Giesen, 2006: 350-351).

Not all dramas are possible as activists may experience performances as inauthentic in relation to their ideals. Activists are "performing the sacred" (Giesen, 2006). This authenticity-requirement also applies in relation to the audience of social movements. As Alexander (2004: 547) puts it, performances stand and fall on their ability to produce cultural extension and psychological identification to authentically connect with the audience. Since an audience can see without experiencing emotional or moral signification, the relation between actor and audience depends on the ability to project these emotions and textual messages as moral evaluations (Alexander, 2004: 531). A major challenge for activists is thus to stage moral ideals in a convincing way, through effective *mise-en-scène* that genuinely represents their ideals. As Eyerman has noted: "Creating and evoking moral empathy is part of what makes a 'movement'" (Eyerman, 2006: 209). Since social movements move by engaging emotions and values, Eyerman concludes that: "Movements must contain, therefore, non-strategic performances which motivate, move, actors because they believe in what they are doing, what they are doing is the right (moral) thing to do" (Ibid: 208).

As pursuers of ideals who seek to achieve social change, social movements transgress existing norms in society. Yet, existing norms also impose limits on activists' performances. What is commonly considered just, right, good, dignified, and virtuous plays a critical role in social movements' ability to achieve public recognition. Thus, movement expansion depends on norm adaptation. This is well illustrated in research on the neo-Nazi movement (e.g. Cooter, 2006). Skinheads belonging to this movement have traditionally been seen as different and clearly identifiable through their physical appearance (shaved heads, tattoos, display of Nazi symbols, and the like). Today, however, many skinheads rely on a normalization tactic with

group members striving to behave more in conformity with conventional
ceremonial norms. While staying true to the ideal of racism, the members
of the neo-Nazi movement have changed their dramaturgical orientation
to attract potential new members (e.g. Cooter, 2006).

Moral Hierarchies

The sacred ideals do not only carry implications for movements' external
strategy decisions, but also for the inner life of activist groups. That, too,
tends to be characterized by reflexivity, as exemplified by the activists'
attempt to remain aware of the internal dynamics and power relationships
within the group. Activists typically try to build structures resistant to
mechanisms of exclusion based on gender, race, age, and the like. Yet, despite
their efforts, they frequently fail to live up to their own high expectations,
with individuals within the group positioning themselves in an informal
status hierarchy. Even though the existence of social hierarchies is broadly
acknowledged (see e.g. Groves, 2001; Peterson & Thörn, 1994), the basis and
functioning of such hierarchies need to be better understood. How and
according to what criteria do activists establish unofficial status orders, and
what consequences do these have for social relationships within the groups?
     We suggest that the informal hierarchies are structured first and fore-
most according to moral evaluations and distinctions. For instance, our
data on the animal rights movement show that women tend to have a
lower status than men. Among the interviewed animal rights activists,
the male activists typically based their motives for action on philosophical
reasoning while the women emphasized emotions. Philosophical reasoning
was seen to have a higher status, which some of the interviewed women felt
uncomfortable with. This has been supported by previous research as well
(Groves, 2001; Cravens, 2009; Gaarder, 2011). However, exploring further,
our study supports that women who are vegans have a higher status than
men who are meat-eaters or vegetarians. Moreover, women who have been
committed for a long time tend to have a higher status than men who have
been engaged for a shorter period. Thus, it is specifically "moral hierarchies"
that form the basis for status differentiation within movements, even if
other social distinctions undeniably also come into play.
     As illustrated below activists construct a moral hierarchy in which ac-
tions are ranked by their morality, and fellow activists are assigned different
positions closer to or further from the sphere of "the sacred". To borrow
Collins' useful expression, the moral hierarchies are linked to "the law of

small numbers" (Collins, 2001: 37-43): only a few individuals are able to reach a position right by the campfire of the sacred, this limited space being reserved to those who stand out as morally exceptional. A high position in this hierarchy enables one to claim an activist identity; one is not primarily evaluated according to one's professional career or civil status but according to one's success in realizing moral ideals. Activists assess one another's deeds and performance, make comparisons, and evaluate one another in relation to their ideals and the contextualized norms that have emerged from their interpretations of their ideals. Figure 1 below gives a chart of the most important moral distinctions giving rise to an informal status order in the two groups studied, as reconstructed from the interviews. While the moral ideal always remains at the core, other distinctions, too, even when more peripheral, still influence the in-group ranking. For instance, it is not technical or tactical expertise as such that is decisive, but having proved one's commitment to the ideal through experience. This is why high-risk actions may play such a prominent role in social movements.

Within the animal rights group, it is not only morally, but also socially advantageous to be a vegan rather than a vegetarian or, worse still, a meat-eater. Hence, there is a strong pressure to becoming a vegan and for all the activists interviewed here vegetarianism is a minimum line while striving towards veganism is called upon (see also Cravens, 2009: 12). Concerning the status of illegal action, the Swedish animal rights community is divided. For the activists engaged in Animal Rights Sweden, the preferred form of action is legal and non-violent (even if several of them have performed high-risk actions in the past). For other activists, however, animal liberation and high-risk action confer the highest social status. Among the Plowshares, on the other hand, it is not only preferable from a moral point of view to have participated in high-risk actions. This great sacrifice also clearly confers on one a superior social status in the group compared to those who have only participated in low-risk actions (such as gathering information about the production of armaments or harbor blockades to prevent weapons transported by sea from reaching their inland destination). It is thus for social reasons, too, that protesters need to dramatize their behavior. Activists place great importance to visibility in the media, as it confirms their status in the movement. In line with this, without being *defined* as a vegan or a high-risk action participant, it is not possible to affirm a prominent activist identity. For instance, animal rights activists engaged in shelters for cats, dogs or rabbits typically find themselves among the lowest ranked.

The moral hierarchies within social movements are action-oriented: the status that the members are assigned depends on what they have done

Figure 1a   Moral distinctions in the animal rights groups in Sweden
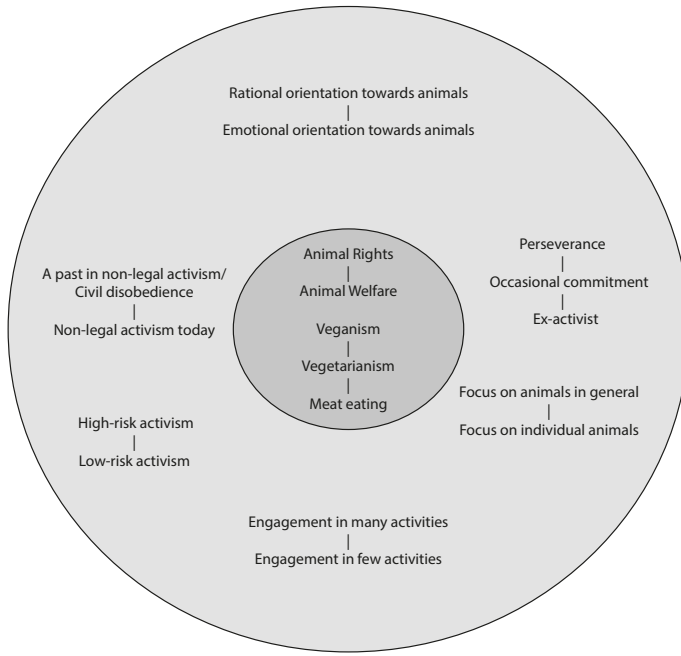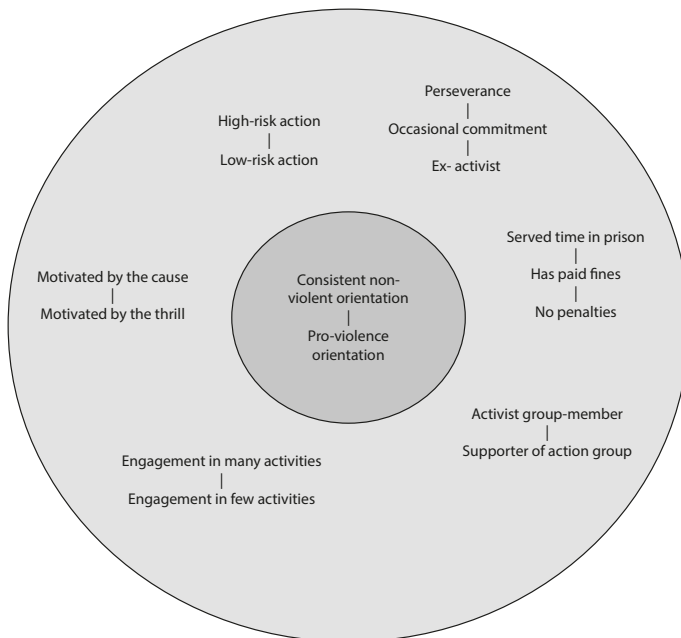

Figure 1b   Moral distinctions in the Plowshares group in Sweden

rather than thought or said. In this sense, the worst that could happen in the world of activists is to stop "doing" altogether – that is, to become an ex-activist who, for example, no longer participates in events or devotes her or his time to the cause. "Losing the fire" along these lines seems, morally speaking, to be more of a liability than not having become engaged in the first place. It was also clear from our interviews that one can only live so long on old merits; one is quite soon assigned the status of an ex-activist. On such persons the interviewed activists expressed almost contempt. In contrast, perseverance in activity over a long period of time and engagement in many different areas – being where the action is – single out those who are truly committed to the cause. The words of a young animal rights protester interviewed for this study serve as a typical example of activists' way of reasoning:

> I compare myself to others, [to see] whether I do more or less than they do. Maybe this preoccupies me more than other people because right now I'm busy trying to get more involved. If I haven't done anything for a while, I then have more to live up to [...]. There are probably a lot of people who come here twice a month just because they like going to meetings. They might not have enough interest and will probably disappear at some point, whereas those who really are on fire for animal rights keep deepening their engagement.

Thus, there are social mechanisms at work in the activist groups that help support and maintain the ideals they pursue. Through moral hierarchies, fellow activists can uphold the ideals of the group by continually discussing and assessing the merits of one another's actions.

The imperative to pursue ideals can also be observed in the aspiration to purity. This draws on the distinction between "sacred" and "profane". To recall, to the realm of the sacred Durkheim (2001/1912) assigned societal phenomena that he saw as having intrinsic value – first and foremost moral ideals – as distinct from objects that only have instrumental value, which belong to the sphere of the profane. Firstly, this implies that activists seek to protect their ideals from contamination by the profane. Secondly, succeeding in this purity-quest also affects activists' social status as it reflects a position closer to the sacred. In their pursuit of purity, both the animal protesters and the Plowshares activists interviewed for this study spoke of paid work in professional life as something that clearly belonged to the profane, hampering their work for the cause. Thus, activists frequently give up opportunities for career advancement along with many pleasures that

living in modern society offers. Even traditional family life was seen as a potential source of pollution; several activists from both groups studied expressed that they were not interested in having children. Activism, for them, required sacrifices. On this point, Lowe (2001) has drawn a parallel to the religious apologist: the willingness to risk imprisonment for what one believes in is indeed similar. Sacrifices for the cause also confer social status. For the Plowshares activists, serving time in jail was clearly a more salient status marker than having been fined or not having been punished at all.

The quest for purity is also manifested in other ways. For instance, the animal rights activists carefully control what they purchase, wear, and use in their daily lives (clothing, make-up, type of soap, etc.). The same is true for their diet. Even though the preparation and serving of meals are not carried out as any specific ritual process, veganism offers repeated opportunities for acts of cleansing and purification that help redress the activists' sense of their own complicity in the suffering of animals (Jamison et al., 2000). For "the purists" in the movement, nothing less than stopping using animals and animal products for human needs altogether is acceptable. Accordingly, the purists had the highest status in both of the groups studied: they were seen as closer to the sacred (see also Tester, 1991). Furthermore, in social life animal rights protesters' focus on moral purity/impurity also constitutes the basis of a stereotypical image where the activist is perceived as an extremist (see e.g. Sorenson, 2009 on representations of activists). This is yet another instance of how moral distinctions produce social effects.

The imperative to act often gives rise to guilt among activists. Our interviewees felt guilt for not doing enough, with guilt propelling them into further action (see also Groves, 1997). Guilt also leads to experiences of alienation in relation to others in society: "I feel alienated from people who just shrug their shoulders", as a Plowshares activist put it. Another Plowshares activist reported a frequent "sense of unreal when walking among people who don't care about the world". Given their radically different world-view to that of mainstream society, the activists often feel like foreigners in this world. Action, and maintaining one's informal position in the group through that action, can be very demanding. The interviewees frequently spoke of fellow activists who had become depressed or burned-out (see also Gaarder, 2008; McDonald, 2000; Pallotta, 2005). As one animal rights activist reported:

> [T]here was a period when I was doing a lot less than usual. I felt really uncomfortable about it. But I was burned out because I had been so active until then. I just couldn't bring myself to get going even though I

really wanted to, as this is the kind of stuff I really feel strongly about. I didn't feel good at all about that break I had, and I'm really glad to be busy doing things again.

Due to her involuntary break from activism, she lost her position in the group's informal hierarchy:

It was a really weird in terms of my relation to my roommate, too. Earlier I had been much more actively involved than her. Then it got pretty awkward when this fatigue hit me, and I began to notice how she was doing a lot more than I. I was constantly reminded of the fact that I wasn't that involved any more. She began to be in the know about everything I used to be informed about. Our roles were reversed.

The activists we interviewed tended to be reflexively aware of the internal status differentiation: "If someone doesn't do something for a while, that person declines in an informal hierarchy [...] you have to be active to retain your position", another one of them explained. The moral hierarchy is constructed first and foremost within and for the group. The pressure to be a committed individual is experienced as coming more from other group members than from friends, family, and other outsiders. Fellow activists can brusquely ask, "Why haven't you been doing anything for such a long time now?" as one Plowshares activist explained it. In a similar fashion, encouragement and praise from within the group were valued higher than admiration by outsiders.

As advocates of anti-hierarchical organizations and relationships, activists strive to become more aware of any informal status differentiation in order to control it. In this respect, the Plowshares movement stands out as hyper-reflexive, in that it has developed specific methods for dealing with status differences. At their meetings, for example, the chairperson function is separated into different roles to ensure everyone's ability to participate on an equal basis. One person has the responsibility of making sure that the discussion is focused on the items on the agenda, another one that underlying conflicts and other tensions are brought to the surface and so become openly dealt with, while a third person concentrates on time keeping. The Plowshares have, furthermore, made attempts to deal with problems related to media attention, as described by one interviewee:

In the media, the Plowshares are often made to look like heroes. All media go after them. We have tried to deal with this within the movement.

> We've purposely divided ourselves between those who carry out the
> actions and those who represent the group to the outside world. This way,
> we have actively tried to avoid the glamorization and idolization that the
> media are so prone to [as] it's so easy for people to look up to and admire
> those who've participated in a well-known action.

However, as the interviewed Plowshares activists also admitted, it is often
difficult to change the hierarchical structures within the movement. Also
it may be in the interest of the activist group to maximize media-coverage
by bringing forward the movement heroes, complying with the media-
logic. This is also made an object of reflexivity. As one activist analyzed
the situation in her group:

> It is us who do the actions that get all the admiration. It's a bit like in the
> theatre: the lead actor gets all the praise while all those who also work
> hard are totally forgotten about. Those behind the scene ought to get as
> much praise as us.

Due to the great economic and psychological demands that participation
imposes, the number of active Plowshares is small. By extension, only few
people generally plan the actions, communicate with the media, write
statements to the courts, and so on. Moreover, as the activists interviewed
for this study testified, the egalitarianism embraced by the movement has
made it complicated for members to openly show admiration when someone
has done something praiseworthy. From the theoretical perspective devel-
oped above, these and other difficulties can be attributed to the activists'
moral world, which, as we have seen, promote informal status distinctions.
Furthermore, as Goffman perceptively noted, we are both moral and social
creatures, which entail a need to put significant effort into being viewed
as moral by others – which in itself is a non-moral activity. In Goffman's
words we are all "merchants of morality" (Goffman, 1990/1959: 243) and
also activists and other pursuers of ideals need to handle this dilemma.

Moral Resonance

A moral-sociological perspective also adds new insights into the study of
recruitment. As noted earlier, moral motivation to participate in protests is
well documented in previous research (e.g. Touraine, 1981; Cohen, 1985; Eder,
1985; Gusfield, 1986; Jasper & Nelkin, 1992; Jasper, 1997; Crossley, 2002; Smelser,

2011/1962). Moral impetus to activism may spring from single, eye-opening and life-changing events (Jasper & Poulsen, 1995; Jasper, 1997), experiences of injustice (Gamson, 1992), and influences from a social network (Munson, 2008), to mention a few examples. Yet, in previous research there has been less interest taken in how the individual's moral beliefs are transformed as she matures into an activist. By extension, the existing models tend to be restricted, focusing on specific moments of the recruitment process. Moral beliefs typically only become important at one stage, which neglects their role throughout the sequence. The approach presented here seeks to remedy this, identifying five consecutive phases in the development of moral beliefs relevant to recruitment. These are called, respectively, "the phase of ideal indifference and norm conformity", "the phase of ideal sensitivity and norm insecurity", "the phase of ideal manifestation and norm revolt", "the phase of ideal establishment and norm-critical extension", and "the phase of ideal pursuit and habitual norm confrontation". As was indicated, the phases draw on the elementary moral-sociological concepts of ideals and norms, and are illustrated with interview data on the animal rights activists.

Firstly, there is *the phase of ideal indifference and norm conformity*. This phase usually constitutes the point of departure in the activist career. At this stage, there is a noticeable insignificance attached to the ideal of animal rights. Striking is the individual's adaptation and loyalty to the norms of majority society. Many of the interviewed animal rights activists testify to a former life as meat-eaters, consuming fish, poultry and dairy products. As noted by one of them about her pre-activist life: "In my family everyone was eating meat and a meat norm prevailed". Similarly, another says: "We have always eaten meat at home" and "I took no stand against the egg industry, milk industry or against leather; they just weren't present". Conventional habits concerning animals are also typically interpreted in non-moral terms. Thus, even if some of the interviewees were vegetarians, this was, they clarify, for health-related and not ethical reasons.

Next, we find the phase of *ideal sensitivity and norm insecurity.* Here the individual becomes receptive and attracted to the ideal of animal rights, and starts to re-interpret her socialization. Among the animal rights activists, an awakening or eye opening experience is characteristic (which is further analyzed in chapter 4). The interviewees attest to an event that made them see what was earlier concealed to them (an experience that resembles "moral shock" as analyzed by Jasper & Poulsen, 1995; Jasper, 1997; see chapter 3). One activist describes how he watched television and then started to question his perception of animals: "I saw documentaries on TV. They were about the chicken industry as well as the meat industry in general. Then I determined

that I cannot support this". This phase involves a rudimentary challenge to the norms of majority society. Being inexperienced, the individual is uncertain as to what the commitment to the ideal stands for as well as its consequences. Indeed, as many of the interviewees put it, they were "ignorant" and "in need to learn more" about animal rights activism. Not overcoming this obstacle, terminates the process.

Moreover, there is *the phase of ideal manifestation and norm revolt*. In this phase of the recruitment process, the individual adheres to a basic under-standing of the ideal, and starts to act upon it. Typical is the writing of essays and reports about the animal rights issue at school, the search for vegetarian or vegan recipes on the Internet, and the contacts made with an animal rights organization where the individual starts to socialize with activists. At this stage, the individual faces the challenge of gathering enough strength to "come out of the closet", and publicly display her commitment to the ideal. As one of the interviewees recalls when joining an animal rights group:

> I absolutely did not want to tell anyone that I was vegan, but on the other hand, I absolutely did not want to eat eggs or meat either. So this was difficult for me. It took a pretty long time before I started to get engaged and thought that "now I have to take this on, this won't work any longer". But it was hard to come out and say "OK everybody, this is who I am". It didn't feel good at all to be associated with animal rights activists.

Another interviewee went through a different sort of trial as she was older than the members of the animal rights group she wanted to join: "I was very nervous at first and had an inferiority complex as I was so old. 'Shall I get involved now?', sort of". Thus, the individual is vulnerable to the normative pressures that family, friends, colleagues, and the activist group exercise. These influences may put an end to the revolt and disrupt the activist career.

We then find *the phase of ideal establishment and norm-critical extension*. Here the individual has become a member of an activist group. In social interaction with animal rights activists, the ideal is applied to more and more areas and instances with the aim of establishing a lifestyle. As the interview data informs us, the individual now extends her norm-critical conduct to include petitions, anti-fur demonstrations, hunting sabotages, animal rights café activities, as well as altering her behavior in relation to animal-tested cosmetics, leather products, etcetera. Yet, since the individual is still susceptible to competing activities and relationships in her life, here the challenge is to prioritize activism before other activities. One inter-viewee recalls that she felt her previous wish to have children would have

to be given up if she was to stay committed (see also chapter 4). Similarly, another interviewee says there were many other attractive options available that could pull her away from engaging for animals: "I also like to be engaged in playing music, to do physical exercise and keep fit, to dance, read novels, go to movies and be with my friends". Activist commitment requires that the individual distances herself from the norms of majority society. Without a strong devotion to do the unconventional, ideal establishment is likely to fail.

Finally, there is *the phase of ideal pursuit and habitual norm confrontation*. This concludes the recruitment process. The individual is now integrated within an activist group and habitually prioritizes her commitment for animals. Here, solidifying an activist identity is an essential feature. Drawing on the interview data, we can note that the individual's sense of being an activist becomes firmer by regularly attending membership meetings and movement-defining campaigns, giving lectures and talks, arranging websites, taking responsibility for administrative and financial functions, and being on the board of the animal rights organization. A challenge at this stage is that of stagnation. On the one hand, the ideal pursuit may seem empty and insignificant due to the routines established. Thus, one interviewee stresses the importance of creativity in protest: "It means a lot to me to come up with new things. Unfortunately there is not much of that right now [...] It is easier to remain engaged if you do things that are fun". On the other hand, while habitually confronting norms, stagnation is also related to the individual's deviant identity (see also chapter 5). More than in the previous phases, the individual may live through loss of meaning rooted in experiences of social exclusion and alienation. As another interviewee attests to: "I can say that I experience an Us and Them feeling all the time, just because I take many things for granted that other people haven't even thought about". The fire that the ideal pursuit ignites may be weakened due to the demanding lifestyle of animal rights. The individual's outside position then draws her towards giving in for the norms of majority society.

What are the implications of the activist career for the study of recruitment to social movements then? Firstly, the activist career stresses the role of moral beliefs. The potential recruit passes through the phases of "ideal indifference and norm conformity", "ideal sensitivity and norm insecurity", "ideal manifestation and norm revolt", "ideal establishment and norm-critical extension", and, finally, "ideal pursuit and habitual norm confrontation". The requirement for social movements to authentically connect with their audiences' moral beliefs when recruiting new members is often ignored in the literature on framing (e.g. Benford & Snow, 2000). Concentrating on the

rhetoric or narrative level of analysis, framing theorists tend to neglect the seriousness of the target audiences' moral convictions and sentiments (e.g. Crossley, 2002; see also Alexander, 2004). In our terms, "moral resonance" is the primary object in recruitment to protest.

Furthermore, moral resonance reflects the fact that deference to their ideals is the main reason for activists' preference for social movement activism rather than engagement in traditional politics, PR work, or other social forums, which do not allow for "authentic moral tests" (Jasper, 1997: 5). As we have seen, various moral tests appear during the recruitment process as the individual walks the road to activism. The tests contain challenges related to breaking up from firmly rooted conformism, and recognizing and accepting one's experiences of awakening. Later the individual faces the challenge of being courageous enough to come out of the closet and publicly display her convictions. Still further in the process, there are challenges related to prioritizing to act on behalf of the ideal rather than performing other activities in life. Finally, the individual is challenged to overcome experiences of stagnation in the pursuit of her moral principles and intuitions.

Finally, moral resonance needs to be analyzed as a process. As demonstrated, recruitment is typically gradual. This contrasts with the general pattern in movement studies, explaining recruitment in terms of cause-effect models. Thus, rather than calling attention to the sequential development of becoming an activist, the focus has most often been on single events or statistical aggregates (see Munson, 2008: 18-45; Jasper, 1997: 90). In our analysis, we too stress the importance of turning points and eye-opening experiences in the individual activists' lives (see chapter 3 and 4). Yet, as our interview data makes clear, these events are to be interpreted as instigating a step-wise process rather than providing a causal explanation of commitment to activism. Indeed, no single episode can, by itself, explain the development from "ideal indifference and norm conformism" to "ideal pursuit and habitual norm confrontation".

Balancing Efficacy and Purity

The critical importance of moral resonance puts constraints on the role that strategic action can play in social movements. As shown above, the inner life of the activist group is socially structured around the protection of sacred ideals. This has consequences for activists' choice of outward strategies: not all strategies are possible if the ideals are to be protected

from contamination. Even so, the literature on framing (e.g. Benford & Snow, 2000) focuses its attention almost entirely on the outreach aspect of movement activity, looking at it from a strategic point of view. This literature thus overstates the extent to which social movement activists themselves, as well as their audiences, are willing to invoke instrumental concerns.

The significance of moral resonance in social movements implies that morality is not a strategic choice among others (cf. for instance Jasper, 2006, who treats morality as one form of persuasion or Williams, 1995, who conceives of morality as a cultural resource to be used instrumentally for the movement's ends). Instead morality permeates the condition of choice itself. Attempting to reveal the irrationality and bias of the dominant codes (Melucci, 1985, 1989), the social role of activists draws on effectively functioning as the mirror of moral conscience in society. Both activists and their audience may therefore exclude tricking, cajoling, bribing and manipulating, which are forms of conduct common in strategic action, as inauthentic. Furthermore, moral resonance also points to the indignation or lack of sympathy that activists may display towards strategic action. Indeed, as Eder has pointed out in his definition of protest, "a social movement is a collective action trying to defend intrinsic normative standards against their strategic-utilitarian instrumentalization" (Eder, 1993: 114; see also Cohen, 1985). Strategies, too, tend to be used for moral positioning, as activists seek to stay true to the "right methods" and "the right plans of action", when positioning themselves in relation to other factions within the same movement (see e.g. Munson, 2008).

This is why we prefer to speak of *the moral grammar of strategy*. In our understanding, strategies result from dilemmas of norms and ideals as moral facts of social groups. This model stands in contrast to rational choice approaches where dilemmas are derived from individual situations, hypothetical or real, where actors seek to reach a future goal but are hindered from doing so. Admittedly, there have been several attempts at mitigating the instrumentalism of the framing approach by nuancing the rational actor-paradigm (e.g. Steinberg, 1999; Gillan, 2008). For instance, Jasper (2006) has developed an approach to social movements that does not assume rational actors, while still emphasizing the role of strategy (see also Jasper, 2015). He shows that movement strategies cannot be equaled with rational calculus as emotions also affect activists' choices. Doubtless, protesters' reflexivity and the dilemmas faced point to the significance of strategy in social movement activism (Jasper, 2006). However, the approach to strategy presented here also differs substantively from these approaches. Drawing, in contrast, on a conception of morality as social fact, it emphasizes that activists' strategies are always impregnated with moral meanings, constraining considerably

the strategies they can employ.[15] Activists thus reflexively balance the need for practical effectiveness and reaching out to the lifeworlds of the intended audience, with the obligation to protect the ideals from being polluted by the profane. The problem of strategy is to perform the sacred in face of the potential recruit's conformity to norms.

The two cases discussed in this chapter exhibit differing degrees of success in their ability to strike a balance between these two aspects, of internally protecting the sacredness of their ideals and effectively reaching out externally to an audience. Collins (2001) has suggested that researchers should devote more attention to the question of why many movements, in fact, lose their influence and disappear, instead of concentrating on the successful cases among them. The Swedish Plowshares serve as a case in point. Several of the Plowshares activists interviewed for this study, speaking from the perspective of long-time movement participants, expressed dissatisfaction with the movement's situation at the time. As one experienced activist put it:

> The Plowshares movement does not have credibility any more as something that can become a popular movement. But what I am first and foremost interested in is creating social change. As I see it, the movement has reached a dead end.

Since the time of the interviews (2004), the Plowshares group's activities have decreased even further, leaving it in a state of what seems like a terminal crisis. The group's failure, in our analysis, can be attributed to its inability to generalize the contextualized ideals and norms it stands for and thus mobilize wider support for its cause. One of the explanations for the Plowshares' failure (in the Swedish context), we might then conclude, is their constant concern with purity, which centers their attention too much on the group itself. In practice, the group might become more focused on "doing the right thing" than on attempts to reach out to recruit new members and supporters or build alliances with others. As Peterson points out (2001), participating in high-risk actions may foster "aristocratic" motives. Activists then understand themselves as an avant-garde that dares to do what others do not. High-risk action also favors secrecy in planning, which in turn contributes to activists' further isolation from society. The dramaturgy of the Plowshares, in the present case, is not only heroic, but also introverted. In failing to speak authentically to any

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15   For instance, the ideal of egalitarianism among activist groups practicing direct democracy frequently comes into conflict with the need for action and external efficacy, which reduces the options available (cf. Polletta, 2002).

significant outside audiences, it, in Alexander's (2004) terminology, fails to achieve cultural extension and psychological identification; and thus, what we call, moral resonance. The critical meanings (or definitions of a situation) are construed beforehand rather than negotiated with the audiences, which are not genuinely invited into the drama.

In contrast, the dramaturgy of especially Animal Rights Sweden has remained more extroverted and more concerned with connecting with the lifeworlds of the movement's target audiences. In contrast to the more radical groups within the broader animal rights movement, Animal Rights Sweden also draws upon the generalized ideal of animal protection and welfare, which can meet wider resonance. By not pursuing their contextualized ideals of animal rights proper in the manner of many radical groups, the activists of Animal Rights Sweden have been able to reduce their risk of becoming defined as norm transgressors and thereby being marginalized. This has frequently been the case for animal rights groups who perform militant activism.[16] As Garner has pointed out in his analyses of ALF, the overall effect of militant actions is that they are "likely to alienate public opinion" (Garner, 2004: 241). Furthermore, since militant activism has increasingly been linked to discourses of terrorism and fear, images of protest violence may today also be effectively employed by the state to delegitimize and politically isolate protesters (Juris, 2005). A moral-sociological perspective seeks to theoretically understand these conditions, highlighting that activists continually need to adapt to the generalized norms of society to win acceptance.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have introduced a theoretical model for explaining how social movements can bring about legitimate social change. A key factor here is the tension between, firstly, ideals and norms and, secondly, between generalized and contextualized ideals and norms. As pursuers of ideals, social movements formulate and act upon moral representations of rightness and goodness, striving to authentically connect to an intended audience, with the ultimate aim of achieving societal change. In this, social movements play the double role of

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16   Tester has formulated the rationale of this fact in the following way: "The militants argue that they are practising the true democracy – they are the only ones who are aware of real extent of the *demos* – and that, therefore, what is socially condemned as mindless violence is, when properly understood, a defence of the truth. The interstitiality of the militants in relation to society is quite total" (Tester, 1991: 184).

interpreting and developing ethical orientations that have become culturally accepted at a given time and space (here termed "generalized ideals" in our framework) and producing and introducing new ones. In both cases, social movements confront and provoke their environment with original ideas of how the world we live in ought to be. They are carriers of contextualized ideals, and thus promoters of moral reflexivity, in society.

As pursuers of ideals, social movements find themselves in an inherently reflexive relation vis-à-vis social norms. On the one hand, discontented with the current state of affairs, social movements seek to transform their own group life to make it more consistent with the ideals they celebrate. They are confronted with the task of implementing both formal and informal routines and rules – contextualized norms – to create a non-alienating praxis in which activists can feel at home. As the case of the Plowshares reveals, this may sometimes be a difficult challenge.

On the other hand, taking social norms into consideration is an important condition for the wider success of the movement. Based on our analysis, this success demands that the movement is able to, first of all, translate its ideals into norms, that is, to codes of conduct backed up by social sanctions, and, secondly, promote and disseminate these norms as norms for society at large (generalized norms). Each movement faces the challenge of having to manage this tension between ideals and norms and of solving the dilemmas it entails.

Moral reflexivity enables activists to appraise the possible discrepancy between their ideals and the prevailing norms. To achieve the desired social change, social movements need to become defined by their environment as followers of ideals rather than norm transgressors, in turn presupposing the successful translation, externalization, and extension of norms just mentioned. They therefore have to adapt to both substantive and ceremonial norms in society, forcing them to balance reflexively between adaptation and transgression.[17] Generalized norms thus function as both the backdrop and the end goal of social movements' struggle.

17   Social movements here differ from subcultures, which, too, may transgress social norms, in that activists purposely and actively promote social change. In our terms, social movements are morally reflexive communities.

3   Emotion Work

> I feel I need to talk to another activist, who can really listen. It feels
> great to talk about one's feelings with someone who agrees. Especially in
> difficult situations, as in relation to animal rescue; these conversations
> are pretty important to me (Swedish animal rights activist).

Moral reflexivity also plays out in the emotional life of social movements.
In this chapter, we argue that the moral-sociological perspective is also
enlightening in understanding the "emotion work" of social movement
activists. Social movement activism is often taxing on the individual activ-
ists who must cope with the emotional costs that their activism involves (e.g.
Gaarder, 2008), even if activism frequently also entails emotional "kicks" and
rewards. Protest, moreover, requires both emotional and cognitive motiva-
tion. While the role of emotions in social movement activism is becoming
increasingly well researched (e.g. Flam & King, 2005; Goodwin et al., 2001;
Jasper, 2011), there has been less attention paid to how inducing, shaping or
inhibiting feelings is a morally reflexive effort and one in which activists
invest considerable amounts of time and energy. Social movement activists,
in other words, are deeply involved in the management of emotions, or
emotion work (cf. Hochschild, 1983; Ruiz-Junco, 2006; Gould, 2009).[18] Based
on our study of animal rights activism in Sweden, this chapter identifies
various types of emotion work carried out by animal rights activists.

   As sociologists of emotions have shown, we are often engaged in emo-
tion work in our work life as well as our private life (e.g. Hochschild, 1983).
However, we suggest that the emotion work of social movement activists
differs from that type of emotion work due to their specific social role, and
activists' ambiguous moral standing as emphasized in previous chapters. In
order to understand the emotion work carried out by activists, it is useful to
apply the moral-sociological perspective. As stated earlier, it is well-known
that social movement activists produce and advance moral visions (e.g.
Jasper, 1997). They try to change the world to make it better conform to
their views on, for example, peace, democracy or animal well-being. What

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18   We draw here on Hochschild's distinction between emotional labor and emotion work
(Hochschild, 1983: 7). While emotional labor is a commodity to be sold on the market just like
physical labor, and emotional management is required in exchange for a salary, emotion work
refers to the management of emotions in a non-commercial context. That is, while emotional
labor has exchange-value, emotion work has use-value.

is less emphasized in previous studies, however, is that this means at times they come to fundamentally challenge the moral order of their society; more specifically, in their work for social change activists also come into conflict with existing social norms. This affects the emotion work they perform. Flight attendants have to work with their emotions to be able to make a service-minded impression serving commercial ends (Hochschild, 1983), and participants in psychotherapy usually work with their emotions to gain a deeper understanding of themselves and achieve self-insight (e.g. McWilliams, 2004). In contrast, social movement activists typically work with their emotions to sustain commitment to their moral ideals and cope with the emotional stress that their norm transgressions imply.

First of all, the recurring (or potential) clashes between activists' moral ideals and generalized social norms give rise to far-reaching emotional tensions and a continual need for emotion work among social movement members (see also Owens, 2009). For instance, the animal rights activists that we interviewed rejected mainstream society's prevailing animal-practice norms. They reported personal feelings of anger, sorrow and alienation that arose not only in conjunction with their open conflicts with fur sellers and vivisectionists, but also in ordinary everyday contexts when socializing with non-movement friends and relatives or doing one's daily shopping. In other words, activists' emotion work is not just confined to the situations usually studied by researchers of social-movement emotions – phases of mobilization and outreach or the emotional peaks associated with protest events (e.g. Collins, 2001; Goodwin & Pfaff, 2001). Going against the stream requires emotion work to be carried out reflexively on a day-to-day basis.

Secondly, social movements are praxis-oriented (Peterson & Thörn, 1994). As pursuers of moral ideals, social movement activists exercise emotion work primarily for the purpose of action. In this respect their emotion work differs from today's dominant emotive culture, which is built around the credo of authenticity and internal reference points with an implicit agenda of sustaining the status quo (Nolan, 1998). In their emotion work, social movement activists evaluate and express their emotions with the intention of effecting social change towards a world that better reflects their particular moral ideals. When activists manage their emotions, it is typically to facilitate protest actions: to better argue their cause, to set good examples, to successfully stage attacks, set up blockades or carry out acts of civil disobedience. This emotion-action nexus does not preclude the building of emotional cultures in which social movement members regularly share and discuss their feelings (e.g. Whittier, 2001). Protesters may also adopt sensitivity training, meditation and counseling (e.g. King,

2006). Yet in activism "emotion talk" or other forms of emotional reflexivity is not primarily aimed at gaining personal insight or development. Instead it serves to prepare participants for conflict, action and change.

Thirdly, pursuing ideals also has implications for the internal life of the activist group. Social movements tend to create their own emotion norms, and this they do by translating and incorporating their moral ideals into the activists' own group life. It is the emergence of shared standards for identifying and evaluating emotions that enables activists to understand and accept one another's affective expressions. An activist might then react in a way an outsider finds off-putting but which fellow activists perceive to be natural. The animal rights activists in our study supplied examples of the numerous norms that govern the way movement participants are expected to express their sympathy for animals. The legitimate way to react to meat eating, for instance, or to the smell and sight of meat, was frequently to display disgust (see e.g. Hansson & Jacobsson, 2014). Herzog and Golden (2009) found that animal rights activists tend in general to be more sensitive to visceral disgust than people who approve of animal use. This creation of non-conventional emotion norms also shows that movement recruits' emotions are not fixed or given from the start. During the socialization process into the movement, the novice has to learn a new emotional language and continually refine his or her emotional responses accordingly (Groves, 1995).

The Importance of Moral Emotions in Activism

A moral-sociological perspective on emotion stresses the importance of moral emotions in a social movement context (see also Goodwin et al., 2001; Jasper, 1997, 2011). Below we provide a number of illustrations of such moral emotions as compassion, righteous anger, guilt, shame, frustration, fear, horror, hostility, estrangement, pride, and solidarity, and analyze them in accordance with our neo-Durkheimian framework. More precisely, we suggest that it is in the light of the moral ideals that activists' emotional reactions can be understood as well as the role that emotions play in underpinning and driving action. Moral ideals, in this perspective, are embodied (see also Hansson & Jacobsson, 2014). It should be noted that this approach is fully compatible with Durkheim's observation that emotional intensity and passion may play an important role in the creation of novel moral visions and thus that "it is at moments of social ferment that the great ideals upon which civilization rests are born" (Durkheim, 1974/1924:

92). Yet, once the moral ideals have become part of a social group, and, by extension, translated into behavioral and emotional norms, they condition the emotional life of its members. The intimate link between animal rights activists' moral ideals and their emotions implies that these phenomena need to be analyzed together.

Essential to the moral world-view of animal rights activists is the notion that animals are sentient beings capable of experiencing pain. This motivates the activists to reduce the suffering of animals. The key moral emotion here is *compassion* or *empathy* for animals (see also e.g. Shapiro, 1994; Pallotta, 2005; Hansson & Jacobsson, 2014). As an animal protester made clear:

> I am incredibly sensitive when it comes to animals. I can see human beings suffer, but when it comes to animals I cry irrepressibly. It affects me much more. This is what drives me in my engagement.

Activists' *righteous anger* and *indignation* respectively stem from the experience that their sacred ideal of animal rights has been violated.[19] One animal rights activist exclaimed:

> I get angry about animals being treated badly and people acting incorrectly. I also feel indignation over the fact that people don't understand that you are not supposed to do such things to animals.

Likewise, another activist said: "Many animals are exposed to suffering. I think that this is bloody awful and something I must do something about". As this quotation displays, righteous anger and indignation help movements mobilize and sustain their activities over time. Yet, righteous anger is loaded with a stronger action orientation than indignation, which may be viewed as more passivizing.

Moreover, protesters feel *guilty* for not living up to their (self-)expectations. For example, one activist told us that she has a bad conscience about not doing enough for improving animals' conditions:

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19   Joas writes that, "In the context of the sacralization of the person, we must consider not only how positive experiences that are constitutive of values may lead to a commitment to universal values, but how negative, distressing, traumatizing experiences of our own and others' suffering may do so as well" (Joas, 2013: 6). Indeed, this is equally true of the sacralization of the animal-individual; traumatizing experiences of animal suffering are key in mobilizing activist commitment in defence of the sacred ideal (see chapter 4).

> I would actually like to devote every free moment to being active, but there are so many other things I also need to devote time to. What I hope is to be able to be more and more engaged. I don't feel that I'm particularly gifted, but that I could do better much more [often].

In our analysis, failure to defend the moral ideal of animal rights actively enough gives rise to feelings of both guilt and shame among movement activists. Guilt arises from one's inadequacies in the pursuit of the ideal as such, while shame arises for one's inadequacies in relation to, or in the eyes of, other group members as pursuers of the same ideal (cf. Groves, 1997). These emotions then help create enduring commitment to action.

Similarly, activists may experience *frustration* when not acting in accordance with their moral ideal to the extent they wish. While guilt puts the blame on the actor herself, frustration is a way of externalizing one's moral inadequacy. Another activist attested to this when talking about the importance of his commitment:

> I experience a sense of frustration because I don't live the way I would like to [...] I want to dedicate more energy and more hours to active resistance and less time on the everyday trivialities that one gets drawn into.

Conversely, activists may feel *pride* when they are able to stand up for their moral ideal of animal rights. One activist told us: "You feel proud of yourself. It affects your self-image". Pride is an emotional reward for taking action.

Furthermore, activists experience *fear* when critical moral boundaries have been trangressed. One activist told us: "I often experience fear. This is what motivates me. I can't sleep calmly as long as I know that there are a lot of idiots who torment animals all the time for their own gain". Fear testifies to the fact that there is a fine line between emotions that mobilize to actions and those that don't. When turned into *horror,* fear might be paralyzing and arrest action. The world becomes incomprehensible as this activist's statement displays when telling that she feels:

> [...] a horror and an agony over how we treat our domesticated animals. The farm animals that we use for food – I shudder at the industrialised and cold-blooded treatment of them. They are treated like commodities/ products [...] Animals are transported and kept in small cages. That's horrendous. It is the most disgusting thing I can imagine. Human beings don't seem to understand what they are doing.

This interviewee illustrates that *disgust* is another important moral emotion evoked by the violation of the ideal. For animal rights activists, verbally expressing and bodily displaying disgust become a way of affirming commitment to the cause.

Moreover, activists may feel *estranged* as they find that they live in a different moral universe from that of mainstream people. As stated by a protester who has illicitly filmed pig farming practices and conditions:

> I have felt traumatized for nearly a year. You experience living in a parallel universe. To see this at night and then during the day go and have lunch with someone ordering ham, it's very difficult to live with. Likewise, to be struck by the thought during daily life that this is happening right now, and all the time, that is very hard.

Activists' sense of alienation may turn into feelings of *hostility*. Hostility may be expressed towards others when perceived as morally accountable for profaning the movement's moral ideal:

> You can point to specific individuals and say that "You have a fur-farm and you must understand, for heaven's sake, that this is completely unethical" [...] Everyone has a moral responsibility to stop being milk consumers, fur-farmers, vivisectionists and circus managers.

When viewing a condition as unjust, activists commonly react with moral outrage and allocating moral blame. The ability to focus blame is crucial to protesting (Jasper, 1998: 414) since it stirs up emotions to underpin and direct collective action.

Activists demonstrate feelings of *solidarity* with and for their fellow activists. For instance, one activist said: "For me, activism is closely connected to group work, and when I have done something alone it hasn't felt as if I was actually engaged". Similarly, another protester expressed that he feels understood when meeting other activists within the group: "It's about recognition. When I talk about something that I've been involved in, or experienced, it resonates for others; They understand what I'm talking about".

In conclusion, activists share moral emotions of different kinds. In a moral-sociological perspective, shared moral emotions, rather than cultural attributes and life-style markers, are what constitute social movement activists' collective identity.

Morality and Emotions in Social Movements

Since the reappearance of emotions in the study of social movements (Goodwin et al., 2000, 2001), there has been a growing body of research on this topic. In light of this, we discuss three different notions that have played a pivotal role in this research and that have a direct bearing on our approach to emotion work in activism; "moral shocks", "moral emotions" and "feeling rules". Rather than examining these three notions as distinct and separate from one another, our approach to protest suggests that they are interdependent. They can all be analyzed and understood in terms of the relation – and clashes – between ideals and social norms.

An important area in the research on social movements and emotions concerns what Schrock, Holden and Reid have aptly called emotional mobilization, i.e. the study of "processes through which feelings are suppressed, evoked, and used in multiple contexts so as to foster and/or support activism" (Schrock et al., 2004: 62). In particular, the phenomenon of moral shock has proved important for emotional mobilization (e.g. Jasper, 1997, 2011; Jasper & Poulsen, 1995). Activists use visual media and emotionally laden rhetoric in attempts to awaken moral sensibilities and recruit new members. Exposure to shocking pictures or films of suffering animals may induce people with no previous connections to activist networks to join animal rights groups (Jasper & Poulsen, 1995). Similarly, it has been found that Central American peace groups, abolitionist and anti-racist groups utilize moral shocks in recruiting new members (Jasper, 2011). These studies tend, however, to focus on moral shocks without taking into consideration the relation between moral ideals and social norms, on which Durkheim's sociology of morals can help to shed light.

First, a moral shock commonly involves some transgression of social norms, meaning that attempts to shock potential recruits might in fact fail. Indeed, it has been shown that activists who employ anger and moral outrage as a strategy may be taken less seriously by their audience, or may be experienced as threatening (e.g. Mika, 2006). This is confirmed in our study, which shows that animal rights activists often have to show restraint in their use of horrifying pictures of animals' suffering. For a moral shock to be effective, the potential recruit must already, at least to some extent, share the social movement's moral ideal. For extreme right activists in democratic societies, it is much more difficult to employ moral shocks as a tactic (cf. Cooter, 2006). A moral shock is successful only if the potential recruit is less "taken" by the norm-breaking aspects of the shock than by the ideal-following aspect of the action. In other words, the challenge for the

activist is to be identified as a follower of a commendable ideal rather than as a norm transgressor. Thus, moral shocks may be understood as involving a dilemma of ideals and norms; activists need to balance between defending an ideal and respecting important social norms if a moral shock is to have the intended effect. Our perspective makes comprehensible the various and contradicting effects of a moral shock. Because, indeed, as Jasper has noted:

> Responses to moral shocks vary greatly. Most people, in most cases, resign themselves to unpleasant changes, certain that governments and corporations do not bend to citizen protest. But others, through complex emotional processes that few researchers have described, channel their fear and anger into righteous indignation and individual or collective political activity (Jasper, 1997: 106).

In our moral-sociological perspective, a moral shock instigates a process, which may or may not lead to commitment to the social movement ideal (see chapter 2 on the recruitment process).

Secondly, another more general point can be made about the existing research on moral shocks and the role of emotions in social mobilization. This research, though significant, tends to confine its attention to social movements' outward and out-reaching features (just as the entire literature on framing). Much less focus is placed on the emotion work that is done within the activist group (see however Gould, 2009; Owens, 2009). Indeed, it has been noted that social movements' internal group dynamics are poorly understood (Jasper, 2011). Activists need to take into account not just the norms of their audiences or society at large, but also their in-group norms. Moreover, in order to sustain the emotional vigor necessary to pursue their moral ideals, fellow activists continually have to work on their relationships to cultivate feelings of loyalty and belonging (Shapiro, 1994; Collins, 2001; Gaarder, 2008).

Identification of the key emotions that play an essential role in social movements constitutes another important area of research. Consistent with the illustrations of animal rights activists' emotions we have presented above, it has been pointed out that moral emotions, such as righteous anger, resentment, compassion, moral shame and guilt, are prevalent among activists and frequently fuel protests (e.g. Herzog & Golden, 2009). This also implies that the emotions most relevant to social movements are rarely instinctive or automatic. Rather, they are "related to moral intuitions, felt obligations and rights, and information about expected effects" (Goodwin et al., 2000: 79) or an analysis of injustice (Gamson, 1992; Jasper, 2011; Olesen,

2015). Moreover, as Jasper has stated, moral emotions are "one of the most lasting accomplishments of social movements" (Jasper, 2011: 16), as activists frequently also affect the feelings and sentiments of other groups in society.[20]

The observation that moral emotions play a significant role in social movements resonates with our understanding of activists as pursuers of moral ideals. However, previous research has not given enough attention to the fact that this also leads them into conflict with important social norms. Moreover, it is because activists share moral ideals as well as contextualized group-norms that they display similar emotional reactions. For example, a person who has not internalized the moral ideals of animal rights and veganism will not show the same emotional susceptibility to animals' suffering as do animal rights activists and will not get upset in social situations where people eat meat for dinner. Neither would she experience the activists' feelings of guilt for not doing more to improve the conditions of animals. A moral world-view where the animal industry is compared to a concentration camp is in itself an infringement on mainstream society's sensibilities: the moral ideals make animal rights activists into emotional deviants (see Groves, 1995). Thus, for a full understanding of the role of emotions and emotion work in social movement activism, the study of emotions must be incorporated within a comprehensive moral-sociological framework.

Accordingly, social movements operate outside and not within the dominant emotional codes (Yang, 2007). Social movements try to achieve emotional liberation by changing the prevailing norms for emotional experience (Flam & King, 2005). In this context, the concept of "feeling rules" plays an important role (e.g. Polletta & Amenta, 2001; Whittier, 2001). Feeling rules regulate what activists take as legitimate feelings and as legitimate expression of their feelings. They denote the presence of socially shared guidelines, which prescribe how an individual should feel – or wish to feel – in a given situation (Hochschild, 1979).

As morally reflexive actors, social movements seek to become aware of, and alter, feeling rules. For instance, they may legitimize the display of aggressive emotions such as anger and outrage. Moreover, activists challenge feeling rules by transforming discouraging emotions such as fear, grief and shame into feelings of pride, anger and joy in life (e.g. Whittier, 2001; Gould, 2009). Social movements form emotional cultures with their own specific

20   Jasper sees "moral emotions" as one category of emotions together with "urges", "reflex emotions", "affects" and "moods" (Jasper, 2007: 81-82).

meanings attached to "what particular emotions signify, how emotions should be interpreted and expressed, and how they should be responded to" (Polletta & Amenta, 2001: 309). In this way activists subvert existing practices of feeling and mobilize counter emotions.

Previous research has generally conceptualized feeling rules, like moral shocks and moral emotions, without elaborating the overarching moral order. And yet it should be noted that feeling rules constitute only a subclass of social norms. It is interesting to note that recent volumes on culture and social movements use feeling rules as a theoretical concept, but tend to shun the concept of social norms (see e.g. Baumgarten et al., 2014). Feeling rules need to be complemented by substantive norms anchored in tradition, law and ethics (Durkheim, 2002/1925). To this can be added ceremonial norms, including the rules concerning social manners and etiquette that are vital to people's self-presentation (Goffman, 1967), as suggested earlier. Indeed, rules concerning how a person should feel or want to feel in a given situation are rarely independent of either substantive or ceremonial norms. For this reason, people usually induce, inhibit and shape their emotions in accordance with their society's prevailing legislative or moral customs. The importance of examining feeling rules against the backdrop of other sorts of societal rules is also pointed out by Hochschild in her seminal article on this concept (Hochschild, 1979: 565-568). She asserts that the norms regulating today's American work and family life permit women to become legitimately angry over abuses at work as well as feel hope for advancement.

A broader moral-sociological framework helps us understand how and why activists transform society's conventional feeling rules. In light of the notion that social movement activists adhere to moral ideals, it should come as no surprise that they expend great effort in changing emotion norms. On the one hand, the particular feeling rules that evolve within an activist group strongly reflect the societal visions that the group embraces. For instance, animal rights activists' specific standards for displaying compassion may be intelligible only when the movement's ideals concerning animal rights are taken into account. On the other hand, once internalized, the new feeling rules turn into established rights and duties within the group: To feel no meat resistance, to show no impulse towards rescuing animals from cruel treatment, to feel no guilt or sadness when animals are being harmed, is seen as a lack of empathy (see also Pallotta, 2008). Such insensitivity will, therefore, be disapproved of and condemned by animal rights activists. As Durkheim succinctly noted in a passage about feeling rules:

> [W]hen the individual feels firmly attached to the society to which he belongs, he feels morally compelled to share its joys and sorrows; to remain a disinterested observer would be to break the ties that bind him to the collectivity, to give up wanting the collectivity, and to contradict himself (Durkheim, 2001/1912: 297).

To conclude, our perspective underlines that emotions are not mere reactions. They are reflexively managed by activists to enhance their ability to pursue their moral ideals and handle their norm transgressions, along with the negative reactions from others that these transgressions may provoke. This requires a focus on activists' emotion work rather than their emotions as such.

Types of Emotion Work in Animal Rights Activism

Social norms are omnipresent. Substantive, ceremonial and emotional norms make up the building-blocks of society. As such they affect activists' emotion work in relation to recruitment processes, mobilization and outreach, as well as everyday contexts and in-group life. Emotion work serves the dual purpose of helping to sustain commitment to moral ideals and to alleviate the emotional stress that norm transgression often implies. From our interviews, we identified five different types of emotion work performed by animal rights activists, which we call "containing", "ventilation", "ritualization", "micro-shocking" and "normalization of guilt".

Containing

Containing is a type of emotion work, which serves the purpose of reducing the effects of norm transgression. Containing, a notion often employed in the practice of psychotherapy, denotes the therapist's ability to tolerate the client's negative emotional reactions by being able to bear with displays of anger, grief or frustration (McWilliams, 2004). Though different in both method and purpose, containing work is common in activism too. As transgressors of social norms, animal rights activists are often faced with aggressive and unpleasant reactions from their surroundings. For instance, our interviewees report that aggressive people often turn up at their bookstands or when they distribute leaflets in the streets. If the activists react impulsively, showing anger and resentment, outsiders will be unlikely to acknowledge the moral ideals of veganism

and animal rights as sound. Rather, they may well become defensive, labeling the activists as norm breakers or deviants. Hence, it is not just the case that animal rights activists avoid interactions with antagonistic others who do not conform to their own emotional dispositions (Groves, 1995). Activists also learn how to maintain their composure in the face of aggression and keep the frustration within them until the public performance is over.

An important motivation for animal rights activists' containing work derives from the fact that the movement is regularly accused of being based on emotions rather than on rational belief. It has been pointed out that the animal rights movement is primarily a women's movement, and represents an anti-instrumental world-view and a passionate concern for animals (Jasper & Nelkin, 1992). In a society dominated by scientific, technical discourse, there is a constant risk that the public will refuse to take such a movement's ideals seriously (Groves, 1995, 2001). In order to circumvent damaging accusations of emotionalism, it becomes crucial for activists not to give way to impulsivity and to show a high tolerance for the hostility of others. As one of our interviewees attests:

> Those who are uninformed of the animal rights question and who are not even vegetarians I can regard as "Them". I may feel that those who do not understand a thing are hopeless and thick-headed, but I never say such things even if I feel like that [...] When I stand [in public] in the city it often happens that I meet people who are intolerant, but I take it calmly or ignore them.

Knowing that expressing his emotions would only validate the public's preconception of the animal rights movement as emotional, this activist instead performs emotion work. He seeks to contain other people's anger and frustration. In this way, the activist is in a better position to raise consciousness about the animal rights issue.

Containing work is also recurrent in the activists' everyday life. It is often called for in connection with meals. Since the vegan diet functions as a recurrent act of animal liberation – the lives of individual animals are spared each time the activist eats a meal – foodstuffs and their consumption have a powerful symbolic meaning in the animal rights movement. This leads activists to spend a lot of time and energy on exchanging recipes and giving advice on how to cook vegan meals (Jamison et al., 2000). Our interview material contains numerous anecdotes about how activists have been harassed when eating together with meat eaters,

which necessitates containing work. As one of the younger activists told us, striking back is seldom the best way to defend the moral ideal of veganism:

> Sometimes I can get incredibly irritated when my friends devour a hamburger right in front of me. Then I feel like provoking [them back] by making a nasty comment. But I know that this just does no good, that I won't get anywhere with it. I realize that I get furthest by setting a good example.

Even if provoked by her friends' aggressive face-work (Goffman, 1967: 24-26), the activist chooses to endure their innuendo and playful belligerence in order to win the moral battle for animals. The quotation also illuminates the fact that the occasions for containing work tend to be abundant in animal rights activism. For someone who has converted to a moral world-view, which includes the idea that animals are sacred (Lowe, 2001), something as simple as the public consumption of a hamburger can be deeply disturbing.

It is important to underline that the efficiency of containing work in the animal rights movement is rarely dependent on individual coping strategies. Managing the general public's anger is instead, typically, a collective endeavor, which bears witness to a continual discourse between activists. As one of the interviewees informed us, fellow participants may need to pause and communicate with each other about their feelings even in the midst of a protest:

> It is important not to be alone [when promoting animal rights]. To be alone would be difficult. This autumn I did in fact staff a book table alone, but then I had trained together with others for a long period of time. It feels like you have support when you are a group. If someone comes up against provocation, that person can discuss it with others. You can take up various aspects and air your own frustrations.

An understanding of the collective basis of much containing work is crucial for the understanding of how activists manage to sustain their commitment despite the emotional costs involved. On her own, as an individual, the activist is vulnerable; but the dialogical support of other activists enables her to deal with the denigrating emotions of shame and self-contempt caused by the general public's antagonism.

Ventilation

Another important type of emotion work – ventilation – illuminates the fact that activists establish context-specific emotion norms. Here, ventilation refers to the abreaction of emotions and is motivated by animal rights activists' need to give vent to built-up anger and irritation. It would seem that ventilation stands in stark contrast to containing and that the two are mutually exclusive. It is, however, an empirical fact that both are employed as activists adapt their emotion work to specific social situations. Animal rights activists typically employ containing work when they staff information stalls or campaign at schools. Ventilation, by contrast, is generally done when protesting, demonstrating, attacking fur shops and crusading against vivisectionists.

One may question the status of ventilation as an emotion work strategy, given that the term "work" implies a conscious effort. Defining ventilation as the abreaction of emotions may remind readers of an earlier paradigmatic approach to social movement studies, popular during the first half of the twentieth century. This approach defined social movements as irrational and passion-driven, and scholars generally focused on activists' negative emotions. Activists were held to harbor primitive urges, including hatred and despair; they suffered, it was alleged, from psychological dysfunctions (Le Bon, 1960/1895; Smelser, 2011/1962; cf. Goodwin et al., 2000). However, in contrast to this earlier perspective on emotions – where emotions *caused* activists' behavior and protesters *were driven* by emotions – we argue that there is a far-reaching reflexivity about emotions in the animal rights movement. This qualifies ventilation as a strategy of and for emotion work. Consider, for instance, the following openhearted account given by an animal rights activist:

> If you are very aggressive when you do your action I think that it can work to your disadvantage. But at the same time you get an outlet for your emotions. Like, when we stand outside a store and shout "scum" and "murderer". It can be seen as a personal attack, which it is, too, but at the same time it can feel so great to just be able to say it. It boils in me every time I walk past a fur store or a person wearing a fur and then one gets an outlet for it.

It is noticeable that this activist is highly reflective about her emotions. She is able both to verbalize her feelings and to work with them: she actually reasons about the aptness of displaying hostile emotions. Furthermore, the

activist's expressions of aggression and frustration are not impulsive, nor expressed in just any social contexts; they are vented during protest events. Other interviewees also confirm that ventilation occurs in reaction to fur shops and people wearing fur. Moreover, when exerting ventilation, they follow the feeling rules of the activist group.

Ventilation also illuminates the praxis-orientation of social movements. As pursuers of moral ideals, animal rights activists not only manage their emotions in order to facilitate action, they also deal with their emotions by *taking action*. While describing her experiences during a recent animal-rights demonstration, an interviewee relates the following:

> The demonstration that we had this Sunday when we walked up Linné Street feels like a wonderful way for us in the movement to gather and march together. But also that it is public, that it is visible and noisy and that there are streamers and slogans [...] You can't just sit at home and write letters to the editor and things like that. It can feel good to have this emotional outlet, that you can yell out slogans and chants together with those who you know believe in the same thing. It is important to be many, and it's about showing others that we are many who are moving together.

By participating in the demonstration, the activist performs emotion work. She gives expression to a feeling of relief in connection with yelling animal rights slogans and chants in unison with fellow activists. In this manner, emotional tensions are ventilated in celebration of moral ideals. It has been suggested that social movement protest should be distinguished from forms of collective violence where hostile inclinations are given free reign (Eisinger, 1973). Our interviews with animal rights activists also display that protesters' abreactions of aggressive impulses may not contradict their reflexive orientation, but complement it.

Ritualization

Containing work and ventilation work are usually exerted together with other activists and may strengthen in-group norms of social solidarity. Hence, these types of emotion work point to, and may overlap with, another type of emotion work, which we call ritualization, the purpose of which is to generate the emotional energy necessary to maintain unity and cohesion in the activist group.

Collins (2001, 2005/2004) has outlined the basic dynamic of ritual emotion work. His model puts emphasis on the mutual focus of attention, which is seen as the building block of rituals. The members sympathize with a cause but, as importantly, there is also reciprocal recognition of the fact that others in the group do this as well. The end result of ritual emotion work is a heightened sense of awareness and aliveness, what Durkheim named collective effervescence, which enables activists to transcend individual self-interest and become part of a moral community.

In line with Collins' reasoning, we hold that animal rights activists continually create interaction rituals in order to preserve norms of social solidarity within the activist group. Routine rituals such as having a cup of coffee after a protest is over, discussions over the Internet (cf. Herzog et al., 1997) and regular invitations to members' private homes assist in maintaining feelings of collectivity. This is also in agreement with the information that we gathered on the animal rights activists' social network. When asked about their circle of friends, the majority of the interviewees told us that they exclusively, or most often, socialize with other activists in the movement.

Ritual emotion work becomes particularly important since, as norm-breakers in society, activists often feel alienated. Hence, many of our respondents reported experiencing strong boundaries between members and non-affiliates, perceiving themselves as "us" in contrast to "them". One activist gave a vivid description of the alienation she feels because of her moral ideal of veganism:

> When you are vegan and have this "thought for animals" it constantly clashes with the meat- and egg-normative world out there, outside of my vegan bubble. Those clashes occur all the time, everything from when I worked for the home service for the elderly and I had to go to the homes of care clients and serve food [...] to being at a class get-together with the school and grilling, and when I and X [female fellow activist] sit there with our own little vegan grill and I feel like the demanding and tiresome one who always ends up in some sort of difficulty [...] To me all that is so emotional somehow. Yes, it is something that really goes deep. When it comes to the animal rights thought, I get terribly upset by people who are not vegans.

This animal rights activist feels that she doesn't fully belong to society. The use of words such as "clashes", "vegan bubble" and being "badly affected" clearly demonstrates that being a vegan can be painful. Like many other

respondents, she sets her hopes, instead, on the animal-rights community where she can feel at home (cf. Gaarder, 2008). Accordingly, being conducive to a strong sense of "internal solidarity" within the group, ritual emotion work together with other activists becomes a necessity. However, as the cited protester moreover indicates, the founding of durable bonds between activists may simultaneously be associated with "an exclusive solidarity" against other groups with different life-worlds. Ritual emotion work thus also helps explain the hostility and antagonism that exists in protest (cf. Stedman-Jones, 2010, who points out the significance of experiences of exclusive group-solidarity for violence in today's society).

Micro-shocking

Research on social movement relevant emotions has pointed to the importance of what are termed moral shocks (e.g. Jasper & Poulsen, 1995; Jasper, 1997). Nevertheless, while previous research has demonstrated how animal rights activists employ images and use expressive rhetoric in an attempt to recruit new members by affecting people's moral sentiments, much less attention has been drawn to the fact that animal rights activists also employ such shocks in their own lives (see, however, Hansson & Jacobsson, 2014) in order to maintain their own commitment to the cause and enable further norm confrontation. The emotion work we term micro-shocking is intended to capture this phenomenon. By actively looking for – and at – horrifying pictures and films, the activist strives to provoke his or her own anger or outrage. To draw on William Gamson's vocabulary, micro-shocking is emotion work which the activist performs to ignite in him or herself "the righteous anger that puts fire in the belly and iron in the soul" (Gamson, 1992: 32).

The particular method used for micro-shocking varies, it seems, from one activist to another. One activist regularly feeds films of animal repression into his DVD player in the morning so that he "gets furious and so awakens to life". It helps him "get going". Another activist told:

> One has to look at animal rights films […] sometimes there are new animal rights films and new undercover [films] in fur farms, and that's what I look at to remind myself of why I'm standing outside, for example, Astra Seneca in Mölndal and screaming. This is why I do this. Not to forget.

A third activist described another approach, that of painting the world in black colors, which was used in encounters with other activists at the bookstand. By focusing on alarming news confirming the widespread exploitation of animals, or taking the view that things are deteriorating badly, activists join in stirring up emotions conducive to engagement in the movement.

Micro-shocking may also function as a remedy for the boredom inherent in activists' work. Social movement life can be quite uneventful; protesting also requires monotonous routine work. As one of our respondents told us, concerning the distribution of animal rights leaflets: "One can get tired of handing out leaflets. It is not especially fun once you have done it 150 times and have to do it the 151st time". Activities that might be stimulating at first can turn into tedious routine. As another activist told us:

> In the beginning I got a kick out of coming out and staffing an information desk and such. That I don't get as often any more […] there are altogether not especially many kicks nowadays. It's pretty much routine, especially at the information desk which is not at all exciting any more. I am in fact pretty tired of it.

Such accounts testify to a need for emotional management to overcome the tedium of everyday social movement practice. Micro-shocking is an important strategy for achieving this end.

Moral shocks and micro-shocking typically manifest at different phases in the activist-career. While the moral shock is significant as a triggering experience, micro-shocking matters at the later stages in the mobilization process. This fact is important as it shows that the protester's emotion work is not fixed, but develops when participating in a social movement's activities. Taking place at an early stage, moral shocks necessarily draw on making basic inferences. The non-activist needs to learn how to attribute her responses of shock to animals' suffering, and not to any psychological over-sensitivity on her part. She also needs to learn how to perceive the shock as an impetus for activist-commitment, not to be downplayed, as other experiences may matter more in her life. Micro-shocking, in contrast, is a confirmation of a previously internalized world-view. Being now an activist the person needs to learn how to self-inflict the shock without feeling inauthentic. Reflexivity is no longer related to the moral meaning and significance of the shock, but instead whether the shocking experience is morally justified to her.

Normalization of Guilt

Micro-shocking demonstrates that animal rights activists may accept their own suffering when the experience is conducive to action and protest. This links micro-shocking to yet another type of emotion work, which we call the normalization of guilt. Guilt plays an important role as an incentive and motivation for the pursuit of a new societal vision. This involves emotional management; animal rights activists frequently seek ways to make their own guilt tolerable and even to encourage their own guilty feelings. Indeed, one of the most striking features of the animal rights movement is the degree to which its members experience feelings of guilt or a troubled conscience (Gaarder, 2008; Groves, 1997; Jamison et al., 2000). As we have already noted, animal rights activists frequently feel they do not do enough, given their feelings of responsibility toward the seemingly infinite numbers of animals that need their support. Animal rights activists have even been called "caring sleuths", because many end up continually searching for new animal victims with whom they can empathize (Shapiro, 1994). Activists want to live their lives with their eyes open. They seek to face the suffering that does exist, as opposed to the many others who prefer to "turn off" or look away. In contemporary society, hedonistic customs have increasingly replaced the authoritarian and punishing superego of early modernity. This deprives guilt of much of its weight (Bauman, 1993). In contrast, the animal rights movement may be viewed as a guilt culture permeated by inverted emotion norms of guilt.

The term "normalization" should not be taken to mean that animal rights activists like to feel guilty. All of our interviewees make it clear that guilt is both painful and difficult to cope with. Yet, it is seen as a sign of animal rights activists' commitment to their moral ideals and is, therefore, accepted as necessary. By acknowledging guilt, by openly talking about it, and by conceiving of guilt as an appropriate motive for action, the feeling tends to be normalized in the movement. As one of the respondents put it when describing her vegan lifestyle:

> It limits me quite a bit, but it is my own choice. I would rather choose something that is difficult than go around with a bad conscience. Then at least I have done what I can do [...] I do this in order to quiet my bad conscience. That is something I can be quite open about. I feel that I just have to do something, when I know what it [the world] is like.

By the same token, another activist told of feeling guilty during leisurely, lazy holidays. Protest, however, might relieve him of his bad conscience:

> I may feel a bit of bad conscience during weekends and long holidays. I think: "Here I sit watching TV a whole week at a stretch". I think many feel like that, for this is of course a call, doing this. The conviction becomes something we really want to spread, and if you do not do anything for a long period of time you can feel blameworthy. I manage bad conscience by doing things. Then it feels better. I have not found any other way of thinking.

These quotations show how activists carry out emotion work to normalize guilt. Though painful, guilt is tolerated as inseparable from the pursuit of the moral ideals of animal rights and veganism. Nevertheless, guilt is also viewed as an emotion from which activists legitimately seek to free themselves through protests and other actions.

Finally, elaborating on an earlier point, animal rights activists' way of dealing with emotions of guilt via action also puts them in a particular predicament. Given their praxis-orientation – and in contrast to those who follow a traditional religion – animal rights activists have no external source of atonement or forgiveness. They can neither pray to a merciful god, nor attain atonement through ritual confession (Jacobsson & Lindblom, 2012; Jamison et al., 2000; Jacobsson, 2014; see also chapter 4). Repeated action is the only way in which they can achieve moral purity. The result readily becomes one of a perpetual spiral of guilt and activism.

The high requirements that this guilt management imposes on activists became apparent in our interviews. Consider, for instance, the following account, given by an animal rights activist:

> What my closest friends and I work hard on is this thing about feeling guilty, and experiencing this whip. It's not a question of having to do something and truly everything, that the suffering of all animals is our responsibility. Because that doesn't work, it makes it difficult for people to sleep. Later they go under, too, and disappear [from the movement]. It is worth more to be able to carry on, and now I am trying to really concentrate on that. And when it [activism] is at its best, it is unbelievably rewarding and meaningful [...] But most people can't handle it [the feeling of inadequacy], and I am not saying that I can, but I am working hard at it. Most people feel such an unbelievable pressure. And they feel really lousy. And yet can't stop. And all the time new things come up – and the more

you are there, the more open [to the needs of animals] you become. And then you can't say, "stop here". And then you hear about a dog somewhere that isn't getting fed, and then you have to deal with that, and then it's something else. And then they are going to shoot jackdaws too; we have to get engaged in that too.

As this quote shows, the acceptance and tolerance of emotions of guilt may generate demands that overwhelm the movement's members. The activist quoted above is seeking an escape from the guilt-activism spiral – to bring her life into balance. Here, then, we can see still another type of emotion work, one in which activists aim for a de-normalization of guilt.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have examined the different types of emotion work that animal rights activists carry out in order to be able to pursue their moral ideals as well as handling their experiences of norm transgression. Activists strive to tolerate others' hostile emotions to reduce the effects of norm transgression in their strivings for social change (containing work). They form emotion norms, which allow them to abreact emotions in specific situations, mainly in the context of protest, in pursuit of their moral ideals (ventilation work). They seek occasions to strengthen their in-group norms of social solidarity and recharge their emotional energy (ritual emotion work). Activists continuously ignite emotions in themselves to reinforce norm-confronting commitment in the face of resistance (micro-shocking). They form an emotion culture of guilt, in which they accept and act upon emotions of guilt for the sake of their cause (normalization of guilt).

Our study also suggests that emotion work plays a vital role in the success of social movements, calling for analytical attention to well-known success factors such as access to economic and material resources, social networks and political opportunity structures to be complemented with a consideration of emotion work in movements. Even if all other conditions are satisfied, failure to adequately carry out the necessary emotion work may doom social movements' efforts to achieve social change. Activists need to be emotionally competent, and a question that future research needs to tackle is that of when and why emotion work in social movement succeeds and in what contexts it is likely to fail.

4   Secular Religion

> Animal rights activism gives my life meaning and makes me strong. I may be struck to the ground by different incidents or when people try to make me feel small, but I feel that I have a mission (Swedish animal rights activist).

In the foregoing chapters, we argued that social movement activists are united by a commitment to distinct moral ideals that, following Durkheim, are conferred a sacred status by those committed to their defense. In this chapter, we further explore the religious qualities in the animal rights movement, suggesting that animal rights activism can fruitfully be analyzed as an instance of "secular religion" (see also Jamison et al., 2000; Lowe, 2001). While "the sacred" is key to understanding the activists' world-view, experiences and practice, this is not incompatible with their moral reflexivity. For Durkheim, modern society is not a completely desacralized world, precisely because modern society also embraces ideals that are given a sacred status. However, as he noted, the taboos and collective imperatives enclosing the sacred are no longer of the same absolute character; with the development of modern science and democracy they become more open to reflection and critique (Durkheim, 2002/1925: 52f). This is why we, with Emirbayer, can speak of "the developmental history of the sacred" (Emirbayer, 1996: 115), or with Collins stress that the sacred in the modern world takes the character of more universalistic and abstract moral principles rather than concrete taboos or reified morality (Collins, 1988: 114f). Indeed, animal rights activists are not only illustrative of a new way of relating to the sacred; through their reflexive moral practice, they are also important agents in this historical development of the sacred. As we show in this chapter, critical here is their challenging and re-drawing of established symbolic and moral boundaries.

We analyze empirically how animal rights activists relate to the sacred and how their lifeworld practices can be understood in terms of secular religion. First, however, it is necessary to introduce Durkheim's view in more detail and briefly discuss some alternative conceptualizations of non-traditional forms of religion.

A Neo-Durkheimian Perspective on Secular Religion

Many scholars have noted that secular belief systems can possess qualities and display features similar to religion without having a spiritual base or belief in a transcendent reality. For instance, Simmel stated, "I do not believe that the religious feelings and impulses manifest themselves in religion only" (Simmel quoted in Yinger, 1970: 86). Various conceptualizations have been suggested for religious expressions in non-traditional forms of religion, such as secular religion (e.g. Yinger, 1970), functional religion (Yinger, 1970), quasi-religion (e.g. Edwards, 1973; Yinger, 1970), implicit religion (e.g. Bailey, 1997) and civil religion (e.g. Bellah, 1967). The most well-known and forceful statement of the persistence of religious elements and forms even in modern, secularized societies is, nevertheless, that of Durkheim (2001/1912). As is well-known, Durkheim contended that elementary forms of religious life pervade collective life in all societies. He pointed to the basic division of the world into the sacred and the profane, the former being the shared sacrosanct ideals that unite a group, the symbols that represent it, and the collective rites that strengthen group allegiance, and generate the capacity to act in unison. Durkheim's sociology of religion is particularly useful as it acknowledges the role of the sacred in all societies, including the modern world, while at the same time acknowledging that the nature and the content of the sacred are changing.

According to Durkheim, there are three fundamental elements to every religion: sacred things, a set of beliefs and practices, and the existence of a moral community. He defined religion as "a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and surrounded by prohibitions – beliefs and practices that unite its adherents in a single moral community called a church" (Durkheim, 2001/1912: 46). Sacred things "are simply collective ideals that have fixed themselves on material objects" (Durkheim, 1973/1914: 159). Thus, the thing symbolizes the ideal. To Durkheim, the division of the world into sacred and profane is universal.[21] All societies have moral ideals, which are held to be sacred and inviolable, the transgression of which leads to reprisal and sanctions – whether legal or social. In the modern, secularized world the sacred is most

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21   Durkheim has long been criticized by religious science scholars for his universalist claims and arguably essentialist view of religion as well as for the empirical basis of his claims (for an early critique, see e.g. Goldenweiser, 1917; for a later one, see e.g. Masuzawa, 2005; see however Lynch, 2012). Sociologists, on the other hand, tend to see his perspective as still very productive (e.g. Alexander, 1988; Joas, 2000; Shilling & Mellor, 2011; Lynch & Sheldon, 2013). This chapter is indeed intended to demonstrate the usefulness of Durkheim's approach (see also Olesen, 2015).

clearly expressed in the sacrosanct status that is granted to the individual, and Durkheim saw individualism as an expression of a modern faith and cult (see also Joas, 2013). We suggest that what the animal rights activists do is *expanding this individualism* to encompass animal individuals as well. Animal rights activists challenge us to take not only humans into account but to perceive of animal-beings too as inviolable and entitled to dignity and rights. By doing so they deliberatively challenge established symbolic classifications and boundaries between sacred and profane.

Durkheim (2001) defined a moral community, or church, as a group of people with shared views of the sacred world and its relation to the profane, and with shared views of how these representations are to be translated into common practice. The animal rights activist group can be understood as such a moral community. Their tight social bonds and intensity of commitment has led some researchers to conceptualize (radical) activist groups as sects (e.g. Peterson, 2001; cf. Jamison et al., 2000). They then draw on Weber's (1963/1920) distinction between church and sect, which has meanwhile been further developed by Troeltsch (1950/1931). Weber (1963/1920) saw church and sect as two polar types of religious organization with contrasting membership criteria. While the church is inclusive, embracing all born into it, the sect is exclusive, demanding that its members be committed, thus being converted. This distinction was further developed by Troeltsch (1950/1931), who argued that while sects tend to be small and ascetic, consisting of members who are intensively devoted, close-knit and rejecting of secular society, churches are inclusive, impersonal and bureaucratic. Moreover, churches tend to be adapted to the majority-culture and society, while sects tend to be more norm confronting and transgressing in relation to dominant norms in society at large. In Troeltsch's terminology, an animal-welfare organization, such as Animals Rights Sweden, which is open to all who pay the membership fee, would be conceptualized as a church. An action group such as ALF would be conceptualized as a sect. In this book, however, we are not interested in formal organizations but rather the activist communities formed around moral ideals. For our purpose, it is sufficient to conceptualize the activist group as a community of believers based on a clear in- and out-group distinction. The activist group is driven by shared moral ideals held to be sacred, which are translated into a specific code of conduct, and group-members being united also in common practices, notably rituals.

Animal rights activists' moral community shares a worldview where animals are seen as fellow-beings with personalities and capable of suffering. This experience relates to the notion of soul, which was for Durkheim an important characteristic of religion. There is no religion, Durkheim claimed,

"in which we do not find a whole system of collective representations related to the soul" (Durkheim, 2001/1912: 183). As beings in possession of a soul, animals are entitled to dignity and respect and the activists strongly object to the instrumental use of animals for human ends. This worldview translates into a coherent code of conduct, namely consistent veganism. The inviolability of the human body has become sacred, a symbol of human rights and dignity. The animal rights activists show a similar concern for the bodily integrity of animals, and see the ingestion of animal flesh as immoral. For the activists studied for this research, the moral rejection plays out as embodied feelings of disgust (see also Hansson & Jacobsson, 2014). As will be further elucidated below, recruitment into animal rights activism can be understood as a conversion to such a moral worldview and mind-set. Even if the belief system (or faith) is also codified in creeds, such as the universal declaration of animal rights, and in foundational texts, such as texts by moral philosophers Tom Regan (1983), Peter Singer (1975), and Gary Francione (1996), even more important here are the ideals inscribed in the hearts and the souls.

The role of rituals was also key in Durkheim's sociology of religion (as also emphasized in chapter 2 and 3). Rituals are standardized and therefore predictable patterns of behavior with a symbolic and expressive dimension to them. For Durkheim, participation in rituals generates effervescence. This is important for collective action because of its transformative potential; for a moment the ritual participants feel that all is possible. The impersonal, extra-individual force transports the individuals into another, ideal realm, lifts them up and outside of themselves, and makes them feel as if they are in contact with an extraordinary energy. However, since collective effervescence is a temporary feeling – often followed by disillusionment and poor self-confidence in the absence of the group – rituals must be repeated. Durkheim's sociology of religion emphasizes the group-related functions of religious practice; that is, the social needs that rituals fill, most importantly by strengthening in-group solidarity and reaffirming commitment to the shared ideal.

Drawing on Durkheim, sociologist of religion Milton Yinger (1970) developed the notion of "functional religion". In contrast to substantive theories of religion, which focus on what religion *is* (its content), functional theories are interested in what religion *does* (Yinger, 1970: 4). In the words of Yinger: "If we take the functional approach to the definition of religion, it is not the nature of the *belief*, but the nature of *believing* that requires our study" (Ibid: 11). This is consistent with our present interest in what a conversion into an animal rights universe of meaning *does* to the individual and her social

relationships – the implications of such a faith, as well as its expressions, forms, and ways in which it is practiced. Yinger defined religion as:

> A system of beliefs and practices by means of which a group of people struggles with [the] ultimate problems of human life. It expresses their refusal to capitulate to death, to give up in the face of frustration, to allow hostility to tear apart their human associations. The quality of being religious, seen from the individual point of view, implies two things: first, a belief that evil, pain, bewilderment, and injustice are fundamental facts of existence; and second, a set of practices and related sanctified beliefs that express a conviction that man can ultimately be saved from those facts (Yinger, 1970: 7).

For Yinger, this did not necessarily imply a belief in a transcendent reality, as inner-worldly matters can also be of ultimate concern: "Injustice is bearable only if this world is written off as a temporary and unimportant vale of tears; it becomes an ultimate concern to those who are concerned only with this existence" (Yinger, 1970: 533; cf. Tillich, 1957).[22] Thus, non-theistic belief systems can also be called religions. According to Yinger, even if people reject that which they identify as religion:

> It is likely, however, that such individuals, having left some traditional religion, will nevertheless affirm their faith in some "over-beliefs", will get emotional support from various symbols, acts, and ceremonies (worship), and will join with others in groups that seek to sustain and realize shared beliefs (Yinger, 1970: 11).

In the stress on symbols, ceremonies and emotions, the influence of Durkheim is marked.

Edward Bailey has suggested the term "implicit religion", which, he claims, can be expressed both in secularism and organized religion. Bailey prefers this concept "because it keeps its options open with regard to its referent's structural and historical origins, its social and cultural location, its mode of religiosity, and its relationship with other forms of religion" (Bailey, 1997: 41). He identified three defining characteristics of implicit religion: commitment, an integrated focus of one's life and intensive concerns with

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22   Theologian Tillich defined faith as ultimate concern (Tillich, 1957: 1f). Bellah defined religion similarly as "a set of symbolic forms and acts which men relate to the ultimate condition of their existence" (quoted in Yinger, 1970: 6).

external effects (Bailey, 1997: 8f). All these characteristics, as we will see, feature prominently in the lives of the animal rights activists.

In this book, we use the concept of *secular religion* to denote a set of ideas and accompanying practices displaying the following features. First, there is a distinct universe of meaning based on a division of the world into sacred and profane. Second, there is a moral community defined by its adherence to a specific sacred ideal and commitment to its defense. This ideal represents a non-transcendent, non-theist system of beliefs and an inner-worldly utopia, which nonetheless becomes an ultimate concern for its community of believers. Finally, the group displays elementary forms of religious life in terms of distinct beliefs, experiences, and practices (such as rituals). According to this concept of secular religion (and in contrast to Bailey and Yinger, for instance), the sacred component of the belief system is still key. It is understood in a Durkheimian sense as a moral ideal, attaching intrinsic value to something, and thus as inviolable and in need of protection from contamination by the profane. Consequently, it is a specific moral ideal that forms the basis for group identification and community. Thus, a secular religion, just like a traditional religion, builds on a clear boundary between believers and non-believers, between those committed to the ideal and others. Moreover, as in the case of traditional religion, a secular religion is also based on dedication to the sacred ideal, which involves not only a cognitive awareness and intellectual motivation but also emotional engagement.

As we will illustrate below, animal rights activism contains and displays these elementary forms of religious life and can fruitfully be seen as an instance of secular religion. It is the sacredness of the ideal (of animals' intrinsic value) that sets the activists on fire, and it is in the light of this sacred ideal that their fervor, zeal and sometimes uncompromising attitudes should be understood. The moral ideal translates into an imperative code of conduct and manner. However, in contrast to most other theories of secular religion, our perspective stresses the capacity for moral reflexivity, also in relation to the sacred. The sacred is not beyond reflection and development; rather, activists maintain their moral ideals as sacred through their reflexive practice, e.g. using rituals, ceremonies, et cetera as will be illustrated later.

Our Perspective in Relation to Previous Research

From a predominantly philosophical standpoint, Socha (2014) argues that the concept of religion is antithetical to animal liberation; animal rights

activism does better without both anthropocentric and speciesist mythologies, in her view. Empirical research on animal rights activists in the US has also found that animal rights activists tend to be less religious in the traditional sense than the average person; the group numbers a larger than average proportion of agnostics or atheists (e.g. Galvin & Herzog, 1992; Jamison & Lunch, 1992; Jasper & Poulsen, 1995; Richards quoted in Jamison et al., 2000). Our sample includes some activists who are committed Christians and one of which has a Muslim background, but most of the interviewees are not religious practitioners in the traditional sense. Nevertheless, the sacred ideals are embraced by the religious practitioners and atheists alike. As will be illustrated empirically later, they share some fundamental experiences and what Durkheim called elementary forms of religious life.

Two previous studies have explicitly studied animal rights activism in religious terms (Jamison et al., 2000; Lowe, 2001), while a number of other studies have drawn parallels to religion without developing this further (e.g. Herzog, 1993; McDonald, 2000; Jacobsson & Lindblom, 2012), or have pointed to experiences which can be interpreted in such terms. Jamison, Wenk and Parker (2000) drew on Yinger (without mentioning Durkheim) and argued that all the critical components of functional religion are present in the case of animal rights activism, such as intense conversion experiences, newfound communities of meaning, normative creeds, distinct codes of behavior and cult formation. The authors suggested that understanding animal rights activism as functional religion helps us understand the intensity of activist commitment.

Lowe (2001) analyzed animal rights activism as a "quasi-religious phenomenon", in view of the activists' moral orientation and outrage, their concern with purity and their common micro-interactions and rituals. Lowe also argues that texts produced by philosophers, such as Peter Singer and Tom Regan, have achieved a quasi-sacred status in the movement. The respondents in our study, however, are far more ambivalent about the importance of the philosophers, and some of the interviewed activists even take a critical stance towards them. As one them puts forward:

> I have never read Peter Singer or Tom Regan. I know they have meant a lot to others. It has often occurred to me that I should read these books, but I think they have a very complicated language that doesn't interest me. So I usually skip these books.

It seems that most of the activists that we have interviewed had not even read the leading philosophical works or were aware of the philosophical

arguments they contain. Other research on the animal rights movement has also contradicted Lowe's proposition (Garner, 2004). We therefore find it more appropriate to conceive of – not the texts or the movement as sacred objects as Lowe (2001) has it – but animals as symbols of a sacred ideal. Nevertheless, Lowe acknowledges the fundamentally moral nature of the animal rights movement (drawing, here, on Weber and the notion of value-rational motives, rather than on Durkheim).

We thus differ from these previous authors in emphasizing that it is in the light of the activist group as a moral community formed around a sacred ideal that the religious elements can be best understood. When Jamison, Wenk and Parker ask, "What are the sources of this intensity and commitment?" (Jamison et al., 2000: 306) our reply would be "the sacred". Without a theoretical understanding of the sacred, the religious features of animal rights activism remain incomprehensible and exotic. By dismantling the symbolic boundary between humans and animals (Cherry, 2010), the activists challenge established boundaries between the sacred and the profane. Key here is moreover the fact that the activists' representation of the sacred clashes with that of mainstream society. This is why many people react so strongly against the views of animal rights activists or depict them as extreme or even bizarre (which is not uncommon in the mass media; see e.g. Sorenson, 2009). Finally, and most importantly, we differ from the authors above in stressing that a perspective on secular religion must encompass both a conception of sacrality *and* acknowledge actors' reflexive capacity. By their exertion of moral reflexivity, the activists turn into important agents in the historical development of the sacred.

Elements of Secular Religion in Animal Rights Activism

Below we show how key elements of religious life play out in the animal rights community, drawing on our interview data. Consistent with an approach that is more interested in what religion *does* than what it is, our focus will be on practices affecting activists' experiences, conduct and relationships. The approach adopted here is in line with Munson (2008) who has argued that social movement scholars should pay more attention to the activities bearing religious meaning. This stands in contrast to studying religious organizations (particularly churches) and beliefs, which has been

the major focus in social movement research.[23] It should moreover be noted here that our methodological use of intensity-sampling (see chapter 1) is in agreement with William James in his seminal work *Varieties of Religious Experience* (James, 2002/1902). In order to capture the religious mind, James chose to study the most religious persons – not because these alone express a religious worldview, but because they do it most explicitly. Likewise, in this book we focus on persons who are on fire for their cause – not the half-hearted individuals who might be paying, but passive, members of an animal-welfare organization – because secular religion is more visible there. Rather than trying to achieve a sample that would be statistically representative of all branches of the broader movement, which would include both animal rights and animal welfare activists, our analysis thus centers on the most committed, zealous activists, who explicitly define themselves as animal rights activists.

In order to illustrate the parallel between the activists' universe of meaning and that of a traditional religion, we have inserted some quotes from the Bible in relation to our themes below. The Bible is a guide to life only for a few of our interviewees; however, the quotes express the same type of commitment and imperative to act as our respondents express.

Experiences of Awakening and Conversion

A marked element of religious life in animal rights activism is the strong experiences of awakening and conversion that activists give witness to, after which they see the world in a new light and feel compelled to act. Their hearts are directed toward a new focus of life, almost as in the words of the prophet: "Return to me with all your heart" (Joel 2:12). Instigating the process of the activist-career (see chapter 2), conversion experiences are a strong impetus to a transformation of the epistemological horizon of the individual (Jamison et al., 2000). Yet, even more important, conversion-experiences may give rise to *a devotion to a moral ideal* and *command*, entailing not just beliefs but moral commitments and obligations. It is in this light that we can understand the dramatic and all-encompassing changes in conduct of life that accompany the changes in thinking (see also

23   In his study of the pro-life movement Munson (2008) found four practices where the influence of religion is manifest: "prayer", "rituals of birth and death", "religious gatherings" and "doing God's work". Starting from the concept of secular religion in the animal rights movement we were able to identify other practices, which are religious in form and nature.

Herzog, 1993; Pallotta, 2005), and the imperative to give up one's old life and live according to new ideals, such as unwavering adherence to veganism.

Durkheim (1973/1914) pointed to the dualism of human nature, by Shilling and Mellor conceptualized as *homo duplex*; as human beings we are internally divided between egoistic dispositions and moral dispositions, the latter of which follow from our attachment to a social group (Shilling & Mellor, 2001: 53; see also Shilling & Mellor, 2011). The conversion to the animal rights ideal entails a "push" towards the moral side of one's character, and giving up one's old life thus entails trying to suppress the egoistic dispositions for the sake of the cause. The fact that the conversion narratives are recurrent in the interview material as well as documented in previous research indicate that the conversion is also social – an individual experience in a collective form.

Reaching a turning point in their lives as meat-eaters, the interviewed activists testify to have experienced a form of revelation – akin to that of a traditional religious revival – whereby their eyes were opened and they saw the world as it truly is. One activist expressed the following:

> I was unenlightened before. Our society is incredibly good at hiding and euphemizing the situation and what is going on. We normalize that we murder and use animals. I was socialized into that [...] I think that I just needed to see, someone needed to show me what reality is like, and when I saw that and opened my eyes to something else and to what reality is like, I felt that "this I cannot support". It felt self-evident.

Another said, "It was as if all pieces fell into their place and I understood that here I have been going around for 10 years without seeing or understanding anything". The conversion experience entails moving from an unenlightened state to a new consciousness about the world and one's place in it, namely as a savior of suffering souls (see also Gaarder, 2008). The interviewees express something close to amazement at not having seen the connection between animals and food before, though perceiving themselves as being animal-friendly. Suddenly it all appears self-evident. In their conversion narratives there is thus a clear "before and after" (who I was and who I became) (see also McDonald, 2000). There is also a sense of surrender – life cannot be the same again. Self-surrender has been seen as fundamental to religious experience (Joas, 2000; James, 2002/1902). To the activist, the moment of conversion appears to be a point of no return. As one activist put it, "Once you have opened yourself there is no way back".

To "open oneself" means opening up to the suffering that is constantly around us. The experience of eye-opening is accompanied by a willingness to live with open eyes, with "no blockers" or blinders on (McDonald, 2000: 11), a commitment to face and confront the suffering that exists. Empathy and compassion with those who suffer feature frequently in the interview narrations (which is consistent with findings in other studies; e.g. Lowe, 2001; Pallotta, 2005; Shapiro, 1994). Instead of turning off or looking away, the activists deliberately let themselves be affected by the suffering of others. The awakening thus entails a sensitization (Shapiro, 1994) and an awakening of sensibilities (Hansson & Jacobsson, 2014), whereby the activists can almost feel the pain of others: "If I put myself in animals' place it hurts so much in my body that I cannot ignore it". As another one puts it, "once you have opened your eyes it is so bloody painful to see everything around you".

In the experience of eye-opening and "seeing", meeting animals' eyes is key, as is also documented in previous research (Gaarder, 2008; Herzog, 1993; Jamison et al., 2000). One interviewed activist relates the following experience of watching films picturing animals suffering:

> I felt so incredibly bad and it was emotional. There are things that just stay and I can never go back. It was like it was so amazingly profound and I was really sad. And when you see it there with their eyes, these pigs' eyes are totally different from other pigs' eyes. Like pigs going to slaughter. Or living in large [industrial] buildings. I still have those pictures. It is the eyes of some animals.

The eyes are the proverbial window of the soul and thus bring to mind that animals are beings with a soul, susceptible to suffering, and therefore entitled to moral consideration and concern. It is in this light we can understand Jamison, Wenk and Parker's finding that their interview-subjects drew a distinction between animals who possess eyes and those who don't (Jamison et al., 2000: 315). Only the former were seen as subjects of moral concern.

As Joas has pointed out, conversions are basically non-intentional, while resulting in a paradoxical feeling of voluntary commitment and ineluctable force (Joas, 2000: 5). The typical conversion pattern among the activists of this study is not that of seekers looking for a meaningful cause to dedicate their lives to, but rather of people attesting to a sense of

being hit by the revelation, like St Paul on his way to Damascus.[24] As also stressed by Giesen, encounters with the sacred *occur* to us instead of being produced by us; these moments "intrude suddenly and violently" into the regular life of the individual (Giesen, 2006: 329, 338). As an extraordinary event "it escapes profane typification and classification as such, it is the opposite of 'déjà vu'" (Ibid: 329). It "suspends the compromises of the ordinary lifeworld and disrupts the mundane social structure" (Ibid: 330). Or as formulated by Joas, the encounter with the sacred is "an experience so intense that it constitutes or transform our entire worldview and self-understanding" (Joas, 2013: 55). A conversion experience thus disrupts and unsettles the activist self, and marks a new beginning. This is why moments of epiphany become turning points of personal biographies and histories (Giesen, 2006: 337), and become stored in individual as well as collective memory.

Indeed, the activists we have interviewed can point to specific turning points when their lives were transformed. In previous research, these moments have been termed "catalytic experiences" (McDonald, 2000) "epiphanic events" (Jamison et al., 2000) or "trigger events" (Pallotta, 2008). The catalytic events typically entail both an overwhelming emotional experience and a new cognitive understanding, whereby "pieces fall into place". As previously discussed, exposure to pictures in films or photographs of animal suffering is an important mechanism in this respect (Jasper & Poulsen, 1995). Yet, for some of our interviewees, the confrontation with pictures had been preceded by a sensitization by animal rights arguments or by having developed a pre-disposition to empathy towards animals – for example acquired through childhood experiences of having beloved pets – which might have facilitated receptiveness to a conversion experience (see also Pallotta, 2005). Our interview-data also include a few (all male) interviewees who stress that their change was due to philosophical reasoning and that their feelings of compassion were developed later. Nevertheless, in the sample, an awakening caused by seeing pictures is the recurrent pattern of conversion. As one activist summed up: "It was pictures that made me react emotionally. I was sad, angry, in despair. It tore up a lot within me".

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24   Tom Regan (1983) has described three paths to animal rights activism: The DaVincians (after Leonardo DaVinci) who are born with a sensitivity to animals they never lose, the Damascans (after the apostle Paul) who experience eye-opening events and thus conversion, and the muddlers, for whom developing an animal consciousness is a process of slow growth (Vaughan, 2012). Even if elements of all three paths were reflected in several of the life-stories of our interviewees, most of them entailed some eye-opening experience.

It is well-known that converts often become "hardcore", as compared to people who have grown into a belief-system gradually, for instance through their upbringing. It is therefore not surprising, in a sample of subjects who define themselves as animal rights activists and who are all vegans, to find many who have had these conversion experiences. In Lowe and Ginsberg's (2002) questionnaire, based on US data, only 25% of the respondents had experienced sudden conversion while (58%) responded that their engagement had grown gradually. However, their sample covered the broader movement, including also animal welfare activists.

Finally, conversion experiences are vital for an understanding of re-shocking experiences within the movement. As noted above, the term "conversion" invites comparison with the religious convert, and relates to the fact that a great number of activists became committed after experiencing an emotionally laden episode involving a suffering and helpless animal. In addition, our interview data suggest that the emotion work of micro-shocking (see chapter 3) may be interpreted as a way of recreating this experience at a later stage in the activist's career. By exposing oneself to appalling pictures, by means of photographs, films or news, an attempt is made to experience an awakening similar to that which characterized one's conversion.

Let us illustrate this. One of our interviewees reported that her concern for animals began when she was ten years old (see also Pallotta, 2005, 2008, on the importance of childhood experiences for adult commitment). As she was driving past a grocery store with her family, she was horrified to see a poster depicting a monkey being given an injection in the back of its head. She responded with strong emotions to the sight of the suffering monkey. The next day she ordered magazines and folders in order to extend her knowledge about vivisection. She also became a dues-paying member of one of Sweden's animal rights groups. When asked how she was able to sustain her commitment today the activist returns to the impact of pictures showing pigs, hens, cows or other animals in distress:

> I feel that I need those horrible pictures and to see what it is that I find so repulsive. That is what gets me to engage myself [...] I am afraid of falling into unthinking routine, that I just come here to have a cup of coffee and talk about shit. It mustn't become so cozy that one loses this goad [...] I think that every person over and over must ask themselves why they do this and why they live the way they do. It is necessary to remind oneself of what one stands for.

To attain the emotional vigor necessary to enable further norm confrontation, the activist upsets or shocks herself by repeatedly exposing herself to images that remind her of the conditions under which animals live. For her, the experience is not unfamiliar; it resembles the event that led to her conversion to the animal rights cause as a child. In this way several of the other activists also keep exposing themselves to re-shocking experiences, in order to recreate the conversion experiences later in their activist careers. As another activist says, "When I see those pictures, then the fire is lit and there is no other way to go". Reminding oneself through re-shocking experiences is a way of affirming one's commitment to the sacred ideal.

It should be noted that micro-shocking is one type of conversion-experience occurring after social movement participation. As pointed out by Munson, protest may also cause activists to convert to a traditional religion (Munson, 2008: 177-184). In his study of the pro-life movement a great number of activists (nearly 20 percent) became Catholic and Protestant due to their involvement in the movement. Having gone through turning points in their lives (such as moving to another city, getting divorced, or being laid-off from work) and making personal contacts with the movement, these activists also opened up their mind-set to religious teachings. Thus it is in a larger context of rebirth that we need to place animal rights activists and their use of self-inflicted shocks.

Dedication and Commitment

"Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead", it is written in the epistle (James 2:17). The same is true for the animal rights activist. The activist feels compelled to live out her faith – by taking action. It is through action that commitment is manifested; faith needs to be enacted. The action orientation is even more pronounced in the militant activist groups who consistently put "deeds before words", convinced that "actions speak louder than words" (Peterson, 2001: viii, 23).[25]

Conversion experiences may be transformative and initiate a change in the totality of an individual's life.[26] Thus, the interviewed activists reflexively monitor all aspects of their lives in detail to ensure that they comply

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25   Militant protest acquires, as Peterson has pointed out, "its force, its creativity, its subversiveness, and its credibility through the political articulation in everyday life" and, thus, "the militant practices what he/she preaches" (Peterson, 2001: ix).

26   While not focusing on social movements proper, Kanter's (1968, 1972) classical analysis of commitment and community in utopian communities still deserves mentioning. Kanter especially pointed to the "commitment mechanisms" that bind persons to social systems.

with the moral ideal. It is not possible to compartmentalize the animal rights issue from the daily, non-activist life (cf. McDonald, 2000). For the interviewees, activism tends to be the first priority of their lives (see also Herzog, 1993): "Activism for animals is very much what my life is about", one says. He adds that this is what he would like people to remember him for when he is dead. The conversion means that the activist gets a new and integrated focus in life, which overcomes divisions of experience, something that is characteristic of religious experience (e.g. Bailey, 1997: 8, James, 2002/1902; Joas, 2000: 52). We see here clearly Bailey's three defining characteristics of implicit religion: commitment, an integrated focus in one's life and intensive concerns with external effects.

The activists are typically overwhelmed by the suffering around them and being driven by empathy they feel compelled to reduce this suffering (see also Jamison et al., 2000; Shapiro, 1994). They also feel called upon to go out into the world, give testimony and spread the message, and so save animal-souls. As has also been pointed out by Herzog (1993), there is an evangelical component in their involvement, and activists assume ignorance rather than indifference from the public. Thus, they strongly believe in information-spreading, through leaflet distribution or bookstalls and by talking to and setting examples for others, for instance by demonstrating that there is nothing strange about a vegan diet. Despite the fact that their own experience typically is that of having seen the truth – revelatory knowledge – they are concerned to back up their claims with scientific knowledge claims, such as findings in neuroscience that animals, including fish, are sentient beings capable of feeling pain. Striking in the animal rights religion is indeed its *combination of faith and science*, a rationalist worldview *and* a secular faith. Nevertheless, the converted activist is also typically convinced of the correctness of her beliefs and the justifiability of her cause, showing a combination of idealism and ideological certainty (Galvin & Herzog, 1992). As stated by one interviewee, "We know that we are right. One day people will look back and think that we were right". Another one said, "Of course it is very tough to go against all that society is fighting desperately to retain. But it is also so comforting to know that the struggle I pursue is the right one". The moral certitude leaves little room for compromise and pragmatism (see also Herzog, 1993; Jamison et al., 2000; Taylor, 2004), which has led Jasper and Nelkin (1992) to speak of animal rights activists as being on a moral crusade. As one activist expressed it, "I am uncompromising – no bloody mawkishness here".

The intensity of commitment, the passion and the zeal of animal rights activists are well documented in previous research (e.g. Jamison et al., 2000; Jasper & Nelkin, 1992; Herzog, 1993; Taylor, 2004). We suggest that it is in

relation to the burning passion for the sacred that we can understand the force of the moral ideal – a force that occasionally compels the activists to break the "earthly" laws.[27] Alexander has argued that the "secularized" versions of social movement theory, stressing the individual and collective rational choice, tend to see even violence as merely an efficient mean, which take place if "it works" (Alexander, 1996a: 208). However, the sacrality of ideals helps us to understand why violence may take place even in contexts where it does not actually "work" or be counter-productive to the cause. Moreover, it is in the light of the passion for the sacred that the dedication to the cause and also the willingness to make the sacrifices it exacts can be understood.

A Meaning in Suffering and Guilt

"But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it", it was written in the gospel (Matthew 7:4). To live the life of an animal rights activist too means embarking on "the narrow road". Small decisions in daily life, which many people don't even think about, such as whether to take medicines tested on animals or whether to kill vermin or not, become a matter of inner moral deliberations and a cause for remorse (Herzog, 1993: 109).

Being committed to reduce the suffering of animal-others means that one may have to accept a certain amount suffering oneself. As Yinger has pointed out, for a religious person, surrender and sacrifice can be positively espoused and religious people typically find some meaning in suffering and in "giving up" (Yinger, 1970: 7-9). Interviewed activists perceive sacrifices for the sake of the cause as necessary. As also discussed in earlier chapters, these may include career opportunities, one's own comfort, or a traditional family life. "Previously I had some plans for having children but I am not particularly interested in that any more. If I eventually would want to have children it would certainly be with a vegan", one interviewee said. Renunciation and sacrifice can be perceived positively as signs of commitment to the moral ideal (cf. Kanter, 1968).

In chapter 3, we characterized the animal rights community as a "guilt culture" given the prevalence of guilt feelings among activists, which is well documented also in previous research (Gaarder, 2008; Groves, 1997; Jamison et al., 2000; Pallotta, 2005; Shapiro, 2004). Having had their eyes opened, the activists see suffering all around them and there is no apparent end to this – billions of animals are killed each year and the world's meat

27   For an analysis of violence in a Durkheimian perspective, see e.g. Mukherjee, 2010.

consumption is on the rise. As pointed out by one activist: "Even if it is very hard to see all this, it would be even harder to know that you don't do anything". Hence, while animal rights activists bear witness to the difficulties entailed in living with guilt and feelings of inadequacy, self-reproach can also gain a positive aura, as it is a sign of commitment to the sacred ideal. By contrast, failure to "give up" may be a sign of the fire having died and the battle against egoistic dispositions being lost.

However, guilt is not just a condition under which activists live. Rather, they also relate reflexively to their guilt. For instance, the activists are well aware of the role that guilt plays in their lives, they talk about their guilt with one another, reflect about what it means to them; basically they *accept* living with guilt just as they accept making sacrifices.

The Moral Community and the Surrounding World

Early Christian converts experienced being different from "the world". As was put in one of the gospels: "They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world" (John 17:16). This experience of looking on the world with completely different eyes ultimately stems from the embracement of other ideals and the living by other norms.

For the animal rights activist, the capacity to "see" distinguishes the converted activist from others, and this easily leads to feelings of dissonance and estrangement from the surrounding world. How can people look upon the world with such different eyes? Where others might just see a bottle of milk, the activist sees a product of institutionalized rape and imagines a calf-child which has been separated from a grieving mother, and where others may enjoy a delicious meal, the activist sees murder. Some interviewees almost feel like they are living in a parallel universe and, like the Christian pilgrim, they feel like foreigners in this world. The seeming indifference of others to the suffering of animals is incomprehensible for them: "I can't understand that people can't see. People are so egoistic". An activist related:

> I feel in relation to those who are not vegans that they are fine people, but I cannot disregard that they do not live the way I do. I ask myself, "How come this clever person does not realize such an obvious thing?" It is sad that we cannot fully understand each other.

As the animal rights paradigm challenges the worldview of mainstream society in such a fundamental way, it inevitably affects activists' relations with others (see also Herzog, 1993; Jamison et al., 2000; Pallotta, 2005). They

frequently encounter hostility from an unsympathetic environment, and they report to have to put up with taunts from their social surrounding on almost a daily basis:

> There was a meat norm and when I breached it, problems arose. Both my parents and my friends could say "Oh you bloody vegan" and then I felt that I didn't want to meet people who are not vegans.

Common for all interviewed, in contrast, is the importance attached to the new-founded community, the vegan community, where they can return to regain their spirits and where they feel they can relax and not have to defend their conduct of life but just "be" (see also Gaarder, 2008; Pallotta, 2005). The sense of community comes from sharing a commitment to the same moral ideal, and by implication, sharing the same way of life. Adherence to the sacred ideal – and non-adherence – provides a clear-cut boundary between in- and out-group. There is no in-between. This means that for the activists formal organizational belonging is less important than the group-boundaries arising from commitment to the same ideal. Adherence to the ideal constructs a community of Us in contrast to Them: "Of course there is an Us and Them feeling [...] but I try to see them as 'thus far blocked'" that is, as persons with the potential to be awakened by the message. Even so, the commitments and practices separating believers from non-believers create a boundary of purity (see also Lowe, 2001), and in-group members are concerned with preserving that purity against contaminations.

Protection of the Sacred

The sacred is worthy of devotion and respect; it carries a sense of intrinsic obligation, demanding devotion and enforcing emotional commitment. This means that the sacred needs to be protected from pollution by the profane; that is, from being taken over by all the mundane matters of everyday life (see also Lowe, 2001). Sacred ideals, as ultimate concerns, stand in stark contrast to individuals' immediate and utilitarian concerns (Yinger, 1970: 14; Tillich, 1957: 1f, cf. Durkheim, 2001/1912). It is in this light we should understand the activists' preoccupation with not letting professional life, leisure interests or even a traditional family life outrival the defense of the collective ideal of animal rights. "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Luke 12: 34).

Protection of the sacred from contamination by the profane entails boundary-drawing, which serves as a symbolic (re)construction of

community (see also Cherry, 2010). It is not only the boundary-drawing in relation to external others that preoccupies the activists but there is also "boundary-work" (Hunt & Benford, 2007) going on within the movement too. For instance, meat-eaters within the movements are looked upon with suspicion and even contempt, and animal-welfare activists are criticized for not going far enough in their demands. Another purity concern is the internal movement debate about the validity of various arguments. Arguments referring to environment or health benefits from giving up meat-consumption tend to have less validity among animal rights activists – although they might find wide resonance in society. Rather, arguments about the intrinsic rights of animals are preferred. Again, the sacred with its intrinsic value is to be protected from the instrumental values, which belong to the sphere of the profane. This requires moral reflexivity, for instance assessing the acceptability of different arguments and actions in light of the ideal.

As also illustrated in chapter 2, the collective protection of the sacred ideal readily translates into social control (cf. Kanter, 1968). There are social sanctions exerted against apostates, such as petty gossip behind the backs of people who seem to have lost the fire and are less active, or who have even reverted to meat-consumption (on the policing of dissension, see also Jamison et al., 2000). As activists must repeatedly prove their commitment to the ideal through action, there is little space for cooling down commitment; anyone who does will risk losing community bonds.

As Douglas (1991/1966) forcefully argued, what is "pure" and what is "dangerous" depends on symbolic classification and boundary-drawing (see also Alexander, 1988; Emirbayer, 1996). The animal rights activists feel the same repulsion at the thought of ingesting pork or chicken as most Europeans may feel at the idea of eating cats or rats. As suggested above, the activists violate and challenge established symbolic boundaries in their attempts to extend moral concern and empathy to animals; they even try consciously to dismantle the symbolic boundary between humans and animals (Cherry, 2010). To mainstream society, this questioning of the exceptional position of human beings may feel threatening or provoking.

Indeed, as pointed out by Melucci, maybe the most fundamental way in which social movements challenge mainstream society is by contesting dominant symbolic classifications and moral codes. By doing so, they reveal the silence and oppression that is always hidden in the dominant codes (Melucci, 1985: 811; see also Melucci, 1989: 75). In fact, the animal rights activists in our study practice all three forms of symbolic challenge that Melucci (1985: 75ff) identified in his analysis of new social movements:

prophecy (the act of announcing, based on personal experience, such as the conversion into a vegan life, that alternative frameworks of meaning are possible); *paradox* (the reversal of the dominant codes by means of their exaggeration, which in turn reveals their irrationality and their inherent dimensions of silence and violence, such as when activists perform street theatre placing themselves in small cages dressed as rabbits or hens) and *representation* (the capacity to act as a mirror, and communicate back to the system its own absurdities), as when applying the same logic to animals as to humans.

It is in light of the deliberate challenges to the symbolic boundary between humans and animals (Cherry, 2010) and in calling into question our present practices of eating non-human flesh, that we should understand the strong reactions against animal rights activists and the aggressions that activists testify they have to cope with (for further evidence on this, see chapter 5). As Boli has argued, wherever we find claims of transgression, we find a sacred element as the subject of concern (Boli, 2006: 101). The strong reactions indicate that something sacred is at stake and is in need of protection from contamination for both sides. As already pointed out by Durkheim, and developed by Joas (2000, 2013) among others, the individual person has become sacralized in the modern world. Joas understands sacralization as:

> A process in which every human being has increasingly, and with ever-increasing motivational and sensitizing effects, been viewed as sacred, and this understanding has been institutionalized in law. The term "sacralization" should not be understood as having an exclusively religious meaning. Secular content may also take on the qualities characteristic of sacrality, namely subjective self-evidence and affective intensity. Sacredness may be ascribed to new content [...] indeed, the entire system of sacralization that pertains within a culture may undergo revolution (Joas, 2013: 5).

And indeed, by including the animal individual in the sacred core, the animal rights activists bring nothing less than a novel moral outlook into the world (Kochi & Ordan, 2008). This, of course, is controversial. Some people may fear that human dignity will be compromised if the same rights and obligations should be extended to animals and feel repulsion when, for instance, activists draw parallels between industrial meat production and the Holocaust. For the activists, on the other hand, it is equally self-evident that human supremacy must be called into question. Here, two secular conceptions of the sacred collide – even if both are versions of the sacralized individual.

Rituals

The importance of rituals is well-known throughout history and this elementary form of religious life has not lost its significance in the modern world. There is: "A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance" (Ecclesiastes 3:4). According to Durkheim, a society "must assemble and concentrate" (Durkheim, 2001/1912: 317) in order to periodically recreate itself, and in the process it also forms its ideals. When the group is assembled face-to-face, consciousness is centered, emotions intensified (Collins, 2001, 2005/2004) and the individual identities are forged into a collective characterized by feelings of group belongingness, solidarity and common purpose (Eyerman, 2006: 195). This experience of group solidarity also enforces group pressure for conformity and respect for the sacred objects and ideals (Collins, 1988: 111).

Indeed, it is the sacred that is the focal point of ritual activity (Alexander, 1988: 11). Following Durkheim, Collins sees the social gathering as "a kind of machinery" for charging objects with sacredness. Sacred objects, as symbols of the group and its ideals, thus become "batteries" for carrying this moral energy into subsequent situations, when individuals are away from the intense sources of moral power. Nevertheless, they continue to carry the group's moral consciousness with them and give guidance to the individual in her mundane activities and everyday life (Collins, 1988: 111; on moral batteries, see also Jasper, 1997, 2011).

Collective ideals are thus celebrated first and foremost in rituals. Vegan meals are a case in point. As eating is something we do several times a day, it is difficult to overestimate the importance of meals for the vegan community. Meals carry symbolic meaning for the activists and become acts of cleansing and purification, which is why Jamison, Wenk, and Parker speak of eating as a redemptive act (Jamison et al., 2000: 319). Peterson conceives of animal rights activists as practicing a "bio-semiotics of protest" (Peterson, 2001: 98) in their strict control of what to ingest and thus exerting strict bodily control. In fact, all religions have dietary rules and food taboos (e.g. Douglas, 1991/1966). Rituals, too, are by their nature rule-bound activity. As pointed out by Giesen, rituals here differ from habits although they share with them the strong relation to corporality: "Unlike habits, the performance of a ritual can be criticized for deviating from the rule [...] Because rituals presuppose an awareness of rules and mistakes they represent reflexive interaction in its most elementary form" (Giesen, 2006:

339).[28] Activists, for instance, assess what is acceptable and non-acceptable in terms of food and clothing. This means that food taboos in modern society are not beyond reflection and discussion; to the contrary they are the constant object of exertion of moral reflexivity.

Even so, common practices, such as eating and clothing habits, separate the activists from others and create a boundary of purity (Lowe, 2001), and rituals of purity and impurity create unity in experience (Douglas, 1991/1966: 2). Thus rituals mark the boundary between inside and outside (Giesen, 2006: 327). As ritual is key to symbolic boundary-drawing (who belongs and who does not), qualifying the action of a group and making it autonomous in relation to other actors, it serves not just as moral but also symbolic reintegration (Sassoon, 1984: 867ff; see also Cherry, 2010; Eyerman, 2006; Giesen, 2006). Each meal is also a reminder of the normative clash with mainstream society. The interviewees for this study testify to how painful it is to eat together with meat-eaters, to experience the smell of meat etc., and to end up having to defend their eating habits against people who question their veganism. For the activists, meat-eating is profanation, while for the meat-eaters, comparisons between industrial farming and concentration camps are equally offensive. Again, two formulations of the sacred ideal collide.

In chapter 3, we pointed to the role of rituals for sustaining moral commitment and also for invigorating the activists emotionally, as *collective effervescence* is generated in rituals. In ritual, an emotional transference occurs, which produces a charged, collective emotional energy, a sense of belonging to some force greater than oneself (Eyerman, 2006: 195). As pointed out by Eyerman, this is key to understanding what *moves* social movements: "most of all movement refers to an experience of moving and being moved by forces greater than oneself" (Ibid). These experiences are incorporated in individual as well as collective memory. As remarked by Giesen: "these moments of intensive encounter with an extraordinary reality may be rare and elusive, but they are the ideal actors strive for" (Giesen, 2006: 347).

Collective effervescence, generated in rituals, thus invigorates and empowers the individual activist and gives her a momentary feeling of

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28   Giesen distinguishes between epiphanic events (as encounters with the sacred), rituals and theatrical performances. He sees rituals as "second-order events" that "frame and tame the impact of unmediated (epiphanic) events" and theatrical performances as "third-order events" that frame ritual events on stage in presentation for an audience: as such the latter are most clearly based on scripts (Giesen, 2006: 327, 349).

everything being possible, and thus a feeling of being able to transcend her own self-limitations. "You gain self-confidence and dare more", as one interviewee said. The collective enthusiasm also helps the individual to transcend her own egoistic desires and tie her more closely to the collective and its ideal (Shilling & Mellor, 2011). Participation in protest action, such as public demonstrations, is a key type of ritual, characterized by corporality and presence; by marching together, singing, yelling slogans etcetera a syn-chronization of bodies as well as fusion of minds and emotions is achieved (Peterson, 2001; Eyerman, 2006; Giesen, 2006). Thus, rituals are important in mobilizing collective action capacity as well as in community-building. This leads Collins to conclude that "ritual is the mechanism by which solidarity groups are both formed and mobilized: hence [...] rituals create the actors of politics" (Collins, 1988: 117). Or as argued by Eyerman, movements move institutions by challenging and changing their practices; they do this "by fusing individuals into collectives and collectives into focused and directed social forces. This is accomplished through social gatherings like public demonstrations and their constitutive ritual practices" (Eyerman, 2006: 207).[29]

As ritual participants, the activists can thus feel joy and pride in their cause. However, according to some interviewees, it can also give emotional energy to share negative feelings: "it is great that someone is there to share pain and sorrow and then one gets energy out of that", one activist conveyed to us. In both cases, convictions are affirmed by collective practice. It has been pointed out that rituals may be even more important for groups who see little tangible success of their struggle (Nepstad, 2004: 54). Animal rights activists are a case in point – with the seemingly endless killing of animals for human ends. Group practice is of utmost importance for them. The rituals serve to infuse in the participants the sense of being on the right track and that "time will tell", as one activist put it.

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29   Giesen argues that dominant paradigms fail to understand the nature and role of rituals in politics: "The paradigm of contract, the paradigm of rational choice, or the paradigm of public discourse, fail to grasp the basic features of these processes. [...] fighting the police in the streets is not for gaining strategic advantage and occupying territories, parliamentary debates are not for convincing political opponents, coronations are not for deciding about political leadership, military parades are not for evaluating the armed forces, carrying flags in a rally is not for providing orientation in a crowd, etc. They are rituals. These rituals are about the visible and tangible representation of a collective identity [...] Thus participation in ritual performances constitutes and constructs the fundamental boundary between inside and outside without which no community can exist" (Giesen, 2006: 353).

Rituals at times are reflexively used to evoke specific emotions in, and reactions by, the audience. As one female animal rights activist describes:

> On the day of the laboratory animals [*Försöksdjurens dag*], which occurs in the beginning of spring every year, we bought a big funeral wreath with pre-printed ribbons saying "In memory of all murdered animals". We held a ceremony with grave candles. We also had an expert on laboratory experiments as speaker. We wanted people who passed us to start to think and to be badly affected.

As Wuthnow pointed out, in a pluralistic society there is no reason to assume that the ritual dramatizes the same values, or communicates the same message, to everyone (Wuthnow, 1987: 132). Rather, the ritual helps to clarify how a social group draws the boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable, and, since there are many groups, it can also reveal clashing norms. Symbolic or moral boundaries can thus be subject to conflicts of interpretation and negotiation, which is why Jacobsson and Löfmarck (2008) argued that the ritual is important for *moral positioning* rather than, necessarily, achieving moral integration.

Conclusion

As this chapter has demonstrated, animal rights activism can be fruitfully analyzed as an instance of secular religion. Although most activists interviewed for this research are not religious in the traditional sense, we have seen that there are many parallels to a religious universe of meaning as for them, the animal rights issue obtains the status of ultimate concern. The chapter identified a number of elementary forms of religious life in the practices of animal rights activism; including powerful conversion experiences, a division of the world into sacred and profane; concern about protecting the sacred; commitment to living out one's faith; the feeling that suffering and guilt have meaning; and the constitutive role of common symbols and rituals. The animal rights activists add new *content* and *meaning* to these practices, the basic features of which are more general to religious experience.

It is in the light of the activist group as a moral community formed around a sacred ideal that these religious elements can be best understood, it has been suggested. A moral ideal held to be sacred drives the activists and creates a community of believers based on a clear in- and out-group distinction;

it is the blaze of the sacred that fuels the activists' passion and compels them to dedicate a considerable part of their time and energy to activism, and occasionally go against the laws of "this world" or exercise militancy. This is, in fact, true of other social movements as well and this analytical framework could therefore, reasonably, be fruitfully applied to the radical and activist branches of other movements too. Nevertheless, the animal rights case is particularly interesting as it represents a very distinctive and controversial symbolic boundary-drawing between sacred and the profane. The sacralization of the human person has here been extended to the sacralization of the animal-individual.

However, there are also differences between a secular religion and a theist system of beliefs. A secular faith, such as that of animal rights activism, is not necessarily a lifetime embracement. While some Christians, for instance, may cool off and apostate, belief in an almighty god may prevent many from turning their backs on the deity. In contrast, the most intensive years of commitment and dedication to animal rights activism are for many a phase of life, after which a more pragmatic stance may come too prevail. It is very demanding to burn for such a cause and to be in conflict with mainstream society. The interviewees for this study were aware of this and expressed fear that they would lose the fervency later in life and that egoistic dispositions would come to dominate their lives. Such a loss would inevitably mean, moreover, a loss of community bonds. Contrary to established religions, there are also fewer established, external authorities setting rules for how individuals should live their lives; instead the moral monitoring is reflexively conducted by the individual activist as well as collectively by the activist group.

The most critical conflicts are those that are produced by the tensions between the fields of the sacred and profane (Alexander, 1988: 3). In this chapter, we suggested that the animal rights activists challenge established boundaries between sacred and profane by questioning our practices of eating the animal bodies and the unique position granted to human beings. In doing so, they also contribute to further moral reflexivity and moral development.

5   Deviance Management

> Even when it comes to my family, which at this point should have under-
> stood me, I still get taunts all the time: "Why don't you start eating meat
> and end this nonsense?" (Swedish animal rights activist).

The defense of sacral ideals, and specific boundary-drawing between sacred
and profane, may not be shared by mainstream society. This frequently
implies that social movement activists are assigned an outsider position
in relation to the dominant moral outlook. However, previous studies have
paid scarce attention to deviance in a social movement context. Overviews
of social movement research generally include no entry for deviance (see e.g.
Crossley, 2002; Snow et al., 2007; Goodwin & Jasper, 2009). This may stem
from a number of interrelated factors. Scholars tend to normalize social
movements' non-conformist behavior by classifying and viewing it as politi-
cal conduct, without theorizing activists' experiences of social exclusion,
victimization and powerlessness (cf. Freilich et al., 1999). Moreover, the topic
of deviance may be associated with the earlier approach, popular in first half
of the 20th century, where protesters were perceived as irrational crowds,
which for good reasons has fallen out of fashion (Le Bon, 1960/1895; Smelser,
2011/1962; cf. Goodwin et al., 2000). By implication, today there is also a
division of labor between researchers in the fields of social movements
(who study political behavior) and deviance (who study non-conforming
behavior). In line with this, research questions about deviance tend to be
omitted from social movement research. A rethinking of deviance in the
study of social movements is therefore needed.

   This undertaking should not be taken to mean that deviance or equiva-
lent concepts have never been employed in relation to social movements
before. Nor that there are not important insights to be gained from earlier
works on social movements. For example, in previous research animal rights
activists have been analyzed in terms of the notion of "emotional deviance"
(Groves, 1995), and attributed the experiences of "ostracism and scorn from
family and friends" (Gaarder, 2008) as well as alienation and "disengagement
from the mainstream culture" (Pallotta, 2005). Ferree (2005) has noted that
social movement activists may be exposed to ridicule, stigma, and silencing.
In a study of the Lesbian and Gay movement, Bernstein (1997) argued that
activists can deploy identities strategically to contest stigmatized identities.
What we suggest, however, is that protesters' collective *management* of
deviance tends to be poorly understood. This means that a theoretical

understanding of the conditions and consequences of activists' deviance is missing, limiting our understanding of social movements as well as the dilemmas that social movement activists face. This chapter sets out to fill this gap.

The deviance approach developed here draws upon a comparative approach of protesters and other types of deviants. In earlier studies on social movements, however, activists are frequently examined in connection with politically relevant actors such as political parties, the government, the state and other social movements (e.g. Crossley, 2002). Thus, there is a tendency in the study of social movements to not consider whether activists share the conditions of groups commonly recognized as deviants, for example organized crime groups, corporations and sects (this fact is also noted by Freilich et al., 1999). In contrast we contend that such comparisons are highly relevant since they reveal protesters' affinity as well as dissimilarity with other norm transgressors, thus unmasking protesters' ambiguous position in the moral order.[30]

Another aspect of moral reflexivity in social movements, then, concerns activists' involvement in deviance management. Like members of other deviant groups, activists must devote parts of their lives to reduce the social and psychological effects of their being defined as norm transgressors. As illustrated in this chapter, activists are often perceived by their surroundings – family, friends, colleagues at work and unknowns alike – as lawbreakers and – more generally – as "outsiders" or deviants. A common experience among the interviewees was to be questioned and be subject to condescending remarks. As one activist explained: "During the time I was a vegetarian people asked mostly why I wasn't eating meat, and they thought I was a rabbit. When I became a vegan I was even more questioned. It got much worse".

To make sense of these experiences the significance of meaning-construction, and in particular the production and effects of social stereotypes need to be emphasized (cf. Rubington & Weinberg, 2011; Spector & Kitsuse, 2001). We follow Becker (1963) in seeing deviance as arising in social interaction and resulting from definitional processes: deviant behavior is behavior that people label so.[31] As some groups in society have more power to impose

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30   This approach is compatible with the view that deviant conduct may contribute to and, indeed, is necessary for societal development (e.g. Erikson, 1966). The deviance perspective put forward here highlights that activism is a case in point, as it also emphasizes protesters' cultivation and advancement of moral ideals in society.

31   Historically, Herbert Blumer's theory is perhaps the most well-known of the symbolic interactionist approaches to social movements. Yet, in his classic text on protest he pays no

their definitions than others, it follows that such labeling is also a way of exerting social control.[32] As we demonstrate, animal rights activists are faced with the public's social stereotypes which they have to counter, both in order to manage their social relationships in everyday life and to effectively convey their message. The fact that such stereotypes are numerous is linked to the perceived "otherness" of activists, and thus a deviance perspective can contribute to the analysis of social movements.

Activists as Entrepreneurial Deviants

In order to examine deviance in the context of social movements, we contend that it is necessary to consider activists' equivocal moral status. Since activists are committed to moral ideals in addition to being seen as norm breakers in society, they typically represent not only the virtuous person, or the illegitimate deviant of the moral order, but both. To give a further illustration of this fact: when animal rights activists film a farmer's bad treatment of animals, this might be perceived as conduct in fulfillment of the ideal of animal welfare, denoting that animals should have a decent life and not suffer. Exposing herself to risk, while simultaneously demonstrating a deep respect for animals' conditions, the protester is seen as a moral example in the eyes of the public. At the same time, however, the action also involves unlawful intrusion into a private area and a threat to the personal integrity and well-being of the farmer. Animal protesters' actions may also cause material damages carrying considerable financial costs (see e.g. Garner, 2004). Hence, when the public's focus is instead on the activists' transgressions of legal doctrines, animal rights activists will consequently be looked upon as trespassers and criminals (see e.g. Liddick, 2006; Smith, 2008; Monoghan, 2013; Donovan & Timothy Coupe, 2013).

In dramaturgical terms this also means that the public's perception of the protester tends to move between that of "an idealistic performer" and "a militant performer". As idealistic performer, the activist is looked upon as a good-hearted and caring individual, standing out as an exceptional person facing up to the grand worries and problems of society. Yet, when turning into a militant performer, the activist is instead regarded as a hostile and argumentative outsider, disturbing the smooth flow of life's everyday

specific attention to deviance and the definitional processes implied (see Blumer, 1951/1939).
32   This focus is also consistent with the constructionist approach to social problems, e.g. Rubington & Weinberg, 2011; Spector & Kitsuse, 2001.

routines. Finally, the tactic of undercover filming bears witness to activists' employment of non-conventional or provocative means for achieving their goals, together with such methods as civil disobedience or blockades. In the eyes of the ordinary person, the activist becomes a passionate campaigner when her strategy is interpreted in terms of her commitment to moral ideals. However, this representation of the protester may soon be replaced by the image of the frightening campaigner since the activist's attempts at provoking also imply infringements on social norms.

Social movement activists' ambiguous moral standing also testifies to the fact that protesters differ from the more traditional deviant groups in society. Relative to the analytical framework developed within deviance studies, the established notion of "positive deviance" is relevant in this respect (cf. Boyle, 2011; Heckert, 1998). Employing this notion means that activists are theorized alongside individuals that are regarded as different or peculiar because they perform better than the norm prescribes, including geniuses (who e.g. may be viewed as lacking social skills), athletes (who e.g. may be perceived as superficial and obsessed with their body) and exceptionally beautiful individuals (who e.g. may be seen as stupid) (Heckert, 1998). However, as these examples reveal, the concept of positive deviance is commonly applied to people demonstrating excellence in a field or displaying special innate characteristics (e.g. Stebbins, 2011), and not to pursuers of moral ideals of what the world should be like.

Additionally, even when illustrated by moral role models such as the good neighbor or the relief-worker, one should be cautious when analyzing activists in connection with positive deviance. Activists, in contrast to the altruists mentioned in the research literature, are committed to moral ideals *as well as* radically disputing and opposing the norms of conventional lifestyles and institutions in society.[33] Moreover, it has been pointed out that

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33 Vegetarians may also be analyzed as an instance of positive deviance. In this connection it has moreover been pointed out that there may be as many as eight different sorts of vegetarians, and that all vegetarians seek to obtain a non-conventional lifestyle based on meatless eating routines (Boyle, 2011). Nevertheless, there are also important differences between the various sub-categories, which, again, derive from the fact that animal rights activists transgress social norms to an extent not found among other vegetarians. Hence, while animal protesters are committed to social change, devoting large parts of their lives to challenge the general publics' moral sensibilities (e.g. Gaarder, 2008), most vegetarians are "not particularly politically active or publicly outspoken, most do not belong to a movement or organization, and national campaigns promoting vegetarianism are rare" (Maurer, 2002: 2). In line with this, the animal rights activist's motive to become a vegetarian also draws upon the ethical notion that animals have rights that parallel human rights (see e.g. Kochi & Ordan, 2008). Due to their moral motivation activists are moreover more likely to convert to veganism (Maurer, 2002). By contrast other vegetarians

positive deviance draws upon an idea of deviation derived from statistical norms, rather than norm-transgressing conduct proper (e.g. Stebbins, 2011). As a consequence, the general public's reactions to the protester's behavior is typically more open, alternating from one situation to another, implying that the protester has to be particularly sensitive to – and also try to influence – social definitions.

Due to the moral equivocality integral to social movement activism, we thus argue that protesters constitute a specific type of deviant, requiring a re-conceptualization of the analytical tools traditionally employed in the understanding of deviance. Having this aim in mind, we suggest that it is fruitful to relate to Howard Becker's (1963) classic work *Outsiders – Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*. In relation to Becker's conceptual apparatus we propose that activists can be understood as representing a deviant type, which we call *entrepreneurial deviant.* This means that activists may be defined as deviants as well as what Becker names "moral entrepreneurs", which he sees as the prototype of a rule-creator (Becker, 1963: 147-63). Similar to the moral entrepreneur, the activist is strongly committed to the activity of creating and establishing new norms in society. Being involved in a symbolic crusade, the ultimate goal is to achieve social change (Gusfield, 1986/1963). Thus, in Becker's words the activist experiences that: "…there is some evil which profoundly disturbs him. He feels that nothing can be right in the world until rules are made to correct it" (Becker, 1963: 148). Yet, the activist also differs from the typical moral entrepreneur, such as the psychiatrist or the politician, in not being underpinned by tradition or supported by acknowledged institutions in society. Instead the protester, like other deviants, continually breaches social norms and may be seen by mainstream society as a public nuisance and a menace to society.[34]

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frequently articulate reasons based on personal health, experiences of disgust at the thought of eating a dead animal or other non-moral concerns.

34   If one is aware of the vital differences between activists and other types of positive deviants stemming from activists' specific position in the moral order, it might still be possible to conceptualize social movement activists in those terms. Entrepreneurial deviance would then constitute a seventh type of positive deviance in addition to the six types acknowledged in Heckert's scheme (1998). This means that "entrepreneurial deviance" (denoting individuals, primarily activists, committed to following and pursuing moral ideals based on which they confront and seek to transform the normative order) is related to, but also different from, "altruism" (involving individuals who voluntarily assist other people without any expectation of reward, such as saints or good neighbors); "charisma" (referring to individuals endowed with exceptional powers of attraction, such as Jesus or Gandhi); "innovation" (including individuals who combine already existing cultural elements in a novel fashion or produce new ones, such as Noble Prize Winners); "supra-conformity" (consisting of individuals who are conform to the

Summing up, having positioned social movement activists as occupying an ambiguous moral standing in relation to the moral order of society at large, and introduced our key-concept of entrepreneurial deviance, we proceed by developing a theoretical framework for understanding deviance in social movements. In doing so, we draw on our interview study with Swedish animal rights activists, focusing on how activists deal with and try to counter social stereotypes, which we interpret as a form of deviance management.

Strategies for Managing Social Stereotypes in Activism

The mass media in Sweden as in many other countries often focuses on the illegal actions performed by animal rights activists; media representations thus tend to picture activists as norm transgressors and "others", often in a stereotypical way (e.g. Munro, 2005; Smith, 2008; Sorenson, 2009). Activists must relate and respond to this. We suggest that a significant expression of the effects of deviance in social movements concerns activists' *management of social stereotypes*. Like the typical deviant, activists must spend a lot of time and energy on handling exaggerated and generalized images (cf. Ross & Lester, 2011), presenting them as strange, bizarre or dangerous outsiders. However, consistent with the general absence of a deviance perspective in the study of social movements, scholars commonly sidestep the importance of stereotypes. We suggest that the analysis of stereotypes should be given more attention within social movement research, since this is critical for understanding the lifeworld of activists and the dilemmas that protesters face. We also show that, as entrepreneurial deviants in society, activists employ a number of different strategies to manage stereotypes, reflecting their ambiguous position in the moral order.

The Significance of Social Stereotypes

The importance of stereotypes in the context of social movements becomes apparent in the general fact that social stereotypes permeate activists'

point of reaching that which is idealized for a particular norm in society, such as straight-A students and athletes); "innate characteristics" (including individuals who are socially defined as endowed with extraordinary inborn qualities, such as intelligence and beauty); and "ex-deviants" (comprising previously stigmatized individuals that manage to convert to the status of normal and become purified, such as a skillful person with a physical disability).

interaction with the general public. In our study, we came across a wide range of deviance images, which activists must address when bringing up issues relating to veganism and the animal rights cause with their audience.[35] In neo-Durkheimian Serge Moscovici's words, these images of animal rights activists constitute *a social representation* with negative connotations: "Categorizing someone or something is tantamount to choosing a prototype among all those embedded in our memory and establishing a positive or negative relationship with it" (Moscovici, 1981: 195).

One stereotype of animal rights activists is based upon their alleged indifference towards human beings, making the protester into "a misanthrope" who doesn't care about humans but only animals. As one activist informed us:

> If you are a vegan and animal rights activist, you are seen as a person who only cares about animals. That most of us are also engaged in other fields people seem to forget. I am for instance also engaged in a feminist group, spreading information about men's violence towards women. That we would only care for animals is something we hear from other activist groups too, they think we have a hang-up about animals.

Hence, being perceived as people who only care about animals and not humans, activists also react to this attribution and seek to manage it.

Another stereotype concerns animal rights activists' assumed juvenile age and immaturity, where the protester is viewed as a "youth led astray". This renders the activist into a person whose commitment is not genuine and may be threatening since it has originated in misdirected anger. As another protester informed us:

> We are supposedly engaged in various issues because we have to think that everything is wrong. We always have to protest and attend every demonstration possible. Many think that we don't have a thought behind what we do. We are just young people and within a year we will have changed our minds. This is just a period we are going through.

Thus, stereotypical ascriptions also aim to weaken the impact of the activists' cause, as the negative images take precedence over the arguments and protesters are seen as unserious or immature people.

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35   All the images reappeared during the interviews. Each of them was mentioned by at least four interviewees.

In addition, there is the stereotype of the activist as "a city-dweller" who doesn't know anything about farming or living in the countryside. One protester told us that "we are seen as people who live in the city and never have seen animals in a farm. We are perceived as if we don't know anything about the real lives of animals". This image is likely to have developed because animal rights activists criticize the way farmers treat animals, and it also illustrates that stereotypes may involve attributions defining the protester as ignorant and misinformed.

Moreover, the animal rights activist may be seen as "a puritan" who leads a puritanical life, abstaining not only from consuming meat-products, but also from life's other pleasures. One of the activists that we interviewed related the following:

> The typical image of animal rights activists is that we are extreme. We don't drink alcohol or coffee and don't eat buns, cookies or sweets. They think that you are not just a vegan, they attach so much more to this. People think we live a very Spartan and boring life.

Thus, stereotypes may likewise include negative appraisals of activists' life-styles, implying that protesters do not lead a normal life.

Such social stereotypes may be based upon the assumption that animal rights activists don't live up to the expectations related to gender or family roles. For instance, there is the case of "the crazy auntie" who is an activist running a home for stray animals such as cats, dogs or rabbits. She is allegedly an odd and lonely person, living for the well-being of her residents.

Two specific deviance images stand out as almost all our interviewees mentioned them. Firstly, there is the stereotype of the activist as "a militant" that employs violence as a method. Here, the animal rights activist is looked upon as someone who sets meat-transporting lorries on fire and threatens individual farmers to stop their production. As one activist told us:

> How many times have I heard the question of how many Scan [Swedish meat company] lorries I have put on fire. I am associated with militant persons even though I am the complete opposite. It is a misconception.

Here stereotypical attributions connect animal rights activists with subversive activities and terrorism. Hence, despite the fact that the various animal rights groups have their different approaches to violence (see chapter 1), in social life the notion of militancy may be attributed to the wider animal rights movement.

Moreover, it is clear that many of the abovementioned stereotypes relate to events highlighted in the media, which functions as an important social arena in the construction of the deviance images of activists. As Moscovici (1981, 1982) has pointed out, in contemporary society mass media is the most important producer and mediator of social representations. This seems to be particularly true of the stereotype where the protester is seen as "a mink-releaser" who illegally and injudiciously liberates animals, specifically minks. The image of the mink-releaser, which was acknowledged by the overall majority of our interviewees, turned up in Swedish newspapers and TV in the mid-1990s and has been commonly used up to this date. As one of the interviewed activists told us:

> We are all thought to release minks. It is the first comment one gets at work or if one meets someone out at a restaurant. Everywhere this comes up. "So you are one of those persons releasing minks". I tell them that Animal Rights Sweden has never organized such an action.

We maintain that the relevance of examining stereotypes in connection with social movements appears in relation to activists' deviance management strategies. As we show below, activists employ different types of strategies reflecting their position as entrepreneurial deviants and their ambiguous standing in the moral order. In theoretical terms, this means that the traditional notions of "passing" (which concerns the deviant's behavioral response to the general public), "techniques of neutralization" (dealing with the deviant's inner, psychological world) and "subculture" (referring to the deviant's relationships within the deviant group) have to be complemented with, what we name, "confronting", "techniques of idealization" and the forming of "a transformative subculture".

Behavioral Strategies: Passing and Confronting

A first strategy which we were able to identify draws upon the fact that the protester, in common with the typical deviant, employs various passing strategies, concealing demeaning facts about him- or herself due to the rewards in being considered normal (Goffman, 1963). The possibility of passing lies in the circumstance that others may actually not discredit a discreditable quality of an individual since it is not evident to them from the social encounter. Hence, a dyslexic may seek to pass as someone possessing reading and writing skills; in order to live up to heterosexual gender-expectations an individual may hide his/her wish to go through a

sex-change operation; and a person whose self is tainted by experiences at a mental institution may conceal his/her background so as not to be viewed as a dysfunctional individual. Applying passing in collective action context, Einwohner (2006) has analyzed how passing was used as a strategy by Jewish and non-Jewish activists alike in the collective resistance against the Nazis in the context of the Warsaw ghetto. As our interview-data demonstrate, passing is also regularly employed by animal rights activists. Advocating a radical world-view where animals are regarded as sacred beings (Lowe, 2001), activists may experience personal suffering and estrangement in most contexts in social life (e.g. Shapiro, 1994). In protection of the self, the protester therefore seeks to keep her deviant emotions, thoughts or behavior to herself. Attempting to pass as normal, for example when visiting a soccer game or meeting a friend at a café, is moreover likely to succeed as animal rights activism is not associated with a physical deformity or a tribal stigma (cf. Goffman, 1963; cf. also Becker, 1963, and his concept "secret deviant").

Against this backdrop, we also contend that protesters manage the negative effects of stereotypes by concealing and masking their activism in selected contexts in everyday life. While activists may sometimes confront people's stereotypes in situations beyond the field of mobilization in public places, our interviews show that encounters involving personal relationships, whether formal or informal, may pose constraints on activists' behavior. In line with what Goffman (1967) has called "the avoidance process", the activist then evades the situation altogether or, when present, makes attempts not to bring up specific topics or pretends not to be aware of the other's conversation in order to save his/her face. For example, an animal rights activist reported that telling her colleagues at work of her vegan life-style "can lead to a lot of personal attacks". Striving to avoid the standard images of a vegan, this protester also made attempts to hide her activist identity:

> I never discuss veganism or activism at work but I just mind my own business. Of course, if someone asks I answer but I give no long talks. People are inclined to be negative to things they are not used to. I used to be the same in relation to veganism before I became a vegan, I must admit [...] There are of course those who flip out and see you as a threat. That is not the way one wants to be introduced [...] In the canteen I never bring up issues concerning activism, I just eat my food and discuss work-related matters.

Similarly, another activist told us about circumventing disagreements when visiting restaurants or private homes with friends who are meat-eaters, experiencing the stereotypes associated with veganism as too burdensome to oppose on such occasions: "I usually just eat my food. I am not standing up yelling that 'now I would like to order vegan food' but I just ask if they have products without milk and such things". Additionally, as Goffman (1967) has noted, social life does not only involve the obligation to keep one's own face, but also that of others. Protesters may therefore feel that they ought to protect the integrity of the non-committed person involved in the social encounter. Hence, as another activist voice makes clear: "It would be untenable both for me and for the others if I would bring up animal rights arguments all the time".

In line with these observations, it is moreover important to note that the negative effects of stereotypes may affect the protester to take a cautious stance when establishing personal relationships with non-activists. For example, several activists pointed to the significance of first reaching a working consensus before revealing their activist identity (cf. Goffman, 1967). Hence, one protester reported that she seeks to keep her engagement to herself at the beginning of new acquaintances. In this way other people are thought to be less likely to perceive her in accordance with the stereotypes of a vegan, and later accept her for who she is:

> I haven't always dropped the bomb immediately and said that I am a vegan. If I start a new job, have begun at a new school or entered a group of some kind, I keep it secret for a while. Later, when they know that I am a vegan, they shake about, take an extra look at me but without making any remarks. In general I think that people who don't know us think that we are strange.

Another activist, relating to the time she was expecting a child, also describes the strategy of concealing one's vegan-identity in the initiating period of the relationship:

> I do feel odd and different sometimes. Then I can feel that I am complicated if I am in a place where I am the only vegan [...] If I get to know someone first and then tell them that I am a vegan, then I will be accepted as a person. In the parental group my husband and I did not say anything at first when we were expecting the baby. We told them only after the child was born.

Finally, our interviews confirm that everyday contexts also provide important opportunities for emotional refill, enabling activists to face the public on future occasions. Hence, another animal rights activist told us about visiting soccer-games with his non-committed friends, making it possible for him to relax from his engagement. In order not to trigger the stereotypes to negatively affect the social intercourse, passing as normal was again put forward as an important strategy:

> We usually go to various sport events and to watch AIK [Swedish soccer team] play. They don't even know that I am a vegetarian but I feel it is just great [...] I try not to talk about it [animal rights] because I feel it is nice to be able to relax. I eat vegan food when we are out but I don't think anyone has noticed that I do that every time [...] In order to spread the animal rights message one ought really to state it out all the time. But I am just a human being and for me it is important to let go of what I work with all day long.

Our examples have served to illustrate that passing (Goffman, 1963) is a strategy used by animal rights activists in everyday life.

However, being entrepreneurial deviants in society, protesters also manage their deviance by confronting their social environment (see e.g. Anspach, 1979). Hence, while routinely adopting passing to reduce emotional pressure, for activists passing functions as a necessary counterpoint and respite to further opposing and challenging social norms. The strategy of confronting testifies to the strong action orientation of social movements (Peterson, 2001), and stands in stark contrast to the deviant who has resigned and come to accept the role that society has assigned her. Consequently, rather than seeking to adapt to the social expectations of the environment, activists deal with their deviance by striving to alter the social order. Moreover, as we have noted earlier, protesters do not only confront norms when mobilizing but also in their everyday life. For instance, since animal rights activists practice an all-inclusive lifestyle with no animal products, they may experience daily clashes and tensions with their families, friends or outsiders, in relation to their eating-routines, clothing etcetera (e.g. Pallotta, 2005).

Hence, we suggest that protesters at times mobilize to confront the general public's stereotypes. In order to gain wider resonance, protesters have to successfully frame their arguments and messages. As our interview-data show, this also involves a need for activists to counter the deviance images communicated by their audience. For example, when animal rights activists raise consciousness in public places they recurrently have to respond to

the stereotypes of being militant, puritan or people who release minks. As one activist attests to:

> A common prejudice is that we release minks. I meet it every time I am in town. I don't know where it comes from but Swedish people seem to have been hit by some kind of psychosis because this is almost the only counter-argument one hears. Earlier I tried to turn it around: "If you don't release minks they will be gassed to death". Now I just say: "We don't do that".

Thus, due to the existence of stereotypes the activists must be prepared to respond to and counter them.

In addition, confronting stereotypes includes coping with provocation and demonstrative reactions. When confrontations occur in public places with strangers (cf. Eyerman & Jamison, 1991), the tensions involved also tend to increase. For example, another protester we interviewed told us about the innuendos and sarcasms she has to deal with when promoting the animal rights cause in the city center:

> I can be surprised with how mean people can be or how little they care when I meet them in town. When I approach them with a petition they don't say anything or they give remarks such as "Meat is delicious" or "I want to wear fur". Sometimes people ask a question and then leave before they have heard the answer, mostly with the intention of provoking. Then they can laugh at you and say silly things.

Here, confronting stereotypical judgments is less about arguing than being able to contain others' unsympathetic behavior (see chapter 3). Hence, just being noticeable in public places also improves activists' chances to challenge and change the public's negative images. As the same activist later clarified:

> People also approach us to give praise and say that we are admirable being able to stand here all the time despite the fact that people are angry with us. We get positive reactions because we are visible in town. That almost outweighs all the negative persons we meet.

By being patient and tolerant activists may thus successfully challenge the stereotypes others have of them and, by extension, be admired for their courage.

Psychological Strategies: The Techniques of Neutralization and Idealization

An established notion in the study of deviance management is that the deviant reduces the negative psychological effects of his or her rule-infringements by employing techniques of neutralization. According to Sykes and Matza (1957) these techniques draw upon the fact that the juvenile delinquent undergoes a socialization-process similar to the average man, and will therefore accept "the legitimacy of the dominant social order and its 'moral rightness'" (Sykes & Matza, 1957: 665). Hence, rather than adopting a new normative system from which to make his transgressions warranted, he is "embedded in the larger world of those who conform"; in particular his teachers, neighbors and family, and "cannot escape the condemnation of his deviance" in society (Ibid: 666). As a consequence, the juvenile delinquent, like the average person, also admits to the wrongfulness of stealing, lying and destroying, which means that he needs to neutralize his norm-transgressing conduct so as to become acceptable even to himself. Utilizing various approaches of justification, for example "the denial of responsibility", viewing himself as a billiard ball helplessly pushed into new situations, he is able to counteract the force of social norms. Techniques of neutralization have also been shown to play an important role in social movements as the protester like the juvenile delinquent remains sensitive to social codes of conduct (e.g. Liddick, 2006, 2013).

In line with this, our interviews suggest that activists strive to neutralize the effects of their norm transgressions by construing counter-stereotypes of the general public. For instance, in order to facilitate further unlawfulness or defiance, activists may "deny the victim" her human qualities: the sufferer of the protester's action is then thought to have deserved what was done to her (Liddick, 2006). Animal rights activists employ this technique mainly in relation to people who work in the animal industry, such as farmers or butchers, but also vivisectionists who may be stereotyped as "evil people". As stated by one interviewee:

> I can never understand how one could choose a profession and be able to cope with having a profession where animals are tortured. I can see those people who can just stand there and murder animals as evil persons.

By extension, related ascriptions like "scum", "sadists" and "executioners" frequently occur as well, especially at demonstrations and ritual confrontations (Peterson, 2001: 55) with fur-farmers or resellers.

Furthermore, counter-stereotypes also include those who consume meat. Hence, animal rights activists typically speak about, and relate to, "meat-eaters" or "meaters", attributing negative characteristics to people who cook and ingest meat of some kind. Giving an account of her social intercourse with fellow protesters, an activist shared the following experience:

> When we meet we may talk about how to reach out to the meat-eaters. We may have some fun at their expense and ask ourselves how it is possible to persuade a person who eats a hamburger five times a week. It is great to just be able to do this and feel that it is they who are faulty, since usually it is us who end up in a defensive position.

As other activists in the study made clear too, by focusing on the short-comings of ignorant or indifferent meat-eaters the roles are temporarily reversed. Hence, counter-stereotypes may also be a way to "condemn the condemners" as those who impose the deviant label are seen as having no moral authority, being guilty of their own failings (cf. Liddick, 2006, 2013; Sykes & Matza, 1957).

However, we suggest that activists, being entrepreneurial deviants in society, employ both techniques of neutralization and what we term "techniques of idealization" to reduce the dissonance of their norm transgressions.[36] Whereas the former techniques follow the generic formula: "I am presumed guilty according to the norms of the majority society, which I accept, but still I am innocent because of the circumstances", the latter are based upon the rationale: "I am presumed guilty, according to the norms of the majority society, which I don't accept, and I am ready to take responsibility for my actions and for which I am proud".[37] The techniques of idealization draw upon the essential fact, pointed out by Durkheim (2002/1925), that the moral order does not only consist of social norms (what the world is) but also of moral ideals (what the world should be like). This implies that

36   We here follow the original formulation by Sykes and Matza (1957). Meanwhile, the notion of techniques of neutralization has greatly expanded and been given new meanings (see Christensen, 2010). Even though what we call techniques of idealization bear similarities with "appealing to higher loyalties" in Sykes and Matza's theory, we argue that, in contrast to the rationale of this technique, activists also repudiate numerous imperatives of the dominant norms.

37   Liddick's (2013) study of ALF's employment of the techniques of neutralization enhances our understanding of animal rights activism, yet his analysis is still within the boundaries of the traditional research-paradigm. What we need is a conceptualization, which reflects the psychological process opposite to the one involved in the techniques of neutralization, namely the techniques of idealization.

the moral order is not given or fixed but continually develops, as there are actual or potential conflicts between moral ideals and social norms. In line with this, we suggest that the protester may justify her rule infringements not by pre- and post-rationalizations to prove innocence but instead by her commitment to moral ideals. Such justifications include "taking pride in standing up for one's moral ideals", "experiencing empowerment and liberation when mobilizing for moral ideals" and "feeling moral superiority vis-à-vis the general public for being devoted to moral ideal". For instance, an activist interviewed conceived of his acts of civil disobedience as involvements bringing new meaning into his life: "These actions have affected me as I nowadays experience bonds to animals. I am particularly deeply connected to the subjugated animals and their fate". The denial intrinsic to the techniques of neutralization is here replaced by personal responsibility and affirmation of one's conduct.

Furthermore, the techniques of neutralization are based upon the understanding that the conduct of the majority society affects the psychological functioning of the individual: if most people in society sustain norm conformity and social control then the delinquent cannot evade the fact that her behavior is deviant, not even to herself. Nevertheless, pursuing moral visions of the environment, peace or animals' well-being, activists transgress social norms, but may also win *social support* by doing so. In our study, we were able to identify a number of practices, which function to affirm activists' moral ideals and justify their norm transgressions. These include, what we call, the search for "ideal confirmation" (finding social support for one's views in contexts of consciousness-raising), "ideal legitimation" (finding support in law- and policy-making) and "ideal amplification" (finding support among family or friends for one's activist commitment).

Hence, we also propose that activists employ techniques of idealization to manage stereotypes, seeking to offset the public's deviance-images by their commitment to moral ideals. This can be illustrated by relating to how activists may deal with the stereotype of "the social failure". Like other outsider groups, activists may be regarded as misfits: out of work or lacking a professional career; as not leading a proper middle-class family life preoccupied with the concerns that structure the days of normal people in society; and as inadequate consumers, lacking the monetary means for purchasing novel possessions. One common strategy to deal with the image of the social failure is to victimize oneself and blame the institutions of society for the predicaments one faces (cf. Sykes & Matza, 1957). In contrast, activists may accept their social and economic position as outsiders, since this is conceived of as a deliberate choice. Protesters then

seek to transform the negative meanings attached to being social failures into positive commitment for their moral ideals. Employing a technique of idealization, which we call "reformulating the stereotype into a life-style choice", activists make attempts to be seen as moral examples because of their social deviance.

As stated earlier (see chapter 2 and 4) our interviews confirm that both male and female protesters frequently give up opportunities for career advancement and raising a family. Seeking to lead simple lives committed to the animal rights cause, the activists adhere to a life-style which they find to be morally superior to that of ordinary people. To give an additional illustration from one of our interviewees who put it as follows when asked about his engagement:

> The animal-rights cause is an important part of my lifestyle and I think everyone should follow this path. The lifestyle is mainly expressed in my eating-habits. Then it is also about all the work that I put into changing society [...] People should not think so much about having a family or devoting their time to possessions. I think it is clear that we who are engaged in Animal Rights Sweden don't care much about such things. We are not as materialistic as society at large [...] I myself have no family and those who are most active are those who don't have children. Of those who usually come to our membership meetings I don't think there is even one who has a child.

Viewing his outside position as a life-style choice based on personal sacrifice, this activist strives to be regarded as a pursuer of moral ideals, and not a social disappointment, in the eyes of others.

Strategies at the Group Level: A Cohesive and Transformative Subculture

Another deviance management method confirmed in our study draws on the fact that the activist group displays features, which make the concept of subculture (e.g. Becker, 1963) applicable in connection with social movements. As we have demonstrated, activists experience alienation from ordinary people and a polarization between "us" and "them". To deal with this estrangement, the activist group commonly functions as an alternative home and a place to rest similar to other deviant subcultures. Moreover, activists establish an internal culture. They learn a new cognitive and emotional language, and establish their own informal hierarchies, drawing

on their moral ideals and where actions are assessed according to these ideals. For instance, in the animal rights movement, a vegan is assigned a higher status than a vegetarian or a meat-eater. This re-socialization also means that protesters pass through a moral career to cultivate a stable, non-conformist identity (Pallotta, 2005), which is a process also constitutive of other deviant groups.

Our interview-data moreover show that activists deal with the public's stereotypes by the cohesion of their subculture and its in-group norms. Vegan food and food-consumption constitute an important part of the animal rights activists' subculture. As one of our respondents informed us: "there is huge knowledge exchange between vegans and everyone is willing to share their knowledge and exchange recipes". Emphasizing the importance of vegan food the same activist later exclaimed: "When food is served all vegans go crazy". In line with this, activists moreover arrange vegan cookery courses where the newcomer learns the necessary craftsmanship to become an integrated member of the group. Protesters also communicate over the Internet to discuss what sort of milk, pies and bread they are permitted to consume. Thus, by sharing a common practice of veganism, mirroring activists' condemnation of meat-products, the subculture also serves to protect the activist from being overwhelmed by the public's stereotypes (cf. Becker, 1963). Against this backdrop, one of the activists told us that being a lonely vegan, with no fellow activists, was almost unbearable, as she was continually perceived as a releaser of minks or a puritan by the people she encountered: "I always had to explain and defend myself. People made mean remarks and were unsympathetic in general". Yet, joining an animal rights group meant a major change in her life: "It felt like coming home, finding people who think like me and striving in the same direction". Another activist also testified to the importance of having joined an activist group:

> When one socializes with family or people at work, where very few show some understanding for my lifestyle, I often feel that I end up in a defensive position, which is tiresome. Then it is great to meet others engaged in animal rights where I don't have to defend myself all the time.

The majority of our interviewees shared similar experiences (see also Gaarder, 2008; McDonald, 2000; Pallotta, 2005).

Nevertheless, being entrepreneurial deviants, protesters do not only seek to strengthen the internal structure of the activist group; they form what we name "a transformative subculture" whose rationale is to reach out and to expand. Hence, as social movements are routinely directed towards

changing society and its institutions, the activist group is typically also profoundly other-oriented. In line with this, it has been noted that social movements continually mobilize in public spaces (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991); that protesters commonly establish social networks, not merely with other movement-organizations, but also with politicians, students, neighbors and persons in authority positions (e.g. Crossley, 2002); and that social movements are involved in, and frequently need to adapt to, the media (e.g. Tarrow, 1998). We propose that this other-directedness and frequent contacts with its surroundings distinguish the activist group from other deviant subcultures, which are less proselytizing and more secluded from society (e.g. Becker, 1963). This applies to the militant action groups as well, which may be more uncommunicative about their members' identities and plans of conduct (Peterson, 2001), but who aim, through their actions, to convey a political message to their audiences.

Thus our interviews additionally suggest that social stereotypes negatively affect protesters' communicative efforts and social networking with the general public. As it is constitutive of stereotypes that they over-generalize (e.g. Ross & Lester, 2011), stereotypes contaminate activist groups who work within the boundaries of existing law with the same undesirable characteristics as those groups who promote illegal actions (e.g. Sorenson, 2009). For example, in the Swedish animal rights movement, Animal Rights Sweden needs to distinguish itself from other activist groups, such as the Animal Liberation Front (ALF), whose norm-breaking methods and behaviors are problematic to be associated with (see also chapter 2). As one of the interviewed activists within Animal Rights Sweden informed us:

> The boundary-drawing in relation to other factions has become more pronounced over time [...] We [Animal Rights Sweden] always make sure that we obtain permission for our demonstrations and we avoid the worst places. I don't see any reason to demonstrate a few meters from a farm. To be 50 meters away is no disadvantage. The media gets good pictures and those at the farm still get the message.

In order to be viewed as a serious and reliable organization, the quoted activist underlines the importance of taking measures to separate Animal Rights Sweden from other factions of the movement. However, to the general public the differences between "legitimate" and "illegitimate" groups may still be difficult to gauge, since people typically possess only limited information about the activists' biographies and organizational affiliation. As our interviews confirm, this means that the people protesters encounter

frequently view them in terms of the standardized images of militants or animal-liberators. Thus, stereotypes also provide evidence for what Becker (1963) terms "falsely accused deviant behavior". Here the activist is perceived as a deviant without, in fact, having been involved in any norm-breaking activity.

The Dialectics of Deviance Management in Activism

We have claimed that activists constitute a specific type of deviants as they occupy an ambiguous position in the moral order, being pursuers and followers of moral ideals as well as transgressors of social norms. With the objective of conceptualizing this condition we developed the notion of entrepreneurial deviance, characterized by passing, techniques of neutralization and the formation of subcultures employed in combination with confronting, techniques of idealization and the founding of a transformative subculture. Elaborating our reasoning, we now also propose that to successfully deal with their deviance, protesters need to *dialectically move* between the two opposite processes to which these concepts refer.

Firstly, for sustainable deviance management, social movements have to strike a balance between the strategies of passing and confronting. On the one hand, too much focus on passing renders activists into *social conformists* where their cause, sooner or later, becomes insignificant or vanishes. In our study, this is illustrated by some protesters who were afraid of losing their commitment if they avoided standing up for their convictions, for instance at school or work. They therefore sought ways of overcoming the comfort of fitting in. On the other hand, a sole orientation towards confronting the beliefs and conventions of mainstream society also creates difficulties since it may lead to *social marginalization*. Hence, animal rights activists may sense that it causes problems every time they socialize with people not involved in the movement as they feel that they are always different. Activists' outsider position in society is then a deeply felt burden, which also affects their well-being (e.g. Shapiro, 1994).

Secondly, the techniques of neutralization and idealization represent different but complementary strategies in social movements, and too much focus on one strategy will lead to less viable deviance management. On the one hand, we suggest that the wide-ranging use of techniques of neutralization reaches a point where the defense ruptures and the activist experiences *inauthenticity* due to avoidance of standing up for her actions and facing the consequences. Self-doubt and a longing to be reconciled with one's biography await behind the wall of rationalizations. In the animal rights

movement, this problem particularly applies to militant groups, such as the ALF, which routinize the employment of masking and concealing their identity with no open dialogue with the public. Since these protesters are not willing to face the legal consequences of their actions, the connection between animal rights activism and delinquency also becomes notably apparent in this case (e.g. Liddick, 2006; Garner, 2004). On the other hand, however, the one-sided employment of techniques of idealization is likely to lead to *burnout* as the protester takes personal responsibility for her actions in every situation. This is also confirmed in our study of animal rights activism. Carrying the world on their shoulders, with no limits to their commitment, activists were overwhelmed by emotions of guilt or compassion fatigue. Protesters also reported experiences of stress and exhaustion (see also McDonald, 2000; Pallotta, 2005; Gaarder, 2008), implying that their sense of being deviant was reinforced.

Finally, we suggest that another precondition for efficient deviance management is that activist groups balance their introvert and extrovert tendencies.[38] On the one hand, showing only limited interest in mobilizing for social change, and focusing instead on strengthening the group's inner cohesion and subculture, the activist group transforms into a *sect*. In this case activists' experiences of deviance are handled through self-segregation. This point is illustrated by the relative success of Animal Rights Sweden; this group in the context of the Swedish animal rights movement has remained oriented towards achieving cultural extension and resonance: i.e. reaching out to a wider audience. This stands in stark contrast to less prosperous and more introvert activist groups, where protesters conceive of themselves as an avant-garde of the movement, performing high-risk actions and preferring secrecy in the planning of actions (for instance the action-groups of the Animal Liberation Front). Their strong in-group focus risks converting them into political sects (see chapter 2, and also Peterson, 2001). On the other hand, if the activist group lays disproportionate weight to outreach and social networking, with no attention directed towards identity work and logistic structuring, this may result in *dissolution*. The subculture then lacks the necessary power of resistance to maintain its existence. In consequence, experiences of being deviant need to be dealt with individually, without support from the group. Moreover, since social

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38   Jasper has paid attention to this challenge in what he calls "The Janus Dilemma" (Jasper, 2006: 125). This dilemma consists of the fact that strategies may conflict with each other since the group has audiences with different interests and goals. Strategies aimed at insiders may, for instance, conflict with those designed to reach out to outsiders or potential recruits.

movements are emergent phenomena, where protesters may move from one social movement to another and the durability of most activist groups is short, the challenge of retaining group unity concerns most protesters. Nevertheless, this problematic tends to be greater among small activist groups, since they frequently lack a formal organization and depend on every individual's commitment to a larger extent.

Conclusion

This chapter has developed a novel deviance perspective on social movements. Like members of other deviant groups, activists must also devote large parts of their lives to deviance management in order to reduce the social and psychological effects of their being defined as norm transgressors and outsiders. We have proposed that the traditional notions of passing, techniques of neutralization and subculture should be complemented with, what we have termed, confronting, techniques of idealization and the forming of a transformative subculture when applied to social movement activists.

The deviance approach presented draws on the observation that activists are sensitive to the codes and rules of the social order and also develop conformist strategies. In contrast, in some previous research, activists may be treated solely as non-conforming individuals oriented towards the emancipation of their own selves or others' (e.g. Anspach, 1979). In this way it is often ignored that activists are accorded negative social identities by their surroundings, creating a need for them also to adapt to social norms, passing as normal and rationalizing the negative effects of their norm transgressions. Similarly, in earlier studies on deviance, the research focus may be restricted to how activists resist or seek to influence definitions of deviance in society. Yet, when scholars concentrate on protesters' conflicts with those who construct the rules of deviance, e.g. psychiatrists or policymakers, the fact that protesters are themselves defined as social deviants is not illuminated and accounted for (e.g. Lauderdale, 1980).

The deviance perspective outlined also illuminates that protesters develop specific strategies for managing deviance. While some research is prone to take the distinction between activism and deviance at face value, other scholars who analyze social movements may claim that protesters display no essential dissimilarity with those social categories traditionally examined under the rubric of deviance. For instance, protesters have been viewed as posing the same sort of threat to the normative order as criminal

and/or other deviant groups (Freilich et al., 1999), as well as outsiders "pre-disposed towards violence" (Allport, 1924) and suffering from "pathological personalities" (Lasswell, 1930). Here activists are not only compared to other groups, which transgress social norms. Their commonalities are also over-emphasized as activists' role as moral entrepreneurs, pursuing societal visions and employing techniques of idealization, is not highlighted.

A task for future research, then, is to test the usefulness of the concept of entrepreneurial deviance and to see to what extent the strategies of deviance management, and the dialectics that we have identified, apply to other social movements as well, in relation to their specific social contexts.

6   Summation

Much of the most productive theorizing of social movements originates from the US and has been utilized in Europe (and elsewhere). The theoretical paradigms developed, while instructive in many ways, tend to share a view of social movements as strategic actors, and their action as being guided first and foremost by instrumental rationality. As Alexander has put it in a critique, such perspectives make social movements "resemble complex maximizing machines" (Alexander, 1996a: 208). This holds true for the highly influential resource mobilization theory and the political process models. Even the culture and sociology of emotion approaches that have more recently been developed often share this assumption. In this book, in contrast, we are positioned in a European tradition, stemming back to Durkheim, and which sees morality as a reality *sui generis* and as fundamental to social life. Without due recognition of the role that morality plays in activism, much of the movements' behavior may seem irrational or ineffective.

While the moral aspects of contemporary forms of collective action have frequently been acknowledged in previous research (e.g. Gusfield, 1986/1963; Jasper & Nelkin, 1992; Jasper, 1997), we examined social movements as essentially moral phenomena. The notions of morality commonly used in social movement theorizing usually do not see morality as a social product and, as such, having social consequences that activists have to deal with on a regular basis. Therefore, moral reflexivity in social movements has, by and large, escaped theorization. Reflexivity draws on problems and tensions that spur people to think. As we illustrated in this book, the project of realizing the moral visions that social movement activists strive for, takes shape as a complex process involving fundamental dilemmas that require for their management – and thus produce – a significant degree of moral reflexivity. Moreover, a continuous and collective exercise of reflexivity forms a precondition for a movement's survival and success. Thus, in our model reflexivity constitutes a causal factor in social movements. These facts need to be better taken into account when analyzing and explaining movements' actions, effectiveness, and outcomes.

Our moral-sociological approach to social movements has been enabled by an original reading of Durkheim's sociology of morality, elaborating underdeveloped themes in Durkheim's sociology. The capacity for reflexivity is only mentioned by Durkheim briefly and in passing, and to most sociologists

Durkheim is known for his determinism. The moral-sociological perspective on reflexivity developed in this book has laid the emphasis on the agentic aspects in Durkheim's sociology not usually highlighted (see however Collins, 1988), and stands in contrast to, for instance, Neil Smelser's (2011/1962) classic approach to social movements. Our neo-Durkheimian model of moral reflexivity seeks to reconcile actor and structure. Reflexivity is both a resource of the individual (the individual's agency and ability to think and reflect) and a property of the social structure (reflexivity is linked to the social norms and moral ideals of society). The methodological assumption is that activists have the competence to alter a given condition known to them, yet are constrained by the existing moral-social order, existing as social fact. Moreover, we showed that Durkheim's sociology of morality can be interpreted in a way that transcends the consensus interpretation of him (see also Collins, 1988, 2001, 2005/2004) while maintaining the understanding of social groups as constituted by shared moral ideals.

This neo-Durkheimian perspective has ramifications for our understanding of social movements. First, morality not only drives but also constrains activists by the existing normative order. Second, social movement activists must balance their in-group norms and their outward strategies, rather than trying to maximize their external impact or gain. Protecting the sacred, understood as non-negotiable moral ideals, might have priority over successful external relations and impact. Third, protesters' moral status in society is inherently uncertain, fluctuating and dependent on societal definition processes, the consequences of which are critical for social movement researchers to investigate. Fourth, this ambiguous position necessitates moral reflexivity in social movement activism, which becomes central for successful outreach and impact. Fifth, activists construct distinctive feeling rules, differing from those of mainstream society. In this way, activists also challenge taken-for-granted sensibilities and emotional displays, making us aware of the fact that our most private experiences are, in fact, social products. Sixth, activists form moral hierarchies, and exert social control in their in-group life in defense of their ideals. Activist identity must be deserved and preserved. Seventh, activist recruitment involves a career, constituting a gradual development in the potential member's orientation towards the social movement's ideals and the norms of majority society. Eighth, the stress on moral reflexivity in the internal life of social movements implies that the term "work" is appropriate here since it denotes that activism is a transformative object. Thus, in our model emotion becomes emotion work, identity becomes identity work, movement culture becomes culture work, and deviance becomes deviance-management work.

Figure 2   A moral-sociological perspective on social movement activism: A conceptual scheme

Generalized Ideals	Secular Religion	Experiences of Awakening and Conversion Dedication and Commitment A Meaning in Suffering and Guilt The Moral Community Protection of the Sacred Rituals		
Moral Ideals	Sacred Qualities			
Contextualized Ideals	Novel Ethical Orientations	The Pursuit of Societal Visions		
Translation Extension	**Moral Reflexivity**	**Strategies**		
Generalized Norms	Substantive Norms	Deviance Management	Passing and Confronting Techniques of Neutralization and Idealization A Cohesive and Transformative Subculture	
Social Norms	Ceremonial Norms	Dramaturgical Control	Dramaturgical Loyalty Dramaturgical Discipline Dramaturgical Circumspection	
Contextualized Norms	Emotion Norms	Emotion Work	Containing Ventilation Ritualization Micro-Shocking Normalization of Guilt	
In-Group Formation	Moral Hierarchies Feeling Rules Moral Resonance			

To summarize the perspective on protest advocated in this book, we present a model of the main concepts we employed, highlighting the relations between these concepts.

A moral-sociological approach acknowledges and starts off from the constant intertwinements between social life and moral life: the social cannot be separated from the moral, and vice versa. Thus, in the model on protest put forward in this book, moral ideals are treated as empirical social facts, rather than as otherworldly or philosophical notions, and they form a constitutive part of society alongside social norms. Depending on their scope and acceptance, social movements' moral ideals may be translated and extended to large segments of people – and thus become general social facts – or remain specific to a certain group and therefore contextual. The more widely shared the ideal, the easier the struggle, as the existing norms in society provide a readily available platform and support for the struggle. The commonly shared ideal of democracy, for example, makes it easier to win battles in new areas in society where this ideal is not yet implemented. At the same time, however, activists must pursue their ideals without being defined as breaching key societal norms. If the activists are seen by the general public and policymakers as norm transgressors, they will fail in winning broader support for their cause and reach moral resonance.

Furthermore, activists' in-group life is deeply connected to their moral ideals. The routines and methods of the group are founded upon contextual norms derived from protesters' interpretations of their specific moral ideals. The contextual norms also regulate activists' moral hierarchies, assigning protesters a specific status-location in the group. This may give rise to conflicts and competition between fellow activists.

Social norms differ according to their object, and may be substantive (principles of law and morality), ceremonial (rules for self-presentation) and emotive (guidelines for feelings). They are always present as a back-drop in activists' thinking of how the world ought to be. Hence, protesters' moral reflexivity is neither confined to a rational calculus nor is it only a personal matter. It is instead deeply social in nature, arising from clashes between social movement activists' novel ethical orientations and the various norms of society; to reach their desired goals activists need to habitually and collectively reflect over the public's accounts and meanings. In addition, there are elementary forms and experiences of religious life in activism, implying that activists conceive of their moral ideals as non-negotiable objects of ultimate concern. This outlook further spurs the clashes between the ethical claims made and the present state of affairs in society, and, thus, prompts and fosters moral reflexivity in social movements.

Furthermore, the strategies that activists employ to pursue their societal visions also relate to the presence of social norms. Whereas deviance management is general and deals with all sorts of norms, there are also the more specific strategies of dramaturgical control and emotion work, concerned with ceremonial norms and emotion norms respectively. Successful dramaturgical control, deviance management and emotion work are success factors for social movements in their pursuit of social change alongside aspects more commonly emphasized by social movement scholars, such as resource mobilization, organizational structure and social networks.

In conclusion, we hope that this book will inspire a moral-sociological research agenda on social movements. Since protest is constituted by moral principles, intuitions and emotions, a moral-sociological framework is applicable to all social movements. Nevertheless, social movements differ in the degree to which they challenge the moral order. Some social movements create novel ideals, others interpret or reinterpret already existing ideals. Some movements break behavioral, ceremonial and emotional norms, others also transgress legal norms and commit criminal acts. Some movements operate in more prohibitive social and political environments than others. Some movements draw explicitly on religious authority, others show deference to their sacred ideals within secular discourse. Thus, a moral-sociological research agenda calls for comparative studies of different kinds of movements as well as movements operating in different normative contexts. Opportunity structures are, in this perspective, first and foremost moral, whether they manifest in a political, legal, cultural or discursive context.

Finally, the moral-sociological perspective we presented opens the door to the general sociologist's study of the moral order. As we argued, activists are significant as a reflexive force in the development of moral ideals in society. Nevertheless, the links to, and contrasts with, other moral facts, to use Durkheim's expression, need to be further examined. This is also a way in which social movement analysis, rather than being a confined field of study, could be fruitfully integrated within general social theory. At the very least, we hope to have contributed to a reawakened interest in Durkheim's sociology of morality and its usefulness in understanding contemporary societies.

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