

CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL MOVEMENTS

Spring 2020



ABOUT

The Centre for the Study of Social and Political Movements was established in 1992, and since then has helped the University of Kent gain wider recognition as a leading institution in the study of social and political movements in the UK. The Centre has attracted research council, European Union, and charitable foundation funding, and collaborated with international partners on major funding projects. Former staff members and external associates include Professors Mario Diani, Frank Furedi, Dieter Rucht, and Clare Saunders.

Today, the Centre continues to attract graduate students and international visitors, and facilitate the development of collaborative research. Recent and ongoing research undertaken by members includes studies of Black Lives Matter, Extinction Rebellion, veganism and animal rights.

The Centre takes a methodologically pluralistic and interdisciplinary approach, embracing any topic relevant to the study of social and political movements. If you have any inquiries about Centre events or activities, or are interested in applying for our PhD programme, please contact Dr Alexander Hensby or Dr Corey Wrenn.

CONTACT

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SUBMISSIONS

Accepted by email on a rolling basis for Spring and Autumn issues.

Dear colleagues,

It is with mixed emotions I greet you with our inaugural newsletter following the reactivation of our centre. As I write you, the UK university system is in the midst of industrial action, while the world itself has been laid low by the coronavirus. For all the disruption and distress, however, there has been an incredible show of compassion and solidarity.

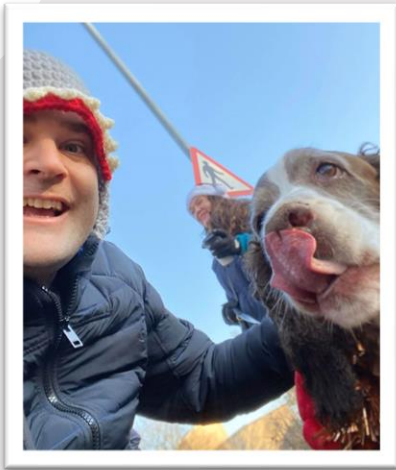
Sidney Tarrow, who describes movements as cyclical and dependent upon political opportunities, has marked the global spread of COVID-19 and, more specifically, the government inaction that allowed for this spread, as [a spark for grassroots mobilization](#). We're certainly seeing that transpire here in the UK with massive volunteering, community outreach, etc.

Will we return to business as usual in the autumn? With the world turned upside down, it seems unlikely. In an effort to understand this change and predict future consequences, I suspect that social movement research will come to be more important than it has been since the civil rights era of the mid-20th century.

In the midst of the chaos, we press on...studying, writing, or just surviving. As highlighted in this newsletter, centre members have participated in a number of public interviews and op-eds, underscoring the importance of bringing social science research to activists, communities, and policy-makers.

Yours in solidarity,

Corey Wrenn



MEDIA

[Always for Animal Rights](#)

On Ottawa public radio, **Dr Wrenn** discusses how professionalized nonprofits ignore and suppress the radical, abolitionist vegan message, and how this compromise is harmful to the Nonhuman Animal rights movement.

[Animal Voices Radio](#)

In this short spot for International Women's Day, **Dr Wrenn** discusses the history of vegan feminism as well as my upcoming book on Irish human/nonhuman relations.

[BBC5 Radio](#)

Following her feature in *The Daily Mail*, **Dr Wrenn** was asked to speak on the BBC's *The Stephen Nolan Show* on the politics of language surrounding pet-keeping.

[The Conversation](#)

Dr. Seyd discusses the importance of public trust for implementing government initiatives in the COVID-19 pandemic.

[The Daily Mail](#)

Dr Wrenn was quoted on the politics of language on nonhuman animals.

[Faunalytics](#)

Dr Wrenn's research on veganism and animal rights in Ireland was featured by Faunalytics, a charity specializing in applying research to effective activism.

[Kent Vegan Events |](#)

Dr Wrenn and **Dr Kristof Dhont** sit down with Jo Kidd, lead organizer for Kent Vegan Events, at the University of Kent to discuss our new books and upcoming vegan programming.

[Marianne](#)

Dr Hensby was interviewed by French news on Extinction Rebellion tactics.

[NBC News](#)

Dr Hensby was interviewed on Extinction Rebellion's disruption tactics.

[On Human/Nonhuman Relations with Other Sentient Beings](#)

Dr Wrenn joins Dr Roger Yates, lecture in sociology with the University of Bangor to discuss the sociology of anti-speciesist activism and the history of the movement.

[University of Kent News Centre](#)

Dr Wrenn was invited to give an expert comment on the [ethics of pet-keeping](#) and [zoos](#).

[Vegan Rainbow Project](#)

In this text-based interview, **Dr Wrenn** discusses the origins of Vegan Feminist Network, gender politics in the animal rights movement, and the importance of sociological theory for informing tactics and theory.

Wired

Dr Hensby was interviewed on Extinction Rebellion tactics and London arrests.

World Vegan Radio

On Houston public radio, **Dr Wrenn** discusses their new book, *Piecemeal Protest*.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Dr Ali Body

Body, A. and J. Kendall. 2020. Expansive Opportunity Makers but Selective Opportunity Takers? Positional Agility and Tactical Social Skill in English Third Sector Social Service, *Journal for Civil Society*.

Body, A. 2020. "In Defence of the Commissioner – Street Level Bureaucracy and the Role of Discretion in the Commissioning of Children's Services." *Voluntary Sector Review*.

Body, A., E. Lau, and J. Josephidou. 2019. "The Spaces and Places Young Children Learn About and Engage with Charity." *Children and Society*.

Dr Alex Hensby

Hensby, A. 2019. "Millbank Tendency: The Strengths and Limitations of Mediated Protest 'Events' in UK Student Activism Cycles." *Current Sociology* 67 (7): 960-977.

Dr Corey Wrenn

Wrenn, C. L. 2019. "From Seed to Fruition: A Political History of The Vegan Society, 1944-2017." *Food and Foodways* 27 (3): 190-210. DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.1080/07409710.2019.1646484>

Wrenn, C. L. and A. Lizardi. 2020. "Older, Greener, and Wiser: Charting the Experiences of Older Women in the American Vegan Movement." *Journal of Women & Aging*. Online first. DOI: 10.1080/08952841.2020.1749501.



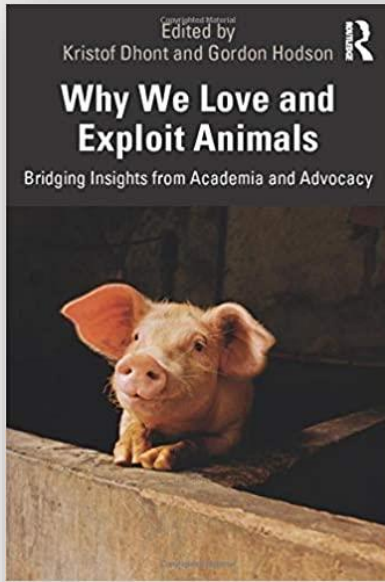
RESEARCH SPOTLIGHTS

Why We Love and Exploit Animals

This unique book brings together research and theorizing on human-animal relations, animal advocacy, and the factors underlying exploitative attitudes and behaviors towards animals.

Why do we both love and exploit animals? Assembling some of the world's leading academics and with insights and experiences gleaned from those on the front lines of animal advocacy, this pioneering collection breaks new ground, synthesizing scientific perspectives and empirical findings. The authors show the complexities and paradoxes in human-animal relations and reveal the factors shaping compassionate versus exploitative attitudes and behaviors towards animals. Exploring topical issues such as meat consumption, intensive farming, speciesism, and effective animal advocacy, this book demonstrates how we both value and devalue animals, how we can address animal suffering, and how our thinking about animals is connected to our thinking about human intergroup relations and the dehumanization of human groups.

This is essential reading for students, scholars, and professionals in the social and behavioral sciences interested in human-animal relations, and will also strongly appeal to members of animal rights organizations, animal rights advocates, policy makers, and charity workers.

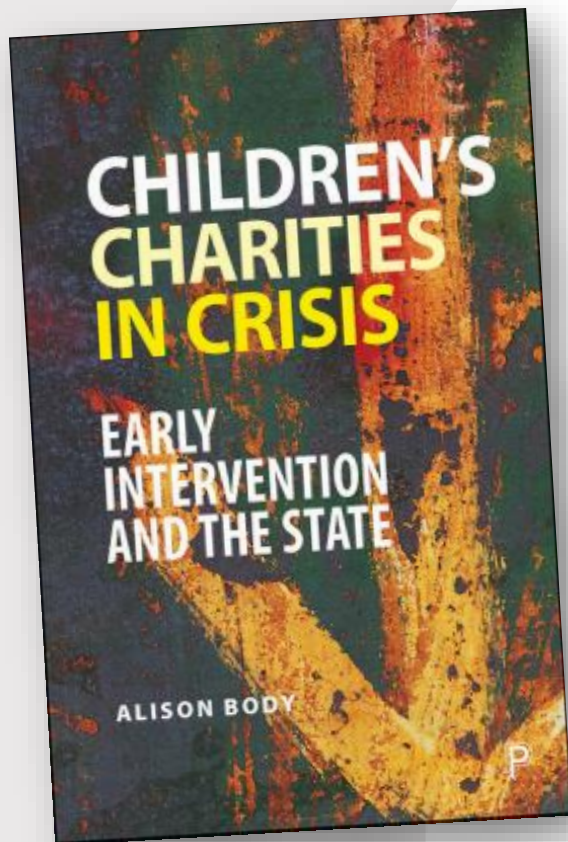


ISBN: 978-0-815-39665-9

Click here to purchase from [Amazon](#).

Click here to purchase the book or purchase individual chapters from the [publisher's page](#).





Children's Charities in Crisis: Early Intervention and the State

Following a decade of radical change in policy and funding in children's early intervention services and with the role of the third sector under increased scrutiny, this timely book assesses the shifting interplay between state provision and voluntary organisations delivering intervention for children, young people and their families. Using 100 voices from the frontline, it provides vivid accounts of the lived experiences of charitable groups and offers crucial insights into the impact of recent social policy decisions on their work. Telling the story of how the landscape of children's early intervention services has changed over the last decade, the author highlights important lessons for future policy while demonstrating the immeasurable value of voluntary organisations working in this challenging terrain.

ISBN-10: 1447346432

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Click here to purchase from [Amazon](#).

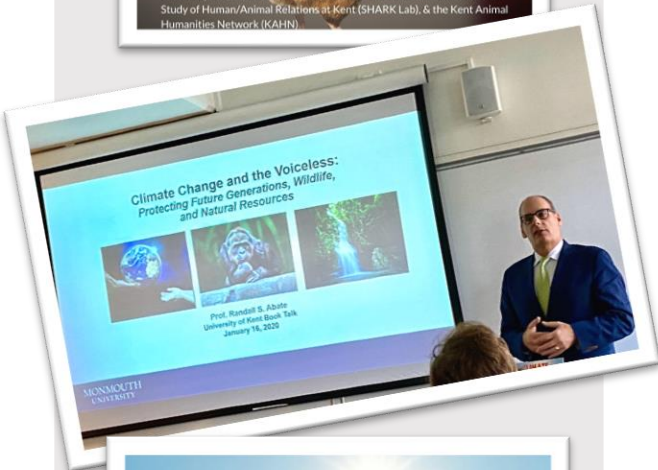
Click here to purchase the book from the [publisher's page](#).



POSTPONED

C. E. ABBATE
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS

A widely accepted view in epistemology is that we don't have direct control over our beliefs. And we surely don't have as much control over our beliefs as we have over simple actions. For instance, you can, if offered \$1,000, immediately throw your hamburger in the trash, but a meat eater can't, at will, start believing that eating animals is seriously wrong to secure a \$1,000 reward. Yet, even though we have more control over our behavior than we have over our beliefs, some of our behavior, especially moral behavior, is heavily influenced by our beliefs. Meat eating is one example. So, if we don't have direct control over our beliefs and our beliefs influence our moral behavior, it's no wonder meat eaters aren't immediately boycotting McDonald's and lining up for the Impossible Burger after watching a video on factory farming. What, then, needs to take place for meat eaters to change their beliefs regarding the moral significance of meat eating and, consequently, their animal-eating behavior? In this presentation, I propose an answer to this question.

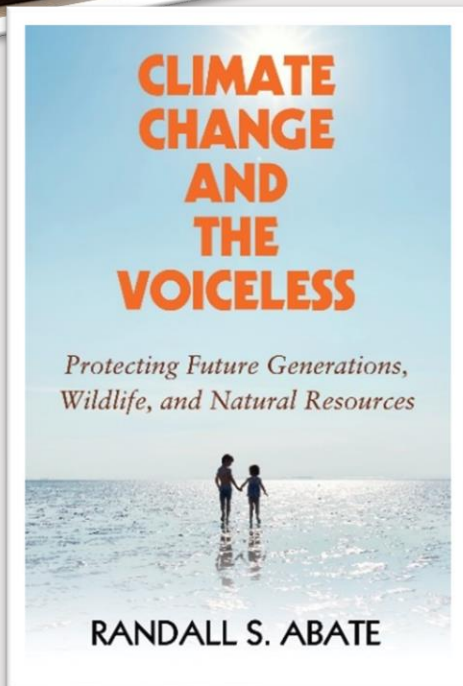


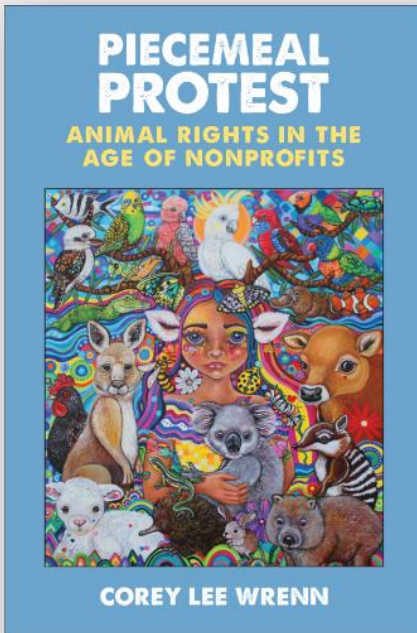
Climate Change and the Voiceless January 16, 2020

RANDALL S. ABATE
RECHNITZ FAMILY / URBAN COAST INSTITUTE
ENDOWED CHAIR IN MARINE AND ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY
PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND SOCIOLOGY
MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY

This semester, we relaunched the Centre with a well-attended talk by Dr. Abate. This event was co-hosted by the SSPSSR Centre for the Study of Social and Political Movements and Civil Society Cluster, the Study for Human Intergroup & Animal Relations @ Kent, and Kent Animal Humanities Network

Future generations, wildlife, and natural resources – collectively referred to as “the voiceless” in this presentation – are the most vulnerable and least equipped populations to protect themselves from the impacts of global climate change. Domestic and international law protections are beginning to recognize rights and responsibilities that apply to the voiceless community; however, these legal developments have yet to be pursued in a collective manner and have not been considered together in the context of climate change and climate justice. This presentation first identifies the common vulnerabilities of the voiceless in the Anthropocene era. It then proposes how the law can evolve to protect their interests more effectively through a stewardship-focused and rights-based system derived from the mandate inherent in the concept of sustainable development.





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DOI: 10.3998/mpub.11301441

Click here to purchase from [Amazon](#).

Click here to view a sample chapter, purchase the book, or purchase individual chapters from the [publisher's page](#).

Cover art by Lynda Bell. [Click here](#) to purchase prints from the artist's website.

Piecemeal Protest: Animal Rights in the Age of Nonprofits (University of Michigan Press 2019) is the culmination of ten years of research covering four decades of Nonhuman Animal rights claimsmaking produced by grassroots, transitioning, and professionalized organizations. In general, I was interested in unpacking the influence of nonprofitization on social movements. As organizations professionalize, their claimsmaking deradicalizes considerably (for instance, they will avoid using the words 'vegan' or 'liberation' and shift towards 'veg' language and welfare reforms). More than this, they begin to utilize the power coalesced from this compromise to stifle the voices of radicals on the margins. This is a significant power dynamic in the movement which should be fully appreciated for its impact on goals, tactics, and outcomes. I actually began my interest in the Nonhuman Animal rights movement as an activist. As I learned more about theory and began to move toward more radical activist strategies (such as feminism, abolitionism, and no kill), the level of resistance I experienced in the movement was quite striking. I was also taken aback by how uncritically most activists accepted the gospel of large nonprofits. I recognized that factionalism between different camps as well as the pressure enacted on all camps by the large nonprofits were two major influences on the movement's trajectory, yet they have been largely understudied. For the most part, activists chalk this division up to interpersonal issues or individual organizations. As a sociologist, however, I recognized that there were structural issues at play that needed to be unpacked.

The bulk of my research was conducted in the Tom Regan Animal Rights Archive in the North Carolina State University library. It was a purposive sampling in which I tracked organizations and collectives surviving from the 1980s or 1990s, looking specifically for clues as to how professionalization impacted claimsmaking. I spent hours sifting through hundreds of magazines, newsletters, correspondence, and the like, taking pictures with a digital camera to organize and analyse when I returned back to home. Since most communication now takes place on the internet, I also conducted a secondary content analysis of blogs and newsletters from the early 2000s onward. The most challenging aspect had to be the sheer volume of material and organizations from which to choose—it was an ambitious project to say the least. However, it is only with a longitudinal analysis of this kind that we can identify major trends in movement behaviours.

All social movements are factionalized, and this factionalism has been critiqued by some scholars as a drain on resources and solidarity, but, for the most part, this common variable is actually greatly overlooked in social movement theory. **In this book, I argue that factionalism is not only normal for movements, but it can also be a healthy function.** Factionalism can propel a movement forward in forcing dialogue related to tactics and goals. In the Nonhuman Animal rights movement, there are factional divides with regard to the appropriateness of direct action, reform and abolition, feminism, and the ethics of "euthanasia." Unfortunately, those taking a radical position tend to be marginalized by larger nonprofits which form a hegemony in the movement and use that power and taken-for-granted authority to position radicals as unrealistic or dangerous. But, without factionalism (and without radicals), the RSPCA might still support hunting, we would not have the Humane Society of the United States (which is a splinter group which emerged over vivisection), and we would not have The Vegan Society (which is a splinter group from The Vegetarian Society). I would imagine, contemporary factionalism will, in the future, be credited for positioning veganism, adoption, nonviolence, and intersectionality/inclusivity as baselines for anti-speciesist activism.

It is highly unlikely that factionalism can ever be overcome, and, for that matter, I argue that it should be embraced. Activists often bemoan the infighting and plead for unity, but *Piecemeal Protest* demonstrates that unity is unrealistic and often code for obedience to hegemonic forces in the movement. For instance, who should be uniting with who? Should we unite with organizations that lethally inject or gas healthy dogs and cats? Should we unite with organizations, like the HSUS or Farm Sanctuary, which propose that it is acceptable to use and consume Nonhuman Animals (as long as this is done "humanely")? Should we unite with organizations promoting reductionism over veganism and reform over abolition? I don't think so. Rarely are the large nonprofits asked to unite with the radicals who are more likely to advocate for the real interests of Nonhuman Animals (which is the right to life and freedom from human oppression). **Unity claimsmaking is usually engaged by the nonprofit hegemonic bloc to reign in deviant factions and shame them for engaging critique. When the lives of so many Nonhuman Animals are on the line, that critique is truly vital and should not be silenced.**

I hope the book will remind activists that factionalism isn't about interpersonal disagreement, but something structural. Factionalism has existed in the movement since its very inception—in fact, early meeting notes from the 1820s document disagreement over tactics and goals! However, with the professionalization of the movement in the 1980s-2000, factionalism really exploded as a result of the many compromises the nonprofits were undertaking in order to access more legitimacy with the state, funding, and power. It isn't just that "we can't all get along," but instead, there are larger political and economic influences on social movements which leave them vulnerable to state and capitalist infiltration. Radical splinter groups predictably emerge to challenge this process, while radical groups themselves, are vulnerable to the temptation to professionalize in an effort to secure much needed funding, legitimacy, and stability.

[The Vegan Society is a great example of this](#)—it began as a very radical, very resource-poor group in the 1940s after several decades of discord with The Vegetarian Society. It struggled to survive throughout the 20th century, but following gradual steps toward professionalization from 1980 onward (whereby organizers from other nonprofits took over leadership of the society and strategically worked to professionalize it), the hardcore anti-speciesist roots to the group gradually decayed. Today, the organization focuses on product consumption and environmentalism. I just received the newest issue of *The Vegan*, for instance, and there wasn't a single Nonhuman Animal pictured! Nonhuman Animals, thanks to the pressures of professionalization, have now become absent referents in *The Vegan Society*. This I find to be truly remarkable. Yes, this professionalization has allowed it to grow and stabilize, but who can Nonhuman Animals rely upon if even *The Vegan Society* has abandoned them in its claimsmaking?

Activists are better served in recognizing factionalism as a vital and fundamental part of organizing. **I also want them to recognize that radicals aren't simply on the margins because their ideas are somehow less practical or realistic, but more accurately, they are marginalized because they are more threatening to the established social order. The state relies on nonprofits to actively squash out radicals; nonprofits do the policing of their own movement.** Beyond this state influence, the nonprofit system itself (as evidenced in the story of *The Vegan Society*) is an extension of capitalism, such that activists and organizations are in real danger of being swept in and commodified. Indeed, the charity sector is one of the largest economic sectors in the world. Social movements are good for business, and this should be cause for concern given that capitalism is the root cause of the inequality we are battling. Nonprofits grew considerably in size and wealth following this shift, but at what cost to the movement's integrity and our obligation to Nonhuman Animals?

Most organizations were silent on this transition. It was as though the bid to get larger, glossier, wealthier, and more corporate was simply expected—and likely, this emerged from the economic logic of growth we've all been socialized by in a capitalist society. More sinister, however, was the quiet work behind the scenes to silence and marginalize radicals, such is the case with Farm Animal Rights Movement (FARM) which hosts the annual National Animal Rights Conference. FARM has, in its requirements for conference participation, a ban on criticizing other organizations (a means to maintain the nonprofit hegemony). But the criticism of organizational compromise is the modus operandi for radicals, such that the no-criticism rule effectively prohibits radical participation. In the past, FARM has also sought to invisibilize factionalism—claiming it doesn't exist in newsletters when it clearly was reaching crisis levels (as was the case in 1996). More recently, it has co-opted feminist tactics for inclusion by using a so-called "safe space policy" to justify radical exclusion at the conference (claiming that, for instance, Nathan Winograd—leader of the National No Kill Center—would be in violation as his work is critical of PETA's kill policy). I don't think many activists recognize how very powerful these organizations have become by cooperating with the state and how the state's interests infiltrate through non-profit channels. Conferences are important spaces for reaching the major decision-makers in the movement and giving platform to various ideas—radicals truly suffer from exclusion. Some have attempted to create their own conferences, but, obviously, the reach and impact of these splinter conferences are much less.

Are we closer to a vegan world today because of professionalization or in spite of it? I feel it is the latter. Radicals, although greatly burdened by two fronts of activism (the public and the big nonprofits) are able to influence movement dialogue, inspire the public, and create important shifts in cultural meaning. The internet has been one important means for levelling the playing field in discourse politics—official newsletters and conferences may silence radicals, but nonprofits are not able to prevent activist attraction to podcasts, websites, social media, and other digital channels where critical discourse thrives. This has forced some nonprofits to acknowledge factional critique and, in some cases, alter organizational practices. I find it frustrating that radicals are facing active marginalization from their own movement, but it is heartening that their efforts are having an impact on the nonprofits to some extent. Farm Animal Rights Movement (FARM), for instance, is now far more radical in its claimsmaking than it once was. Even the name indicates this, as it was once called Farm Animal Reform Movement!