

EDITORIAL

Each year the critical animal studies literature continues to develop in new and exciting directions. Wherever possible the *Journal for Critical Animal Studies* has always sought to publish submissions that are contributing - and thus situated - at the very cutting edge of this burgeoning literature. In addition to this we are committed to promoting those fresh, distinct and unique voices that lie beyond the traditional walls of academia - and seek innovative ways to solicit contributions from a broad range of non-academic communities, groups and activists. To help encourage this diversity we invite a wide range of submissions that go well beyond traditional essay based formats, in the hope that this may capture a broader diversity of authors (and readers). I would like to think that the spirit of this approach and commitment has been highly rewarded in recent years, and it is captured in the diversity and rigour evident throughout the content of this issue.

The Issue begins with two **Essays**. The first of these, "*Resisting the Globalization of Speciesism: Vegan Abolitionism as a Site for Consumer-Based Social Change*" is written by Corey Lee Wrenn. Drawing on an extensive literature, Corey focuses on a series of interconnected critical animal issues as they are influenced by the contested realities of globalization. Here Corey develops a range of well-presented, highly persuasive themes and arguments that demonstrate (in part) how globalization has exacerbated speciesism through the ever widening commodification of non-human animal life. Following a critique of the (global) commodification process, and the implications that arise from this, the paper helpfully focuses on the impact and legitimacy of vegan abolitionism as an effective resistance movement to globalized speciesism.

The second excellent essay is written by Lauren Corman. In "*Getting Their Hands Dirty: Racoons, Freegans, and Urban Trash*", Lauren expertly unpacks the shared nature(s) of the social and culturally constructed vilification that (human) freegans, and (non-human) racoons endure (as pests, vermin etc.). The narrative is as clear and accessible as the critique is deep and hard-hitting. Happily, there is much to be found in the content of this essay that complements the central arguments harnessed in Corey Wrenn's essay, not least in the discussion of freeganism as a challenge to consumerism, but also later when focusing on how

"Racoons and freegans disrupt and reroute state-regulated and socially-sanctioned foot pathways." Importantly, Lauren argues, there is much to be gained by seeking a better - more critical - understanding of these vilified groups not least in affording insight into "radically different ways of understanding and being in the city".

"*Plattered Beings*" by Alejandra Maria Bozzolasco is the solitary **Poetry** contribution for this issue. With echoes of Alice Walker's famous observation, "We are one lesson", the poem explores, through superb, haunting and unflinchingly direct imagery, the invisible reality of violence, suffering and sense of outrage that is present whenever other animals are killed - and quite literally torn apart - to be consumed by humans. As Alejandra acknowledges, this poem stands not only as an outcry for other animals but also as a creative catharsis for self.

Paul C. Gorski's "*Strategic Oppositionality to the Animal Rights "Antis": Identity-Building and the United States Sportsmen's Alliance*" is published in the **Strategy and Tactic** section. Here, Paul explores the strategic formation of organizational identity with direct reference to the United States Sportsmen's Alliance (USSA). What follows are intelligent, nuanced and critical readings of the ways in which the USSA successfully continues to promote itself by harnessing itself in opposition to animal rights "antis". This approach has obvious highly significant implications for animal rights and liberatory movements, and Paul takes time to reflect openly on what these implications are, as well as suggesting constructive ways in which this oppositionality may be successfully confronted and de-constructed.

The **Interview** is conducted between Jon Hochsartner and the long standing animal activist Josh Harper. Through asking a range of thoughtful, interesting, timely, and highly relevant questions Jon allows a meaningful, insightful and critical exchange to be brought to the fore. The result in a fascinating and rich interview, which gives fresh insight not only into the ideas and experiences of Josh, and the challenges he faces, but also offers considered reflection on a broader set of issues and changes that have occurred across both space and time (reflecting on the changes in the animal rights movement since the 1970s).

This issue sees the inclusion of a new and valuable **Open Data** section. In this section we publish a succinct report that focuses on all the "*United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Recalls from 2006-2010*". The data has been provided by Carol L Glasser in her capacity as the research director of The Human Research Council (HRC). A lengthy

discussion about the importance of such data, and the methodology that underpins it is also provided by Carol. It is hoped that these statistics and collective insights will be applied constructively within and beyond the academy to help further the twin goals of animal rights and animal liberation.

Jessica Gröling provides the **Conference Review** for this issue. Focusing on the "*International Rights Conference held in Luxembourg*" in May 2011 Jessica highlights the main speakers; includes broad summaries about the nature of the conference; and pays close reflective attention to the key themes that were introduced and explored. The result is an extremely articulate and insightful review that will make for interesting and informative reading for many, not least for those who didn't get to attend the conference.

In the **Film Reviews** section, Adam Weitzenfeld presents a highly favourable review of the 1996 HBO documentary "*To Love or Kill: Man vs. Animal*". While noting some unfortunate gaps in the film - for example, a lack of explicit discussion of the intersectional nature of oppression - Adam argues that the film does an excellent job of highlighting the institutionalization of speciesism in myth, tradition, and political economy. Indeed Adam contends that the film offers "perhaps the greatest and most accessible prompt for a complete rethinking of contemporary human-animal relations": high praise indeed.

Carol L. Glasser reviews another documentary film, the 2010 "*Vanishing of the Bees*". While arguing that the film is a "must-see", Carol critically exposes some of the glaring weaknesses that are overlooked by the film makers. Most disappointingly perhaps the film fails to develop any critical arguments that would focus on the bees *intrinsic* qualities associated with being subjects-of-a-unique-life and thus mount a challenge to the speciesist's *instrumental* valuing of bees (i.e. as purely a means to human ends). However, the strengths of the film - and its potential appeal to a range of audiences (community, high school and college classes etc.) - are significant enough to recommend viewing.

The **Book Reviews** begin with an honest, insightful and critical review by Colin Salter focused "*The Vegan Revolution,...with Zombies*". Colin concludes that the book has all the necessary qualities that are associated with the most important literature, gauged in its ability to influence readers on many different levels, and also to cause the reader to fundamentally question and re-consider their own worldviews.

The second review by Hilary Malatino, explores: "*The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory 20th Anniversary Edition*". Focusing on 'Carnophallogocentrism and The Sexual Politics of Meat', and incorporating infamous examples in the recent past (Lady Gaga's meat dress for example) Hilary harnesses an extremely interesting, challenging and timely review of Carol Adams's influential text. Drawing on an impressive range of authors and philosophers, this review firmly supports the notion that the Sexual Politics of Meat is at least as relevant to the contemporary world as it was when it was first published.

In "*Muzzling a Movement: The Effects of Anti-terrorism Law, Money & Politics on Animal Activism*" Melanie Wellsmith finds the book to be well written, accessible and clearly presented. Orientated around analysing post 9/11 U.S. 'eco-terror laws' generally, and through the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act in particular, the book successfully addresses the key contribution that it seeks to make. Hence it becomes an important book on many levels, not least by encouraging readers to think more deeply and more critically about broader socio-political considerations. Beyond this, it also force individuals to question the implications of freedom in light of the repressive legal restrictions that have been ushered in through anti-terror legislation.

Piers Bierne's "*Confronting Animal Abuse: Law, Criminology and Human-Animal Relationships*" is reviewed by Jennifer Gannett. Impressed by the scope and depth of the book, and thus finding it a wonderful resource of context and information, Jennifer argues that this makes an important addition to the burgeoning literature on human-animal relationships. Indeed the key themes and arguments presented in the book force us continually to challenge our own assumptions and beliefs and allow us to gain new and deeper insights not only into ourselves but into the human condition more broadly. Thus it allows us to think actively about how to better present ourselves in a way that can more effectively influence the human-animal relationships in the world at large. It is certainly a book that deserves to be read as widely as possible.

The final book review is by Steve Remanin who focuses on "*Critical Theory and Animal Liberation*" (edited by John Sanbonmatsu). The review is highly favourable, and Steve draws particular attention to the way in which the book successfully applies critical perspectives in political and social thought to the question of our relationships with other animals. This, he

argues, is an extremely important intervention, giving much needed direction to 'left' political traditions as well as broader animal liberation movements. While noting problematic gaps, the omission of overt critical race or queer theory perspectives for example, Steve considers this an "invaluable" multidisciplinary text for scholars, students, or anybody interested in critical animal studies.

With a brief overview regarding the content of this issue now in hand, I hope that you enjoy the rest of this regular JCAS issue and uncover many things of interest, importance and critical insight.

Richard J White

Editor-in-Chief