Richard J White
Following in the footsteps of Elisee Reclus
Disturbing places of inter-species violence that are hidden in plain sight
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Contents

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> We hope to live one day in a city in which we no longer risk seeing butcher shops full of carcasses next to silk and jewelry stores… We want to be surrounded by an environment that pleases the eye and is an expression of beauty. (Elisee Reclus, 1901, p. 161)

> … the only way in which widespread animal liberation, or anything approaching it, can be achieved, is by changing the behaviour of ordinary people toward animals. (Ronnie Lee, 2014 p. xiv)

Introduction

Walking from my home to the local railway station takes no more than fifteen minutes. If someone were to observe this relatively short journey, I would probably be seen as one of several people going about their daily morning commute. Should the observer wish to contextualise this scene further, by reference to the broader urban surroundings for example, they may note that for the majority of this time I walk past a range of shops and businesses (fifty-three on the right hand side of the street, forty-seven on the left, if they were paying great attention). These shops sell a modest range of goods and services that can be found across most small towns in England. If their initial observations ended there: "*Richard's route from home to the station is predictably straightforward … passes some shops on the way to the station… nothing out of the ordinary or remarkable or unusual to note,* " they would be in good company (based on my prediction that most observers in this scenario would not depart significantly from this conclusion). Certainly, assuming that I (a sentient animal) had not been attacked *en route* in some way there would be no reference to any act of violence taking place against a sentient animal. And yet there are *extreme* levels of violence and misery that concern more-than-human sentient beings that are entangled within the urban fabric of this

public place. Paradoxically, the very fact that this violence is *so* pervasive and commonplace that it becomes, to all intents and purposes, *hidden in plain sight* within the urban environment. This idiom was popularised in "The Purloined Letter" by Edgar Allen Poe (1902). Here Poe hypothesised that things that are deliberately hidden in plain sight are all the more evasive because they

> escape observation by dint of being excessively obvious; and here the physical oversight is precisely analogous with the moral inapprehension by which the intellect suffers to pass unnoticed those considerations which are too obtrusively and too palpably self-evident. (p.36)

Perhaps, were I to push my observer to move beyond an anthropocentric scripting of this encounter with place, and ask that they critically focus instead on the excessively obvious presence (or indeed absence) of more than human animals, then I would hope (and fear) that their urban narrative would generate observations altogether more dark and *disturbing*.

Acknowledging the centrality and contested nature(s) of place has a great deal to offer any praxis that advocates ethical and social justice. There are many important reasons for this, but perhaps the most significant comes with the recognition, as White and Cudworth (2014, p. 205) argue, that the "real geographies of violence, suffering, trauma, and abuse [are] thoroughly embedded in space and place: [physical] violence is neither disembodied nor abstract; it occurs… *somewhere to someone*." A more conscious and critical awareness of the possibilities that different approaches readings of, and relationships to place provide, is particularly important for activists working to advance an intersectional politics of Total Liberation (Best, 2014, Colling et al, 2014). As the American social activist, feminist and author bell hooks (1984) observed:

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> [a]s a radical standpoint, perspective, position, "the politics of location" necessarily calls those of us who would participate in the formation of counter-hegemonic cultural practice to identify the spaces where we begin the process of re-vision." (hooks 1984, p. 153)

Many animal right activists make reference to place, but do so in a way that limits place to that of a setting or generic stage designed to give background context to (more extreme) acts of animal abuse. To take one example, think of the popular saying: "if slaughterhouses had glass walls, everyone would be a vegetarian (or vegan)". This argument makes reference to a *spatial* invisibility, highlighting hidden places wherein extreme violence and suffering takes place (see Eisnitz, 2006). Slaughterhouses, at least in contemporary urban western society, are deliberately placed *out of the sight*. As Adams (1990) argues: "Geographically, slaughterhouses are cloistered. We do not see or hear what transpires there." (p. 49). These places of slaughter are private and forbidden. Slaughterhouse workers notwithstanding (themselves often representing a group of human animals who are brutalised and exploited, see Grezo (2012)) the general public would rarely be permitted to enter. Indeed the active exclusion of people is aggressively enforced, in the shape of explicit warning signs, electric fences, barbed wire adorning high walls, patrolled by security guards and/ or surveyed by CCTV cameras. Any unauthorised person or group who does manage to gain entry does so at great personal risk. The owner(s) of the slaughter house would no doubt appeal to laws against trespassing, and property damage (breaking fences/ windows/ doors/ locks). In this way the animal liberators find themselves labelled as criminals or, increasingly, denounced as terrorists (see Potter, 2014a,b). The increasing pervasiveness of such harshly punitive domestic laws is testament to the immense threat that acts of transgression pose the profiteers of animal abuse. Revealing the deliber-

ately hidden realities created and contained within these places of violence — is never a small or inconsequential act, but one which carries radical and revolutionary possibilities.

In so many important ways the call for Total Liberation embodies an explicitly spatial praxis: the desire to live without *places* of violence. This brings sharply therefore the question: "to what extent does the success of animal liberation — as part of a total politics of liberation — concern an ability to successfully confront, transgress and liberate these violent places?" With this question in mind the principal aim of the chapter is to encourage the reader to focus their attention not towards those places where violence is deliberately hidden violence, but to think more critically about the disturbing acts and consequences of violence against sentient beings that are all around us: embedded and normalised within *familiar* urban environments. In doing so it is also important to make connections between these 'everyday' and 'exceptional' places of violence: neither are fundamentally discrete or different. Rather they are codependent and co-constitutive, coming together in both time and space in many complex and sometimes unpredictable ways.

The focus on 'disturbing' in this chapter is two-fold. Places can be *disturbing* (or contain disturbing things) in the sense that they may provoke anxiety, worry or distress. But they also have the capacity to be *disturbed*. Places are highly open to being dis-ordered, over-turned, distressed, given that they are "socially constructed, the product of a host of human [and more than human] practices" (Ward, 2007, p. 269). With reference to the first, the intention of the chapter is to show, how acts of violence against more than human animals are captured — that is, rendered commonplace, routine, easy going, unremarkable and ultimately invisible- in the everyday urban environment, and to consider the implications that this heightened consciousness brings with it. This discussion takes place within a contextual framework which explicitly draws on critical (animal) geographies, and anarchist geography in particular. It is my belief that an expanded anarchist geographical praxis

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that embraces more than human animals when speaking of ethics and social justice, and foregrounds questions of space and place when challenging power, domination and oppression has the great potential to inform a deeper awareness of, and understanding toward, existing intersectional strategies of resistance and liberation. To illustrate this, I focus on *On Vegetarianism* (1901) written by the French anarchist geographer Elisee Reclus (1830 -1905) (for other discussions of the importance of this work see also Colling et al, 2014; White and Cudworth, 2014). Taking inspiration from this short pamphlet, this chapter seeks to follow in his footsteps, by re-visiting the commute to work highlighted in the introduction, but this time re-worked from personal observations which are sensitive to the inter-species violence that this place contains.

Addressing the question of how violence in place can be disturbed forms the final third of this chapter. Here, there is a strong recognition of the (aspirational) need for anarchist means and ends to be consistent, which demands that forms of violence, coercion and *arche* are rejected (see Springer, 2014). A critique focused on everyday, familiar, and highly transferable acts of urban activism designed to draw attention to urban spaces of violence will be made. This, I hope, will reinforce the open and inclusive nature of the possibilities that can be achieved through individual and small groups taking direct action. This politics of hope cannot be underestimated: we must be recognise that nothing is inevitable, and that we are not condemned to walk amidst such violent places evermore. On the contrary we all have the capacity and capability to find new ways to effectively interrogate, transgress and transform these (our) everyday sites of violence and despair, into places of non-violence and hope.

Regarding structure, first the chapter explores the contested geographical definitions of space and place. Second, a more explicit discussion focuses on an emerging critical animal geography, and then anarchism and anarchist geography. This actively acknowledges the presence/ absence of more-than-human violence that are

contained and captured (in live and dead bodies) in the places I walk through. Fourth, a brief discussion of forms of street-based activism that aim to unsettle and disturb these speciesist violence will be made.

Space, place and more-than-human animals

The question "what is *place*?" escapes definitive answers. Typically, geographers have identified place with reference to space (and vice versa) in which the two concepts operate on a relative spectrum of difference. Consider this definition by Gieryn (2000) as illustrative of this approach:

> Space is what place becomes when the unique gathering of things, meanings, and values are sucked out. Put positively, place is space filled up by people, practices, objects, and representations. (p.465)

This immediately suggests that, far from being passive, fixed, or predictable our (human) relationship to place is something altogether more dynamic, fluid, open, active, engaged, and unfolding. This transformation of space to places (of meaning and resonance) operates on both physical and mental registers, insofar as places are also "interpreted, narrated, perceived, felt, understood and imagined" (p. 464). If we extend Gieryn's anthropocentric reading of place to acknowledge the presence and agency of 'more than human animals', how might this contribute to the way in which place is constructed? In so many ways, the consequences are both ethically disturbing and troubling. For in opening up the interrogation of place through connection with the lived experiences of more than human animals, it insists that we recognise contemporary places as bearing witness (in shape and form) to a speciesist culture, wherein lies the dominant "belief that nonhuman animals exist to serve the needs of the human species, that

> "The fight for animal liberation demands radical transformations in the habits, practices, values, and mindset of all human beings as it also entails a fundamental restructuring of social institutions and economic systems and economic systems predicated on exploitative practices."

To be successful, a radical praxis will duly inspire, indeed demand, transformative changes that impact upon everyday spaces that humans engage, and give meaning to. In this context, I hope that the principal themes, arguments and conclusions made here, and which have all drawn inspiration from anarchist praxis are of relevance and merit. At the very least I hope that they will in turn inspire greater reflections concerning (a) the complex natures of place — of meaning and experience — that the reader has a relationship with, and (b) suggest ways in which the they (and others) can engage in a meaningful way to co-create places that embody ethics, justice and non-violence towards all animals, human and non-human. The brave new world that we strive for through prefigurative praxis and critical education on the streets and elsewhere, will be will be embedded in the spaces and places that will emerge and prosper.

These will reflect and represent positive, life-affirming relationships with all animals: one that speaks openly of love, freedom, hope, peace, care, justice and — in the *Reclusian* sense — beauty.

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toward non-human animals is normalised, and made invisible in society. Importantly, this chapter has not focused attention on s on those marginal or exceptional places of animal violence, such as the slaughterhouse, but on those deceptively 'civilised' public places that we regularly encounter, but rarely interrogate. Recognising place as being "not just a thing in the world but a way of understanding the world" (Cresswell, 2004, p. 11) becomes important because it allows us all to be potential agents of change: nothing about space or place is inevitable, everything is possible. What would an urban place look like which emphasized liberty, freedom, ethics, justice, love toward all (sentient) beings: human and non-human? In *On Vegetarianism* Reclus outline his/our vision thus:

> We look forward to the day when we will no longer have to rush quickly past hideous sites of killing to see as little as possible of the rivulets of blood, the rows of cadavers hanging from sharp hooks, and the bloodstained workers armed with gruesome knives. We hope to live one day in a city in which we no longer risk seeing butcher shops full of carcasses next to silk and jewellery stores, or across from a pharmacy, a stand with fragrant fruit, or a fine bookstore full of engravings, statuettes and works of art. We want to be surrounded by an environment that pleases the eye and is an expression of beauty." (1901, p. 601)

Strategies focused on total liberation, which are sensitive to the tangled and interconnected nature of oppression and violence between human and more than human animals, should also pay great attention to the ways in which this involves liberating "the spatial" landscapes, by disturbing and displacing the normalised nature of violence toward non-human animals. Place is *never neutral* or simply *in-the-background*. As Best (2008, p.198) argued that

animals are in various senses inferior to human beings, and therefore that one can favor human over nonhuman interests according to species status alone." (Best, 2008, p. 190). In a great number of (explicit and implicit) ways our urban environments embodies this ugly speciesism. This reinforces, rather than challenges, the animal condition, which, for the majority of more than human animals, speaks of their "actual life situation with its routine repertoire of violence, deprivation, desperations, agony, apathy, suffering, and death". (Pedersen and Stanescu, 2012, p. ix).

The distinction between the 'ordinary' and 'exceptional' acts of violence involving humans and other animals is an important distinction. Violence against non-human animals in a speciesist society is rarefied and attributed to the latter: we can readily emphasise with the victim of an exceptional act of violence, while being unaffected by the daily products of extreme violence that confront us in the everyday. Paradoxically it may be that the very intimate familiarity of a known place (which we are never encouraged to challenge) desensitises an individual to suffering and violence. In some cases, perversely, the more extreme the violence exacted on more than human animals, wrapped up in religious or cultural traditions, the more likely it will be enjoyed rather than condemned. Johnson (1991) drew attention to this in a graphic way:

> At fiesta time in many a Spanish or Latin American village, a gory spectacle is enacted. Live chickens or geese are tethered to the top of a pole while the local braves take turns at hurling arrows or stones, or try to seize and pull off the birds' heads from horseback. How the little children clap their hands, and what pious tears of joy their mothers weep, to see the holy festivities. (p.103)

Importantly though, Johnson uses this illustration as a means to a further end: to unsettle his intended western-based readership.

No doubt upset, if not outraged, by the violence that is evident in this 'foreign' place, Johnson then makes unsettling and uncomfortable parallels with the (British) slaughterhouse, telling his readers: "In the still hours of darkness, many a sleepy English village is the setting for a pageant no less bloody." (ibid).

Within critical geography circles an interest in the relations between human and non-human animals has gained notable momentum in the last twenty years (see Wolch and Emel, 1995; Philo and Wilbert, 2000; Emel, et al. 2002; Gillespie and Collard 2015). Importantly, within this body of research, a number of geographers have developed important research agendas "in response to our political and ethical responsibilities to the species who share our planet." (Johnston, 2008: 633). Here, the most critical contributions are those which have responded to Wolch and Emel's (1998) urgent call to recognise the plight of more-than-human animals. They write:

> The plight of animals worldwide has never been more serious than it is today. Each year, by the billions, animals are killed in factory farms; poisoned by toxic pollutants and waste; driven from their homes by logging, mining, agriculture, and urbanization; dissected, re-engineered, and used as spare body-parts; and kept in captivity and servitude to be discarded as soon as their utility to people has waned. The reality is mostly obscured by the progressive elimination of animals from everyday human experience, and by the creation of a thin veneer of civility surrounding human-animal relations, embodied largely by language tricks, isolation of death camps, and food preparation routines that artfully disguise the true origins of flesh-food. Despite the efforts made to minimize human awareness of animal lives and fates, however, the brutality of human domination over the

> the bleeding flesh as a generator of health, strength, and intelligence. They, too, enter without repugnance the slaughter house, where the pavement is red and slippery, and where one breathes the sickly sweet odour of blood. Is there then so much difference between the dead body of a bullock and that of a man? The dissevered limbs, the entrails mingling one with the other, are very much alike: the slaughter of the first makes easy the murder of the second, especially when a leader's order rings out, or from afar comes the word of the crowned master, "Be pitiless." (1901, p. 159)

Recognising the interconnected and overlapping nature of oppression between humans and non-humans, and promoting this through activism demands a more nuanced and critical approach, (one that is sensitive to class, race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, etcetera). Campaigns must be constantly critical and reflective on their structure and approach. At the very least, this means avoiding fighting on behalf of one form of oppression, while advocating strategies that play upon and reinforce another (for example, the sexist advertising used by in the campaigns by the People for Ethical Treatment of Animals, (see Pennington, 2013)). Similarly, internal structures in terms of organisation and representation must be constantly critiqued and open to criticism should they privilege certain individuals and groups, or conversely discriminate, suppress, censor and marginalise 'other' particular sub-groups within the total liberation movement (see Wrenn, 2013).

Some final thoughts

The chapter has sought to impress upon the reader the importance of taking seriously place when understanding how violence

> arrested for 'willful obstruction of the highway' and public order offences.

As a scholar-activist, I've witnessed individuals hurl abuse, insults and threats at campaigners. In conversation with other animal rights activists, and through personal experience, I'm aware of many instances where — with alarming regularity — animal activists have been threatened, and subjected to actual bodily violence, with stalls upturned and destroyed. How ironic given the fact this activism — rooted in an ethics of care, education, compassion and love — can, through disturbing violence in place, be themselves the cause of further acts of violence and intimidation. At the same time, this speaks volumes of the omnipresent threat that disturbing place — by revealing new unsettling truths — has for those who are interested in maintaining a (speciesist) status quo, and the lengths they will go to preserve it.

This violence against those humans who are seeking to challenge the violence metered out to other animals, focuses attention on the need for activists to critically reflect upon the intersectional natures of violence. As Fitzgerald and Pellow, (2014 p. 31) argue: "Intersectionality reminds us that we cannot understand one form of oppression without understanding others and that various forms of inequality interrelate and work together to produce advantages and disadvantages for individuals and groups". Commonalities between interlocking forms of oppression, violence toward other animals and humans have been made elsewhere (for example, Kemmerer, 2011; Glasser and Roy, 2014), and not least in Reclus's work. Here, for example, he draws parallels between the slaughtering (sic) of animals and the murder (sic) of people:

> But is there not some direct relation of cause and effect between the food of these executioners, who call themselves "agents of civilisation," and their ferocious deeds? They, too, are in the habit of praising

> animal world and the catastrophic consequences of such dominionism are everywhere evident. (p.xi)

Though perhaps not an obvious connection, anarchism and geography have enjoyed a long, if uneven, common history from the 20th century to the present day. Certainly, at the time of writing, contemporary events (animated by wider economic, political, and environmental crises) have provoked and inspired new and important lines of flight to emerge between anarchist praxis and geography in recent years (see Springer et. al, 2012). Writing as a selfidentified anarchist geographer, the mutual benefits of such comings together between anarchists and geographers can be captured and understood in many ways. One of these is, as Ince (2010, p. 296) argues, rooted in the fact that anarchism and geography both converge on matters of everyday life: "Anarchism's tendency to foreground the everyday as crucial to the revolutionary project combined with geography's tendency to foreground the everyday and a primary terrain of human [and non-human] (inter)action provide a potent theme of synergy for the two."

Though sadly more often conspicuous by their absence in the broader anarchist canon, meaningful references to the condition of non-human animals can be found. These are certainly present within the writings of two highly influential late 19th and early 20th century anarchist geographers, Elisee Reclus and Peter Kropotkin. Encouragingly, aspects of their work and the recognition of interspecies suffering and oppressions are beginning to inspire new critical conversations in the contemporary field of critical animal geographies. When exploring the historical anarchist archive it is striking how appeals to common suffering and struggle that connect both humans and non-human animals have been used to epitomise and embody the very *spirit* of anarchism. As Giovanni Baldelli (1971) writes:

> Anarchism is a purity of rebellion. A pig who struggles wildly and rends the air with his cries while he is held

> to be slaughtered, and a baby who kicks and screams when, wanting warmth and his mother's breast, he is made to wait in the cold — these are two samples of natural rebellion. Natural rebellion always inspires either deep sympathy and identification with the rebelling creature, or a stiffening of the heart and an activation of aggressive-defensive mechanisms to silence an accusing truth. This truth is that each living being is an end in itself; that nothing gives a being the right to make another a mere instrument of his purposes. (p. 17)

In many ways, an explicit commitment to an intersectional politics, advanced by a politics of total liberation — to challenge *all* forms of unjustified hierarchy and dominion and the places in which these occur — has a natural alignment with anarchist praxis (see Dominik, 1997, and Dominik's chapter in this book). Of all the radical traditions, anarchists have consistently strived to recognise how:

> capitalism, imperialism, colonialism, neoliberalism, militarism, nationalism, classism, racism, ethnocentrism, Orientalism, sexism, genderism, ageism, ableism, speciesism, carnism, homophobia, transphobia, sovereignty and the state as interlocking systems of domination. The mutually reinforcing composition of these various dimensions of "archy" consequently means that to uncritically exempt one from interrogation, is to perpetuate this omnicidal conglomeration as a whole. Springer, (2012, p. 1614)

In seeking ways to make visible, and disturb, everyday places of animal violence, the anarchist writings of Elisee Reclus has much to offer. Reclus was noted to be a man driven by "a concern for the self-realization of all beings in their uniqueness and particularity, and

Even if passers-by do not actively take a leaflet, or approach a demonstration stall, they are forced to engage with its presence. Such a deliberate act of avoidance interrupts regular flow and momentum. Physically they have to adjust their steps to move beyond the stall and the activists. Mentally, they have to avoid seeing the information that the stall is conveying. But, at some cognitive level they will have had to have seen that this is an animal rights stall: they cannot un-see what they have seen.

As a testament to the power of street-based activism, regrettably, it should also be recognised that non-violent forms of activism act often generate violent responses in others. This can be seen in the physical and psychologically abuse from both members of the public or (and speaking volumes about the erosion of personal rights, and freedom of expression) the police. *Red Pepper* (Bowman, 2009) magazine, for example reported on the illegal removal of information stalls from ten different political organisations (including animal rights groups) that were set up in Church Street, Liverpool:

> Merseyside Police arrived rapidly and asked them to move on, later claiming to be acting upon retailers' complaints about 'obstruction of the highway' (a difficult task to accomplish with a few pasting tables, given the street's breadth). Assured of the legality of their actions, the campaigners refused.
>
> Without explaining what powers they were acting under, police officers began seizing campaign literature and tables. They also demanded participants' names and addresses. Five people who complied with this demand were later issued with court summons. Those who refused to give their details were threatened with immediate arrest. Two quickly found themselves joining the tables and literature in the back of a police van,

animal rights activists, noted that many activists are driven by the common assumption that: "…the major cause of the abuse of animals was public ignorance rather than indifference. In this context, it is timely to re-emphasise the importance of the often taken-for-granted role of two popular forms of activism: campaign stalls and the act of leafleting.

Campaign stalls and leafleting

Whether they are strategically positioned (for example, targeting particular shops that more obviously benefit from the violence and oppression of other animals: butchers shops, seafood shops, fur-selling shops) or aim to occupy space on the street more generally, information stalls and leafleting perform very powerful acts that serve to disrupt (both mentally and physically) the normal — unconscious — flows of urban space. Obviously they invite active conversation and dialogue between people, or some form of contact by process of giving/receiving printed materials. A local activist group, Sheffield Animal Friends (SAF), have consistently acknowledged the importance of these forms of direct, human contact and interaction, through which they can meaningfully draw attention to the cruelty of fur, vivisection, meat, animal entertainment industries. Importantly, they have successfully combined a general message for respect and non-violence against all animals, through focusing on particular businesses and shops who have vested interests in selling, or supporting, systems of exploitation and animal abuse (including banks and charities that directly fund vivisection). Moreover the stall could also be used to appeal to other senses of information — of taste, of smell, of sight, by cooking and freely distributing vegan food. Again this was seen as incredibly successful in constructively addressing and overcoming many deep seated prejudices about the type of food (and people) involved when eschewing animal based products.

a practice of love and care for those beings (Clark, 2013a: 6). This led to him integrating a biocentric social and ecological ethic at the heart of his work and activism. As a visionary, Reclus anticipated

> current debate in ecophilosophy and environmental ethics, is his effort to raise both ethical and ecological issues concerning our treatment of other species. His ideas are important in view of the fact that he was not only a pioneer in ecological philosophy but also an early advocate of the humane treatment of animals and of ethical vegetarianism. Even today, after several decades of discussion of "animal rights" and "ecological thinking," there are few theorists who have attempted to think through the interrelationship between the two concerns. (Clark, 2013b p. 31)

One of the most striking arguments for respecting the lives of non-human animals can be found in the short pamphlet "On Vegetarianism" (1901). Here Reclus, draws on his own experiences and memories concerning the violence against animals in the familiar places he grew up with. Importantly, Reclus builds his argument to transgress normalised (violent) relations toward other animals not by appealing to rights-based argument, but by appealing to strong emotional and affectual registers of the reader through citing the disturbing, ugliness of violence in place. In highlighting some key passages to illustrate this, I will then attempt to re-visit this by focusing on the daily commute outlined in the beginning of the chapter.

On Vegetarianism begins with a disturbing recollection, recalled through Reclus's childhood eyes, which focuses on his visit to the village butcher:

> One of the family had sent me, plate in hand, to the village butcher, with the injunction to bring back

> some gory fragment or other. In all innocence I set out cheerfully to do as I was bid, and entered the yard where the slaughter men were. I still remember this gloomy yard where terrifying men went to and fro with great knives, which they wiped on blood-besprinkled smocks. Hanging from a porch an enormous carcase seemed to me to occupy an extraordinary amount of space; from its white flesh a reddish liquid was trickling into the gutters. Trembling and silent I stood in this blood-stained yard incapable of going forward and too much terrified to run away. I do not know what happened to me; it has passed from my memory. I seem to have heard that I fainted, and that the kind-hearted butcher carried into his own house; I did not weigh more than one of those lambs he slaughtered every morning." (1901, p. 2)

Place is absolutely central to the terror and tenderness captured in this memory. For the former, the gloomy, blood-stained yard, and the (occupied space) of the carcass makes Reclus a prisoner of place: as somewhere so deep and terrifying that it is impossible to escape. Indeed, as a relevant observation, we can note though Reclus is *physically* no longer in that place, psychologically and this place still exerts a horrifyingly real and bloody grip within his (childhood) imaginary. Elsewhere, the memory also highlights how place forms a strong contrast: the bloodied slaughter-in-the-yard, is the same kind-hearted man who, in taking pity on the young Reclus, carries him away to recover in the comparative safety of that warm, peaceful place known as "his own house".

Later, Reclus draws attentions to the manner in which, removed from the slaughterhouse to the street, people are (deliberately) distracted from such thinking literally about the ugliness of animal flesh:

> what it feeds upon, the so-called means. To say that the end justifies the means is to acknowledge that the means, judged separately, are unjust. If they are unjust, it is because there are concepts of justice prior to, and independent of, the ends to be realized. What will not be permissible tomorrow is permitted today in order that it is not permissible tomorrow. This is to declare today's humanity in some way inferior to tomorrow's, and to burden the latter with a debt of gratitude unasked for and more likely to be cursed than blessed.

In the context of activism and non-human animals, Rowlands (2002) argues that 'acts of rescue' are distinguished from 'attempts to change society'. While recognizing this to be an overly simplistic duality, this section of the chapter is very much concerned with animal activism in the context of attempting to change society. For acts of rescue, many key strategies of resistance to confront and transgress places of animal abuse have justifiably and necessarily included acts that many people instinctively consider violent. These would include breaking and entering (into factory farms or vivisection laboratories), and destroying private property as a form of economic sabotage (see Mann, 2007). However, in their attempts to change society, indisputably non-violent forms of direct action continue to inform the vast majority of tactics foregrounded by animal activists. These include, but are not limited to, leafleting, fundraising, demonstrations and marches, undercover surveillance, candle-lit vigils (a powerful form of night-based street activism), and other covert forms of animal rescue. Amidst this diversity of non-violent tactics, there are important common aims to be found. Principal among these is the way in which they are intentionally employed to draw attention to violence through education, and hoping to make visible the violence and suffering of non-human animals that most people choose to overlook and ignore. Herzog (1993, p. 112) for example, when writing about the psychology of

Disturbing violence in everyday places: the importance of non-violent activism on the street.

As mentioned in the opening to this chapter, the focus on disturbing violence pays particular attention to (a small number) of wonderful everyday forms of activism that focus on 'the street' level. Certainly, the visibility and centrality of street-based activism has long been seen as an important site for direct action, both symbolically and strategically for (animal) liberation movements (see White and Cudworth, 2014). This type of activism, is fundamentally concerned with education, raising conscious in a way that encourages (rather than forces) individuals — and groups — to *see the same things differently*. Anarchists and critical animal scholars alike have long emphasised the importance of education in maintaining, or disturbing, broader social norms and the importance of changing hearts and minds at the individual and societal level to make for truly progressive and lasting change (see Socha and Mitchell, 2014). Thus, while street-based activism and protest can assume many forms, and take on different shades of legality, thinking carefully about how violent spaces can be meaningfully and effectively disturbed and transformed is important (see Rowlands, 2002). In this context I would identify strongly with Springer's (2012, p. 1606) conviction that, "anarchism should embrace an ethic of non-violence precisely because violence is recognized as both an act and process of domination." Anarchist praxis, wherever possible, must be prepared to demonstrate an admirable commitment toward consistency between the means and ends. The Italian anarchist theorist Giovanni Baldelli (1972, p. 19–20) eloquently points out the logics of this argument:

> The tree is known by its fruit but the so-called ends of political organizations and movements seem never to manage to ripen. Let the tree be judged then, by

> …butchers display dismembered carcasses and bloody pieces of meat before the eyes of the public, even along the busiest streets, next to perfumed shops decked with flowers. They even have the audacity to decorate the hanging hunks of flesh with rose garlands to make them aesthetically pleasing. (1901, p. 158)

With these powerful thoughts in mind, the next section re-visits the opening discussion concerning my daily commute. Here, unlike the imagined observer, I want to emphasise how a seemingly unremarkable engagement through the urban places of my home town, actively captures and presents a range of complex, and contradictory encounters that concern humans and more-than human animals: from care and compassion on the one hand, to violence, abuse, neglect and death on the other.

Re-visiting the urban commute in Reclus's footsteps: disturbing geographies of place.

Two minutes after leaving my front door, till the railway station itself, I walk past the windows of shops. Some of these windows contain living more-than-human animals in small cages that would make "ideal pets" (goldfish, hamsters, guinea pigs, gerbils); another shop window advertises a range of weapons (with which to fish, hunt, shoot, deceive, catch and kill "wild" animals and birds); elsewhere I pass a veterinary surgery (there to heal and help (all) animals. However, again, the complex — indeed ambivalent — reality of these places challenges such overtly positive interpretations. Think, for example, of how veterinary drugs are tested on other animals; or how a vet's training routinely involves them dissecting the very animals they will be expected to help heal). At frequent intervals I walk in front of the windows of fast-food restaurants

(selling roasted fragments of animal bodies to 'eat in or takeaway'), or local businesses advertising a range of fried fish (and chips) to buy. Two local butchers, both claiming to stock the finest quality "meat", (animal corpses) in the area. While never the same, I would be bold to say that a similar urban story composed by reference to the complex presence(s) and absence(s) of other-than-human animals would be repeated, more often than not in most other towns and cities throughout western society.

What do these observations have to contribute to our understanding of the complex ways in which we (ab)use more than human animals in society? In its best light it creates an impression of both respect and care: providing more than human animals with medical facilities for example, and food and shelter for companion animals (pets). At its worst the streets and shop windows bear silent witness to cruelty that is as immense as it is incomprehensible. There are far more numerous examples of shops which reflect the reality that we kill and exploit (many) more animals for trivial purposes: to eat their body parts or for so-called "sport" and recreation pursuits (to hunt).

Raising consciousness about the ways in which urban places display and hold up non-human animals (literally in the shop window) is so important, because these places form such powerful sites of education about the role of more than human animals, sites which are particularly influential upon the minds of children. We only have to recall how (most) children delight in seeing (and perhaps "interacting" — touching the glass, tapping on the wires of the cage) with the animals and fish imprisoned within the pet shop. Cajoled by their parents to move on, they may then wait outside the butchers as their parents seek to purchase a selection of fleshy, dead lumps of "farmed" animals. These encounters presented — and vigorously enforced — as "natural" and "normal" and "healthy" inter-species relations, powerfully and openly legitimised by an urban space which provokes neither ethical questions, nor questions of social justice. For the first eighteen years of my life I internalised

all of these messages, never thinking to question or challenge them. Yet in the subsequent eighteen years, being increasingly influenced by anarchist praxis and a critical animal studies approach, the urban windows of my home town slowly revealed their dark reality. They are silent witnesses to the on-going story of human domination, unrestrained exploitation and gratuitous violence characteristic of a speciesist society (see Weitzenfeld, and Joy 2014) which guides us toward love and compassion for some animals, indifference toward the fate of many others, and indeed (beyond the shop windows) encourages abuse and hostility toward the presence of other urban animal dwellers (for example, rats, mice and pigeons, and urban foxes as "vermin"). Needless to say, over time my appreciation of these places — which collectively form the "place" of my home town — have changed markedly. My emotions are one of repulsion, hostility, resentment, anger, sadness, exclusion, and alienation. At times, surrounded by these windows it feels best, perhaps, not to think too much. Yet such disengagement is in many ways self-defeating. Without challenge and confrontation this normalised violence-in-place will forever remain undisturbed and untroubled. In this direct — immersed — silence of my daily commute, the conscious appraisal of the violence that is embedded all around me speaks of the silence of the omnipresent animal referent, is an accusing one: "You, who see us but no longer see, who hear us but no longer hear, how can you carry on as you do, so wilfully blind, wilfully deaf, wilfully silent."

Unfortunately, the violence in place is far from unique. Indeed, it relates to many places that we all encounter: the seemingly mundane, ordinary, everyday, routine, familiar. These are places which capture and reflect highly speciesist geographies: in both structure and form they exist as testament to the geographies of violence and death that are visited upon many non-human animals in contemporary society. How to respond?