

Farmed Animal Sanctuaries: The Heart of the Movement?

A Socio-Political Perspective

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One of the fundamental challenges for animal rights theory is to imagine the contours of just relations that humans might have with “farmed animals” once we stop confining and killing them for food. What sorts of social relationships would cows, pigs, chickens, and other animals be able to form with us, and with members of their own and other species? What kind of sex life, family life, and cooperative activities might they want to engage in? Farm sanctuaries are one of the few spaces today where these questions are being asked, and where possible answers are being explored. However, if sanctuaries are to be effective spaces for exploring a better future, some of their current practices may need to change. Farm sanctuaries originally developed as places of safe refuge for abused animals who were rescued from factory farms and slaughterhouses. Rescued animals live out their lives in safety and comfort, and also serve as ambassadors to the visiting public for all of the animals who remain trapped in the animal-industrial complex. We call this the “refuge + advocacy” model, and it is a noble vision that has inspired many people. But the offer of safe refuge is not the same as the opportunity to create a new and shared interspecies society. A different vision of a farm sanctuary would see its animal residents less as refugees and ambassadors, and more as citizens and pioneers of new “intentional communities” who are given the freedom to create a new social world. This paper explores the limits of the refuge + advocacy model, both in terms of the messages it communicates to human visitors and the freedoms it provides to its animal residents, and outlines an alternative model rooted in emerging practices of intentional community.

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INTRODUCTION¹

The animal sanctuary movement is rapidly expanding, and represents an important dimension of activist response to human violence against non-human animals.² The movement encompasses a range of different types of sanctuaries, including: wild animal rehabilitation centers, exotic animal refuges, animal companion rescues, feral and working animal support programs, and sanctuaries for “formerly farmed” animals rescued from the agricultural industry.³ In this paper our focus is on the final category, farmed animal sanctuaries (henceforth FASes), although some dimensions of our analysis might be helpful for thinking about the politics of animal sanctuaries more generally.

In North America, Farm Sanctuary in Watkins Glen, NY launched the sanctuary movement for farmed animals in 1986. There are now at least 50 such public FASes in the U.S. and several more in Canada.⁴ We refer to these as “public” sanctuaries, not because they receive

public funding, but because, in conjunction with their rescue work, they maintain a public profile—through visitor and/or volunteer programs, public outreach, social media, fundraising, and/or advocacy. As a result of this profile, they play an important role in shaping public opinion about the role of FASes, and the possibilities for human–animal relations.⁵

Our focus is on the politics of FASes, and their role within the animal rights (hereafter AR) movement. What do these sanctuary communities communicate about the goals of the AR movement regarding justice for domesticated animals? What role *could* they fulfill in enlarging our understanding of human–animal justice, and the potential for compassionate, cooperative, and flourishing interspecies communities of the future? Our analysis is very preliminary, based on visits to FASes in our region,⁶ information from sanctuary websites, and a very small emerging literature on this topic (including books written by sanctuary founders, and a small number of academic articles). Our perspective also draws on research con-

cerning human sanctuary movements, and intentional and transition communities.

The paper is organized as follows. We begin by identifying a standard model of FAS—a broadly shared set of goals, designs, and practices—which we believe captures the public face of the movement as it exists today. We call this the *refuge + advocacy* model. In Part 2, we apply a critical lens to this model, raising questions about its effectiveness for advocacy, and the message it communicates concerning animals’ capacities, interests, and rights, and the possible lives open to them. Finally, in Parts 3 and 4, we sketch the dimensions of an alternative *intentional community* model, and how this alternative model addresses certain limitations of the standard model, but also poses its own challenges. Aspects of this alternative model, we suggest, are already implicitly shaping emerging practices at some sanctuaries, to some degree. Our aim is to clarify this alternative model. We hope our analysis will provide a useful template for the FAS community, and the broader AR movement, for considering the socio-political dimensions of sanctuary projects, and how they can become more effective allies in the fight for social justice for domesticated animals. We also hope this conceptual framework might be a spur to future research in this emerging field.

We wish to emphasize that the two models we identify—the standard *refuge + advocacy* model and the alternative *intentional community* model—are analytic constructs. They are not descriptions of actual sanctuaries, but are a framework for analyzing sanctuary practices. The sanctuaries we have visited fall along a continuum, displaying features of both models, to varying degrees.

1. THE REFUGE + ADVOCACY MODEL

FASes typically rescue animals from the meat, dairy, and egg industries, and may also include dogs, cats, horses, donkeys, and rabbits, and other animals spanning the boundary lines between farmed animals, farm animal laborers, and animal companions. Whereas dog and cat rescue organizations typically seek private adoptive homes for animals on an individual basis, the farmed animal rescue movement has established institutionalized sanctuaries, providing “forever” homes for thousands of animals.⁷ Many FASes are located in traditional farming communities, partly because this is where the necessary infrastructure exists in terms of suitable housing, space, and pasture, proximity to food sources, veterinary exper-

tise, and so on; partly because this is where current zoning laws create a legal opening; and partly, perhaps, because this is where we “see” farm animals, and imagine them belonging.⁸

This spatial and institutional separateness of FASes helps, in part, to explain how they have come to play a distinctive role in the AR movement. They bring together a concentrated group of individuals with common purpose, providing not just a physical refuge for rescued animals, but a focal point for cruelty-free community and advocacy, and a center for visitor education and outreach.

The larger sanctuary movement is beginning to organize and self-regulate, a process being led by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries.⁹ Some FASes, including the pioneer Farm Sanctuary, have joined GFAS, which provides accreditation on the basis of detailed and rigorous welfare guidelines. Many smaller FASes lack the resources to meet these rigorous guidelines, but nevertheless participate in informal networks of cooperation and knowledge sharing. Overall, the FAS movement is primarily grassroots, without a coordinating structure or prescribed ethical framework. Having said this, FAS mission statements typically espouse similar ethical commitments to the animals they rescue, and reflect similar underlying assumptions about animals’ interests.¹⁰ Some key commitments for the purposes of our analysis can be summarized as follows:

- i. *Duty of care.* Provide a safe, healing environment for animals who have been abused by humans and the agriculture industry. Put the needs and safety of animal residents first.
- ii. *Support for species-typical flourishing.* Provide an environment that allows animal residents to engage in a range of behaviors and activities considered natural for members of their species.
- iii. *Recognition of individuality.* Appreciate animals as unique personalities, with their own needs, desires, and relationships.
- iv. *Non-exploitation.* Challenge conventional ideas of domesticated animals existing to serve human needs. Eschew use, sale, or other commercial activity involving animals.
- v. *Non-perpetuation.* Prevent animals from breeding in order to subvert the future of animal farming. Ded-

icate resources to rescuing animals already in existence.

- vi. *Awareness and advocacy.* Educate the public about animal sentience, and the cruelties of animal farming. Foster respectful engagement with sanctuary residents as “ambassadors” for the billions of animals suffering in the industrial agriculture system.

We will return later to the details of these frequently-espoused principles. For now, we wish to note how this general framework, in conjunction with the practical realities noted previously, has contributed to the emergence of what we are calling a standard *refuge + advocacy* model for FAS, versions of which are being replicated across North America.

What does this model look like? Physically, it often looks like an idealized traditional family farm (the location, the buildings and infrastructure, the selection and groupings of animals). Many sanctuaries are owned by a founding individual or family, who may, initially, do all of the care work themselves. As they grow, they begin to rely on volunteer and paid workers, and typically they become incorporated charitable or non-profit entities in order to facilitate fundraising. At this stage, they may establish a board of directors and other governance structures. For very large organizations such as Farm Sanctuary, the paid staff increases and becomes differentiated into various kinds of roles, such as animal care, educational programming, physical infrastructure, fundraising, and political advocacy.

Most public sanctuaries operate education and outreach programs, and/or volunteer/internship programs, and indeed view this as central to their mandate. They can only rescue an infinitesimally tiny percentage of the billions of animals raised and killed annually in the animal-industrial complex. One goal, therefore, is to leverage this activity to raise public awareness and advance the advocacy aims of the AR and farmed animal welfare movements. Rescued animals are often described as “ambassadors” representing their conspecifics who will not escape the agriculture industry. Their stories are described on sanctuary websites, on speaking tours, and in books (e.g., Brown, 2012; Baur, 2008; Crain, 2014; Laks, 2014; Marohn, 2012; Stevens, 2009, 2013). But the core educational experience is bringing visitors to the sanctuary to meet the animals for themselves.

Sanctuary tours often educate the public about the realities of modern farming through written and video descriptions of farming practices, examples of farm equipment (battery cages, gestation crates), and stories of individual animals and their history in the industry. This focus on the realities of the agriculture industry is contrasted with how animals live at the sanctuary, where they are safe and cared for; where they can engage in a wide range of natural behaviors; and where they can form stable social attachments. Visitors have the opportunity to meet animals as individuals and to interact with them, and to hear their stories of survival, recovery, and for some, newfound joy. For many visitors, this may be the first time they have met and interacted with animals such as pigs and turkeys and other farmed animals.

Sanctuaries generate cognitive and emotional dissonance as a way to prompt individual change. They provide information about how modern farming reduces sentient beings to numbers in a production quota, while simultaneously encouraging visitors to observe and interact with actual individuals who give the lie to the industry treatment of animals as inanimate fungible products. Once this educational moment is created, sanctuary visitors are encouraged to educate themselves further, to adopt a plant-based diet, and to support legislation to reform the agriculture industry. They are also encouraged to directly support the refuge work of the sanctuary itself by making donations or purchasing sanctuary memorabilia. And they are invited to become part of the sanctuary “family” in a loose sense—following developments via the organization’s website and social media, making return visits to the sanctuary, participating in special festivals (such as alternate holiday celebrations) and programs (such as cooking classes), advocacy events, fundraisers, and volunteer opportunities. In this way, sanctuaries contribute to the growth of an animal advocacy community.

This general description glosses over many variations amongst sanctuaries in terms of underlying philosophies and conceptions of animals’ interests; financial resources (security, quality of space and infrastructure, professionalization of staff, and access to expert animal care); content of tours, focus of education and outreach activities; and roles for volunteers and interns. Despite these variations, we believe this standard model captures important features of many existing FASes.

In the next section, we will explore some possible limitations of this standard model. We should emphasize that we believe FASes have played, and will continue to play, an essential role in the AR movement. Indeed, we take seriously the suggestion that they are the “heart of the movement.”¹¹ However, to fulfill their potential, it may be helpful to rethink certain features of the standard model. We will explore these limits under two headings: (a) the impact on humans, and in particular the effectiveness of the standard education and advocacy model; and (b) the impact on animal residents, and in particular the underlying conception of animal rights and interspecies justice. We will address each in turn.

2. LIMITATIONS OF THE STANDARD MODEL

The Impact on Human Visitors

As described above, the core advocacy model for FASes is based on a sanctuary “experience” leading to personal transformation. Members of the public visit (or read about) the sanctuary, meet and observe individual animals, learn about the realities of modern agriculture, become educated about a plant-based diet, and (ideally) embark on a life of veganism and animal advocacy. In their websites and pamphlets, many FASes offer anecdotal evidence of this transformative experience, but to date it has not been systematically researched, and may be more an article of faith than a well-established fact. We do not know the pre-existing views or dietary habits of people visiting sanctuaries; we do not know whether their behavior changes after their visit (and if so, whether this change is sustained); and we do not know if they return to their communities as agents of change. Until such research is available, claims regarding the impact of sanctuaries, and of the visitor experience, remain speculative.

However, there are grounds for skepticism about the efficacy of the individual transformation model. Growing evidence indicates significant levels of backsliding amongst vegans and vegetarians, and this raises the possibility that FAS visits (and other forms of individual consciousness raising and outreach) may have only a temporary impact. A recent poll by the Humane Research Council finds that in the US, only 1 in 5 vegans/vegetarians sticks with the diet, and most backslide within three months (Green, 2014).¹² Often-cited reasons for backsliding include social estrangement/awkwardness; practical challenges of realizing a balanced plant-based diet; uncontrollable urges for animal foods; and health issues

(Herzog, 2011). This suggests that an advocacy model centered on changing the beliefs and behavior of individuals, one by one, may be setting them up for failure and frustration, while constituting a Sisyphean task for the advocacy movement.¹³ For most people, awareness and good intentions are not enough. They need supportive environments and institutions—the sense of being part of a like-minded community—to be able to develop and maintain an animal-friendly way of life in the face of the overwhelming power of the status quo.

Some FASes try to address this problem by creating a sense of supportive community—encouraging visitors to make return visits to renew their commitment, sponsoring alternative celebrations, sharing strategies and advice. But because sanctuaries are (typically) located in rural settings, some distance from where most of their visitors live, it is not obvious that these efforts provide the sort of support individuals need in their day-to-day lives. More research is required to investigate whether sanctuaries are effective in giving individuals “the necessary community support with which to maintain their commitment to an admittedly challenging new way of life.” (Rodriguez, 2014)

This problematic focus on individual vegan conversion is hardly unique to FASes. We would argue that it is a systematic limitation of the AR movement, at least in North America, which focuses a great deal of attention on individual veganism, and not enough on creating an organized social justice movement for animals. We need to broaden the focus to a wider spectrum of issues (such as habitat destruction, pollution, vivisection, and animal management/control), and a wider spectrum of strategies targeting institutions and practices at all levels of society (from local zoning laws to the legal and constitutional status of animals; from local business and government policies to national subsidies for the agriculture and carbon industries; from grassroots community organizing to traditional party politics). We have to do more than change individual beliefs and desires concerning animal consumption; we have to create communities of interspecies justice that support those beliefs and desires, and connect them to broader conceptions of, and strategies for, social and institutional change. The implicit model of vegan outreach is a uni-directional arrow: you act on individual conscience, and eventually there are enough conscientious individuals to magically transform institutions. In reality, however, institutions are constantly

acting upon individuals, undermining, frustrating, and co-opting individual efforts and desires. These political and institutional structures must be the direct focus of AR advocacy and organization.¹⁴ Otherwise, the vegan advocacy of FASes and other organizations, rather than being part of a sensible division of advocacy labor, may simply be ineffective.

We will return to this question later, when we consider the possible role for FASes as part of a more structural and transformative project. For now, we simply flag the concern that while the FAS experience may produce desirable effects (e.g., raising individual awareness and commitment to veganism), these effects may be both temporary and non-transformative due to the limits of an individual conversion model of social change.

But we also have a deeper worry, which is that the sanctuary experience may, unintentionally, produce less desirable effects by implicitly reinforcing limited conceptions of animals' natures, status, and roles. As noted earlier, many FASes have visitor programs to educate the public to the reality of farmed animals as sentient individuals of emotional and cognitive complexity. Visitors observe animals living in circumstances that support the expression of a range of individual preferences and species-typical behaviors, providing a sharp contrast to the horrors of factory farming. But few members of the public have ever witnessed factory farms or feedlots, so what might strike visitors is not how *different* FASes are from factory farms, but rather how *similar* FASes are to traditional farms.

As noted earlier, some FASes resemble idealized traditional farms from children's books—pastoral settings with fenced pastures and yards, and red-roofed barns with animals segregated by species, being cared for by human stewards. Rather than challenging our ideas about farmed animals, this kind of setting may inadvertently reinforce assumptions about where farmed animals belong, what forms of society and behavior are “natural” for them, and their relationship to humans. This worry is expressed by Justine Van Kleek, co-founder of a “micro-sanctuary” designed to integrate formerly farmed animals into our lives in suburbia in order to shake up existing ideas about them:

Another important task for us and our micro-sanctuary is to demystify farmed animals. Part of the prevailing mindset that feeds into the dominant model of farm sanctuaries is the no-

tion that farmed animals are “other.” Most of us see cats or dogs as a normal part of your average household. Farmed animals, however, are often viewed as completely different and utterly foreign, even by vegans: they live on farms somewhere out in the country and are owned by farmers ... unless they are extremely lucky and go to a big farm sanctuary that is also out in the country and run by a different sort of farmer. (van Kleek, 2014)

So one concern is that FASes look disconcertingly like farms—the idealized farms of children's books. And while the informational component of a FAS visit may discuss the violence of factory farming, the more visceral experience may reinforce a pre-existing sentimental image of farms and animal husbandry.

Moreover, as some observers have noted, the FAS visitor experience can have disconcerting parallels to a visit to the zoo (Gruen, 2014; Emmerman, 2014). Some sanctuaries are intentionally located near large population centers in order to draw day visitors—a destination experience, like a day at the zoo or aquarium. The sanctuary space is divided into animal areas and visitor areas. Decisions are made by paid or volunteer human caregivers. Animals are confined, displayed, and subject to the gaze of visitors (Gruen, 2014).¹⁵ In both zoos and FASes, the visiting experience is justified by its educational focus on learning about animals' real natures and needs. And it is further justified by an advocacy purpose of encouraging people to support conservation of endangered species (in the case of zoos), or reform of agriculture (in the case of sanctuaries). Animals are called “ambassadors” whose role is to represent their less fortunate peers in the wild (in the case of zoos), or in industry (in the case of sanctuaries). The experience focuses on the stories of these individuals, whom visitors are encouraged to identify with (and to “adopt”), and whose experiences they can follow online after they return home.

Research on the zoo experience suggests that the intended education and advocacy impacts are negligible, and that zoos function primarily as a form of animal-watching entertainment (Bekoff, 2014; Margodt, 2010; Lloro-Bidart, 2014). Most FASes would strongly resist the comparison to zoos, insisting that they reject many of the unethical practices of zoos (e.g., capturing animals in the wild, breaking up families and friendships for captive breeding purposes, euthanizing unwanted offspring, etc.),

and that they instead embody and promote an animal liberation message. But different intentions do not ensure different effects, and the principled differences between zoos and sanctuaries may not be obvious or meaningful to casual visitors, especially young children. FASes enable forms of animal viewing that may reinforce implicit assumptions about a human entitlement to confine and display animals. If the intended educational component of the visiting experience is dwarfed by the more visceral experience of seeing captive animals in a familiar, traditional farm setting, interacting with human handlers in traditional ways, then the sanctuary experience (at least for day visitors on short tours) might be self-undermining as an advocacy strategy for disrupting ideas of human–animal hierarchy.

So far, we have considered the sanctuary experience from the perspective of visiting humans—a target outreach group. What do those individuals learn by visiting sanctuaries? Is their behavior or commitment to animals transformed by the experience? If so, how? We have suggested that claims concerning the transformative impact of visiting FASes need to be investigated, not assumed. And this research should attend not solely to intended messages, but to the hidden curriculum of the visitor experience, which might inadvertently reinforce rather than disrupt ideas of human–animal hierarchy.

We now turn to the experience of the animal residents, and their opportunities for meaningful flourishing in the sanctuary setting. As in our discussion of visitor impacts, our goal is to raise questions for further research, based on some standard features of FAS design, and how they structure human–animal relationships.

Conceptions of Animal Flourishing and Community

How do FASes frame issues concerning the interests and rights of their animal residents? In one sense, the answer is obvious. Sanctuaries are places of refuge. Animals who make it to sanctuary are indeed “the lucky ones”¹⁶—a tiny percentage (numbering in the thousands of individuals) of the billions of farmed animals exploited annually by the North American agriculture industry. The lucky few live out their lives in a safe environment under expert and loving care.

Indeed, we might say that, on a daily basis, many FASes achieve minor miracles in advancing the well-being of their animal residents. Many of these animals

suffer from debilitating physical illnesses caused by intensive breeding and industry practices, and also from psychological trauma. Some of these problems can only be managed, not cured, and inevitably lead to compromised welfare and a shortened life span (Jones, 2014, p. 94). But under the careful ministrations of FAS staff, many animals are able to recover remarkably from illness, muscle atrophy, and psychosocial deprivation and damage. Chickens and turkeys regrow their missing feathers. Chronic infections (e.g., cow mastitis) are treated and often cured. Injured animals regain mobility with prosthetic devices. At VINE sanctuary, cows sometimes arrive with spindly legs barely able to hold up their enormous bodies and enlarged udders. Over time, with carefully graduated opportunities for exercise, some can develop proper leg muscles and eventually negotiate the rugged terrain and wooded expanses of their sanctuary home. Former fighting roosters arrive at VINE terrified that every other bird they encounter is going to kill them. Many of these roosters have been slowly and carefully re-socialized, and reintegrated into community with other animals.¹⁷

Many people doubted that these sorts of recoveries were possible, or worth pursuing, but FASes have expanded our understanding of the possibilities for animal wellbeing. Indeed, the best FASes are helping to develop a whole new field of farmed animal veterinary care—care that is aimed not at keeping juvenile animals alive just long enough to be slaughtered, but rather, care designed to benefit animals for their own sake, and to support their flourishing, insofar as possible, for the duration of their natural lives. These developments in rehabilitative and veterinary knowledge are leading to increasingly better care standards and practices at FASes.¹⁸

FASes rightly, therefore, take pride in their commitment to compassionate healing and care of animal residents. On the question of animal rights, however, the picture is more complex. To consider this issue, we turn to some cautionary lessons from the literature on human sanctuaries. This literature indicates that we need to consider sanctuaries, not just as communities of conscientious and committed staff and volunteers caring for animals, but as *institutions*, where roles, rules, and practices structure social relations and allocate power in very specific ways. And all caring institutions have their own characteristic sets of risks.

What kind of an institution is a public FAS? It is an institution where a concentrated and segregated popula-

tion (the animals) is cared for by paid experts and/or volunteers with defined roles and responsibilities with regard to the animals. There are guiding rules, practices and routines to keep everyone safe, and to ensure that necessary tasks are performed.¹⁹ The institution's *raison d'être* is to take care of the animals—the guiding ethic of sanctuaries is to act in animals' interests, not the interests of humans. But a basic characteristic of the institution is that it distinguishes the class of human caregivers, who make the decisions, from the animal residents who receive care under terms established by humans.

In this respect, a FAS bears resemblance to what Erving Goffman famously called a “total institution”—namely, “a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life” (Goffman, 1961, p. xiii). (In the case of FASes, animals are the “like-situated individuals.”) Classic examples of total institutions include asylums, orphanages, and prisons (i.e., institutions into which individuals are consigned), but the concept has also been applied to institutions in which admission is self-initiated—shelters for homeless people (Katuna & Silfen Glasberg, 2014), shelters for women and children fleeing domestic violence (Koyama, 2006), retirement residences (Atwande, 2014), and refugee camps (Holzer, 2012; Saltsman, 2014). Sociologists consistently find that these institutions, while they can be reasonably successful at providing for basic needs (such as food, shelter, and health care), are highly paternalistic in their control of all dimensions of residents' lives (Bruhn, 2005, p. 103). Structures and routines end up being created as much for the convenience and legal protection of caregivers and administrators as for the needs and wishes of residents, and the residents have few if any means to contest those routines and structures.

The problem is not that the care providers or administrators are uncaring. On the contrary, the problem is precisely “the difficulty of seeing rights violations in care-giving contexts” (Katuna & Silfen Glasberg, 2014, p. 28). The challenge of meeting the immediate basic needs of the residents, and of repairing harm and trauma, crowds out attention to a broader range of capabilities and rights. The institutional structure gives some people the power to structure other people's lives, and “the cared for” have limited means to counteract this power. A kernel of care is surrounded by a hard shell of restric-

tive paternalistic regulation that, too often, diminishes the freedom, dignity, and well-being of residents, leading to what Goffman called “curtailments of the self” (Goffman, 1961, p. 14). Those in control, understandably and appropriately, identify themselves as providers of the kernel of care, and indeed that is often why they work at the institution in the first place. But this very self-identity as a caregiver may blind them to the hard shell of paternalism that encases this care work. This tendency is exacerbated when caregivers are further separated from care-receiving residents by social experience, or cleavages such as race and class. Stereotypes about the unruly nature of particular subaltern groups can further reinforce tendencies to paternalistic rule (Koyama, 2006; Katuna & Silfen Glasberg, 2014).

These are the characteristic challenges of care-giving total institutions, well documented in the literature on human sanctuaries, such as homeless shelters, shelters for victims of domestic violence, orphanages, institutions for people with intellectual disabilities, and retirement communities. The literature also suggests that, to effectively resist inappropriate paternalism, formal procedures must be in place that do not just rely on the good conscience of the administrators and caregivers, but which provide effective and independent mechanisms of contestation and accountability for residents.

Are FASes vulnerable to a similar dynamic by which caring crowds out empowerment? There is a striking absence in most sanctuary mission statements (and related public documents) of any discussion of the rights of animal residents, or of procedures for ensuring that their voices are heard and their interests represented in decision-making.²⁰ This is not to say that rights are not respected, or that interests are not represented in informal and unstructured ways. But the point of comparing FASes to human care-giving institutions is to alert us to the fact that it is never sufficient to rely on the well-meaning intentions and ad hoc practices of caregivers and administrators to empower those in their care. Moreover, emphasis on caring intentions can occlude the inevitable conflicts of interest between carers and cared-for. This is why rights have to be institutionally recognized and protected to shield the most easily silenced members of the community from unwarranted paternalism and infringement of freedoms.

In our view, most FASes have not adequately addressed this risk. They operate within a paternalistic model that limits animals' participation in key decisions

affecting their lives, and which results in policies and practices that may diminish animals' wellbeing and infringe their rights. We do not mean to imply that animals make no decisions in sanctuaries. Sanctuaries recognize that animals are individuals with preferences—favorite foods, sleeping spots, activities, friends, or places to hang out—and provide at least some range of freedom to explore and develop these individual preferences (Jones, 2014, p. 92). But the scope for such individual choices is often quite narrow. It allows for day-to-day choices within a pre-defined way of life—what we call “micro-agency”—but rarely extends to more fundamental life choices (or “macro-agency”) that might challenge the existing institutional structure of sanctuaries.²¹ Miriam Jones argues that animals in FASes do not live “on their own terms”:

[F]ences, enforced routines, involuntary medical procedures and regimes (including everything from forced sterilization to force-feeding), and other impositions certainly do not comprise a free state of being for those on the receiving end. Those of us in the sanctuary movement routinely make decisions about the animals in our care (and under our control) that we, as ethical individuals, should find extremely problematic. (Jones, 2014, p. 91)

Jones characterizes the small day-to-day freedoms of sanctuary life as “fake freedoms” (Jones, 2014, p. 94). We would not describe them as such: micro-agency is neither fake nor trivial. However, we agree that most FASes, as currently set up, do not enable animals to explore different possible ways of life, and thereby to exercise macro-agency.

What would it mean to allow animals to explore different possible lives? Some concrete examples might help illustrate how the current structure of FASes limits (or creates) opportunities for animals to experience, to learn, and to exercise control. We will consider four issues: association, reproduction, environment, and work.

Association. Sanctuaries differ in how much they segregate animals by and within species, but as noted earlier, many sanctuaries do segregate animals by species, breed, or sex. The cows have their pasture; the sheep are in a different pasture; the turkeys, chickens and ducks all have separate enclosures; the pigs have their own barn and field; and so on. A standard rationale is safety: large

animals will trample small animals; diseases will pass between species; animals will eat the wrong foods; different species need different kinds of terrain and ecological environment; males will fight, and so on. Segregated communities are justified on grounds of good animal care. Moreover, we are told that this is what animals want: pigs want the company of other pigs; chickens want to be with chickens.

However, on closer inspection, segregation may be based more on human assumptions (or convenience) than on responsiveness to the needs and desires of individual animals. While some sanctuaries are highly species-segregated, others have more intermingled populations in which a variety of individual preferences are freer to emerge. One striking result is the prevalence of cross-species friendships, revealing that domesticated animals do not have a fixed pattern of preferring the company of conspecifics (though many exhibit this preference). Their attachments are far more varied and flexible. And this should not be surprising, since one of the distinctive features of domesticated animals is precisely their capacity for interspecies sociability. This is what enabled them to be domesticated by humans—that is to say, their ability to trust, cooperate, and communicate with humans, and to exist sociably in physical proximity with them. There is no reason to assume in advance that this capacity is only activated in relation to humans, and indeed the evidence suggests that when opportunities for wider cross-species friendships exist, they are often seized upon.

Given this emerging evidence of flexibility and interspecies flourishing, we can no longer assume that animals' wants are in alignment with human concerns for safety and convenience. This calls for a re-orientation of sanctuary practice to explore whether animals can be given more control over their associations and social relationships. To be sure, there are risks of allowing greater interspecies sociability, but there are also strategies for managing the risks. Sanctuaries that operate on a more open, free association model manage risk by providing lots of space and designing it creatively; by attending carefully to animal introductions; and by dedicating more time to monitoring and observing animals' interactions. Given sufficient space for shelter and hiding spots, many domesticated animals can manage their own relationships—hanging out with those they like, keeping a distance from those they dislike or fear, and watching out for the small and vulnerable underfoot. VINE sanctuary

has found that animals often figure out ways to sort out conflicts amongst themselves, with different animals playing different roles in managing relations within the community. There are peacemakers who regularly intervene to break up squabbles. There are hosts who invariably welcome new animals—of whatever species—to the community. There are enmities that are managed by individuals who agree to keep to their own space and agree to disagree. Some animals seem to thrive in this kind of interspecies community. Others gravitate toward smaller sub-groups of conspecifics. The point is that these individual preferences cannot emerge without establishing a “least restrictive environment.”

The Pig Preserve in Tennessee provides a home for rescued farm, potbellied, feral, and mixed breed pigs and is deliberately exploring a new model to overcome the challenges faced by traditional FASes concerning pig conflicts.²² (In many contexts these different breeds are kept separate, to minimize risks of injury or conflict). The Preserve provides animals with ample space and freedom—“the two things that all pigs crave the most and find the least” (The Pig Preserve, n.d.-a). Approximately 100 pigs inhabit a hundred acres of natural mixed landscape. They sort themselves into their own social communities, and have significant control over how much they interact with humans. (This is not to say they are left to fend for themselves. They are monitored closely, and receive veterinary care and supplementary food when forage and other wild foods are unavailable. Older or ailing pigs live in a more traditional enclosed sanctuary space when they need greater care). The Preserve has taken in many individuals identified as “problem pigs” at other sanctuaries (hard to handle or prone to conflict with other animals and therefore requiring segregation). When they move to the Preserve and are given “more space, freedom and the ability to live life on their terms much of the reported aggressive and antisocial behavior disappears rather quickly.” (The Pig Preserve, n.d.-b) In other words, at traditional sanctuaries pig conflicts are attributed to the temperament or problematic history of individual pigs, and resolved through segregation. But in fact the problem is environmental—a result of crowding and control.

There are risks involved with the freer association of larger and/or interspecies groups, which call for suitable risk-reduction measures. In addition to providing adequate space for animals to sort out their own preferences

and differences, a free association model requires careful observation so that if animals do indeed pose an unmanageable threat to one another they can be separated. Monitoring is also needed to keep on top of diseases that might require quarantine, and to ensure that everyone is eating adequately. VINE has designed shelters that allow chickens to retreat to safe spaces that larger animals cannot access. Similarly, they have designed feeding stations where the chickens can access their own food, but the cows (who would be sickened by it) cannot.

In other words, rather than structuring the social life of animals to fit practical and safety concerns, it should be the other way around. We should first attempt to determine what sort of social life an animal wants to have, including their preferences to be part of an interspecies (or breed, or sex) community, and then support these preferences through creative design of space and structures to support choice, while limiting risk.²³

Sharing control with animals over association and social relationships also affects admission decisions. Many sanctuaries are overwhelmed with requests to take in animals—whether from other over-crowded sanctuaries, individual rescuers, animal cruelty cases, large-scale agriculture industry disasters, or overwhelmed hobby farmers. They cannot take them all, and are faced with constant decisions about admissions. How do they choose? Some sanctuaries simply take in animals from their immediate community. Some choose to specialize in a particular species like pigs or chickens (out of interest or expertise). VINE, located in Vermont dairy industry country, focuses in particular on dairy cows as part of a larger advocacy project for transitioning the State to a plant-based economy. For some sanctuaries, the goal of creating a visitor outreach experience with animal “ambassadors” means choosing a representative sample of animals to reflect the spectrum of agricultural exploitation, and the spectrum of experiences that animals have within the system. (We will call this the “*Noah’s Ark* model.”) A related issue is whether or not to choose animals who display the most serious effects of intensive breeding (to better illustrate the horrors of factory farming), but who will face chronic ill health and constant health management at the sanctuary, or, alternatively, to choose heritage breeds who have not suffered the same level of genetic manipulation, and may have a greater chance of leading a good life (but are less illustrative of factory farming).

There is surely no one “right” formula for admissions. But we would argue that admission decisions should respect the communities that animals establish for themselves, their preferred living conditions, and their potential not just for basic welfare but also for exercising meaningful control over their lives. Admission decisions which prioritize supporting animals to live on their own terms might look rather different from admissions based on educational criteria (e.g., highlighting the ravages of industrial breeding and factory farm conditions), or other human-driven criteria like publicity for high-profile rescues, or a commitment to saving as many animals as possible. Admission decisions based on advocacy considerations are not necessarily in conflict with the interests of animal residents, but they can be.

An alternative to both the *Noah's Ark* model (with “ambassadors” from all the main species of farmed animals) and a species-specific model (just pigs or just chickens) might start with questions like: “What kind of flourishing animal community is possible here, given the circumstances of space, climate, ecology, resources?” “Who would thrive here?” (Or, “Where should we be located in order to create optimal conditions for animals?”) Farmed animals do not all thrive in the same climates and ecological conditions, for starters. Both as individuals and as species, some might benefit from closer contact with humans and human settlement. Others might thrive in more remote circumstances. (For example, at the Pig Preserve, admissions are geared toward younger and healthier pigs who will most benefit from conditions of greater space and freedom). And as new residents are considered for inclusion in a sanctuary community, key questions would be: “Will they fit in and flourish here?” “Will this be good for the existing residents, or will it entail crowding, new restrictions, or threats to existing bonds and social structures?”

Reproduction. FASes routinely impose decisions on animals regarding health care and reproduction—decisions that often involve invasive procedures, and significant impacts on quality of life. For reasons of space, we will focus specifically on control of reproduction.²⁴

Almost all FASes prevent reproduction through sterilization or segregation—indeed, this is almost universally viewed as a requirement to qualify as an ethical sanctuary.²⁵ In some cases, reproductive control can be justified on grounds of protecting the health and wellbeing of an individual animal. Animals in the agriculture

industry are forcibly impregnated, often on a repeated basis that leads to chronic injury, disease, and exhaustion. “Rape racks,” continuous pregnancy, and milk and egg hyper-production are part of the system from which animals are being rescued. In addition, many farmed animals have genetic conditions induced by selective breeding which severely undermine their quality of life. They are bred to maximize production of flesh, eggs, or milk in the shortest time possible—with a lifespan usually measured in weeks or months. They are not intended to live to maturity, and if they do, their hearts and lungs cannot support their body weight. Moreover, they are prone to aggressive cancers and degenerative diseases. For all these reasons, intervention to prevent sexual intercourse and reproduction may often be justified on paternalistic grounds.

However, paternalistic intervention due to the health status of animals and their offspring does not justify a total ban on sex and reproduction. Many animals indicate a strong desire for sex and parenting, and, given the freedom, would be able to act on these desires without significant health risks to themselves or their offspring. The usual justification for a total ban, even in such cases, is that FASes are perpetually pressed for space and resources. They can take in only a fraction of the animals in need, and in a world in which forced breeding creates billions of farmed animals for exploitation it makes no sense to allow animals to reproduce. Space should be used for existing victims.

Are these adequate arguments for banning procreation? In the human case, we would strongly oppose sterilizing humans in homeless shelters or in refugee camps in order to reserve all available space for additional individuals in need. Humans are protected from having their bodily integrity violated in the name of crisis management or scarce resources. Human population growth on a finite planet is a serious ecological concern, and it is also a concern of justice since continuous expansion of human settlement and increased resource use robs wild animals of their habitats—hence their drastic population reductions in recent decades. Yet we do not respond to these legitimate concerns about human overpopulation with universal sterilization. So why is this justification accepted in the animal case?

Part of the explanation may be that some animal advocates, including many sanctuary providers, favor an abolitionist-extinctionist position vis-à-vis domesticated

animals. They think that sterilization is justified in order to bring about this extinction. We have discussed the multiple problems with this view elsewhere (Donaldson & Kymlicka, 2011, pp. 77–89).

But extinctionism is not offered as the public explanation for why FASes engage in total reproductive control. Based on their mission statements, most animal sanctuaries do not advocate (at least not publicly) an end to the existence of domesticated animals—and indeed many celebrate inter-generational and interspecies society. The usual rationale for sterilization focuses on the problem of animal populations outrunning the resources of the community, and the prospect of new births taking spaces that could go to animals rescued from industry.²⁶

It would be of no benefit to anyone, human or animal, for a sanctuary to become unsustainable through uncontrolled population increase. However, the choice is not between unregulated reproduction and no reproduction at all. There is a cluster of interests tied up with reproduction, and it is important to consider this larger context when thinking about reproductive policy in a sanctuary community. Animals have interests in forming attachments, and in sexual pleasure. They also have interests in caring for, and enjoying the company of, youngsters. In addition, they have interests in being part of a stable, ongoing, intergenerational community. These interests are important components of a rich conception of animal flourishing, and they are all too often ignored or discounted, without even attempting to understand their significance to the animals involved.

Attending to these interests does not necessarily require that animals be able to engage in reproductive sex, or bear and raise their own young (although there may be some individuals for whom this is a very strong desire).²⁷ Sexuality can be explored through same sex, non-reproductive or interspecies contacts and relationships, in what patrice jones calls an “ecology of eros” (jones, 2014a). A community can be intergenerational without all of its members having offspring. And a desire to care for vulnerable others need not be channeled to a narrow focus on one’s biological children.

We cannot do justice to this complex topic in this limited space, but we hope that it is clear that in this area, as in other dimensions of sanctuary life, policies rationalized on grounds of pragmatic necessity can involve a serious violation of rights, and an unduly narrow conception of flourishing. Only by careful exploration of a less

restrictive framework can we learn what is important to which animals and why; and how their interests and desires can be practically supported in a FAS environment instead of being crowded out by the needs of the institution, or the ideological commitments of its human administrators.

Environment. As noted earlier, FASes often look like (idealized) farms—a series of structures or enclosures on relatively flat or gently sloping, cleared, monoculture pasture in a pastoral setting. This set-up has many practical benefits: clear sight lines to keep track of both the animal residents and possible invaders/predators; control of potentially toxic plants and trees; absence of rugged terrain and other potential hazards; general ease for humans moving themselves and equipment around the sanctuary. In short, the terrain is functional, predictable, and secure—from the perspective of the human administrators and caregivers. And those attributes can be important to animals, too. But if one’s entire life is lived in this environment, then it might also become barren or boring.

Many animals arrive at sanctuary with illnesses and physical disabilities, conditions that require close monitoring and make them vulnerable to injury or attack. For some, a life of restricted mobility is unavoidable, and the limited and controlled spaces of many sanctuaries may be adequate. Other animals, however, are much hardier, or can have their health and strength gradually restored. As noted earlier, VINE has been successful in the physical rehabilitation of cows with atrophied leg muscles. As they develop physical strength and confidence, they are introduced to greater opportunities for roaming hilly and forested terrain. And at Pig Preserve, even giant farm pigs apparently benefit from their enlarged space and roaming potential, with improved mobility, muscle tone, and life spans.

Greater mobility and space comes with greater risks and reduced control. Some animals will start to evade human caregivers. They might appear for food and shelter, but not make themselves easily available for monitoring or health checks. Chickens and roosters who have access to woods and who re-learn how to roost in trees cannot always be coaxed down to the safety of shelter at night. A cow could stumble and injure herself up in the hills and not be found for hours. A sanctuary with significant acreage and more intact ecology is going to be a home for many wild animals, creating potential for pre-

dation and competition—but also for stimulation, enjoyment, and new forms of community.

At VINE, wild turkey flocks regularly traipse through the property, intermingling with the domesticated animals. Rabbits, turkeys, deer, coyotes, and bears all visit the 100 acres at Pig Preserve. At Farm Sanctuary, the calves run along the fence lines with wild deer. During fawning season, deer take up temporary residence in the pig pasture in the center of the Sanctuary to keep their fawns safe. Foxes are sighted frequently, but predation is not a significant problem. (The threat from carnivorous rats is much harder to manage). In fact, eggs from the sanctuary chickens are placed out for foxes to eat. Unlike the agriculture industry, which tends to favor massive violence against wild animals (framed as threats to, and competitors with, farmed animals), some FASes are exploring a different model in which the sanctuary is more integrated with the surrounding ecological system, and the animals who are part of it.

Here again there are risks, but the benefit is a much richer and more stimulating environment for the animals, one that allows them to test and extend their capabilities, and to exercise some control about the extent of contact with humans and other animals.²⁸ Just as animals can learn how to manage many interpersonal conflicts by themselves, given sufficient space and security, so too they can learn how to manage the challenges of a more complex and stimulating environment. For example, some sanctuaries rigorously defoliate animals' environment, fearing that horses will eat red oak, or that goats will browse on choke cherry. The list of plants toxic if ingested by each species of farmed animal is extensive. Therefore, a zero tolerance approach to dangerous plant risk is, *de facto*, a policy of radical defoliation. Pig Preserve, on the other hand, offers pigs a chemical-free zone and a complex ecology to negotiate—embracing a different approach to risk assessment and cost-benefit analysis.

In fact, it is unusual for animals to eat toxic plants unless they are starving. They learn which plants to eat, and when they do not know, they experiment with minute amounts in order to figure out what is safe. Animals able to roam extensively can seek out plants to benefit their health and digestion, and humans can learn from observation about how animals are feeling, and how they self-medicate (Young, 2003). It is important for human caregivers to be knowledgeable about plants so that they

can be on the lookout for unusual browsing behavior, or symptoms of poisoning. And some plants may be so dangerous that eradication is prudent. But as in other cases of trade-offs between risk and opportunity, the solution is not necessarily to denude the environment, but to ensure that animals have abundant food that they like, and freedom to socialize with and learn from mature animals about the hazards of their environment. In other words, the goal should be to manage and reduce risk, but not to avoid it entirely when doing so means significantly limiting freedom and opportunity.

Work. Finally, what do animals like to do? And how do we find out? Presumably, the answers are varied and innumerable, influenced by genetics, individual temperament, experience, stage of development, and exposure to opportunities. All farmed animals belong to social species. Like us, they tend to be intensely interested in what others are up to, and have a strong inclination to be part of things, to participate, to belong. As embodied beings, they, like us, are inclined to want to move, to be active, to explore, and develop bodily limits and capacities. They, like us, are not pre-programmed in their behavior and interests, but flexible learners, driven by curiosity, and the pleasures of discovery, and confident mastery.

We have already discussed how FASes can allow animals to explore opportunities and develop interests by increasing associational freedom and by enriching the physical environments. But they can also engage animals in activities, roles, “jobs.” Most sanctuaries are wary of any activity that looks like animal work. This often reflects a philosophical position that asking or expecting animals to work as part of a mixed human–animal society inherently amounts to exploitation of animals by humans. What this overlooks is that work, activity, cooperation, and contribution can be critical dimensions of flourishing. Anyone who has watched a goat’s delight in testing her climbing and balancing skills, or a dog cooperating with a human on a tracking task, or an adult cow patiently teaching her calf how and what to graze, knows that animals want to do things, and derive pleasure from physical accomplishment, from cooperation, from caring.²⁹ When humans, in the context of an interspecies FAS, provide opportunities for animals to engage in meaningful activity, this need not be exploitative. If the purpose of the activity is to support animals in finding meaning and purpose, in fulfilling their desire to be active, to develop

skills, and to be contributing members of the community, then far from exploiting animals, it may be supporting a crucial dimension of their flourishing.

Consider some examples. Some dogs like to guard. If, as members of a FAS, they take the job of alerting other animals to potential threats, are they being exploited? Some pigs like to root. If their rooting activity is used to help create productive garden plots to grow food for a sanctuary community, is this exploitation? If a sanctuary rescues orphaned infant animals, and adult members of the sanctuary community are willing and able to nurse and raise them, is this exploitation? When animals welcome newcomers to the community and show them the ropes, is this exploitation? If chickens lay eggs and abandon them, and some of these eggs are used to feed cat or pig members of the community (or neighbor foxes), is this exploitation?³⁰ When sheep are shorn, if their wool is used to produce products that are sold to help finance the sanctuary, is this exploitation? If an ox carries hay bales on his back to feeding stations for other animals, is this exploitation? If humans who are part of the sanctuary community derive psychological benefit, companionship, and emotional sustenance from their interactions with the animals, does this exploit the animals?³¹

It *is* exploitation if animals are coerced (or manipulated) to do activities they don't want to do, or if those activities are inappropriate or dangerous, or if there is a lack of balance between work and other dimensions of life, or if their contribution is ignored or trivialized. But the mere fact that animals might engage in activities that are useful, or that make forms of contribution to the sanctuary community, is not inherently exploitative. Indeed, as we have argued elsewhere, preventing animals from participation and contribution can be its own kind of harm and its own form of disrespect (Donaldson & Kymlicka, 2011, pp. 136–7).

Moreover, once we see that purposive interspecies cooperation and activity is not inherently exploitative, we can be open to new forms of flourishing that interspecies cooperation might make possible. Animals are not pre-ordained, by virtue of species-specific genetic inheritance, to want only to do the kinds of things that their wild relatives do. Animals have general drives, interests, and capacities—such as playing, nurturing, problem solving, exerting, learning, and participating—that can be realized in different ways. For wild animals, the specific realizations of these general dispositions are determined by

the demands of survival. But in domesticated interspecies contexts, these general dispositions can be expressed and nourished in new ways. Humans, by constructing play structures, or facilitating interspecies friendships, or teaching animals how to do certain activities, can help them (and us) explore new opportunities, new forms of pleasure and satisfaction, and new ways of being.

In this section, we have explored four domains in which many FASes have often adopted unduly paternalistic policies that may diminish the wellbeing of their animal residents, and violate their right to exercise meaningful control over their lives. To be sure, sanctuaries vary widely in their commitment to animal agency and their openness to new forms of relationship, encounter, challenge, activity, experience, and new ways of participating and belonging. Some sanctuaries, as we have discussed, are actively exploring new models. In general, though, it is fair to say that sanctuaries have focused intensively on keeping animals safe and on meeting their basic needs. They have focused much less attention on imagining different possible lives for animals, and on enabling animals to tell us how they want to live and to contest our ideas of what they need.

To return to our earlier discussion, this is what we would predict once we recognize that FASes share some of the features of human care-giving institutions, including the risks of excessive paternalism whenever administrators/caregivers make all the decisions for client residents who lack institutional power.³² The self-identity of caregivers may make it difficult to acknowledge these risks, because we all “want autonomy for ourselves and safety for those we love.” (Gawande, 2014, p. 96) But when those we love are denied effective control, they can be oppressed by our desire to protect them. Over time, we come to accept diminished possibilities for them, and we downplay and dismiss routine violations of their rights and “curtailments of the self” with a litany of familiar excuses: “They wouldn't want to do that anyway”; “That's too risky”; “They don't need that”; “Wild goats don't do that”; “That wouldn't work”; “That's a luxury for a better day”; “You should see what we rescued them from”; “We're dealing with a crisis”; “He's a 'problem' pig.”

Increased freedom and choice for animals brings increased risks—of predation, of injury, of fear or confusion. But as Jonathan Balcombe has said, the best life is not the safest life (Balcombe, 2009, p. 214). Yet, if we

look back to our earlier summary of the principles guiding standard *refuge + advocacy* sanctuaries,³³ we can now see that the emphasis is overwhelmingly on safety—through protection from harm, neglect, exploitation, commodification, or instrumentalization, and through provision of basic needs. What is missing is a commitment to creating communities that are more spacious, complex, varied, open, unpredictable, and free, in which animals are actively enabled to have a say in how they will live. And this, we will argue, requires moving away from ideas of sanctuary as refuge to sanctuary as a new kind of intentional community whose future directions can be shaped by all of its members.

3. FROM TOTAL INSTITUTIONS TO INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES

So far, we have argued that the *refuge + advocacy* model of FASes is limited both with respect to its intended effects on human visitors and with respect to its vision of the rights and status of animal residents. We believe that these two limitations are inter-connected: the effect on human visitors might be more transformative if the status of the animal residents were more transformative. We will return to this linkage below.

But what is the alternative? In the previous section, we argued that FASes are vulnerable to some of the same limitations as human care-giving total institutions. This suggests we might learn important lessons by considering efforts to reform or transform such institutions. After all, much has changed since Goffman's influential critique of total institutions was first published, and many alternatives have been explored. For our purposes, however, it is important to distinguish two broad categories of human care-giving total institutions: those that are places of temporary refuge from violence, such as refugee camps or domestic violence shelters, and those that offer a permanent home for an identifiably vulnerable and special needs population, such as the mental asylums that Goffman studied, or nursing homes.

Because FASes rescue animals from the violence of industrialized exploitation and abuse, it may seem natural to think of them as akin to other places of safe haven, such as refugee camps or domestic violence shelters. Indeed, the choice of the term “sanctuary” rests on this comparison. The term sanctuary—like the terms shelter, haven, asylum, or refuge—highlights the idea of urgent escape from threatened violence.

But this is not the right comparison for FASes. Refuges and shelters are intended as temporary arrangements, operating on the expectation that residents will be able to return to “normal” life once the emergency has passed. FASes, however, are not a temporary refuge—they are, in sanctuaries' own words, “forever homes” for animals. And this matters. Forms of governance that may be acceptable, and perhaps even unavoidable, in the context of temporary asylum are unacceptable in the context of a community of permanent residents. It may not be possible to run a refugee camp or domestic violence shelter without having a fairly stark distinction between the permanent care-giving staff and the transient care-receiving residents, and without relying on rules and procedures that are, to some extent, dictated by the permanent staff. These rules are likely to be excessively paternalistic, for the reasons we have discussed, but the “curtailments of the self” that arise, however aggravating, are at least temporary, and to some extent may be unavoidable.

A FAS is very different. A more apt comparison is to a residential care institution for seniors or for people with intellectual disabilities, where people become long-term residents. For such permanent residents, this is their home, the locus of whatever relationships and activities give meaning to their lives, and not just a temporary haven until an emergency ends so that they can return to real life. In this context, the problem of curtailments of the self is more profound, and calls for different solutions.³⁴

Indeed, this is precisely the central challenge that has faced advocates for people with intellectual disabilities. They have struggled for the past forty years to replace the “total institution” of mental asylums with a range of alternative forms of community that empower rather than curtail the self. We believe the FAS movement—and indeed the AR movement generally—can learn from these struggles, and from the principles of community membership and participation that have been developed to contest tendencies toward excessive paternalism, circumscribed rights, and diminished opportunities.

We have elsewhere attempted to elaborate on these lessons, so we will just quickly state some of the key principles that underpin these struggles to transform total institutions:³⁵

- i. *Belonging*. The community is home for its residents. They are not captives, patients, visitors, or refugees but

permanent residents and members. Since it is their home, they belong to the community, and the community belongs to them.

- ii. *Absence of fixed hierarchical relationships.* In place of a stark dichotomy between professional caregiver and recipients of care, or between guardian and ward, social relations are multiple, fluid, and egalitarian. Each is a caregiver in some contexts, and cared for in others. And everyone has many relationships outside of this caregiver-cared for dyad (with friends, family, co-workers, neighbors, employees/employers, co-citizens, etc.).
- iii. *Self-determination.* Members of the community are not confined by pre-determined roles or conceptions of wellbeing, but are supported in an open and least restrictive environment to explore different ways of living and contributing. People with intellectual disability develop their own “individualized script” of wellbeing, not reducible to or predictable by their disability categorization.
- iv. *Citizenship.* The residents are not passive wards, but active citizens with a right to a say in matters affecting them.³⁶ This is often described as a “3P” model of rights: Protection, Provision, and Participation. Older models of disability rights operated with a 2P model: they emphasized *protection* and *provision*. Total institutions like asylums were justified as effective ways of securing these 2 Ps. The addition of the third P of *participation* marks the decisive shift in contemporary disability advocacy from wardship to citizenship, emphasizing the right of all individuals to exercise control over their lives (to make decisions about how they will live, where they will live, with whom they will associate, and so on).³⁷ Decision-making power is therefore shared. All members of the community exercise control over their lives, and participate in shaping the nature of the shared community, insofar as this is possible and meaningful for them.
- v. *Dependent agency.* In order to be self-determining (i.e., to explore different ways of life) and to be active citizens (i.e., to have a say over matters that affect them), individuals with intellectual disability will often require the help of others. They will therefore be exercising a form of “dependent agency”—agency enacted through relationship with others who are responsive to what they

communicate about their needs and desires. This raises challenges of interpretation and accountability, but it is a mistake to assume that “real” freedom requires self-sufficiency. All of us, in different ways and at different points in time, require the help of others to exercise our self-determination and citizenship. What matters is whether society is organized in such a way as to solicit and be responsive to our subjective good when fundamental decisions about social life are made.

- vi. *Scaffolded choices and reconfigured spaces.* Dependent agency in turn must be scaffolded: starting from a safe and secure social membership, new activities, experiences, and learning moments are progressively introduced in ways that are meaningful (allowing individuals to build on what they already know and what they might want to know in intelligible ways). This in turn requires moving decision-making to the spaces and places that are intelligible and meaningful to individuals. We will enable self-determination and citizenship for people with intellectual disabilities not only or primarily through the right to vote in national elections or to testify in parliamentary committees, but through empowering them in the everyday spaces where they live and work.³⁸

These are some of the key principles that have revolutionized advocacy around intellectual disability, and that have guided alternatives to total institutions. They are obviously ambitious and abstract, and it is not self-evident how one goes about implementing them. For most people in the disability movement, the ultimate goal is to restructure all of society in accordance with these principles. But given the level of prejudice in the larger society, and also the fact that people with intellectual disability have distinctive vulnerabilities and dependencies, many have concluded that, for the foreseeable future at least, we need to start by creating dedicated spaces of like-minded people committed to these goals—in other words, to create an *intentional community*.³⁹ Well-known examples of such intentional communities built around a commitment to empowering individuals with intellectual disability are the L’Arche and the Camphill community movements.⁴⁰

Consider the intentional community of Botton Village, in North Yorkshire, UK, which is part of the Camphill Movement. The village has about 280 people, of whom 150 live with intellectual disability. Those without disability are not paid caregivers, but choose to live in a

community that supports people with intellectual disability. The village works on a pooled labor and resources model. Jobs in the community include farming, carpentry and craft industries, and service industries (gift shop, café, bookstore, etc.). People with a disability live with a host family, and work in the community. They are actively involved in community decision-making, and in the vibrant social, cultural, and religious life of the community.

Residents of Botton Village—many of whom previously lived in group homes, residential centers, or with their own families—express a high degree of satisfaction with their lives at Botton Village.⁴¹ One key factor is a sense of security. The size and stability of the village community, and its intentional nature (i.e., the fact that people choose to live there because they want to live with people with intellectual disability), provides residents with a feeling of personal security. In most towns and cities, going out to shop, or to a café, or to travel to work, is fraught with uncertainty and fears about being harassed or taken advantage of. Life at Botton, by contrast, is a comfortable, supportive, and more predictable environment. This sense of security and belonging gives the residents with intellectual disabilities the confidence to go out and about, to participate in activities, and to try different kinds of work. This in turn leads to more social contacts and friendships. And all of these encounters are encounters amongst equals. Residents without intellectual disability are not in a paid administrative or caregiver relationship with people with intellectual disability; they are neighbors, co-workers, friends, host families. Social contacts are multiple, inter-generational, and varied in their nature and predictability. Residents can engage in meaningful work that provides the satisfaction of being a contributing member of the community. As for the political structure of the village, residents with intellectual disability have clear avenues for expressing their views and wishes, and for having these concerns addressed by the community and incorporated into policies and planning.

In our view, Botton is suggestive for thinking about the kind of communities that allow individuals with high levels of vulnerability and dependency to exercise meaningful control over what matters to them, to live “on their own terms,” and to be agents in shaping the nature of their community. The evidence suggests that the quality of life in Botton compares very favorably with other more “integrated” options for people with intellectual disability, including supported accommodation in indi-

vidual homes, group homes, or residential campuses. The key factors underlying the high quality of life include a genuine sense of community—being “part of a readily available, supportive and dependable social structure” — high levels of meaningful employment, facilitation of friendship, and “the absence of the overt subordination of residents to staff” (Randell & Cumella, 2009, pp. 717, 724–5). This shows what is possible when we commit ourselves, not just to an ethic of humane care and safe refuge, but to freedom, participation, and membership.

To be sure, intentional communities such as Botton Village are not without their critics. They have been criticized as a form of re-segregation of people with intellectual disability, and/or as an apolitical retreat or withdrawal from the struggle to reform the larger society. This is indeed a familiar criticism of all intentional communities, including those based on a “back to the land” ethic, or on religious commitments, or “eco-communities” bringing together individuals committed to post-carbon lifestyles and economies,⁴² or on commitments to social diversity (sexual orientation, etc.).

On our view, however, intentional communities should be seen not as apolitical, but rather as engaging in what Sargisson (2007) calls the politics of “estrangement,” generating a creative tension between an intentional community and mainstream society. If intentional communities are to be experiments in living, they need to be sufficiently separate to create a space within which to explore a better world. But if they are too separate, their political role in critiquing and influencing mainstream society is lost, and rather than being transformative, they can lapse into a “reactionary fantasy” of homogenous self-sufficiency (Pepper, 2005; see also Bruhn, 2005, chap. 7). Kenis and Mathijs (2014) describe the key question as whether intentional communities are truly oppositional or simply alternative—i.e., focused “on building small havens without agonizing existing society” (Kenis & Mathijs, 2014, p. 182). They describe the latter as a “local trap” in which intentional communities lose their potential as sites for political transformation.

This question of “separation” or “estrangement” is not only, or even primarily, a question of geographic location, but of boundaries and separation on multiple levels—social, economic, and ideological. For an intentional community to function as a potentially transformative space, it needs to maintain creative tension with mainstream society. It needs to be sufficiently bounded to

provide a safe space for cohesive experiments in living, while being sufficiently fluid to maintain connection and mutual influence with the mainstream. This is especially true when the community's *raison d'être* is to include individuals who are more vulnerable and dependent than the general population. Boundaries, in this sense, need not be about confinement, isolation, or exclusion, but about creating fertile circumstances for freedom and progressive change—spaces of both “withdrawal and resistance” (Meijering, Huigen, & Van Hoven, 2007, p. 43).

Botton seems to navigate this politics of estrangement. It is not cut off from the larger society—it is connected economically and socially to the surrounding region, and through Camphill to a larger advocacy movement. In this way, it seems to find that “creative tension”—it is a space sufficiently bounded that residents can explore a new way of living, while still being part of the larger society to which it offers a form of critique or alternative model.

4. REIMAGINING SANCTUARIES AS INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES

We have explored in depth the principles of the intellectual disability movement, and its experiment with intentional communities, because we believe these are directly relevant for the case of FASes. We would argue that, philosophically, FASes should be guided by similar principles of shared membership and non-hierarchical social relations, and that this in turn will require a similar commitment to self-determination, “3P” citizenship, dependent agency, scaffolded choices, and reconfigured spaces. We want to emphasize again how different these principles are from the safe haven principles that currently dominate FAS mission statements. Once we recognize that FASes are ongoing communities of members, rather than spaces of temporary humanitarian refuge, justice requires setting up the conditions under which the animal residents, as individuals and groups, can indicate to us how they want to live, rather than us imposing preconceived ideas of what they need or want based on alleged species norms, or on our ideas of what constitutes acceptable risks, desirable freedoms, and possible kinds of flourishing. It means starting from the basic assumption that, under the right conditions, animals may often be in a better position than we are to figure out how they want to live, and in ways that we may be unable even to imagine.⁴³

We also believe that, for the foreseeable future, these principles can and should be pursued within an intentional community model. To be sure, justice for domesticated animals ultimately requires that these principles be applied at a societal level, and not just within intentional communities that are “estranged” from the larger society.⁴⁴ Our long-term goal for society as a whole should be to shift from a model of domesticated animals as (at best) wards or (at worst) mere resources to a 3P model of domesticated animals as co-citizens (Donaldson & Kymlicka, 2011; 2015). It is impossible for a single small-scale institution, such as a FAS, to fully replicate the model of 3P co-citizenship that we believe should characterize society as a whole.⁴⁵ Nonetheless, FASes can play a vital role in providing spaces where small-scale experiments in new forms of interspecies community and justice are possible. Indeed, FASes are one of the very few spaces and places where it is possible in today's society to pursue this vision.⁴⁶

Moreover, while a FAS cannot replicate all of the requirements of social justice, we would argue that for domesticated animals, it is precisely the immediate, local context that is most important for their participation. The 3P model requires us to look beyond classical forms of political activity like voting, sitting on juries, or organizing demonstrations to think more broadly about what it means to have a say in decisions affecting your life. And for domesticated animals, as for people with intellectual disabilities, what matters most is the ability to have a say regarding the paternalistic over-regulation of their everyday local context—control in the spaces and places that are meaningful to them. All four of the issues we flagged in the second section—free association; reproduction; work; environment—fall within the effective control of FASes, and provide opportunities for animals to participate in shaping the norms and activities of human-animal interspecies society.

What would it mean to shift our idea of FAS to look less like a total institution that curtails the self, and more like an interspecies village that empowers the self? Less like a destination animal park, and more like an intentional community in which the perimeter/fences aren't markers of captivity, but rather boundaries that can actually support agency and flourishing?

We have already discussed certain specific issues on which FASes could empower animal residents, including

association, reproduction, environment, and work. But we need to take a further step back and ask how we can change from a fundamentally institutional model to a community model. The first and most fundamental step is to recognize animal residents as full and equal members of the community, with a right to help shape the community. This is impossible if paternalistic decisions regarding safety, resources, or human convenience continuously limit animals' freedom and agency—their ability to explore ways of living, and communicate to us what they want.

Implementing these rights to membership and participation requires a range of reforms. At the institutional level, it requires developing political models for representing animal residents' interests. There are several dimensions on which representation can occur. One model, practiced at VINE sanctuary, is for decision-making about the community to take place in a big barn in the company of animal residents. They cannot articulate their views in discussion, but they are a presence, a reminder, and a check, on human deliberation. Describing an important decision moment at VINE, patrice jones says:

We stood in the barn surrounded by sanctuary residents, as we like to do when making important decisions. [Sanctuary co-founder] Miriam and I have always believed that decisions about animals ought to be made, insofar as possible, in consultation with animals. If that's not possible, the next best thing is to be in physical proximity to animals like those you're thinking about, so that you don't make the mistake of treating them as abstractions (jones, 2014b)

Another model is to appoint an animal advocate whose role, in all contexts, is to represent animals' interests—to ask hard questions every time justifications of “safety,” “practicality,” “urgency,” “efficiency,” or “sufficiency” are invoked to explain limitations on animals' freedom and opportunities.⁴⁷ Another option is to create FAS networks which aren't restricted to sharing care and veterinary knowledge, but also sharing strategies for supporting a rich conception of animal flourishing—experiments in animal agency, participation, and choice-making. Finally, it is crucial to involve the perspective of community outsiders—animal advocates, veterinary and ethology ex-

perts—to ensure that the community is constantly renewing and enriching its advocacy.

To be effective, these institutional reforms must be accompanied by even deeper reforms in our understanding of animal freedom and flourishing. We noted earlier that FAS mission statements typically define animal freedom and flourishing in terms of species-typical behaviors. According to this view, in order to know how an individual animal wants to live, we need to know the behaviors and activities typical of her species, and ensure that she can engage in them. Pigs like to root and build nests. Chickens like to scratch and take dust baths. Stimp, a rabbit rescued from a lab, was lucky enough to end up in Margo DeMello's sanctuary where he “was able, before he died, to run and jump, to groom another rabbit and be groomed, to taste grass and dig in the dirt, to feel the sun and sniff the breeze, to do rabbit things and feel rabbit pleasures.” (DeMello, 2014, p. 87)

This vision of animal freedom and flourishing is pervasive, not just within FAS mission statements, but within AR theory and advocacy more generally. As we have argued throughout the paper, it is an unduly narrow conception, and one that too easily leads to the sorts of paternalistic constraints we discussed earlier. To be sure, it is essential to assert the right of animals to species-specific forms of flourishing (“doing rabbit things” in order to “feel rabbit pleasures”), given that so much human treatment of animals denies this right. It is also a valuable heuristic: in the absence of any other information about an individual, we can start from the assumption that she will benefit from species-typical forms of flourishing. But this should be the starting point, not the end point. The good life for any individual will diverge in unpredictable ways from the species norm, and in the case of domesticated animals is likely to include finding enjoyment in the kinds of novel activities and relationships that are only possible in an interspecies context.

Too often AR advocacy starts from the assumption that the good life for domesticated animals is somehow to restore, as best we can, whatever natural behaviors characterized their pre-domesticated ancestors. This assumption treats every change involved in domestication as always already a harm, and a deterioration of pre-domestication species-typical behaviors. But this too quickly excludes the possibility that animals, like humans, might benefit from their capacity for interspecies social

bility. After all, domesticated animals are social animals—domestication only works for animals capable of interspecies sociability—and over the years, domestication has typically enhanced their capacities for interspecies communication, trust, cooperation, and sociability, making possible a range of activities and relationships unavailable to animals in the wild. Of course, we have horribly abused this capacity for interspecies sociability. But this should not blind us to its potential. Just as humans benefit from interspecies sociability—and the benefits to humans of animal companionship are now very well documented—so too the lives of domesticated animals can be enriched by the endless surprises and challenges of interacting across species lines. Just as humans enjoy the *frisson* of cross-species friendship—the strange combination of connection and mystery, the mental challenge of communication, the opportunities for surprise, respect, and humor—these satisfactions may be meaningful to some domesticated animals.⁴⁸ If we are ever to achieve justice in our relations with domesticated animals, it will be through enabling them to explore these opportunities, and then responding to their preferences about how they want to relate to us and to other species.⁴⁹ And there are no places better suited to this task than farmed animal sanctuaries, once redefined as intentional communities and not just safe havens.

So revising FASes as intentional communities requires both new institutional structures of decision-making and new visions of animal freedom and flourishing. It also requires rethinking the boundaries of membership. To be perceived as full and equal members, not wards, it is crucial that animals' human contacts are not limited to caregivers, administrators, or paying visitors. A genuine community will have caregivers and administrators, of course, but fundamentally it is made up of individuals who want, and choose, to live together in extended family and community arrangements. So rather than being a "destination" catering to day visitors (with the attendant limitations noted in Part 2), FASes could be set up to welcome short term or longer term residents.

Farm Sanctuary and others are already set up with intern programs for people who want to come and work at the sanctuary, participating in animal care and public education. But this could be expanded into a more ambitious residential model. Long-term residents might include academic researchers, artists, farmers, craftspeople, architects, teachers, ethologists, and others who want to

be part of an interspecies community, and lend their skills to exploring the potential for intentional communities of interspecies justice and flourishing. Partnerships (educational, cooperative, economic) could be fostered with the local community—farmers, small businesses, wildlife rehab centers, schools, seniors' residences, special needs support structures, ecological initiatives, community gardens, food and nutrition programs—in ways that anchor sanctuary as part of the regional community and economy.

This brings us back to our starting point, regarding the advocacy role of FASes. Reimagined as intentional communities, sanctuaries would participate in a very different model of advocacy than currently practiced. Animals would no longer be "ambassadors" who educate the public about industrial agriculture. They would be themselves, living as equals in an interspecies community, encountering a wide diversity of humans in different roles and relationships, pioneering new forms of interspecies living from the ground up. If animals could be seen as pioneers of a just future, rather than as ambassadors of an unjust present, this would surely have a more transformative effect on the humans who encounter them as co-citizens of FASes.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have compared two ideal-types of sanctuary philosophy and design. The first model we have called the *refuge + advocacy* model; the second we have called the *intentional community* model. We have argued that they differ along a number of dimensions, including their underlying goals, decision-making procedures, the roles of humans and animals, and their relationship to the larger society. These differences matter: thinking of animals in FASes as agents, as members, and as co-creators of ongoing, shared communities leads to very different outcomes than viewing them as refugees in need of humanitarian care. We are aware of the immense logistical challenges facing any serious effort to allow animals to express and act upon their own preferences, but if sanctuaries continue to treat animals as wards, not citizens, they risk reinforcing the very ideologies they are trying to dismantle regarding human–animal separation, species norms, and animal agency.

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² Between 9 and 10 billion land animals are killed annually by U.S. and Canadian agriculture industry. It is estimated that the population of wild animals worldwide has been halved in the last 40 years.

³ *Wild animal rehabilitation and release centers* care for injured and orphaned animals before releasing them back to the wild if possible, and/or participate in conservation programs to provide ongoing support and protection for wild animal populations. *Exotic animal refuges* rescue animals from zoos and circuses, private homes, the entertainment industry, and biomedical research labs. Many of these animals were born in captivity, and suffer physical and mental problems from long captivity that preclude unsupported release to the wild. *Animal companion rescues* rescue abused or abandoned dogs and cats, and seek private adoptive homes for them. *Feral and working animal support programs* provide health and other services to animals such as village dogs, free-roaming cats, and donkeys and oxen used for transportation and other work.

⁴ <http://www.sanctuaries.org> is an informal listing of American FASes maintained by Animal Place (a California FAS). While FASes exist throughout the world, this paper is rooted in the North American experience.

⁵ There are also countless small family sanctuaries, many of which participate in informal sanctuary networks for adopting animals and sharing expertise. These sanctuaries are focused almost strictly on rescue and refuge, not public advocacy (although some may be exploring innovative conceptions of human–animal community). They are not the focus of this paper since they are less visible to the public, and therefore play a less significant role in shaping public understandings of FASes, and their role in the animal rights movement. We should also note that there are also many sham sanctuaries. Anybody can claim to operate an “animal sanctuary,” from petting zoo operators to hunting camps. Our focus is on those FASes that identify as part of the animal rights/liberation/welfare movement, and whose mission is to act in the interests of animals, not to exploit them.

⁶ Sanctuaries visited in Ontario include Primrose, Tejas, and Big Sky. In New York State: Farm Sanctuary and Wood-

stock. In Vermont: VINE. We are also involved with a private family sanctuary established in Kingston, Ontario, Canada in 2014.

⁷ Some dog and cat rescues also follow more of a sanctuary model, establishing permanent sanctuaries for large groups of animals who might never be adopted, such as the Sanctuary for Senior Dogs in Ohio (n.d.). And many FASes place suitable animals in individual homes.

⁸ The novelty of FASes in the rural/agriculture scene is reflected in the fact that regulatory bodies do not know how to categorize them. Are they farms? Humane Societies? (IRS designation) Charitable Organizations? Political Advocacy Groups? For example, Woodstock Sanctuary (NY) is designated as “a residence with an agricultural use,” but this designation has been contested. As the Town Assessor noted, “Unfortunately, we don’t have a code ... for a sanctuary” (Kemble, 2012).

⁹ <http://www.sanctuaryfederation.org/gfas/>. GFAS includes FASes, but most of its members are wild animal sanctuaries.

¹⁰ See Brestrup (2004) and Fargo (2015) for overviews of religious and philosophical views underlying sanctuary work. Most sanctuaries post mission statements on their websites. See: Pigs Peace Sanctuary (n.d.), Woodstock Farm Animal Sanctuary (n.d.), Piebird Farm Sanctuary (n.d.), Peaceful Prairie Sanctuary (n.d.), United Poultry Concerns (n.d.), Safe Haven Farm Sanctuary (n.d.), Animal Place (n.d.).

¹¹ The editors of the vegan website/podcast Our Hen House (<http://www.ourhenhouse.org/>) have described sanctuaries as “the heart of the movement,” which inspired our title.

¹² See also the “Vegetarian Recidivism” page of the Animal Charity Evaluators (n.d.) website.

¹³ As Norm Phelps puts it, given the level of recidivism, the vegan outreach strategy has been “treading water” (Phelps, 2015).

¹⁴ Concerns regarding the limitations of advocacy focused on individual vegan conversion are being raised by many people in the AR movement (Cavalieri, forthcoming; jones, 2013; Phelps, 2015; Stallwood, 2014; Forkasiewicz, 2014).

¹⁵ Depending on the size and set-up, animals have more or less opportunity to avoid the gaze of people. But in general terms, the visitor experience is premised on opportunities to “see” the animals. When it comes to physical contact, most FASes emphasize that only those animals who solicit and enjoy human interaction can be touched, petted, and rubbed.

¹⁶ This is the title of Jenny Brown’s memoir about establishing the Woodstock Animal Sanctuary (Brown, 2012).

¹⁷ See also DeMello (2014) for a discussion of rabbit rehabilitation in sanctuary.

¹⁸ Moreover, the knowledge being developed at places like Farm Sanctuary is having an impact on traditional vets and veterinary colleges, who are starting to recognize FASes as reservoirs of unique knowledge and experience.

¹⁹ There is often flexibility in how practices are implemented, ongoing experimentation and improvisation in the face of changing circumstances, and responsiveness to the perceived needs and wants of animal residents. This does not change the fact, however, that in order to function and to ensure basic care for residents, sanctuaries institutionalize structures and routines. These include care, feeding, and cleaning routines; routine sterilization; routine medical treatments; population segregation; animal introduction procedures; and visitor schedules and protocols, to name a few examples.

²⁰ VINE sanctuary is an exception here, as discussed later in the paper.

²¹ We develop the micro/macro agency distinction in Donaldson and Kymlicka (2015).

²² <http://thepigpreserve.org/index.htm> . For an interview with the founder see: <http://mynonleatherlife.com/2013/08/09/10-questions-for-richard-hoyle-founder-of-the-pig-preserve>

²³ Some problems cannot be resolved by these strategies. For example, in order to satisfy the human dietary preference to eat thin skin, selective breeding has resulted in turkeys whose skin is so thin that if females are mounted by males the skin on their backs is shredded. Therefore, these breeds have to be sex-segregated or watched very carefully.

²⁴ This is not to say that there are not also difficult questions about paternalistically justified medical procedures. Animals cannot consent, and rely on humans to act in their interests. As in the human case, there are undoubtedly instances of under-treatment, when the potential for quality of life is underestimated, as well as over-treatment in the name of prolonging life even when quality of life is dismal.

²⁵ Brestrup (2004). See also the GFAS guidelines (above note 9), and the sanctuaries.org membership requirements in the listing maintained by Animal Place (<http://animalplace.org/index.html>).

²⁶ Further concerns are the potential for inbreeding, and aggressive behavior by intact males. We do not have space to fully address these issues here, but once again they go to the larger issue of how sanctuaries are structured and conceived in order to promote animals' flourishing. A small sanctuary with a closed population must control reproduction to prevent conflict, crowding and inbreeding. A larger and more openly conceived sanctuary can create more opportunities and flexibility. The goal of accommodating as many rescued animals as possible is in tension with the goal of providing the space necessary to enable a greater range of behaviors and opportunities.

²⁷ Elsewhere, we have explored the possibility that for some animals the loss of sexual urge and pleasure, while a cost, may be counterbalanced by an increase in sociality and affection made possible by reduced competition and violence when sex hormones are suppressed (Donaldson & Kymlicka, 2013). Julie Ann Smith argues that rabbits who have not been spayed or neutered exist in a whirlwind of procreative pressure—marking,

competing, having sex, giving birth, etc.—which crowds out the possibility of any other kind of behavior. Relations between rabbits become more stable and peaceful if rabbits are fixed. She concludes that “spaying and neutering affords the animals a chance to express potentialities that would not otherwise come into play.” (Smith, 2003, p. 94; see also DeMello, 2014)

²⁸ A fascinating example of this occurred on a private FAS outside of Kingston, Ontario. The sanctuary community included three turkeys—one male and two females—of a domestic heritage breed (Narragansetts are much hardier and closer to wild turkeys than industrial breeds). The turkeys are able to fly over the farm fences, and wild turkeys frequent the area, often visiting the sanctuary turkeys. For some time the three turkeys remained at the sanctuary. In keeping with the sanctuary's no-reproduction policy, eggs were removed. The females began going and coming from the sanctuary, mixing with the wild turkeys. And one of the females eventually chose to build a nest outside of the sanctuary, perhaps so her eggs would not be removed. She continued to come and go, and eventually returned to the sanctuary with a baby turkey. They stayed for a while, and eventually left, along with the other female, to join the wild turkey community. They have not returned since. (The male turkey has remained at the sanctuary, and has become the devoted companion of two mallard ducks.) It is impossible to know the fate of the departed turkeys, and there is no question that they would have been safer remaining in the sanctuary. But it is also fascinating to consider that in coming and going over an extended period, they were able to experience two very different kinds of life, and, possibly, to opt for one they preferred.

²⁹ See Inglis, Forkman, & Lazarus (1997) for a discussion of animals who prefer to work for food rather than simply be given food, and the hypothesis that this preference relates to a desire to learn.

³⁰ Many sanctuaries feed some or all eggs back to hens to help restore their calcium levels, which can be drastically lowered by hyper-laying. So we are talking here about eggs not required by the hens themselves.

³¹ Some sanctuaries ban anything that looks like animal “contribution,” while others allow for activities such as human-animal therapy programs, or the selling of wool or manure to raise money for the community.

³² To be fair, these deficiencies do not just reflect problematic institutional dynamics within FASes, but also reflect more general problems with the way the AR movement has theorized and conceptualized animal freedom and animal flourishing. We return to these theoretical implications in our Conclusion.

³³ See pages 51-52 above.

³⁴ There is a long tradition in moral and political philosophy of distinguishing the duties of rescue, care, and hospitality owed to temporary visitors or guests in distress from the duties that arise from membership in a shared society.

³⁵ For a more extended discussion of these principles, see Donaldson and Kymlicka (2015). In developing this list, we have drawn upon several key texts in disability theory, including Silvers and Francis (2007), and Arneil (2009).

³⁶ The idea that people with disabilities have a “right to a say in matters that affect them” is a core principle of the UN’s Declaration on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

³⁷ This third *P* is essential both in resisting institutional pressures to embed care within a paternalistic shell, and in signaling that individuals are not just passive recipients of humanitarian care, but are active members of a shared society with a right to shape the norms that govern our shared life. This is why “citizenship is the central organizing principle and benchmark” of the contemporary disability movement (Prince, 2009, 3).

³⁸ As Jens observed in relation to children’s right to participate, if we want to treat children as citizens we need to create “child-sized spaces of citizenship” (Jens, 2004). The same basic idea applies to intellectual disability—and, we will argue, to the animal residents of FASes.

³⁹ Intentional communities have been defined as “a relatively small group of people who have created a way of life for the attainment of a certain set of goals” (Shenker, quoted in Sargisson, 2001, p. 68). These are not just utopian imaginings of a better way of living, but practical experiments in living. Intentional communities aspire to “[set] things right in a more intimate setting” (Brown cited in Meijering, Huigen, & Van Hoven, 2007, p. 44), to “educate desire” (Levitas, 1990), and to create “spaces in which the good life is explored and pursued” by placing “familiar subjects in unfamiliar settings” (Sargisson, 2007, pp. 393, 396).

⁴⁰ Camphill (<http://camphill.net/>) and L’Arche (<http://www.larche.org/>) are religious-inspired communities. Both have spread widely around the world. For a discussion of L’Arche as a form of intentional community, see Hiemstra (2013). Related explorations of de-institutionalization are underway for the elderly and frail (Gawande, 2014), and for people with dementia (e.g., Hogewey, a “dementia village” in the Netherlands: <http://dementiavillage.com/>).

⁴¹ Our description of Botton Village draws on a recent ethnographic study of its residents, designed to assess the benefits and limitations of an intentional community model for people with intellectual disabilities (Randell & Cumella, 2009).

⁴² Most eco-communities are not committed to an AR agenda, but there is at least one example of an intentional community founded explicitly to model new forms of human–animal society. The community of Harmony, Florida, has serious limitations both on ecological and animal rights dimensions, but also offers valuable insights into the challenges of constructing new forms of interspecies community (Seymour & Wolch, 2009).

⁴³ It is testament to the abject status of domesticated animals that few people in our society even consider the question

of what sort of lives they want to lead, including what sort of relationship they want to have with us. The idea that domesticated animals are capable of having and exploring different lives seems unthinkable to most people. We should note, however, that even some AR theorists, such as Alasdair Cochrane, are skeptical of this idea. He argues that since animals lack the cognitive capacities to “frame, revise and pursue their own conceptions of the good,” they don’t need liberty to explore and make fundamental decisions regarding their lives. Humans can take these decisions for animals “provided that [animals’] basic interests are satisfied” (Cochrane, 2014, pp. 165, 171). We cannot address this in depth here, except to note that it rests on an overly intellectualized conception of how individuals explore alternatives. To be sure, some neuro-typical adult humans exercise freedom through a deliberate process of reflecting on propositions, and explicitly endorsing actions, beliefs, or principles. But for many individuals, human and animal, pursuing and revising their way of life is more trial and error than reflective endorsement, yet is still fundamental to their well-being.

⁴⁴ Note that intentional community need not entail geographic isolation in the countryside. Many intentional communities are located in suburbs and cities, and this could be the case for FASes too.

⁴⁵ For example, justice for domesticated animals requires state-level policies regarding public health insurance; political representation; zoning regulations; the design of public space and public transportation; criminal law and property law—all of which at present institutionalize injustices toward domesticated animals (Donaldson & Kymlicka, 2011, chap. 5). FASes can insulate animals from some of these wider societal injustices, but not all of them.

⁴⁶ Reframing FASes as intentional communities also helps overcome the perception that because FASes involve boundaries, therefore they are a place of “fake freedoms” where animals cannot live on their own terms. Within an intentional community model, boundaries are reconceived, not as a way of confining animals, but as a way of regulating their relationship with the larger society—providing space and security for genuine participation, while being sufficiently permeable to keep in touch with, and be relevant to, the possibilities of the larger world. See Streiffer (2014) for helpful discussion of the multiple roles and functions of boundaries, beyond confinement.

⁴⁷ For discussions of the political representation of animals, see Matarrese (2010), Meijer (2013), and Smith (2012).

⁴⁸ Cross species interaction offers “new information—incongruities, interruptions of expectations, challenges—in the context of familiar otherness” (Myers, 1998, p. 78; cf. Feuerstein & Terkel, 2008). Another attraction of interspecies friendships may be that they allow animals to escape hierarchical relations with conspecifics—providing a liberating opportunity for a pig, or a chicken who might otherwise be stuck at the bottom of the “pecking order.”

⁴⁹ For a more extended critique of the species-typical account of flourishing, see Donaldson and Kymlicka (2011, pp. 95–99), Kasperbauer (2013).

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