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Veganism of a different nature: how food not bombs challenged capitalism, militarism, and speciesism in Cambridge, MA

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Veganism of a Different Nature

**How Food Not Bombs Challenged Capitalism, Militarism,
and Speciesism in Cambridge, MA**

Alessandra Seiter
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Senior Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Bachelor of Arts degree in Geography

Adviser, Professor Yu Zhou

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Chapter 1

FNB's Ideology of Anti-Militarism, Anti-Capitalism, and Anti-Speciesism

Seated in the second-floor auditorium of Vassar College's Rockefeller Hall, my freshman self gazed at a jovial, Santa Claus-esque man – complete with a full white beard and perpetually red cheeks – wearing a flat-brimmed straw hat. He lounged in a desk chair at the front of the room, hands folded in his lap, as if he were about to recount stories of his childhood to his grandchildren. In effect, he was doing something similar: describing to a lecture hall full of students his over 30 years of activism with the anarchist anti-war social movement known as Food Not Bombs (FNB). This man was Keith McHenry, one of FNB's eight original cofounders (“FAQ”), and the Vassar Animal Rights Coalition (VARC) – a student organization of which I was an active member – had brought him to the college's campus to give a lecture.

I had been involved in the U.S. vegan/animal rights movement for four years by the time I was a freshman at Vassar. I was interested in hearing Keith speak because I knew of FNB's core principle – one of three – of serving only veg*n¹ food at its actions, due to the movement's desire that its food “reflect [its] dedication to nonviolence [which] include[s] violence against all beings including animals” (“The Three Principles”). To me, this principle meant that FNB was committed to challenging institutionalized speciesism—a term coined in 1970 by prominent animal rights activist Richard Ryder (2005), and which refers to “discrimination against or exploitation of certain animal species by human beings, based on an assumption of mankind's [sic] superiority” (OED). Given my own political concerns with speciesism – particularly its bearing on the relationship between humans and other-than-human nature – this aspect of FNB attracted me to the movement.

¹ I use this term as an abbreviation for “vegan or vegetarian.”

Because anti-speciesism was the first issue around which I was politicized, I viewed it as the whole of my politics, rather than as a facet of the broader radical politics that I would develop over the course of my next three years at Vassar. As such, before my initial encounter with FNB in my freshman year, I had not considered how speciesism might relate to militarism and capitalism; it was Keith's lecture which catalyzed an expansion of my political framework from being single-mindedly concerned with other-than-human animals to understanding the deeply embedded power structures which created and perpetuated speciesism among a myriad other forms of oppression.

Beginning to realize the connections between speciesism, militarism, and capitalism thanks to FNB's linking of these three entrenched societal structures in its activism, I started to wonder how FNB was able to arrive at such a uniquely synthesized political ideology and approach to activism, unlike that of any other anti-militarist, anti-capitalist, or anti-speciesist group. It was the three-year incubation of this question which led me to this thesis, which is primarily an exploration of the origins of FNB's ideology, and how the geographical context of its founding in the particular place of Cambridge, Massachusetts during the most influential era of the U.S. peace movement has shaped FNB's unique notions of the human-nature relationship.

Articulated slightly differently by FNB members and scholars alike (Butler & McHenry, 1992; Khan, 1998; Sbicca, 2014, pg. 823; K. McHenry, personal communication, 28 December 2015), FNB's mission is to shift the structure of U.S. society from centering on capitalist militarization to ensuring that the needs of everyone – human and other-than – are met in order for them to lead a free and creative life. To work toward this broad and long-term goal, FNB recovers and redistributes surplus veg*n food to those in poverty, and shares veg*n meals both with community members and at protests/demonstrations in collaboration with other activist groups.



Figure 1: The poster that inspired FNB's first bake sales (McHenry, 2014).

Founded in the spring of 1980 in Cambridge, MA by eight anti-nuclear activists from the Boston Metropolitan Area, FNB grew out of the aftermath of the Coalition for Direct Action at Seabrook's nonviolent occupation of the Seabrook nuclear power plant located along the Massachusetts-New Hampshire border (Myers, 2013, pg. 412). After activist Brian Feigenbaum's arrest at the occupation on May 24, 1980, the other seven future FNB cofounders sought to raise money for his bail by holding bake sales outside of Harvard University's Student Union in Harvard Square ("FAQ"). At the sales, the seven activists dressed in military uniforms purchased at an army surplus store and displayed a banner which read, "It will be a great day when our schools get all the money they need and the air force has to hold a bake sale to buy a bomber" (McHenry, 2015, pg. 98) (see Fig. 1), highlighting the U.S. government's diversion of resources away from social necessities like education and toward the military. Though the seven activists raised very little money, the attention-grabbing nature of their street theater performance allowed them to engage a large number of people in discussion regarding the connections between U.S. government defense spending and social inequities. After Brian's charges were dropped, the eight activists decided to again couple anti-

war organizing with free food distribution by coordinating their first demonstration. On March 26, 1981, the group protested capitalist exploitation and nuclear investment outside of the Federal Reserve Bank during a stockholders meeting of the Bank of Boston, drawing a crowd of about 70 demonstrators and homeless people to share a free veg*n meal (“FAQ”). FNB’s cofounders decided upon the veg*n-ness of this first meal after reading Frances Moore Lappé’s renowned 1971 book on eating sustainably, *Diet for a Small Planet*, which convinced the eight activists of veg*nism’s ability to reduce hunger and alleviate climate change (McHenry, 2015, pg. 27). With this knowledge, the cofounders decided to integrate veg*n philosophy into the movement’s activism as an “obviously appropriate” choice (Winter, 2015, pg. 68), and designed their logo (see Fig. 2) to depict the success they found in using veg*n food as a core principle of revolutionary organizing against societal structures of inequity and violence.



Figure 2: FNB Logo (FAQ).

The success of this first protest solidified the eight activists’ commitment to sharing free veg*n food as a tactic of anti-war organizing, and within a matter of days each of them had quit their jobs, rented a house at 195 Harvard Street, and begun to pick up surplus veg*n food from local grocery stores and distribute it each weekday to battered women’s shelters, immigrant support shelters, food pantries, and housing projects in Cambridge, Somerville, and Boston (McHenry, 2015,

pg. 99). As one half of the group carried out the food pick-ups and distributions each day, the other half would save enough of the surplus food to craft a large-scale veg*n meal to serve on the streets of Cambridge (see Fig. 2) – either alone or in solidarity with an already existing demonstration or protest – to all who wanted to partake, regardless of socioeconomic status (Sbicca, 2014, pg. 823). In these nonviolent direct actions of veg*n food-sharing and distribution, FNB publicized the connections between defense spending and the state’s economic health by making visible the poverty, homelessness, and exploitation of other-than-human entities that those who wield societal power seek to hide (Heynen, 2010, pg. 1227).



Figure 3: FNB in Harvard Square, 1980 (McHenry, 2014).

From its humble origins as an eight-person group selling vegan baked goods in Harvard Square, FNB has grown into a worldwide movement of over 1,000 independent chapters on all continents except Antarctica (“FAQ”), with activity done by over 50,000 people in about 500 U.S. cities (Crass, 2013, pg. 37). Indeed, urban geographer Nik Heynen (2010) has deemed FNB “one of the fastest-growing social movements in the world” (pg. 1225). Clearly, considering this sizeable constituency, FNB’s political ideology and approach to activism that uniquely synthesizes anti-militarism, anti-capitalism, and anti-speciesism has proven powerful to a broad base of people.

While militarism, capitalism, and speciesism can exist and have existed independently of one another – virtually every region of the world dating back to medieval times has had a military, for example – I contend that FNB’s commitment to challenging this triad of ideologies through synthesized activism proves important due to its ability to make visible the inherent violence² embedded in all three. To be sure, militarism depends upon the perpetuation of physical violence against another entity whose interests oppose those of another; capitalism depends upon the social and economic violence committed against the earth and its inhabitants in the name of profit accumulation; and speciesism depends upon humans violently infringing upon the bodily autonomy of other-than-human beings. The common thread running through these three ideologies is the belief that, in order to advance one’s own interests, violence must be enacted upon another, less powerful entity. Feminist environmentalist author Marjorie Spiegel identifies this common thread of violent arrogance in perpetuating social inequities, and asserts that, “As long as humans feel they are forced to defend their own rights and worth by placing someone beneath them, oppression will not end” (pg. 18), emphasizing the need to challenge militarism, capitalism, and speciesism for their shared core belief and practice in order to foster a just and equitable society for all beings.

Dedicated to “nonviolent social change” (The Three Principles) as one of its three main principles, FNB synthesizes anti-militarism, anti-capitalism, and anti-speciesism in its political ideology out of this desire to create a world based on mutual cooperation and respect between the earth and all of its inhabitants (as will be discussed further below). Chris Crass, a formerly active member of the San Francisco chapter of FNB, succinctly explains FNB’s nonviolent ideology in his 1995 position paper on anarchism in the movement:

“In the Food Not Bombs book *Feeding the Hungry and Building Community*, it is explained that, “The name Food Not Bombs states our most fundamental principle; society needs to promote life, not death. Our society condones, and

² Throughout this paper I will use the word “violence” to refer not necessarily to bodily harm inflicted upon some living entity, but as the domination of one, more powerful entity over another, less powerful one.

even promotes violence and domination. Authority and power are derived from the threat and use of violence.”

In this “most fundamental principle,” FNB explicitly identifies violence as the primary factor in the perpetuation of inequitable social structures, and has committed itself to dismantling them through anti-militarist, anti-capitalist, and anti-speciesist activism.

Since the movement’s founding, FNB has been committed to making visible the violent manner in which militarism, capitalism, and speciesism all function in an interconnected fashion to perpetuate poverty, hunger, and environmental devastation. FNB sees it at the utmost injustice that “[i]n a globalized [world] [...] of advanced capitalism, where bond traders exchange billions of dollars in our financial markets, people are still allowed to die of starvation, malnutrition and lack of permanent shelter” (“Why FNB Pilsen...,” 2014), and seeks to nonviolently replace the “profit-before-people system” (Khan, 1998) that prioritizes the accumulation of wealth for those already in power with “decentralized communism and social networks of mutual aid” (“Why FNB Pilsen...,” 2014) such that the needs of the earth and all of its inhabitants are adequately met. Though this anti-capitalist goal of putting people before profit is common among activist groups which seek to combat the violent structures underlying social inequities, FNB’s anti-speciesist inclusion of other-than-human animals among those whose needs must be met importantly distinguishes FNB from other groups—a point upon which I will elaborate below.

In line with this radically democratic ethos that seeks to challenge the violence embedded in militarism, capitalism, and speciesism, FNB operates through nonhierarchical, consensus-based decision making, such that “there is no one person telling everyone else what to do” (Boston FNB) while all members of an FNB chapter “collaborate and synthesize all of [their] ideas and opinions until [they] reach a decision that [they] feel is best for the group” (ibid). In its operational organization, FNB seeks to empower its members to enact the nonviolent anarchist social structure

that it believes will bring justice to humans and other-than-human life (as will be discussed in detail in chapter five).

In the U.S., the profit accumulation that prevents the achievement of such justice centers on the military—for example, in 1980 when FNB began and Reagan was about to take office, defense spending had reached \$325.1 billion, and by 1987 had peaked at \$456.5 billion, or 27 percent of the federal budget (Schneider and Merle, 2004). Increases in U.S. poverty coincided with these spikes in military spending, when between 1980 and 1990 the overall poverty rate rose to around 15.5%—a level not seen since the recession of the early 1960s (Matthews, 2012). As such, in order to “highlight the waste of valuable resources on capital-intensive projects such as nuclear power while many people in this country went hungry and homeless” (Butler & McHenry, 1992) and to encourage the U.S. public “to start supporting policies that redirect military spending towards education, healthcare and other domestic necessities” (“False allegations...”), the activism of the original FNB group in Cambridge focused on organizing and providing food for anti-nuclear and anti-war demonstrations in addition to redistributing surplus food. Take, for example, FNB’s second street-theater action that took place on August 20, 1981 outside of a weapons bazaar at Boston University:

“The night before, we spray-painted the outline of ‘dead’ bodies on the ground, stenciled mushroom clouds with the word ‘Today?’ and wheat-pasted ‘War is Murder for Profit’ posters along the route that the weapons buyers and sellers would take from their hotel to the conference hall. The day of the bazaar, we distributed free food and flyers protesting this profiteering from weapons of mass destruction. This literature also had the mushroom-cloud stenciled on it, and we held signs that were also stenciled.” (Butler & McHenry)

Or consider FNB’s impromptu creation of “The Pepsi Challenge,” which called attention to the Coca-Cola Company’s military involvement with the U.S. government and the resources it diverted away from providing nutritious food to people:

“The marketing scheme ‘The Pepsi Challenge’ showed up one day next to the Food Not Bombs table at Brattle Square, setting up a tent and sharing flat

Coke and fizzy Pepsi to blindfolded college students. A dentist donated a case of small paper cups to Food Not Bombs. Someone added brochures about the Coca-Cola Company hiring death squads against labor organizers in Guatemala to the literature displayed for visitors. Fruit was put aside, and Food Not Bombs started the Tofu Challenge, offering small cups of tofu smoothies. “There is more nutrition in this cup of tofu smoothie than [in] all the Pepsi products in the world!” The tofu challenge came to an end when the angry Pepsi employees pulled down their tent, packed up the soft drinks, and rushed away yelling obscenities at the Food Not Bombs activists.” (McHenry 100)

Because FNB’s primary method of wealth redistribution away from military spending and toward basic human and environmental needs is through the gleaning of surplus food, FNB supports a veg*n diet due to its maximization of the amount of food available to people, its minimization of agriculture’s environmental impact, and its nonviolent relationship with other-than-human animals. Since FNB’s founding in 1980 (Winter, 2015, pg. 68), one of the movement’s three primary principles – along with its commitments to a non-hierarchical structure, consensus-based decision making, and nonviolent direct action – has been to make all of the food it serves veg*n (“The three principles”) due to the diet’s ability to challenge violent social structures by mitigating global hunger and climate change. Indeed, in explaining its reasoning for serving only veg*n food on its website, FNB asserts that “as a part of our work for peace we do not want to be supporting violence against animals” (FAQ), while McHenry (2015) writes that “[o]ur diet reflects our desire to promote a nonviolent future” (pg. 27).

Regarding the inefficiency of meat production in terms of reducing global hunger, FNB cofounder Keith McHenry notes in his 2015 book *Hungry for Peace*,

“...vegetables, grains, and fruits—properly balanced for amino acids—can provide more protein per acre than meat. Each sixteen pounds of perfectly edible human food in the form of grain fed to cattle produce only one pound of beef. The 4.8 pounds of grain fed to cattle to produce one pound of beef for human beings. An acre of cereals produces five times more protein than an acre devoted to beef production. Scientists at Cornell report that the U.S. could feed 800 million people with grain that is fed to livestock.”

McHenry goes on to detail animal agriculture's role as a leading contributor to global climate change, as declared in a November 2006 United Nations report entitled "Livestock's Long Shadow: Environmental Issues and Options" (*Animals not bombs*; McHenry, 2015, pg. 108):

"A vegan lifestyle can be one of the most effective ways to protect the environment. The production of meat is a leading cause of climate change gasses. A University of Chicago study found that a typical meat based diet in the United States generates the equivalent of nearly 1.5 tons more carbon dioxide per person per year than a vegan diet. The livestock industry is responsible for more than 18% of all global greenhouse gas emissions by producing 90 million tons of carbon gas emissions through the use of fossil fuels each year along with causing over 8 percent of the most deadly climate change gas: methane. Even exceeding all cars, busses, planes and trains combined."

In this concern for the wellbeing of the earth and its inhabitants through its support of a veg*n diet, FNB demonstrates its understanding of speciesism as sharing the same ideological core of violence with militarism and capitalism. In addition to serving only veg*n food at its actions, FNB demonstrates its commitment to anti-speciesism through its founders' consideration of their "four dog friends" (Butler & McHenry, 1992) as "important members of the collective" (*ibid*)—a consideration which highlights a mentality of equality with, rather than superiority over, other-than-human beings. FNB also collaborates with prominent U.S. animal justice groups, such as by delivering veg*n meals to crews of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society whenever they come to port, and attending the annual national Animal Rights Conference organized by Farm Animal Rights Movement (FARM) (Winter, 2015, pg. 61).

Uniting anti-militarism, anti-capitalism, and anti-speciesism in its political ideology and approach to activism, FNB has created a uniquely synthesized political framework of nonviolence that has attracted tens of thousands of people to participate in the movement since its inception in 1980. While everyone included in this multiplicity of activists undoubtedly has different reasoning for why FNB's ideological framework speaks to them, I locate the power of FNB's activist approach in its understanding of and mobilization in response to the interconnectedness of all forms of

oppression through their shared core of violence. As mentioned previously, numerous other contemporary anti-capitalist and anti-militarist political groups operate with an understanding of the violence common among societal structures in the U.S., but what makes FNB's approach uniquely important is its extension of the idea of interconnectedness to other-than-human beings—its inclusion of speciesism as a social justice issue intimately bound up with other violent social structures. In other words, FNB's political ideology is powerful due to its ability to subvert dominant Western understandings of what constitutes an appropriate relationship between humans and nature in such a way as to work towards justice for the earth and all of its inhabitants, human and other-than. In my second chapter, I will provide a detailed account of the theoretical traditions that I find best speak to FNB's political ideology—feminist environmentalism and socionature. In contrast to the human exceptionalism stemming from a belief in the separation between self and other commonly upheld in Western discourse, feminist environmentalism specifically and socionature more broadly seek to envision nature and society as intimately bound up with one another such that the earth and all of its inhabitants must be freed of violent ideologies that seek to profit off of another's exploitation.

With an understanding of the interconnectedness of anti-militarism, anti-capitalism, and anti-speciesism in its political ideology and approach to activism, FNB operates under a socionatural conception of the human-nature relationship and acts in such a way as to support justice for all groups affected by the three aforementioned violent societal structures. It is this socionatural understanding of the world that distinguishes FNB from other anti-war, anarchist, vegan, and food justice groups, and accounts for FNB's ability to shift people's conceptions of the appropriate way to act in relation to the world and beings around them, human and other-than.

Anti-war, anarchist, vegan, and food justice groups in the U.S. each tend to fail in making analytical connections of the violence shared between militarism, capitalism, and speciesism, instead

focusing on only one of these ideologies and thereby engaging in activism that provides an incomplete account of state-sponsored violence. Most vegan groups, for example, focus on changing “everyday practices in one’s lifestyle” (Cherry, 2010, pg. 156) by encouraging the general public to adopt animal-free consumption habits. In doing so, however, vegan groups bolster the capitalist notion that individuals can enact meaningful social change by making “ethical” consumption choices. In reality, without a complete overthrow of capitalism – no matter if the market economy is based on animal or plant products – our economic system will continue to sacrifice the wellbeing of the earth and all of its inhabitants in order to continue its perpetual profit accumulation. In contrast to vegan groups, FNB’s activism revolves around this anti-capitalist reality, seeking to subvert the capitalist system instead of upholding it.

While the food justice and anti-war groups that developed alongside FNB in the late 1970s and early 1980s also tended toward an anti-capitalist politics³ – such as Food First, the Living Theatre, and Mobilization for Survival⁴ – none of them explicitly recognized that the institution of animal agriculture upholds the very ideologies of violence and human superiority over the environment that militarism and capitalism embed into the structures of U.S. society. Food First, for example, “has been working to end the injustices that cause hunger since 1975” (n.d.) by speaking out against U.S. government involvement in Central America and “the free market ideology imposed by international financial institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization” (n.d.), but the group fails to acknowledge animal agriculture’s role in exacerbating hunger worldwide (Carus, 2010) or as a main contributor to global climate change (Steinfeld & FAO, 2006). Meanwhile, the Living Theatre and Mobilization for Survival lack any analysis of the food system’s perpetuation of poverty and violence, never mind of the role of animal

³ This is with the exception of more mainstream food-related welfare programs, which further invisibilize poverty by “hiding poor people away in church basements while they get a meal,” according to the FNB chapter in East Bay, CA (cited in Heynen, 2010, pg. 1229).

⁴ Now known as Boston Mobilization.

agriculture more specifically. The only group integrating ideologies of food justice, anti-war, and anti-poverty that also incorporated veg*nism into its work during the time of FNB's development was The Farm, an intentional community in Summertown, TN. However, since The Farm's activities centered internally on building an off-the-grid community rather than directly challenging U.S. power structures and engaging with the general public, The Farm cannot be adequately compared with FNB due to their fundamentally different approaches to activism as well as the scale on which that activism happened.

While FNB is distinct from groups engaging in the forms of activism discussed above, it succeeds in creating a coalition of individuals – both activists who are doing work in other realms, and self-identified non-activists – to unite these seemingly disparate forms of activism and otherwise non-politicized people under one political framework. I will discuss in detail the varied activist backgrounds of FNB members in my third chapter, but can comment briefly on the subject of politicizing formerly non-activists, which arose during my interview with members of the current Boston FNB chapter. James Cook, for example, reported that his group attracts a number of people who do not consider themselves to be activists, but are interested in FNB's work because “not killing people and feeding people are pretty easy things to get on board with” (personal communication, 18 March 2016). FNB's ability to appeal to a wide array of people due to its unification of three interconnected structures of violence only increases the importance of its work, as it demonstrates the movement's efficacy in shifting public opinion.

Considering FNB's simultaneous uniqueness from groups engaging in related forms of activism and its ability to reach both individuals involved in each form and those not involved at all, my interest now lies in determining what prompted FNB to develop a particular socio-natural political ideology based on an understanding of the interconnectedness of militarism, capitalism, and speciesism.

I aim to answer this question by analyzing the geographic location in which the movement originated—Cambridge, MA. Such an approach strikes me as particularly relevant to this thesis because it hinges upon a socionatural understanding of social processes affecting and being affected by the ecological and spatial contexts in which they are embedded. Existing literature on the role of place in social movements – specifically, the political process model of theorizing social movements, upon which I will elaborate in my third chapter – stresses the importance of the external sociopolitical environment of a certain place in influencing collective action (Miller, 2000, pg. 24.) I contend that this analysis must be applied to FNB, a movement whose political ideology hinges upon the interconnectedness of nature and society. However, no prior scholarly studies on FNB have applied such an analysis to the movement, and have instead focused on FNB’s anarchist approach to food (Clark, 2004; Edwards & Mercer, 2007), its operational history (Crass, 2013; Gelderloos, 2006), its civil disobedience of direct action (Heynen, 2010), its spatial protests of neoliberalism (Sbicca & Perdue, 2014), and its tenets of animal liberation (Winter, 2015). My thesis aims to fill this gap in the literature on FNB by applying a socionatural lens inspired by the political process model onto the movement.

The research methods involved in this thesis include archival analysis and interviews. In addition to scholarly literature on FNB, socionature, social movements, place, and feminist environmentalism, I have analyzed archival resources produced by and about FNB, including FNB’s website, blog, and social media platforms; textual resources produced by FNB for burgeoning activists; articles from alternative newspapers and magazines on FNB’s activism; and written interviews with FNB members. I have further analyzed archival resources regarding the historical, political, social, and economic context of the peace movement in Cambridge, MA during the time period of 1970-2000, most notably Byron Miller’s Geography PhD dissertation on the subject;

census data on Cambridge, MA; and articles on the websites of the City of Cambridge and the Cambridge Historical Society.

In terms of interviews, I was able to get in contact with three individuals, all of whom are still involved with FNB in some capacity: James Cook, an FNB activist since 2001 who started out with the San Diego chapter and in December 2015 helped to reincarnate the dormant Boston FNB group; Jay Morgan, an activist relatively new to FNB who after experiencing homelessness firsthand joined the Boston FNB group out of a commitment to increasing food accessibility; and Keith McHenry, one of FNB's eight original cofounders who, in his 36th year of activism with FNB, currently serves as a global coordinator for the movement.

The remainder of this thesis will proceed as follows: my next chapter will focus on the socionatural understanding FNB brings to its activism, situating that understanding within a tradition of feminist environmentalism that challenges the dominant Western discourse on nature as a distinct entity uncorrupted by societal forces. After establishing the theoretical basis for FNB's political framework, chapter three will draw upon the political process model of theorizing social movements to first describe the larger political context in which FNB developed under the pro-military Carter and Reagan administrations, which gave the peace movement clear grievances around which to mobilize. The chapter will go on to examine the city out of which FNB grew – Cambridge, MA – and its place-specificity as an intellectual center, a socioeconomically segregated area, a locus of the high-tech defense industry, and perhaps the most active hub of the 1980s-era U.S. peace movement. The primary goal of this chapter is to theorize which particular factors of time and place allowed FNB to develop its politics of interconnection via a synthesis of anti-militarism, anti-capitalism, and anti-speciesism. However, since socionatural literature has effectively argued that worldly events are intimately bound up with ecological transformations, such factors of time and place will not be sufficient to holistically explain FNB's political development. As such, my fourth

chapter will examine ecological transformation in Cambridge, particularly how New England's history of communal resource management and the high-tech-induced gentrification of Cambridge shifted both the physical landscape of the city and its residents' conceptualization of their relationship to the land so as to likely contribute to FNB's development.⁵ I will conclude this thesis with my fifth chapter, which will analyze the strengths and limitations of FNB's socionatural approach to activism, and discuss how FNB's exemplification of such an approach demonstrates the importance of taking a socionatural approach to understanding its mobilization.

⁵ I acknowledge that by separating discussions of political processes and ecological transformations into two different chapters, I risk committing the very dualistic epistemological fallacy that literature on socionature seeks to dismantle. However, my aim in doing so is to demonstrate the limits of examining individually the political and ecological context of Cambridge from 1970-2000 in explaining FNB's development, since neither chapter will be able to provide a complete account of FNB's story. By first juxtaposing the two analyses then combining them in my concluding chapter, I seek to highlight the increased analytical efficacy of an epistemology which depends upon a socionatural understanding of the world.

Chapter 2

A Theoretical Framework of FNB's Ideology

In order to begin examining how the sociopolitical and ecological contexts of Cambridge, MA in the 1980s influenced FNB's understanding of the interconnectedness of militarism, capitalism, and speciesism via a shared core of violence, it is first necessary to determine exactly what that understanding entails. This chapter will lay out a theoretical framework for FNB's interconnected ideology. It will begin by introducing the Cartesian-influenced discourse on nature that dominates Western society, then continue by contrasting this prevailing "wisdom" with a socionatural framework for understanding the human-nature relationship, situating FNB's ideology in this particular understanding of the earth and its inhabitants. Finally, since the literature on socionature does not explicitly discuss veg*nism as a less violent method of relating to the other-than-human world, the chapter will draw upon what I consider to be a subset of socionatural theory that does specifically reflect FNB's anti-speciesism via veg*nism: feminist environmentalism. By the end of the chapter, I will have described the theoretical backbone – supported by socionatural theory broadly and feminist environmentalism specifically – of FNB's interconnected ideology of anti-militarism, anti-capitalism, and anti-speciesism.

The Western dominant discourse on nature.

Western societies have historically embraced the idea of nature as "a distinct material domain" that exists "regardless of, and separately from, our attempts to understand it" (Castree, 2014, pg. 5), rather than as intimately bound up with society. This boundary between humans and nature is constructed largely through what Claudio Guillen termed the "interiorization" of knowledge (as cited in Bordo, 1986, pg. 442), which prevented individuals from understanding

themselves as existing in dialectical⁶ relation to the world around them. Though certainly disseminated long before the 14th century, particularly in Christian theology, this separation of the self and others was reestablished in popular thought by French philosopher René Descartes during the European Renaissance as one of the foundational tenets of European Enlightenment ideology. Under Descartes' well-known manifesto of *cogito ergo sum* ("I think therefore I am"), knowledge stemmed from what was conceptualized as a solely human ability to differentiate between our inner selves and the outer world, to separate the knower from the known (ibid, pg. 499). This individualistic conception of the self which took hold during the Cartesian era and still dominates Western philosophical imagination stands in stark contrast to that of medieval times when – although the self-others dichotomy still existed in Christian circles – “the categories of self and world [...] were not [so] rigorously opposed” in popular imagination (ibid, pg. 446). Indeed, Owen Barfield has commented on medieval understandings of the intimate connections between “inner” and “outer” lifeworlds in the context of medieval art: pre-Renaissance, paintings did not use the now pervasive technique of perspective, since observers of the paintings “felt themselves and the objects around them [...] immersed together in something like a clear lake [...] of meaning” (as cited in ibid).

With the dissolution of this medieval understanding of interconnection between individuals and the world around them, however, humans could much less easily “feel nourished by the same sense of oneness, of continuity between all things” (ibid, pg. 454), and instead began to derive meaning from a belief in their uniqueness from the unthinking and uninteresting world around them (ibid, pg. 450). This belief of human exceptionalism – taken up after Descartes most notably by Immanuel Kant – not only fostered a sense of detachment from the natural world, but also a sense

⁶ Here, I am using “dialectic” in the Marxist sense of the term, which encourages an understanding of the intimate connections between various societal forces rather than a view of individual worldly phenomena as isolated and unaffected by the context in which they are embedded.

of intrinsic superiority over it (ibid), such that nature became a means to human ends rather than an end in and of itself worthy of moral consideration (Donovan, 1994, pg. 176). The conceptualization of nature as existing solely for human use paved the way for a capitalistic human society to use the earth and its inhabitants in such a way as to maximize profits, which meant turning all other-than-human beings – in what Marx calls their “first nature” – into inanimate commodities – thus producing their “second nature” – with little consideration for the ecological or moral implications of doing so (cited in Castree, 1997, pp. 2, 8). While capitalism understands itself as utilizing resources rather than destroying them, Marxist scholars argue that capitalism necessarily must destroy those resources since – in the name of constant profit accumulation – capitalism will continue to use resources until they are entirely depleted. As Castree asserts, “capitalist principles of economic organization have a *specific liability to destroy their own resource base*” (ibid, pg. 9, emphasis in original). Among the resource bases that Marxist scholars contend capitalism is guaranteed to destroy are the earth and its other-than-human inhabitants. By utilizing resources to the point of their ultimate destruction, capitalism exerts dominance over other-than-human entities which cannot advocate for themselves, and therefore commits a violence against natural ecosystems. However, in contrast to capitalist principles of human dominance, socionatural theory argues that such other-than-human entities should be included in the moral concern of humans. I believe that an understanding of the tenets of socionature prove integral in framing FNB’s political framework, as it challenges the hierarchical separations of self and other, and of human and nature, perpetuated by dominant Western discourse and largely responsible for the violence embedded in the militarism, capitalism, and speciesism that FNB works to combat.

Socionatural theory.

While Buddhism and other Eastern religions have long advocated for an understanding of the interconnected relationship between humans and nature, I find it appropriate to situate the

political framework of FNB – a Western social movement – in a Western theoretical tradition that challenges the dominant one. As such, I locate FNB’s political framework on a broad scale in a geographic theoretical tradition called “socio-nature” (Castree et al, 2013, n. pag.), which identifies the underpinnings of human-made environmental destruction in the dominant conception of nature as having a constitutive essence that detaches it categorically from social processes, such that we understand nature to exist “‘out there’ [...], waiting to be understood” (Castree, 2014, pgs. 5-6). Socionatural theory asserts that this detachment sets up a dualism between nature and society—one dualism among many constructed through Western “enlightened” discourses (Gerber, 1997, pg. 1) which uphold society’s violent power structures by creating hierarchical relationships between two entities that have come to be understood as inherently antithetical to one another (Castree, 2014, pg. 26).

Aiming to call attention to the nature/society dualism and the violent power relations it creates, literature on socio-natural construction aims to describe “nature and culture not as antagonistic or even dialectical, but essentially as an ecological whole: a bioregion” (Judd, 2014, pg. ix). With such a description, socio-nature goes beyond dialectical approaches to describing nature and society – which “k[ee]p both as a priori separate domains” – to assert that both entities “are integral to each other and produce permanencies (or thing-like moments) in their unity” (Swyngedouw, 1999, pg. 446). Swyngedouw demonstrates such unity in his 1999 article on water and Spanish society, in which he illustrates both “the central role of water politics, water culture, and water engineering in shaping Spanish society” and “the contemporary water geography and ecology of Spain as the product of centuries of socioecological interaction” (pg. 443). In other words, Swyngedouw highlights how in Spanish society water functions not as a “natural” entity, separated from yet influential upon social processes, but as a social process in and of itself.

To better to understand nature's dynamism within and diffusion throughout society's dominant discourses and physical processes, the four – often contradictory and always socially constructed – meanings of nature as laid out by Castree (2014, pg. 10) provide a useful clarification. First, there is *external nature*, which we understand as any phenomenon – living or inanimate – occurring in what we believe to be the “other-than-human world.” Next there comes *universal nature*, which we understand as the entire physical world – both in its historical development and contemporary status – including humans. More abstractly, there is *intrinsic nature*, which we understand as the defining features – the “essences” – of all worldly phenomena. Finally, there is *super-ordinate nature*, which we understand as the meta-force driving worldly phenomena. Recognizing these four diverse meanings of nature provides a helpful framework for understanding nature not as “a distinct material domain” which exists “regardless of, and separately from” society and its discourses (Castree, 2014, pg. 5), but as a pervasive phenomenon whose meaning depends upon the social context in which it is used and the physical, mental, and/or social entities to which it refers.

Envisioning the human-nature relationship in this interconnected fashion allows humans to understand how we affect and are affected by the world around us, further prompting us to relate on a more intimate level to other-than-human entities, and can ultimately lead to the creation of a much less violent world—beliefs on which FNB centers its anti-militarist, anti-capitalist, and anti-speciesist activism. However, because socionatural theory makes no mention of veg*nism as a method by which to challenge the violent arrogance that forms the core of the social structures FNB is committed to combatting, I'm drawing upon the discourse of feminist environmentalism to fill in this ideological gap between socionatural theory and FNB's political framework.

The feminist environmentalist discourse on nature.

Though its principles existed in earlier philosophical traditions such as Native American spirituality, the feminist environmentalist – or, “ecofeminist” – movement began explicitly in the

early 1970s with the publication of French author Françoise d'Eaubonne's book *Le Féminisme ou la Mort* (Ecofeminism), and locates the underpinnings of environmental destruction and other types of human-made violence against the earth and its inhabitants in the sense of human separateness and superiority that developed in the Cartesian era, and the capitalist prioritization of profit accumulation that stemmed from it (Bordo, 1986; Donovan, 1994; Seager, 2003). In order to develop a critical discourse on the relationship between humans and the earth, feminist environmentalists advocate an understanding of the intimate interconnectedness between all living creatures such that we break down the “barriers of individuation and egoism” (Donovan, 1994, pg. 190) that prompt us to act – often violently – purely in terms of rational self-interest. Additionally, feminist environmentalists call for a care-based ethic toward the earth, encouraging us to regard all living creatures with an “attentive love” that directs attention away from the self and toward the needs of those around us, both human and other-than (ibid). According to environmental ethicist Paul Taylor, this sympathetic ethic depends fundamentally upon an ability to conceptualize other-than-human entities as agents whose value lies not in how we can use them, but in their own complex lifeworlds constructed in intimate relation to our own (as cited in ibid, pg. 192).

This understanding of interconnectedness has prompted many feminist environmentalists, such as Donna Haraway, to regard movements for animal justice as “clear-sighted recognitions of connection across the discredited breach of culture and nature” (as cited in Seager, 2003, pp. 169-170). A number of prominent feminist environmentalists – such as Carol Adams, Greta Gaard, Lori Gruen, patrice jones, and Marti Kheel – write on veganism and practice it themselves as a method of cultivating a less violent relationship with the earth and its other-than-human inhabitants. These scholars do so based on an analysis of the oppression of women and the oppression of other-than-human entities as being intimately connected, citing the “patriarchal logic of domination that lay at the heart” of the mistreatment of both (Bailey, 2007). Clearly, just like FNB, these scholars identify

the common thread of violence running through social structures of domination, and advocate veganism as a means of challenging that violence.

Discourse within the vegan movement itself draws upon the socrionatural analysis of feminist environmentalism in its understanding of the interconnected relationship between humans and nature, as well as the nonviolent principles that tend to stem from it. Though the term “vegan” was coined in 1944 by Vegan Society founder Donald Watson, vegetarianism as a practice traces back to Greek philosopher and mathematician Pythagoras, who around 500 B.C.E. “promoted benevolence among all species, including humans” (Suddath, 2008). This nonviolent relationship to other-than-human entities via an understanding of interconnectedness still colors contemporary vegan discourse. For example, prominent Vegan Society member Eva Batt (1964) writes that “veganism is one thing and one thing only—a way of living which avoids exploitation whether it be of our fellow men, the animal population, or the soil upon which we all rely for our very existence,” while animal rights movement scholar Elizabeth Cherry (2010) cites as a core goal of veganism the challenging of the species boundaries developed through “[t]he vast majority of human societies throughout history [founding] their social relations with nature on a nature-culture divide, viewing humans as superior to nature.” A number of prominent nonprofit organizations that promote veganism today – such as Vegan Outreach, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, Mercy for Animals, The Vegan Society, EarthSave, and the Food Empowerment Project – as well as the 2014 documentary film *Conspiracy: The Sustainability Secret*, also emphasize the detrimental environmental impact of animal agriculture (as discussed in chapter one), which further demonstrates the understanding of the interconnectedness of nature and society embedded in vegan discourse.

It is this understanding of the interconnected relationship between humans and nature which has guided the overlapping feminist environmentalist and vegan movements to advocate veganism as a less violent mode of relating to other-than-human entities, and which I believe

provides a useful framework for understanding FNB's politics of nonviolence via anti-militarism, anti-capitalism, and anti-speciesism.

However, While feminist environmentalist philosophy provides a useful framework for understanding veg*nism as a nonviolent method of relating to other-than-human beings, scholars have critiqued the literature for its tendency to essentialize women as being “in fact *closer* [than all other genders, specifically men] to nature and hence [being able to] derive some unique insight from this bond” (Archambault, 1990, pg. 19). This line of thought usually leads to the conclusion that women are the only ones who can foster a less violent relationship between humans and other-than-human entities (Sargisson, 2001, pg. 52), and thus proves limiting in terms of developing a theory that can be widely adopted. With these critiques in mind, for the remainder of this thesis I will frame FNB's uniquely synthesized ideology in terms of socionatural theory.

Conclusion.

In contrast to dominant Western conceptions which envision nature and society as distinct realms in hierarchical relation to one another, feminist environmentalism, specifically – in its explicitly advocacy of veg*nism – and socionatural theory, more broadly, provide a theoretical framework for understanding the political framework of FNB, which unites anti-militarist, anti-capitalist, and anti-speciesist activism due to their synthesized ability to challenge the violence embedded in U.S. societal structures.

Now that I have laid out FNB's political framework, I can address the central question of this thesis: what prompted FNB to develop a socionatural political ideology based on an understanding of the interconnectedness of militarism, capitalism, and speciesism?

Some may find it tempting to attribute FNB's integration of anti-speciesism via veganism into its activism to its typical membership pool—young, white, middle-class, well-educated men with strong ideological beliefs and commitments to activism, usually drawn from punk and hippie

subcultures (Edwards & Mercer, 2007, pg. 282-283; K. McHenry, personal communication, 28 December 2015). Indeed, Cherry's (2010) research on the linkages between veganism and punk subcultures found that the "strict vegans" surveyed "were all punks," that many punk bands touch upon veganism and animal rights in their music, and that punk zines often discuss the two topics (pg. 157). One could argue that this typical membership of FNB's bolsters the movement's commitment to anti-speciesist principles.

However, this argument is a circular one: not only do social movement members influence the movements in which they participate, but the identities of social movement members are influenced by their activity in those movements (Benford & Snow, 2000, pg. 632). Since FNB has integrated anti-speciesism into its activism as one of its three main principles since its founding in 1980, the movement has undoubtedly changed its members' understandings of the other-than-human world—cofounder Keith McHenry evinces as much in his experiences at the annual national Animal Rights Conference, where many attendees share with him that they adopted vegan consumption habits and became politically active around non-human animals because of their participation with FNB (Winter, 2015, pg. 61).

Because of the circularity of the membership argument, I will emulate FNB by engaging in a sociopolitical and ecological analysis of the movement's development. In the following chapter, I will begin to do so by following the political process model of social movement theorization to examine first the national political context under which FNB developed in the late 20th century, then the sociopolitical factors of the specific city – Cambridge, MA – in which FNB originated.

Chapter 3

Hypothesizing FNB's Development: The Political Opportunity Structure of Cambridge, MA

Now that I've described the socionatural understanding of interconnection that FNB brings to its activism – identifying militarism, capitalism, and speciesism as outgrowths of the same violent social system that prioritizes profit accumulation over the wellbeing of the earth and its inhabitants – I can begin to examine how the sociopolitical context of Cambridge, MA in the 1980s helped to develop that understanding. This chapter will focus on the particular factors of time and place that helped to prompt FNB's socionaturally interconnected approach to activism.

After introducing the political process model of theorizing social movements and giving a brief overview of Cambridge's history, I will describe the sociopolitical factors that led to the strength of the Boston-area peace movement of the 1980s, out of which FNB grew. In doing so, I will focus on the U.S. foreign policy of the Cold War era and Cambridge's status as the national center of the high-tech defense industry. Once I've laid out these national and local contexts in which the Boston-area peace movement and, subsequently, FNB, developed, I will argue that FNB's origins in the Boston-area peace movement influenced FNB's socionatural awareness of interconnection between all beings, due to both the peace movement's political strategy of effecting change internationally by focusing its activism on a local scale, and the experienced activist backgrounds of movement members. The ultimate goal of this chapter is to demonstrate that by helping to form FNB's understanding of interconnectedness, the sociopolitical context of Cambridge in the 1980s served as a major influence on FNB's development of its nonviolent political framework of anti-militarism, anti-capitalism, and anti-speciesism.

The political process model.

The political process model of theorizing social movements analyzes the sociopolitical context of a particular place and time in order to determine the likely factors that influence social

movement mobilization. Political process scholars note that, though sociopolitical context does not prescribe the success or failure of mobilization⁷, it does comprise a “crucial [component] in a complex set of interacting causal processes” (Miller, 1995, pg. 206). Analyses of social movements under the political process model tend to depend on the following four major resources – outlined by political scientist Sidney Tarrow – which vary depending on time and place: the degree to which political institutions are open to grassroots influences; the (in)stability of broader political structures; the presence or absence of allies among members of the political elite; and the state’s propensity for repression (as cited in Miller, 2000, pg. 25). While my analysis of FNB does not strictly follow Tarrow’s four-pronged analysis, it does focus heavily on the geographic concept of most relevance to the political process model: the concept of place.

Place consists of three facets: locale (the context in which social relations take place), location (the geographic area encompassing that context), and sense of place (the “feeling” of a place as constituted by and constitutive of human activity there) (Miller, 2000, pg. 16). As Miller (2000) notes, the mobilization of a social movement is constituted both temporally and spatially (pg. 68)—that is, by both the current political moment as well as “place-specific patterns of social interaction” (pg. 22). Indeed, Agnew (cited in Miller, 2000, pg. 17) identifies six factors which shape political activity in particular places: spatial divisions of labor; communications technology and its accessibility; state characteristics; divisions along class, gender, and racial lines; local centers of identity formation; and the patterns of everyday life. It is when potential members of social movements make sense of these factors in the context of their geographic location – at any number of scales – and form a “geography of social knowing and unknowing” (cited in Miller, 2000, pg. 21) that social movements begin to mobilize. For FNB, this mobilization began in the specific place of Cambridge, MA.

⁷ Indeed, as I will discuss in the following chapter, my argument is that the ecological processes of a particular place and time can also provide great influence on social movement mobilization.

An historical introduction to Cambridge.

From 1850 to 1920, Cambridge served as an important center of industrial development due to its close proximity to the national commercial center of Boston, an extensive transportation network, its large tracts of undeveloped land, and a steady supply of cheap immigrant labor (CHS, n.d.). Cambridge's status as an industrial hub, coupled with its being home to the prestigious intellectual institutions of Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), began attracting two significant groups of people: technological innovators and young intellectuals. By the 1960s, the former group had built a concentration of high tech companies around Massachusetts' Route 128, soon dubbed "America's Technology Highway" (Mass Moments, n.d.). Though Silicon Valley overtook the Route 128 region in technological innovation by the 1980s (Saxenian, 1994), Cambridge continued to serve as a hub for scientific research—so much so that by the late 1990s Massachusetts ranked as one of the top five states in terms of federal resources granted, with the Department of Defense accounting for over sixty percent of those resources (Saxenian, 1994). As a center of government funding, Cambridge also comprised an ideal area for the aforementioned young intellectuals at Harvard and MIT to effect activist influence over the state policies that they understood as sources of societal inequities. Starting in the 1960s when Harvard Professor Stuart Hughes ran for U.S. Senate on an explicit anti-nuclear platform (Miller, 1995, pg. 210), Cambridge hosted one of the most active and radical anti-war movements in the nation, largely due to its high concentration of skilled students and young professionals (ibid, pg. 255). It was out of this vibrant anti-war movement that FNB grew.

Setting the stage for the Boston-area peace movement of the 1980s.

As geography and social movement scholar Byron Miller writes in his 1995 PhD dissertation, the Boston metropolitan area functioned as "the principal center" (pg. 6) of the late-twentieth-century peace movement, boasting over 70 peace organizations in Cambridge by the early 1980s (pg.

320). While I will elaborate upon the activities of these organizations when I describe the Boston-area peace movement's influence on FNB later in this chapter, I must first describe the national and local contexts which prompted the development of the movement.

U.S. foreign policy from Kennedy to Reagan

The Boston-area peace movement has its origins in the international anti-nuclear movement, which began in the late 1950s at the height of the Cold War (NAPF, n.d.; CND, n.d.). After the first few years of intense activity, anti-nuclear groups saw a decrease in their numbers due to the seeming efficacy of multilateral disarmament (CND, n.d.) that came with the post-Cuban Missile Crisis implementation of a hotline between the United States and the Soviet Union to be used to resolve future conflicts, as well as the signing of the Limited Test Ban Treaty by the U.S., the U.S.S.R., and the U.K. in 1963 (AJSM, n.d.). The anti-nuclear movement continued throughout the 1960s and 1970s in a relatively small capacity, lacking clear grievances around which to mobilize the public in major numbers (Miller, 1995, pg. 324). It was not until midway through the Carter administration that the anti-nuclear movement became revitalized, responding to Carter's increasingly hawkish foreign policy developed in 1979 after the Iranian Hostage Crisis and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (ibid, pg. 326).

Reagan's election in 1980 – which brought “exponential growth in military spending” (NAPF, n.d.), an increase in anti-communist intervention in Central America, and bellicose pro-war rhetoric – only bolstered the renewed anti-nuclear movement, allowing it to convey the immanence of an uncontrolled arms race and nuclear war (Miller, 1995, pg. 328-329). In a 1982 ABC News/Washington Post poll, 81 percent of U.S. citizens favored a nuclear freeze (ibid, pg. 348). It was this pro-war national political context, coupled with anti-nuclear public opinion, that in part led to the strength of the Boston-area peace movement of the 1980s, lending the movement both clear grievances around which to mobilize and a large pool of potential activists upon which to draw.

Cambridge's high-tech defense industry.

The broader pro-military context of the Cold War – reinforced by Carter's transition in 1978 to an aggressive policy of arms buildup (ibid, pg. 326) – prompted the Massachusetts Miracle, a period of economic revitalization in Massachusetts from the late 1970s to the early 1980s which depended upon the sudden influx of high-tech defense startups in the Boston-Metropolitan Area. During this period, the massive Carter-Reagan defense buildup played a significant and visible role in Cambridge through the restructuring of its economy from an industrial center to a high-tech defense hub. The effect of federal defense spending on Cambridge's own economy mobilized local peace activists to action (ibid, pg. 2-3).

The background for the Massachusetts Miracle begins in the post-Civil War era. After Massachusetts' period of rapid industrialization following Reconstruction – largely due to railroad expansion from Boston, domestic market growth, and the bountiful arrival of European immigrants (CHS, n.d.) – and the subsequent strengthening of organized labor, industrial capital began shifting to the southeastern U.S. in search of a more exploitable workforce (Miller, 1995, pg. 154). As a result, Massachusetts' unemployment rate steadily rose from 1919 through the 1970s (ibid), plateauing at 12 percent in 1975 (Butterfield, 1985).

The late 1970s, however, brought a wave of high-tech defense startups to the Boston area, coinciding with Carter's shift to a policy of arms buildup that launched an increase in defense appropriations from \$97.5 billion in 1977 to \$227.4 billion in 1974 (Miller, 1995, pg. 182). This wave led to the Massachusetts Miracle (Miller, 1995, pg. 142), when high-tech manufacturing almost doubled from 1973 to 1984 (ibid, pg. 171). During this time, 10,544 defense jobs were created in Cambridge (ibid, pg. 200), where the Department of Defense accounted for over 60 percent of federal research and development spending (Mackun, n.d.).

From the late 1970s through the 1980s, high-tech defense companies began concentrating along Route 128 – a highway circling around Boston that runs through the cities of Cambridge, Waltham, and Lexington – forming the nation’s first modern industrial parks (Mass Humanities, n.d.). During this period, the Route 128 region rivaled Silicon Valley in terms of technological concentration (Mackun, n.d.; Wadhwa, 2009; Saxenien, 1994), hosting such influential companies as Bell Labs (where the transistor was invented), Raytheon, Digital Equipment Corporation, and Wang Labs (Mass Humanities). By concentrating here, high-tech defense companies strategically located themselves near Cambridge’s elite educational institutions, most notably Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) (Miller, 1995, pp. 155-158 & 197). In doing so, these companies established research-based collaborations with some of the most advanced scientists in the world, founding during the Cold War such research hubs as MIT’s Radiation and Draper Labs, and Harvard’s Countermeasures and Cruft Labs (ibid, pg. 158). It was at Draper Lab that the missile guidance system for the Trident II submarine’s nuclear missiles, the MX missile, and the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System (BMEWS) were developed (ibid, pg. 197), making Cambridge a center of manufacturing for key weapons of the Carter-Reagan arms buildup (ibid). Clearly, the national arms buildup played a primary role in restructuring Cambridge’s local economy, making the U.S.’s aggressive foreign policy even more visible to peace activists in the Boston area.

Interconnectedness in the Boston-area peace movement.

Against the backdrop of national arms buildup and local high-tech defense industry, Cambridge became a center for “the most vibrant peace movement in the country” (ibid, pg. 143). Through its strategy of challenging national pro-war policies on a local scale, as well as the varied activist backgrounds that its members brought to its activities, the Boston-area peace movement hinged upon an understanding of interconnected power structures of violence—an understanding

which influenced FNB's own awareness of the interconnectedness of anti-militarism, anti-capitalism, and anti-speciesism.

Focus on local politics.

In the hopes of challenging the aggressively militarized U.S. state and halting the arms buildup, the Boston-area peace movement sought to effect change at a local level, and thus understood the ways in which local and national politics influenced one another. By focusing on the passage of city council resolutions and peace referenda, as well as on influencing local legislators (ibid, pg. 219), the peace movement recognized the interactions between processes at various *scales*—“different levels of analysis (from global to local) in which the investigation of political processes is set” (Miller, 2000, pg. 17). In this recognition, the peace movement abided by the popular wisdom of social movement literature which asserts that institutions of the local state are not mere “reflection[s] of [those of] the central state,” but can instead be “instruments for real social change” (ibid, pg. 28). Social movement geographers Blickstein and Hanson emphasize the efficacy of multiscalar organizing in social movement mobilization in their (2001) investigation of Critical Mass, a now international monthly rush hour bike ride intended to increase the visibility of biking (pg. 351). As Blickstein and Hanson note, “bicycling is an inherently local act” (pg. 357), yet by utilizing virtual forms of communication (pg. 352) to coordinate actions across multiple cities worldwide (pg. 359), Critical Mass is able to shape the dialogue surrounding alternative modes of transportation at a global scale (pg. 348). Clearly, both Critical Mass and the peace movement alike realized the important effects that local activism can have on larger geographic scales.

This recognition of the linkages between activism done at different scales suggests an analysis of interconnectedness within the Boston-area peace movement—an analysis which I hypothesize contributed to the development of FNB's understanding of the interconnectedness of all creatures, human and other-than.

Even though the Boston-area peace movement had little hope of directly affecting national military policy based on the federal government's conservative makeup and the lobbying power of the defense industry (Miller, 1995, pg. 3), the open structure of local politics, the presence of local pro-peace politicians, and the strongly politicized population of young intellectuals made Cambridge an ideal place in which to encourage larger-scale change through local activist measures (ibid, pg. 320).

In 1940, Cambridge adopted a council-manager form of government with proportional representation, meaning that the City Council – elected by a process which ensures that all candidates receiving more than one-ninth of the votes become councilmembers – appoints the Mayor, who has no veto power (ibid, pg. 221). This local state structure allows for councilmembers representing minority political groups to exert strong political sway, and for those minority political groups to easily place initiatives on the ballot for further increased influence (ibid, pg. 223). During its heyday, the Boston-area peace movement capitalized on this local state structure, enjoying political allyship from a city council that supported ballot initiatives calling for an end to the Vietnam War, refused to participate in FEMA's nuclear war planning under Regan, established the Cambridge Peace Commission, and backed a nuclear weapons freeze (ibid, pg. 350).

The Boston-area peace movement also received support from a number of political elites at the broader level of Massachusetts politics, with a congressional delegation full of politicians who took liberal stances on defense issues in the 1970s and 1980s, such as Democratic Socialist Michael Harrington, anti-war activist Father Robert Drinan, and Representatives Joseph P. Kennedy III, Niki Tsongas, and Tip O'Neil (ibid, pg. 210-211). Though the Massachusetts delegation did support several weapons systems which brought jobs to the state, it opposed the MX missile, anti-satellite weapons, and many other weapons system (ibid, pg. 211). All of these latter stances allowed the delegation to build alliances with liberal voters, anti-war voters, and voters otherwise concerned with

the state's boom in high-tech defense industries (ibid, pg. 209), including those involved in the many organizations which constituted the Boston-area peace movement.

Most notable among these organizations was the Cambridge Lobby for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze, founded in 1981 by Cambridge citizens Ann Crumb and Louise Coleman out of their concerns with the acceleration of the nuclear arms race under Ronald Reagan (ibid, pg. 320, 331). The organization's founding by Crumb and Coleman followed the national Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, launched in 1980 by defense and disarmament researcher Randall Forsberg and peace activist Sommaripa (Wittner, 2010). Designed to run from 1980 to 1984, Forsberg and Sommaripa's national Freeze Campaign planned to first secure the support of peace organizations before proceeding to gain the backing of major interest groups, engage in widespread public education to sway mainstream opinion, and finally introducing the issue into electoral politics (ibid). The Cambridge Lobby abided by the strategies of the national Freeze Campaign (ibid, pg. 334) – though with less of an emphasis on peace education due to Cambridge's history of peace activism and large pool of intellectuals (ibid, pg. 336) – and focused its activism on lobbying federal legislators (ibid). In particular, the Cambridge Lobby concentrated on demonstrating political support for the Freeze from the districts of Tip O'Neill, Cambridge's U.S. representative and Speaker of the House, whose influential national position gave the Cambridge Lobby the chance to wield significant political power (ibid). Though O'Neill's political actions did not always align with those of Freeze activists, he did lead several congressional efforts against such major weapons programs as the MX missile thanks to the Cambridge Lobby's activities (ibid).

The Cambridge Lobby was a locally focused part of a national Freeze campaign that, by the summer of 1982, had collected 2.3 million petition signatures and had successfully prompted 370 city councils, 71 county boards, 446 town meetings, and 23 state legislatures to pass Freeze resolutions (ibid, pg. 348). This massive popular support for the Freeze caused Massachusetts

Senator Kennedy, along with Senator Hatfield and Representatives Markey, Conte, and Bingham, to move the resolution into the U.S. legislature in the same year, thus shifting a locally based campaign to one with the potential to affect the military policy of the central state (ibid). Though the final Freeze Resolution, passed on May 4, 1983, was “amended to the point of becoming meaningless” due to bipartisan congressional interest in safeguarding defense jobs (ibid, pg. 349), the fact that the locally based Freeze campaign was able to mobilize the U.S. public on such a large scale showcases the wisdom of Freeze organizers in general and Boston-area peace movement organizers specifically in their understanding of the interconnected nature of local and broader-scale politics. It is this analysis of interconnection that I believe set the stage for the development of FNB’s own recognition of the interconnectedness of all creatures, and subsequently its synthesized political framework of anti-militarism, anti-capitalism, and anti-speciesism.

FNB activists themselves have spoken to the intimate linkages between local and broader-scale politics. James Cook of the Boston FNB chapter, for example, believes that “large changes pretty much always come out of small changes” (personal communication, 18 March 2016)—a view supported by the reasoning behind a series of three protest marches planned by FNB in the summer and fall of 1981. The marches, which began at Cambridge City Hall and ended at MIT’s Draper Weapons Research Lab, “[were] designed [...] to highlight how the international politics of nuclear war directly affected local politics, specifically, that the diversion of resources from human needs reduces services for the people of Cambridge” (Butler & McHenry, 1992). Based on the multiscalar strategies of the Boston-area peace movement, I contend that FNB’s own analysis of the interrelated effects of local and broader-scale activism stemmed largely from its basis in the peace movement.

Experienced activist makeup.

Further highlighting the peace movement’s analysis of interconnection via its understanding of the way that violent societal structures are intimately bound up with each other, movement

members came from varied activist backgrounds. Byron Miller's 1995 survey of Boston-area peace movement members, for example, found that most people active in the peace movement in the 1980s were socialized into activism through earlier roles in the movements for civil rights, environmental justice, gender equality, and affordable housing rights (pg. 291). The involvement of Boston-area peace movement members in other areas of political activism suggests that they brought a structural understanding of societal issues to the movement, thus bolstering the analysis of interconnection that the peace movement lent to FNB.

Participation in numerous movements beyond FNB is also quite typical of FNB members, who throughout FNB's over 30 years of existence have been influenced by anarchism, animal rights, the U.S. Civil Rights movement, faith-based activism – “from Quakers to Pagans” – indigenous land struggles, and more (Crass, 2013, pg. 39). Before founding FNB, for example, the movement's eight original members spent much of their time “running around” Cambridge to meetings, rallies, and demonstrations organized by groups involved in activism relating to a wide variety of sociopolitical issues of particular relevance in the 1980s (K. McHenry, personal communication, 28 December 2015).

Another prominent FNB member who heavily participated in other social movements is Andy Stepanian, who had been involved with an FNB chapter in Long Island, NY for six years before becoming one of the SHAC 7. The SHAC 7 are six individual activists and a corporation (Stop Huntington Animal Cruelty USA, Inc.) who in 2006 were convicted of terrorism under the Federal Animal Enterprise Protection Act – which punishes anyone who “physically disrupts” an animal enterprise – for allegedly operating a website that expressed ideological support for protests against the product testing lab Huntingdon Life Sciences (“Animals not bombs,” n.d.; SHAC 7, n.d.). During the time of the SHAC 7's imprisonment, FNB encouraged the public to contribute finances, books, and letters to the six political prisoners, as well as to spread the word about their

case (“Animals not bombs,” n.d.). In a 2009 episode of *Democracy Now!*, Stepanian spoke of how his first six years of activism with FNB had prompted his involvement in a number of other movements, including that for animal justice:

“I definitely applaud people that fight for animal liberation, that fight for earth liberation, that fight for human rights and justice. And I have to say that I don’t have any regrets. I don’t have any regrets, because I know deep down inside—I mean, I’ve been involved with a variety of causes. I was doing Food Not Bombs, feeding the homeless once a week for about six years. It’s the same motivation that I had to do that every Sunday morning that brought me to question what was going on inside Huntingdon Life Sciences, the efficacy of testing on animals and the efficacy of the way we treat animals in this country. And it also brought me to New Orleans, Louisiana, to help folks after Hurricane Katrina. I mean, that’s what has motivated me to do what I do. It’s the same, I guess, tugging on my heartstrings. So I can’t say that I have any regrets for following my heart.” (“Animals not bombs,” n.d.)

This multifaceted political involvement of FNB members is indicative of the movement’s understanding that societal issues are not isolated phenomena, but instead arise from the same set of interconnected power structures that function to uphold violent hierarchies between historically marginalized groups and those who control how society operates. FNB locates these unequitable power structures in U.S. militarism, capitalism, and speciesism, seeking to decommodify food (Wilson, 2013, pg. 720) and public space (Sbicca, 2013, pg. 826) as a means of creating democratic control over (Myers, 1995, pg. 413) societal institutions through which the capitalist state perpetuates various forms of deeply entrenched oppression.

It is this understanding of the interconnected nature of all oppression as stemming from the same violent structures fundamental to militarism, capitalism, and speciesism in the U.S. that allowed the original founders of FNB to recognize the irony in a cluster of dilapidated public housing in Cambridge – and the hungry people who lived there – being located just across the street from the “shiny buildings” in Kendall Square where high-tech defense firms conducted government-funded military development research (McHenry, 2015, pg. 31). In other words, FNB’s appreciation of interconnected power structures allowed the movement to make visible the links between the

violence inherent in government defense spending, rampant poverty, hunger, and disregard for living beings. This structural understanding of state-sponsored violence speaks to FNB's socrionatural understanding in its ability to philosophically situate individuals in their broader worldly context such that they do not conceptualize themselves as separate from and/or superior to the world around them, but as both constituted by and constitutive of that world.

Conclusion.

This chapter has theorized how FNB's origins in the Boston-area peace movement influenced FNB's socrionatural understanding of the interconnectedness of all creatures through the peace movement's political strategy of effecting change internationally by focusing its activism on a local scale, as well as the experienced activist backgrounds of movement members. Thanks to this influence, it is my argument that the Boston-area peace movement and the broader sociopolitical context of Cambridge in the 1980s served as a large factor in FNB's development of its unique, nonviolent political framework of anti-militarism, anti-capitalism, and anti-speciesism.

However, even though the political opportunity structure of Cambridge in the 1980s played a primary role in this development, since literature on socrionature has convincingly theorized that political events are intimately bound up with ecological transformations, the particular factors of time and place discussed in this chapter will not be sufficient to fully explain how FNB arrived at its unique political framework. As such, the following chapter aims to continue this explanation by describing the ecological history of Cambridge and its influence on FNB.

Chapter 4

Hypothesizing FNB's Development: Ecological Transformation in Cambridge, MA

While my last chapter theorized the development of FNB's nonviolent political framework via the political opportunity structure of Cambridge, MA, this chapter follows the mandate of sociocultural theory – that social processes cannot be fully understood apart from the ecological context in which they are embedded – by describing the environmental transformation that took place in FNB's birthplace, and hypothesizing how that transformation influenced the movement's sociocultural understanding of interconnectedness and its subsequent unification of anti-speciesism, anti-capitalism, and anti-militarism. In pairing this chapter with the previous one and contending that social movements cannot be holistically understood without an analysis of both their sociopolitical and ecological contexts, I aim to challenge the dominant narrative that nature and society exist separately from, rather than in intimate relation with, each other—a narrative that, as FNB has so astutely identified, has conditioned the violence running through U.S. militarism, capitalism.

Hypothesizing the impact of historical changes in Cambridge's physical environment on the development of FNB's epistemology and political activities, this chapter proceeds down two analytical paths. First, I argue that the long history of communal resource management and conservation in the Boston Metropolitan Area conditioned FNB's understanding of the interconnectedness of nature and society, using the region's adoption of a municipally owned water system as a case study to show how area residents came to realize the impact of their environmental activities on their own communities and the communities around them. With this understanding of sociocultural interconnection, I argue, FNB was able to conceptualize a more contemporary form of environmental transformation happening around them – gentrification in Cambridge – as an outgrowth of the violent ideologies embedded in the structures of U.S. society, and to act upon that

socionatural understanding in its anti-militarist, anti-capitalist, and anti-speciesist activism. By outlining the epistemological influence of communal resource management and the practical influence of gentrification on the development of FNB's unique political framework, this chapter serves to demonstrate the import of ecological transformation on FNB's mobilization and thus provide a useful analysis of the movement not taken up previously by any other scholars.

Interconnection via communal resource management.

Just as my previous chapter located FNB's socionatural understanding of interconnection in the peace movement's political strategy and membership pool, this chapter additionally locates the development of that understanding in the longstanding tradition of communal resource management in the Boston Metropolitan Area. With the institution of public infrastructure owned municipally at the regional level, many residents of the Boston Metropolitan Area were able to realize the relationship of interconnection between the built, urban environment and the "natural" landscape, and between their own communities and those around them. This realization further allowed many residents to understand the intimate relationship of oneness between nature and society, as well as that between violent societal structures at local and broader scales—both of which FNB embodied in its activism.

Dating back to the earliest Puritan settlements of the colonial period (Judd, 2014 pg. 175), what is now known as the Boston Metropolitan Area boasts a long history of common resource management and conservation that has instilled in many area residents a recognition of the intimate relationship between nature and society. Though private land ownership and marketing of natural resources dominated among Puritan settlers, these two exploitative processes operated alongside those of conservation—while Bostonians "depleted their fisheries," "devastated their forests," and industrialized the landscape, they also founded the first fish, forest, and conservation agencies in the U.S., (ibid, pg. 179) and instituted a "centuries-old English common land system" to regulate use of

productive natural resources (Rawson, 2010, pp. 24-25). According to environmental historian Richard Judd (2010), this tradition of communal conservation efforts proved common among Boston Metropolitan Area residents for four reasons: many of them experienced a deep sense of and appreciation for place due to a long settlement history, held a Puritan ideology that prioritized a commitment to the common good, recognized the fragility of the area's resource base, and celebrated the Romantic artistic legacy of the region that depended upon the beauty of the natural landscape (pp. 180-181).

The strong ties that many Boston Metropolitan Area residents felt to the land, as well as the common resource management and conservation efforts that stemmed from them, imparted in many residents a visceral understanding of what Judd calls *civic ecologies*—"the network of interrelationships that binds the urban environment" (pg. 176), made up of both artificial and natural elements like water supplies, organic waste, parks, and vacant lots (ibid, pg. 210). As city-building proliferated across the U.S. in the late 19th century to accommodate larger population and increasing commercial interests, U.S. residents began relating to the natural environment through systems of human-made infrastructure (Rawson, 2010, pp. vii-viii). Since it urbanized very early by U.S. standards (ibid, pg. 3), the Boston Metropolitan Area helped to define this increasingly ambiguous relationship between city and nature through its invention of the nation's first canals, public parks, water and sewer systems, railroads, factories, suburbs, cemeteries, harbors, and forest preserves (ibid, pg. vii). These newly constructed ways of relating to the natural environment among urbanites became articulated in the U.S. first with urban geographers in the 1950s and followed by environmental historians in the 1980s, when they "began describing the built environment in ecological terms" (ibid, pg. 210). Throughout their history, many Boston Metropolitan Area residents have demonstrated a similar understanding of the interconnected reality of nature and society.

While FNB showcases its own understanding of ecological change as bound up with social processes in its anti-speciesist activism (discussed in chapter one), the movement also participates in climate change activism, which FNB cofounder Keith McHenry describes below:

“The philosophy of many Food Not Bombs volunteers has a strong environment component. Many groups seek to provide organic food to spare the Earth from the ravages of toxic chemicals. Our food being vegan reduces the impact on land and water as well as the climate. Food recovery make use of the resources that were used to grow the food which would have otherwise been wasted. These are just some of the direct ways Food Not Bombs seeks to protect the environment.

Food Not Bombs volunteers also help provide food, organize and participate in many environment protests. [...] For example I have met a number of Food Not Bombs groups in Indonesia [that] have been providing food, logistical support and participate in nonviolent direct actions against cement factories and mining operations that directly impact minority and low income communities. Food Not Bombs in Indonesia is typical of local chapters in [many] areas of the world. One of the longest campaigns Food Not Bombs has participated in has been participating in the defense of the indigenous people of Arizona against Peabody Coal. We have also supported campaigns to protect many other native people’s lands and water including the Aboriginal people of Australia, Shoshone people in Nevada and First Nations people in Canada. We also support groups like Sea Shepard and their work to protect the oceans [by providing] food to [seal, whale, and dolphin] hunt saboteurs.” (Personal communication, 18 April 2016)

By organizing against environmental devastation as part of its anti-militarist, anti-capitalist, and anti-speciesist activism, FNB demonstrates its understanding that violence to the earth is intimately bound up with violence to its inhabitants, and thus highlight its realization of the interconnectedness of nature and society.

Not only did many Bostonians – including the FNB cofounders – realize the interconnectedness of nature and society, they also structured their resource management in such a way as to emphasize the interconnected realities of their own lives and those of the residents of surrounding communities—an emphasis which we can see taken up by FNB in its analysis of the intimate relationship between local and national politics (as discussed in chapter three). Originating in Boston when in 1889 the city created the Metropolitan Sewerage Commission to become the first

U.S. city “to turn public services over to a metropolitan special district” (Elkind, 1998, pg. 5), this interconnection-emphasizing structure of resource management is referred to by environmental historian Sarah Elkind as *regionalism* (ibid, pg. 3). In the transfer of responsibility for natural resource management from the individual to the public (ibid), many residents of the Boston Metropolitan Area were able to recognize their roles in much larger systems of community activity at the local and regional levels. In Boston, this transference combatted the culture of privatism among wealthy and tax-averse Bostonians (Rawson, 2010, pp. 127, 77) by teaching them that their actions – environmental, sociopolitical, and economic – were intimately bound up with those of the peoples around them.

One of the most striking examples of this shift to regionalism and the societal analysis of interconnection it engendered is Boston’s aforementioned changeover to a municipal water system, undertaken in collaboration with its surrounding communities. The significance of Boston’s water-based regionalism – which the city has sustained to this day – is particularly strong considering the “dramatic increase” in the privatization of local water supplies in the U.S. since the 1980s—for example, from 1997 to 2000, 70 U.S. cities entered into long-term contracts with private companies to regulate their local water systems (Arnold, 2009, pg. 792). Since this thesis focuses on Boston’s surrounding community of Cambridge, my analysis of the area’s understanding of interconnection via water-based regionalism will briefly examine Boston’s struggle with Cambridge over the Charles River. In particular, this struggle clarified to many of the cities’ residents the need to consider the region’s various bodies of water not as separate entities each managed by individual communities, but as one interconnected unit under the holistic management of a new political agency.

Flowing for 80 northeastern miles starting in Hopkinton, running between Cambridge and Boston, and emptying into the Boston Harbor, the Charles River “dominated discussions of Boston’s sanitation” in the late 19th century due to widespread concern over the effect of its “foul

odors” on public health, especially prevalent since the river flowed through the neighborhoods of some of Boston’s most wealthy and influential residents (Elkind, 1998, pg. 85). These foul odors stemmed from the excessive dumping of effluent into the river by the industrial neighboring communities of Cambridge, Somerville, Waltham, and Watertown, which “overwhelm[ed] any water quality improvements” undertaken by Boston officials (ibid). By the late 1870s, in order to clean up the Charles, the Massachusetts State Board of Health began insisting upon the implementation of regionalism via a political agency with authority over all sewerage throughout the Boston Metropolitan Area, since the conflicting interests of Boston and its suburbs suggested that the mere coordination of sewerage among these communities – conceptualized as individual – would not provide an effective means of sanitation (ibid, pg. 85 & 87). This unification of Boston and its neighboring communities through the management of the Charles and other nearby waterways set the stage for many 19th- and 20th-century Boston Metropolitan Area residents to understand the socio-ecological health of their own communities as interconnected with that of their neighbors, thus contributing to a twofold analysis of interconnection among many Bostonians.

Gentrification of Cambridge.

With communal resource management having instilled in many 19th- and 20th-century Bostonians an understanding of interconnection between society and nature, and between their own communities and those around them, many contemporary area residents were well-prepared to realize another form of political interconnectedness that was happening with increasing rapidity starting in the late 1970s: gentrification as an outgrowth of the violent social structures embedded in U.S. society. This phenomenon – inherently socionatural due to its simultaneous changing of the physical urban landscape and of the socioeconomic health of already marginalized groups in the Boston Metropolitan Area – provided area residents broadly and the FNB cofounders specifically with a visceral example of the manner in which national defense spending enacted violence not only

on military battlefields, but also on the people and environment of their own communities, and thus helped to set the stage for the development of FNB's political framework of anti-militarism, anti-capitalism, and anti-speciesism.

Gentrification is an urban process by which higher income, usually white residents displace lower income, usually of color residents in particular areas of a city, creating “pockets of wealth in trendy neighborhoods” rather than bringing economic and infrastructural revitalization to the city as a whole (Hansberry, 2013). Beginning in the mid-1970s, the nationwide tech boom brought an influx of wealthy, young, and highly educated high-tech employees to Cambridge, among many other cities, resulting in major changes in the urban landscape (ibid). The changes to Cambridge's civic ecologies on which I will focus in this chapter are the upscale, mainstream commercialization of Harvard and Central Squares, as well as the construction of the Route 128 highway running through Cambridge's western suburbs.

Though there exist no statistics on Cambridge's homeless population in the 1970s and 1980s, the spike in the city's unemployment rates in the mid-1970s (“Demographics...,” n.d.), the 1983 opening of the Harvard Square Homeless Shelter in response to “the much increased homeless population” (HSHS, n.d.), and the 1988 establishment of the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust (CAHT, 2000) suggest that the gentrification happening during this time contributed to a fast-increasing number of Cambridgians living on the streets. This upswing in Cambridge's homeless population in the mid-1970s through the 1980s left Bostonians particularly attuned to the national rise of homelessness, in which homelessness rates tripled between 1981 and 1989 thanks in large part to the fiscally exorbitant pro-military policies of the later Carter and entire Reagan administrations (as I discussed in chapter three) (Burt, 1991, pg. 169).

Though this particular attunement to homelessness undoubtedly influenced FNB's development of its unique political framework, the movement would not have been able to do so if

not for the analysis of interconnection instilled in FNB founders in part by the long-held sociocultural understanding of many Boston Metropolitan Area residents (discussed above). It is this analysis of interconnection that I believe allowed FNB to point to homelessness via gentrification in Cambridge as an outgrowth of the violent social structures that brought the high-tech defense industry of the Massachusetts Miracle – and its wealthy gentrifying employees – to the city.

Harvard and Central Squares

Cambridge has been referred to as the “City of Squares” due to the placement of most of the city’s commercial districts in major street intersections known as “squares” (Cambridge Wiki). Two of Cambridge’s most frequented squares are Harvard Square and Central Square, located just over one mile away from each other in between Harvard University and MIT. Both of these squares followed similar paths of gentrification, functioning as downtown hotspots in the early 1900s before playing host to radical political activism from the 1960s through the 1970s, then rapidly gentrifying as the high-tech defense industry began inundating Cambridge.

In the early 1900s, Harvard Square served as the downtown home of literature – frequented by such “giants of 19th- and 20th-century American poetry” as Longfellow, Lowell, T.S. Eliot, and e. e. cummings (HSBA, n.d.) – while Central Square functioned as a crowded center of retail and social life (Boyer, 2001, pp. 90-91). By the 1960s, both Harvard and Central Squares comprised the homes of young and artistic anti-war, civil rights, and women’s rights activists, who held countless protests and demonstrations in the squares (Crimson Staff, 2015; Brown, 2011; Boyer, 2001, pg. 170).

Throughout the 1970s, as the vibrant social movements of the 1960s began to wind down and an increasing number of Boston Metropolitan Area residents began relocating to the suburbs, the political activity of the squares had deteriorated into drug-dealing, shoplifting, break-ins, rundown buildings, and “general grit” (Boyer, 2001, pg. 205), prompting revitalization efforts by city officials. These revitalization efforts, coupled with the influx of wealthy residents brought by the high-tech

defense industry, began in the mid-1980s transforming Harvard and Central Squares into mainstream commercial centers and displacing the family-owned businesses – many of which were operated by lower-income immigrants and people of color – that had characterized the Squares for decades (Boyer, 2001, pp. 8, 201-202; Crimson Staff, 2015; Brown, 2011; Osterlund, 1984). With their livelihoods taken from them in the name of commercialization, these already marginalized residents experienced increasing difficulty securing affordable housing, and many ended up living on the streets.

While some Cambridgians responded positively to these changes – welcoming the “cleanup” of “grubbiness” (Brown, 2011) and blaming newly homeless people for their own economic “failings” – numerous others, such as the Harvard Square Defense Fund, felt that the Squares had become “homogenized” (Marcus, 1991), transitioning from racially diverse areas to ones frequented primarily by young, wealthy, white students and high-tech employees. It was in the midst of this Square gentrification that FNB began to mobilize, identifying – thanks to the movement’s understanding of interconnection – the poverty and homelessness that resulted from such gentrification as directly tied to the U.S. government’s diversion of resources away from social services and toward military spending. It was exactly this gentrification that prompted FNB to plan most of its local activist demonstrations and outreach in Harvard Square (K. McHenry, personal communication, 28 December 2015)⁸, bringing a critical analysis of capitalism and militarism to one of the geographic areas whose civic ecologies best exemplified the two interconnected ideologies.

The Route 128 Highway

Another area of Cambridge where capitalism and militarism coalesce thanks to gentrification via the high-tech defense industry is the 57-mile highway running through Cambridge’s western suburbs, known as Route 128. As noted in chapter three, starting in the late 1970s during the first

⁸ In recent years, the Boston FNB chapter that grew out of the original Cambridge group has begun serving its biweekly meals in Central Square and on the Boston Common (FNB—Boston, n.d.).

U.S. tech boom, high-tech defense companies began concentrating along Route 128 to form a technological hub that until the late 1990s rivaled Silicon Valley in terms of industry influence. Just as the high-tech defense industry led the gentrification of Harvard and Central Squares, as discussed above, it also made Cambridge's western suburbs inaccessible to lower-income residents. Though the high-tech defense industry created numerous jobs for both high- and low-skilled, immigrant and non-immigrant workers, only the wealthiest of these employees were able to settle close to their jobs in the western suburbs of Route 128 (Johnson, 2015, pg. 95). This housing inaccessibility stemmed from large-lot – “snob” – zoning restrictions that prevented the construction of affordable housing and multifamily homes, instituted by residents of the towns along Route 128, who feared overdevelopment and “changes in the social fabric of their communities” (ibid). Because of these restrictions – not to mention the steep housing costs and discriminatory lending practices that came with them – Cambridge's western suburbs became populated by white, wealthy high-tech employees, while lower-income residents and residents of color were forced to move elsewhere (ibid). Through its understanding of the intimate relationship between nature and society, FNB was able to recognize this housing discrimination and environmental industrialization an outgrowth of the U.S.'s violent social structures that prioritized defense buildup and profit accumulation over the wellbeing of the earth and its inhabitants, and felt that interconnectedness even more acutely due to the fact that the gentrification was taking place in the movement's very own city. Indeed, Boston FNB members James Cook and Jay Morgan both note that many of the people who get involved with FNB – including Jay himself – do so because they have experienced firsthand living in and/or near poverty and/or homelessness, and “want to alleviate the unevenness of how [the U.S.'s systems of violence are] set up” (personal communication, 18 March 2016).

Conclusion.

The socionatural understandings to which many Boston Metropolitan Area residents came during the 19th century provided the ideological backdrop necessary for the development of FNB's unique understandings of the human-nature relationship, while the gentrification of Cambridge – ever-increasing since the late 1970s – provided a constant and visceral reminder of the connections between the treatments of the environment and of marginalized groups of humans under the U.S.'s violent social structures of militarism, capitalism, and speciesism. By analyzing FNB's development through the lens of ecological change in Cambridge in this chapter, and through Cambridge's sociopolitical context in the 1980s in the previous chapter, I have demonstrated that neither analysis alone can provide a holistic view of FNB's mobilization, since factors from both realms likely played substantial roles.

While I have taken the majority of this thesis to theorize exactly what FNB's socionatural understanding of interconnectedness entails and which factors of time and place may have contributed to its development, the question of the strengths and limitations of this understanding in terms of FNB's activism remains to be answered. I will take up this question in my following and final chapter, ultimately offering a broader concluding discussion on socionature's importance in FNB's mobilization.

Chapter 5

Promises and Limitations of FNB's Ideology on its Activism

Thus far in this thesis I have described FNB's understanding of the interconnectedness of militarism, capitalism, and speciesism via a shared core of violence as deriving influence from socionatural theory broadly, and feminist environmentalism specifically. From there, I examined how the sociopolitical context of Cambridge, MA in the 1980s, as well as the transformation of both the area's natural landscape and residents' conceptualization of their relationship with nature, may have influenced the development of FNB's political framework. With this information, I have provided a number of possible answers to the question of what prompted FNB to develop a particular socionatural political ideology based on an understanding of the interconnectedness of militarism, capitalism, and speciesism.

The question that remains involves determining the strengths and limitations of FNB's socionatural ideology regarding its activism, and it is on this question that this chapter will focus. To do so, this chapter will discuss the areas where FNB excels and where it is lacking in terms of three facets and consequences of FNB's work: the movement's anarchist-influenced, decentralized internal structure orchestrated through consensus-based decision making, the movement's international growth and demographic spread, and the repression the movement faces from the U.S. government.

I chose to use these three subjects as measures of FNB's work based on my interviews with current movement members. First of all, in my interviews with FNB cofounder Keith McHenry and Boston FNB member James Cook, both activists emphasized the benefits of anarchist-inspired organizational structure to FNB's work (ibid; personal communication, James Cook, 18 March 2016), suggesting that they consider this structure to be a strength of the movement's activism. Additionally, when asked how they would judge the efficacy of FNB's activism, both FNB

cofounder Keith McHenry and Boston FNB member James Cook cited the movement's "grow[th] from one collective of eight young people to thousands of volunteers active in nearly 1,000 cities on every habitable continent" (personal communication, Keith McHenry, 18 April 2016), while McHenry added that "the massive levels of surveillance, infiltration and covert disruption of [FNB] is also an indication [that] our strategy and techniques for encouraging a transition to a peaceful, healthy world are a threat to the [dominant] political and economic system" (ibid).

After discussing FNB's strengths and limitations in terms of the three aforementioned subjects, I will conclude this thesis with a discussion of how FNB's unique political framework demands a socionatural analysis in order to holistically understand its mobilization.

Decentralized anarchist structure with consensus-based decision making.

FNB's anarchist-inspired organizational structure – though not explicitly named as "anarchist" by many FNB activists so as not to alienate potential members (ibid) – constitutes a defining aspect of the movement's work, as noted by scholars and movement members alike. Indeed, nearly every piece of literature referenced in this thesis written by and/or about FNB discusses the movement's commitment to decentralized leadership and consensus-based decision making. As such, it strikes me as necessary to provide an examination of the strengths and limitations of FNB's organizational structure in terms of its activism.

In terms of the strengths of FNB's anarchist-inspired organizational structure, longtime anti-oppression organizer Chris Crass (2013, pg. 56) and PhD candidate in anthropology Drew Robert Winter (2015, pg. 60) agree that FNB's decentralized structure – indicative of the movement's commitment to challenging violent social systems based in hierarchies of dominance – has largely accounted for the substantial and rapid spread of FNB's chapters and ideology (which I will discuss in further detail below), since such a structure allows interested individuals to jump right into the activism and even start their own FNB chapter instead of working their way up a hierarchy

of movement leadership. FNB members additionally cite the following as reasoning for adopting a decentralized leadership structure operating through consensus-based decision making: consensus allows for all members to get equal say in the operation of the movement with “no one person telling everyone else what to do,” such that the decisions reached are what everyone “feel[s] is best for the group” (FNB—Boston, n.d.); a decentralized structure challenges the hierarchical organization of societal structures of violence, which inherently privileges the voices of white, wealthy men at the expense of all others (Crass, 1995); and this organizational structure enacts a “prefigurative politics” – “social relations that embody and exemplify in the here and now the beliefs and values of a future desired society” (cited in Myers, 1995, pg. 412) – that allows movement members to practice the “cooperative, egalitarian human relationships and social structures that promote mutual aid, radical democratic control of political and economic decisions, and ecological sustainability” (Crass, 1995), and that FNB seeks to build on a broader scale through its interconnected political framework of anti-militarism, anti-capitalism, and anti-speciesism.

While each of these lines of reasoning is consistent with FNB’s synthesized political ethos of nonviolence via anti-militarism, anti-capitalism, and anti-speciesism, this decentralized organizational structure run through consensus-based decision making can fall short of its idealistic goals in its practical implementation. In particular, critics cite the formation of implicit and undemocratically decided leadership, such as “an unofficial ‘inner circle’ of members” (FNB media archive, n.d.) who have a better understanding of the movement’s mission and functioning than do members who are not a part of the unacknowledged elite group. Not only does this unspoken leadership create the very power dynamic that supposedly non-hierarchical groups seek to avoid, it can also lead to the “activist burnout” of the members in implicit leadership roles, since their leadership more often than not stems from their assumption of responsibility for much of the movement’s processes (Gelderloos, 2006). Additionally, consensus-based decision making – in its inherent structurelessness

– usually relies on “unspoken rules resulting in a culture of personal dominance by founders or other informally dominant individuals” that often results in frustration and resentment among newer and less influential movement members (FNB media archive, n.d.).

Considering the practical implications of anarchist-inspired, decentralized organizing, FNB may be able to exert even more influence over public opinion with a more explicit, less decentralized structure, but – considering that FNB’s political framework revolves around challenging the hierarchical violence of domination inherent in militarism, capitalism, and speciesism – doing so may also sacrifice some of the movement’s fundamental principles of nonviolence. Social movement scholarship on what theorists term “New Social Movements (NSMs)” reflects this dilemma—a point upon which I will elaborate after discussing the appropriateness of considering FNB as an NSM.

Social movement scholars define an NSM as a movement, made up of predominantly middle-class, white, young people, which uses direct-action strategies and a decentralized organizational structure in order to push back against the violent social systems of modern-day society, and advocate a new social paradigm that affords members of a differentiated social group “the freedom to be” (cited in Laraña et al, 1994, pg. 9; Dalton et al, 1990; Miller, 2000). FNB fits this definition well: the majority of its members are economically stable, white, and between 18 and 30 years of age; it partakes in direct action by taking control of public spaces to serve politicized food and distribute literature, and by staging political street theatre performances; its lack of formal leaders or headquarters gives it a decentralized structure; and it challenges violent social structures through its political framework of anti-militarism, anti-capitalism, and anti-speciesism.

While NSMs can effect profound changes in both individual and collective identities (Laraña et al, 1994, pp. 12, 18) due to their close engagement with “personal and intimate aspects of human life” (ibid, pg. 8) (as I will expand upon below), their ability to bring about larger-scale, more tangible

changes remains in question. For example, due to their anti-establishment views (Dalton et al, 1990, pg. 5), NSMs “feel that close cooperation with government bodies may lead to cooptation and de-radicalization of the movement” (ibid, pg. 15). As I discussed in chapter three with Congress’ amending of the Freeze Resolution to the point of meaninglessness, this cooptation is a valid concern. However, foreclosing upon the possibility for collaboration with all governmental entities potentially precludes NSMs from effecting the enactment of substantial policy changes, if any. Additionally, since NSMs operate with a decentralized structure, they “cannot bargain” with political parties by “reliably deliver[ing] them electoral resources” (ibid). Though the U.S.’s two-party electoral system certainly does not serve as the only venue by which to effect political change in this country, the fact that some of the most successful social movements in U.S. history – such as the Civil Rights and Women’s movements – did make their concerns wedge issues in national elections suggests that the potential for powerful sociopolitical change lies in leveraging the U.S. two-party system. Since FNB on its own has never effected a change in local or national policy, these theoretical concerns regarding NSMs may apply to FNB and speak to the limitations of FNB’s anarchist-inspired, decentralized structure run through consensus-based decision making. Ultimately, it seems that FNB’s anarchist-inspired structure has theoretical and ideological strengths, but its weaknesses are exposed in its implementation.

International growth and demographic spread.

FNB’s ideological strengths, however, have proven powerful enough to attract participation from and ideologically influence large numbers of people, with the potential to generate in its members long-term activist commitments. As discussed in chapter one, FNB has expanded exponentially since its origins in 1980, and it is my contention that FNB’s ability to appeal to movement members’ collective and personal identities has largely accounted for such rapid expansion.

In addition to FNB's non-hierarchical organizational structure (as discussed above), I argue that the movement's ability to foster its members' personal identities as FNB activists through collective action has also facilitated the rapid growth of the movement. This phenomenon of social movement expansion via identity construction is common among social movements, but – as noted in chapters one and three – FNB's unification of three supposedly disparate ideologies allows the movement to attract both people from various activist backgrounds as well as self-proclaimed “non-activists,” accounting for FNB's ability to influence such large numbers of people to adopt the identity of “FNB Activist.”

Social movement scholars provide the theoretical backdrop for this phenomenon. By “link[ing] individuals and groups ideologically” (Benford & Snow, 2000, pg. 632), identity construction via collective action “blurs” (Laraña et al, 1994, pg. 7) the relationship between the individual and the collective, thereby integrating an individual's participation in a social movement into their personal identity. This integration can both more easily attract into the movement people who see similarities between themselves and already active movement participants, and facilitate in movement participants long-term commitments to activism. For example, an FNB activist cited by Clark (2004, pg. 29) noted that “a lot of activists are vegan so they end up coming [to FNB],” while FNB cofounder Jo Swanson has observed that even though most of her cofounders are no longer involved with FNB, they are “all still trying to make the world a better place” (cited in McHenry, 2015, pg. 9). Additionally, fellow FNB cofounder Keith McHenry notes that “[w]hile no scientific test has been conducted on the impact of [FNB] and those who became vegan or vegetarian because they ate at, or volunteered with, a [FNB] group, people often tell me that [FNB] was responsible in some way for their change in diet and lifestyle” (personal communication, 18 April 2016)—an observation which demonstrates the direct and long-term effect that FNB has had on the lives of many of its members.

But while FNB's ability to foster personal identity construction via collective action may effectively attract large numbers of people to its membership, the circles from whence those people typically come may not prove as varied as FNB members tend to make them out to be. Indeed, FNB's ideological framework has proven agreeable to the movement's majority membership of white, middle-class, well-educated young people with progressive political leanings and propensities toward vegan lifestyles, but may dissuade people who do not identify with one or more of these characteristics – namely, people of color – from getting involved with FNB. For example, though there are people of color doing important work on the frontlines of the vegan movement from whence FNB draws a substantial number of its members, those whom appear to mainstream society as the most visible actors within the movement are overwhelmingly white (Dellorco, 2001). If people of color cannot see where they might fit into anti-speciesist activism thanks to its presentation as predominantly white, it logically follows that they might neither be able to see themselves actively participating in FNB. More importantly, many people of color may not want to focus their energies on anti-speciesist activism, since it might not be as integral to their own identity as might anti-racist activism, for example. There is a privilege in being able to advocate on behalf of an identity taken on by choice – such as one of veg*nism – versus an identity bestowed at a very young age by an interrelation of social and biological factors (i.e., racial identity) (Seiter, 2015).

Additionally, given the criticisms leveraged at anti-racist movements for their “violent” tactics, people of color may see FNB's core principle of nonviolence as falling in line with a white supremacist agenda of hiding the structural violence of racist domination embedded into U.S. society by demonizing the riots that have played a role in struggles for black liberation from the Civil Rights Movement to Black Lives Matter. As journalist Ta-Nehisi Coates notes in his seminal 2015 article in *The Atlantic* – written in the wake of the death of Freddie Gray, a young black man killed in Baltimore due to police brutality – the calls of politicians for Black Lives Matter protestors to remain

“nonviolent” in their riots prove misguided, since “[w]hen nonviolence is preached by the representatives of the state, while the state doles out heaps of violence to its citizens, it reveals itself to be a con.” The tendency of U.S. political elites to promote principles of nonviolence only when it supports the white supremacy that upholds their power can further be seen in mainstream framings of Martin Luther King Jr., which praise the civil rights leader for his encouragement of nonviolent forms of activism (Rothman, 2015). In truth, King considered riots to be “the language of the unheard” (as cited in *ibid*), and argued that instead of demonizing the rioters, political elites – and the U.S.’s white citizenry, more broadly – “must see that riots do not develop out of thin air. Certain conditions continue to exist in our society which must be condemned as vigorously as we condemn riots” (as cited in *ibid*). Though I don’t mean to suggest that FNB’s principles of nonviolence necessarily promote the white supremacist agenda of advocating nonviolent forms of activism in order to mask more structural forms of violence embedded in U.S. society, I do think that such a principle may cause people of color to regard FNB’s activism with wariness.

In addition to the ideological factors that may deter people of color from adopting the identity of “FNB Activist,” the people of color who have gotten involved with FNB have spoken out against the movement’s internal elitism and racism. FNB endeavors to provide an activist space inclusive of people from all walks of life (FNB—Boston, n.d.) and has “worked against racism since the beginning” – such as by providing food to protests of the Black Liberation Army and Mohawk nation (“FAQ,” n.d.) – but multiple accounts of the movement’s actual functioning suggest its shortcomings in achieving these goals. For example, in his time with an FNB chapter in Harrisonburg, VA, anarchist scholar Peter Gelderloos (2006) observed that while the chapter shared food with a diverse group of people, “those who [held] power and responsibility in the outcome of the weekly meal are on average younger, whiter, wealthier, better educated, and more politically active.” Gelderloos additionally noticed that the Harrisonburg chapter provided an unwelcoming

atmosphere to activists who did not “fit in with any of the anarchist subcultures.” Expanding upon these critiques, FNB’s People of Color Caucus recently issued a statement decrying the “unchecked white privilege,” “rampant cultural appropriation,” and “tokenization” of people of color within FNB spaces, and has encouraged white FNB members to foster camaraderie with communities of color beyond asking of their attendance at weekly or monthly meetings. Though the ideology-influenced identity construction that FNB provides has effectively attracted young, white, middle-class, and well educated individuals to the movement, I argue that it has also hindered the movement’s growth through practices of implicit elitism and racism that have discouraged people who do not identify with FNB’s primary identity group.

Government repression.

Even though FNB’s anarchist-influenced organizational structure and deterrence of people of color to its membership serve as weaknesses of the movement, the government repression that FNB has faced since the late 1980s suggests the strengths of FNB’s ability to mobilize large swaths of middle-class, white, well-educated people around the violence inherent in militarism, capitalism, and speciesism. As FNB itself notes on its website, “one sign that [FNB] is an effective model of organizing for change is all the effort the United States Government has taken to disrupt our movement,” which FNB identifies as stemming from government worry that the movement might “influence American taxpayers to start supporting policies that redirect military spending towards education, healthcare and other domestic necessities” (“False allegations,” n.d.). While the U.S. government has not explicitly confirmed the accuracy of FNB’s reasoning for the repression it has experienced, the following government actions suggest that FNB poses a substantial threat to the U.S. elite and the violent social structures upon which its power depends: the listing of FNB among the U.S.’s top domestic terrorist threats (“FAQ,” n.d.), the over 1,000 arrests made of FNB activists from 1988 to 1997 in San Francisco alone, the passing of new laws limiting or outlawing free public

food distribution programs since 2003 in at least 22 U.S. cities (“Our Story,” n.d.), and the clandestine infiltration of FNB chapters by the FBI, local police, and agents from the Department of Defense (Heynen, 2010, pg. 1229). The nature of the threat FNB poses remains ambiguous, but various scholars as well as FNB itself have pointed to FNB’s “refusal to hide the poor away” (ibid), its “protests against [cities] anti-homeless policies” (“Our Story”), its “anarchist sympathies” (Sbicca, 2013, pg. 825), and its “free provision of food to anyone” (Myers, 1995, pg. 413) as reasons why the U.S. government is so concerned with FNB’s activities.

While FNB considers this government repression in and of itself to serve as an indicator of the movement’s strengths, the public outcry against this repression and in support of FNB suggests further FNB’s ability to exert ideological influence against the violent structures of militarism, capitalism, and speciesism over not only its members, but the general public. For example, human and civil rights groups have expressed their disapproval of the government’s actions against FNB, both in written statements or public forums. In 1994, Amnesty International issued a written statement voicing its concern that FNB “activists may have been targeted on account of their beliefs and effectively prohibited from exercising their right to freedom of expression, assembly and the right to impart information” (cited in Heynen, 2010, pg. 1229), promising to adopt imprisoned FNB activists as “Prisoners of Conscience” and to work for their unconditional release. Additionally, at the November 1996 World Food Summit in Rome, members of Food First India “publicly condemned the U.S. government for arresting FNB [members] and interfering with its free food distribution to the poor” (Ziman, 1999), while in 2005 Associate Legal Director of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) Ann Beeson publicly asked, “Since when did feeding the homeless become a terrorist activity?” (cited in McHenry, 2015, pg. 182). As scholars (Winter, 2015, pg. 59) and FNB members alike have noted, the public support FNB has received suggests that the U.S. government’s repression of FNB has only served as “a graphic example of the misguided policies of

corporate and political leaders in the U.S.” (ibid, pg. 21), further supporting the notion of the strengths of FNB’s ability to shift public opinion away from the violent social structures of militarism, capitalism, and speciesism.

Conclusion.

Clearly, there are both strengths and limitations to FNB’s anarchist-influenced, decentralized internal structure orchestrated through consensus-based decision making, and the movement’s ability to appeal to the identity construction of certain groups of people. And yet, the repression that FNB faces from the U.S. government speaks to the overall efficacy of the movement’s ability to mobilize people in large numbers against the violence embedded in the interconnected U.S. societal structures of militarism, capitalism, and speciesism. This ability further speaks to FNB’s popularization of a socionatural understanding of the world, as such an understanding forms the basis for the movement’s political framework of interconnection.

While this chapter as well as the first have discussed the profound impact that FNB’s socionatural understanding has had on its ideology and activism, existing literature on FNB has largely omitted such an analysis. This thesis has begun to fill this gap in the scholarship on FNB by situating FNB’s unique political ideology within socionatural theory at a broad level and in feminist environmentalism more specifically; by hypothesizing which factors of time, place, and ecological transformation most influenced the development of such an ideology; and finally by discussing the promises and limitations of such an ideology in terms of FNB’s activism.

Though this thesis has separated into two chapters discussions of the sociopolitical and ecological contexts of Cambridge in terms of their effects on FNB’s political development, it is my hope that the clear incompleteness of both analyses has demonstrated the importance of taking up a socionatural examination of FNB’s mobilization. Such an examination should not, of course, conclude that the movement’s mobilization could only have taken place in the specific geographic

and ecological context of Cambridge, but should provide an analysis of the factors that contributed to the movement's mobilization that is at once both more holistic and contributive to the widespread development of a less violent understanding of the human-nature relationship. In other words, scholarly work on FNB must take up a socionatural lens in order to better emphasize the political nature of ecological transformation and environmental changes in the dominant discourses of Western society.

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