TOWARDS A GLOBAL CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR HUMANE EDUCATION

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Dedication

To all the animals who inspire me to be their voice and who demonstrate their sentience, cognizance and innate value daily-I dedicate this work to you; especially, Molly, Cleo, Marmalade, Jerome, Joe and Rosie.
Abstract
The Humane Education Coalition (HEC) is a non-profit organization supporting the development of humane education by providing humane education organizations and their practitioners professional development, research, and grant opportunities. Globalization and the advancement of other social movements in education have forced humane education to adapt from its historical roots. Although currently, humane education is defined as a critical pedagogical approach aimed to empower students through critical thinking and active engagement in connecting environmental protection, social justice, and animal welfare issues in practice the limited empirical studies of humane education, highlight a wide range of practices, definitions, pedagogical approaches, and learning outcomes that are not aligned with this definition. Consequently, humane education remains fractal in its application and misunderstood by educators, contributing to its limited use and impact. Following, this study provides a foundational framework for humane education creating a pathway for cohesive application and evaluation reflective of the needs both within in the field and educational stakeholders globally. Using a mixed-methods design the study answered the following: (1) What are the relevant constructs of the animal perspective within humane education that transcend cultural boundaries? (2) How do these constructs connect to the current definition of humane education integrating with social justice and environmental education? (3) How does a comprehensive model for humane education develop?

Keywords: humane education(or), animal welfare in education, framework, social justice education, environmental education
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Executive Summary

Humane education as a field has struggled to grow as a mainstream pedagogical practice despite its long history within western cultures (Unti & DeRosa, 2003). Investigation into the barriers preventing wider practice of humane education showed a limited amount of literature on the subject and wide variation of the term’s definition. Looking more broadly into education approaches that include the animal perspective alongside environmental and social justice education revealed continued anthropocentric domination, as well as a resistance to a moral framework that persists from humane education’s historical roots. Furthermore, the ambiguity over the meaning of humane education and how it is practiced contributes to ongoing confusion over its goals and potential impact. Following a needs analysis and literature review, the study aimed to build a conceptual framework that would transcend cultural boundaries and provide a pathway to cohesive humane education development, implementation and practice.

Analysis of Underlying Factors

Founders of the early humane movement, such as Henry Burgh, sought to address community issues relating to the maltreatment of those less fortunate (Unti, 2002). Living beings that were most vulnerable included children and animals. From these efforts, humane education developed as a way of involving the youth (mainly in the United Kingdom and the United States) in organized activities around nature and kindness (Unti & DeRosa, 2003). As these programs grew and gained popularity, they received the approval of important education organizations such as the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA). Following World War I however, the humane societies needed to prioritize more hands-on activities, such as rescue and rehabilitation and the institutionalization of humane education failed at the school level (Unti &
DeRosa, 2003). Since this time, humane organizations (or those focusing on animal protections) attempted to reinstitute humane education in various ways with less success. Specifically, humane education faces obstacles to growing as a field of educational practices due to persistence anthropocentricism in curricula (Pedersen, 2004) and a resistance to moral frames of teaching and learning (Bebeau, Rest, & Narvaez, 1999).

At the same time, other social movements in education have gained traction and mainstream viability, such as environmental and social justice education. To adapt, humane education evolved a comprehensive approach by connecting environmental and social justice perspectives alongside the animal component (Arbour, Signal, & Taylor, 2009). However, the inclusive approach to humane education led to more confusion in defining the field and streamlining the practice. Furthermore, its variation in use produces ambiguity in the field and prevents strong empirical evidence and dilution of potential effects.

To understand the problem in practice, a needs analysis investigated humane education practitioners and focused on understanding beliefs about the practice, as well as sense of agency. Soon thereafter, a subsequent environmental scan taken by the Humane Education Coalition of its global partners in the humane education nonprofit sector identified additional factors in the field contributing to its limited reach. The combined findings pointed to a need for a foundational definition of humane education that could guide program conceptualization, implementation and evaluation. As such, this study sought to create a foundational framework to ground humane education and answer the following questions: (1) What are the relevant constructs of the animal perspective within humane education that transcend cultural boundaries? (2) How do these constructs connect to the current definition of humane education integrating with social justice
and environmental education? (3) How does a comprehensive model for humane education develop?

Cross-disciplinary support for framework building exists empirically for both emerging or poorly defined fields (Jabareen, 2009; Maxwell, 2014). A literature review across fields guided the development of a mixed-methods explanatory sequential design to build a conceptual framework for humane education. With the support of two major humane education non-profits (Humane Education Coalition and Academy for ProSocial Learning) participant recruitment took place worldwide via social media and direct contact campaigns.

The two data sets examined holistically within the context of the research questions. The result is the Humane Education Global Framework presented in Chapter 5. The framework illustrates the key conceptual markers of humane education as defined by its practitioners across cultural boundaries. It further demonstrates how humane education moves students through phases of learning towards an ecocentric mindset and provides pathways to link humane education to appropriate theoretical frameworks. Despite limitations in the sample (e.g. small sample size and limited diversity), this first iteration of a humane education framework moves the field out of its previous moral frame and towards cohesion and cultural competency. Moreover, connecting the framework to theoretical applications improves potential of program development, implementation, and evaluation increasing rigor in practice and allowing for empirical study.
Chapter One
The Evolution of Humane Education and Barriers Towards Its Expansion as a Social Movement in Education

This chapter presents a broad investigation into the factors contributing to the lack of a workable framework for humane education. Brofenbrenner’s (1994) ecological systems theory was used to explore the literature across social, political and cultural boundaries with specific understanding of the evolution of humane education over time. Specifically, identified factors included cultural expectations about the role of school in socialization throughout history both inside and outside of the United States. Moreover, traditional models of instruction and evaluation prevail, creating obstacles for social movements to upset the status quo (Brault, Janosz, & Archambault, 2014; Freire, 1970; Kahn & Kahn, 2010). At the same time, using a historical perspective revealed additional barriers, such as the significance of anthropocentric filters within education and cultural relationships to animals, relegating these relationships to a moral domain. These identified factors currently contribute to the struggle of the humane education movement reaching its goals of mainstream acceptance.

Presented first is a synthesis of these historical roots of humane education that lays the groundwork for the current state of the field. Also included is a review of the limited empirical evidence supporting the use of humane education in an educational setting. Next, Bronfenbrenner’s (1994) systems theory guides the analysis of barriers contributing to the current state of the field in humane education programs and its subsequent evaluations. In conclusion, a summary of the literature findings provides focus for the subsequent needs analysis.
A History of Humane Education in the United States

The humane movement and the inclusion of empathy towards animals in childhood socialization developed in the post-colonial age of the United States before the Civil War (Whitlock & Westurlund, 1979). During this time, the United States was creating an identity for itself through the formation of middle-class values based on a Protestant ethic that included compassion towards animals (Grier, 1999). The establishing of social order and the institutionalizing of education as a means of socializing youth became a dominant discussion among the thinkers and philosophers of the day (Button & Provenzo, 1983). The development and proliferation of the public school as envisioned by Horace Mann, at its heart was to promote citizenship and support the burgeoning middle classes in their progress towards social mobility and civility (Unti & DeRosa, 2003). Mann saw the treatment of animals as a critical component of how public-school instruction would promote American values. He stated in a published speech, “From the youthful benevolence that rejoices to see an animal happy, one grows up into a world-wide benefactor, into the healer of diseases, the restorer of sight to the blind, the giver of a tongue to the dumb, the founder of hospitals” (Mann, 1861). The development of the country’s new independence would require a respect and a relationship with those more vulnerable beings working towards the nation’s aspirations as a benevolent leader.

As the concept of Mann’s Normal School and the practice of socialization within education began to take shape, so too came the first animal welfare organizations that aligned themselves with the protection of both animals and children. The first anti-cruelty laws passed in New York and Massachusetts were coupled with regulations protecting children. Henry Bergh, the founder of the first humane organization in the country (The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals [ASPCA]) was also responsible for initiating the first child
protection movement and successfully prosecuting a child abuse case through the animal cruelty statutes (Whitlock & Westerlund, 1975). The civic obligation to protect and care for the most vulnerable members of society initially bound humans and animals together. This requirement was enforced both in schools and by the community.

George Angell, founder of the first Society for the Prevention of Cruelty towards Animals in Massachusetts, echoed Mann’s belief that public-school education had a duty to promote responsibility and kindness to animals that would promote human empathy (Unti, 2003). The Bands of Mercy organizations Angell founded provided children with activities and services aimed at building compassion and protection for animals, and claimed a quarter of a million children participating across the United States in 1882. With the growing support, both inside and outside the animal welfare movement, humane education became a state-mandated curriculum component in nearly half of the states by 1932 with the American Humane Education Society beginning to promote the training of humane educators through higher education institutions. The National Parent Teacher Association Congress in 1933 distributed the following in pamphlet during its annual gathering,

“Children trained to extend justice, kindness, and mercy to animals become more just, kind and considerate in their relations to one another. Character training along these lines in youths will result in men and women of broader sympathies; more humane, more law-abiding - in every respect more valuable - citizens. Humane education is the teaching in schools and colleges of the nations the principles of justice, goodwill, and humanity towards all life. The cultivation of the spirit of kindness to
animals is but the starting point toward that larger humanity that includes one's fellow of every race and clime." (Haar, 2002 p. 70)

While this statement predicts the future extension of humane education into social and environmental justice, only three states (Illinois, Oklahoma, and New York) instituted sanctions for non-compliance of humane education instruction in its schools (Davis, 2016). This uneven mandating of the curricula created a dependency on the individual passion of educators (Krows, 1938; Shultz, 1924) and an uncertain future for humane education.

The decline of humane education in schools was evident by the start of World War I. Animal welfare organizations needed to shift attention and resources from humane education to hands-on care and rescue activities (Unti & DeRosa, 2003). The failure of humane education to become institutionalized through teacher training institutions limited its reach and capacity for school curriculum integration (Whitlock, 1973). The role of public education also shifted in the subsequent years of war as the country’s demographics and politics began to change. As the understanding of ethics was so deeply rooted in religious beliefs, the appropriateness of this application came into question with changing demographics. Similarly, the role of the school became less involved in mandating morality or ethical thinking as the public became more concerned with the divisions such morality had created (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Such divisions in cultural diversity, cultural make-up and likewise social and economic status gave rise to new social movements, originating both inside and outside of the United States.

For example, within the United States increased attention on gaps in schooling for women and minorities resulted in large social movements, such as civil rights and desegregation. In other parts of the world, such as Brazil, the similar disparity of education by economics led the way for pedagogical changes aimed at democracy as suggested by Paolo Freire (1970, 1993).
Such movements addressed systemic oppression and prejudice in the education system and beyond. At the same time, access to resources for marginalized groups rose in importance. Freire’s colleagues and contemporaries saw the relationship between the people and the earth’s resources such as clean water, the forests, and the land, as inextricably linked, allowing for the subsequent connection between social justice and environmental/ecopedagogy (Gadotti & Torres, 2009). While social justice and environmental education continued to grow and expand within the education community reaching a stage of “institutionalization” (De la Porta & Diani, 2006), humane education and the inclusion of animal welfare and nonhuman animals did not regain its once-held position (Unti & DeRosa, 2003). It also was not incorporated into the fields of social justice and environmental education in an integral way.

**Anthropocentrism within the Social Change Education Movement**

Consequently, humane education’s focus expanded from solely animal welfare to recognizing its interrelationship with other successful social movements. It is defined in the last decade as the teaching of one’s roles and responsibilities towards animals, the earth and each other (Arbour, Signal, & Taylor, 2009; Association of Professional Humane Educators, 2017). The connection between animal protections and perspective, social justice and environmental sustainability in education creates a natural strengthening of the social change education movements to achieve reform (Horstemke, 2009; Kahn, 2008). However, such connections in reformatory thinking about education, such as Freire’s critical pedagogy (1970), at their core demands a critical investigation by the student population of systematic oppression of people. Freire’s praxis model in his seminal work “Pedagogy of the Oppressed” (1970) was much later expanded through eco-pedagogy to include the nonhuman element through the consideration of people as planetary stewards. Still, the inclusion of the animal perspective in Gadotti’s (2010)
work refers to sustainable consumption and more specifically conservation and environmental oppression in its relation to human suffering (Kahn & Kahn, 2010). In both pedagogical frames while moving towards and alluding to a balanced interdependence between humans, the earth, and its nonhuman animals, the nonhuman animals are still viewed through a utilitarian lens.

Specifically, Freire’s model did not include the animal or the animal perspective as integral to the process of empowerment. His work not only excluded the nonhuman animal from the networked relationship of power and oppression but explicitly denies nonhuman animals a place in the conversation. Bell and Russell (2000) attempt to address “some of the anthropocentric blind spots within critical pedagogy” (p. 189) by dismantling Freire’s suggestion that humans should provide dominion over animals as humans are the only species capable of enacting change. The authors argue the paradigm limits the discussion and potential for addressing inequities in the world, as it automatically places a hierarchy between species. This position perpetuates an oppressive anthropocentric system, with implications for the environment and social justice. Without allowing for the consideration of the animal perspective to interchangeably hold a similar level of power in the discourse around a new paradigm for relationships, then balance cannot be achieved. In this way, the creation of a new paradigm or conceptual frame would acknowledge the failures of such models by identifying the gaps in current pedagogical frameworks and creating a new pathway for humane education. A continued utility model does not fit the humane movement as currently defined.

Corman (2011) agrees in her critique of Freire’s model calling on educators to embrace critical theory. She suggests that by “sharpening our own critique of speciesism and anthropocentrism, we work against a dominant Western cultural logic that reifies animals, and casts them in the perpetual role of humanity’s degraded Other” (p. 41). Accordingly, the
theoretical dichotomy of animal vs. humans has practical demonstrations in teaching and learning.

Pedersen (2004) highlighted the anthropocentric tendency in education in a pilot study using qualitative analysis of a primary school in Sweden. Through document analysis of the curricula and textbook materials, in addition to structured interviews conducted with two school leaders (the principal and the social science teacher), Pedersen (2004) investigated the dynamics of the positional relationship between the schools, the environment, and animals highlighting what she terms the ‘hidden curriculum.” It is this hidden curriculum that reinforces and perpetuates beliefs of the nature of dominant human relationships towards animals. Her analysis in this pilot study concluded that the “school seems to express, and reproduce, a view on the human-animal relation that tells us to care about the interests of animals as long as we do not need to modify our own purposes” (p. 8). Pedersen’s findings reveal the perpetuating reluctance of school curricula to address ethical thinking or take too firm of an ethical position. The relation to self is supported by similar evidence at the teacher level. While applied to the institution by Pedersen (2004), the same disconnection exists at the individual level.

Sjögren, Gyberg, and Henriksson (2015) conducted qualitative interviews with teachers to investigate their feelings about extending sustainable education to include nonhuman animals. Across eight focus groups (n=34), the study revealed a resistance to expansion to include animals in the curriculum and professional development based on two identified themes: 1) individualism 2) hierarchical understanding among physical domains demonstrating disconnect. They identify deterritorialization as a factor that “refers to the detachment of social and cultural practices from their ties to place” (p. 606).
This detachment creates gaps in the ability to connect along the chain of values, beliefs, and norms as it allows for discrepancy between values and actions. Although humane educators would self-identify with values aligned with the animal welfare movement, no studies have been conducted to establish what those values might be and as indicated by the Heleski, Merteg, & Zanelli (2006) survey of animal science students there may be differences between perceived support of animal welfare and behaviors. The exclusion of nonhuman animals in these other social movements relegated humane education to the realm of moral or character education, that was a contributing factor in its isolation.

**Humane Education as a Moral Issue**

A 2009 study around the continued struggle schools face in incorporating ethics reinforced the early assertion that the role of school and the teacher has morphed over time, moving away from a school-bound morality towards a parental and student privilege model through “values clarification” (Lickona, 2009). At the same time, schools remain tasked with developing students’ social skills and creating good citizens engaged in their communities (Damon & Gregory, 1997). This tension between home and community responsibility is present in curriculum debate, as ideological camps disagree over strategy (Bebeau, Rest, & Narvaez, 1999). Historical and contemporary topics contained within social justice and environmental education have transcended the ethical boundary into interdisciplinary domains and have allowed for the integration of such themes across curricula standards, as well as across geographical and cultural boundaries. The application of social justice and sustainability to science, literature, and math, for example, has expanded the reach of the educational goals of such pedagogical approaches globally.
However, the human-animal relationship within humane education has remained within a moral frame and therefore, dependent upon rules specific to the system’s definition of humane. For example, ideas around consumption of animal products, domestication of animals, and the rights of nonhuman animals are difficult to disentangle from cultural or religious beliefs. It leaves a challenge for humane educators trying to engage students on what could be considered a moral issue.

In summary, the current limited frameworks proposed diminishes the capacity for humane education to transcend cultural boundaries by placing the human-animal relationship in didactic terms (e.g., right or wrong, good or bad). Unlike frameworks for social justice and environmental education that identify culturally neutral constructs for application across cultures, defining humane education in moral terms ignores cultural differences and infers judgment. For instance, a significant concentration of humane education programs and research remain focused on concepts such as empathy and kindness (Ascione, 1992; Daly & Suggs, 2010; Thompson & Gullone, 2003). Admittedly, empathy skill building and altruism are important components of and goal of humane education; however, there is a limit to the scope a program built on this singular construct can reach. An examination of the spectrum of human-animal relationships illustrates the problem of humane education remaining solely in a moral frame.

**Changing Human-Animal Relationships Across Cultures**

Traditional beliefs about animals provide understanding about how the human-animal relationship contributes to (or diminishes) cultural capital for both teachers and students (Arkow, 2013). This analysis of assets can influence what becomes school curricula and establishes the way teachers and students relate to each other and their immediate environment. For example, in the West where the animal welfare movement has grown, the human-animal relationship,
specifically with “pets” has dramatically evolved. The 2017-2018 national survey of pet owners in the United States (APPA, 2018) showed steadily increasing numbers of American pet owners spending increasing amounts of money on care for their pets, including insurance coverage, organic foods, and treats. Increasingly, the notion of animal as a family member in western societies has changed the types of considerations taken to care for an interaction with animals. However, the imposition of such standards of care on animal welfare elsewhere or with immigrant populations, specifically in terms of empathy becomes problematic (Serpell, 1987). In earlier studies of the human-animal relationship within Inuit societies by cultural anthropologists, western notions of empathy and ethical treatment can be unfair and at times dangerous to the civilization itself (Wenzel, 1991). The domestication of animals may reference only production or economic value for certain populations, but the care and welfare of the animals may be extremely high. In these cases, the populations may be behaving ethically, but ultimately still reflecting a highly utilitarian approach to their relationships with the earth and its inhabitants.

For this reason, topics such as hunting create complicated socio-cultural barriers and therefore go unaddressed by humane education programs (see Needs Analysis). The construct of threat perception is an example of how an ethical frame can produce power struggles between human and animals. In a qualitative study of German students ($n=31$) investigating attitudes towards the reintroduction of wolves, geographical differences were noted. Students recruited from various geographic locations around Germany from urban to rural created the sample. To provide a range of responses, they selected participants from grammar school through high school, with an average age of 15, in addition to various community pools such as schools, youth centers, and church groups. Through semi-structured interviews focusing on threat perception,
Herman and Menzel (2013), found that rural students were more likely to believe that population control techniques such as hunting or culling were appropriate. They also found that students were more likely to view solutions such as these as acceptable as the perceived threat to humans increased. On the other hand, when similar topics are placed within a context such as ecological preservation and social justice, such as conservation for increased livelihood, greater support for animal protection is found. Kahan and Ali (2015) describe shifting attitudes in the Mangla Dam region of Pakistan for example. In this case, 392 participants from across several villages largely supported a ban on hunting and community oversight for animal conservation efforts to increase individual livelihood. Alternatively, less anthropocentric concerns can equally shift behaviors towards animals or the environment when presented in a culturally sensitive way. For example, indigenous populations in the Philippines demonstrated the ability to shift perceptions and behaviors toward animals, despite long-standing traditions of hunting to preserve the place where their ancestors still roamed. New traditions such as limited fishing and observing periods of no hunting demonstrated an understanding of the connection animals have to the community’s existence and the need for living in balance (Gabriel & Mangahas, 2017). In this way, humane education shifted the human-animal relationship towards balance. Humane education used in this way is an integrative approach that is culturally relevant to the population at hand and without a moral or ethical imperative.

This idea can be further extended to the complex social phenomenon of using animals as food. Meat consumption and the species-specific differentiation creates language and beliefs about animals to both the animals’ and the family’s social status (Roex & Miele, 2005). Within the United States, the agricultural industry holds considerable influence both as an American tradition and as a legislative power. Education material on diet and nutrition is often constructed
and distributed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, illustrating a relationship between current farming practices and health. However, the dietary guidelines for 2015-2020 do currently include plant-based alternatives as a “healthy option” alongside traditional recommendations of meat and dairy products (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services & U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2015). The guidelines present an opportunity for change, but still reflect a utilitarian relationship between humans and animals for consumption. For example, a recent survey of animal science faculty at a public university in the Midwest assessed attitudes about farm animal welfare (Heleski et al., 2006). Results showed that while 90% of the sample (n=446) reported supporting general animal welfare practices, only 32% were concerned with husbandry practices that have been determined to cause stress to the animal (such as castration without anesthetic). These views present a conflict of major stakeholders in the animal welfare movement with one foot remaining in traditional practices. Traditionally, the view of “dominion” created the relational parameters between human and domesticated animals. Dominion focused on the human’s responsibility for minimizing pain, stress, suffering, and deprivation while providing for the needs of animals in one’s care (Broom, 2003). Although there has been some change in the consideration of animal care within the production chain as well as other working animals (e.g., circus animals), the idea of dominion remains at odds with animal protection and animal rights movements. Members of these movements view the term “animal welfare” as maintaining a utilitarian and ultimately anthropocentric view of the human-animal relationship. This conflation of perspectives remains unreconciled in a cohesive approach to humane education.

Yet, the timing seems right for humane education to capitalize on the opportunity to capture a growing change in public sentiment. Consumers’ consideration of the animal’s well-
being within the agricultural systems in many countries around the world (Broom, 2001, 2010) is growing and causing shifts in practice.

For example, considerations towards a plant-based diet and cruelty-free products are growing momentum both within the United States and across the world. A recent survey of consumers in the United Kingdom identified that health factors highly correlated with animal welfare considerations for food purchases (Harper & Makatouni, 2002). Furthermore, in developing nations such as India and Pakistan, preference is given to those cosmetic products that are not tested on animals (Hasan, 2018). Similarly, companion animals as a concept are spreading to communities where previously these relationships did not exist as well as within western cultures. The “pet” industry has exploded (American Pet Owners Association, 2018) indicating an increase of value placed on animal life.

However, like with the guidelines for agricultural husbandry and product development, these values do not always align with regulatory policies pertaining to animals. Policy, law and regulations are still often anthropocentric and influence cultural perceptions of the human-animal relationship. Considering the relationship between social movements, such as civil rights movement, and school instruction resulting in or prompted by specific legislation, a brief review of law relating to the human-animal relationship and its impact on humane education programs and education curricula is included here.

**Regulating the Human-Animal Relationship**

Legislation globally indicates mixed progress for the inclusion of animal protection (Buccieri, 2015). Specifically, three categories of sanctioned animal protection situations exist worldwide (Trent, Edwards, Fent, & O’Meara, 2005). First, there are countries with strong animal protection laws and strong reinforcement of those laws. Second are countries with strong
animal protection laws, but little or no enforcement of such laws. Third are countries with little to no animal protection laws. Within each category of country are differentiations as to what animals are protected (e.g., protections for companion animals, but not farm animals). Similarly, there is variation around what behaviors are considered illegal, based on definitions of humane or cruel treatment. Trent and colleagues (2005) assert that a relationship between economic status and animal protection legislation does exist. However, enforcement is more closely associated with cultural and political barriers. A prime illustration of this relationship is found in animals in blood sports (e.g., cockfighting, dogfighting, bullfights).

In communities where blood sport is sanctiated and animal control is not, the education system has difficulty directly addressing issues that run counter to the societal norms and government policies. Additionally, when blood sport is considered part and parcel of religious and cultural identity legislation to curtail cruelty hit a roadblock. In Puerto Rico for example, Spanish colonizers brought bullfighting and the concept of “dominion.” Although bullfighting did not become endemic in Puerto Rico, the use of animals for sport and entertainment did. Catholic traditions took hold alongside mixed traditions of the Taino Indians and African slaves, and we see the beginning of cockfighting on the island. Cockfighting persisted in part to the religious understanding of dominion. As Davis (2013) writes, “most human actors in colonial cockfighting struggles believed in biblical dominion from the book of Genesis (1:6), that codifies speciesism as a Christian imperative by granting humanity control over all creatures.” (p. 551).

On the mainland of the United States the belief in dominion also existed, as did a growing emphasis on the responsibility to protect those under human power. By 1900, the burgeoning animal welfare movement had achieved anti-cruelty legislation in nearly all 50 states. When Puerto Ricans were granted U.S. citizenship in 1917, the government argued that
cockfighting was a right as U.S. citizen and tied the idea of cockfighting to expressions of their cultural identity (Davis, 2013). By the early 1930s, the ban on cockfighting was repealed in response to a slowing economy to stimulate tourism with the lure of “native culture.” Cockfighting continues across the island of Puerto Rico, televised and celebrated (Schechter, 2015). Yet bullfighting has become unpopular in Spain and many arenas have closed, although it is still considered part of cultural identity and deemed such by the government and constitutional court in Madrid. The persistence of bloodsport as tradition illustrates the challenge of humane education faces when pitting morality against culture.

Similar examples exist across the spectrum of animal protection. Countries in Africa, for example, face difficulty creating animal protection laws that do not conflict with the economic stability of their nations (Trent et al., 2005). Moreover, when laws relating to hunting or misuse of animals are passed, they are unenforced by citizens or law enforcement because of the overriding issues of hunger and poverty (Trent et al., 2005). This interconnection between human and animal suffering is where we find the majority of empirical evidence. The problem of animal cruelty and its relationship to interpersonal violence is one that has become a widely understood both by policymakers, law enforcement, and educators. In fact, it is through this “link” that the first studies of humane education are found. The “link” further engrained the perception that humane education was a means to develop morality and prosocial behaviors, in opposition to antisocial behaviors.

The Limits of “the Link” on Humane Education

The connection between abuse or cruelty to animals and interpersonal violence was asserted as far back as philosopher John Locke (1705). Hogarth’s (1751) depiction of the “Four Stages of Cruelty” illustrated a degradation of the human as a perpetrator of animal violence began his life participating in animal cruelty and ultimately becoming a murderer and victim of
cruelty himself (Shesgreen, 1973 plates 73-79). Early case studies into this relationship (Tapia, 1971) suggested that antisocial behaviors of children correlated to acts of animal abuse. Later in the 80s and 90s, such studies became more commonplace and seemed to confirm the link between human and animal violence (see Ascione, 1997; Diviney, Dickert, & Lockwood, 1983; Kellert & Felthouse, 1985; Ressler, Burgess, & Douglas, 1988). For example, in homes where there is domestic violence and animals are present, the animals are as likely to be victims of abuse or used as pawns to manipulate victims (Arkow, 1996; Lockwood & Ascione, 1998). Exposure to animal violence links to a variety of antisocial behaviors including bullying, perpetration of animal abuse and other violent acts (Gullone & Robertson, 2008). In Gullone & Robertson’s study, 20% of 241 teens surveyed aged between 14 and 16 admitted to participating in animal abuse and 17% participated in bullying behavior within the year surveyed. A regression analysis revealed that witnessing animal abuse was a predictive factor in both participating in animal abuse and bullying behaviors. While there is no indication that violence against animals or exposure to such acts predicts future violent behavior, there is a clear association between animal violence and other types of antisocial behavior (Arluke, Levin, Luke & Ascione, 1999; Flynn, 2011). In a series of studies on incarcerated criminals (Hensley & Tallichet 2005; Hensley, Tallichet, & Dutkiewicz, 2009; Tallichet & Hensley, 2004), inmates who had witnessed violence against animals were more likely to perpetrate violence against animals. In another study of the same inmates those who began this behavior at a younger age did so with more frequency, suggesting school-aged intervention is appropriate.

Beginning in the 80s the initial empirical studies associating pro-animal and prosocial behavior begin to emerge (Cameron, 1983). Subsequent studies continued to focus on the potential for an animal-focused emotional connection as a deterrent for antisocial behavior
(Faver, 2010; Thompson & Gullone, 2003). Over the last three decades, studies demonstrate the potential for programs to increase empathy development in children by promoting positive human-animal relationships (Ascione, 1992). Poresky (1990) found a significant positive correlation between a student’s bond with their companion animal and the measured level of empathy. These same students consistently outscored their peers who did not have a companion animal in their home.

Other investigations of different humane education interventions showed effects in the affective domain including positive attitudes towards animals and peers (Ascione, 1992; Tsai & Kaufman, 2014; Wagner, 2014) and on the development of skills aiding social relationships, such as perspective taking (Maruyama, 2011). On the opposing end of the prosocial skills continuum, there is compelling evidence suggesting the impact of negative human-animal relationships on child development and education outcomes.

Programs directed at children who have participated in animal abuse show significant increases in empathy and coping skills, as well as decreased instances of additional abusive behaviors (Lunghofer & Shapiro, 2011). More recently, significant gains on measures of empathy, such as the Bryant Scale of Empathy (Bryant, 1982) have been reported for students participating in a humane education program offered by the LA SPCA, with the greatest benefit observed in those students deemed most at-risk at pretest (Wagner, 2014). However, a 2008 meta-analysis of school violence reduction programs did not include one that incorporated human-animal relationships (Park-Higgerson et al., 2008).

In general, comprehensive school programming to reduce violence and increase prosocial behaviors, while focused on prosocial skills building such as empathy building (e.g. Roots of Empathy) remain exclusive to peer to peer interaction. Yet effective intervention programs with
at-risk youth often include the use of animal-assisted therapy or activities (Nimer & Lundahl, 2007), seemingly confirming Pedersen’s suggestion of a “hidden curricula” and anthropocentric bias. It further highlights the lack of penetration that the human-animal relationship has in the broader educational experiences of children.

One potential reason for this is the lack of rigor and robustness in the studies of humane education interventions. A recommendation from the leading researchers on “the link” (Ascione & Shapiro, 1999) discusses the need for the field to further define the goals, objectives, and procedures with a culturally competent lens (Kaufmann, 1999). It also mandates the need to clearly articulate how to address any established connection between animal and personal violence. Despite this recommendation, Aguirre and Orihuela (2013) assert that studies in humane education continue to lack rigor to appropriately advance the field.

Contributing to this, is the ambiguous definition of humane education in practice. In Jalongo’s (2014) Teaching Compassion: Humane Education in Early Childhood, chapters reflect a wide array of definitions of humane education and predicted outcomes, ranging from animal-assisted therapy (AAT), animal-assisted activities (reading to dogs), as well as cruelty prevention. As a result, humane education programming varies widely in practice (Arkow, 2010; Komorosky & O’Neil, 2015) containing no universal guidelines for implementation or best practice. In this way, while “the link” is one important avenue for the role of humane education, it seems incomplete to identify empathy development as the only potential outcome. Student outcomes from improving their relationships with life around them goes beyond the benefit to socialization and the affective domain.

Humans have a natural predilection towards relating to nonhuman animals and a desire to connect with the living world around them. This relationship first described by Wilson (1984)
as biophilia defines the human relationship with nature as a genetic trait. The relationship built with the natural world is one that Wilson (1984) deemed to be evolutionary and built within our nature as humans to seek life outside of ourselves. The intersection of a natural desire to connect and our cognitive development is critical to the development of scientific understanding (Littledyke, 2008). Within the realm of science education, studies investigating the cognitive benefits of addressing student attitudes towards animals has shown increased aptitude (Randler, Humel, & Prokop, 2012) and interest in scientific inquiry (Bloom, 1992). The evidence supports the link between children’s connection with nature through experiential and outdoor experiences and cognitive performance gains across the curriculum, including social studies and language arts (American Institutes for Research, 2005; Lieberman & Hoody, 1998; Louv, 2009).

Despite this evidence supporting the benefits of a comprehensive and humane education, teacher preparation remains traditional and didactic (Shor, 2012). Educator preparation struggles to prepare teachers for the realities of a global system (Bourn, 2015)-and those who identify as humane educators have even less preparation. To date there have been no studies investigating the training of humane educators in pedagogical approaches or best practice, therefore little evidence exists for humane educators to build practice with appropriate outcomes in mind.

In summary, the practice of humane education stems from its historical roots in developing morality and socialization of American children. While this is one outlet for the practice of humane education, it has narrowed the field’s ability to integrate fully into compatible and related social change movements, such as social justice and environmental education that have seen global expansion in educational practice and research. Yet, social justice and environmental education are built on anthropocentric paradigms (Orr, 1994) and do not address the nonhuman animal that is a natural extension of this critical pedagogy (Bell & Russell, 2010;
Corman, 2011). Equally, the lack of a cohesive paradigm created the isolation of humane education within a moral and character education paradigm and an almost sole focus on its ability to deter antisocial behavior. In this way, a culturally competent framework can act as a neutral entry point to the inclusion of animals in education across cultures and subjects. Without such a framework, humane education as a field is determined by those who practice it without a conceptual beacon to guide. Consequently, the topics, concepts, and approaches vary significantly by the practitioner and individual beliefs.

To investigate the full spectrum of beliefs about humane education by those who practice it, a needs assessment was conducted with 30 humane education practitioners in the United States and Puerto Rico. At the same time, an environmental scan determined priorities for humane education programs by surveying over 50 humane education organizations in distinct locations around the world. The following chapter details these two sources of data to describe the state of the field of humane education.
Chapter 2
Assessing Practitioner Beliefs About Humane Education

The most recent review of U.S. humane education programming revealed that humane education programs are taught by educators outside of the public system and most frequently by employees of animal welfare and shelter groups (Olin, 2002). This same survey showed that of 203 respondents within the sheltering community tasked with humane education, only 15% had some professional certification in education. The professionalization of humane educators is a target area for those within the field (Ascione & Schapiro, 2009), with a variety of institutions recently created to provide “would-be” educators with a theoretical understanding to strengthen pedagogical approaches. The Academy of Pro-Social Learning (formerly, Humane Society Academy of the Humane Society of the United States) and Institute for Humane Education are just two credentialing bodies working to standardize practice within the movement. Professional organizations also exist, such as The Association of Professional Humane Educators and Humane Education Advocates Reaching Teachers (HEART) established to mobilize and support humane educators around the globe. The Humane Education Coalition (HEC), is a new organization aiming to be the epicenter for excellence in practice within humane education by providing professional development and support through grant funding.

Despite the high understanding and utilization of the term humane education within the field of animal welfare, it is less recognized in the education field at large. A 2012 study reported of those teachers currently working in a state with a humane education mandate, 57.2% of respondents (n = 167) were unaware of its existence (Itle-Clark & Forsyth, 2012). This same report also highlighted teachers’ variable understanding of how to define humane education, most often referring to vivisection. This misunderstanding is not surprising considering the
current state mandates on humane education. Reviews by both HEART and the National Humane Education Society, revealed that only 11 states carry humane education mandates (National Humane Education Society, 2017). Of those, only three specify humane education or kindness to animals. Of the rest, the mandates vary widely often with humane education falling under umbrella stipulations of environmental protection (conservation) and most often under moral or character education, such as empathy development. Like Ile-Clarke’s (2012) findings, most of the language in the state mandates referred to laboratory experiments and vivisection.

Meanwhile, terminology within environmental education and social justice education has grown exponentially within public school education and in preservice teacher preparation becoming part of professional vernacular (Taylor, 2000). The use of exclusive terminology within schools limits students thinking and provides separation between the students and their schemas about natural systems (Bowers, 2001). Similarly, this overarching anthropocentric view influences practitioners in their work. The contextual influence on the individual and the general lack of acceptance of an animal-inclusive worldview may impact the efficacy of humane education practitioners through triadic determinism (Bandura, 1978).

**Educator Preparation and Agency**

The lack of mandate, common language, and limited pedagogical training can contribute to restricted agency, as these shape educator beliefs and goals. Agency of educators has been defined as a dynamic trait and one that involves engagement. In a study of the characteristics of teacher agency, Biesta, Preistley, and Robinson (2015) use this definition:

“the temporally constructed engagement by actors of different structural environment – the temporal-relational contexts of action –that, through the interplay of habit, imagination, and
judgment, both reproduces and transforms those structures in interactive response to the problems posed by changing historical situations” (Emirbayer & Mische 1998, p. 970).

Biesta and colleagues (2015) ethnographic study of 6 classroom teachers undergoing school reform in different geographical locations in the United Kingdom identified patterns of beliefs that impacted agency. Under one of three themes identified (purpose of education), over 12 months of interviews and observations, the team found no discussion around the idea of educational values and an absence of concepts of social justice or democratic values. They suggest that teachers are hyper-focused on short-term goals and struggle to enact a vision of their work “within deep consideration of the purposes of education” (p. 636).

The purpose of education is undoubtedly shaped through teachers’ training and professional development. Investigations have been undertaken to determine how best to prepare teachers to serve as agents of change and address issues of social justice (Lee, Eckrich, Lacke, & Showalter, 2010; Rogers et al., 2005; Stenhouse & Jarrett, 2012) and environmental protection (Redman, 2013; Quinn, Castera & Clement, 2016). These studies suggest a model of teacher preparation involving a focused effort to provide time and space for discourse in addition to field work. Lee et al. (2010), like Stenhouse and Jarrett (2012), highlight the importance of preservice teachers having the opportunity to be hands-on with socio-political issues through experiential learning. While Lee et al. (2010) investigated a grant initiated an overhaul of courses for educators geared towards urban setting teaching, Stenhouse and Jarrett (2012) qualitatively reviewed the effects of service-learning projects selected by various cohorts and the learning outcomes of that process on the teachers. Each found that teachers strategically exposed to these learning experiences gained an appreciation for this connection to community. Lee et al. (2010) highlights the importance of these experiences in removing bias for teachers and
promoting equity in education. In Lee’s study, the framework for field work was pre-determined within the course agenda. Comparatively, Stenhouse and Jarret provided insight into the organic process of determining community-embedded action and the difficulties that arise from conflicting interests. Although the methods of experiential learning in each study were different, the results indicated positive outcomes for teacher perception of community issues.

Similarly, the investigations to support pro-environmental behaviors for preservice teachers involved opportunities for the active challenging of perceptions. While Quinn, Castera, and Clement (2016) identified bias and anthropocentric tendencies in teacher approaches to instruction about the environment, they suggest that just like students are expected to reflect and challenge their thinking, so should teachers. They conclude that “fostering critical engagement as eminently reconcilable with promoting pro-environmental values and the valuing of nonhuman components of the environment “(p. 906) is possible through targeted programs.

This critical engagement corroborates Picower’s (2012, 2015) assertion that true change-educators will not simply transmit information about issues but encourage action and participate in that action themselves (Picower, 2015). Picower (2012, 2015) suggests that to initiate change, educators must create opportunities for action and push their actions outside the limitations of the of their classrooms. Similarly, Bourn (2015) suggests that there needs to be an extension of influence from the classroom to the school and into the larger society. However, he implies that it is not enough to employ a ‘global mindset,’ and that educators must have at hand the tools and skills to enact change (p. 74). These discussions and calls for action are reminiscent of critical pedagogy and blur the line between teacher and activist. However, such assertions align with the value-beliefs and norms theory and helped to classify behaviors into the following categories guiding the needs analysis: (a) non-activist public-sphere behaviors (organizational affiliations)
(b) private-sphere behaviors (humane consumption, vegan/vegetarian behaviors), and behavior in organizations (actions taken as a humane educator) (adapted from Stern, 2000).

**Goals and Objectives of Needs Analysis**

The purpose of this needs assessment was to profile humane educators working either within the animal welfare sector or a school system. The constructs for investigation are grounded in two previously discussed guiding theoretical frameworks. The first is social cognitive theory as it relates to agency (Bandura, 1989). This relationship provides insight into the interplay between self-determinacy and environmental factors that may be influencing the humane educator’s choices. The second is Values-Beliefs-Norms theory (Stern, Dietz, Abel, Guagnano & Kalof, 1999) that focuses on the chain of supports needed to influence behaviors within a social change movement (Figure 2.1).

![Figure 2.1 Values, Beliefs and Norms Frame](valuesbeliefnorm.net)

With this framework, the needs analysis adapted Stern’s constructs from pro-environmental to animal welfare. The following constructs emerged for investigation: (1) beliefs of the humane educator about animal welfare issues (2) programming content and strategies that support or inhibit the growth of social change (3) educator’s self-efficacy in reaching community
members. These three constructs were then compiled to create a single measure profiling the humane educator.

The following research questions guided the data collection and analysis: (1) What are the characteristics of the professionals who self-identify as a humane educator? (2) What beliefs do humane educators hold around important humane education issues? (3) Is there a relationship between educators’ beliefs and their understanding of animal sentience? (4) What types of animal welfare content are covered in programming? (5) How are topics covered (instructional strategies)? (6) What is the educator’s perception of their self-agency? The questions sought to inform the way in that leaders in the field of humane education provide support for practitioners in growing program implementation in schools.

**Methodology**

To answer these questions, a survey was designed using three previously validated tools in the areas of animal attitudes and self-efficacy. The study employed quantitative measures to develop a profile of the current humane educator and to gain insight into the state of the field with a small sample. The following section describes details about the measurements, the participants, and the procedural steps for data collection and analysis.

**Participants**

Participants were recruited from four pools of humane educators: (a) current students enrolled in the Certified Humane Educator program offered by the Academy of Prosocial Learning (formerly of the Humane Society of the United States) (b) Members of the Association of Professional Humane Educators (c) Members of the humane education committee for the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and (d) educators identified by that committee. Each of these pools, except for the UFT, have members working in both the animal welfare field and
school systems. The UFT members, however, must be certified teachers and union members in New York State. Participants were contacted via email by their respective organization leader with a brief introductory message, the consent forms and a link to the survey. In the first two weeks following contact, only three surveys were completed. Specific personnel in each participant pool were then contacted via email and asked to directly distribute the project information to staff and others who might be interested to increase participation. Participants were also encouraged to share the study information with other possible participants to increase response rate.

At the close of the survey, participants \( n=27 \) were entirely female and ranged in age from 27 to 71, with an average age of 44. Of the respondents, two were licensed schoolteachers with one in a public school. No other participants held a teaching license, nor any affiliations with any institutes of education. The sample represented a wide geographical spread from North America. Coastal states (New York, New Jersey, and California) represented 60% of the sample, with the remaining respondents spread across locations in the United States and one participant from Canada.

Of the 27 participants, 21 completed the survey in its entirety providing a complete data set. The other six surveys did not contain sufficient data for inclusion in the analysis. A data collection problem did arise with Qualtrics not providing the full questionnaire to those six participants.

**Measures**

Three previously constructed scales merged to create the Humane Educator Profile survey used in this assessment. The Animal Attitude Scale (Herzog & Golden, 2009) \( (\alpha = .91) \) and the Belief of Mind Scale \( (\alpha = .62) \) (Knight, Vrij, Cherryman, & Nunkoosing, 2004) assessed educator’s beliefs about topics within the animal welfare movements. Items clustered around
constructs of animal research, animal usage in food/clothing, use of force to control animals, and animal sentience. Both instruments use a five-point Likert scale (strongly disagree, agree, no opinion, agree and strongly agree) with 20 and five items respectively. As exemplified in other studies (Binngießer, & Randler, 2015; Herzog, Betchart, & Pittman, 1991), the responses were scored with those least associated with animal welfare ideas as 1 and 2 and those most associated with animal welfare ideas as 4 and 5 “No opinion” responses were scored as 3. Higher cumulative scores are associated with attitudes most supportive of animal welfare. The same scoring pattern was used for all scaled items, if not otherwise specified.

To assess educator’s agency, selected subscales of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) were included. The items of the subscales clustered around the participant’s ability to ascertain involvement from members of the community, including parents. Responses ranged from not at all, very little, somewhat, quite a lot, a great deal. Points were allocated in ascending order from 1-5, the higher scores indicating a higher degree of self-efficacy.

In addition, a multiple response section covering topics selected for programming and instructional strategies asked respondents to identify humane education topics covered in their programming within the last 12 months. Topic choices ranged from companion animal, farm animals, wildlife, rodents and insects and various welfare issues about animal life. The selection of topics were based on a brief survey of humane education curricula from leading organizations and campaign themes from major animal welfare organizations (Humane Society of the United States, American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals). Strategies used with students (i.e., humane literature, animal-assisted activities, etc.) were also calculated. Each content topic content was given a value of one, so to assess the range and the frequency of each participant. An example of the research questions and
sample questions are provided in Table 2.1. The instructional strategies were given the same
values. All questions and topics included in the survey can be found in Appendix A.

Table 2.1 Sample Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Example Question</th>
<th>Scoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1. Characteristics</td>
<td>New Construction</td>
<td>What is your current title? Do you have a teacher’s license?</td>
<td>5-point Likert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2. Beliefs about animals</td>
<td>Animal Attitude Scale</td>
<td>Eating eggs is morally wrong. Hunting plays an important role in animal population control.</td>
<td>5-point Likert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3. Animal Sentience</td>
<td>Belief in Animal Minds</td>
<td>Animals know what is happening around them</td>
<td>5-point Likert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4. Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>Bandura Sub-Scales</td>
<td>I am confident in my ability to get parental support with my program</td>
<td>5-point Likert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5. Content Questions</td>
<td>New Construction</td>
<td>I have covered the following topics in the last 12 months: (companion animals, endangered species, etc.)</td>
<td>Multiple Choice (free selection)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6. Pedagogical Approaches</td>
<td>New Construction</td>
<td>I have used the following approaches to teaching the last 12 months: humane literature, service learning, etc.</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The measures were distributed in two rounds to test validity. The initial distribution was provided to a limited sample (n=5). Following completion of the survey, participants were interviewed to discuss the clarity of the questions. There were no indications from those
interviewed that the questions were unclear or posed any type of validity issue. The survey was distributed to a wider sample without change.

**Procedures**

After the pilot launch, recruitment letters were distributed to the selected sample groups via email. Recruitment letters included the letter of consent and contact information to receive a link to the online survey hosted by Qualtrics.

To increase participation, the second round of recruitment letters were distributed to contacts in the field to who had access to multiple humane educators, and a call for participants placed on the Association of Professional Humane Educators private message board. This round included the letter of consent, a project description and a direct link to the survey. This increased survey participation, although limited tracking data. Participants were encouraged to use the contact information provided in the consent form to share additional thoughts or ideas about the survey.

**Initial Results**

The data was analyzed to answer the research questions through descriptive statistics. This provided an overall profile description of the sample. The scores on each of the measures were to provide a baseline of this sample and allowed identification of areas of low scores that could be targeted for intervention. In standard practice for interpretation of Likert-scale data (Warmbrod, 2014), summative scores on the measures were taken, in addition to frequency of response on subscale items for the AAS, the BAM, and self-efficacy scales. When appropriate, average scores were transformed to percentages to ascertain differences between the overall mean and subscale scores. Frequency scores were also compiled to analyze humane education content topics and strategies. The data highlight patterns that will be discussed here, in
summary, followed by a more detailed analysis under each research question. The main findings were as follows:

- Humane education is taught primarily by those outside of the school setting who lack formal education training
- Humane educators hold moderate beliefs about animal welfare issues, not activist beliefs
- Wide variation of topics covered, showing little consistency
- Content covered hovers around culturally acceptable topics, such as companion animals and avoids more controversial topics, such as hunting
- Self-efficacy scores indicate a low agency in relation to parental and community involvement with businesses and churches (and schools)

**Who Identifies as a Humane Educator?**

Despite direct contact with the humane education committee at the United Federation of Teachers, only one school-employed teacher completed the survey and only two held teaching licenses. The lack of response from classroom teachers could have multiple explanations, however, this sample illustrates the reality of humane education operating most frequently outside of general school instruction. The demographics of the respondents is also reflective of Olin’s (2002) survey of humane education programs where humane education was conducted primarily by nonprofit organizations by people who are not formally trained as educators.

Less than half (47%) of participant’s job titles included the words “humane education.” The other participants, with the exception of a single classroom teacher, held job titles including the terms youth, or community engagement, and only one participant’s title (adoption counselor) did not contain any words relating to education or outreach.
What Beliefs Do These Educators Hold Around Important Animal Welfare Issues?

The data indicate that this group of humane educators were moderate in their beliefs about important animal welfare issues. Overall, the average AAS score was 65.1 ($sd=9.5$) with a potential score of 100. While survey scores overall show an above-average pro-animal welfare position, these scores are modest and do not represent an activist stance (Knight & Herzog, 2009). This baseline helps to inform the risk of humane educators being polarized in their views and provides insight as to the overlap of humane education practitioners Values Beliefs Norms vs. that of the public. Items were then grouped to form the following sub-categories: 1) Use of animals in research 2) Animal rights 3) Use of animals for food/clothing 4) Use of force based on animal threat. Item analysis showed the lowest pro-animal response to questions on the use of animals for food and clothing. While responses were highly against wearing fur (100%), they were less against wearing leather (56%).

Also, there was no strong support for the avoidance of animal products for food. This is representative of other findings relating to people’s conflictual feelings regarding the use of animals for human purposes. While animal welfare activists view the suffering of animals as paramount or equal to that of humans, those outside of activism are more likely to see human needs as more important (Knight, Vrij, Bard, & Brandon, 2009).

The other groupings also showed a pattern of conflictual beliefs. For example, there was strong support for the rights of animals and ending the use of animals in research (70%). This supports Knight et al.’s (2009) findings that the belief of a viable alternative instead of animal use influences people’s thinking about animal use (i.e., there are other ways to test products for humans other than on animals). However, the use of force to remove animals showed less of a consensus with 58% supporting the removal of animals deemed as a nuisance or threatening
(pigeons, rats, and mosquitos). This tension is representative of other findings relating to people’s conflictual feelings regarding human action and animal type (Knight et al, 2009). It can also connect to individual’s feelings of disgust for animals that fall within this category and the lack of exposure to them (Randler, Hummel, & Prokop, 2012).

The response scores by cluster in comparison with the overall AAS scores are presented in Figure 2.2. These scores represent the percentage of responses in each category that were either supportive or substantially supportive of a pro-animal perspective. With a total score of 100 possible in each category, the percentages represent the score in relation to the total. The average score for all participants was 66%. The lowest pro-animal scores related to vegan and vegetarian issues such as wearing leather and eating meat (35%). The highest pro-animal scores were found in the area of the use of animals in research and in animal rights and utility (e.g., Animals should have the same rights as humans, Humans have no right to use animals for entertainment).

Figure 2.2 AAS response by category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of animals for food and clothing</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of force (animal removal)</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Rights/Utility</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total AAS Score</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Is there a relationship between educators’ animal welfare beliefs and their understanding of animal sentience?

The data represent a trend about the belief in animals’ ability to feel emotions and awareness of their environment, that was supported by 76% of responses, and the sample’s ambiguity with using animals as represented in the AAS. It highlights challenges within the field of humane education to deliver a unified message about the animal perspective as it intersects with human life. As animal sentience has been recently proposed as key to humane education (Balcombe, 2016), this indicates a possibility that belief in sentience does not translate into a change in values. It also supports what Pedersen (2004) described as the hidden curriculum, where animal welfare is considered only to the point where it becomes unbeneﬁcial or too difﬁcult for humans.

The belief in animal sentience is also a distinguishing factor of a pro-animal stance in different populations (Knight, Vrij, Bard, & Brandon, 2009). Knight et al. (2009) found that scientists were signiﬁcantly more likely to support the use of animals in all categories (research, entertainment, wearing) than their animal-welfare counterparts and the layperson. However, differentiation existed to the type of animal being used. Animal activists generally did not differentiate between the type of animal being used (i.e., they opposed using all types of animals) scientists and laypersons did. While animal type was not speciﬁcally targeted in this needs analysis, there is some indication of animal preference and differentiation based on the results. For example, those questions relating to certain animals received higher pro-animal responses (e.g., opposition to wearing fur or horse use in entertainment) vs those questions relating to insect removal.
Types of Animal Welfare Content

In alignment with the responses observed in the survey data, programming topics covered by the sample some predictable patterns (Figure 2.2). Like the survey responses, topics covered hovered around a moderate pro-animal perspective and tended to avoid more activist topics. On average, educators covered seven different topics over a 12-month period. The topics covered tended to address issues related to companion animals and avoid topics practitioners may be ambivalent about or deemed controversial. Figure 2.3 represents the most and least frequently covered topics.

Based on the responses to animal usage for food on AAS, it is not surprising to see low instruction rates for these topics within programming. It is unclear however whether this reflects educator bias or is a result of community or organizational influence. Given the wide geographical spread of respondents within North America, a more substantial data set to assess this would be necessary. Findings on food choice have been found to be influenced by family and social norms (Roex & Miele, 2005) and deeply entrenched in behavior even after targeted intervention (Redman, 2013).

Figure 2.3 Humane Education Topics Covered
How Are They Being Covered (instructional strategies)?

The literature supports a critical pedagogical approach to create social change behaviors and includes the idea of experiential and service learning as an effective strategy (Lee, Eckrich, Lacke, & Showalter, 2010; Stenhouse & Jarrett, 2012). Although 57% respondents indicated that they had used service learning in the last 12 months, it was still the least frequently used strategy. In contrast, nearly 80% of respondents used animal-assisted activities or live animals during instruction. The use of live animals is consistent with what Komorosky and O’Neil (2015) found in a study on teacher experience with humane education. This supports evidence that humane education has become heavily focused on the animal welfare component to the exclusion of environmental and social justice domains and could be contributing to the isolation of humane education programs. Furthermore, it represents an interpretation of humane education that is aligned with animal-assisted activities or therapies and not an integrative, critical pedagogy.

What is the educators’ perception of their self-agency?

Based on the sample size and relatively normal distribution of the data, a correlation was run to assess the relationship between the use of multiple strategies and the level of efficacy the educator felt. There was a modest correlation between the number of strategies used and scores on the efficacy scales ($r=0.45$). This could indicate a relationship between the educator’s belief in their ability to influence students toward more humane mindsets and their capacity to utilize and employ various instructional techniques.

Scores on the self-efficacy scales showed a modestly low feeling of self-efficacy ($n=33.64$ $sd=9.21$) with the lowest scores on items related to parental involvement, followed by local business and churches. These scores show room for improvement with connecting humane
educators with community resources that can create new opportunities for support and expansion.

**Summary of Needs Analysis Findings**

The needs assessment affirmed observational and empirical evidence that humane education generally operates outside of the educational system and relies heavily on staff within the animal welfare field. The beliefs held by this sample represent above-average support of animal welfare, but also ambivalence about protection that interferes with human needs (such as research). These beliefs seem to be reflected in the types of topics humane educators are covering through their programming. In other words, without the field providing an integrative framework, practitioners follow their beliefs about what should be taught as a community educator.

Instructional strategies involving live animals or animal-assisted activities dominated programming, while connecting to the wider community through service learning was less utilized. Equally, a lack of connection to the community was evident in the community-related items in the self-efficacy scales, specifically to parental, church and business involvement. The community connection and understanding would serve as a means of gaining more in-depth cultural competency.

Moreover, the needs assessment provided critical information for areas of further investigation for humane education. Continued data collection will allow for further analysis and insights into possible interventions within the presented theoretical framework. In coordination with the HEC’s gathering of feedback from humane education organizations a more precise picture of the field from the organizational viewpoint emerges.
The founder of the HEC conducted phone interviews and electronic surveys of over 170 humane education organizations in 35 different countries. In the end, 85 agencies provided detailed feedback to the HEC about top concerns for the field of humane education and their organization's efforts. This information was compiled and reported in the organization’s strategic plan (Moon, 2017). Several essential factors emerged from participants as necessary to advancing the field of humane education:

- Access to financial resources.
- Competition for and dependence on limited grant funding makes program development challenging.
- Agencies seek to make their programs not only self-sustaining but revenue-generating.
- Organizations need to expand or diversify their program offerings to accommodate growth in their geographic regions or to reach new audiences.
- Strong relationships with schools and educators is a critical factor, as well as positive public opinion and support.
- Agencies seek to cultivate relationships with specific populations in their communities that are more challenging to reach, due to language barriers and/or limited access to schools.
- Effective programming also requires an effective curriculum, including accessing accurate information and aligning the material with academic content standards.
- Staff and volunteer retention is an important consideration, and agencies must access teaching tools and resources to support the staff and volunteer educators in their professional development pursuits.
• Agencies need more humane-themed teaching materials and books to enhance their program offerings.

In addition, the environmental scan data identified the top challenges or concerns identified by humane education organizations in growing their programs. The current challenges or barriers to developing humane education programming vary by region; external issues and trends in different areas of the world impact the efficacy of humane education. Again, finances and funding top the list as a primary concerns and barriers to success. Interestingly, however, organizations recognize the role that the limited empirical research in the field of humane education is a challenge for many agencies and was further singled out as a reason for stakeholder buy-in and funding opportunities. The lack of research also presents an obstacle for convincing schools and teachers to partner with humane education organizations. In many regions, teachers and schools are overwhelmed with required material, leaving limited time for humane education and enrichment activities.

At the same time, humane education organizations cannot sustain in-house educators due to financial constraints. Accordingly, agencies report limited public interest and support for humane education. For example, those in remote or rural areas report their constituents do not see humane education as a priority for their community. Organizations also cited laws and cultural values as contributing to diminished community support. While the organizations view the lack of support as primarily due to inadequate knowledge and/or marketing limitations, it is likely more related to a diluted message and unclear outcomes. Overall, the responses from the agencies reflect similar findings in the literature about how to build the field of humane education. In combination, it supports an effort to develop a comprehensive and culturally
competent framework to strengthen humane education as a movement in education and provide clearer pathways for implementation and evaluations.
Chapter 3

**Building a Conceptual Framework to Define the Field of Humane Education**

Based on the findings of the literature review and the needs assessment, the conclusion was to focus on the building of a conceptual framework that would apply to stakeholders in a culturally relevant way. The goal of the project was to define the boundaries of humane education principles through its stakeholders’ beliefs and practices to move the field forward through a cohesive approach. A conceptual framework can be defined as a “network of linked concepts” (Jabareen, 2009) that hypothesizes the reality of a given field of study. Jabareen (2009) further recommends that a proposed conceptual framework demonstrates a philosophical viewpoint of the field specific to the framework. Following this thought, an area of study without a conceptual framework is void of these critical underlying components by failing to communicate the field’s ontological and epistemological assumptions.

Furthermore, without developed and tested frameworks, researchers cannot build a systematic understanding of a given phenomenon. In this way, frameworks are discussed as a necessary component for legitimizing a field for study. Without a framework to provide a roadmap of the connecting elements, building a theory of effect becomes more challenging and at times ineffective.

According to Maxwell (2013), the conceptual framework is constructed based on several resources of information. These sources can include prior literature and theoretical assertions, but also practical and experiential knowledge and exploratory research by the researcher. In this way, a sound conceptual theory emerges from the field itself and presents the stakeholders’ theory of what the phenomenon to be studied is believed to be. It is further argued that this construction allows for discernment in what available information is useful and valid for the
work at hand. Consequently, for the field of humane education, a framework it provides a way to build on the current evidence by identifying the gaps in knowledge and structuring new understanding. More specifically, it allows for humane education to examine itself at a higher level by determining the critical components to the field that translate across cultural contexts.

An example of the necessity of building a frame to see a phenomenon within a global system was the development of the U.K. National Ecosystem Assessment (2014). According to Albon and Turner (2014), a framework of this kind represented the main components of the ecosystem showing interrelationships between the human and the natural world. It served to develop a shared understanding of how a field should be studied and implemented. In this case, the purpose was to identify the drivers creating change in environmental behaviors across systems. Specifically, the authors wanted to take an innovative approach to framing change behaviors. They looked at services embedded within the ecosystem that impact individual well-being and values and in this way, the authors recognize the variation of values in the human population. They also recognize the relationship between those values and the environment is dependent on a variety of factors such as economics, demographics and socio-political circumstances. As Albon and Turner (2014) recognized the need to create a new framework illustrating the relationship between people and the environment in a previously undeveloped way, humane education has the same need.

Likewise, not only do frameworks allow for the understanding of relationships in a new way, but the work is also relevant for new fields of study or areas for research that are underdeveloped. As new phenomenon become of interest, both inside and outside the world of academics, the building of a framework guides the discussion of what defines this area of interest. Often in research, it is the conceptual framework that serves as the driver for
investigating a specific problem within a field (Grant & Osanloo, 2014), but for new fields, the conceptual framework development may be the first opportunity to gather evidence of the boundaries of the field itself. Frequently, the conceptual framework builds the picture of how concepts within a field fit together within a larger theoretical framework (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). In other words, the framework becomes the blueprint for both the field’s foundation and growth. Over time frameworks are tested and adjusted as additional information or theoretical lenses are applied. As previously discussed, current theoretical frames applied to humane education provided limited connection, and therefore a framework development can provide new pathways for theoretical understanding. Moreover, without a conceptual framework, the theoretical application fails to move the field forward. Conceptual frameworks are not meant to explain a phenomenon per se, but to describe the observed phenomenon empirically through systematic categorization and organization of ideas (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996).

In the case of humane education, two stagnations in moving the field forward have occurred. First, the theoretical frameworks most closely aligned with the practice are not a perfect fit. As previously discussed, both critical pedagogy and ecopedagogy provide some conceptual elements that apply to humane education, but both fall short of explicitly including the nonhuman animal as a category worthy of connection as its own conceptual element. This gap has been discussed at a theoretical level by both Bell and Russell (2012), and Corman (2011) as flaws in Freire and colleagues work, yet they offer no broader or inclusive theoretical model of their own. Similarly, Kahn and others (2010) discuss the interconnectedness of critical and ecopedagogy to animal protection but fail to extrapolate the conceptual nature of how the former encapsulate the latter. More practically, frameworks within the field of education practice such as those suggested by UNESCO (United Nations Education, Science, and Cultural Organization)
and the “World’s Largest Lesson” address both social justice and sustainability goals, but equally do not include the nonhuman animal in a capacity beyond a utilitarian viewpoint. Yet, humane education organizations often refer to this model as an entry point to discussing animal issues and a model for practice.

In this way, humane education has been attempting to “find a home” within other frameworks both theoretically and conceptually to gather legitimacy for study and acceptance for broader practice. This has been unsuccessful primarily because the current frameworks do not fully reflect the reality of humane education as it exists. As a result, humane education has been self-limiting in research and in practice by attaching itself to other domains of study. Therefore, it seems a logical step that the field of humane education requires a focus on framework development to design a conceptual map that is truly representative. Also, attention given to building a framework can act as an opportunity for developing better-aligned theory. According to Tremblay et al., (2017) the investment in creating a framework underpins a field with both a potential theoretical foundation, but also in a practical way. Within the social sciences, but particularly in education, practical application that is the ultimate goal.

This leads to the second area of stagnation of practical use within humane education. The practice of humane education and the way in that it is defined is widely varied, but hovers within a small scope of animal protection topics limited seemingly by cultural norms. As seen in the 2017 needs assessment, the definition of humane education seems dependent on individual beliefs and norms as opposed to a universal definition of humane concepts for education. In this way, application becomes contextually dependent, but not in a consistent way diminishing humane education organization’s ability to expand more globally. Similar variation in use and definition has occurred in other areas of education before the successful development of
appropriate frameworks. For example, multicultural education went through a similar process of framework building to “help clarify differing underlying assumptions, sort out discrepancies between theory and practice, and analyze the ways they are entangled with competing political agendas” (Cochran-Smith, 2003 p.8). Like Cochran-Smith (2003), the framework for understanding humane education needs to weave together the variations of stakeholders’ perception, of its underlying theory, its practice and map them in a systematic way.

Additionally, framework building defined and developed fields within social movements. Frame building within social movements, such as social justice or sustainability has contributed to the understanding of how it can be applied across cultures. This is important for organizations addressing issues of social change within a global context, like humane education. It provides practitioners a connection with communities in a culturally competent way while simultaneously working towards a clear overarching mission. The following section discusses frame building for cultural relevance in social movement arenas.

**The Use of Conceptual Frameworks Cross-Culturally**

To begin, it’s useful to identify the principal goal of introducing a culturally competent framework into any area of social change. Frequently, the development of such a framework has been to address a gap in existing theoretical or conceptual frameworks in its application to diverse populations or different communities. For example, in attempting to increase access to health care for underrepresented communities, the need for creating a framework within a cultural lens includes “changing demographics, quality improvement and regulatory requirements, equitable care missions, and accreditation standards” (Gertner et al., 2010 p. 191). These factors prompted the need for an extensive examination of barriers to providing culturally competent services. These same factors apply to all organizations who provide services.
Towards this end, Betancourt, Green, and Carillo (2002) conducted an extensive literature review to design a framework that more clearly defined the term “cultural competence” and to further identify key components for potential intervention as well as means for application within health care. Betancourt et al., (2002) uncovered those sociocultural barriers to receiving adequate health care for various populations from the service provider. In other words, the authors sought to discover what cultural considerations are missing in services that prohibit groups receiving adequate care. Next, Betancourt’s framework looked at the level within the health care system where these barriers occurred (systems level vs. clinical) and then identified appropriate interventions that linked this framework to strategies that eliminate discrimination in care.

Findings from this review highlighted organizational, structural and clinical barriers to the delivery of culturally appropriate care in health care settings. By identifying the levels where obstacles occurred, the authors were able to define what culturally competent care would look like within each level and then specify interventions to move towards the ideal. Using Betancourt and colleagues’ framework as a guide, a subsequent study by Gertner (2010) asserts that the full understanding of the gaps in current models and the impact these have in health care implementation is the first step to increase the quality, efficacy, and effectiveness of health care delivery.

In a case study of a single health care network, Gertner and colleagues (2010) documented the forming of a new culturally competent framework through the examination of the pathway to its development. While historically the Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) had used typical frames for reaching and caring for its multicultural community, feedback from a large client survey revealed that overall members of various ethnic, socioeconomic and religious
groups did not feel that their preferences or needs were represented in their health care, or in some cases these aspects of their care were ignored. This information was a transformational event, prompting the need for a re-examination of the cultural framework the LVHN was using to supply care for its constituents.

The LVHN decided to approach this problem by creating a cultural task force that would utilize input from multiple stakeholders to further assess gaps in practice and develop a new framework for service delivery across the health care system. Using organizational change models, the taskforce identified areas in that development was needed. These identified areas contained well-defined subcategories and terms through that implementation and evaluation could then be carried out. For example, categories included “Assessment of Cultural Competency,” “Language-Appropriate Services” and “Recruitment of Diverse Employees.” Within these larger dimensions, indicators were included to specify how these dimensions would be defined and understood in the daily practice of the health network. Furthermore, this new framework provided the mechanism for evaluation of LVHNs new framework for practice. In this way, the framework could be tested to ensure that it is providing equitable access and care to all its patients regardless of gender, ethnic, religious or socioeconomic status.

To this end, the case study found that this comprehensive approach to framework building, with broad stakeholder input and through a systems lens did transform practice and increase access to care. For instance, the new frame provided changed methods of assessing employee competence by including cultural awareness indicators within employee evaluations. Similarly, training and hiring practices for employees now align with this culturally competent frame, specifically targeting employees and professional development opportunities to increase services provided in languages other than English. Furthermore, the use of cultural competency
assessments identified specific areas where extra work was needed. In this way, the framework provided a continued pathway to assess practice and ensure social equity. The Gertner (2010) case study highlights the attempts of health care organizations to address racial and ethnic disparities in the delivery of health care across geographic locations. It demonstrated the practical application of a new framework that links “interventions to an overall approach to eliminating racial/ethnic disparities in health and health care” (Betancourt, Green, & Carrillo, 2002).

Likewise, other seminal frameworks, such as that created by Betancourt et al., (2002) have impacted the study and implementation of approaches to environmental protection and sustainability measures. Krasny and Tidball (2009) recognized the need for framework development based on observations of differentiated practice in sustainability education programs, specifically in urban environments. Using other theoretical frameworks under the “ecology” umbrella, the authors derived the term “civic ecology” to frame their study of stewardship of the natural environment in urban settings within the larger social-ecological system. The work of Krasny and Tidball in developing a civic ecology frame parallels humane education, not only in defining a new phenomenon but also through the recognition of the citizen, non-profit organization and government as interconnecting forces impacting education programs and its subsequent changes in behaviors. It further aligns with humane education by focusing on individual change to collective action stating, “civic ecology suggests a role for environmental stewardship practice and environmental education at the level of the individual, community, and social-ecological system” (Krasny & Tidball, 2009 p. 467).

The work of Krasny and Tidball place the practice of environmental and sustainability education into a systems view and towards collective community action. The innovation of their
the proposed framework creates an application of civic ecology across geographic and cultural boundaries. Moreover, the authors highlight the positive force of incorporating different cultural knowledge into learning experiences that serves to bolster and embed civic connections. They further support this assertion in their framework with evidence of the benefit of incorporating traditional (local) knowledge into sustainability education from community members to create an authentic learning experience. This connection of the education program to the community’s culture produces a community resilience that makes the lessons learned more likely to endure.

Krasny and Tidball’s work demonstrates the need to create frameworks that are representative of practice. However, without a systems application that can be applied cross-culturally the education component of sustainability behavior is limited. The framework provides practitioners and researchers with a means to implement and study the field in new ways. As such, it increases accessibility for education stakeholders to engage in the practice of sustainability education. A prime example of how a framework increased accessibility with great success in the K-12 sector is that of social-emotional learning (SEL). While social and emotional learning is not a new phenomenon in education, the development of a comprehensive framework moved SEL into the learning environment in an entirely new way by connecting it to larger learning goals allowing for universal application.

Like the previous examples provided, the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) designed an integrative framework to enhance the understanding, the use and the evaluation of SEL within the students’ systems. CASEL saw an opportunity in the height of the school climate reform movement to build an approach that provided schools with a means to align student needs with school goals (CASEL, 2018). Although SEL was not a new concept (specifically in early childhood best practices), CASEL’s framework was
groundbreaking in that it defined SEL as an educational approach to addressing school climate holistically (See Figure 3.1). The integrative framework provides schools with a blueprint for understanding the overarching goals of SEL at multiple levels of a student’s environment and has “become a coordinating framework for how educators, families, and communities partner to promote students’ social, emotional, and academic learning” (CASEL, 2018). As humane education often draws on its ability to also serve as a comprehensive strategy to increase empathy and social competencies through developing regulation and relationship skills, there are components of the SEL framework that could also inform the work in defining humane education. However, like the other comparable frameworks presented there are apparent gaps in the SEL framework that a humane education frame could fill.

Figure 3. 1 CASEL Framework

However, what is evident in the CASEL example is the ability of a framework to change perception and practice through a new dimension of education by taking a complex, culturally
contextual concept and focusing on the universally applicable tenets. Although the SEL framework focuses on individual outcomes within a community setting, the idea is that SEL impacts collective action through the creation of improved school climate. The movement from the individual to collective action was also a component in Kransey and Tidball’s work. An additional example is found in Tseng et al. (2002) discussion on changing the perception and practice of social work.

Specifically, Tseng and colleagues recognized a gap between the theoretical rhetoric in the field and the practical application. The authors here also stress a need for a new framework to focus on systems and the “contextual embeddedness of individuals and groups” within those systems. Like the other examples provided, Tseng et al. (2002) homed in on the disparity between theoretical assertions related to their field and the realities of practitioner experience. They argued that the current framework and definitions used to understand promotion within social work served as barriers to a better connection between theory and practice. More importantly, Tseng et al. (2002) wanted to build a framework towards social change, meaning that their work would serve to transform practice and change the lens within the field. Perhaps most relevant to the humane education field is Tseng and colleague’s description of contextual processes and how these processes inform social change. Temporal, cultural and power/empowerment processes outline social contexts that must be understood to identify appropriate points for change to occur. Understanding these contextual elements as dynamic entities as opposed to static categories provides the flexibility and the applicability needed for humane education organizations to work effectively in communities at the appropriate level within the system.
The work of Tseng et al. (2002) provides a clear pathway for building a framework within the field of humane education towards social change. Using a systems approach they developed a culturally adaptive model that is representative of practitioner expertise and experience. Also, like Tseng, this attempt at a humane education framework is an initial iteration in an ongoing process to further define and refine the field of humane education. The goal of this work is to provide a pathway for systematic exploration and evaluation that will build theory and strengthen practice.

In summary, humane education has been limited in its ability to grow as a legitimate field of study and practice due to a lack of cohesive understanding of its principles and practice. Furthermore, cultural influences have dominated practice and have failed to incorporate cultural systems processes in both the conceptualization and implementation of humane education. Following the examples in fields of social change and cultural competency presented here, the building of a framework is an appropriate step in defining humane education more clearly and constructing an understanding of its elements that can be applied across contexts. This work further serves to begin a more rigorous study of humane education as a field within education. The literature to date has failed to propose a fitting theoretical or conceptual map to drive humane education forward. Without such a guide, humane education remains isolated within individual organizations operating without connection to other practitioners and without a theoretical foundation.

There are numerous examples across disciplines of constructed frameworks for different purposes, such as implementation and evaluation. In this case, the approach for a conceptual framework is focused on defining humane education by its core components that work across cultural contexts. Following, the process for construction will begin with a review of current
literature, however limited, on humane education, but equally utilize the field of practitioners and stakeholders currently embedded within humane education programs.

The argument for such stakeholder analysis in framework development is well supported. Those embedded within the field possess essential information about the phenomenon under investigation. Specifically, without the stakeholders’ “ideas, meaning and values” it is possible to misjudge what is going on in the field (Maxwell, 2013 p. 67).

Likewise, the identification and inclusion of stakeholders’ perspective within the framework reflect an inclusive mindset to the study of humane education. As humane education purports to integrate social justice, environmental and animal protection into its pedagogy, then it is fitting that the study of the field must be representative and inclusive. Gathering knowledge from those in the field across geographical and cultural contexts further bolsters an attempt to develop a framework that is comprehensive and culturally relevant.
Chapter 4
Conceptual Framework Building

There are numerous examples, across different disciplines, of constructed frameworks for various purposes, such as implementation and evaluation. In the case at hand, the approach for a conceptual framework is focused on defining humane education by its core components that transcend cultural contexts. To determine appropriate methods for approaching framework building in this context, a brief literature review of qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches was conducted. The following section outlines the recommendations from this review and concludes with the methodology for the current study.

Literature suggests that the first step to building a conceptual framework is to deeply investigate the literature specific to the field under study. Jabareen (2009) indicates that the identification of themes within a selected phenomenon should incorporate social, cultural, political and other themes drawn from a multidisciplinary review (p. 50). Similarly, Maxwell (2013) cautions that a too-narrow review of the literature will result in a reporting of what is currently available in the field, as opposed to a construction of concepts that reflect a reality. To this end, Maxwell advises that supplemental information taken directly from the advisors and experts active in the field is critical to developing a meaningful frame. Maxwell further recommends both stakeholders analysis and exploratory studies to strengthen conceptual frames. Although Maxwell (2013) presents these suggestions for approaching framework building within a qualitative paradigm, they can also be used with other types of methodologies.

For example, the themes found in an empirical review can be used directly to create a framework that can then tested for fit. Subsequent investigation into those themes can take multiple directions depending on the specific questions at hand. As an illustration of this, Stutsky and Spence-Laschinger’s (2014) worked towards developing a conceptual framework for
interprofessional collaborative practice. The authors first constructed a framework from the literature and then tested their ideas with field stakeholders through a quantitative survey. Although the sample in the study was small (\(n=117\)), themes that were identified in the literature were supported through the participants’ survey responses. Like the proposed study of humane education, Stutsky and Spence-Laschinger (2014) saw this attempt at framework building as a first step towards research that would build a stronger and more accurate framework.

Alternatively, qualitative designs for framework building can also generate and test themes through inductive methods and subsequent revision (Baxter & Jack, 2008). A qualitative paradigm for conceptual understanding and modeling seems appropriate given the complexity of most phenomenon under study. Jabareen (2009) identifies relevant qualitative methods used for conceptual framework building, such as content analysis, thematic analysis, conceptual analysis, and discourse analysis. However, these methods are somewhat cumbersome and also may not produce the theory building that other methodological approaches can produce. For this reason, Jabareen (2009) recommends grounded theory as the most effective in its ability to uncover possible theory through a systematic collection of data. Furthermore, it is the most frequently used approach to building frameworks perhaps for its ability to facilitate “the generation of theories of process, sequence, and change pertaining to organizations, positions, and social interaction” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 114). More specifically, grounded theory provides an iterative pathway to identifying a phenomenon’s core concepts and the linkages among them while at the same time strongly rooted in the field’s reality. It is particularly fitting for the field of humane education and the intention of developing a framework because it both contributes to theory building while also reflecting the current reality of the field.
To adequately represent the state of the field, the need for the data to emerge from participant experience is fitting. The argument for such an approach to framework building through approaches like stakeholder analysis is well supported. Those embedded within the field possess essential information about the phenomenon under investigation that the literature may not adequately communicate, especially in a new or previously unexplored context. Consequently, without the stakeholders’ “ideas, meaning and values” it is possible to misjudge what is going on in the field (Maxwell, 2004; Menzel, 1978). Likewise, the identification and inclusion of stakeholders’ perspective within the framework reflects an inclusive mindset to the study of humane education.

As a result, the need for a mixed-method design to adequately construct a meaningful framework for the field of humane education became necessary. The study aimed to produce the first iteration of a conceptual map within the field that can continue to be tested and refined. This type of research purpose fits into Greene, Caracelli, and Graham (1989) reasoning for a mixed-methods study. Under Green et al.’s (1989) typology of reasons, the study falls under development, where a quantitative survey informs the areas to be explored in the qualitative interviews and focus groups with participants. It equally can be seen under initiation that Green et al., (1989) see as a way of identifying “new perspectives in frameworks” (Cresswell & Plano-Clark, 2011 p. 62) where one method facilitates the types of questions for the other method. In this way, the methodology utilized participant responses to dive deeper into potential conceptual constructs to confirm or build upon the initial analysis.

An explanatory sequential design allows for this type of interaction in the data collection process. Furthermore, this design permits the quantitative data analysis to give insight into the initial research questions, while the subsequent qualitative strand explores participants’ views to
refine further and develop the statistical results (Cresswell, 2003). Although this design requires adequate time and resources to collect and analyze each distinctive strand, the strength of this design is in its ability to improve the quality of inferences and emphasize the “elaborating purpose” of such a design (Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006 p. 17).

For this study, the process for framework construction began with a critical review of current literature, however limited, on humane education to identify general themes of beliefs and practices within the field. Next, a survey tool to identify and prioritize themes around the principles and purpose of humane education was developed and distributed to stakeholders actively involved in delivering humane education programming to students within their given community. After analysis, the quantitative results guided the development of follow-up questions and prompts for participant interviews and focus groups. The following questions guided the framework-building research: (1) What are the dimensions of humane education as seen by current practitioners? (2) How are they (can they) align with the other humane education domains (environmental and human perspectives)? (3) Can (do) they translate across contexts?

The emerging constructs the formed the boundaries of the field, as well as provided understanding about how they can be applied across multiple contexts. There is also potential for identifying ways in that to better align concepts with additional educational stakeholders for building relationships between humane education organizations and school environments. Figure 4.1 (Appendix B) provides a visual representation of the purpose of each stage of the design.
Procedures

This section provides details about the recruitment process, target population and instrumentation and additional description of data handling and analysis. The following hypothesis guided the procedures:

H1: Organizational desire for cohesion within the field is greater than mission division

H2: Conceptual priorities within the animal perspective will fall within the 5 dimensions outlined

H3: Strong alignment and connection among animal, environment and human perspective exists

H4: A singular cohesive model of instruction inclusive of the animal perspective is possible

Recruitment.

The target participants for the initial phase of the study sought representation of the diverse organizations and communities that partner with the Humane Education Coalition. Therefore, anyone 18 years old or older actively involved in delivering programs related to a humane education mission or an integrative education program targeting social justice or environmental protection with an animal welfare component were eligible to participate in the survey study. Similarly, recruitment was open to those not directly instructing students, but perhaps held a leadership position within the humane education organization directly impacting curricula, materials or other resources. Due to the specificity of the type of education program under investigation, limiting restrictions to maximize potential participation was necessary. Therefore, to answer the research question(s), little restrictions for recruitment other than age and active educator status were employed (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002).

Participants were recruited from within the humane education community in several ways. First, the researcher secured commitments of support from the Humane Education Coalition and the Academy of Prosocial Learning (APL) to promote and distribute the survey to
its members. Accordingly, both organizations reached out to its members and partner organizations via individual emails and social media (specifically Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn) to describe the project and ask for their support. A direct link to the survey was available via each of these points of contacts. In addition to social media and individual contacts, a QR code was created to be used at speaking events and conferences where humane educators were attending. The APL used this code at two separate events and as part of the speaker’s presentation. As the intention was to get a broad understanding of alignment between dimensions identified by humane educators and educators in other environments, snowball sampling was an acceptable and appropriate strategy for recruitment.

The initial post calling for participation in the survey with a link to the survey itself was placed on each organization’s Facebook and webpages. This first post resulted in a slow uptake by participants with less than 25 completed surveys after a 2-week recruitment phase. After discussion with the HEC’s and APL’s directors, the decision was made to place a last call for participation with a deadline on each of the social media sites, in addition to direct messaging members through email and newsletter highlighting the date when survey participation would be closed. This second effort was successful in recruiting an additional 30 participants and completed surveys over the final week. In total 52 completed surveys were available for data analysis. Of these, 45 participants opted for inclusion in the subsequent focus group sessions.

**Recruitment for Focus Groups.**

Alternatively, the qualitative strand of investigation used purposive sampling (PSI-Typ) to cover a range of participant experience and equally homogenize the sample adding to generalizability (Wholey, Hatrey, & Newcomer, 2010). Specifically, from those who completed the survey, focus group and interview participants were selected according to outlined
criteria within the constraints of the sample. The groups’ configuration contained a range of geographic locations, community makeup (e.g., rural, urban), and program concentration to provide additional insight into the findings from the survey and diverse perspective. By strategically recruiting for these characteristics, such variables are accounted for during analysis to help inform any differences in outcome measures. It further reduces Type II error and increases the overall power of the analysis (Shadish et al., 2002).

After closure of the online survey, the email addresses of those participants who opted in the focus groups were compiled and organized based on geographic location. Following, two google forms were created; one for the overseas community and one for the north American community. The google forms document provided three times and dates for focus group participation. Participants were asked to select their first and second preferred date and time. Of the 45 possible participants only 9 registered for focus group dates and only one from the overseas community. Despite continued email reminders and opportunities for additional dates and times a total of 9 people participated in three separate focus groups.

Sample.

The recruitment process aimed to maximize accessibility for a wide audience in largely different community contexts across the globe. The use of web-based recruitment and survey data collection, although unable to reach those without access to the internet, did make it possible to reach more potential participants. Of the 52 participants, 14 resided outside of the United States. Table 4.1 provides an overview of geographical locations of survey participants by continent.
Table 4. 1 Geographic Location of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sample was heavily skewed toward North America with more than half of participants working within the United States and Canada. This was somewhat expected due to the origin of the supporting recruitment organizations being North America based. Also, as discussed previously, humane education as a practice began primarily in the United States. Certainly, within animal welfare organizations, humane education is a term that is used and often encompasses part of their programming. Outside of the United States, animal welfare organizations themselves are often a recent addition to the non-profit sector specifically for countries such as China (Lu, Bane, & Wang, 2013). However, based on the number of international members currently on roster at the HEC (27 different countries over 5 continents) the number of international participants was low. The reason for the low turnout from international partners is not clear. One possible explanation is competing recruitment efforts from another humane education organization. Another member organization of the HEC was also launching a survey during the time of our recruitment. It is possible that the demand for time from a limited pool of humane educators divided attention. In addition, all recruitment communication was produced in English including the survey itself. It is possible that language presented a barrier for additional international involvement. Ultimately, the survey resulted in a 3:1 ratio for U.S. participants to those in other countries.

Despite this skew, participants showed greater variation in the types of communities they worked in (Figure 4.1). On the other hand, there was greater homogeneity in their identification
of organizational focus. More specifically, participants were asked to choose what types of issues their program addressed amongst social justice, environmental and/or animal protection. In addition, they were later asked to choose the **primary** focus for their program. All but two participants chose animal protection as a focus for their programming, while 30 chose animal protection with an addition focus such as environmental protection or social justice.

Figure 4. 1 Community Type

![Community Type Pie Chart]

**Instrumentation.**

A quantitative survey was constructed for use in the proposed study. Findings from the needs analysis and environmental survey (See Chapter 2) guided initial question creation. The final version’s items were guided by the following research questions: (1) What are the critical concepts of the animal perspective of humane education as seen by current practitioners? (2) How do they connect to the other dimensions (Environment and Human Perspectives)?
Identification of themes and connections. (3) Can (do) they fit across multiple contexts? (i.e., supersede cultural variability). After reviewing surveys used in the field of environmental education concepts and those in social justice, the animal protection pieces were selected to maintain cohesion while still allowing for specificity. As such, the survey divided concepts into 5 dimensions. The dimensions were developed based on a review of recommendations and program elements in both social justice and environmental education literature. Specifically, using Picower’s (2012) Elements of Social Justice Curriculum supported also by recommendations by Hackman (2005) and other studies of programs focused on social justice reviewed in this paper the recurrent types of learning recommended for creating a socially just aptitude were included. Similarly, the Environmental Protection Agency (epa.gov, 2017) also outlines a typology of learning for students in the domain of sustainability and pro-environmental understanding and behavior. Although there were differences in the ways each author labeled the underlying typology, consistency of the intent of the language existed. For the purposes of creating the animal piece in relation to the social justice and environmental components, the author here developed a new, but consistent set of terms and divided them into the following dimensions: (1) awareness (2) knowledge (3) attitudes (4) skills (5) actions. Therefore, items within the animal perspective were identified along these dimensions for inclusion in measurement.

The survey was then further divided into four sections. The first section was a background and demographic section. Section 2 was the animal concept questions. All participants answered the questions in these two sections. Next, depending on qualifying questions about the participant’s program focus, participants would be prompted to answer questions about either environmental or social justice concepts. A skip logic was developed to
move participants to answer questions from either the environmental or social justice section. As it was anticipated that most participants would select animal protection as the sole focus for their organization, these participants were sent to the social justice items. All other responses for program focus, even if it included animal protection, were sent to the environmental protection items. Questions asked participants to identify concepts within each perspective they felt necessary for instruction and rank those items regarding priorities or importance. Some items provided space for participants to fill in options that were not provided for them but they saw as important. Appendix C contains the full survey with all items.

Prior to full distribution the survey items were tested in a paper document through two cognitive interviews for clarity and flow. The two participants were selected based on availability and willingness to participate. Each was a former student of the APL. One was a male, American by birth living in Florida and focused on environmental ethics. The other was a female, Kenyan by birth living in Kenya working at a small humane organization. After having time to complete the survey, the participants and the researcher spoke by virtual meetings (Zoom, WhatsApp) to discuss the items in the survey, their understandings of the language and the overall survey experience. As a result of this process, no major changes to the survey were necessary.

The survey was then transferred online using Qualtrics. Access to the survey was secured using an individual link sent out to all eligible participants. Based on the responses and analysis of the survey, focus group and individual interview questions were then developed. (See Appendix D for questions.) The general protocol for the focus group and interview procedure is found in Appendix C and included four broad themes of questioning: (1) How did you see these areas prioritized and why? (2) How do you see these areas connecting with
essential concepts within the environmental and human perspectives? (3) How do you relate to
the dimensions as they are presented? (3b) Do you see these areas needing to be addressed in a
linear modality? Flexibility to this protocol was necessary to adjust for responses from
participants and allow for organic discussions.

Qualitative instrumentation.

The focus group protocol was refined after analysis from the survey data was collected
and descriptive analysis on the priorities were run. The focus group sessions were organized into
three general sections. First, was to review the initial findings from the survey data and discuss
those results with participants. In this way, the first part of the session served as a member check
to ascertain in the survey findings reflected, in general, the thoughts of the focus group
participants. The group was shown the top three ranked responses for each of the dimensions in
the animal section first. If there was dissent or additional items the participants wanted added
then the facilitator reflected these responses in real time on a shared screen. Next, the top three
responses for the environmental and social justice categories were revealed. Participants were
then asked if they agreed with these responses and additions were made in real time. The second
phase of the focus group was to ask participants to draw “big ideas” from across the three
categories (animals, environment and social justice) where they saw alignment. Here,
participants were shown the survey responses across each of the categories one dimension at a
time. If the participants were able to find alignment or groupings across the three categories,
then the facilitator created a new column and added these responses to the table. This resulted in
a map of “big ideas” for each group.

Finally, the participants were asked to think about the dimensions themselves. The
dimension titles were displayed on a shared screen and participants were asked if these terms
resonated with them or if they would change them in any way. Responses from participants were reflected in real time on a shared screen.

Survey Analysis

As previously noted, descriptive analysis for the survey was conducted upon the closing of the survey. The data was exported from Qualtrics and placed first into Excel for cleaning and organizing. The data was cleaned and coded based on predetermined scoring guidelines. Additional codes were added as needed for text responses. All text responses to open-ended questions were given the same code for the initial analysis. Then the top three responses for each dimension across the three survey categories were determined using the mean. Next, each response was calculated based on the percentage of participants who selected that response as any of their top 3 items of importance in the rankings. Finally, the responses were organized in a spreadsheet of each of the top responses across the animal, environmental and social justice items across each dimension.

Focus Group Analysis

The qualitative strand adhered to best practice by recording sessions and using a transcribing software (otter.ai) to transcribe each session. To begin, the dimensions were used as a means of categorizing emergent data. Because the software further recorded repetition of specific key phrases and words based on the number of times used in each session this was also used to determine initial classification of data. This key word identification was first extracted through the transcription of each session. Next, these key terms and phrases were compared across the three interview sessions to look for consistency. The terms that emerged as consistent across the three session were then grouped together into similar themes to generate an initial set of codes. Next, the transcripts were analyzed line by line using inductive coding strategies.
Codes were recorded and then subsequently grouped together to create a second more exact set of categories. Finally, these categories were then grouped again to provide a final set of themes for the data. Table 4.2 details this process with the key words, codes, categories and themes.

Figure 4. 2 Analysis of Key Words, Codes and Emergent Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A priori codes</th>
<th>Key Terms</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Emergent Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>Teachers/teaching Community leaders Humane educators Connection/Interconnection Issues Priorities</td>
<td>Engaging students in humane topics</td>
<td>Connection/Interconnection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Content Information Learning Working Ideas</td>
<td>Meeting student and community needs Bringing something new/different to schools</td>
<td>Knowing Your Audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>Sentience Emotion Care Empathy Beliefs Values</td>
<td>Creating positive relationships Understanding perspective(s)</td>
<td>Animal Sentience and the Understanding of “Other”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>Abilities Behavior Habits</td>
<td>Applying new knowledge</td>
<td>Community Influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Act Service-learning Outcome</td>
<td>Seeking out for others</td>
<td>Forms of Empowerment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mixed Analysis Procedures**

The final component of analysis was to revisit the quantitative data with the new codes generated from the qualitative strand. Using the themes created by the focus group and interview work the researcher attempted to identify similar patterns or commonalities within the survey.
data. Specifically, across each component (animal, environmental and social justice) and within each dimension the quantitative data were reviewed for alignment with the qualitative codes. A new category was created for each dimension where alignment was determined. These new categories or “big ideas” formed the foundation of the framework.
Chapter 5
Analysis and Discussion

This study explored the perceptions of key elements in the field of humane education held by practitioners to build a needed conceptual framework connecting animal, environmental and social justice. This section begins by describing the data analysis and results in relation to each question, culminating with a proposed framework based on the cumulative analysis of all data. Table 5.1 presents the research questions, hypothesis, and methods for the study. The quantitative analysis of survey results identified the types and rank of concepts across the five dimensions: (a) awareness (b) general knowledge (c) attitudes (d) skill building (e) action. Constructs identified through the needs analysis and the literature are present in the survey instrumentation and measured within each dimension. In addition, the survey collected information about demographics, such as geographic location and organizational mission described in the previous chapter.

The survey provided key items for selection, but equally allowed for text answers if participants did not see their ideas represented in the choices. Moreover, the scaled items were determined on a sliding scale allowing for minor adjustments. All participants began the survey with the nonhuman animal questions.

Table 5.1 Research questions, hypothesis and data methods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Data Collection Method</th>
<th>Time Collected</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) What are the critical concepts of the animal perspective in humane education seen by</td>
<td>Organizational desire for cohesion within the field is greater than mission division</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>April/May 2019</td>
<td>Descriptive analysis of survey results</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings

In an attempt to develop a comprehensive framework, results from the survey provided a baseline of priorities in the field. This section presents the results of the quantitative analysis of the key issues in humane education by dimension across each section: animal, environment and social justice and aims to answer what the critical concepts of the animal perspective of humane education as seen by current practitioners (RQ1).

**Animal Awareness.**

Participants first selected those topics that were critical for awareness. Awareness in this context speaks to the students’ ability to observe their everyday experience and identify issues of
importance within those spaces (e.g. multiculturalism, sustainability, animal neglect). Like those results in the needs analysis, animal care ($\mu=84.45$) and its counterparts, neglect ($\mu=86.13$) and cruelty ($\mu=85.51$) were the three issues scored highest. Similarly, when asked to rank the same issues in order of importance animal care emerged at the top with almost 60% of participants ranking this in their top 3. The top 5 ranked issues mirrored the highest-scored issues in the scaled items reflecting primarily issues of animal and human safety and care, followed by neglect and cruelty. Interestingly, this question garnered the most open-ended responses. Participant responses in the “other” centered on three areas. First was working and farmed animals, a group that was not specified in the fixed responses. Second was the topic of overpopulation or spay and neuter, that is a frequent part of animal shelter programs. Lastly was policy and law. Overall, the rankings supported the scores on the scaled items. Figure 5.1 displays the rankings for the awareness items in the animal section.
Figure 5. 1 Total Top 3 Rankings of Items in Awareness

**Animal knowledge.**

The knowledge section targeted items taught within humane education programs that result in new informational understanding by the students. In the animal section, the top responses were like those in the awareness dimension. The highest scores were the items related to animal safety through understanding animal body language, followed by basic animal care—the latter referring to access to food, water and medical care. The third most popular response was knowledge about animal sentience. Sentience is an animal’s ability to be aware of its surroundings, its relationships with other animals and humans, and of sensations in its own body, including pain, hunger, heat or cold (Balcombe, 2016). More simply, sentience can be defined as an animal’s ability to feel both pleasure and pain (Balcombe, 2016). An additional term, “telos” relating to the ways in which an animal has the ability to be him/herself was further cast as a priority. Rollin (2012) describes telos within Aristotle’s philosophical assertions that telos is the “nature of an animal, the set of interests constitutive of its unique form of life – the ‘pigness’ of
the pig, the ‘dogness’ of the dog’” (p. 1). Although philosophical in its roots, knowledge of telos relates to the way in that an animal exhibits its natural behaviors. For example, a pig in nature will spend much of its time rooting, sitting in mud to keep cool, etc. This type of information about animals’ natural behaviors speaks to important consideration as to what is needed for their care. Introducing information that focused on the ways an animals’ needs are met and communicated dominated the top priority rankings with more than 80% selecting these three items as a top priority. On the other hand, the least selected items had to do with aspects of animal knowledge central to a different understanding of animal characteristics including their biology, habitat and ecosystems.

Figure 5. 2 Knowledge Rankings
**Animal attitudes.**

The items in this section asked participants to consider what outcomes they deemed important for students in their thinking about animals after a humane education program. In other words, what would humane educators view as the ideal perceptions about nonhuman animals from their students. The highest-scored items were those relating to animals (human and nonhuman) deserving respect, closely followed by the acknowledgement and consideration of sentience. These not only align with the priorities following from the knowledge section, but cluster around the attitude of equality between animals and humans. The idea of respect relates closely to the second most prioritized items, those articulating that students should believe that animals have feelings and should live free from fear (part of the Five Freedoms (Farm Animal Welfare Council, 1993). The attitude of animals deserving and acting with respect towards animals, as well as the attitude that animals feelings are real and should be considered in our encounters with them all clustered very closely as the highest scored and ranked creating a clear distinction between these items and the next highest scored items by almost 10 percentage points. Those items describing attitudes relating to the person more directly, such as feeling love for an animal or holding animals as important in their personal lives were at the bottom of the priority lists.
Building on from the types of attitudes students develop in a humane education program would be the set of skills they can perform as a learning outcome. The expectation would be that the skill set developed would be closely related to the knowledge they’ve gained and the attitudes developed throughout the program. Within the skills section, interestingly, participants move toward prioritizing students’ ability to bring together their new knowledge and attitudes in a way that connects to goals beyond the individual. For example, participants valued students being able to connect issues impacting themselves to other aspects of life, such as animals and the environment. Similarly, participants wanted students to be able to observe their community and identify situations that could be having an impact on lives beyond their own. At the same time, they also expected students to be able to think about the feelings of animals before interacting with them and to respect animals whenever they encounter them.
time, goals of safe and respectful interactions remain a high priority for those within the field aligning with the types of knowledge and attitudes viewed as important in the field.

Figure 5. 4 Skill Set Priorities

- Connect issues: 49%
- Community issues impacting animals: 47%
- Interact respectfully with animals: 45%
- Interact kindly with animals: 39%
- Transfer positive interactions: 39%
- Show respect: 35%
- Interact in a safely: 24%
- Connect behaviors and values: 16%
- Recall facts about animals presented during lessons: 6%
- Other: 0%

**Action for animals.**

The final dimension asked respondents to prioritize what actions students should be able to take as part of a humane education program. The action dimension differs from the skill set as it requires the student to self-actualize their learning. In other words, what actions would demonstrate the student has reached their potential to assert themselves for a greater good. The clear top ranked item was for students to share what they’ve learned in their program to their immediate circle of connections including family, friends and classmates through some form of communication (e.g. a meeting, a discussion etc.). Following, the second ranked item was connecting students to third parties. Respondents wanted students to utilize community resources to help animals, such as the local shelter or, to report instances of cruelty of neglect to local
The third most selected action was for students to organize a school or community group addressing animal issues. Again, these actions focus on the connections students have with the immediate circles of family and peers.

**Figure 5. 5 Action Priorities**

![Bar chart showing top 3 actions](image)

### Environmental awareness.

Those participants who took the environmental section of the survey were those who selected environment as a focus within their programming. Of the items presented as important issues in environmental awareness the top awareness priorities were (1) global warming (2) sustainability and (3) land conservation/usage. Despite the participants familiarity with environmental issues, those items in the awareness section did not receive a priority score that averaged above 85 on a scale of 0-100, yet no additional text responses were recorded.
Environmental knowledge.

The knowledge items in the environmental section reflected an extension of the items presented in the awareness category. However, in this case, respondents selected that students needed to learn information about (1) recycling, (2) where food was sourced and (3) understanding sustainability and ecosystems. These items were perceived as more important compared to other items relating to an understanding of local resources and ecosystems, that received the lowest scores.

Environmental attitudes.

Similar to the attitudes in the animal section, respondents selected the respect of the environment and their right to existence as the top outcome. Participants saw valuing the importance of environmental education as the second most important attitudinal outcome for students. Lastly, the idea that humans are subject to the laws of nature was the third highest scored outcome. Alternatively, the lowest scored items were those reflecting a more utilitarian view of humans and the environment, such as “humans have the right to modify the environment to suit their needs” and “humans were meant to rule over nature.”

Environmental skills.

The skill set for the environmental section focused again on the idea of recycling and handling trash responsibly as the second highest scored issue (μ=80.8). The primary and tertiary priority related more to student’s efficacy in environmental choices. Specifically, the third highest item was for students to be able to discern environmentally friendly purchases and choices, while the first was for students to identify environmental problems over that they could exert some control. These seem to lay some groundwork for environmental action objectives.
Actions for the environment.

The action items deemed most important for this section were highly concentrated. There was a clear distinction between those items in the top section and those in the bottom. The most selected action item was for students to have actively sought out additional informational resources on an introduced topic. The second and third were closely related items focusing on participation in organized events, such as attending a meeting about an environmental issue or a beach clean-up organized by an outside organization. Following these three items, a steep drop (7% points) occurred for other action items that involved reaching out beyond the students’ immediate connections, such as writing a letter to the paper (10%) or contacting local representation about an environmental issue (3%). Like those action items in the animal section, the most highly selected focus for action centered on the students’ close relationships.

Social Justice awareness.

Social justice awareness can be defined as a person’s understanding of issues of equity, accessibility and participation across various groups of people in society. In this context, participants were asked to decide what awareness issues were most important within a humane education program perspective. Contrary to the awareness responses in the environmental section, the social justice items received much higher scores overall (many above the 90% mark) and were much more closely clustered together. For example, there were 5 issues that achieved the same high mean (µ=95.1). These items were the importance of equity of gender treatment, the acknowledgement of racial discrimination in society and three items that spoke to access to safe and equitable education for all children especially girls and LGBTQ students. The lower scored items were awareness items about systemic oppression. Specifically, that systems were in place that created discriminatory practices (µ=88.2) and that society is unfair (µ=82.5).
Likewise, although respondents saw access to education as a high priority, they did not relatively place a high value on the education system or its curriculum reflecting cultural differences. Further investigation into this disconnect is described in the qualitative analysis.

Figure 5.6 Social Justice Awareness.

Social Justice knowledge.

Picower (2012) discusses that teaching for social justice requires students to have knowledge of those social justice movements both historical and current. Survey participants were asked to review social justice movements and select those that were discussed within their humane education programs in the last 12 months. Again, like the awareness dimension the highest scored items were clustered tightly on three items. At the top was knowledge about the Civil Rights movements, following by Women’s Equality and Refugee/Immigrant Protections. Following these top three, there was a large drop in all other social justice movements. Unlike
the environmental section, respondents did choose to write-in text responses for this dimension that potentially reflected a more localized representation of social justice issues. For example, text responses included First Nations of Canada and Age Discrimination.

**Social Justice attitudes.**

This section asked participants to consider the types of attitudinal statements that aligned most closely with the goals of humane education. Humane educators placed the highest value on programs promoting value on incorporating diverse cultures and experiences into classroom discussions ($µ = 91.4$). Similarly, participants felt that an ability to examine one's attitudes and beliefs about race, class, gender, disabilities and/or sexual orientation was important for humane education programming. At the bottom of the top three priorities ($µ = 87.20$) participants felt that humane education goals should align with preparing students to be successful within their lives.

**Social Justice skills.**

The prioritized skill set for social justice focused heavily on the way students handled differences. For example, the highest scored items were for students to be able to discuss ($µ = 97.6$) and show appreciation ($µ = 97.4$) for difference perspectives, opinions and people of diverse backgrounds. Humane educators felt less strongly that students needed to develop skills that examine the current system, aligning with findings in the needs assessment pertaining to the reluctance of introducing activism or topics viewed as activist in nature. As such, those items such as recognizing dominant culture, challenging social inequities and thinking critically about the role of government were at the bottom end of the scored items.

**Actions for Social Justice.**

The action items selected for important outcomes in this section looked very similar to those in the animal section. Specifically, respondents selected that students should be able to
access and utilize community resources to help people in need, as well as, talk to those close to them (e.g. parents, teachers, friends) about social justice issues. A more distant third priority was for students to organize a club or group in their school community to address social justice issues. At the same time, 2 participants chose to enter a text response for answers outside of the items listed. The text items included (a) “learning how to take political actions” and (b) “students determining for themselves what actions to take.”

In summary, the priorities selected across the three surveyed areas developed clear areas of interest for the focus group sessions. Table 5.2 provides an overview of priorities as determined by the survey results across the three areas in each dimension.

Table 5.2 Conceptual priority rankings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Animal</th>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Social Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>Basic Animal Care</td>
<td>Global Warming</td>
<td>Access to education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cruelty/Neglect</td>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>Gender treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spay and Neuter</td>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>LGBTQ safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Body Language</td>
<td>Recycling</td>
<td>Civil Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basic Care</td>
<td>Where does food come from?</td>
<td>Gender Equality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sentience/Telos</td>
<td>What is sustainability?</td>
<td>Refugee/Immigration Protections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>What is an ecosystem?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How does the system work?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>Free from Fear Respect</td>
<td>Plants and animals</td>
<td>Incorporating Cultures is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Animals have feelings/thinking about animal feelings</td>
<td>have the same rights as humans to exist</td>
<td>important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EE is equally important in school</td>
<td>Examining beliefs about race, culture etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Preparing students for the life they need to lead</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Humans are still subject to the laws of nature.

### Skills

- Show respect
- Act kindly
- Act respectfully
- Recognize issues they can have an impact on
- Handle trash responsibly
- Discern environmentally friendly products
- Appreciate difference
- Act respectfully
- Perspective taking

### Actions

- Discuss with family members
- Utilize community resources
- Seek additional information
- Take part in an organized event
- Discuss with family
- Utilize community resources

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**Understanding the Priorities of Humane Education Holistically**

Following the analysis of the quantitative data, the focus group sessions were organized to ascertain more detailed information about participants’ thoughts of the rankings and scoring of those items key to humane education programming. Each focus group session began with a review of the results of each section of the survey data. Participants were then asked to discuss their thoughts about the rankings and how they did or did not reflect their thoughts about the importance of selected items to humane education. Each session began with the animal section, as that was the section where all participants had responded. The emergent themes are now presented in order of the frequency of appearance in the discussions and its correspondence to the level of importance the participants believed these items to be to humane education programming.
Creating Connection

All participants talked about the idea of connection. Two main ideas of connection were discussed. First was connecting the student to the animal through individualized and often 1:1 experiences. One participant whose work was based in China spoke about showing versus telling:

“…then through those, those intimate studies with individual animals, then they start to see things for themselves instead of us as educators, not just trying to indoctrinate them with pandas are good mothers, etc., but literally letting them truly see animals as individuals”

Another participant spoke about connecting through using mindfulness as a technique to connect students to the world around them,

“when I'm teaching my students, because I want them to get the interconnection, I want them to feel the interconnected nature that we all have. When we're talking about experiential learning, I assign things that go up in that quiet environment for 30 minutes in nature and observe the animals and observe the nature and observe your connection.”

The process of connection was also a way to bring engage students with issues of environmentalism or social justice within their communities. This was frequently referred to as “inter-connection.” Some participants saw the idea of connection as a new way of approaching their practice in developing program goals. For one participant connection was a way of looking at program development,
“I want to kind of take a step back and look at what ways this animal component connects with some of the other big ideas and humane education underneath the, the environmental section and the social justice section.”

A final point of connection was the need to help create links for students between the animals and their own lives, “when we started to engage and see the link between what happens when we take on one issue and they see another issue and they start to address it in our communities and school.” The idea of connecting the three components of humane education to the community often brought the community influence into the discussion.

**Community Influence**

Participants spoke frequently on the influence their community has on their programming. This was consistent across geographical locations. One participant from the Midwest stated,

“Oklahoma, neglect and cruelty are definitely big issues. And it's a ranching community for the most part. And animals are still treated as property. So sometimes they're not treated well. And so they just get dumped, there's a lot of dumping, because there's a lot of open space here”

Another participant from an African nation spoke to this same idea of community guiding the priorities for humane education, in this instance combatting traditional notions of the care for working animals. “Some people also see this [humane education] as a threat to the source of survival, because they have been using this [animal] for generations. So, you get to the old, it'll improve on the welfare of this animal.”
Knowing Your Audience

Similarly, participants often thought about their community and its needs as a way of “considering your audience.” Knowing your audience was thought to be of critical importance to humane education programming whether it was understanding cultural norms, age appropriateness or topic boundaries. Broadly speaking, participants saw a need for animal topics to be embedded through understanding the group they were working with in order to address issues in a responsive way. One participant summed it up by stating,

“spending time with a community or with a school or whoever our intended audience might be, to talk to people on the ground, it is important to find out the roots of the cause, because we might see, oh, there's animal abuse happening. But we maybe we don't actually know why it's happening.”

In this way, although participants agreed with the rankings and order of importance of topics such as basic animal care and cruelty, they consistently returned to connecting these topics to both the individual and community experience. At the same time, they saw a means of connecting these issues through the concept of sentience, that is deeply rooted to the animal sector.

The Nonhuman Animal as Sentient and Perspective of the Other

The idea that historical views or cultural barriers existed to raising awareness was viewed as surmountable through the introduction of sentience and recognizing the feeling aspect of nonhuman animals. Teaching about the science around animal feelings was viewed as critical to changing student understanding about animal life. For one participant this was a missing element in education,
“animals, other species, other than humans have sentience, and emotions and feelings and social structures and whatnot, and that they want to live just as much as we do. I think that people don't have the opportunity to learn about these things.”

For others, the idea of sentience encompassed many other of the animal-specific issues presented in the survey. Topics such as communication, body language, cruelty and neglect were all extensions of understanding nonhuman animal’s ability to feel. For example, one participant stated,

“if you're talking about body language, it's their way of communicating. So, it's an intelligence, the fact that the way [different] animals behave and think and their level of understanding and communication”.

At the center of this discussion, however, was how the understanding of animal sentience and all it encompasses is ultimately what can address one of humane education’s biggest goals: preventing cruelty and neglect.

**Combating Cruelty and Neglect**

Overwhelmingly, all participants spoke about the desire for humane education to eradicate incidents of cruelty and neglect between people and animals. Regardless of geographic location, type of community, age groups etc., all humane educators saw neglect and cruelty as a driving force in the need for humane education. A participant who worked with law enforcement officers offered this in summary,

“I deal with typically animal cruelty issues... That is exactly what we're trying to teach, the basic animal care, [signs of] the cruelty, neglect, [animal] body language for officers. But also, the fact that animals are not just animals, and they have feelings, and they are sentient”
Additionally, humane educators spoke of the way in that topics like neglect and cruelty for animals were a way of supporting children in need, much like the beginnings of humane education programs in the 1800s. For example, a practitioner on the west coast of the United States discussed,

“So, for some kids, [cruelty and neglect] can impact how they potentially focus and whether they see the future or just survive till tomorrow…In our lower income schools, it's basic, it's the basic animal care. Because those kids barely are seeing that for themselves, are receiving that themselves. So, we do a lot of and I know a lot of human educators do this: is the needs of animals; the needs of children, the care of animal; the care of children.”

On parallel with unifying the needs of living beings is to negate the possible adverse factors that stress caused from cruelty and neglect can create. As such, humane educators discuss the potential for humane education to provide students with tools and behaviors that can mediate such stressors. All focus group discussions included elements of empowering students in various forms.

**Forms of Empowerment**

Aligning with the dimension of action, humane educators discussed the importance of students utilizing new skills, knowledge and attitudes to act for the benefit of others. Like the quantitative results showed, participants see this empowerment starting on a small and intimate scale before (if ever) reaching levels of changing things like policy. For example, the idea of turnkeying information by influencing family and friends as a potential for capacity building within a community. One participant said,
“I think kids teaching other kids is a great way to keep them involved and committed to what they're doing. For my family it actually really worked. My brother and I, we're policing each other on, not littering, and all of those kinds of things. And, and then other, the neighbor kids were doing that too. So it is that idea of kids teaching kids, but then also that holding each other accountable. is really important, too.”

On the other end of the spectrum was a focus on empowering learners to take greater action to improve the lives of others. One participant who worked with law enforcement discussed the impact of empowering her audience on behalf of animals: “that's why I like to discuss family members, because that's something anyone can do. But when I think actions on the level of what I'm doing, the level of what I expect my students, my students are law enforcement, your actions are to arrest someone.”

Yet ultimately, the pathway to empowerment came from the learning process itself. Participants discussed how moving through the dimensions created a pathway for new action that moves through the resistance. A college professor illuminated this idea:

“So, I like to bring them on a journey, and have them discover these things for themselves. Their families push back, or their communities push back, it's part of the learning experience. We're all here, shifting, maybe we could push it in toward a better place that causes less harm.”

While other themes emerged during the analysis of the qualitative data, these presented were most related to the task of identifying conceptual values for a framework of humane education. Upon completion of the qualitative analysis, the task was to review the data holistically and merge the findings to create a picture of what was learned.
What follows is an interpretation of the mixed data analysis that presents a conceptual overview across the three sections of humane education within the 5 dimensions as seen by the researcher and culminates in a possible framework to answer RQ 4 Can (do) the priorities fit across multiple contexts? (i.e., supersede cultural variability).

**Discussion**

To determine the superseding conceptual boundaries for humane education across multiple contexts, the qualitative analysis was applied to the rankings and priorities from the quantitative results. The researcher then created a new column of “big ideas” to each dimension that encapsulated the priorities across each of the animal, environmental and social justice sections.

**Safety and Security**

The priorities within the awareness dimension were dominated by issues of resource allocation and safety. A clear connection is evident between overpopulation (spay and neuter) in the animal section and that of sustainability and conservation. Frequently issues of land usage and conservation determine the ways in which animal populations are controlled. In addition, those resources available within a community can influence what can be allocated to its animal inhabitants. However, a connection between the safety of animals through basic care and combatting cruelty and neglect can also be seen by providing safe accessibility to minority communities within our education systems. For some, human safety was a precursor to addressing animal safety: “You have to take care of yourself before you can start expanding out right, you know, or before you can start taking care of the animals, you have to have a safe, humane human condition as well.”
This conceptual marker aligns with the work of One Health, a movement beginning with the World Health Organization to address issues of zoonotic diseases (those spread between humans and nonhuman animals) and expanding to an interdisciplinary model for social work and education. The University of Denver describes the One Health movement as “a unifying and global approach for coming to terms with problems centering on human-animal, human-nature, and human-human interactions (https://www.du.edu/humananimalconnection/global-initiatives/one-health.html). One Health is frequently a model utilized within the humane education movement as a starting point in programming. Participants spoke about One Health in this capacity for addressing the most basic safety needs for people of all nations. The model is also gaining traction in the medical field. Rabinowitz, Natterson-Horowitz, Kahn, Kock and Pappinaionou (2017) proposed that:

“In the research setting, One Health opens up new avenues to understand, detect, and prevent emerging infectious diseases, and also to conduct translational studies across species. In the clinical setting, One Health provides practical ways to incorporate environmental and animal contact considerations into patient care.” (p 1)

Such applications also work in the educational setting where interactions between humans, animals and the environment have impact on the health and safety of the students.

Table 5. 3 Awareness Conceptual Marker

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Animal</th>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Social Justice</th>
<th>Theme Connection</th>
<th>Big Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>Basic Animal Care</td>
<td>Global Warming</td>
<td>Access to education</td>
<td>Knowing Your Audience</td>
<td>Safety and Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cruelty/Neglect Spay and Neuter</td>
<td>Sustainability Conservation</td>
<td>Gender treatment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Animal Safety</td>
<td>Resource</td>
<td>LGBTQ safety</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Safety/Planetary Security</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Connecting the Self to Others

The ranked priorities across the dimension of knowledge were reviewed applying the insight of connection from the qualitative strand. Here, we can see the relationship of the priorities to the concept of connecting the student to elements of their world. For example, a greater knowledge of communication, basic care and feelings help students to build a relationship with nonhuman animals. Similarly, an informational foundation of planetary needs through the questions prioritized builds a relationship between the student and their immediate environment. Those priorities in the social justice section likewise serve to connect student populations to those that could be considered “other.”

This idea of “othering” builds on the idea of anthropocentricism where students see human needs above and separate from those of animals or the planet and applies this same separation to fellow humans. Humane educators see this othering as a problem within their student populations: “I see that in my students, whether it be animals, other human beings, plants… they just having a real hard time with the concept of diversity. If they look different than that means they are different.” Connecting students to others through new knowledge creates alignment across the three sections and directly addresses anthropocentricism, and promotes human understanding.
Table 5. 4 Knowledge Conceptual Marker

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Animal</th>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Social Justice</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Big Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Body Language</td>
<td>Recycling</td>
<td>Civil Rights</td>
<td>Connection/ Perspective of “Other”</td>
<td>Connecting my world to those around me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basic Care</td>
<td>Where does food come from?</td>
<td>Gender Equality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sentience/Telos</td>
<td>What is sustainability?</td>
<td>Refugee/Immigration Protections</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human/Animal</strong></td>
<td><strong>Relationships</strong></td>
<td>Human/Planet Relationship</td>
<td><strong>Connecting with other people</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Valuing the Intrinsic Value of Diverse Live

The attitudinal goals for humane education have been documented in the literature review as focusing primarily on the development of empathy for animals. However, the results of the survey revealed a greater importance placed on respect and equality for people, animals and the environment. While empathy and respect are closely linked and often spoken about in tandem, there are important differences in the terms. Specifically, a focus on respect provides a pathway to the improvement of the lives of living beings beyond those that are completely understood with empathy. Respect as an outcome for humane education would produce students who are able to exhibit regard for the feelings, needs, or rights of others and communicate in a way that “validates the basic dignity and worth of others, without necessarily endorsing their views or beliefs.” (vetset2goproject.edu.au; p. 2) This ability to develop an attitude that places value and respect on another’s right to live seems particularly important because of the humane educator’s
concern over instruction on sentience. With a shift from empathy to respect and innate value of a life, pathways open for increased ecocentric behaviors and subsequent empathy.

For humane education, this pathway may be developed through an increased focus on perspective taking and sentience. Exploration of educational models for understanding within the multicultural literature provide some guidance as to how to incorporate strategies to increase students’ value of elements that are different (Gay, 2002; Nieto, 2008). Similar strategies could be applied to increase such value placed on diverse life outside of human beings.

Table 5. 5 Attitudinal Conceptual Markers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Animal</th>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Social Justice</th>
<th>Big Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Animal Life Is Separate from the Needs/Wants of Humans</td>
<td>Incorporating Cultures is important</td>
<td><strong>Intrinsic Value of Diverse Live</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Free from Fear Respect</td>
<td>Plants and animals have the same rights as humans to exist EE is equally important in school Humans are still subject to the laws of nature</td>
<td>Examining beliefs about race, culture etc. Preparing students for the life they need to lead</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Animals have feelings/thinking about animal feelings</td>
<td>Environmental Lives are separate from human needs/wants</td>
<td>Human Beings Are Diverse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Self-Empowerment**

Although attitudinal markers, such as empathy have been the focus for the outcomes of humane education programs this study sought to explore other possibilities. With the inclusion
of a skill set dimension to instrumentation, responses indicated an importance on patterns of behaviors focusing more on student empowerment to act in accordance with new information. Within the animal section, skill sets focus predictably on kind or respectful behaviors. Because humane educators see neglect and cruelty as a consistently high priority, these skills align accordingly. However, looking across the sections we view such skills within the theme of students’ sense of empowerment to act in accordance with their understanding. In other words, when students know more about the lives of animals, plants and other people they can exhibit a skill set that is reflective of respect. Like Nieto’s (2008) continuum to move multicultural education beyond tolerance, self-empowerment moves humane education beyond empathy and into a new set of behavioral outcomes that reflect a more comprehensive view of prosocial behaviors. Such assumptions about the potential for humane education can be explored within Mezirow’s (1978) transformational learning theory where humane education serves as the disrupter to propel students to act differently.

The transformation towards new beliefs, actions and perspectives would occur through a process of reflection where students become more aware of challenges within the animal, environmental and/or human spheres and challenge the established definition of a problem being addressed, and “perhaps by finding a new metaphor reorient(s) problem-solving efforts in a more effective way.” (Mezirow, 1990, p. 4). Through this practice of raising awareness and new knowledge students can connect their new observations to future actions in a meaningful way (Sanders, Van Oss, & McGeary, 2016).

Table 5. 6 Skillset Conceptual Markers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Animal</th>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Social Justice</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Big Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>Show respect</td>
<td>Recognize issues they can</td>
<td>Appreciate difference</td>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>Empowerment of the self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act kindly</td>
<td>have an impact on</td>
<td>Act respectfully</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act respectfully</td>
<td>Handle trash responsibly</td>
<td>Perspective taking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful Response</td>
<td>Discern environmentally friendly products</td>
<td>Affirmation and Critique</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informed Individual Decision Making</td>
<td>(Nieto, 2008)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Empowerment within the System(s)**

A major differentiating factor for humane education must be the movement from anthropocentric behaviors to more ecocentric behaviors. To do this requires action on the part of the student. Conceptually this differs from skill set because it asks the student to take initiative on behalf on another. Although one participant spoke about students taking action on a political scale, more frequently the participants spoke about taking action within more intimate circles of influence. As previously noted, respondents frequently discussed the importance of understanding the audience for their programming and spoke directly about the ability of younger children to take appropriate types of actions. Sometimes the empowerment related directly to other themes of importance like neglect and cruelty, with one humane educator saying,

“We also provide them resources and tools, different information about the services within our facility, but also within the community, how to report crimes against animals, because oftentimes the kids are witnessing those crimes, and their adults may not want..."
to…..And so I'm empowering the kids to make choices and to assist those animals, even if it's not their animal.”

These statements reflect an acknowledgment that students can act in a way that combats the oppression of animals and transforms the inequity in that relationship. Others spoke more globally about long-term potential impacts:

“School age kids, they don't always have control in the home …we can only hope that they will take these lessons and maybe then apply it in the future when they do have control, or that they can try and have some influence in their family or help educate their family members.”

These action goals make sense if we extend a critical pedagogical lens to incorporate ecological systems of oppression and goals to change it. In his discussion on blending critical pedagogy and placed-based learning, Gruenwald (2003, p.5) suggests,

“The ecological challenge to critical pedagogy is to expand its socio-cultural analyses and agendas for transformation to include an examination of the interactions between cultures and ecosystems….critical ecological educators posit that an ecological crisis necessitates the transformation of education and a corresponding alignment of cultural patterns with the sustaining capacities of natural systems.” (Bowers, 1993; O’Sullivan, 1999; Orr, 1992)

Humane educators share such vision with the addition of the core relating back to the motivation to act altruistically to all life including nonhuman animals. One participant offered: “Maybe in empowering people, participants in a program want to create policies and laws,…maybe that means creating a recycling policy at their school…. but I think the important piece is people have to care a whole lot.”
Table 5. 7 Action Conceptual Markers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Animal</th>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Social Justice</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Big Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actions</td>
<td>Discuss with family members Utilize community resources</td>
<td>Seek additional information Take part in an organized event</td>
<td>Discuss with family Utilize community resources</td>
<td>Empowerment Community Connection</td>
<td>Empowerment within the system(s)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Considering the data holistically allows a framework to emerge that captures the core of humane education goals. The proposed framework of humane education core concepts illuminates how practitioners can apply those goals within diverse community contexts. Figure 5.6 depicts the proposed global framework for humane education as interpreted through this study. The figure depicts the growth of ecocentricity as the learner can address issues of safety and security and become more deeply connected to the living world. Important to note is the need for the process to be deeply embedded within the needs of the community at large. This means that any content delivered in this framework would originate from the community needs.
Limitations

It is important to note this study had several limitations. First, is the small number of participants for the survey and the relatively low participation rate in the focus groups. Given the sample size it is not possible to say that the responses are representative of the entire field of humane education practitioners. Perhaps more importantly is that the sample cannot claim representativeness of those participants outside of the North America. Additional studies will need to increase the sample and representation of humane practitioners from more diverse geographic locations. Possible ways to increase participation should be investigated, including translation of recruitment and testing materials.

A duplication of this study would also serve to address the second limitation of the untested instrumentation. As no tool existed in the literature to collect the information sought, a new survey tool was drafted and piloted with this study. Although the data collected provided
insight into our research questions, refinement and testing of the tool is critical to validating any future results.

Finally, it is acknowledged that the interpretation of the qualitative strand is subject to researcher bias. Although the transcripts were reviewed by an outside reviewer for consensus of themes, additional data points could be gathered in replication to triangulate the data. For example, document analysis of humane education program materials, such as was done by Rouhiainen and Vuorisalo (2014) in their effort to uncover ideological understanding of environmental/animal education prior to World War II. The addition of such data would assure that researcher bias would be minimized. However, in this case the researcher recognizes that bias may be present in the interpretation of the results. This is reflected in the hypothesis that the creation of a model united the three strands of humane education is possible. Testing of the framework through replication and validation of the presented results is necessary.

Implications for the Field and Future Research

The field of humane education struggles to define itself both within the academic literature and in practice. Divergent definitions, applications and evaluations of programs under the umbrella of humane education produces ambiguity for key stakeholders both within the field, such as non-profit organizations and out (e.g. classroom teachers and administrators). The purpose of this study was to engage those stakeholders within the field to define its core concepts and build a framework to serve as a foundational model for practice. The mixed methods approach determined what priorities existed for humane educators in each of the three areas of humane education (animal, social and environmental justice) and investigated how they saw these areas connected. Results yielded a deeper understanding of humane educators’ beliefs and a clearer picture of what humane education is. The culmination of information saw five
overarching themes to guide the work of humane education both in practice and theoretical exploration.

In practice, the proposed framework provides a model for humane educators that gives flexibility by allowing community specific content to drive program development. Equally, it creates clear boundaries for the types of learning experiences that fit within the definition of humane education. Practitioners therefore can use the frame to determine where they are working within the model. This then gives a structured pathway to create, implement and evaluate their programs. It also gives a means of communicating to outside stakeholders, such as school educators, parents and community leaders how humane education programs can align with other learning goals and student development. Additional research in the usefulness of the framework for field practitioners is necessary. For example, piloting the framework with humane education programs under development could inform areas for change or enforce its viability.

Moreover, the framework demonstrated how humane education concepts can support learner growth moving from anthropocentric to ecocentric lenses. As such, the framework lends itself to connections to non-cognitive outcomes within the social and emotional domain. Specifically of interest is investigating ideas of humane education’s impact on student self-efficacy, empowerment, and perspective taking with other achievement outcomes. humane education programs implementing the framework could examine this link as an outcome for humane education students.

Finally, an important consideration for this study was any possible threads that could tether humane education to a theoretical foundation. At the start, the paper outlined how other models, such as critical and eco-critical theories in education did not extend enough to the
nonhuman animal to be viable for humane education. It may be, that humane education is an extension of an eco-pedagogical approach that elevates the nonhuman animal perspective to that of humans and the environment. Only through the research of more comprehensive humane education programs can we determine if this is the case. However, the creation of the dimensions and the utilization of the emergent themes illuminates the need for further evaluation on humane education connections to other theoretical models. For example, viewing humane education within transformational learning theory could examine mechanisms that move students from levels of anthropocentricism towards ecocentricism. This is especially relevant for those programs working with adults, or that contain hands-on or service learning as part of their work. Additionally, you can consider applications of the framework within Maslow’s theories of self-actualization and to the development of the ecocentric self (Hage & Rauckiene, 2004). Such examinations are necessary to place humane education within the larger context of understanding of learner development and allows humane education to take its place within the literature.
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Appendix A

Humane Educator Teaching Profile

Name: Birthday:

Organization: City and State:

Job Title: Affiliated with a school?

Y N

Teaching Certification: Grades worked with: (please circle all that apply)

Y N Pre-School

Elementary School

High School
1. Humans have no right to displace wild animals by converting wilderness areas into farmlands, cities, and other things designed for people.

2. Animal research cannot be justified and should be stopped.

3. It is morally wrong to drink milk

4. It is morally wrong to eat eggs.

5. A human has no right to use a horse as a means of transportation (riding).

6. A human has no right to use a horse as a means of entertainment (racing).

7. It is wrong to wear leather jackets and pants.

8. I have seriously considered becoming a vegetarian in an effort to save animal lives.
9. It is morally wrong to eat beef and other "red" meat.

10. Insect pests (mosquitoes, cockroaches, flies, etc.) should be safely removed from the house rather than killed.

11. Animals should be granted the same rights as humans.

12. I would rather see humans die or suffer from disease than to see animals used in research.

13. Having extended basic rights to minorities and women, it is now time to extend them also to animals.

14. There are plenty of viable alternatives to the use of animals in biomedical and behavioral research.

15. Since many important questions cannot be answered by doing experiments on people, we are left with no alternative but to do animal research.

16. It is a violation of an animal's rights to be held captive as a pet by a human.

17. It is wrong to wear animal fur (such as mink coats).

18. It is appropriate for humans to kill animals that destroy human property, for example, rats, mice, and pigeons.

19. Most cosmetics research done on animals is unnecessary and invalid.
20. It is morally wrong to eat chicken and fish.

21. Hunters play an important role in regulating the size of deer populations.

22. Most animals are unaware of what is happening to them.

23. Most animals are capable of experiencing a range of feelings and emotions (e.g. pain, fear, contentment, maternal affection).

24. Most animals are able to think to some extent to solve problems and make decisions about what to do.

25. Most animals are more like computer programs, i.e. mechanically responding to instinctive urges without awareness of what they are doing.

**During your humane education program….**

How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?

Nothing  Very Little  Some Influence  Quite a Bit  A Great

How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?  A Great

How much can you do to prevent problem behavior on the school grounds?
Through your humane education program....

How much can you do to get parents to become involved in your program activities?

How much can you assist parents in helping their children do well in your program?

How much can you do to make parents feel comfortable coming to your programs activities?

How much can you do to get community groups involved in working with your program?

How much can you do to get churches involved in working with your program?

How much can you do to get businesses involved in working with your program?

How much can you do to get local colleges and universities involved in working with your program?

Part III

1. I have covered the following types of animals in my humane education program in the last 12 months

   (Check ALL that apply):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Companion animals (dogs, cats, rabbits, birds, horses)</th>
<th>Working animals (horses, donkeys, mules, burros, llamas)</th>
<th>Wild birds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm animals (cows, sheep, chickens, pigs)</td>
<td>Wild animals/endangered species</td>
<td>Insects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. I have covered the following topics in the last 12 months (Check ALL that apply):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Companion animal population control</th>
<th>Companion animal care</th>
<th>Animal anatomy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wild animal population control</td>
<td>Hunting</td>
<td>Animal sentience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting</td>
<td>Industrial farming</td>
<td>Land/habitat conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spay/neuter</td>
<td>Animal behavior</td>
<td>Biodiversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal cruelty or neglect</td>
<td>Animal research</td>
<td>Animal captivity (zoos, circus etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Homelessness</td>
<td>Animal Fighting (Dog Fighting, Cockfighting)</td>
<td>Animal Entertainment (Rodeos, Zoos, Dolphin Swimming)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fur Farms or Fur</td>
<td>Meatless</td>
<td>Humane Economy (Cruelty Free Shopping)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. I have used the following methods in my humane education programming in the last 12 months:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Humane Themed Literature</th>
<th>Animal Observations (Animal Biology/Animal Sentience)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animal Assisted Activities (Bringing or Interacting with Live Animals)</td>
<td>Service Learning Projects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Study Design
Figure 4.1. Explanatory Sequential Design (adapted from Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006)

Virtual interviews and focus groups with selected participants
Follow-up discussions as needed
Recordings and written notes

Purposively selecting sub-samples for interview based on geographic and cultural characteristics and maximal variation
## Appendix C

**Humane Educator Survey Constructs**

### Guiding Questions:

1. What are the dimensions of the animal perspective of humane education as seen by current practitioners?
2. How do they connect to the other dimensions (Environment and Human Perspectives)? (Identification of themes and connections)
3. Can (do) they fit across multiple contexts? (i.e. supersede cultural variability)

### Constructs for Survey: Divided into 5 dimensions (as supported in the literature and professional experience).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Operational Definition</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of Animal Related Issues</td>
<td>The acknowledgement of complex questions around the use and treatment of animals in society</td>
<td>• Production of Animal Products&lt;br&gt;• Consumption of Animal Products&lt;br&gt;• Use of Animals in Entertainment&lt;br&gt;• Use of Animals in Research&lt;br&gt;• Population Control&lt;br&gt;• Cruelty&lt;br&gt;• 5 Freedoms</td>
<td>(Based on the Animal Attitudes Scale used in needs assessment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge about Animals</td>
<td>Basic understanding of the biological, physical and psychological makeup of a range of nonhuman animal species</td>
<td>• Animal Biology&lt;br&gt;• Animal Natural Behavior&lt;br&gt;• Animal Sentience</td>
<td>Based on measures of animal knowledge and the Belief in Animal Mind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-Animal Attitudes</td>
<td>Positive feelings about nonhuman animal species</td>
<td>• Empathy development&lt;br&gt;• Reverence and Respect&lt;br&gt;• Fear reduction</td>
<td>Poresky’s measures of fear reduction and Animal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Phase II: Developed after survey results tentative model of humane education framework (elements contained above and their interactions). Focus groups aimed at further development of themes (and additional ones if necessary) AND creating the context for such learning

I. How do you see these areas prioritized and why?
   a. Where do you see the connections between these constructs and those found within the environmental and social justice frameworks for education programs?
   b. Are there areas that are not aligned?

II. How does this learning occur?
   a. Through the distribution of information?
   b. Through building emotional connections?
   c. Through actions and experience?
   d. Is it linear (one dimension must come before another)?
III. How do you see the conceptual map that’s been created applying across cultural contexts?
   a. What are the elements that are applicable across contexts?
Appendix D

Protocol for Individual Interviews, Focus Groups (adapted from ovc.gov)

1. Begin with one facilitator providing introductory comments:
   a. Welcome and thank everyone for volunteering to participate.
   b. Introduce yourself, the cofacilitator, and the note taker.
   c. Ensure everyone has reviewed and signed the consent form.

2. Give a very brief overview of the project and goals for the focus group or interview. For example, “We are working on developing a representative model of what humane education means as a global concept to those in the field. To do so, we want to discuss with you your thoughts about topics that seem to be important to humane education and understand more deeply how they are applied in practice.”

4. Give participants information about the process, times, breaks, etc.

5. Allow a brief introductory period for participants

6. Provide basic guidelines for the focus groups and individual interviews, review them with participants, and consider posting them for everyone to see.
   a. If you feel uncomfortable during the meeting, you have the right to leave or to pass on any question. There is no consequence for leaving. Being here is voluntary.
   b. The meeting is not a counseling session or support group.
   c. Keep personal stories “in the room”; do not share the identity of the attendees or what anybody else said outside of the meeting.
   d. Everyone’s ideas will be respected. Do not comment on or make judgments about what
someone else says, and do not offer advice.

e. One person talks at a time.

f. It’s okay to take a break if needed

g. Everyone has the right to talk. The facilitator may ask someone who is talking a lot to step back and give others a chance to talk and may ask a person who isn’t talking if he or she has anything to share.

h. Everybody has the right to pass on a question.

i. There are no right or wrong answers.

j. Does anybody have any questions?

7. Let people know that project staff will be taking notes about what is discussed, but that individual names or identifying information will not be attached to comments.

8. An opening question can help break the ice and should be easy to answer. For example, “How did you find out about the humane educator survey?”

9. Key questions for any focus group or interviews will include:

1. What do you see as the most important components of an humane education program? What are the long-term goals?

2. What concepts about nonhuman animals do you see as critical to your program?

3. How do community values factor into your programming materials and your pedagogical approach?

4. Does humane education connect animal perspectives, environmental protection and social justice? If so, how?

10. Let people know when you are going to ask the last question. This cues participants to share relevant information that may not have come up in answer to your key questions. For
example, “Is there anything else you want to share that we haven’t talked about yet?”

11. Thank everyone for participation
Curriculum Vitae
Erin M. Comaskey
emcomaskey@gmail.com

Profile: Global educator with expertise and experience in culturally-relevant research and practice. Dedicated professional who strives to maintain best practice through continued development in academic research and field application. Socially-minded practitioner who believes education should prepare students of all ages to be global citizens.

Education and Honors

Doctoral Student  Johns Hopkins University  2015- Currently
Enrolled

MA Thesis (Educational Psychology)  McGill University  2004-2006
❑ GPA 4.0/4.0

BS (Early Childhood Education /English)  The College of New Jersey  1996-2000
❑ Dean’s List
❑ New Jersey Teaching License: Early Childhood and Elementary Education
❑ Certified Humane Education Specialist

Professional Experience

Board of Directors
Humane Education Coalition  2017-
Present
• Provide strategic support for projects and partnership initiatives
• Advisor to the Research and Accreditation sub-committee
• Editorial Committee member for the upcoming International Journal of Humane Education

Graduate School Teaching Assistant  Current
Johns Hopkins University, School of Education
Research Methods
• Support faculty instructor in reaching course goals; including, reviewing paper submissions, monitoring course discussion boards and providing feedback when necessary
• Support students through engaging in discussions and providing constructive feedback on their coursework

Manager of Curriculum and Training
Humane Society of the United States 2014-2015

• Produced 3 continuing education webinars per month using GoTo webinars; coordinating field experts and field professionals
• Designed and created training programs for field professionals across departments; including law enforcement and prosecutors
• Trained over 1000 teachers across Puerto Rico on incorporating humane pedagogy into classrooms as part of a Ministry of Education initiative
• Co-Coordinator of multi-year grant research program investigating program effectiveness

Educational Consultant
Humane Society of the United States 2012-2014

• Developed curriculum for The Humane Society International use in developing nations
• Edited and updated service learning program for students K-12 (Humane Society University)
• Designed dynamic learning activities to promote active student and community involvement
• Created full learning curriculum in Emergency Aid Procedures for Dogs for students attending experiential learning program in Thailand (Rustic Pathways)
• Developed a Management course for students enrolled at Humane Society University in the Executive Management program

Educational Consultant/Teacher
Barcelona, Spain 2007-2010

• Head teacher intensive summer school preparation program (Collegi Europa)
• Head teacher English as a second language instructor (Quality English School)
• Consultant English immersion program (St. Leo XIII )
• Freelance English instructor
• Guest choreographer: Celtic Chaos/ Claddagh Ring Dancers
• Guest Performer/Choreographer: Tap on Barcelona
English representative: SOS Galgos

Literacy Projects Manager 2005-
2007
Concordia University, Montreal, Canada.
Center for the Study of Learning and Performance

- Directed a team of programmers and instructional designers in the development of 3 major software initiatives
- Coordinated the research activities related to all literacy projects
- Oversaw the research coordinator and team of research assistants in implementation of project objectives
- Organized and conducted key meetings with project stakeholders across Canada
- Trained and supported teachers in the use of key literacy software projects
- Hired and supervised a team of research assistants and interns to execute design and development of research deliverables
- Chaired the weekly Literacy Executive Committee meetings
- Examined and analyzed research data for report writing
- Designed and implemented professional development workshops
- Created and implemented instructional plans in collaboration with classroom teachers
- Facilitated community outreach program with pre-school teachers to incorporate technology into teaching practices
- Wrote articles (scholarly and practitioner) on these projects for knowledge dissemination
- Originated the redesign of the ABRACADABRA quarterly newsletter

Junior Researcher
McGill University, Montreal, Canada
Concordia Center of the Study of Learning and Performance 2004-
2005

- Coordinated and conducted field observations with multiple schools for literacy evaluation (Kindergarten, Grade 1 and 2)
- Facilitated literacy intervention project with students (K-1) working in small group sessions during the year
- Managed relations between school officials and research team
- Facilitated literacy intervention across Montreal using newly developed computer software
- Developed measurement tasks and protocol for use in pre-school phonemic awareness study
- Created new curriculum for original thesis research on literacy software and kindergarten students
**Senior Instructor/Team Leader**  
2003-Sept 2004

Mad Science of Montreal

- Developed and initiated expansion of pre-school program curriculum
- Designed and conducted training sessions for new employees
- Conducted tour of Maritime States-First Nations tribes for science outreach working with children on First Nations reservations

**Teacher**  
2000-June 2003

West New York Early Childhood School

- Created Integrated learning experiences resulting in high percentage of passing language assessment scores for Pre-K students
- Developed and implemented successful Behavior Modification plans for children with special needs
- Sponsored and supervised two Childhood Development Certificate Candidates who both achieved degrees
- Initiated use of anecdotal records and work samplings for student portfolios in addition to districts report cards for assessment

**Founder and Director**  
2002(founded)

Cumascaigh School of Irish Dance

- Increased enrollment numbers annually (100% per year) through development of marketing materials and maintaining strong client loyalty
- Solely responsible for sales, record-keeping and budget management
- Planned and staged large scale Irish Heritage event including securing venue and entertainment
- Produced and created dance choreography for a 100 member dance troupe
- Established and managed elite performance team for cultural events both public and private

**PUBLICATIONS**

Contribution: Chief investigator. Based on masters' thesis work.

- Savage, R. S. (2010), Comaskey, E., et al., ABRACADABRA In The Hands Of Teachers: The Effectiveness Of A Web-Based Literacy Intervention In Grade 1 Language Arts Programs. Computers in Education
- Contributions: Research assistant. Collected quantitative and qualitative data, compiled it for presentation to the school board. Conducted the appropriate literature review.

Contributions: After conducting appropriate literature review and a review of previous used testing materials, created a new measurement and protocol for using that measurement that improved upon previous studies.

Conferences and Presentations

- Presenter National At-Risk Educators Network: Compassion in the Classroom (2015) Baltimore, MD
- Presenter Association of Professional Humane Educators: Compassion Fatigue (2015)
- Adjunct Professor Weber State University: 3 day humane education professional development (2014) Salt Lake City, UT
- Presenter Animal Care Expo: Creating a Culture of Compassion (2014) Daytona, FL
- Presentation of thesis research e-Learning Symposium (2006), Melbourne Australia

Personal Interests/Languages

- Founder and Director Cumascaigh School of Irish Dance
- Choreographer and coach of dancers aged 5 and over
- Volunteer for various animal welfare groups
- Community animal population management
- Triathlon, running
- Principle French
- Intermediate Spanish