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Harness Electricity, Free the Mules: Animal Rights and the Electrification of the Streetcars in New Orleans

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Harness Electricity, Free the Mules:
Animal Rights and the Electrification of the Streetcars in New Orleans

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
History

by
Brittany Mulla

B.A. University of New Hampshire, 2008

May 2010

Dedicated to my Uncle Brian and Grandpa Mulla,
who were my biggest cheerleaders and did not get to read the final draft.

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Abstract

Prior to the streetcar lines being electrified in the late 1800s, equines pulled the cars. The quadrupeds that pulled the horsecars in New Orleans, Louisiana, were area specific: New Orleans had mules, not horses. The mule in the South is typically associated with the rural South; however, in nineteenth century urban New Orleans the mule played an integral part in daily commerce and society.

New Orleanians admiration for the animals turned into concern when the rigors of work became apparent to the public, as mules suffered from the abuses of drivers, the seedy practices of street railway companies, malnutrition, and exhaustion. As a direct result, the Louisiana Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was established and many New Orleanians took to defending the voiceless laborers. Animal rights, not the drive for more modernity, was the central factor to convince the city to electrify the street railway.

Keywords: animal rights, horsecar, Louisiana Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, SPCA, mules, streetcar

Prior to the introduction of electric streetcars in the late nineteenth century, New Orleans relied on their predecessor, the horsecar. For approximately sixty years the horsecar mules dominated the city's streets, yet it was not until the 1890s when the quadruped began to command the sympathy of the citizens of New Orleans. The abuse directed at transport mules resulted in the establishment of the Louisiana Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and provoked New Orleanians to insist upon electrifying the horsecar.

Equines in New Orleans were not uncommon prior to the introduction of the horsecar in 1831. Individual households, commercial businesses, delivery services, and omnibus businesses all kept horses and mules within the city limits.¹ Nineteenth-century urban dwellers viewed equines as machines critical for living in a metropolis, rather than as fellow mammals. Mules were also considered property, subject to management.² Nineteenth-century New Orleanians, in particular, who were predominantly Catholic, believed in a wide gap between rational human beings, endowed with immortal souls, and irrational animals.³ That wide gap cleared consciences, allowing for the physical exploitation of work animals.

The sight of a mule pulling a streetcar in New Orleans in the 1890s could be distressing and heartbreaking. An elderly gaunt mule with a sway back, protruding rib and hip bones, and an unsteady afflictive gate from a lame leg pulling a streetcar was not

¹ An omnibus is a stagecoach-like vehicle that transported people on predetermined routes.

² Clay McShane and Joel Tarr, "The Horse as Technology-The City Animal as Cyborg," in *Horses and Humans: The Evolution of the Human-Equine Relationship*, ed. Sandra L. Olsen, Susan Grant, Alice M. Choyke, and Laszlo Bartosiewicz (Oxford: Archeapress, 2006), 365-366.

³ In 1890, 67,156 of 95,716 church goers in New Orleans were Roman Catholic. U.S. Bureau of the Census, Report of Statistics of Churches in the United States, *Eleventh Census of the United States, 1890*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1894), 65, http://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/1890a_v9-02.pdf (accessed on March 18, 2010.)

uncommon. At the helm of this spectacle was a horsecar driver shouting commands and lashing a whip to spur on his mule, while the beast sweated and foamed at the mouth from dehydration from the summer heat. Scenes such as these would compel many to organize protests against the mule-dependent local transit system.

While technological innovations aided the electrification of the New Orleans transit system in 1893, an important movement for reform (one that historians, largely, have overlooked) paved the way for the adoption of the electrical streetcar throughout the city. Female activists, the police department, and the press in New Orleans created a highly publicized reform movement advocating for improved conditions for the mules that pulled the public streetcars. In the 1880s, New Orleans citizens encountered troughs operated by the animal protection society posted throughout the city, Bands of Mercy badges adorned policemen's uniforms, benevolent women who handed out fliers for the Louisiana Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and pro-animal rights articles splashed across the *Daily Picayune*. Ultimately, concern for the welfare of the mules and the desire to electrify the city's transit system would bring two unlikely parties together: animal anti-cruelty groups and street railway entrepreneurs. The voiceless mules were being given a voice—or rather many voices—and they demanded reform.

Street Railway in the South

In the 1830s, railroading was popular throughout the United States of America. Capitalizing on that, the mayor of New York signed an ordinance to build a street railroad on December 22, 1831 and by November 1831 the United States had commemorated its first horsecar.⁴ Believing that they governed a modern city, the members of the City

⁴ John A. Miller, *Fares, Please!: A Popular History of Trolleys, Horse-Cars, Street-Cars, Buses, Elevateds,*

Council of New Orleans authorized the building of a street railway soon after New York. The proposed line would run from Canal Street to the neighboring town of Carrollton, a total of four miles west.⁵ The intended street railroad, with larger vehicles and closer headways, would relieve the pressure put on the quadruped-drawn omnibuses by the New Orleans population.⁶

Equines were used to pull the new cars because steam locomotives were too dangerous to run at street level, posing hazards for pedestrians and animals alike (Image 1).⁷ Ann Norton Greene, in *Horses at Work: Harnessing Power in Industrial America*, states that although “railroads stimulated urban growth...they did not fit well into urban life.”⁸ City governments were reluctant to have steam locomotives traveling in cities due to the sparks dispersed from passing engines, the earsplitting noises, and the potential accidents at crossings.⁹

The initial opposition towards the street railway system in New Orleans concerned the mules’ wellbeing. Some public distress arose over the unfair workload for the mule, which would have to pull heavy railcars with even more passengers than the omnibus. The individual and private omnibus owners were the business financiers for the street railway; not wanting to delay construction, the financiers insisted the iron wheels

and Subways (New York: Dover Publications, 1960), 16-18.

⁵ New Orleans and Carrollton Rail Road, *Charter of the New Orleans and Carrollton Rail Road* (New Orleans: E. Johns, 1833), 4, in the Louisiana Division, New Orleans Public Library, <http://nutrias.org/~nopl/spec/pamphlets/nocrr/nocrr01.htm> (accessed on March 22, 2009).

⁶ Louis C. Hennick and Elbridge Harper Charlton, *The Streetcars of New Orleans* (Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company, 2000), 10.

⁷ Clay McShane and Joel A. Tarr, *The Horse in the City: Living Machines in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 64.

⁸ Ann Norton Greene, *Horses at Work: Harnessing Power in Industrial America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 170.

⁹ Ann Norton Greene, *Horses at Work: Harnessing Power in Industrial America*, 170.

on iron tracks would be an easy workload for the mule.¹⁰

Before the Carrollton line was even completed, promoters began operation on a branch line on Magazine Street on December 9, 1834. By the end of 1835, the New Orleans and Carrollton Railroad Company (NOCRC) had built five miles of track with two branches, one to the town of Lafayette on Jackson Avenue to St. Charles Avenue (then Naydas Avenue), and the other from Baronne and Poydras Avenue to LaCourse Street to South Peters Street (then New Levee Street).¹¹

The major transition from omnibuses to street railway occurred between 1861 and 1867. Coinciding with this development was the American Civil War (1861-1865), which commanded the attention and financial resources of the federal and state governments. Nevertheless, daring businessmen such as J.B. Slawson, an owner of an omnibus company and confident with the success of the Carrollton line, began the New Orleans City Railroad Company. Slawson hired two contractors out of St. Louis—Champlin and Biel and Mr. M.W. Hodgeman—to build the street-railway system.¹² New Orleans' expanded tracks created a “web-work of the most charming excursion railroads” that were the most “complicated and complete of any country,” reported the *Daily Picayune*, only nine days after Confederate forces attacked Fort Sumter in South Carolina.¹³ The construction of New Orleans street railways gradually continued after the war. Robert McCullough, editor of the *Street Railway Journal*, described the optimism in post-bellum United States which enabled the final stage in transition from omnibuses to street railway:

¹⁰Louis C. Hennick and Elbridge Harper Charlton, *The Streetcars of New Orleans*, 22.

¹¹ Louis C. Hennick and Elbridge Harper Charlton, *The Streetcars of New Orleans*, 6, 22.

¹² Louis C. Hennick and Elbridge Harper Charlton, *The Streetcars of New Orleans*, 10.

¹³ “Horse Railroads In New Orleans,” *Daily Picayune*, April 21, 1861. This newspaper publication changed its title from the *Daily Picayune* to the *Times Picayune* in 1914.

When sheer exhaustion brought peace at last, there had been engendered a vigor, and enterprise...This vigor and enterprise found abundant opportunity. The good soldier became the useful citizen, and the street railway, claiming its share of attention, began to attribute its part to urban development (Image 2).¹⁴

Alexander Easton's one-hundred-ninety-three page discourse on the construction and management of horse-power railways, published and circulated in 1859 for business investors throughout the United States, had just one paragraph on the *treatment* of street railway horses and mules. "Keeping the stable clean will prove advantageous" and "mules and smaller Canadian horses are commended as being more hardy" were two of the few such strategies suggested by Easton.¹⁵ Similarly, Easton compiled seventy-five rules and regulations for employees from several established street-railway companies in Boston and New York; out of the seventy-five recommended rules (concerning such issues as intoxication, right-of-way, treatment of ladies, and passenger's personal affects) one is concerning the equines:

11. In all places where the street is dug open for paving, or other purposes, so as to endanger the safety of your horses, they must be detached from the car.¹⁶

The *treatment* of the equine is scarcely mentioned in his document. Easton, a businessman, had written a how-to for other businessmen; the equine was nothing more than a factor in a profit, a view many associated with the street railway shared.

Quadruped of Choice

New Orleans' horsecars were technically mule-cars. Biological traits gave the

¹⁴ Robert McCullough, "Street Railways- a Review of the Past and a Forecast of the Future," *Street Railway Journal* XVIII, no. 15 (October 1901): 541.

¹⁵ Alexander Easton, *A Practical Treatise on Street or Horse-Power Railways: Their Location, Construction and Management; with General Plans and Rules for Their Organization and Operation ... and Inquiries As to Their Value for Investment; Including Copies of Municipal Ordinances Relating Thereto* (Philadelphia: Crissy & Markley Printers, 1859), 96.

¹⁶ Alexander Easton, *A Practical Treatise on Street or Horse-Power Railways: Their Location, Construction and Management; with General Plans and Rules for Their Organization and Operation...and Inquiries As to Their Value for Investment; Including Copies of Municipal Ordinances Relating Thereto*, 105.

mule the advantage over the horse in the Gulf South. Only two, albeit considerable, drawbacks were connected with using mules, which raised their price: they were difficult to breed and they were imported. New Orleans had to import their mules since the Gulf South had difficulty breeding them. The seasonal patterns of the Delta's rainfall and acidic soils did not produce good pasture land; therefore most mule breeders were located in Missouri, Kentucky, and Tennessee. The purchaser of a mule would have to pay for transport; however New Orleans did have the help of the downward flow of the Mississippi River to aid in transportation costs.¹⁷ Mules would come by the hundreds from the upper Southern states to be sold in and around the Crescent City. For example, in 1867, Mr. Thomas McKnight imported and advertised "200 fresh, broke and unbroken Kentucky mules, just from the pastures of Kentucky" which he sold out of his Jefferson City stables; the advertisement's emphasis on the mules being from Kentucky implied they were of quality stock.¹⁸

Despite the high costs associated with breeding and importing, mules were more frequently used in New Orleans to pull the horsecar for several reasons. First, the mule is sired from an ass, whose ancestor is a desert mule, making it an appropriate animal for New Orleans's humid weather. Secondly, mules are easier to care for; horses have a delicate digestive system which needs bits of food throughout the day while mules can survive with less attentive handlers. Thirdly, a large number of mules are easier to manage than the equivalent number of horses; they do not fight for a pecking order and can be corralled or stabled together easily. Finally, the mule is more resilient to

¹⁷ Larry Sawers, "The Mule, the South, and Economic Progress," *Social Science History* 28 (Winter 2004), 669, 674.

¹⁸ "Kentucky Mules For Sale," *New Orleans Times*, October 30, 1867.

maltreatment or abuse.¹⁹

The notion that the mule could withstand abuse was commonplace among New Orleans horsecar drivers. Being a horsecar driver was difficult; the work was physically demanding and the respect towards the drivers from the public varied greatly. The drivers earned \$1.60 for working over fifteen hours a day, with frequent penalties and complaints for running a late car on the line, little compassion remained for the feelings of a mule that was not his property.²⁰

On September 9, 1882, the *New York Times* reported on the average life of a streetcar mule:

...As for the street car horse [or mule] his time of misery must be held to date from the time he enters that service, when his 'poor feet' never know what it is to be off those horrible cobblestones. By the end of three years the ruin of the legs of most of these car horses [and mules] has been completed... All over the city may be seen animals...which literally have not a leg to stand upon. Watch the poor things for a moment standing, and you will see them shift painfully from leg to leg, so as to give one an occasional rest. Many are lame of both a fore and a hind foot, and cannot move without great distress; some cannot possibly get beyond a walk without creating such an exhibition which might raise a cry of 'BERGH!'...Here are animals, presumably innocent of offense, condemned to long years of the extremist misery without remedy or appeal. For can any misery be much greater than, with a weak, sick old body and terribly tender feet, to be attached to a heavy load driven by a man with a heavy whip, day after day until you are on the verge of utter exhaustion? . . .²¹

The street railways rarely, if ever, reprimanded the drivers for their treatment of the quadrupeds. The animals were a sunk cost for the streetcar companies. "Street railways [in general] depreciated their equine over five years, then sold them even if healthy, since statistical analysis showed that lameness occurred more frequently after prolonged heavy

¹⁹ Larry Sawers, "The Mule, the South, and Economic Progress," 670-675.

²⁰ Gerald Carson, *Men, Beasts, and Gods; A History of Cruelty and Kindness to Animals* (New York: Scribner, 1972), 93.

²¹ "A California paper relates..." *New York Times*, September 9, 1882, <http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?r=1&res=9506E5D91E3EE433A2575AC0A96F9C94639FD7CF> (accessed November 12, 2009).

use,” states horsecar historians Clay McShane and Joell Tarr.²² An advertisement in the January 16, 1896, *Daily Picayune* attests to a mass discharge of 200 superannuated mules by Martin, Thomson & Co. (Image 3).²³

The second leading cause of equine death in cities was lameness. Veterinarians shot large numbers of equines, operating on strict economic principle, that is, that the treatment of this animal was not worth the expense. Sometimes, depending on the market cost of the animals, it was more profitable for owners to work horses and mules to death since a carcass might be worth more than a live animal.²⁴ After all of the difficulty in breeding and importing, the mules were simply considered disposable, or recyclable, to New Orleans street railway companies.

Streetcar owners allowed the quadrupeds to be worked to death to avoid veterinary costs. After the equines would, quite literally, fall down dead harnessed to a streetcar, the streetcar companies would send the carcasses to factories for chemical processing. A factory would buy the corpse from the streetcar company to produce leather known as cordovan, seat-cushion stuffing from the hair, hunting and wading boots, handles for pocket and table cutlery, ammoniacal salts, insecticides and vermifuges, and much more. In the 1890s, a factory would make a profit of twenty-four dollars from each carcass.²⁵

Unhealthy as a Horse

Although the mule was less prone than the horse to disease, no equine was safe from the epizootic plague of 1872. Furthermore, the attention generated by the equine

²² Clay McShane and Joel Tarr, “The Horse as Technology-The City Animal as Cyborg,” 368.

²³ Advertisements, *Daily Picayune*, January 16, 1896.

²⁴ Clay McShane and Joel Tarr, “The Horse as Technology-The City Animal as Cyborg,” 370.

²⁵ “The Dead Horse: How Its Carcass Is Utilized in the Manufacturing and Domestic Arts,” *Journal of Comparative Medicine and Surgery* 17 (August 1896): 597-598.

plague was unavoidable in New Orleans. The disease first appeared in Toronto, Canada in September 1872, from Toronto it spread to Montréal, Quebec, and then south to the United States in Detroit, Buffalo, and Rochester. It continued to spread down the East Coast and by late November the epizootic had reached Atlanta, Memphis, and then New Orleans.²⁶

Prior to the horse plague infecting New Orleans, the mayor received an anxious letter from the president of the NOCRC, which was reprinted in the *Daily Picayune* on November 15, 1872. The letter requested that a quarantine on all horses and mules from coming into or going outside New Orleans, in fear that the epizootic could halt the horsecars of the NOCRC and in all of the city. Unsure, Mayor Benjamin Flanders wrote to the Board of Health for its opinion.²⁷ The Board of Health's response was that an equine quarantine could not be maintained, since the board believed the epizootic to be atmospheric.²⁸

On November 27, 1872, however, the first cases of the epizootic plague in the city of New Orleans were reported in the Central Business District (then the American Quarter). The Mazeppa Livery and Sale Stables on Gravier Street showed "strong and unmistakable indications" of the horse plague, the private stable of Jacques Levy near the corner of Gravier and Baronne Street had "clearly developed" the disease, and the stables of Messrs. Leonard and Maxwell on Baronne Street were also affected.²⁹ Horsecar mules were usually housed under crowded and unsanitary conditions without adequate air

²⁶ Ann Norton Greene, *Horses at Work: Harnessing Power in Industrial*, 167-178.

²⁷ "The Horse Disease," *Daily Picayune*, November 15, 1872.

²⁸ "Meeting Of The Board Of Health," *Daily Picayune*, November 17, 1872.

²⁹ "The Horse Plague," *Daily Picayune*, November 27, 1872.

circulation and light, making them more vulnerable to equine diseases.³⁰

All equines had to be stabled due to their shivering, runny noses, coughing, tear streamed eyes, and physically weakened state. The city came to a near standstill, as business and daily life could not be conducted.³¹ “The epizootic is spreading with fearful rapidity through the city, and is already having its effect upon business,” stated one *Daily Picayune* article on November 29, 1872.³² The next day, the *Daily Picayune*’s headline was equally discouraging:

THE HORSE PLAGUE
THE DISEASE SPREADING WITH GREAT RAPIDITY
THE CARROLLTON LINE OF CARS TO BE STOPPED

CARROLLTON RAILROAD LINE

This line of cars seems to have suffered more than any other from the plague. Yesterday only five cars were run[ing] to Napoleon Avenue, and no horse cars at all between Napoleon Avenue and Carrollton...Early in the day yesterday, the company posted a bulletin at the corner of Canal and Baronne streets, that no cars would be run after 5 P.M. except the dummy, which would ply only between Napoleon Avenue and Carrollton.

RAMPART AND DAUPHINE STREET LINE

Only eight or nine mules at the station house of this line had contracted the disease up to last night. No cars withdrawn.

CANAL STREET LINE

More than 40 mules used on this line have been attacked, nevertheless no cars have yet been withdrawn.

ST. CHARLES STREET RAILROAD COMPANY

The horses and mules belonging to this company are generally sick. Two cars were laid up yesterday, and it was expected the line would be suspended today.

ORLEANS RAILROAD COMPANY

All the horses and mules belonging to this company are sick, and six cars were dropped out of use yesterday.

MAGAZINE AND PRYTANIA CAR LINE

Between forty and fifty of the animals on the Magazine street line are reported sick. Eight cars were laid up yesterday. On Prytania street line eighty-five mules are sick, and during the day yesterday seventeen cars had to be retired.

It is not improbable the entire line be suspended today.

CRESCENT CITY RAILROAD COMPANY

³⁰ Joel A. Tarr, “The Horse- Polluter of the City,” in *The Search for the Ultimate Sink: Urban Pollution in Historical Perspective* (Akron, Ohio: University of Akron Press, 1996), 327.

³¹ “The Horse Plague,” *Daily Picayune*, November 27, 1872.

³² “Commerce and Finance,” *Daily Picayune*, November 29, 1872.

Sixty animals belonging to this company, we are informed, had the disease...and the number [of] sick rapidly increasing. In consequence eleven cars have already been withdrawn from use.

It is understood the Jefferson line along the river will be suspended this morning, and all the available stock transferred to the Annunciation street line.³³

The horsecars' wheels grinded to a halt. Private and corporate barns looked similar to the Carrollton Railroad's barn: "the doors closed, cars laid up, outside all quite and not a soul to be seen, inside rows of blanketed horses and mules, a strong cough, strangely like that of a human being, now and then interrupting the silence."³⁴ Fearful of losing profit, businesses quickly adapted; the Atlantic, the Natchez, and the Phoenix cotton companies made arrangements with the Harbor Towboat Company to transfer their cotton while sugar and molasses were stored in the fruit lockers until the equines recovered to transport it into New Orleans.³⁵ Men found themselves pulling the horsecars of the city, which must have forced a few to reconsider the mistreatment of their own mules.³⁶

In response, the *Daily Picayune* published Mr. Quinn's, "a very sensible man [']s," treatments which showed the city-wide concern of the horse plague. Mr. Quinn suggested feeding the animals a mixture of warmed flaxseed tea, molasses, and potash (or potassium salt); scald the hay with hot water and place it low so that the animal can inhale the steam; sponge the animal with a mixture of hartshorn (an animal oil) and lamp oil; and blanket the animals in a warm yet ventilated stable.³⁷ Others attempted to cash in on the horse plague that infected the city. By claiming that their medicine had been

³³ "The Horse Plague," *Daily Picayune*, November 29, 1872.

³⁴ "The Epizootic Uptown," *Daily Picayune*, November 30, 1872.

³⁵ "Commerce and Finance," *Daily Picayune*, November 29, 1872.

³⁶ Louis C. Hennick and Elbridge Harper Charlton, *The Streetcars of New Orleans*, 17.

³⁷ "The Epizootic Uptown," *Daily Picayune*, November 30 1872.

proven at the street railroad stables of New York, Buffalo, and Chicago, the Frederickson and Harte Druggists and Chemists on Canal Street promised that no equine deaths would result after using their remedy.³⁸

The epizootic plague left New Orleans as quickly as it had struck. A week's worth of rest to recover was the true cure.³⁹ By December 2, 1872, the epizootic plague had declined.⁴⁰ The plague had not only affected the city's economy and transportation, it affected the mentality as well. Responding to the heavily reported on epizootic plague, Mr. Henry Bergo wrote into the *Daily Picayune* which admonished the citizens of New Orleans for their treatment of their horses and mules:

There is a moral as well as material aspect to the present subject, and the moment seems opportune to allude to it. That the horse, the most generous and indispensable servant of mankind, is as a rule, in our country, held in lower estimate than elsewhere, and more generally rated-particularly in large corporations-among their inanimate property...the question of humanity is not an active principle; and hence the disabled horse and the disabled car or stage are placed in the same category! Indeed the careful housing, washing, oiling and repairing of the senseless vehicle to be in marked contrast to the inadequate consideration bestowed on the weary, maimed, and emaciated...This is not only unprofitable, it is something more-it is a crime. The horse...has been one of the greatest elements of human progress and happiness; and it is not exaggerating his importance to say that civilization would be almost impossible without him.⁴¹

When the Great Epizootic struck in the fall of 1872, it emphasized the extent to which New Orleans relied on and treated their living machines.

In 1888, Augustine W. Wright published *American Street Railways: Their Construction, Equipment and Maintenance*. Its contents are in response to the epizootic plague and are vastly different from the *suggestions* in Alexander Easton's pre-epizootic

³⁸ Death was not a common outcome of the horse plague (unless an animal was very old or already sickly), so the advertisement was a scare tactic to convince worried equine owners to buy the medicine. Epizootic Advertisement, *Daily Picayune*, December 2, 1872.

³⁹ Louis C. Hennick and Elbridge Harper Charlton, *The Streetcars of New Orleans*, 17.

⁴⁰ "The City," *Daily Picayune*, December 2, 1872.

⁴¹ Henry Bergo, letter to the newspaper, *Daily Picayune*, November 9, 1872.

publication, *A Practical Treatise on Street or Horse-Power Railways*. Wright stresses that a damp stable produces more evil; a stable should be thoroughly light and aired and no less than 800 to 1000 cubic feet. Improve the stable and prevent disease, Wright argues.⁴²

Wright's argument, like most street railway businessmen, was not a humane one:

We appeal to you in behalf of the horse, to give him suitable stable quarters; but this we urge upon the score of economy, rather than humanity...About 30% (to 40%) of our operating expenses is expended on the horse [and mule] department...Anything that will reduce this expenditure by prolonging the life of the horse [and mule], which is now about four years, more or less, is worthy of investigation.⁴³

Included in Wright's manual is an entire chapter on equine care and stabling; suggestions on where to place the hospital, which ratio of oats and hay to feed, how often to shoe, how to keep the stable safely warm in winter, gutters for hygienic waste removal, and intricate diagrams designed by Wright were included in the publication (Image 4 & 5).⁴⁴ Although, better stabling and care were for "economy, not humanity," it did propagate the understanding that the work animals needed basic living essentials.

Popularity: Rise of the Mule, Fall of the Man

The novelty of the horsecar driver stayed with the public until 1888. A Street Car Driver's Day was even celebrated in New Orleans three years prior in 1885 in honor of the city's admired icon.⁴⁵ City horses and mules were notoriously overworked. The streetcar mule abuse became obvious in two ways, with no real force to keep the drivers' maltreatment in check: mules became more visible in society with the help of newspapers, while their emaciated and sore ridden bodies, on public display, testified to

⁴² Augustine W. Wright, *American Street Railways: Their Construction, Equipment and Maintenance*. (Chicago: Rand, McNally & Co, 1888), 144-145.

⁴³ Augustine W. Wright, *American Street Railways: Their Construction, Equipment and Maintenance*, 144.

⁴⁴ Augustine W. Wright, *American Street Railways: Their Construction, Equipment and Maintenance*, 149.

⁴⁵ "Our Picayunes," *Daily Picayune*, May 5, 1885.

their suffering.

A closer look at photographs of drivers and conductors posed with their mules and horsecars reveals mules that were severely undernourished, emaciated, and with leg deformities. In a photograph, four men stand with their mule harnessed to a horsecar (Image 1).⁴⁶ Upon further analysis of the equine featured in the photograph, it is clear he was emaciated by the protrusion of bones in his shoulder, ribs, withers, loin, and tailhead (Image 6). According to the Henneke Body Condition Scoring System, a scientific method of evaluating an equine's body condition, this animal would have ranked a 1—Poor, the worst on the equine chart of health (Image 7).⁴⁷

Examining another photo of a horsecar in New Orleans confirms the same abusive inattentions. The photograph of a driver and a conductor posing with their car and two mules captures two cruelly neglected animals (Image 8).⁴⁸ The mule on the left has been attenuated, he would score a 1—Poor on the Henneke Body Condition Scoring System. Three of his ribs are clearly visible in the photograph and his hip bone protrudes prominently. The mule on the left is a fair weight, however he is extremely cow hocked (Image 9).⁴⁹ A cow hocked equine has an unbalanced collected gait and is predisposed to

⁴⁶ unknown photograph, "2002.13.1-?," "Folder "11," Box 2 of 2, The Louis C. Hennick Streetcar Collection, The Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans, LA.

⁴⁷ The Henneke Horse Body Condition Scoring System is a system developed by Don Henneke, PhD, while a graduate student at Texas A & M University. It is a scientific method of evaluating an equine's body condition regardless of breed, body type, sex, and age. The scale ranges from one (extremely poor) to nine (obese). The scoring chart has a description for six major parts of the equine body: neck, withers, shoulder, ribs, loins and tailhead. It is based on both visual appraisal and palpable fat cover of the six major points of the equine that are most responsive to changes in body fat. It is now widely used by law enforcement agencies as an objective method of scoring a horse's or mule's body condition in equine cruelty cases. The Chart is accepted in a court of law. Habitat for Horses, "Henneke Body Condition Scoring System," <http://www.habitatforhorses.org/rescues/bodyscoring.html> (accessed on February 23, 2010).

⁴⁸ Street Rail Road Car, New Orleans, photograph PC 37-3-A, 1981.31.1, The Louis C. Hennick Streetcar Collection, The Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans, LA.

⁴⁹ Melvin Bradley, "Leg Set: Effect of Action and Soundness of Horse," University Extension, University of Missouri-Columbia, <http://extension.missouri.edu/publications/DisplayPub.aspx?P=G2843> (accessed on February 23, 2010).

leg unsoundness (such as lameness). As previously stated, lameness was the second leading cause of death for a horsecar equine.

In 1887, the *Daily Picayune* reported that several “weapons of torture” were confiscated from a horsecar driver. The driver’s first whip was a heavy hickory handle and at the lash end the whip was tied into knots, oiled, and dipped in wax to make it hard. His second whip had an iron handle and wire wound into the lash.⁵⁰ Cases such as that reported in the newspaper aided the work animal’s cause and brought New Orleanians together as an active voice for the mule.

A horsecar driver could find relief by joining the Car Drivers' Benevolent Association. The association was a labor union that acquired less than fifteen-hour work days, overtime pay, and meal breaks for the horsecar drivers.⁵¹ However the real beasts of burden, the mules, were mute and could not make demands. The ones to watch over the mules’ wellbeing were not the horsecar drivers, who had become known as cruel characters in New Orleans society, but the newly formed Louisiana Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (LASPCA), the New Orleans Police Department, and ordinary citizens of New Orleans.

The violent treatment of animals was commonplace in nineteenth-century Western culture: cock-fighting, dog-fighting, cruelties in slaughtering. However, it was the abuse of the streetcar horse which motivated New Yorker Henry Bergh to found the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in 1866 (Image 10). “In the South,” however, “organizational activity lagged nearly two decades behind the

⁵⁰ “Their Sting Is Gone, Some Instruments of Torture Captured by the Humane Society,” *Daily Picayune*, October 21, 1887.

⁵¹ “No Horse Cars in New Orleans; The Strike of the Drivers Continuing and Violence Used,” *New York Times*, December 29, 1884.

Northeast's animal rights movement," states historian Diane L. Beers.⁵²

New Orleans' *Daily Picayune* made light of the want for such a crusader as Henry Bergh, as early as July 13, 1875, when they published: "We want a Bergh in New Orleans- an iceberg." However, in 1879, a handful of influential ladies of New Orleans "place[d] a bill in the hands of Mr. Moncure, the Speaker of the house...to form a society to prevent cruelty to animals."⁵³ The earliest known Southern animal cruelty prevention society was founded in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1880. Second was Mobile, Alabama, in 1885, and third was North Carolina in 1887. By the 1890s, the South Carolina, Alabama, and North Carolina chapters existed primarily on paper, and were not reactivated until the 1940s.⁵⁴ The Louisiana Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was not founded until 1888, nine years after the bill was placed in Mr. Moncure's hands. Like Henry Bergh, the LASPCA's initial focus was the equine; made evident with the LASPCA's insignia, which pictured an angel stopping an equine from an abusive driver (Image 11).

Beginning efforts of the LASPCA were conventional at best. Initial reports of the LASPCA's activities included the construction of drinking troughs for the working equines of New Orleans and keeping them clean and full. Building troughs did not unshackle any street railway mules; however, the efforts began to gain the attention of the public. Donations and dedications of water troughs from prominent New Orleanians garnered public attention (Image 12). One such dedication of a trough at the intersection of Canal and Peters streets, in January of 1890, included addresses by Mayor Joseph A.

⁵² Diane L. Beers, *For the Prevention of Cruelty: The History and Legacy of Animal Rights Activism in the United States* (Athens, Ohio: Swallow Press/Ohio University Press, 2006), 51.

⁵³ "Horse and Mule Beating," *Daily Picayune*, January 16, 1879.

⁵⁴ Diane L. Beers, *For the Prevention of Cruelty: The History and Legacy of Animal Rights Activism in the United States*, 51-52.

Shakspeare and Judge William W. Howe which drew the attentions of a local newspaper.⁵⁵ This over-the-top dedication is an example of the street theatrics used to garner the attention of New Orleans citizens.

Animal rights historian Barnard Unti found that societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals aided city governments by operating horse ambulances allowing for fast removal of disabled or deceased equines from the street, the handling of abandoned work animals, and reviving exhausted work animals on the streets since “unregulated contexts taxed the ability of government authorities to ensure public health making it possible for anti-cruelty societies to work closely with municipal agencies.”⁵⁶ Once a reasonable amount of membership was acquired, the LASPCA was able to be an active part of New Orleans street life. It also became the most important humane organization in the South, argues historian William J. Shultz.⁵⁷

During the fifth annual meeting of the LASPCA, at Tulane Hall, President F.W. Young congratulated the society for stopping 788 “agents of cruelty” (753 were intentionally cruel), producing thirty-five convictions. The LASPCA was also able to secure the suspension of four and dismissal of two malicious horsecar drivers. President Young then thanked three essential allies in his anti-cruelty campaign: the *Daily Picayune* for its “publishing free all matters pertaining to our society,” Chief of Police D.S. Gaster and the entire police force for their “willing cooperation,” and the “ladies especially.”⁵⁸

⁵⁵ “The New Drinking Fountain on Canal Street,” *Daily Picayune*, January 1, 1890.

⁵⁶ Bernard Oreste Unti, “The Quality of Mercy: Organized Animal Protection in the United States, 1866-1930” (Ph.D. Dissertation, The American University, 2002), 94.

⁵⁷ William J. Shultz, *The Humane Movement in the United States, 1910-1922* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1924), 40.

⁵⁸ “Cruelty To Animals: Society for Its Prevention Holds Its Annual Meeting,” *Daily Picayune*, March 29,

The *Daily Picayune* taking an interest in equine welfare provided not just free advertising and press for the LASPCA, but mass media awareness for horsecar mule maltreatment. The support of the New Orleans Police Department gave the LASPCA clout within the society. Unconcealed support, such as that from the Fifth District Band of Mercy, included signing a pledge to be kind to animals and pinning the blue button of the American Humane Education Society Band of Mercy Auxiliary next to their badges. About fifty officers and patrolmen in the Band of Mercy administered first aid to injured animals and maintained the city troughs.⁵⁹ One of the principal agencies of humane education work in New Orleans was the Bands of Mercy movement.⁶⁰

Also during the fifth annual meeting of the LASPCA, Judge John H. Ferguson, who spoke after President Young, stated that when he learned that there were 300 ladies in the LASPCA he "...knew at once it was going to be a success. Anything that the ladies of New Orleans take an interest in is a success."⁶¹ "Animal protection shared characteristics of such manifestations of social feminism reform as the club movement," argues Bernard Unti.⁶² The animal humane society allowed women to extend their influence into public life without open rejection of existing doctrines of their proper place.⁶³

Anti-cruelty organizations were spearheaded by men; however most of the work was done by women. Mainly white middle-class women participated as members,

1893.

⁵⁹ "Police Mercy Bands: Fifth Precinct Force Dons the Buttons of Humane Concern," *Daily Picayune*, September 10, 1912.

⁶⁰ William J. Shultz, *The Humane Movement in the United States, 1910-*, 130.

⁶¹ "Cruelty To Animals: Society for Its Prevention Holds Its Annual Meeting," *Daily Picayune*, March 29, 1893.

⁶² Bernard Oreste Unti, "The Quality of Mercy: Organized Animal Protection in the United States, 1866-1930," 267.

⁶³ Bernard Oreste Unti, "The Quality of Mercy: Organized Animal Protection in the United States, 1866-1930," 267.

benefactors, and volunteers.⁶⁴ This type of voluntary charitable work for community institutions and organizations was not uncommon among white Southern middle-class women. Their benevolent efforts had been taking place for much of the nineteenth-century, especially in the support of churches.⁶⁵

Women's work in the humane organizations included promoting humane education outreach, supporting legal restraints against cruelty, endowing horse fountains, writing and distributing pamphlets and flyers, and most significantly raising money.⁶⁶ For example, in March of 1893 when LASPCA President Young found that the funds for the equine ambulance had not been as "quick and liberal" as he hoped, he requested that "our citizens, *and ladies especially* [emphasis added], come forward with their subscriptions," which confirmed the importance of the women's work in New Orleans society.⁶⁷ The LASPCA maintained the public views of women as naturally gentle and tender and the guardians of private and public morality. This form of social mothering allowed white Southern women to stay on their pedestal; it just somewhat resembled a soapbox.

Membership to the LASPCA cost a business firm five dollars, a man three dollars, and women or children one dollar.⁶⁸ Even with all the support from the *Daily Picayune*, the New Orleans Police Department, membership dues, and fundraising the LASPCA was continually forced to solicit monetary and material donations from members and the

⁶⁴ Diane L. Beers, *For the Prevention of Cruelty: The History and Legacy of Animal Rights Activism in the United States*, 53.

⁶⁵ Jane Turner Censur, *The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood, 1865-1895* (Baton Rouge, L.A.: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 184.

⁶⁶ Bernard Oreste Unti, "The Quality of Mercy: Organized Animal Protection in the United States, 1866-1930," 268.

⁶⁷ "Cruelty To Animals: Society for Its Prevention Holds Its Annual Meeting," *Daily Picayune*, March 29, 1893.

⁶⁸ The Louisiana State Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, "The Sacred Street" [1915?], membership application, box: 1A, folder: Applications, document: E5, Rare Vertical Files, Louisiana Division, City Archives and Special Collections, New Orleans Public Library, New Orleans, L.A.

public. The dog and equine ambulances were both donated to the insufficiently funded LASPCA. The dog ambulance was bequeathed by Mrs. Silvia Easton in 1907, to remove unlicensed dogs off the city streets (Image 13).⁶⁹ In June 1908, the LASPCA finally received the equine ambulance President Young had fundraised for in 1893 (Image 14). Ironically, it was donated after Young's death, by his wife, in honor of her late husband. The equine ambulance was able to respond to eleven calls within twenty four hours during one "hot spell."⁷⁰

Propaganda

By 1912, the LASPCA maintained six main services: (1) prevention of cruelty on the streets and the investigation of complaints sent in by members and others; (2) the ambulance service; (3) humane deconstruction of diseased or homeless small animals; (4) the operating of the pound and dog wagon; (5) the maintenance of drinking fountains in the streets of New Orleans; (6) the humane educational department.⁷¹

Evidence of humane education that has survived in New Orleans consists of songs, poems, pamphlets, and news articles. In May 1915, the LASPCA printed and distributed "Hot Weather Rules," a pamphlet on equine treatment in the city (Image 15). The document gives fifty locations of troughs in the metropolitan area making it only useful to New Orleans drivers. It is not known what was considered "hot weather," but once it reached "hot weather" carriage drivers, horsecar drivers, and stable boys were encouraged to follow the rules by LASPCA members and, a more compelling authority,

⁶⁹ "Catching the Curs, Now the Task of Cruelty to Animals Prevention Society" *Daily Picayune*, January 6, 1907.

⁷⁰ "Louisiana's State Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Good Work Done in the Twenty-Four Years That Have Elapsed Since the Organization Came into Existence," *Daily Picayune*, June 7, 1908.

⁷¹ Louisiana Society for Protection and Cruelty to Animals, 25th Annual Report (1912), in William J. Shultz, *The Humane Movement in the United States, 1910-1922*, 40.

the New Orleans Police.

“Hot Weather Rules” lists troughs available throughout the city in 1915, which could be utilized free-of-charge, and furnishes twelve rules to abide by. LASPCA members and police were charged with keeping the troughs clean. “Hot Weather Rules” advised stopping in the shade, watering an equine often, sponge bathing with cool water, etc. More obscure rules include “7. Do not use a horse hat, unless it is a canopy-top hat. The ordinary bell-shaped hat does more harm than good,” which suggests that companies dressed their quadrupeds with paraphernalia to solicit business.⁷² This was not the first or only document of its nature to be circulated to the public: a 1912 article in the *Daily Picayune* reports on a pamphlet of the same nature.⁷³ Hot weather documents prove that there were at least fifty troughs operated by the LASPCA throughout New Orleans. They are also evidence that these troughs would have been another way for the LASPCA to publicize the cause of mules’ rights through out the urban landscape.

Literature and songs were a fashionable and cost-effective way to promote animal anti-cruelty, even if not written by or for humane education or the LASPCA. The “Car Song” by Mrs. C. Edmonston, was written for the NOCRC and became popular enough to be sold in music stores.⁷⁴

Ho! driver stop, not quite so fast,
I’m bound to take a ride,
And se’d there be a jam within,
Why, I’ll hang on outside.
Now muley, don’t be sleepy, don’t!
Though not of Arab race

⁷² The Louisiana State Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, “Hot Weather Rules,” May 1915, Pamphlet from Superintendent E. S. Freemont, box: 14 Prospectuses-Solicitations, folder: Schedules, document: I19, , Rare Vertical Files, Louisiana Division, City Archives and Special Collections, New Orleans Public Library, New Orleans, LA.

⁷³ “Police Mercy Bands: Fifth Precinct Force Dons the Buttons of Humane Concern,” *Daily Picayune*, September 10, 1912.

⁷⁴ Advertisements, *Daily Picayune*, February 1, 1867.

You can, if you are urged a bit,
Go at a killing pace...

Oh, many a weary journey-man,
Jumps in with working tools?
His heart grows light as he nears,
His home, thanks to the mules

They never shy, nor balk at all,
But keep the level road;
So we don't need the spur at all,
The patient mule to goad.⁷⁵

Edmonston thanks the mules, not the horsecar driver, for getting horsecar patrons home after a long day of work. In the song, the horsecar mules are a significant part of New Orleans life and she is sympathetic to the mules even though they are not a purebred or a racehorse “of Arab race.” The antagonist, as did New Orleans society, venerated the mule for providing public transport unwaveringly (“They never shy, nor balk at all”) without the need of “spur at all;” which simultaneously socially condemns the horsecar driver.

Nationally, the equine anti-cruelty campaign owed much of its success to literature. The 1877 publication of Anna Sewell’s *Black Beauty* aided in turning Americans pro-animal rights, as did Harriet Becher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* popularized the abolitionist cause.⁷⁶ Sewell’s story of an abused horse being told by the horse, in the first-person narrative, played on the fact that large, intelligent, anthropomorphous mammals inspire more favorable attitudes than reptiles, fish, and

⁷⁵ Composer unknown, *Car Song*, 1868[?], found in Hugh Mercer Blain’s *A Near Century of Public Service in New Orleans* (New Orleans: New Orleans Public Service, 1927), 49. This was written by a Mrs. C. Edmonston, which the *New Orleans Times* and the *Daily Picayune* reported on (“Car Song,” *New Orleans Times*, December 12, 1866; and “New Orleans Car Song,” *Daily Picayune*, December 14, 1866.). On June 16, 1926 the *Times Picayune* published a shoe ad for Godchaux’s, which confirms Mrs. C. Edmonston wrote “Car Song” by utilizing the first verse of the song in the advertisement (“Godchaux’s and Old New Orleans” advertisement, *Times Picayune*, June 17, 1926.).

⁷⁶ James Serpell and Elizabeth Paul, “Pets and the Development of Positive Attitudes to Animals,” in *Animals and Human: Society: Changing Perspectives*, ed. Aubrey Manning and James Serpell (London: Rutledge, 1994), 128.

invertebrates.⁷⁷ In New York, the American Humane Education Society even used the novel as campaigning tool by distributing over two million free copies of *Black Beauty*.⁷⁸ Pamphlets, poems, songs, newspaper articles, and other published sources informed New Orleanians of equine abuse and or anti-cruelty reform within their own city, which also influenced the horsecar electrification campaign in New Orleans.

Modernity from Humanity

The 1872 epizootic that affected the entire United States sparked interest and experimentation centering on mechanical traction. “An equine population so vulnerable and easily devastated by disease could not be relied upon to meet the demands of an expanding industrial economy,” argues Bernard Unti.⁷⁹ Andrew S. Hallidie, inventor of the cable car, later revealed that the sight of horses struggling to draw their cars up the steep hills of San Francisco during the 1870s inspired him to seek an alternative.⁸⁰ Electric streetcar companies found an unlikely bedfellow with equine anti-cruelty activists, who both promoted the electric streetcar to be a liberating invention.⁸¹

James A. Gaboury, an engineer (who would later build street railways throughout the South), attended the Toronto Agricultural Fair in the summer of 1885. There he met Charles J. Van Depoele who was showcasing a car powered by electricity at the fair grounds. Van Depoele hawked his electric-powered car on the basis that it was much cheaper than horses and mules; by the end of the night Van Depoele had made plans to

⁷⁷ James Serpell and Elizabeth Paul, “Pets and the Development of Positive Attitudes to Animals,” in *Animals and Human: Society: Changing Perspectives*, 128.

⁷⁸ Diane L. Beers, *For the Prevention of Cruelty: The History and Legacy of Animal Rights Activism in the United States*, 26.

⁷⁹ Bernard Oreste Unti, “The Quality of Mercy: Organized Animal Protection in the United States, 1866-1930,” 438.

⁸⁰ Accounts differ as to exactly how involved Hallidie was in the inception of the cable car. Bernard Oreste Unti, “The Quality of Mercy: Organized Animal Protection in the United States, 1866-1930,” 438.

⁸¹ Bernard Oreste Unti, “The Quality of Mercy: Organized Animal Protection in the United States, 1866-1930,” 438.

return to Montgomery, Alabama, with Gaboury to electrify the Capitol City Railway. Construction began in January 1886, and by April 15, 1886, the two men had introduced the first city-wide electric street railway to the South and the world.⁸²

The electric vehicles launched were much like the familiar horsecar. There were three minor differences. First, there was a motor on the front platform. Second, a pole extended from the roof of the car, which kept a rolling contact along a wire running with current. Once the power reached the streetcar through the trolley pole, it was fed to motors, called traction motors, that were located on each wheelset (Image 16). Finally, it took one less person to operate the car. The electric streetcar required only one operator, who was responsible for regulating speed, controlling the doors, and braking. The electric streetcars featured friction brakes, as the horsecar did, where a pad or brake shoe was applied to the tread of the wheel to stop. The horsecar had been operated by two crew members, a driver to steer the equines with reins and control the brake and a second, a conductor, who assisted passengers, collected their fares, and gave the departure signal to the driver once the passengers were safely situated.⁸³

Gilded Age historian Joy Jackson stated that “several times during the 1880s suggestions had been laid before New Orleans streetcar companies and the city council concerning the merits of electric streetcars.”⁸⁴ Still with all of its attributes “the city [of New Orleans] would not consider allowing the overhead trolley system to be employed. The horsecars, at five to eight miles, seemed satisfactory” to New Orleanians, claims

⁸² John A. Miller, *Fares, Please!: A Popular History of Trolleys, Horse-Cars, Street-Cars, Buses, Elevateds, and Subways*, 54-56. Other experimenters tested cars on tracks powered electrically by batteries in the 1840s; however none produced any practical results.

⁸³ Louis C. Hennick and Elbridge Harper Charlton, *The Streetcars of New Orleans*, 111.

⁸⁴ Joy J. Jackson, *New Orleans in the Gilded Age: Politics and Urban Progress, 1880-1896* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1969), 14.

Louis C. Hennick and Elbridge Harper Charlton, in *The Streetcars of New Orleans*.⁸⁵

Equines were familiar to city dwellers, and the relatively slow speeds of the horsecar did not excite fears as did an electric street railway.⁸⁶ However, the street railroad companies in New Orleans were the most vital means of transportation in the city, meaning they held political power.⁸⁷ The last three models of horsecars arrived in New Orleans in January 1890 and by December 25, 1891, Ordinance CS 5847 had granted the NOCRC permission to electrify.⁸⁸ On February 2, 1893, the *Daily Picayune* reported on the first electric streetcars to run the old Carrollton line (which was changed to the St. Charles line on the first day): “Those persons who persistently fought against the introduction of this means of rapid transit will now have to take a back seat.”⁸⁹

Literature and songs, once used to show the mules’ plight, now acknowledged the arrival of the electric streetcar and the emancipation of the mule from public transport. In a stanza from an 1888 poem, “The Electric Car,” by Mame L. Foster Parker, the author feels relieved to see the equine unfettered from hauling a couple thousands pounds and being abused:

. . . ‘Tis this we know and surely know,
That cars can by ‘lectricity go,
.....
How smoothly they glide along;
No sound of whip, but “trolley” song
To every journey does belong,
And so our sympathies now are not all pained
By noble horseflesh overstrained
And used by drivers bad.

So more and more this unseen power

⁸⁵ Louis C. Hennick and Elbridge Harper Charlton, *The Streetcars of New Orleans*, 437.

⁸⁶ Clay McShane and Joel A. Tarr, *The Horse in the City: Living Machines in the Nineteenth Century*, 167.

⁸⁷ Joy J. Jackson, *New Orleans in the Gilded Age: Politics and Urban Progress, 1880-1896*, 162.

⁸⁸ Louis C. Hennick, et al., *The Streetcars of New Orleans*, 23.

⁸⁹ *Daily Picayune*, February 2, 1893.

Becomes familiar every hour; . . .⁹⁰

Similarly, Roy L. McCardell’s “The Song of the Trolley” notes the freedom of the mules, while welcoming the supremacy of modernity:

. . . Though old fogies fought against me, for I went too fast, they said;
.....
Oh! a frightful state they were in from my wire overhead.
.....
I have harnessed nature’s forces. I’ve freed the mules and horses, . . .⁹¹

The lyrics to McCardell’s song are accompanied with a couple of sketches of equines emancipated from the streetcar (Image 17). In the imagery, the word “FREE” accompanies a horse left to graze and an unharnessed mule sits next to a discarded streetcar; however, the juxtaposition of these drawings under a glorified image of the electric streetcar seem to belittle the equines. Parker’s poem and McCardell’s song both document the electric streetcar technology, while simultaneously crediting the horse and mule for their drudgery.

The electric streetcar did free the horse and mule from public transportation. The last horsecars in New Orleans were on the Bayou Bridge and City Park line, which ran until early 1900.⁹² By 1902, there were 747 electric streetcar companies and 26 cable car companies in the United States, with only 67 horsecar companies remaining.⁹³ “The fastest decline in any urban use of the living machine involved the shift by transit firm after firm from horsecar to the electric-powered streetcar,” argues McShane and Tarr.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Mame L. Foster Parker, “The Electric Cars,” *The Meridien Daily Journal* (Connecticut), September 21, 1888, reprinted in *Pioneers of Electric Railroading: Their Story in Words and Pictures*, edited by John R. Stevens (New York: Electric Railroaders’ Association, 1991), preface.

⁹¹ August Perez & Associates, *The Last Line: A Streetcar Named St. Charles* (Baton Rouge, LA: Claitors Publishing Division, 1972), inside cover.

⁹² Louis C. Hennick, et al., *The Streetcars of New Orleans*, 24.

⁹³ “The Census Report on the Street Railway Industry,” *Street Railway Journal* XXII, no. 2 (July 11, 1903): 63-65. Compared to 506 horsecars, 126 electric streetcars, and 52.7 cable cars in the United States in 1890.

⁹⁴ Clay McShane and Joel A. Tarr, *The Horse in the City: Living Machines in the Nineteenth Century*, 169.

When the first streetcar in El Paso, Texas, ran on the tracks it carried a “little brown mule” with a banner on the side of the car that read “Reward of thirty-five years of faithful service.” The *Street Railway Journal* ran an article on the El Paso event stating:

Where would the modern street railway have been but for the mule? If Christopher Columbus was the first American advance agent, surely the mule can also lay claims to having been the pioneer of the street car... The reward seems rather scant... but we are glad to see that Mandy [the little brown mule] is now out to grass... We hope that someday the grave of the first mule that ran the first American street car will be duly dignified with a monument. Less deserved memorials are in existence.⁹⁵

No such memorial was ever erected for the equines of the street railway.

New Orleans after the Mulecar

After the electrification of the street railway, animal anti-cruelty groups continued to arrest and prosecute those who mistreated horses, provide veterinary counsel and care, wage campaigns against bits and restraints, found rest havens for aged work horses, and distribute food, blankets, bonnets, and maintain watering stations and fountains.⁹⁶ In New Orleans, the LASPCA even set up a retirement pasture for “aged horses and mules to spend their last days in comfort.”⁹⁷ The LASPCA also interjected themselves into the campaign against dog and cock fighting. Joy Jackson stated that dogfights and cock fighting arenas existed within the city and in the neighboring parishes until the LASPCA interceded. Before the LASPCA’s involvement, “any Sunday afternoon an observant rider on one of the streetcars which led to the city’s outskirts could see gentlemen carrying bags whose contents were obviously gamecocks.”⁹⁸ In 1914, the LASPCA became a parent organization to several newly formed anti-cruelty societies outside of the

⁹⁵ “The Passing of the Mule,” *Street Railway Journal* XIX, no. 7 (February 15, 1902): 194.

⁹⁶ Bernard Oreste Unti, “The Quality of Mercy: Organized Animal Protection in the United States, 1866-1930,” 437.

⁹⁷ “Lost Pets and Work-Worn Horses Find Friend in S.P.C.A.,” *Times Picayune*, March 20, 1932.

⁹⁸ *Mascot, An Independent Journal of the Day*, April 8, 1882, in Joy J. Jackson’s *New Orleans in the Gilded Age: Politics and Urban Progress, 1880-1896*, 14.

New Orleans area allowing the animal rights message to spread throughout the state.⁹⁹

The achievement of the LASPCA as the most successful animal anti-cruelty group throughout the state, and arguably the South, could not have been accomplished without the success of the horsecar mule crusade.

The city gained an additional benefit with the modernity of the electric streetcar. Not only did it free society from the sight of maltreated equines and of the cruelty associated with horsecar drivers, the electric streetcar aided in street cleanup. United States government sanitary experts measured the actual amount of manure produced by equines, finding that the average city equine produced between fifteen and thirty pounds of manure a day, with an average of twenty-two pounds.¹⁰⁰ The electric streetcar left no litter, which made the compelling argument for other metropolises to try horsecar electrification. Perhaps New Orleans and the LASPCA could have emancipated the mule sooner if they had used the same argument as other cities or maybe they did try, however evidence shows that animal rights were the main force that convinced the citizens of New Orleans to finally accept streetcar electrification.

Traditionally, New Orleans has been left out of the history of modern transit and the Gilded Age. Historians have not considered New Orleans large enough or modern enough of a city, like New York, Philadelphia, or Chicago, to be considered a leader in modernity. While other American cities could flaunt new waterworks, sewerage systems, or street paving, New Orleans had none of these to show. “Amid the dazzling municipal growth which characterized American cities in the Gilded Age, New Orleans would have

⁹⁹ William J. Shultz, *The Humane Movement in the United States, 1910-1922*, 123.

¹⁰⁰ Joel A. Tarr, “The Horse- Polluter of the City,” in *The Search for the Ultimate Sink: Urban Pollution in Historical Perspective*, 323.

to run very fast if it wished to stand still,” states Joy Jackson.¹⁰¹

For the city of New Orleans, the electrification of the horsecar was driven by a shift in thinking of the mules as a living machine to a rational animal with basic rights and needs, not driven by an advance in modernity. The efforts of the LASPCA, benevolent New Orleans women, the New Orleans Police Department, and the *Daily Picayune* spoke for the voiceless mules, successfully creating a labor union for the living machines. Vital food and water, proper housing, work restraints on hot days, veterinary care, and enforced anti-abuse laws were either successfully gained for horsecar mules or provided for them by the LASPCA. The ethical reform that happened in New Orleans in the twenty-five years of animal anti-cruelty campaigning liberated the streetcar mules and set the quality of work that made the LASPCA the most prominent animal protection society in the South.

¹⁰¹ Joy J. Jackson, *New Orleans in the Gilded Age: Politics and Urban Progress, 1880-1896*, 2-3.

Image 1



Image source: unknown photograph , "2002.13.1-?," "Folder 11," Box 2 of 2, The Louis C. Hennick Streetcar Collection, The Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans, LA.

Image 2



Image source: unknown photograph , "Folder 9," Box 2 of 2, The Louis C. Hennick Streetcar Collection, The Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans, LA.

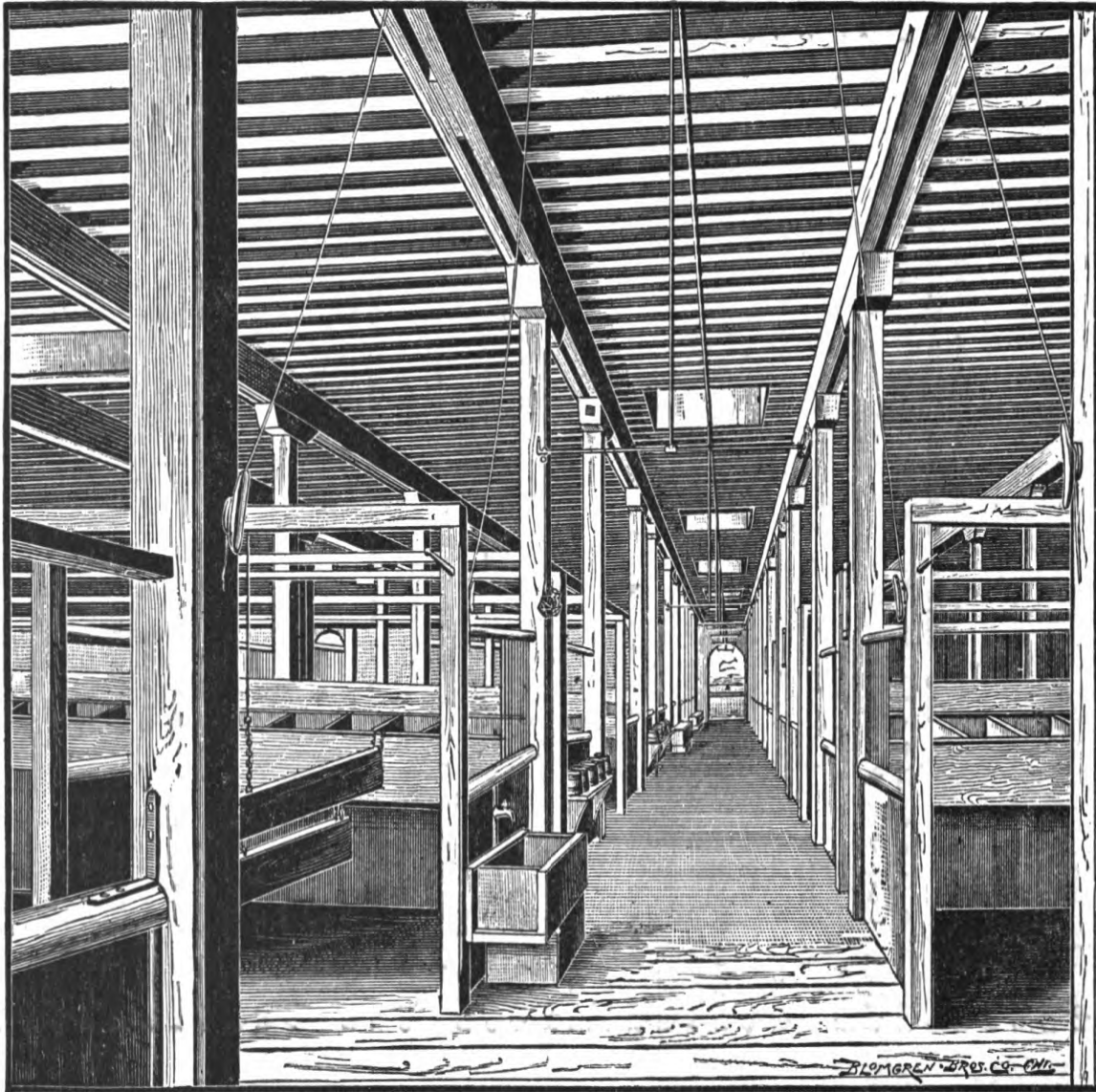
Image 3

200
Street Car Mules
FOR SALE.
BEST LOT YET OFFERED.
MARTIN, THOMSON & CO.,
618 BARONNE STREET.

An advertisement in the *Daily Picayune* attesting to a mass unloading of streetcar mules.

Image source: the *Daily Picayune*, January 16, 1896.

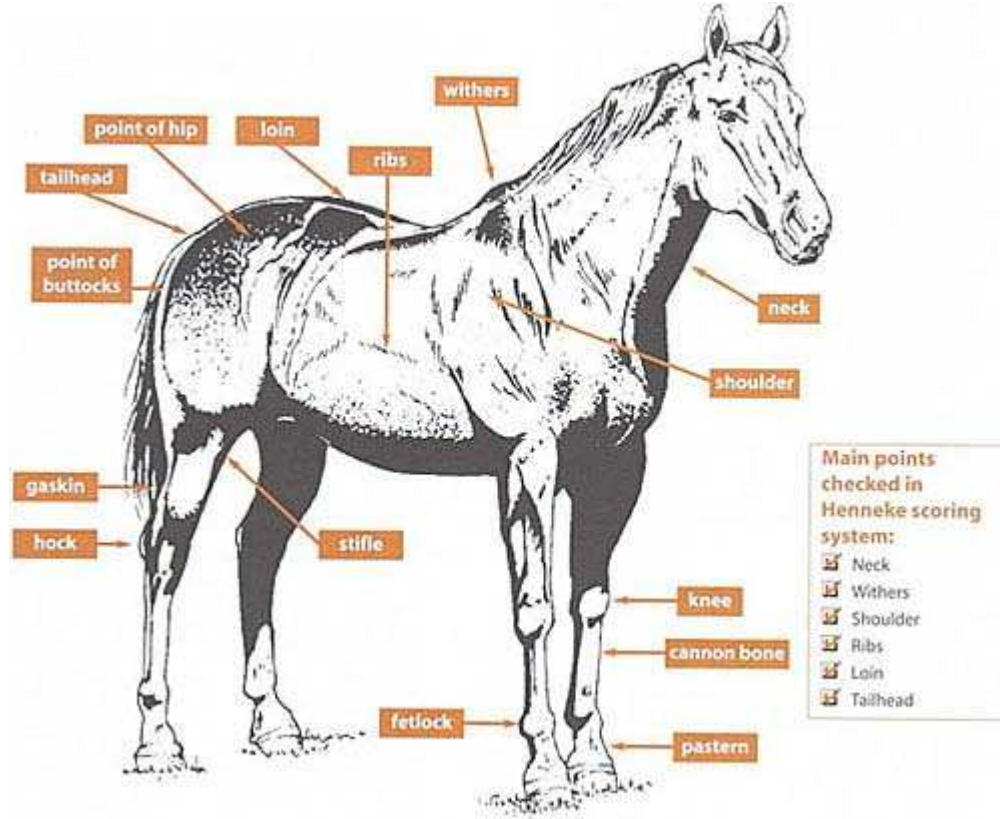
Image 5



The interior view of the suggested street railway stable, designed by Augustine W. Wright.

Image source: Augustine W. Wright, *American Street Railways: Their Construction, Equipment and Maintenance*. (Chicago: Rand, McNally & Co, 1888), 151.

Image 6



Parts of the equine, including the six main parts checked in the Henneke Scoring System.

Image source: Habitat for Horses, "Henneke Body Condition Scoring System," <http://www.habitatforhorses.org/rescues/bodyscoring.html> (accessed on February 23, 2010).

Image 7

Condition	Neck	Withers	Shoulder	Ribs	Loin	Tailhead
1 Poor	Bone structure easily noticeable	Bone structure easily noticeable	Bone structure easily noticeable	Ribs protruding prominently	Spinous processes projecting prominently	Tailhead, pinbones, and hook bones projecting prominently
2 Very Thin	Bone structure faintly discernible	Bone structure faintly discernible	Bone structure faintly discernible	Ribs prominent	Slight fat covering over base of spinous processes. Transverse processes of lumbar vertebrae feel rounded. Spinous processes are prominent	Tailhead prominent
3 Thin	Neck accentuated	Withers accentuated	Shoulder accentuated	Slight fat over ribs. Ribs easily discernible	Fat buildup halfway on spinous processes, but easily discernible. Transverse processes cannot be felt	Tailhead prominent but individual vertebrae cannot be visually identified. Hook bones appear rounded, but are still easily discernible. Pin bones not distinguishable
4 Moderately Thin	Neck not obviously thin	Withers not obviously thin	Shoulder not obviously thin	Faint outline of ribs discernible	Negative crease (peaked appearance) along back	Prominence depends on conformation. Fat can be felt. Hook bones not discernible
5 Moderate (Ideal Weight)	Neck blends smoothly into body	Withers rounded over spinous processes	Shoulder blends smoothly into body	Ribs cannot be visually distinguished, but can be easily felt	Back is level	Fat around tailhead beginning to feel soft
6 Moderately Fleishy	Fat beginning to be deposited	Fat beginning to be deposited	Fat beginning to be deposited	Fat over ribs feels spongy	May have a slight positive crease (a groove) down back	Fat around tailhead feels soft
7 Fleishy	Fat deposited along neck	Fat deposited along withers	Fat deposited behind shoulder	Individual ribs can be felt with pressure, but noticeable fat filling between ribs	May have a positive crease down the back	Fat around tailhead is soft
8 Fat	Noticeable thickening of neck	Area along withers filled with fat	Area behind shoulder filled in flush with body	Difficult to feel ribs	Positive crease down the back	Fat around tailhead very soft
9 Extremely Fat	Bulging fat	Bulging fat	Bulging fat	Patchy fat appearing over ribs	Obvious crease down the back	Bulging fat around tailhead

Chart of the Henneke Body Condition Scoring System for equines.

Image source: Habitat for Horses, “Henneke Body Condition Scoring System,” <http://www.habitatforhorses.org/rescues/bodyscoring.html> (accessed on February 23, 2010).

Image 8



Image source: Street Rail Road Car, New Orleans, photograph PC 37-3-A, 1981.31.1, The Louis C. Hennick Streetcar Collection, The Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans, LA.

Image 9

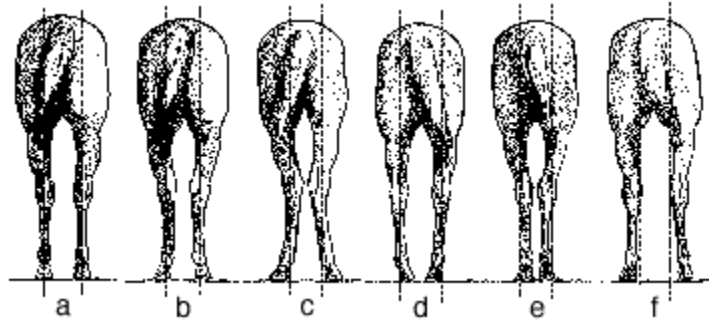


Figure A. Straight legs.

Figure B. Slightly cow-hocked.

Figure C. Extremely cow-hocked, splay-footed.

Figure D. Bow-legged or bandy-legged or "too wide," pigeon toed.

Figure E. Base-narrow or stands close.

Figure F. Base-wide or stands wide.

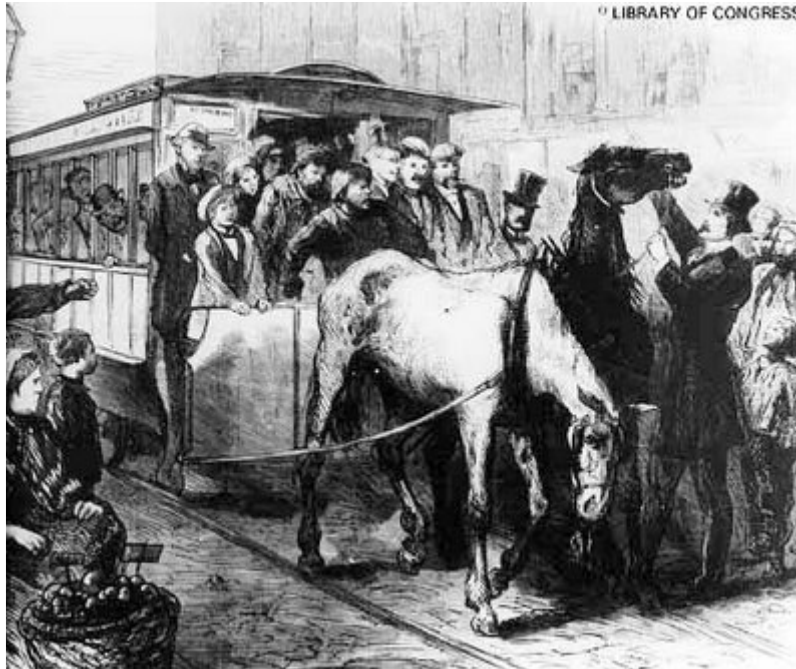
Figure of Faults found in the Hind Leg Set.

The mule on the right in Image 7 is C, extremely cow hocked.

Image source: Melvin Bradley, "Leg Set: Effect of Action and Soundness of Horse," University Extension, University of Missouri-Columbia,

<http://extension.missouri.edu/publications/DisplayPub.aspx?P=G2843>
(accessed on February 23, 2010).

Image 10



The illustration shows Henry Bergh halting a street car to examine the harnesses on the horses.

Image source: The Jurga Report: Horse Health Headlines,
http://special.equisearch.com/blog/horsehealth/2007_04_01_archive.html
(accessed on February 21, 2010.)

Image 11



The Louisiana Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals insignia pictured an angel shielding an equine from an abusive driver.

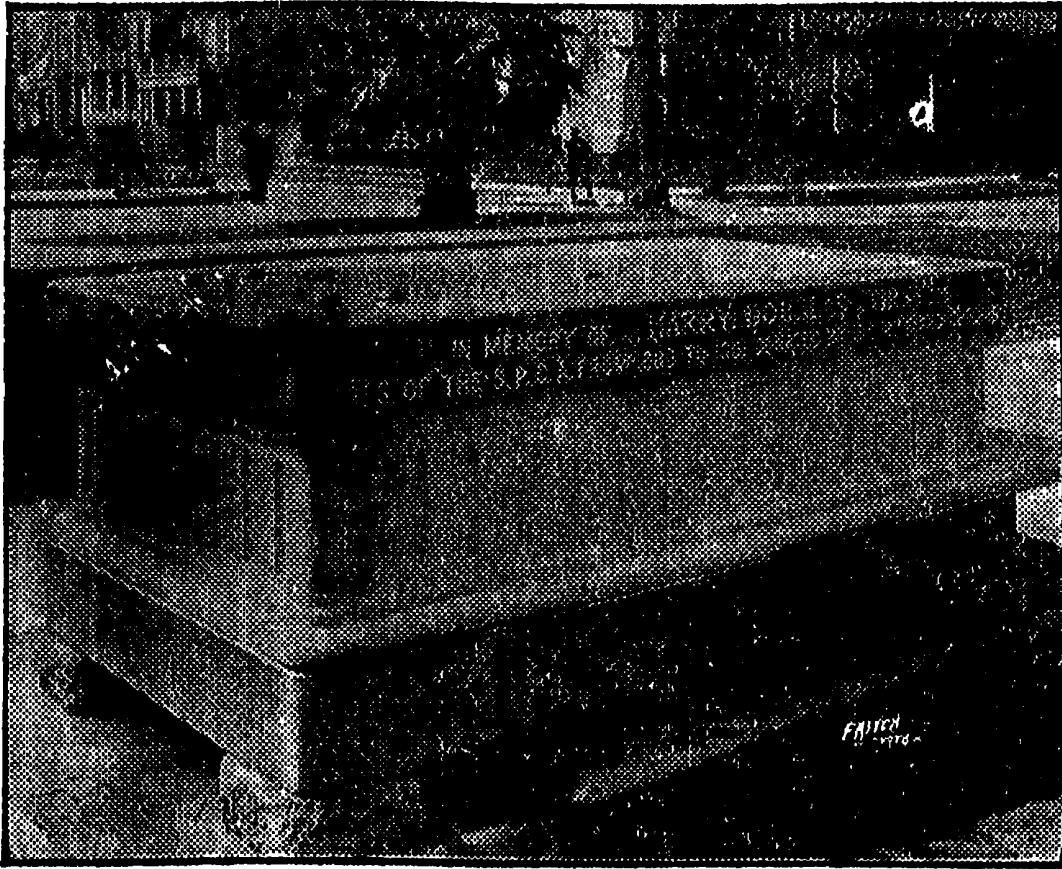
Image source: "The New Drinking Fountain on Canal Street," *Daily Picayune*, January 1, 1890.



Here is the original insignia from The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. It is almost identical to the one above.

Image source: "About the ASPCA," The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, <http://www.asPCA.org/about-us/about-the-aspca.html> (accessed on February 21, 2010.)

Image 12



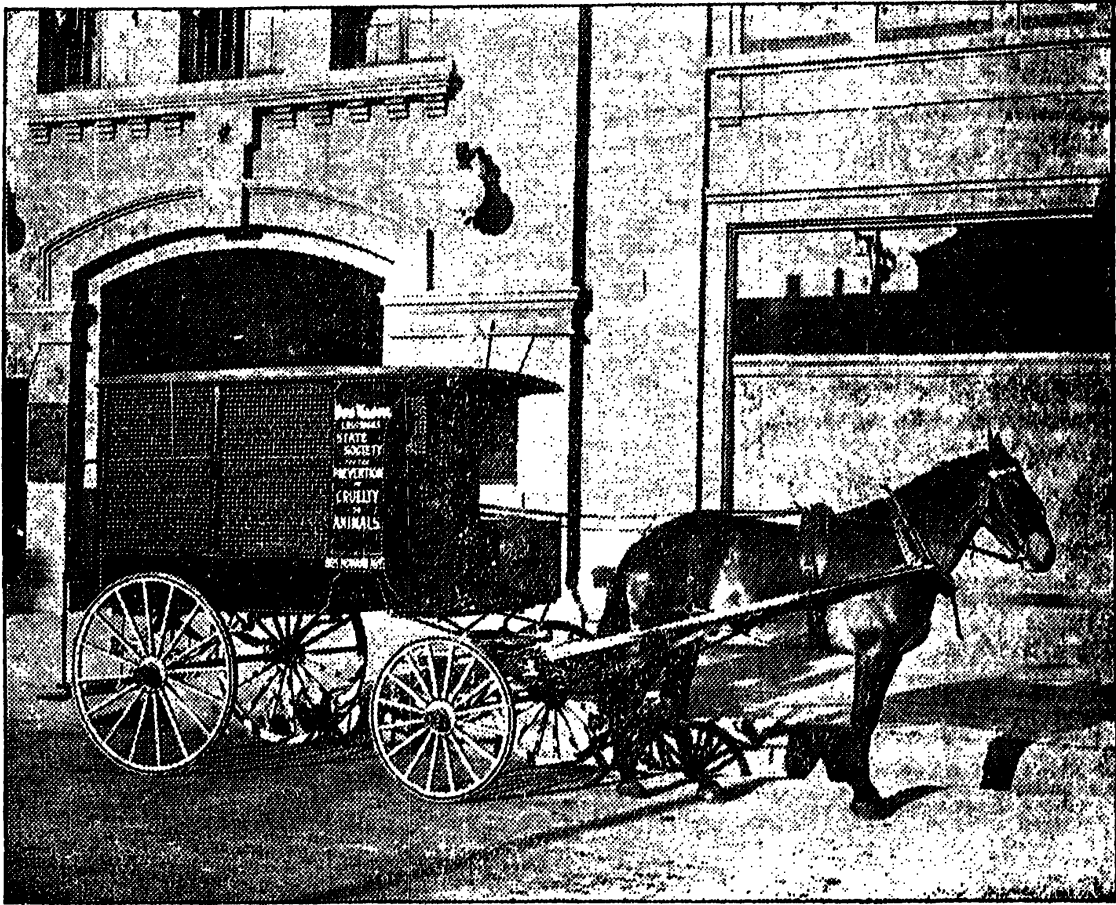
**FORSYTHE FOUNTAIN DEDICATED
TO CAUSE OF DUMB NOBILITY.**

Here is a photographed example of dedications of water troughs garnering public attention in the newspaper.

Henry Douglas Forsythe was the first active president of The Louisiana Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, from 1888 to 1901. A granite drinking trough was dedicated in Forsythe's memory. The article stated "...it was a fine example to the youth of the city in care for those who cannot help themselves."

Image source: "Forsythe Fountain Dedicated to Cause of the Dumb Nobility," *Daily Picayune*, February 19, 1912.

Image 13

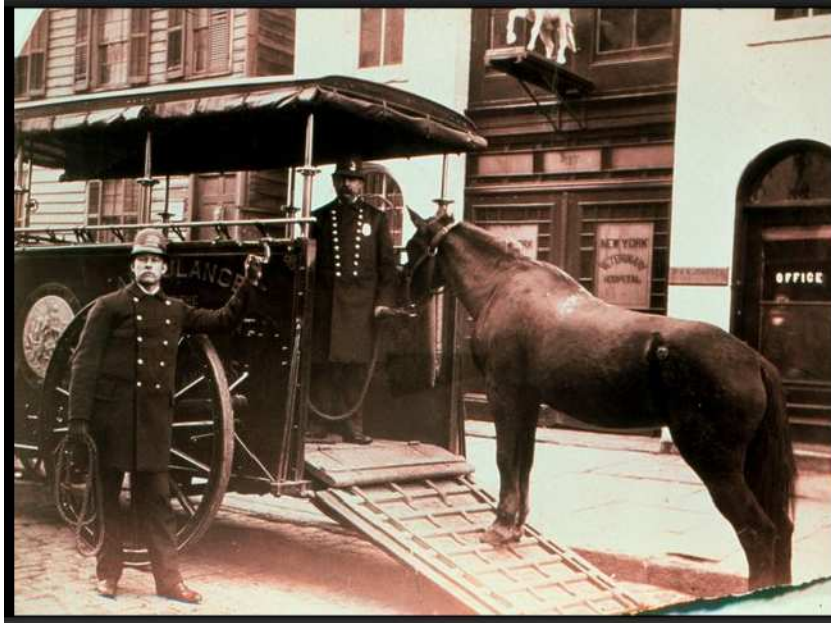


THE L. S. S. P. C. A.'s NEW DOG WAGON.

A dog ambulance, bequeathed to the Louisiana Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals by Mrs. Silvia Easton in 1907.

Image source: "Louisiana's State Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Good Work Done in the Twenty-Four Years That Have Elapsed Since the Organization Came into Existence," *Daily Picayune*, June 7, 1908.

Image 14



A photo of a horse ambulance, which belonged to The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in New York.

Image source: This Week in History, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/gallery/2009/04/06/GA2009040603119.html?referrer=emalink> (accessed on February 21, 2010.)

The Louisiana State Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals



805 HOWARD AVENUE
NEAR CARONDELET STREET

New Orleans, La.

E. S. FREMONT, Supt.

NEW ORLEANS, LA., May, 1915.

HOT WEATHER RULES:

1. Load lightly and drive slowly.
2. Stop in the shade, if possible.
3. Water your horse as often as possible. So long as a horse is working, water, in moderate quantities, will not hurt him. But let him drink only a few swallows if he is going to stand still.
4. When he comes in after work sponge off the harness marks and sweat, his eyes, his nose and his mouth and the dock. Wash his feet but not his legs.
5. If the thermometer is 75 degrees or higher, wipe him all over with a wet sponge. Use vinegar water, if possible. Do not turn the hose on him.
6. Saturday night give him a bran mash cold and add a tablespoonful of saltpetre. *Feed him at noon.*
7. Do not use a horse hat, unless it is a canopy-top hat. The ordinary bell-shaped hat does more harm than good.
8. A sponge on top of the head or even a wet cloth is good, if kept wet. If dry, it is worse than nothing.
9. If the horse is overcome by heat, get him into the shade, remove harness and bridle, wash out his mouth, sponge him all over, shower his legs and give him four ounces of aromatic spirits of ammonia, or two ounces of sweet spirits of nitre, in a pint of water, or give him a pint of coffee, warm. Cool his head at once, using cold water, or if convenient, chopped ice wrapped in a cloth. Call ambulance and have animal removed to hospital, or call professional aid.
10. If the horse is off his feed, try him with two quarts of oats mixed with bran and add a little water; add a little salt or sugar. Or give him oatmeal gruel or barley water to drink.
11. Watch your horse. If he stops sweating suddenly, or if he breaths short and quick, or if his ears droop, or if he stands with his legs braced sideways, he is in danger of heat or sunstroke and needs attention at once.
12. If it is so hot that the horse sweats in the stable at night, tie him outside. Unless he cools off during the night he cannot well stand the next day's heat.

Our Office is open day and night. Telephone Main 51. Telephone stations receive all calls for this number free of charge.

LOCATION OF TROUGHS.

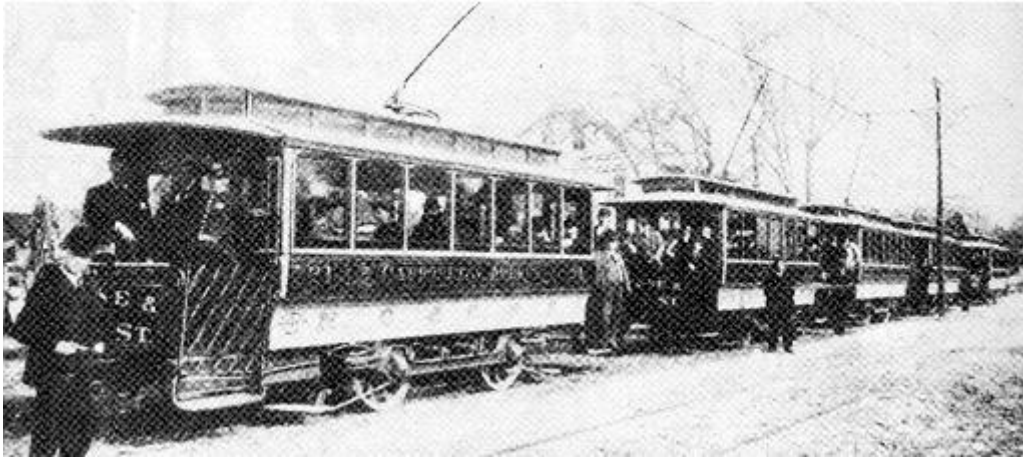
Up Town.
 Carrollton and St. Charles Avenues.
 Carrollton and Mobile Canal
 Carrollton and New Basin
 Claiborne and Washington
 Dryades and Thalia
 Fourth and Carondelet
 Howard Ave. and Annunciation
 Howard Ave. and Carondelet
 Howard Ave. and Baronne
 Julia and Fulton
 Julia and S. Rampart
 Julia and Magnolia
 Julia and River Front
 Jackson Ave. and St. Charles
 Louisiana Ave. and Tchoupitoulas
 Louisiana Ave. and Magazine
 Laurel and Calhoun
 Magnolia and Washington
 Magnolia and Berlin
 Napoleon Ave. and Magazine
 Napoleon Ave. and St. Charles
 Newton and Tech (Algiers)
 Nashville Ave. and Magazine
 Tchoupitoulas and St. Mary
 Metairie Ridge

Down Town
 Bienville and River Front
 Burgundy and Lafayette Ave.
 Burgundy and Poland
 Canal and Front
 Canal and Galvez
 Canal and Carrollton Ave.
 Canal and Anthony
 Claiborne and Carondelet Walk
 Claiborne and St. Bernard Ave.
 Claiborne and Frenchmen
 Dorgenois and Aubry
 Esplanade and N. Peters
 Esplanade and N. Rampart
 Esplanade and Moss
 Gentilly Road and Frenchmen
 Gentilly Road and Eastern
 Gravier and Rampart
 Hagan Ave. and Dumaine
 Poydras and S. Peters
 Press and Urquhart
 St. Louis and Villere
 St. Claude and Kentucky
 Tulane Ave. and Galvez
 Tulane Ave. and Broad
 Tulane Ave. and Hagan Ave.

IF ANY TROUGHS ARE FOUND UNCLEAN OR OUT OF ORDER, PLEASE PHONE MAIN 51.

Image source: The Louisiana State Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, "Hot Weather Rules," May 1915, Pamphlet from Superintendent E. S. Fremont, box: 14 Prospectuses-Solicitations, folder: Schedules, document: I19, , Rare Vertical Files, Louisiana Division, City Archives and Special Collections, New Orleans Public Library, New Orleans, LA.

Image 16



“February 1, 1893. New Orleans & Carrollton RR. Co. inaugurates electric streetcars on St. Charles Line. First line in the city to have overhead trolley. Cars were St. Louis Car Co. models, McGuire 19F truck, Thomson-Huston motors and controls.”

Image source: Louis C. Hennick and Elbridge Harper Charlton, *The Streetcars of New Orleans* (Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company, 2000), 109.

Image 17

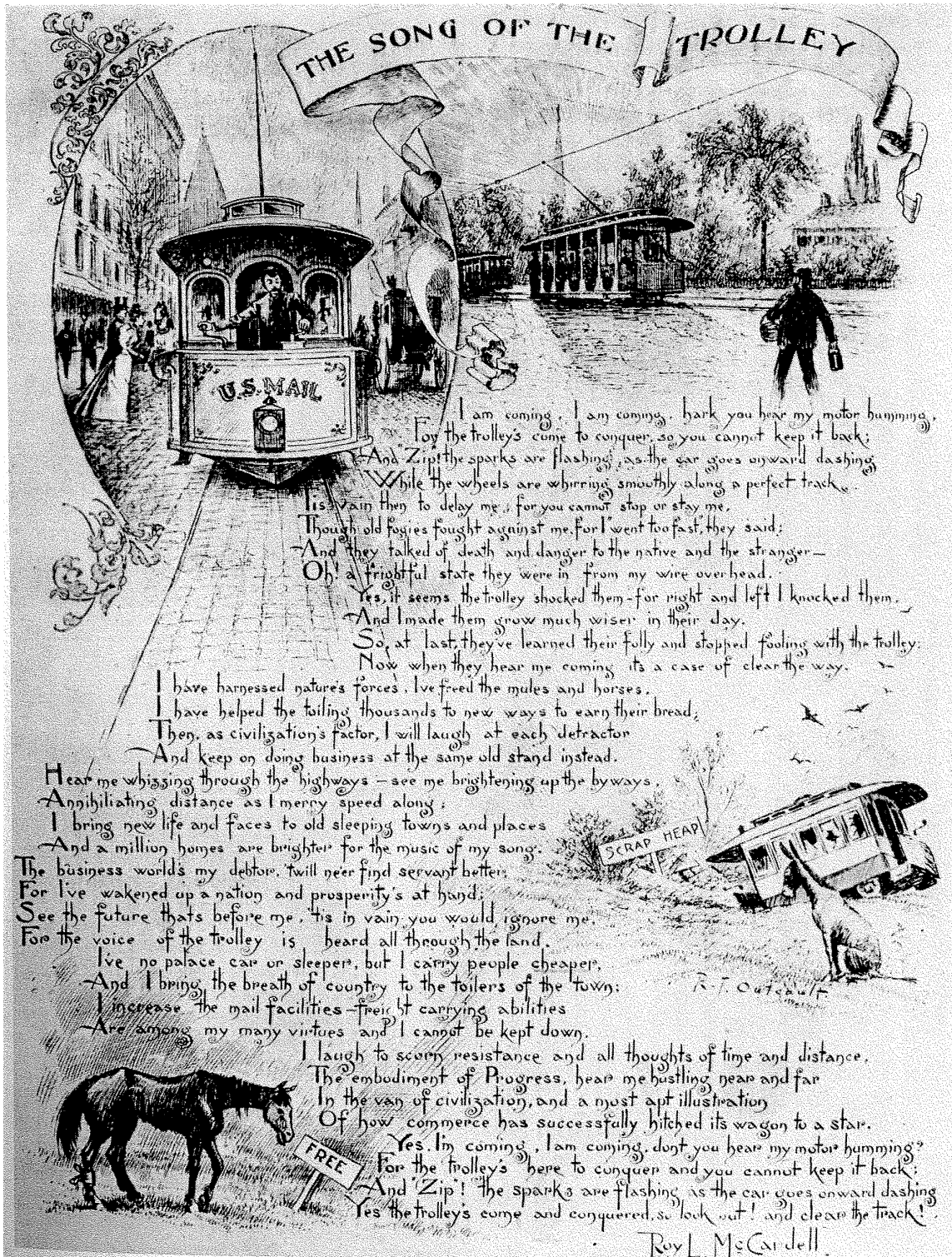


Image source: August Perez & Associates, *The Last Line: A Streetcar Named St. Charles* (Baton Rouge, LA: Claitors Publishing Division, 1972), inside cover.

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The Louisiana State Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, "Hot Weather Rules," May 1915, Pamphlet from Superintendent E. S. Freemont, box: 14 Prospectuses-Solicitations, folder: Schedules, document: I19, , Rare Vertical Files, Louisiana Division, City Archives and Special Collections, New Orleans Public Library, New Orleans, LA.

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Vita

Brittany Mulla was born in Columbia, Tennessee. Moving frequently with her father, who served in the United States Marine Corps, she attended several schools. In 2004 she graduated from Trinity High School, in Manchester, New Hampshire. She entered the University of New Hampshire, in Durham, New Hampshire, where she received her Bachelor of Arts in History in May, 2008. In the summer of 2008, she participated in an archeological dig in the French Quarter of New Orleans, Louisiana and acted as the site historian. In August, 2008, she entered the Graduate School at The University of New Orleans.