



ANIMALS & SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

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FOLLOW UP:

DECENTERING WHITENESS

The Animals & Society Section Addresses Racial Inequity

This year we started the process of establishing a structurally inclusive environment for the section to address racial disparity in ASA and our section’s membership. We started with an essay dialogue on Mobilizing Ideas titled “Decentering Whiteness in the Study of Animals Advocacy” that was featured in our fall newsletter and is still available [here](#). Four authors contributed essays on how the centering of whiteness in studies of animal advocacy compromises the robustness of research we produce as well as reinforces broader structures of racial oppression in academia. These are two excerpts from the essays by section member and Ph.D. student, **Julie LaBagnara**, and critical race theorist, **M. Shadee Malaklou, Ph.D.**




FOLLOW-UP: DECENTERING WHITENESS

Essay Excerpts



Jackson suggests that CAS's academic and/as political-ethical project has not thought about how black social and/or material death is the pivot for animal social and/as material death. Nor has CAS addressed how humanism's species cut is 'contrapuntally' (Radhakrishnan) born from its race/ist cut. Nor has CAS spoken to how humanism's species-cum-race/ist cut discards with black and animal nonbeings alike as un/gendered, fungible flesh.

~M. Shadee Malaklou

Moral panics in the United States have fueled white supremacist ideals throughout history, manifesting in myriad ways such as the disproportionate representation of people of color in the criminal justice system and the violence inflicted on Black men by police (King 2015). In the context of race or class, moral panics arise from the fear that people of other classes and races threaten the status quo of the ruling class and race, middle- and upper-class White people (King 2015). Moral panics can have disastrous consequences for the groups targeted by the panic, and scenarios, people, or animals associated with the stigmatized group also become a source of panic.

~Julia LaBagnara



REACTION: COMMENTS FROM MOBILIZING IDEAS

// **LaBagnara** discusses a new way to frame this issue . . . by explaining that not adopting these dogs to poor families of color or removing them from homes where the level of care does not meet their standard may actually cause the dogs more harm since they are a breed whose adoption rates are low, and they are often euthanized instead of adopted. Also, sheltering these dogs uses up scarce resources in shelters. . . . being taken from homes may also cause these dogs and those caring for them a significant amount of psychological distress, making adoption even less likely while causing further harm to poor people of color who are already put in harm's way in other aspects of society. . . . And, . . . Pit Bulls and other stigmatized breeds are less likely to be denied in white spaces if they are accompanied by a white person." ~**Misty Whitney**

"This is such an important topic and so rarely discussed in academic spaces! Thanks for sharing your research." ~**Sarah Freeman-Woolpert**

Deconstructing 'Race' and 'Whiteness' in Critical Animal Studies | [Moses Seenarine](#)

👉 **Seenarine** talks about how slaughterhouse workers are being defined as "murderers" when they were just doing their job. These people are identified as essential workers and they have an absurd amount of deaths in their line of work. . . . The pandemic has divided a fine line between activists and workers. . . . I always knew that African Americans were treated harshly by the police force, but this leaves me with the question: Were the police more cruel because of the strain of the pandemic?" ~ **Demi Batten**

// This article is sort of eye-opening for me because I have never thought of the animal agriculture industry in this type of way. We know that most owners of capital in America are European Americans. We also know that they are the ones who primarily create laws and regulations in this country. But what about the voices of the people who don't agree with what these leaders have created?" ~ **Taija Pate**





FOLLOW-UP: DECENTERING WHITENESS

Anti-Racism Workshop

We followed up this first discursive step on April 21st with our interactive workshop led by the Executive Director of



Encompass, Aryenish Birdie. Encompass is an organization that works with animal advocacy groups and helps them establish infrastructure for the ongoing process of fostering racial diversity and interdependence, as opposed to symbolic gestures. During this Interactive Workshop on the Need for Racial Equity, Aryenish facilitated a discussion based on Michelle Rojas-Sotos essay on Oppression Without Hierarchy, and our section members discussed the

forms of racism they have witnessed, what changes were made/are being made in response to seeing those forms of racism, and how we can incorporate an ongoing trajectory of change organizationally in the section. There is a list of links that were shared during the workshop and we'll chat about next steps during our business meeting at ASA.

THE ANIMALS & SOCIETY
 SPRING WORKSHOP SERIES PRESENTS:
 ARYENISH BIRDIE,
 E.D. OF ENCOMPASS

An Interactive Workshop on the Need for Racial Equity



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21ST AT 1PM EST
 TO RSVP JOIN ZOOM ID:999 5598 6331



ACTION: SPRING WORKSHOP SERIES



The **ANIMALS & SOCIETY SECTION** of the
AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
presents:

DIGITAL NETWORKING

from the margins

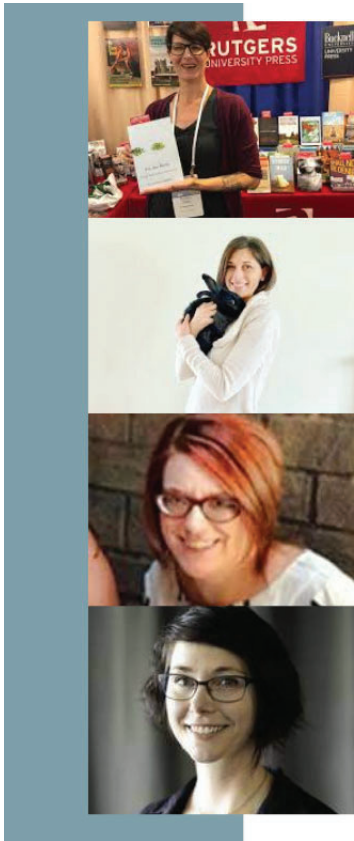
Jan 15, 2021

Zoom + Facebook Live + IG Live

8AM PST/11AM EST



COREY WRENN, PHD
UNIVERSITY OF KENT



*The Animals & Society section
Spring Workshop Series Presents*

JOB MARKET TALK

MONDAY FEBRUARY 8TH AT 2PM EST.
JOIN ZOOM ID: 923 3932 8030 TO REGISTER!

Each of the workshops this spring, including the ASA Happy Hour Planning workshop, had 15-20 participants and received super positive feedback. We are hearing a lot of interest in hosting more in the future. **If you are interested in organizing and facilitating a workshop with section support, please get in touch!**

Thanks to Elizabeth Cherry, Jessica Greenebaum, Carol Glasser, Corey Wrenn, Aryenish Birdie and Erin Evans!



2021 CONFERENCE NEWS

Animals & Society Break-Out Reception

Saturday, August 7th at 8pm EST / 5pm PST

For our reception this year we are hosting a break-out room event! Join us for a special virtual reception with topical Zoom break-out rooms that participants will visit during the event. We'll have Meet-the-Author rooms and topical rooms like Teaching Animals & Society, Activist-Scholarship, and Applied Sociology. We'll convene the night of our section's panel and roundtables. If you are interested in being an author for a Meet-the-Author room or in hosting or co-hosting a room, please email Erin Evans at emevans888@gmail.com. **PLEASE NOTE, we are NOT using ASA's organizational Zoom account for the reception, so registration here is necessary.**

RSVP by joining [Zoom Meet ID: 920 8618 3037](https://zoom.us/j/92086183037)

The online program is available by logging in to the [Virtual Annual Meeting Portal](#) using your ASA username and password and selecting View Online Program. Setting a bookmark in your browser for the online Virtual Annual Meeting portal is an easy way to quickly access the online program.

The Virtual Annual Meeting sessions and meetings will run on the Zoom platform. To ensure you can access sessions and meetings successfully, you will need a Zoom account. If you do not already have Zoom access, you can sign up for a free [Basic Zoom](#) account.

Please contact meetings@asanet.org if you have any questions about your registration or accessing the online program. Thank you.



Is Animal Welfare Better on Smaller Farms? Mark Suchyta

The emergence of COVID-19 has led scientists, journalists, and activists to ponder the future of factory farming. This is in part due to the potential for factory farms to spread disease among farmed animals and eventually to humans, as well as the appalling conditions farmed animals are subjected to. These concerns have even gained some momentum in policy circles. For example, U.S. Senators Cory Booker and Elizabeth Warren recently teamed up to co-sponsor the proposed Farm System Reform Act, which would prohibit the opening of new large factory farms and require that all such farms cease operations by 2040 (Slisco 2020). As advocates for animals, this appears to be an opportunity to improve the well-being of farmed animals across the U.S. However, we must ask the question, is animal welfare always worse on large farms compared to small farms?

It is often assumed that the conditions for farm animals on smaller farms are superior to those of larger farms. For example, when people think about small farms, they may imagine idyllic, family-owned properties with free roaming animals. Large farms, on the other hand, are often conceptualized as dark, cramped, mechanized settings where large numbers of animals are hidden from the public eye and subjected to abuse. Of course, these are ideal types and the realities can be much different. Large industrial farms can certainly be (and usually are) family owned and smaller farms frequently employ the same controversial housing and handling standards that larger farms do, also classifying them as factory farms (U.S. Department of Agriculture 2017). Survey data seems to confirm that many people do indeed see a difference between small and large farms. A study in the U.S. suggests Americans believe larger farms are “less likely to share their values” and “more likely to place profit ahead of public interest” (Center for Food Integrity 2013). Lusk, Norwood, and Prickett (2007), drawing from a representative sample of Americans, found 57% agreed with the statement “farm animals raised on small farms have a better life than those raised on large farms”. Stronger opposition to larger farms relative to smaller farms has also been found in



studies in Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, and Poland. (Verbeke et al. 2010; Sørensen et al 2012).

In recent research of my own under review, I asked a representative sample of over 500 Americans about their views of farm animal welfare on “large industrial” and “small family” farms. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent they agreed or disagreed (on a five-point Likert-scale) with four statements regarding farm animal welfare on “large industrial farms” and then were presented the same four statements again but regarding “small family farms”. Three of the statements began with the lead-off “On [large/small farms] in the U.S....” and followed with the statements “farm animals have a poor quality of life”, “government regulations do a good job at preventing cruelty toward farm animals”, and “most farmers treat their farm animals well”. The fourth statement read “The treatment of farm animals on [large industrial/small family] farms in the U.S. raises serious ethical questions.” A series of paired-sampled t-tests were then run to compare the mean response for the statements regarding large industrial farms to the means of their equivalent statements regarding small family farms. The t-tests all were significant ($p < .001$) with respondents seeing the welfare of farm animals on “large industrial” farms as worse than on “small family” farms.

So, are there real substantial differences in farm animal welfare between these two types of farms? Or is this just a common perception without much empirical proof? Robbins et al. (2016) attempted to address this issue by reviewing over 150 studies from several nations that examined the relationship between farm size and farm animal welfare. They found no consistent relationship between these variables and concluded that larger farms provide some opportunities to improve animal welfare as they have more capital, veterinary resources, and standardized employee training, but also create some risks due to the large number of animals and the high density they are subjected to. For example, the animals are less likely to be allowed access to pasture. Robbins et al. suggest that policy and advocacy efforts should focus on increasing animal welfare across all farms rather than targeting farms based upon their size.

In conclusion, we are bound to see interesting conversations about the future of factory farming considering the current public health crisis. We need such conversations. Yet, while new policies regarding large factory farms may address some environmental issues, it is not clear that the conditions farm animals live in will improve by targeting them alone.



References

Center for Food Integrity. 2013. "Consumer Trust in the Food System." *Center for Food Integrity*: Gldstone, MO.

Lusk, Jayson L., F. Bailey Norwood, and Robert W. Prickett. 2007. "Consumer Preferences for Farm Animal Welfare: Results of a Nationwide Telephone Survey." Working Paper. Retrieved July 20, 2020 (<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.514.9416&rep=rep1&type=pdf>).

Robbins, Jesse A., Marina A. G. von Keyserlingk, David Fraser, and Daniel M. Weary. 2016. "Invited Review: Farm Size and Animal Welfare". *Animal Science* 94(12):5439-5455.

Slisco, Aila. 2020. "Elizabeth Warren and Corey Booker Join Forces on Bill to Ban Most Factory Farming by 2040." *Newsweek*, May 7. Retrieved June 20, 2020 (<https://www.newsweek.com/elizabeth-warren-cory-booker-join-forces-bill-ban-most-factory-farming-2040-1502699>).

Sørensen, Bjarne Taulo, Marcia Duta de Barcellos, Nina Veflen Olsen, Wim Verbeke, and Joachim Scholderer. 2012. "Systems of Attitudes Towards Production in the Pork Industry: A Cross-National Study." *Appetite* 59(3):885-897.

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Verbeke, Wim, Federico J.A. Pérez-Cueto, Marcia D. de Barcellos, Anthanasios Krystallis, and Klaus G. Grunert. 2010. "European Citizen and Consumer Attitudes and Preferences Regarding Beef and Pork." *Meat Science* 84(2):284-292.

Mark Suchyta, M.S. is a Doctoral Candidate and Graduate Assistant in the Department of Sociology at Michigan State University. Suchyta's recent article "**Environmental Values and Americans' Beliefs about Farm Animal Well-Being**" in the journal *Agriculture and Human Values* is available [here](#).

ANIMALS & SOCIETY SECTION NEWS

An examination of the Correctional Service of Canada's **plan to open an industrial goat dairy at two of their federal prisons** in the Kingston, Ontario area.

[The Conversation](#)

[Full Report](#)

[Related petition](#)





Publication Highlights

“Reminding us that we are part of multispecies societies, in what ways has zoonotic COVID-19 affected the perception that humans are the center of being? What we know thus far is that COVID-19 unveiled urgent intersectional problems within a food system that is demonstrably vulnerable to the very disruptions it can produce. We are in a unique space to question and critique the literal “meat and potatoes” of culture and society.”

Faas, A.J., Roberto Barrios, Virginia García-Acosta, Adriana Garriga-López, Jennifer Trivedi, and Seven Mattes. 2020. “Entangled Roots and Otherwise Possibilities: The Anthropology of Disasters COVID-19 Research Agenda.” *Human Organization* 79(4).

Carrie P. Freeman's new book

[UGA Press](#)

[The Human Animal Earthling Identity: Shared Values Unifying Human Rights, Animal Rights & Environmentalism.](#)



Andrea Laurent-Simpson, Ph.D. was interviewed in 2020 for a Quartz News article regarding the pet industrial complex as related to the emergence of multi-species families. The article is "[How America's Love For It's Cats and Dogs Built the Pet Industrial Complex](#)" and is penned by Oliver Staley.

Laurent-Simpson is Lecturer in the Department of Sociology at Southern Methodist University, and author of the forthcoming book *Just Like Family: How Companion Animals Joined the Household* (NYU Press, forthcoming July 2021). Learn more about Laurent-Simpson's work on her [website](#).

The Evolution Institute's Special Issue titled ***Debate: Nothing in Sociology Makes Sense Except in the Light of Evolution*** is now published at This View of Life (TVoL) Magazine of the Evolution Institute. You can read it [here](#).

Kathy Merlock Jackson, Kathy Shepherd Stolley, and Lisa Lyon Payne, Virginia Wesleyan University (eds.), ***Animals and Ourselves: Essays on Connections and Blurred Boundaries*** (McFarland, 2020).

Corey Lee Wrenn, PhD

[New article and related BLOG summary](#)

[6-episode podcast on Wrenn's upcoming book \(episode details here\)](#)

[Wrenn's new book Animals in Irish Society \(forthcoming, Summer 2021\)](#)

[Wrenn's walking tour of Canterbury from a Critical Animal Studies perspective](#)

Dr. Corey Lee Wrenn is also co-founder of the International Association of Vegan Sociologists (IAVS). See the IAVS' [CFP: International Association of Vegan Sociologists Conference 2021](#).



CALL FOR PAPERS: You are invited to contribute a scholarly essay on the topic **“Communication in Defense of Nonhuman Animals During an Extinction and Climate Crisis,”** to the 2022 special issue we are editing for the open-access international journal *Journalism and Media* (ISSN 2673-5172) (<https://www.mdpi.com/journal/journalmedia>).

The guest editors (Nuria Almiron and Carrie Freeman) work within the critical animal studies and critical media studies traditions and prefer communication scholarship that shows respect for the interests, welfare, and rights of all animals (human and nonhuman) in an effort to protect them as individuals and species groups in an age of environmental crisis.

For detailed information and topic examples/ideas, please follow the link to the Special Issue website: https://www.mdpi.com/journal/journalmedia/special_issues/comm_animals The submission deadline is 31 October 2021. You may send your manuscript now or up until the deadline. Submitted papers should not be under consideration for publication elsewhere. You are also encouraged to send a short abstract or tentative title to the Guest Editors or journal’s Managing Editor, Ivana Vuleta (vuleta@mdpi.com; journalmedia@mdpi.com).

The Article Processing Charge (APC) for open access publication in this Special Issue will be *waived*, which means that you have the privilege to publish your paper free of charge in an open access scholarly journal.

Papers should be in the range of 6,000 to 9,000 words. For further details on the submission process, please refer to the instructions for authors at the journal website or let us know if you have any questions (<https://www.mdpi.com/journal/journalmedia/instructions>). (the instructions don’t mention a literature review section, but do include one after the introduction section, as would be standard in humanities and social scientific writing).

Guest Editors:

Carrie P. Freeman, PhD, Associate Professor of Communication,
Georgia State University, USA cpfreeman@gsu.edu

Núria Almiron, PhD, Associate Professor of Communication,
Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain nuria.almiron@upf.edu


GRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT
SNAPSHOT**EDUCATION**

PhD (Candidate), Sociology (McMaster)
 MA, Critical Sociology (Brock)
 Bachelor of Environmental Studies (York)

RESEARCH INTERESTS

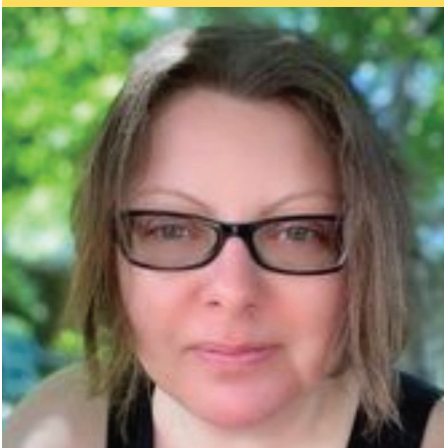
human-nonhuman animal relations,
 shelters/environments, poverty, mental
 health, stigma and deviance, veganism

EXCERPT (article, forthcoming)

“Co-sheltering is an intentional act of nonviolence; a tangible expression of/ toward a trans-species social justice. . . . the emergency shelter system remains siloed by species; shared housing is rare. . . . [paradoxically] other species are allowed—without exception—in these same shelters, if they are there to serve humans. . . . **This practice illustrates an uneven level of care, based on a client’s family makeup, location, and ability.** “

lindsays@mcmaster.ca

[Linkedin/CV](#)



Dear Members,

I am so pleased to introduce myself! I’m Sarah May, the new Newsletter Editor and current elected council for our Section. I am also co-chair of the CSA’s Animals in Society Research Cluster, Assistant Editor of the Student Journal of Vegan Sociology, and an organizing member of the Canadian Violence Link Coalition.

I have taken a winding and blustery path to this point. I did some things “backwards”, like beginning university at age 33. I worked for years in retail, medical insurance, and an air bag factory. I have a diploma in Radio Broadcasting and I’m a certified bookkeeper. I’m the proud mom of a brilliant young woman. I rescue cats.

I told my Nana when I very young that, one day, I would be a veterinarian. I did not know what else to do with my empathy and concern for nonhumans. Today, I am nearing completion of my dissertation (yep, Nana, a doctor); I hope to complete before 2022.

My advice to peers struggling to meet this milestone is to **just keep going**. Seek out **mentors**. **Believe in your work**. Remind yourself each day why you are on this journey. (*For me, the “why” are nonhuman beings.*)

And always, **be kind to yourself**.

Peace and love. ~ **Sarah May**