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Environmental Acts and Environmental Ethics

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Abstract

This thesis discusses environmental ethics and environmental ethics. This is done through the presentation of different types of environmental acts which can be divided into three. Those that are based on non-violent and legal acts such as peaceful demonstrations and signing petitions. The second category are the actions that are illegal but not violent and include different types of civil disobedience, and the last category are acts that are considered violent either through the use, or threat of use, means such as arson. All of these actions are based on some type of environmental ethics, might that be an anthropocentric view or deep ecology. Furthermore, ethics have been a place of origin for several radicalized individuals or groups such as ALF and ELF. These groups use violence as a means to make change, either through breaking in and releasing animals or through setting an apartment complex on fire. The justification for these acts is that they are saving animals and/or the environment from the invasive acts of other humans.

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1. Introduction

During the Age of Discovery, several European states set out to explore new land across the seas (Arnold, 2002, pp. xi-xii). When the colonists discovered North America, they viewed it as a land with unlimited natural resources that was ripe for the taking by the humans, thus they spread out and started to process the land to their benefit (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 18; Robbins et al., 2014, p. 124). However, in later centuries the notion of infinite resources started to be questioned and environmental movements began to form (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 18). The conservationist and preservationist schools of thoughts sparked debates on environmental ethics and several environmental organizations was created, especially during the 1970s and onwards (Dunlap & Mertig, 1991, p. 210). In April 1970 the US marked the first Earth Day which rallied over 20 million participants and showed the widespread engagement for environmental concern (Dunlap & Mertig, 1991, p. 210; Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 19). This engagement led to the creation of the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), a federal agency tasked with ensuring the health of the American people through access to clean water, land, and air, amongst other (United States Environmental Protection Agency [EPA], 2022), as well as the legislation of several environmental laws (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 19). These laws were fought against by large corporations and Congressional members during the 1980s that stated that economic growth was thwarted, which led the environmental organizations and movements to spend much time in the decades afterwards countering resistance such at this (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 19).

In Norway, the development of environmental engagement amongst the public followed a similar timeline as in the US (Andersen & Halleraker, 2021). It was during the 1970's that the Norwegian environmental movement gained sway within politics, and the Ministry of Environment, later known as Ministry of Climate and Environment, was established in 1972 (Andersen & Halleraker, 2021; Miljøverndepartementet, 2013).

Now, more than fifty years after the first Earth Day, many aspects concerning the environment has changed (Tortell, 2020, p. 8683). There have been substantial scientific advancements which means that human impact on Earth can be better understood, closer monitored, and provide insight into the situation for the future (Tortell, 2020, p. 8688). What these advancements show is

that over the last three decades, CO₂ concentrations and fossil fuel consumption has increased, the Earth's average temperature is rising, patterns for precipitation and wind have been altered, tropical regions have decreased in size due to deforestation, and more species are going extinct (Tortell, 2020, p. 8688). This means that the use of land these last centuries "have significantly impacted ecosystems, biogeochemical cycles, biodiversity, and climate" (Tortell, 2020, p. 8688).

Such a development has caused a spike in environmental engagement, especially amongst the youth (Thackeray et al., 2020, p. 2). One of the most well-known young environmental activists is Greta Thunberg, and in 2018 Thunberg demonstrated outside the Swedish Parliament every day for three weeks for climate change (Fridays For Future [FFF], s.a.). This demonstration prompted several others to join, and not long after, the School Strike for Climate, also known as Fridays For Future (FFF) began (Walker, 2020, p. 2). School Strike for Climate consisted of a large number of youths demonstrating for the environment and climate change instead of participating in school on Fridays, and after a year since Thunberg's first demonstration, almost three thousand five hundred strikes were registered at the FFF webpage and over a thousand more were scheduled, spread over 145 states worldwide (Walker, 2020, p. 2). Furthermore, in 2019, over sixty thousand people got together in various parts of Norway and roared for climate (Klimabrølet, s.a.). The roar was the largest demonstration for climate in Norway's history and it was done to show the politicians the engagement for climate amongst the Norwegian citizens (Klimabrølet, s.a.).

Because of climate change and the state of the environment, there is a general increase in activism and civil disobedience (Thackeray et al., 2020, p. 1). Utilizing such means to demand change have been present throughout history (Delmas & Brownlee, 2021), and consists of acts like signing petitions (Ekman & Amnå, 2012, p. 292), demonstrations (Curtin & McGrarty, 2016, p. 228), tree spiking (Eagan, 1996, p. 6), and more violent acts like sabotage (Wagner, 2008, p. 25) and arson (Ackerman, 2003, p. 143). Moving from legal activities, towards non-violent but illegal acts, and then possibly committing a violent act is a process of radicalization (Moskalenko & McCauley, 2009, p. 240). There can be several internal and external factors present when an individual or group become radicalized (McCayley & Moskalenko, 2014, p. 70; Moghaddam, 2005, p. 161). The processes that are in play when going from a non-participatory individual to

becoming a terrorist are explained through various metaphors such as a stairway (Moghaddam, 2005, p. 161), and two pyramids (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2014, p. 70).

1.1 Research question and sub-research question

- Is there is a correlation between environmental acts and environmental ethics, and can a possible relation influence the view on violence as a tool for environmentally motivated acts?

With the sub-research questions asking:

- What are the different types of environmental acts, and which of them use violence?
- How can the use of violence become a tool for action?
- What are the different approaches to environmental ethics and how to they describe the relationship between human(s) and the environment?

Thus the purpose of this thesis is to investigate if there is a correlation between environmental acts and environmental ethics, and how this relation might influence the perception of violence. This will be done by first providing a basis of understand in chapter two for the several different types of action an individual or group might use to demand change by other individuals, corporations, or governments, before discussing in chapter three the different types of environmental ethics and how these relate to the notion of violence. Furthermore, several environmental groups and actions will be presented in order to provide a basis for discussing the relationship between acts and ethics. Some of these examples are taken from groups or acts in Norway in order to show the engagement in another state than the US, and because the participants in the study are Norwegian which means that using Norwegian examples might place the participants perceptions into context. However, chapter four will provide a detailed presentation of the methodology used in this thesis as well as an evaluation of the study's quality based on trustworthiness. In chapter five a presentation of the results from the data collections will be given and these will be discussed in regard to how the results are linked to environmental ethics and actions. Lastly, a conclusion is provided to summarize the main arguments and findings retrieved from this thesis, as well as a discussion of future research.

2. Environmental acts and radicalization

The purpose of the first part of this chapter is to provide an understanding of the different categories of environmental acts. Environmental acts mean actions that have been perpetrated with the aim of instigating change with an environmental motivation (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 5), and must not be confused with a legislative act (Mushtaq et al., 2020, p. 149). Furthermore, some of the acts or concepts will be introduced and explained in a general context before they are linked to environmental motivations. Thus, the explanation in the first part of the subsections will also consist of other underlying motivations for actions such as political right-wing orientations (Moskalenko & McCauley, 2009, p. 257) or Islam (Bilgin, 2018, p. 71). The second part of this chapter includes two metaphors of radicalization which is provided in order to illustrate how an individual or group might move from legal acts and towards violence.

Actions or violence perpetrated with an environmental issue or agenda in mind, have several different labels such as environmental activism, environmentalism, environmental terrorism, ecotage, ecoterrorism, monkeywrenching (Bondaroff, 2008, p. 6; Chalecki, 2002, p. 48; Izak, 2022, p. 395; Milton, 1993, p. 2).

2.1 Activism

One of the ways in which an individual can champion for change is through activism (Curtin & McGarty, 2016, p. 228). Curtin and McGarty (2016, p. 228) define activists “as people who actively work for social or political causes and especially those who work to encourage other people to support those causes”. This definition includes those individuals that participate in activities such as demonstrations as well as those that take on a more organizational role through mobilization, recruitment, and office work (Curtin and McGarty, 2016, p. 228). Furthermore, in a means to reframe the typology surrounding political participation, Ekman and Amnå (2012, p. 290) also discuss activism and argues that political participation is not only expressed through parliamentary activities such as voting and political parties, but also through what is defined as extra-parliamentary activism (Ekman and Amnå, 2012, p. 292). Extra-parliamentary activism can be divided into legal and illegal activism where the former includes actions such as signing petitions and participating in demonstrations, whilst the latter pertain squatting buildings, riots,

and other violent activities (Ekman and Amnå, 2012, pp. 290-292). This inclusion of illegal and violent act whilst defining activism is in contrast to amongst other, Moskalenko and McCauley's (2009, p.240) definition which state that activism is a political action that is both non-violent and legal.

An individual that advocated for the environment, often through activism, is referred to as an environmentalist (Milton, 1993, p. 2). Environmentalists champion for the possibility of securing a sustainable future and since an environmentalist understand that human activity affects the environment the responsibilities lie controlling these activities (Milton, 1993, pp. 2-3). However, as with most concepts in the social world, the motivation for an environmentalist is relative and subjective since there are many ways of contextualizing a sustainable future and the means needed to achieve it (Milton, 1993, p. 3).

2.2 Radical

If an individual or groups utilize means which are other than the mainstream legal and non-violent activities, it can be discussed as radical (Sedgwick, 2013, p. 7). As with many concepts within areas such as international security and politics, radical and radicalization does not have a definition that has been universally accepted (Dalgaard-Nielsen & Haugstvedt, 2020, p. 6; Schmid, 2013, p. 5). Even defining what it means to be a radical is difficult as both radical and radicalization are relative concepts (Schmid, 2013, p.7). This means that the definitions and understanding of the concepts are dependent on, and varies with, independent but fundamental variables, and an example of this is the way norms are different within different cultures (Baghrarian & Carter, 2022, sect. 1). Furthermore, the concept of radicalization varies in relations to the definition of radical (Schmid, 2013, p. 7) because the way radical is defined will influence how the process of radicalization is understood. Thus, the meaning of radical and radicalization continuously change because they are dependent on factors within specific domains such as cultures, paradigms, and belief systems (Baghrarian & Carter, 2022, sect. 1).

Furthermore, Sedgwick (2010, p. 485) argues that agendas within different academic branches will influence the definitions and the work surrounding the concepts. Three agendas that might influence are the security agenda, the integration agenda, and the foreign-policy agenda (Sedgwick, 2010, pp. 485-488). The first agenda, security, is also the most well-known and is

focused on the threat radicalization can impose either directly or indirectly on state security or on the security of its inhabitants (Sedgwick, 2010, p. 485). By the integration agenda, Sedgwick (2010, pp. 486-487) argues that having a focus on community improvements such as desegregation influence the environment in which radicalization is conceptualized and used, and ultimately can be a means when working on creating communities of equality in order to prevent segregation. Lastly, the foreign-policy agenda have an interest in security matters of radicalism, but it is also a reflection on interests and interaction with other states because the concept can be utilized in ensuring political power or positions (Sedgwick, 2010, p. 487). The different agendas can have different views on certain issues of radicalization and radicalization in beliefs does not necessarily pose a security threat meaning that the belief could be labeled radical with an integration agenda, but not radical in a security context (Sedgwick, 2010, p. 488).

The concept of radicalization can be argued to be best understood when placed “in relation to mainstream political activities, at least in the context of democratic societies” (Schmid, 2013, p.7). Democratic states such as Norway and Denmark have presented their own understanding of radicalization. The Norwegian Police Security Service (PST) defined radicalization as a process where “an individual develops an attitude of acceptance for or a willingness to actively support or take part in violent acts to achieve political, religious or ideological goals” (Norwegian Police Security Service [PST], 2022, p. 5), whilst the Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET) works with a similar definition of radicalization that defines it “is a process in which a person increasingly accepts the use of violence to achieve political, religious or ideological ends” (Danish Security and Intelligence Service [PET], s.a.). By combining these two definitions together with other state agencies and the European Commission, Rahimulla et al. (2013, p. 20) argues that “[r]adicalization is a process involving an individual or group whereby they are indoctrinated to a set of beliefs that support acts of terrorism, that can be manifested in one’s behaviour and attitudes” (p.20). However, this definition explain terrorism as an end station of radicalization, but it can also be considered a radicalization to move from legal activism to partake in civil disobedience. Civil disobedience can be considered as a deliberate act which breaks either one or several state laws in order to champion for a change in policies or laws (Lefkowitz, 2007, p. 204). This definition does not include general criminal acts which are not done as a means for political change, as well as the exclusion of acts committed for a revolution with the purpose is to remove the existing state officials (Lefkowitz, 2007, p. 204).

The fight for change is also present in Dalgaard-Nilsen's (2010, p. 798) understanding of radical and radicalization. Dalgaard-Nilsen (2010, p. 798) defines a radical as an individual that have a "deep-felt desire for fundamental sociopolitical changes" and with this in mind, radicalization is then the process of becoming ready to support or seek out drastic changes within a society that challenge the current order (Dalgaard-Nilsen, 2010, p. 798). Furthermore, it is specified that radicalization combined with an increasing inclination towards violence, either through support or action, can be individually defined as violent radicalization (Dalgaard-Nilsen, 2010, p. 798). Some actors, such as PST (2023, p. 26) differentiate if the individual or group accept violence but not partake in it. This is then labeled as extremism and "implies acceptance of the use of violence to achieve political, religious or ideological goals" but not necessarily partaking personally (PST, 2023, p. 26).

The notion of violence is also present in Moskalenko and McCauley's (2009, p. 240) understanding where radicalism is seen as the willingness to participate in political action that is both violent and illegal. Violent and illegal acts are often considered in relation to terrorism, but Moskalenko and McCauley (2009, p. 240) argues that radicalism is different from terrorism in terms that "terrorists are the subset of radicals who use violence against civilian targets" (p.240). Thus the main difference is presented as the target of violence, civilians versus government or military (Moskalenko & McCauley, 2009, p.240).

2.3 Radical environmentalists

In terms of radicals within the environmental movement, Rik Scarce (2016, pp. 5-6) have compiled five general characteristics. The first characteristic is the willingness to take direct actions such as to demonstrate outside of laboratories or governmental buildings, engage in civil disobedience, or damage properties that are used for mine digging and road building (Scarce, 2016, p. 5). Scarce (2016, p. 5) state that "[i]t is this willingness by some to sabotage the tools of "progress" which sets radical environmentalists apart from all of their predecessors in the environmental movement". The foundation for their actions is to stop destruction of biodiversity and to ensure its preservation, but Scarce (2016, p. 5) note that instead of biodiversity it should rather be referred to as ecological diversity. This is because biodiversity focus on the "total variability and variety of life forms in a region, ecosystem, or around the world" (Robbins et al.,

2014, p. 316), but radical environmentalists also focus on the non-living aspects which means that they are focused on preserving both the biotic but also the abiotic factors (Scarce, 2016, p. 5). The third characteristic reflect on the organization of radical environmental activists, noting that there usually is not a hierarchical structure and that the actions rather come from a smaller group of individuals (Scarce, 2016, p. 6).

Another characteristic is that the radical activists have scarce monetary means because of their dedication to the environment (Scarce, 2016, p. 6). Often times, they have environmentally focused low-paying work or they only aim at working up enough funds to be able to put in motion their next plan of action (Scarce, 2016, p. 6). It is also a possibility that their actions will have legal consequences which can result in imprisonment, legal fees, and loss of income (Smith, 2008, p. 540). Furthermore, many choose to live a life that will have the lowest environmental footprint possible thus implementing dietary restrictions such as not eating meat and being mindful of their modes of transportation (Scarce, 2016, p. 6). Lastly, many radical environmental activists are realistic about the possibility of not achieving the goals of their actions (Scarce, 2016, p. 6). Thus, catching the eye of the media is often crucial because it can help raise awareness about the environmental issues the radical activists are fighting (Joosse, 2012, p. 81; Scarce, 2016, p. 6).

Devall (1991, p. 252) argues that “radical environmentalism is a response to our existential condition”. This is because of the realization that humans are the ones destroying the ecosystems that it needs to survive (Manes, 1990 in Devall, 1991, p. 252). Therefore, the actions of radical environmentalists are less a response to actions of government and industry, and more a response to the call for our continued existence (Devall, 1991, p. 252), and this perception, amongst others, will be further discussed in chapter 4.

However, an example of a radical act within the environmental movement is ecotage (Taylor, 2008, p. 45). Ecotage, also referred to as ecological sabotage (Amster, 2006, p. 299; Taylor, 2008, p. 45; Vanderheiden, 2008, pp. 299-300), is comprised of illegal actions such as threats or vandalizing properties in a means to protect the environment or demand change in a practice (Wagner, 2008, p. 25). However, it is important to note that this form of action is not meant to cause any harm to humans (Wagner, 2008, p. 25).

As stated above, terrorism can be argued to be the end station of the radicalization process. When terrorism is perpetrated because of an environmentalist motive, it is often referred to as ecoterrorism (Eagan, 1996, p. 2) or ecological terrorism (Chalecki, 2002, p. 48). According to Hirsch-Hoefler and Mudde (2014, p. 598), the first ecoterrorism article within social science was published in 1996. The article “From Spikes to Bombs: The rise of eco-terrorism” was written by Sean P. Eagan (1996, p. 1), and in this article ecoterrorism is defined as “the use or threatened use of violence of a criminal nature against innocent victims or property by an environmentally oriented subnational group for environmental-political reasons, aimed at an audience beyond the target, and often of a symbolic nature” (Eagan, 1996, p. 2). This definition of ecoterrorism became much more known six years later when James F. Jarboe, Domestic Terrorism Section Chief of the Counterterrorism Division in the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), used it in a testimony discussing ecoterrorism in 2002 (Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI], 2002). Jarboe used the definition as a means to label the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) as terrorist threats because of the many millions of dollars the two groups had caused the US in property damage (Smith, 2008, p. 553). Furthermore, this testimony established that the FBI regarded threats against property as terrorism if the motives behind the threat were concerning environmental agendas, even if these threats never resulted in damaged property (Smith, 2008, p. 553).

Although the concepts environmental terrorism and ecoterrorism often is used as interchangeable, Chalecki (2002, p. 48) argues that they do differ. Therefore Chalecki (2002) clarifies that environmental terrorism is “the unlawful use of force against *in situ* environmental resources so as to deprive populations of their benefit(s) and/or destroy other property” (p. 48) whilst ecoterrorism is to be understood as “the violent destruction of property perpetrated by the radical fringes of environmental groups in the name of saving the environment from further human encroachment and destruction” (p. 48). Furthermore, Likar (2011, p. 4) also separates the two concepts but use Eagan’s definition of ecoterrorism whilst stating that environmental terrorism is “either an attack against persons or property using an element of the natural environment (e.g., water or fire) as a weapon or an attack directly against a natural resource (e.g., forest or ocean reef) for the purpose of instilling fear in a human target”. Thus the two authors, Chalecki and Likar, understand the two concepts in a similar manner, where both argue that the main difference between the concepts are that environmental terrorism either violently use or attack natural

resources as a means to deprive or destroy, whilst ecoterrorism are concerned with the environmental crisis and takes violent action to hinder further environmental destruction. However, Izak (2022, p. 395) do not separate between environmental terrorism and ecoterrorism, but rather discuss them as one and the same, ecoterrorism. With this in mind, ecoterrorism is understood as violent actions perpetrated by individuals or groups with a radicalized, pro-environmental, intention (Izak, 2022, p. 395).

According to Long (2004, p. 4) the U.S. government label ecoterrorism as special interest extremism. Special interest extremism means that its devotees are concerned with specific problems, such as biodiversity loss or deforestation, which separates the concept from left-wing and right-wing extremism since these are more concerned with drastically changing politics (Long, 2004, p. 4).

Schmid (2013, p. 4) argues that “[c]auses for radicalisation that can lead to terrorism ought to be sought not just on the micro-level but also on meso- and macro-levels”. Furthermore, Schmid (2013, p.4) differentiate the three levels based on the scope of focus which means that the micro-level focus usually on a single individual whilst the meso- and macro-levels focus on community and larger socially impulses, respectfully. Research into radicalization often have a micro-level approach that analyze individual experience of elements such as relative deprivation, alienation and exclusion, identity struggles, and discrimination (Schmid, 2013, p.4). Although important, this dominant focus has been argued to overshadow a more extensive approach to the other factors leading to violent extremism and terrorism (Schmid, 2013, p.5). Expanding the scope of radicalization analysis will factor in experiences such as an enabling community, government politics, society’s inclinations and actions, as well as cross-borders impulses (Schmid, 2013, pp. 4-5). By using all three levels of focus it “can bring us closer to answers about the socio-psychological causes of radicalisation, socialisation, mobilisation to terrorism and related processes of engagement and escalation” (Schmid, 2013, p.5).

2.4 Staircase to terrorism

Moghaddam (2005, p. 161) have outlined a metaphor labeled “the staircase to terrorism”. The purpose of presenting this metaphor and the explanation behind it was to enrich the discussion on the psychological and social factors behind the act of terrorism (Moghaddam, 2005, p.161). It is

important to note that Moghaddam (2005, p.162) specify that the staircase metaphor is not meant as a complete model, but rather to be used as a means to systemize current knowledge and inspire new research.

The metaphorical stairway starts with a base floor and then five steps upwards follow, with the end step being the act of terrorism (Moghaddam, 2005, p.161). Moghaddam (2005, p.161) argues that an important part of this metaphor is how individuals understand the options available to them at each step meaning that when a person ascends the stairs “they see fewer and fewer choices, until the only possible outcome is the destruction of others, or oneself, or both”. The staircase starts with a feeling of injustice and inequality, where an individual perceives oneself to be deprived of a variety of means compared to others within that society (Moghaddam, 2005, p.162). If the individual take action to seek out solutions for restoring justice or improve the circumstances, the individual reaches the first step of the staircase (Moghaddam, 2005, p.162). However, if these solutions cannot be obtained, the individual might feel frustrated or angry which can lead to a notion of an external enemy and the individual might experience an openness to act on the aggression, which is the second step (Moghaddam, 2005, 162:164). According to Moghaddam (2005, p.162) the most important change is from the second to the third step because this is where the individual begins to seek out organizations that have the same enemy and the individual also can begin to agree with the use of terrorism as a means to correct perceived injustice. During step four, the individual will actively be recruited to a terrorist organization, and will be indoctrinated accordingly, which can lead to the last step: carrying out an act of terrorism (Moghaddam, 2005, p.162).

Moghaddam’s metaphor is constructed by using a stage model which means that it is consisting of a fixed order where the individual must go through each step to reach the top (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2017, p.206). According to McCauley and Moskalenko (2017, p.206) “[t]he difference between justifying terrorism (third floor) and joining a terrorist group (fourth floor) is the difference between radical opinion and radical action” (p.206).

2.5 Pyramids of radical opinion and radical action

Radical opinion and radical action are two different aspects of political radicalization (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2014, p.70). Political radicalization is defined by McCauley and Moskalenko

(2014) “as changes in beliefs, feelings and actions in the direction of increased support for one side of a political conflict” (p. 70). In order to explain different levels of radicalization, the two scholars have created two separate pyramids for illustration. The first is the pyramid of radicalization in opinion with the first level consisting of those that do not sympathize or have an opinion on a specific cause (McCauley & Moskaleiko, 2014, p.70). The second level consists of those that sympathize with the cause but do not engage any further, whilst the third level consists of those that believe actions taken for the cause can be justified (McCauley & Moskaleiko, 2014, p.70). The fourth level, which is also at the top of the pyramid, consists of individuals that believe they have a personal moral obligation to act for the cause (McCauley & Moskaleiko, 2014, pp. 70-71).

The second pyramid, radicalization in action, consists of four levels as well. The first level consists of those that are not participating in any action for a specific cause, and then the levels move accordingly with the amount of action taken (McCauley & Moskaleiko, 2014, p.72). Activists are on the next level, and they participate in political action defined as legal and nonviolent, whilst those that participate in political action that is illegal and sometimes violent, are allocated at level three and is considered radicals (McCauley & Moskaleiko, 2014, pp. 72-73). At the top of the pyramid are those that conduct violence towards civilians and is thereby labeled as terrorists (McCauley & Moskaleiko, 2014, p.73). It is not necessary for an individual to move through the levels to reach the top, meaning that it is possible to become a terrorist without being an activist first (McCauley & Moskaleiko, 2014, p.73).

It is important to note that an individual’s level of radicalization in opinion does not have to correlate with the level of radicalization in action (McCauley & Moskaleiko, 2014, p.72). This means that an individual does not have to believe that they have a moral obligation to defend a cause for them to carry out a violent terrorist attack. McCauley and Moskaleiko (2014, p.72) have identified three reasons why there can exist a gap between radical opinion and radical action. An individual can become a member of a terrorist group in search for revenge due to perceived personal injustice (personal grievance) or become a member because someone they love is a member (love), whilst some individuals become members because they seek status, money, or excitement (status and thrill seeking; McCauley & Moskaleiko, 2014, p.72).

The reason why these two models are pyramids is because there is usually a correlation between the size of the population and the size of the pyramid level (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2014, p.71). What is meant by this is that there is often a larger population that identifies at the lowest level of the pyramids, neutral and/or unactive, and the size of the population will decrease moving further up on the pyramid.

In this chapter, the different acts and concepts relating to environmental action has been explained. These actions are tools in a toolbox that the environmental movements use as means for their cause, and when the environmentalists use tools that are illegal and/or violent, they are in a process of radicalization. Thus, two ways of explaining the process of radicalization has been outlined as well. In the next chapter, environmental ethics will be introduced, which can be used to understand different environmental acts.

3. Environmental ethics

Different worldviews and environmental ethics approaches will be discussed throughout this chapter. First the main environmental worldviews will be outlined to provide a foundation of understanding for the specific views as well as to establish that humans have different perceptions in regard to themselves and Earth. After this, several of the main approaches to environmental ethics are presented and these are often connected to either previous events or to environmental groups or movements.

3.1 Environmental worldviews

Different individuals can have different understandings of environmental problems and the solution to solve these (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 17). Thus these individuals might have different environmental worldviews, meaning that their understanding of the relationship between their role on Earth and the Earth's purpose, is shaped by their values and assumptions (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 17). Norton (1991, p. 9) argues that there is no general accepted understanding regarding the relationship between humans and the natural world amongst environmentalists.

However, according to Miller and Spoolman (2016, p. 18) there are three main categories to view the environmental world. The first view places the human at the center where the focus is mainly on the human's wants and needs (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 474). There are at least two ways to understand this human-centered narrative. Those that have a planetary management worldview argues that humans are the dominant species on Earth and that every other part of nature is evaluated in relations to the potential to serve humans (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 474). This particular human dominance environmental worldview also has resonance in the dominion thesis discussed by Lynn White (1968 cited in Robbins et al., 2014, p. 68). The dominion thesis is derived from the Book of Genesis where it is stated that humans are to dominate anything and everything on Earth because humans are the only species that is made in God's image (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 68). Furthermore, White (1968 cited in Whitney, 2015, p. 398) argues that this perception of human superiority is one of the sources for the environmental crisis.

However, there is also another prominent worldview where humans are the main agent. Viewing the world with the assumption of human stewardship means that humans have a responsibility to take care of Earth (Hunter, 2011, p. 132; Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 474; Robbins et al., 2014, p. 68). Thus, when humans take something from nature, it follows a responsibility to replenish the system that has been taken from in order to make sure the Earth's system also can provide for the future (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 474). One of the critiques against this view is that humans do not have enough knowledge to understand the full impact of the use of nature or how to sustainably manage it (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 474).

The second worldview category consists of those that value all life on Earth (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 18). This value is not dependent on usefulness to humans, because all species are an important part of Earth and many of those viewing the world through this lens believes that humans have responsibility to reduce or slow down biodiversity loss (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 474). This is because biodiversity loss also decreases the amount of genetic variety on Earth which can limit ecosystem's ability to adapt to environmental changes and thus jeopardize the future of all life (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 474).

Lastly, those with an Earth-centered view argues that humans are only a part of nature, and not its master (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 18). Therefore, humans must take steps in order to ensure that biodiversity is preserved, and that Earth is habitable for all species (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 474). The underlying belief for this view is that Earth will continue to exist regardless of human behavior, but it can end up being uninhabitable for humans and other species thus leading to mass extinction. Therefore, humans have a responsibility to save other species, as well as our own, because humans "are a part of, and not apart from, the earth" and humans "are utterly dependent on the earth's natural capital" (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 475).

3.2 Anthropocentrism

The first worldview, human-centered, is linked to the ethical standpoint anthropocentrism (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 69). Anthropocentrism is an understanding that "places humans not only at the center of everything but makes "us" the most important measure of all things" (Probyn-Rapsey, 2018, p. 47). Furthermore, this standpoint sees humans as the main factor when

considering if an action is right or wrong in regard to nature (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 69), and that everything on Earth can be considered means to fulfil human ends (Kopnina et al., 2018, p. 109).

Boddice (2011, p. 6) explains that any arguments against anthropocentrism are actually a product of anthropocentrism. This is because every statement is a result of human construction and calls for saving the environment or animal rights are founded on human concepts (Boddice, 2011, pp. 6-7). Rights are shaped by a human understanding of what is legal and moral, such is the argument of intrinsic value (Boddice, 2011, p. 7). Thus, Boddice (2011, p. 7) states that “any ethical, value-based, law-based, or society-based view of the world is inherently and irredeemably anthropocentric”. Furthermore, every individual that champions for the environment, that write critical articles, or plan demonstrations, they “all begin their work *because* they are human” and anthropocentrism should thus be understood as a “non-optional starting point” (Boddice, 2011, pp. 7-8).

3.3 Biocentrism

Where anthropocentrism argue that only human has moral status, biocentrism includes all species (Attfield, 2013, p. 1). In this biocentric view, every living species have rights and value, and the survival of the living species have moral priority (Ojomo, 2011, p. 573; Yu & Lei, 2009, p. 1). Schweitzer (1923 cited in Attfield, 2013, p. 1) resonated that every living thing have an inherent will to live and the respect for one individual’s will to live should, morally, be recognized amongst all other living things.

There are several different ways to understand what biocentrism entail. One perception of biocentrism was presented by Paul Warren Taylor (cited in Attfield, 2013, p. 1), and it approached environmental ethics with an egalitarian, life-centered, view. In this view, every living thing has intrinsic value, and this value is not ranged in a hierarchal system, but rather based on a notion that individually, everyone has equal value (Attfield, 2013, p. 1). Whilst drawing on Schweitzer’s resonance, Taylor (1986 cited in Attfield, 2013, p. 1) discuss the will to live as a goal oriented focus to ensure continuous biological functioning and existence. This not only includes living species such as humans and animals, but also plants because plants are focused on consuming nutrients to live and to mature, which ultimately induce respect and moral status (Attfield, 2013, p. 1).

With this egalitarian biocentrism follows some principles to resolve conflicts between non-human living beings and humans (Big-Alabo, 2019, p. 99). These principles were created because it is not enough to only argue about value and the good of all other living beings, there must also be a system of principles and rules that can be used when conflict of interests arises (Attfield, 2013, p. 3; Big-Alabo, 2019, p. 103). As a base for these principles lies a notion of equality which means that species cannot be given more worth or value (Big-Alabo, 2019, p. 103).

The first principle is self-defense and entails that a moral agent can defend themselves if there are no other options (Attfield, 2013, p. 3). Thus, if the moral agent is faced with a danger and cannot escape, the agent can harm or kill in order to keep existing, but this does not allow the act of killing if there are no immediate threats towards continuous existence (Big-Alabo, 2019, p. 104). In the second principle lies the notion of proportionality which means that in a potential conflict, basic interest that is needed to preserve the well-being and continuous life of a living organism is prioritized above non-basic interests (Big-Alabo, 2019, pp. 103-105) such as the killing of animals for sport or the clearing of large areas of nature for a better view. However, principle three, minimum wrong, explains that non-basic human interests can be allowed if the moral agent have an inherent respect for nature and achieve the interest through the least violating way possible in terms of nonhuman living organisms suffering (Attfield, 2013, p. 3).

In regard to environmental resources, all living organisms have an equal share when access to them is necessary to fulfil their basic interest (Attfield, 2013, p. 3). This principle of distributive justice is meant to ensure that nonhuman living organisms can exist alongside humans, and that they are all able to create and maintain their continuous life because of equal access to necessary resources (Big-Alabo, 2019, p. 107). The last of the five principles, restitutive justice, comes in place after a situation including principle three or four have accorded meaning that either the moral agent did not follow the principle of minimum wrong or there have been a lack of equal resource access (Big-Alabo, 2019, p. 107). Restitutive justice is evoked when it is “needed to restore the balance of justice when any moral subject has been wrong” and “the greater the harm done, the greater should be the amends or reward required” (Big-Alabo, 2019, p. 107).

The notion that even plants have equal value to all other living organisms are disputed within the field of biocentrism (Attfield, 2013, p. 3). Thus several forms of inegalitarian biocentrism have been proposed and Attfield is one scholar that adapts a more consequentialist perspective arguing

that “actions are right when they are in accordance with practices which, if generally recognized, would bring about the greatest overall good” or if the “foreseeable consequence would bring about the greatest overall good” (Attfield, 2013, p. 4).

3.4 Conservation and preservation

Amongst many environmentalists there have been a divide in the ethics approach since the start of the twentieth century (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 18; Norton, 1991, p. 6; Robbins et al., 2014, p. 71). Minter and Corley (2007, p. 308) explain that some theorists and philosophers see the divide as “an unbridgeable philosophical gulf separating conservation and preservation”. Conservation and preservation are two forms of approaches concerning human interference on the environment, and the two have been the source of many debates (Minter & Corley, 2007, p. 308).

The conservation approach argue that species and ecosystems are resources that can be used as long as they are used sustainably to ensure productivity over time (Norton, 1991, p. 6; Robbins et al., 2014, p. 70). This understanding can be linked to an anthropocentrism view because it places value on nature and natural resources depending on their usefulness to humans (Minter & Corley, 2007, pp. 308-309). The notion of usefulness is based on a utilitarian ethics approach which means that the value of a good is dependent on how useful it is to society and the most ethically sound use of resources are the ones that brings forth “the greatest good for the greatest number” (Robbins et al., 2014, pp. 69-70).

The movement conservationism, also referred to as wise-use environmentalism, was shaped by Gifford Pinchot (Norton, 1991, p. 7). Pinchot was the first in the United States to become an official forester and thus in the middle of the debate on how the vast amounts of public lands in the US during the early twentieth century should be managed (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 70). These lands contained a huge amount of valuable natural resources which corporations were eager to exploit, however, Pinchot believed that government intervention was needed to provide a rational resource manage plan to ensure sustainability but also economic well-being (Norton, 1991, p. 7; Robbins et al., 2014, pp. 70-71).

However, another group that fought against corporations exploiting public lands were those arguing for preservation (Norton, 1991, p. 7). Proponents of preservation, preservationists, champions for the restrictive use of natural resources on public lands, arguing that nature should not be exploited by humans regardless of how sustainably it is done (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 18; Robbins et al., 2014, p. 71). One type of natural area that preservationists state should especially be continued to be devoid of human intervention are areas of wilderness, even if the area might contain resources valuable to humans (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 71).

The preservation movement was fronted by John Muir which founded the Sierra Club in 1892 (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 71). Sierra Club is an environmental organization that is founded on a mission to protect the wilderness, to provide education on the protection and restoration of the environment, and to “practice and promote the responsible use of Earth’s ecosystems and resources” (Sierra Club, s.a.). One of the early successes of Sierra Club, and Muir, was the expansion of the Yosemite National Park’s borders (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 71).

It was also regarding a valley in this national park that Muir and Pinchot polarized the environmental debate at that time (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 71). The two leaders stood on opposite sides regarding the damming of Hetch Hetchy, a canyon located in the northwest of the park (Norton, 1991, p. 8). Pinchot argued that the benefits facilitated by a dam such as providing drinking water for the citizens in San Francisco, outweighed the possible damage the dam had on local environmental systems (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 71). This argument follows the notion that the dam would provide for the greatest good for the greatest number, thus the dam was considered to be the ethically right decision. However, Muir meant that the valley should be left alone because of its unique nature and that this nature should be preserved for its own sake, but also because it was a place where humans could witness the spectacular landscape (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 71). The preservationists fought against the dam project for over a decade, and even though the dam was eventually built, the moralism present during the fight continued and spurred engagement which led the Sierra Club to be successful in stopping other similar developments later on (Norton, 1991, p. 8).

3.4.1 *Dam in Alta*

During a period from 1968 to 1982 there was a large political conflict in the North of Norway (Berg-Nordlie & Tvedt, 2023). The conflict was about the scheduled damming of a river in Alta where the state and conservationists argued for the need for retrieving hydro energy, whilst those arguing for preservation were, amongst many others, Samis (Berg-Nordlie & Tvedt, 2023). Not only would the dam drastically change the nature of highly biodiverse habitats in areas such as Sautso, a grand river canyon (Askheim, 2020), but it would also threaten the livelihood for some Samis as well as the eradication of a village called Masi (Berg-Nordlie & Tvedt, 2023). The protestors against the dam collected fifteen thousand signatures, but it did not stop the development, thus individuals resorted to civil disobedience such as chaining themselves together and hunger strikes (Berg-Nordlie & Tvedt, 2023). Although the case was brought to court several times, it was ultimately decided that the development of the dam was legal and thus the dam was built (Berg-Nordlie & Tvedt, 2023). However, it did illuminate the need for new laws and regulations for the Samis, as well as bring forth a debate on invasive environmental practices (Berg-Nordlie & Tvedt, 2023).

3.5 Land ethics

In the middle of the twentieth century, environmental ethics was strongly influenced by Aldo Leopold (Robbins et al., 2014, pp. 72-73). Leopold's career started within the conservationist school of thought but over time it shifted towards the preservationist, and Leopold became a pioneer within "forestry, soil conservation, wildlife ecology, and wilderness preservation (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 18). Although the shift from one school to another most likely were compiled by several reasons, Leopold's relationship with the deer and wolfs can be used as an example of this development (Norton, 1991, p. 43).

During the 1920's, Leopold implemented a predator eradication program in the southwest of the US (Norton, 1991, p. 43). The purpose of this program was to get rid of predators such as mountain lions and wolves so that the deer population would grow and turn the area into a paradise for hunters and improve conditions for livestock (Gundersen & Kraabøl, 2013, p. 5). However, after the predators were killed, the deer population became too large and threatened the pastures for livestock, which meant that the number of deer had to be regulated (Gundersen &

Kraabøl, 2013, p. 5). Furthermore, the eradication of predators led to other problems as well because the soil began to erode and the overgrazing altered the vegetation (Gundersen & Kraabøl, 2013, p. 5; Ripple & Beschita, 2005, p. 613). The change in Leopold's understanding of the relationship between predator and prey, and the widespread effect this relationship had on ecosystems is evident in the essay "Thinking Like a Mountain" published in 1949 (Leopold, 1989). In this essay, Leopold shares some observations after the eradication of predators such as wolves, stating that "the south-facing slopes [of a mountain] wrinkle with a maze of new deer trails [...] every edible bush and seedling browsed, first to anaemic desuetude, and then to death [...] every edible tree defoliated to the height of a saddlehorn" (Leopold, 1989, p. 131). Thus Leopold changed from being positive to the extinction of predators to becoming concerned for the often unknown consequences human interventions had on ecosystems.

Another influential essay published by Leopold was "The Land Ethic" which presented an ethical framework based on ecology (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 73). Ecology is the "study of interactions among organisms and between organisms and the habitat or ecosystem in which they live" (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 72). Leopold (2014, pp. 108-109) argued in this essay that there is a need for a third form of interaction to supplement the two forms that are already existing. The first of the two existing interactions were about the relation between human individuals and what actions in this regard can be considered right or wrong (Leopold, 2014, p. 109; Robbins et al., 2014, p. 74). Then the second interaction considered right and wrong actions between society and individuals such as governance, and individuals and society such as the golden rule (Leopold, 2014, p. 109). However, the third ethical interaction that Leopold argued for was between individuals and nature explaining that "[t]here is as yet no ethic dealing with man's relation to land and to the animals and plants which grow upon it" (Leopold, 2014, p. 109). Furthermore, the essay state that the relation between individuals and land are solely based on economics which means that humans enjoy the resources without the feelings of obligations toward nature (Leopold, 2014, p. 109).

This lack of obligation affects every decision made in relation to the environment. However, ethics can be considered a framework for guidance when individuals are confronted with unknown situations and question what the right thing to do is (Leopold, 2014, p. 109). When unknown situations arise for an animal, it is the instinct that provide guidance, and Leopold

(2014, p. 109) pondered if “[e]thics are possibly a kind of community instinct in-the-making”. Every individual is part of a community that consists of several pieces that is linked to each other (Leopold, 2014, p. 109). Within a community, the individual willingly forfeits some freedom in order to facilitate cooperation and thus becoming an integral part of this community (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 74). Leopold’s notion of land ethics takes this community and extend its borders to cover not only humans but also animals, plants, waters, and soils which can “affirm their right to continued existence, and, at least in spots, their continued existence in a natural state” (Leopold, 2014, pp. 109-110). Thus, humans must change their perspective from being dominant over nature to being equal members of the community, where the community is based on respect (Goralnik & Nelson, 2011, p. 187; Leopold, 2014, p. 110).

Furthermore, Leopold’s work includes an expression of moral extensionism (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 74). Moral extensionism means that “humans should extend their sphere of moral concern beyond the human realm”, and it is most often thought of in regard to animals (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 74). Moreover, Leopold (2014, p. 119) argued that in order for land ethic to be present, there must exist an ecological conscience. An ecological conscience can be understood as humans having the ability to value nature (Lercher, 2006, pp. 315-316) meaning that human consciousness is connected to the land and thus taking responsibility for the land’s ability to continue to exist (Leopold, 2014, p. 113; 119).

In regard to what actions are right or wrong, Leopold (2014, p. 121) state that “[a] thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community” and that “[i]t is wrong when it tends otherwise”. Such an understanding of land ethics transcends the conservationist belief where a human act is right if is the greatest good and benefits the greatest number, and the preservationist belief that argues against most humans acts in regard to nature (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 74). This land ethic has later been implemented into the ethical stance of ecocentrism (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 74). Ecocentrism “argues that ecological concerns should, over and above human priorities, be central to decisions about right or wrong action” which stands in contrast to anthropocentrism (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 74).

The notion of community, such as in land ethics, can spur environmental action (Goralnik & Nelson, 2011, p. 189). Goralnik and Nelson (2011, p. 189) explain that the reason why Leopold’s ethical framework brings forth action is because when humans develop an emotional

connectedness to the environment it will also produce a sense of value. With value and connectedness comes a will to act in order to preserve, which means that humans will preserve the environment because all parts belong in the community. This line of thinking can be a starting point for environmental activism for those that feel connected towards nature and want to take action for the sake of rightful towards the environment (Goralnik & Nelson, 2011, p. 190). If an act is considered right it should follow with encouragement and approval, but if an act is wrong the community must make the disapproval clear (Leopold, 2014, p. 121).

3.6 Animal liberation

Another approach of ethics emerged a few decades after land ethics and this approach focused on the human relation with animals (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 75). In the foundation for this ethics was the belief that all animals, both those domestic and those wild, should be given moral consideration by humans (Robbin et al., 2014, p. 75). At the forefront of this belief was Peter Singer, which published several academic texts regarding the moral and ethical relations between humans and animals (Singer, 1986; 1987) and the most well-known is the book “Animal Liberation” published in 1975 (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 75).

One argument from Singer (1987, p. 5) was that instead of focusing on animal rights as a measure for moral status, one should consider the interests of animals instead. In various ethical approaches interests are often considered such as the interest of avoiding pain or increasing pleasure (Singer, 1987, p. 5). When the ethic is rooted in human interest, it can provide justification for action when humans experience their interests being ignored or discounted because they are different from another group of human individuals, such as having a different sex or race (Singer, 1987, p. 5). Because the concept of interests being equally considered amongst humans is generally accepted, Singer (1987, p. 5) argued that “it is very difficult to find any logical basis for resisting its extension to *all* beings with interests”. This means that moral consideration should also be given to those nonhuman beings that can experience consciously interests like pleasure or pain (Singer, 1987, p. 5). Furthermore, Singer (1987, p. 5) state that these beings also have “fundamentally equal moral status: their interests are to be given the same consideration as the like interests of any other being”.

This equal consideration does not necessarily mean that the treatment of animals should be the same as humans (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 75). However, all beings with interests should receive equal consideration thus ethical decisions are made based on interests like the reduction or elimination of suffering (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 76). Therefore, most circumstances where humans use animals such as for cosmetics, in research, or simply for food production cannot be justified and is thus unethical (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 76).

3.6.1 Animal Liberation Front (ALF)

An animal liberation movement fighting against the unethical actions of humans towards animals are the Animal Liberation Front (ALF; Braddock, 2014, p. 5). ALF have divided their goals into short-term and long-term where the former is to take action to directly stop unethical activities towards animals and to rescue those animals that are being abused, whilst the latter goal is to ultimately end the possibility of animal abuse through forcing corporations that partake in such actions to permanently close down (Braddock, 2014, p. 5). In order to reach these goals, individuals or groups within ALF partake in several different actions such as like breaking into laboratories or fur farms to free animals and if property is destroyed or vandalized in the process it is understood as restoring justice for abusing other living beings (Best & Nocella, 2004, p. 17). In these actions, ALF does not use violence against any living being, including towards those humans that partake in exploiting animals, because it goes against their core belief of non-violence (Best and Nocella, 2004, pp. 17-18; Cordeiro-Rodrigues, 2016, p. 229).

However, ALF's definition and understanding of violence provides justification for many of their actions which might be seen as violent by others (Tester & Walls, 2008, p. 85). According to ALF violence is an act that cause pain, which means that acts such as vandalism is not violence because it is done on an inanimate object that does not experience pain (Cordeiro-Rodrigues, 2016, p. 229; Tester & Walls, 2008, p. 85). Even though ALF is against the use of violence towards humans, sometimes the movement is linked to violent actions because of its structure of non-organization (Best & Nocella, 2004, p. 18).

The reason for this is that ALF is a leaderless movement (Best & Nocella, 2004, p. 18). This means that the movement does not have any form of leader, member lists, or admission tests, and if an individual carries out an act that supports the aims of ALF, that individual is a part of ALF

(Tester & Walls, 2008, p. 82). Instead of having an organizational perception of the movement, the movement should rather be thought of as a state of mind according to Tester and Walls (2008, p. 82). Furthermore, this non-structure makes it more difficult for state authorities to strike down on the movement, because ALF consists of several individuals and smaller groups that moves covertly where the different parts does not know of the activities or identities of the others within ALF (Best & Noella, 2004, p. 17)

At the end of the twentieth century and the start of the 21st century, a Norwegian faction of ALF called Dyrenes Frigjøringsfront (DFF) came into motion (Lia & Nesser, 2003, p. 14). DFF conducted arson and sabotage towards mink farm and stores selling fur, as well as threats against the owners of such businesses, and the aim for DFF was to eradicate the fur and animal testing practices through sabotage or releasing the animals (Aale & Jonassen, 2011; Kjølberg, 2003, p. 18). In 2019, animal activist and writer Norun Haugen published a documentary for the Norwegian Broadcaster (NRK) about the conditions for pigs in Norwegian farms (Kumano-Ensby & Fjeld, 2019). Haugen went undercover at thirteen pig farms during a period of five years and secretly recorded the pigs' treatment, and these recordings showed that the farms knowingly broke Norwegian law (Kumano-Ensby & Fjeld, 2019). The Norwegian law states that animals have intrinsic value regardless of the use they may have for humans, and that animals should be treated with respect and humans should care for their welfare (Dyrevelferdsloven, 2009). The revelation made by Haugen spurred more activists to conduct illegal activities such as to break into farms with cameras in order to expose illegal conditions (Ordin, 2021).

3.7 Deep ecology

During the same decade as animal liberation emerged, deep ecology also made its headway (Devall, 1991, p. 247). The deep ecology platform came as a critique to the ineffectiveness of larger environmental organizations and the belief that these organizations had become too centralized and bureaucratic to cause real change (Devall, 1991, pp. 247-248). Such environmental organizations were also labeled shallow by the Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess (1973, p. 95) because they sought to find solutions for specific issues such as the unsustainable use of resources and pollution for the purpose of improving conditions for humans in the developed world, instead of tackling the causes of these issues. However, Naess (2005, pp. 61-

62) did not wish to outline a set structure or precise directions for deep ecology because of the many fundamental understandings that can be in correlation to the movement, as well as it strengthens its transcultural character. Even though deep ecology lacked a set structure, Naess together with George Sessions (1984, p. 3) formed principles for the movement to provide “a literal defensible way that would appeal to a great many people”. Presenting principles was also meant to make it easier to recognize deep ecology amidst all the other movements and to foster cooperation amongst those that might resonate (Naess, 2005, p.71).

The principles consisted of eight statements (Naess & Sessions, 1984, p. 3). In the first principle it was stated that all natural objects on Earth, such as animals and rivers, have intrinsic value, thus it rejects the utilitarian view that value is decided by the usefulness to humans (Naess & Sessions, 1984, p. 5). Principle two and three was as follows: “[r]ichness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves” and “[h]umans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs” (Naess & Sessions, 1984, p. 5). Vital is purposefully left vague because it allows for the recipient to judge what vital entails based on needs shaped through cultural factors such as some of the necessary practices by various indigenous groups for survival (Naess & Sessions, 1984, p. 6). Furthermore, the two philosophers insists that the human population must decrease in order for humans and cultures to thrive, and to ensure that the natural object continue to exist (Naess & Sessions, 1984, p. 5). However, principle five states that these objects are threatened due to human activities, and it is increasingly getting worse, thus principle six demands a change in policies which must alter current human practices (Naess & Sessions, 1984, p. 5). One of the changes humans must do is to stop striving for ‘bigger and better’ and enjoy the simple quality of life (principle seven), and lastly, principle eight argues that “[t]hose who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to try to implement the necessary changes” (Naess & Sessions, 1984, p. 6).

At the core of deep ecology is also the process of self-realization and ecocentric, or ecological, identification (Devall, 1991, p. 248). Ecological identity can be understood as how a human extend the “sense of self in a relationship with nature” (Thomashow, 1996, p. 3), which means that “[t]hough nature is an object of identification, ecological identity refers to a person’s connection to earth, perception of the ecosystem, and direct experience of nature” (Jeong &

Bretherton, 2001, p. 232). However, ecocentric identity takes this notion of the individual self and extend it so that it “embrace all beings and ecological processes” (Jeong & Bretherton, 2001, p. 232). This type of identity was described by Naess as the cornerstone of self-realization (Devall, 1991, p. 248). When an individual identifies with nature, such as the mountains or forests, it brings forth a notion of solidarity and this notion further spurs environmental action (Devall, 1991, p. 248).

Even though deep ecology does not present a radical environmentalist ideology, it has still become a place of origin for many activists (Devall, 1991, p. 251). The last of the eight principles calls for action, either directly or indirectly, to fight for the implementation of changes that is necessary for a reduction on human interference and destruction of the environment (Naess & Sessions, 1984, p. 6). In order to follow this, many radical environmentalists join the work of other environmental groups to organize demonstrations, to educate others, and to protect particular ecosystems from invasive actions perpetrated by corporation (Devall, 1991, p. 253). Thus, the deep ecology movement, also including its radical members, works towards finding similarities with different views of environmental ethics and groups in order to learn from them as well as strengthen the fight against common enemies (Devall, 1991, p. 257).

Furthermore, Eagan (1996, p. 2) explain that radical environmentalist groups have three generalized characteristics in common. The first is that because of the importance of the environment, the radicals insists that there is no longer room to compromise, secondly, this uncompromising position is followed by direct action instead of trying to work the political channels, and thirdly, these radical groups often do not have an organizational structure nor generate a high income (Eagan, 1996, p. 2). Examples of such environmentalist groups are Earth First! and Earth Liberation Front (ELF; Joosse, 2007, p. 352).

3.7.1 Earth First! and tree spiking

Earth First! became the first group to use the act of tree spiking as a means to stop ruining such as logging (Eagan, 1996, p. 6; Fritsvold, 2009, p. 801, Long, 2004, p. 5). Tree spiking is the process of hammering lengthy metal nails into trees that are supposed to be cut down because of actions like area clearing or harvesting timber (Eagan, 1996, p. 6; Fritsvold, 2009, p. 801). The nails are not meant to damage the trees (Eagan, 1996, p. 6) since that would be counterproductive to the

radicals' aim, and the areas where trees have been spiked are usually presented to the companies that are supposed to work at the site because of the harm the nails can pose to humans (Fritsvold, 2009, p. 801). Harming humans is not the aim of tree spiking, but it could happen when mill blades or chain saws come in contact with the nails (Eagan, 1996, p. 6). Thus, when members of Earth First! became aware of this, potential lethal, side effect some members banned the practice (Foreman and Haywood, 1993, cited in Vanderheiden, 2005, p. 441). However, other members requested that the spikes were placed high up on the tree so that it would not affect chain saws and that only trees meant to be harvested by large corporations should be spiked since those corporations had protective shields in place for their sawmills (Foreman and Haywood, 1993, cited in Vanderheiden, 2005, p. 441).

3.7.2 Environmental Liberation Front (ELF)

ELF was created by a few members of Earth First! that were against the organization's reluctance to partake in illegal activities (Best & Nocella, 2004, p. 1). ELF drew on a similar model as ALF where groups and individuals within ELF does not know about each other and thus more difficult to strike down (Best & Nocella, 2004, p. 17; Joosse, 2007, p. 354). ELF is a leaderless movement that focus on one main task which is to stop environmental degradation (Joosse, 2007, p. 352). Because ELF does not have an explicit aim or strict ideology, the movement gains support from a variety of groups with different ideologies and purposes which increase the amounts of individuals taking direct action (Joosse, 2007, p. 352). Furthermore, the number of members is not a measure of success for radical environmentalist movements like ELF, rather success is concerned with the amount of direct action that is taken, and if this action is helping to stop degradation (Joosse, 2007, p. 356).

One of the most destructive actions ELF uses is to commit arson (Ackerman, 2003, p. 143). ELF commit arson against constructions or corporations that further environmental degradation, and in 2003, ELF sat on fire a large complex of apartments that was being built in San Diego and caused damages for around fifty million dollars (Ackerman, 2003, p. 143). Furthermore, ELF has committed arson towards ski resorts, logging companies, and oil corporations (Ackerman, 2003, p. 143) which prompted the FBI (2002, para. 4) to define ELF as one of the most serious terrorist threats in the US. However, this has been challenged by Ackerman (2003, p. 144) because the

movement has not purposely harmed humans, which other extremist groups or orientation in the US has (Jasko et al., 2022, p.7).

Throughout this chapter several different approaches to ethics have been discussed. This discussion, combined with concepts and acts from chapter two, will provide the basis for placing the data findings into context in chapter five. However, first a detailed description of the methodology used in this study is given in the next chapter.

4. Qualitative research approach

4.1 Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to present the methodology. This is done through explaining the processes of sampling, discussing the criteria that needs to be met before data can be collected, then the process of interviewing will be mentioned, before the aspects of coding is presented. At the end of this chapter a thorough evaluation on the study's trustworthiness is written.

4.1.1 *Qualitative process*

When collecting data for research, there are two main approaches that can be used. Either a quantitative approach which focus on numbers and follows a process of deduction, or it takes a qualitative approach and focus on words and induction (Bryman, 2016, p. 31). The difference between deduction and induction is that the former process draws on existing theory to create one or more hypotheses which will then lead the researcher through the data collection and findings in order to either reject or confirm the hypothesis and lead to a revision of theory (Bryman, 2016, p. 21), whilst the latter process means that a theory will be generated through data collection and interpretation (Bryman, 2016, p. 379). This study will approach the research qualitatively and through an induction process, which means that the collection of data starts with the discovery of themes interesting to the researcher, and then the creation of research questions (Bryman, 2016, p. 379). The collection and interpretation process in qualitative research can be iterative, which means that it is not a fixed linear research structure, but rather an interlinked process that is both circular and in tandem through data collection, interpretation, specifying or altering research question(s), before more data collection and interpretation and so on, all in order to produce a theory (Bryman, 2016, pp. 378-379). This iterative process together with the creation of theory are the two main features of grounded theory (Bryman, 2016, p. 381), a process in social research that was developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967, cited in Walliman, 2016, p. 42). An important aspect of grounded theory is the processing of data with coding which is a process where categories are identified continuously and used for further data collection (Walliman, 2016, p. 236). This iterative process does not stop before the data collection brings no new information (Walliman, 2016, p. 236).

4.1.2 Sampling

Whilst quantitative research often focusses on probability sampling, quantitative research utilizes non-probability sampling (Bryman, 2016, pp. 407-408). More specifically, the non-probability sampling method is referred to as purposive sampling and it means that participants for the research is not selected at random but rather selected strategically based on the notion that they will contribute to the research (Bryman, 2016, p. 408).

For this study, the main sampling method was theoretical sampling. During a theoretical sampling approach, participants are chosen because of their relation to the topic of the research (Walliman, 2016, p. 115), which means that for this study, Norwegian participants with prior knowledge to environmental acts were asked to participate. At the start of this study, the purpose was to collect data from members within environmental organizations in Norway, but during the process of finding participants two issues was revealed. The first issue was to generally find members of environmental organizations, and even though the population was rather large, since the two largest environmental organizations in Norway, Future in our hands and Naturnvernforbundet, have 45,000 and 37,000 members respectively (Future in our hands, s.a.; Naturvernforbundet, s.a.A), the list of members are not publicly available, nor are they allowed to be shared with a third party (Datatilsynet, s.a.).

This means that even though the population is large, the availability of member information is low. Some information on employees or board members of the organizations were often provided on the organizations' websites and could be used to send out requests for participation. However, this is the root of the second issues because these individuals are strongly associated with the public message of their organization which prompted the researcher to question if that could influence the answers given in an interview, even though the interview is anonymous. Thus, the researcher contacted one employee of an environmental organization in Norway, an individual the researcher knew personally, to discuss this possible issue and it became clear that in terms of questions about violence, many of the organizations present a strict policy against it. This also became evident after a climate activist in Norway spoke publicly about the need for violence in the fight for climate (Nessemo et al., 2022), because sixteen of the environmental organizations in Norway published shortly after a shared statement saying they do not condone

any form of violence (Naturvernforbundet, s.a.B). Since the interviews for this study is meant to collect personal thoughts and believes, it would be counterproductive to interview employees and board members.

Thus the population criterion included members of a Norwegian environmental organizations, but also Norwegian individuals who have shown engagement for the environment. The reason for the first criteria is that members of organizations are more likely to engage for the cause (Quintelier, 2008, p. 356), and a general level of engagement for the environmental cause is vital for this study. If the participants did not engage, or believe in the cause, it could be interesting to explore the reasons why, but that is not the aim for this study.

The researcher sent out inquiries to possible participants during the easter holiday and did not get the expected response because only a couple even answered. In hindsight, the inquires could probably have been sent out on a different week, since several of the follow-up emails a few weeks later got responses stating that the inquires had been forgotten after reading. Furthermore, in the weeks between the first few interviews and the last, a new sampling approach made its headway. This new approach had similarities to a snowball approach because the researcher discussed the difficulties of finding participants to friends and family, which led them to suggest individuals that met the sampling criterion. Since these interviews were strictly anonymous, and no one other than the researcher could know who the participants for the study were, these suggestions were written down and then the researcher internally debated if it would be responsible to make contact. These internal debates consisted of questions regarding the relationships between the one suggesting, the one being suggested, and the researcher. Since some of the questions in the interviews are considered sensitive, having a preexisting relationship with the participant might make it easier to talk about the sensitive subjects, or it can be the complete opposite and make the participants feel uncomfortable. Thus, before the start of the interview, the participants are made aware of the interview topics such as violent actions, and that the participants can choose not to answer if uncomfortable. Furthermore, the participants were given a consent form where the study was introduced, and their rights were stated.

Thus the complete sampling approach for this study became a hybrid between theoretical and snowball sampling. Generally, snowball sampling is a purposive technique where participants for the research suggests other participants that could be relevant for the study, and these again will

suggest other participant, thus the (snow)ball gets rolling (Bryman, 2016, p. 415). However, in this study the researcher did not ask other participants for suggestions, instead the suggestions came from people the researcher talked about the topic of the study and the population criteria with. After receiving the suggestion and means of contact if needed, the researcher waited a while before making contact and were transparent with the proposed individuals about why they were contacted. Since participation on this study is based on the promise of anonymity, the individual which suggested a participant were never, and will never be, informed that contact was indeed made, nor if this contact resulted in an interview. Ultimately, the inquiries and recommendations resulted in ten digital interviews.

4.1.3 Data management

Before the interviews could start, there were several criteria that needed to be met to provide correct data management. Much of the data collected for this thesis is considered sensitive personal data (Fossum-Raunehaug, 2021). This means that the data is classified as confidential (RED) and must be handled in line with specific requirements (Fossum-Raunehaug, 2021). The reason why the data receives classification RED is because it contains personal information about political perceptions and beliefs and personal information about conducting illegal activities (University of Oslo [UiO], 2022), which means that if this information became exposed it might place the interviewees at risk for harm (UiO, 2020). To collect such data, the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research (Sikt) must be informed at least thirty days before the data processing starts of the researcher's data management plan (Oksnes, 2021; Sikt, s.a.). This means that Sikt review the plans for how data is collected, stored, and archived, and can suggest necessary adjustments in order to comply with rules and regulations (Oksnes, 2021; UiO, 2020). Only after the data management plan is approved by Sikt, can the researcher start to collect data. Furthermore, since this research concerns sensitive data, Sikt suggested the use of a recorder connected to Nettskjema (Oksnes, 2021).

Nettskjema is a digital tool provided by UiO used for collecting data (UiO, 2021). Although the tool is mainly created for online surveys, it can also be used when conducting interviews through the operation of the Nettskjema recorder app (UiO, 2023). Through this app, the interviews can be recorded, encrypted, and sent to Nettskjema, where the researcher can listen to the recording

in order to transcribe it. However, since the data is categorized as classified, the recordings must be collected and stored on the Service for Sensitive Data (TSD) platform (UiO, s.a.). TSD fulfil necessary requirements of Norwegian privacy regulations for data processing and ensures that the recordings are not being stored in an unsafe matter (UiO, s.a.). When these recordings were transcribed, they were played in the TSD platform whilst written down using the university's external platform, and the anonymized transcript was stored accordingly to NMBU guidelines (Fossum-Raunehaug, 2021).

4.1.4 Interview

The data for this study was collected through semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with an interview guide that contains some questions and topics used to steer the conversation in a direction that can be used to answer the research questions (Bryman, 2016, p. 468). This structure provides space for the conversation to flow, without the need to move in a linear matter (Bryman, 2016, p. 470). The interview guide for this thesis can be found under Appendix 1, and it was used to provide some direction of the conversation as well as ensuring that the research questions were answered. Since these interviews contained sensitive personal information and in regard to the participants anonymity, they were not asked any questions regarding name, gender, or place of work on the record. However, they were asked about their age because it could provide useful context during analysis. Furthermore, the study guide was altered significantly after the first interview because the topic of environmental ethics was not a part of the study at that time. This alteration came as a result of a continuous research process, and it also altered the research questions, which are all part of an interactive grounded theory process. After that first interview, there were only minor changes to the interview guide.

4.2 Trustworthiness

An important aspect of social research study is to evaluate trustworthiness (Bryman, 2016, p. 384). Guba and Lincoln (1981, cited in Guba & Lincoln, 2000, p. 376) proposed four terms linked to trustworthiness: “credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability”. The first term, credibility, concerns the perception of social reality and argues that the researcher's perception of the data might differ from the participants', and one technique to solve this is to provide the

results from the study to the participants and ask if the understanding is similar (Bryman, 2016, p. 384; Guba & Lincoln, 2000, p. 376). The researcher did not facilitate a validation process due to two main reasons. The first was that since this is an iterative study, the results from the data analysis were not complete until shortly before the submission date which is the second reason, time constraint. The lack of time was due to several unforeseen instances as well as poor time management from the researcher. Although a respondent validation process was not done, the researcher did ask the participants for consent to translate their words or sentences from Norwegian to English if they were used as quotes in this study. Several of the responses from the participants followed along the lines of a statement from one of the participants saying that “I trust you to translate my thoughts and ideas to the best of your ability”.

The second trustworthy term, transferability, refer to the possibility of extending the data results to other social environments (Bryman, 2016, p. 384). Since qualitative research is focused on in-depth data collection from individuals or smaller groups within a population, the findings are often not able to be generalized to the whole population, even if saturation is reached (Bryman, 2016, p. 384; Walliman, 2016, p. 42). However, the transferability of this study is low due to the wide sampling criteria, as well as the low number of participants. There are several aspects that could have been improved in order to make it more transferrable, such as making the population more narrow by focusing on specific age groups, geographical locations, or one to two organizations, or the number of participants in the study could have been increased through more effort into recruiting and time management.

In terms of the third term, dependability, the researcher should continuously update the working file of the study. The working file is where every thought, idea, question, and decision throughout the study is documented (Bryman, 2016, p. 384). If this is done in a clear manner, it can make it possible for other researchers to follow the steps of the study in order to assess if the research has been done properly and concisely (Bryman, 2016, p. 384). Although, the researcher did keep a working file running throughout the study, the file is very chaotic and would not make much sense to others, but the sampling methods are given in detail in this thesis which means that the readers can follow some of the processes. Keeping a complete trail of processes is also time consuming and is thus often not used as much when assessing research (Bryman, 2016, p. 386).

The last term is confirmability. Confirmability takes into consideration if the researcher is aware of biases that might influence the study, and to ensure confirmability there must be a clear notion that the researcher interpret the results as objectively as possible (Bryman, 2016, p. 386). This study research environmental actions and ethics, and the researcher have several pre-existing biases in regard to this. First at foremost, the researcher is a member of an environmental organization, and have participated in non-violent legal activities such as demonstrations and petition signing. Furthermore, the researcher holds a clear notion that violence or threat of violence towards humans are not justified by any means. However, this does not mean that any judgement was made during the interviews, nor did any of the researcher's environmental engagement come up. The researcher made a conscious decision not to provide any personal thought and to speak as little as possible in order not to influence any answers given, as well as letting the participant speak their mind as much as possible regarding the subjects. In the analysis of the results, there was also a conscious effort to question why the researcher drew the codes into the different categories as well as that the analysis provided a correct representation of the data. Another unconscious bias is that the researcher lives in Norway, which is considered less vulnerable to climate change than other states (Mertz et al., 2009, p. 746) and thus the researcher does not physically feel the urgency of climate change as much as other individuals in other states might experience. Norway is also considered to have high democratic quality with established democratic channels (Ringen, 2010, p. 43) that can influence the researcher's feeling of need to take violent action.

5. Findings and discussion

The findings retrieved from the data collection and coding perpetrated in the previous chapter will be presented below. The presentation of findings is divided into two chapters, where the first part is concerned with the findings in relations to the subcategories revealed during coding, whilst the second part of this chapter will draw on the findings and core category to discuss the research question and sub-research questions. This is done to ensure that the data is properly communicated and explained, as well as used to draw the findings together with the information discussed in chapter two and three.

5.1 Subcategories

As a result of several rounds of coding, one core category appeared. The core category, community, functioned as an umbrella concept covering several subcategories that were teased out of the collected data. These subcategories were: shared responsibility, dependency, societal consequences, and threat to democracy. The first two subcategories are in the context of humans and the environment, whilst the last two subcategories are based on civic engagement.

The first subcategory, shared responsibility, is concerned with the fact that all humans are accountable. A strong notion presented by several of the participants were that humans had the sole responsibility to take actions in order to rectify some of the invasive practices perpetrated by humans, and to implement ‘greener’ actions for a sustainable future. ‘Greener’ actions were referred in a wider sense to the replacement of energy derived from fossil fuels and instead focus on solar energy, hydropower, and other alternative sources of energy, and in an individual sense to take those smaller steps in the everyday life such as reducing consumption of meat, buy clothes second-hand, and to fly less. Furthermore, one participant stated that “I think the Earth will thrive if humans go extinct in the future [...] which means that it is on us humans to make sure the environmental development starts to move in the right direction”.

With the current direction that the environment is changing, humans must make drastic changes because the environment is in a state of crises. All the participants referenced to the climate crisis with its rise in temperature, and to the biodiversity crisis. The call for action is not solely to save

humanity, but also to ensure the ecosystems continue to work “for our [humans] sake, and for the sake of those we share Earth with” because the whole of “nature must work if we [all] are going to survive”. These statements relate to the second subcategory, dependency, which means that every part of the environment is dependent on each other. Humans are “completely dependent on ecosystem services” but if humans keep stressing the environment, the environment’s ability to adapt to change will be reduced. Furthermore, if an ecosystem or species is thought of as useless to humans it is quite possible “that we might not know enough about it, which means that there probably are several other [species and ecosystems] that are more important than we know right now” and that we do not know the complete consequence of it if these are destroyed.

As stated above, the next two subcategories are based on civic engagement. The meaning behind the subcategory societal consequences is that civic engagement can affect the relations within a society, either positively or negatively. Civic engagement like demonstrations and fundraisers can have a positive effect on the feeling of connectedness and hope within a society, and a participant explained that “little me, on my own, does not have an effect on anything, but when I show up [to a demonstration] and see the crowd, I mean, we are all small alone, but when everyone shows up it eventually becomes a big thing that gains a lot of attention”. However, this effect turns negative when violent means of engagement is used. Several participants stated that the use of violence is never acceptable and that it is detrimental regarding “trust, peace, and order”. Furthermore, violent acts were argued to “create anger and aggression” and it would not benefit the cause “if people became furious” because of the violent means used to get the message across.

There are non-violent processes in place if there are situations within a democracy of which an individual is deeply against. If such a situation arises several participants answered that they would rather use democratic channels than resort to violence because violence is counterproductive since “it contributes to the making of a society where it would become more difficult to work democratically because it would become tougher” and that “it could make it more difficult to engage in demonstrations, it would be more surveillance, tougher counter-reactions, and just a general reduction in free speech”. These thoughts and statements illustrate that violence might become a threat to democracy.

The second part of this chapter will try to answer the research question and sub-research questions through the connection of the core category and subsequent findings with the

information presented in chapter two and three on environmental acts and ethics. The core category retrieved from the coding process was community.

5.2 Community and radicalization

There are many types of environmental actions, and these are often separated based on the notion of violence. Non-violent and legal environmental activism consists of signing petitions, participating in peaceful demonstrations, and recruitment (Curtin & McGarthy, 2016, p. 228). All of the participants in this study had engaged in at least two types of this kind of activism, signing petitions and demonstrations. In terms of believing that these acts had an impact, one exclaimed that “of course signing petitions work!”

Furthermore, all but one was members of one or more environmental organizations or movement. The reasoning for waiting on becoming a member somewhere was not because of a lack in engagement, but rather that the participant felt that “many are too uncompromising which means that there are very few organizations I can fully support”. Those already members stated that they had faith in the work that these organizations did, and that “it has shown itself to be effective and to have an impact”.

When asked if the individuals interviewed had engaged in non-violent but illegal acts, known as civil disobedience, only half of the individuals answered that they had. Those that had viewed civil disobedience “as an acceptable tool used to supplement all the other tools in the democratic toolbox”. However, one individual explained that “the long-term effect of non-violent civil disobedience is often that you lose that specific case because the government will always be stronger than you, but you will win a change of direction”. The possibility of legal consequences because of civil disobedience work as a restricting factor among the other half of the individuals, but none are against the activity, they “just do not want to sacrifice their criminal record” or lack the belonging to a community that participates.

6.1.2. *Staircase and the environment*

Previously in this study, a metaphorical staircase and two pyramids have been used to explain to different ways of understanding the process of radicalization. Moghaddam (2005, p. 161)

presented the “staircase to terrorism” where an individual walked five steps up from the feeling of injustice to the act of terrorism. Although this metaphor was not specifically created for the purpose of explaining environmental radicalization, several aspects of it can be modified and used accordingly. In stead of focusing on an individual’s personal experience, the boundaries of self can be expanded, and the metaphor can rather be focused on an individual’s experience in relation to others or the state of the environment. What is meant by this is that at the base step of the metaphor, the hypothetical individual originally has feelings of injustice or inequality towards oneself (Moghaddam, 2005, p. 162), but this could instead be that an individual feel that the environment is unjustly used by others in a society or that others are unjustly affected. Several of the participant in this study noted that the environment is in a crisis because of the unsustainable use of resource which could be considered an injustice. Another injustice, although not in terms of the environment but in terms of other people is that these crises will affect different parts of the world differently, and a interview participant stated that “climate change is going to be much sooner really really bad first for those that live in a less developed state than Norway”.

If this hypothetical individual seeks out solutions for restoring justice or improve the circumstances, the individual has reached the first step of the staircase (Moghaddam, 2005, p. 162). These acts can be changes in the daily life of the individual such as one participant “flying less, eating more greens, and demanding products that have a lower impact on the environment”. However, if the results of these acts are considered too small to make a change in the situation, the individual might feel aggression towards an external enemy such as large fossil fuel corporation and feel more open towards using means that can be violent. Towards reaching the third step, the individual might then seek out a community such as an organization that work with violent means against the same or similar corporations (step three), join them (step four) and then the last step on the staircase is to carry out an act of ecoterrorism.

6.1.3 Pyramids and the environment

The other possible way to understand radicalization is through the two metaphorical pyramids created by McCauley and Moskalenko (2014, p. 70). These two pyramids are the pyramid of radicalization of opinion and pyramid of radicalization in action, and both have four levels. The pyramid of radicalization of opinion for the environmental cause starts with those that are

indifferent to the environmental cause whilst the second level are for those that sympathize but do not engage in any activity. The next level is for those that believe environment actions for the cause are justified, and at the top of the pyramid are those that view environmental actions as a personal moral obligation. All of the participants in this study are at the top of this pyramid because they either see engagement as a way to “provide the most welfare for the most humans” or because they feel a responsibility because “it is on us humans to make sure the environmental development starts to move in the right direction”.

In terms of the pyramid of radicalization in action combined with the environmental cause, the first step is not to participate in any act at all. The environmental activists are on the second level since they partake in non-violent and legal action, whilst the radicals that partake in illegal and sometimes considered violent such as civil disobedience and tree spiking are on the third. The last level is for those that use violence and can be considered ecoterrorists. As stated before, half of the participants can be located on the second level whilst the other half can be located on the third which means that all of the participants have a difference in their level of radicalization in opinion and action. However, several stated that they could be more inclined to participate in civil disobedience, and thus moving up a level on the action pyramid, “if they had a community around them that also engaged in this type of action”. One of them even stated that community could “be a very big power of persuasion”.

5.3 Community and ethics

Environmental ethics considers right and wrong actions regarding the treatments of the environment (Miller & Spoolman, 2016, p. 17). In chapter 3, the different approaches to this kind of ethics was discussed such as anthropocentrism, biocentrism, conservation and preservation, Land ethics, animal liberation, and deep ecology. Although several versions of these approaches, as well as other distinct approaches, exists, the ones discussed in chapter three are considered to amongst the most influential (Robbins et al., 2014, pp. 68-77).

In the interviews, the participants were specifically asked to explain their relationship with the environment (see Appendix 1). First of all, a couple of participants answered that they had not reflected over this relationship, and that they were unsure. However, there were several statements made during the interviews that can be linked to different approaches to ethics.

One participant answered that individual humans “are a part of nature but in a dramatically different way than other organisms”. What this meant was that “humans are capable of making drastically invasive act on their surroundings” and this separates them from other organisms, but when asked if humans thus are superior the participant answered, “not morally”. However, the same participant recognized the underlying human-centered view in many of the answers given and stated that this individual’s motive for action was to ensure the most amount of good for the greatest number of humans. This notion is similar to Pinchot’s conservationist justification for resource use that was rooted in “the greatest amount of good for the greatest number” (Robbins et al., 2014, p. 70). The final sentence given on the topic of environmental ethics, the participant states that it is “the humans I think about” when debating if an act is justified and that “it is sad that animals die”.

However, most of the participants were quick to identify that the notion of intrinsic value was important to them. Intrinsic value was discussed in regards to two relationships, human-animals, and humans-all natural objects. The first relationship is connected to biocentrism and animal liberation and was revealed through the explanation that “we have a shared responsibility because we share Earth with many animals that are also entitled to continued existence”. “Nature has a value in its self, even if it does not have a human purpose” and that “nature has intrinsic value” are two examples of the human-all natural objects relationship present in approaches such as land ethics and deep ecology.

Furthermore, in land ethics, Leopold (2014, p. 109) explain that a community is made up of several individual but interlinked parts. These parts must give up something in order to become a part of the whole, and for humans that is to abandon the notion of superiority, and instead accept that all parts are equal members (Leopold, 2014, p. 110). “It is not about the dominion of nature, but rather that we must coexists”.

6. Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to investigate the possible relationship between environment ethics and environmental actions. Environmental actions are acts that are done due to a motivation of creating change, either for humans, all living beings, or the entire ecosystem that Earth is. The first motivation is rooted in an anthropocentric perception of the human world, where the action humans are spurred by the feeling of domination or stewardship. The second motivation is rooted in a biocentric notion that all living beings deserve moral consideration, and the third motivation is derived from a notion of all aspects of Earth have intrinsic value, may that be a human, an animal, or a river.

Thus environmental ethics influence different environmental action because of the way an individual understand oneself in relation to the surroundings. Actions are placed into three main categories: non-violent and legal, non-violent but illegal, or violent. The first category consists of actions like demonstrations, the second category concern civil disobedience, and the third category use means such as arson.

Some environmental groups justify their use of violence based on ethical directions such as deep ecology which demands that its followers go out and make the changes that are needed. However, it is not states that these changes must be violent, this is derived by the organizations themselves.

An individual might use violent means to promote change after a process of radicalization. Two illustrative examples are the staircase to terrorism and the pyramids of radical opinion and radical action. After the coding process of the data collected, several participants were at the top of the pyramid of radical opinion, but not at the top on radical actions. However, several participants stated that they had participated in civil disobedience, but all of the participants made it clear that violence was never justified, regardless of situation or environmental ethics.

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8. Appendix 1

8.1 Interview guide in English

Note: the interview guide is translated to English for the purpose of submitting it as an appendix in the thesis. The interviews were conducted in Norwegian.

General plan for semi-structured interview

Before you start recording:

- Go through the interviewee's rights.
- Do you consent to audio-record the interview.
- Do I have your consent to directly translate sentences or phrases that is quoted in the thesis, to English?
- Do you have any questions before we start?

Inteview:

- Reference questions: what is your age?

Environmental organization:

- Are you a member of an environmental organization?
- Why are you a member of an environmental organization?
- Will you consider the environment to be in a crisis?
 - o If yes, why do you think so?
 - o What is the most prominent danger/threat to the environment?
 - o What do you think will help it?
 - o Do you feel that you could help the crisis?
- Do you, in your daily life, take any action to 'help' the environment?
 - o Why do you do it?
 - o Do you feel a responsibility?

Environment and you:

- Environmental worldview:
 - How do think humans and the environment is connected?
 - What is your relationship with nature?
 - Where do you place yourself in this relationship?

Environmental action:

- Have you participated in any form of non-violent environmental action?
 - Demonstrations, petitions etc.?
 - What do you feel about this kind of action?
 - Do you feel that this form of action work?
- Have you participated in any form of non-violent illegal environmental action (civil disobedience)?
 - Chained together, roadblocking, etc.?
 - If yes: did it have any consequence for you?
 - What do you feel about this kind of action?
 - Do you sympathize with those who ‘do it’, even if you do not do it?
 - Do you think this promotes or demotes the cause?
- Have you participated in any form of violent environmental action?
 - Threaten or use violence against humans (or buildings)
 - If yes: did you experience any consequences?
 - What do you feel about this kind of action?
 - Do you think this promotes or demotes the cause?

8.2 Interview guide in Norwegian

Generell plan for semi-strukturert intervju

Før opptak:

- Gå gjennom rettigheten til deltaker.
- Tillater du at jeg tar opp lyden på samtalen?
- Har jeg tillatelse til å direkte oversette setninger eller uttrykk som blir sitert i oppgaven, til engelsk?
- Har du noe spørsmål før vi begynner?

Intervju:

- Referansespørsmål: Hva er din alder?

Miljøorganisasjon:

- Er du medlem av en miljøorganisasjon?
- Hvorfor er du medlem av en miljøorganisasjon?
- Vil du betrakte miljø som i en fase av krise?
 - o Hvorfor tenker du det?
 - o Hva er den største krisa?
 - o Hva tenker du vil hjelpe krisen?
 - o Føler du at du kan hjelpe den?
- Til vanlig, tar du noen steg for å hjelpe miljøet? Altså miljøvennlige valg i hverdagen?
 - o Hvorfor gjør du det?
 - o Føler du et ansvar?

Miljøet og deg:

- Miljø verdenssyn:
 - o Hvordan tenker du mennesker og miljøet henger sammen?
 - o Hvordan er ditt forhold til naturen?
 - o Hvor setter du deg selv i dette forholdet?

Miljøhandling

- Har du deltatt i noen form for ikke-voldelige miljøaksjoner?
 - Demonstrasjoner, underskriftskampanjer etc.?
 - Hva er dine tanker og følelser rundt slike aksjoner?
 - Føler du at de hjelper til noe?
- Har du deltatt i noen form for ikke-voldelig ulovlig miljøaksjoner (sivil ulydighet)?
 - Lenket deg fast, blokkert veier o.l.
 - Om ja, fikk det noen konsekvenser for deg?
 - Hva tenker du om denne formen for aksjoner?
 - Sympatiserer du med de som gjør slik?
 - Føler du at de fremmer målet? Eller er det mer ødeleggende?
- Har du deltatt i noen form for voldelige miljøhandlinger?
 - Altså har du truet eller skadet mennesker, eller bygninger?
 - Hvis ja, fikk det noen konsekvenser?
 - Hva føler du angående slike handlinger?
 - Tenker du at de hjelper eller hindrer miljøbevegelsen?



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