Overview

• Context: Hunting & the Deliberative Systems approach
• The Q study: what I did
• The Q study: why I did it
• The Q study: four discourses
• Next steps: preliminary thoughts / analysis
• Challenges
• Questions
Outline of thesis

Animals in the Deliberative System: the UK Hunting Debate

- Exploring potential of DD for enhancing political representation of animals
- Dryzek’s deliberative system: private, public, empowered (incl. networks), transmission & accountability, meta-consensus

Hunting with Dogs

- Hunting Act 2004
- One of the most controversial & salient animal issues in the UK
- Highly politicised (see Plumb & Marsh 2013)
- Although ostensibly an animal issue, debate tends to include arguments about class, social, cultural, political, power, conservation
The Q study: why Q?

• Robust and systematic, but still interpretive
• More nuanced than survey approach
• Allows inclusion of issues surrounding hunting debate
• Can identify areas of overlap/common ground

The Q study: what I did

• Compiling the concourse: semi-structured interviews (10)
• Statement generation
• Pilot study & statement revision
• Q sorts & interviews (33*)
• Analysis: factor extraction & ‘by-hand’ rotation (PQMethod)
Rotation

• See whiteboard...

Results

• Initially extracted seven factors for by-hand rotation
• Chose a four factor solution explaining 57% variance
• Choosing a final solution relied heavily on my knowledge and feeling for the subject matter and participants
• Interpretation required looking at interview material as well
Factor 1: Modern Family

• Largest and most diverse group
• Mainstream animal welfare ethic, and then some
• Animal sentience is “guiding principle”
• Emphasis on “modern, civilised society” – no place for hunting
• Object primarily on basis of cruelty and non-functionality
• Unsure/indifferent on farming

Factor 1 contd.

“...we would say that it’s OK to slaughter an animal, providing it’s done humanely, providing it doesn’t suffer, and also it’s done on a needs basis, so for food, we wouldn’t condone it for entertainment. We also don’t condone it for luxury products such as fur, where the animal suffers beyond the point of ridiculousness...we accept that it’s part of life...it’s OK to slaughter an animal, if it needs to be done.”
Q sort interview with an animal protection organisation (OO15)

“I think as with other modern attitudes, particularly 21st century, we’ve moved into a different place of awareness as regards animal life. As we have with gay people, people of colour, many other things and I think...there is no place for taking pleasure in hunting another species, particularly where there’s no necessity involved in it....apart from gaining pleasure.”
Q sort interview with Denise Ward, documentary maker (OO23)
Factor 2: Live and let die

• Hunting is a legitimate sport and should be allowed to continue
• Hunting is NOT the most efficient/effective method of control
• Humans are selfish and destructive by nature
• Rigid ontology – “that’s life/nature/what happens”
• Animals are to be respected

Factor 2 contd.

“I’ve done a lot of hunting in various forms, and at no point have I ever thought about deliberately inflicting suffering and injury and stuff to an animal. Yeah, they get killed, we all die and everything else… but I don’t go out and think about being as painful and as cruel as possible…it’s a process of – for instance, when I was doing the falconry… was a whole process to it that for me was like, any other sport… even the fox hunting, you’re more wrapped up – for me – I was more wrapped up in the whole process of how things worked…the amount of effort put into training dogs, looking after them, the process of tracking, hunting, hawking… for me, hunting’s not about creating pain, misery or anything else…it’s a sport. And, I think it’s one of the most natural sports that we do…”

Q sort interview with Keith, who has been involved with shooting, hawking, working & training dogs

(PP20)

“The amount of people that you see that… to get a house, to get money from the government, from us — they’re just… bang out… end of the day they’re not really… they don’t really care, as long as they get a house and everything they want paid for, so that’s where I think we’re at…”

Q sort interview with a horse trainer, who has been involved with shooting
Factor 3: Management Speak

• Echoes pro-hunting lobby’s arguments
• Hunting with dogs as a form of wildlife management
• Countryside is a man-made and man-managed environment
• Opponents of hunting don’t understand it
• Animal lovers

Factor 3 contd.

“...wherever you want to go in the countryside, it’s not natural, you’ll see...oats, barley, wheat, you’ll see a ploughed field; you’ll see maize, you’ll see grass...the countryside is a working countryside. If we left the countryside entirely on its own, we’d be looking at a jungle.”

Q sort interview with the Huntsman of a Foxhound pack (OO7)

“I think...people have very preconceived views of hunting. I think it’s an easy subject to have quite a superficial view of. You know, I think just about anyone who doesn’t understand the issues think of people going round on horses killing foxes with dogs and think “[gasp] that’s disgusting!”

Q sort interview with a hunt supporter (OO24)
Factor 4: Political Animals

• Highly correlated with F1 but some clear distinctions
• Animal sentience is “baseline”
• Overtly political emphasis on structure – hunting in the past & now; reflecting from the future
• Object to hunting on a more fundamental level
• Objection to farming industry

Factor 4 contd.

“Why should farmers always get special bloody treatment?!...you know, they get all of the subsidies, people somehow think they can do no wrong, even though they’ve pretty much destroyed the countryside, well the biodiversity in the countryside, and somehow we all owe them this infinite gratitude that they’ve chosen to go into a career that is bloody hard, doesn’t pay very well, and is...declining, you know - fewer and fewer people want to buy animal products, so...screw em! [laughs] I mean, how dumb do you have to be, to become a farmer in this day and age? The only thing that keeps half of them going is the subsidies. It’s completely unsustainable.”

Q sort interview with a former hunt sab and ecologist (OP11)

“There was place for hunting in previous civilised societies when there was no knowledge about animals intelligence or capacity to suffer, or there were other priorities, and there was a huge hierarchical structure where hunting played part of it...we are in a democracy, that hierarchy doesn’t exist anymore, er, hunting remains one of the few relics of the medieval times where people still use the terms such as master and servant...it’s a relic of a time when values were very different, and so when you apply hunting to the modern world, it’s completely out of touch...”

Q sort interview with Jordi Casamitjana, IFAW (OO10)
**Extremely preliminary analysis...**

Deliberative moments in private/public space:

- Encounters: hunts & activists*
- Deliberative enclaves
- Reflection, justification and reason-giving – internal deliberation?

*Remember – these are few and far between!

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**Challenges**

- Overcoming primal fear of quantitative things
- ...then overcoming the urge to rely too much on quantitative things
- Conducting a Q study is time and labour intensive
- The factor solution does not tell the whole story; you’ll need additional contextual info to make sense of everything
- Raising as many questions as answers...
...Q-uestions

• Is Q a bit coercive?
• *What happens if you don’t force people into the quasi-normal distribution?
• Does Q privilege a certain type of person?
• Does Q enhance reflexivity and is this good or bad?
• Is my four factor solution OK???