Tourism Management Perspectives 29 (2019) 1–8

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Tourism Management Perspectives

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/tmp

The future of animals in tourism recreation: Social media as spaces of collective moral reflexivity

Mucha Mkono*, Afiya Holder

University of Queensland, Brisbane 4072, Queensland, Australia

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:
Animal ethics
Trophy hunting
Social movements
Cyberactivism
Animal studies

ABSTRACT

Over the last few years, a number of high profile incidents involving animals in tourism recreation contexts have sparked heated animal welfare debate on a global scale, giving rise to ethical movements mediated by various online platforms. This study applies a Critical Animal Studies approach and draws on the cases of the killings of Cecil the lion, Marius the Giraffe, Harambe the Gorilla, and Xanda (Cecil's cub) to analyse the role of digital movements and moral reflexivity in shaping the future of animals in tourism recreation spaces. We conceive of social media as digital spaces of *Collective Moral Reflexivity (CMR)* which signal heightened public engagement in human-animal recreational ethics. Findings highlight animal ethics in this context as a discursively evolving social construction, but one on which the public increasingly expects a more robust and compassionate ethical model of operation from the animal recreation industry.

1. Introduction

The last few years have seen a number of high profile incidents involving animals in tourism recreation, including: the killings of Cecil the lion, Marius the Giraffe, Harambe the Gorilla, and Xanda (Cecil's cub). This paper uses these relatively recent four cases to analyse the role of moral reflexivity, as expressed in digital spaces, in shaping the future of animals in tourism recreation contexts. We conceive of social media as digital spaces of *Collective Moral Reflexivity (CMR)* which signal heightened public engagement in human-animal recreational ethics.

Given the equivocality of the term 'reflexivity' in scholarly works, it is important to clarify its usage in this paper. Czyzewski's (1994, p. 161) observations capture our sentiments in this respect succinctly:

> The troublesome circumstance of all considerations on 'reflexivity' is that the term as well as its generic form 'reflexive' are equivocal in English. Consequently, this equivocality influences analytical reasoning … ..To begin, the dictionary provides four basic meaning variants in which the term 'reflexivity' may be used: 1a: directed or turned back on itself, 1b: marked by or capable of reflection … .2: relating to, or characterised by, or being a relation that exists between an entity and itself … .

Our own use of the term is given in definitions 1a and 1b. Specifically, we view the multi-directional discussions in social media as constituting a collective 'cultural reckoning', where society uses empirical incidents to 'turn the mirror on itself' and question whether a status quo is morally tenable. The social media exchanges that we present indeed reveal a digital era community capable of moral reflection in relation to human-animal relations.

While these digital spaces are a relatively recent phenomenon, the use of animals in tourism recreation stretches over centuries—exotic animals have been used within the tourism and entertainment industries for sports, recreation, and transportation; as actors, circus clowns, exhibitions in zoos, trophies and a host of other activities Carr & Cohen, 2011; Carr, 2016a, Carr, 2016b, Carr, 2016c; Cowie, 2014; Fennell, Fennell, 2006, Fennell, 2014, 2015. There is a constant high demand for tourist-animal encounters in captive, semi-captive and wild settings (Newsome, Dowling, & Moore, 2005), generating income for communities and conservation efforts globally (Harris, Cooney, & Leader-Williams, 2013; Powell & Ham, 2008). It remains a matter of contention however whether these tourism experiences have a net positive impact on tourists' awareness, appreciation and behaviours towards animals (Ballantyne, Packer, & Falk, 2011; Nelson, Lindsey, & Balme, 2013), associated in turn with environmental sustainability and conservation outcomes.

At the same time, there is growing interest in ethical issues pertaining to animal welfare in a range of tourism recreation contexts (for example, Bauer, 2017; Carr, 2016b, Carr & Broom, 2018; Fennell, 2011, Fennell, 2014, Fennell, 2015b; Mkono, 2018), and indeed in relation to

* Corresponding author.
E-mail address: m.mkono@uq.edu.au (M. Mkono).

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2018.10.002
Received 15 May 2018; Received in revised form 21 September 2018; Accepted 7 October 2018

tourism activities more broadly (for example, Fennell, 2006, 2015a), captured in what has been termed the 'moral turn' in tourism studies (Caton, 2012; Khoo-Lattimore, 2018). While such a turn is encouraging for the advancement of a more ethical form of tourism, animal ethics remains a relatively small part of the tourism body of knowledge. In view of this status quo, Cohen and Fennell (2016) have called upon the academic world to fully examine the socio-ethical ramifications of tourism-related activities on animals.

Furthermore, tourism studies as a field of research is yet to investigate fully the role of digital movements in the animal ethics conundrum, and, in particular, in the push towards more humane treatment of animals in tourism recreation. The present study seeks to make a contribution in that respect. As such, the paper considers the role of (digital) moral reflexivity in shaping the future of animals in tourism recreation—a key aspect of an evolving global ethos on human-animal relations in a technology driven era. The next section reviews current knowledge on these themes, in the context of tourism studies.

2. Digital activism (movements) in tourism studies

Digital movements (also 'cyberactivism') are a relatively new area of inquiry within tourism studies. However, in recent years, there is an expanding body of critical work on the role of digital media in tourism more broadly (Buhalis & Deimezi, 2004; Gretzel, 2017; Mkono, 2016a, 2018). Still, very little is known with regard to the role of digital movements in the evolution of human-animal ethics.

From a researcher's perspective, digital platforms have become an important data source for various topics within tourism studies (Mkono, 2016b; Munar & Jacobsen, 2013). As online communities such as Facebook continue to grow, tourism researchers are seeking new ways to draw insights on tourist experience, tourism service delivery, destination management, and other related phenomena (Mkono & Markwell, 2014; Watson, 2008; Woodside, Cruickshank, & Dehuang, 2007; Zhang & Hitchcock, 2017). Digital data possess the merits of rawness and authenticity due to their unsolicited nature, global sample sizes, and convenient downloadability (that is, easy to collect).

Outside of tourism studies, there is an emergent stream of research on digital movements (Carty & Onyett, 2006; Sandoval-Almazan & Gil-Garcia, 2014). This body of work seeks to demonstrate the unique attributes of movements that are digitally mediated, in comparison with traditional protest movements of the pre-digital era. For example, Sandoval and Gil-Garcia's (2014) conceptualisation of the progression of social movements identifies four stages of digital movements: the triggering event; the traditional media response; viral (online) organisation; and, the physical response. Such a framework is useful for understanding how contemporary movements can spread rapidly to reach a global scale and mobilise debate and change.

More broadly, there is increased scholarly interest in understanding the impacts of social movements, in terms of their successes and failures. Falling under the umbrella of Social Movement Impact Theory, the resultant body of work identifies four kinds of movement impact: individual, cultural, political, and institutional impact. Within these may be located "discursive impact", which is realised when a movement generates new narratives and conceptions of a particular issue, thereby altering public understandings and attitudes. The present study engages with these aspects of digital movements, and locates them within the animal ethics debate in tourism contexts.

For clarity, the terms 'activism' and 'movements' are used in this paper to denote collective expressions of disapproval of, and petitioning against, the actions of the animal recreation industry in each of the four cases, with the goal of achieving more humane treatment of animals. As such, we do not focus on the actions of specific protest organisations, but collective public reactions and drives for change. This fluid understanding of digital movements is arguably becoming increasingly useful for the modern era of online mediated ethical protests, as observed with recent hashtag protests in other areas such as the #Metoo movement, the #Blacklivesmatter movement, and others. The next section offers an overview of the existing literature on animals in tourism recreation.

3. Animals in tourism recreation contexts

A number of tourism studies observe how tourists and tourism stakeholders often perceive the role of animals as objects of the tourist gaze for mere enjoyment, utilization or exploitation in the form of unpaid employees rather than sentient beings possessing feelings, fears and a wide range of needs (Carr, 2014, 2018; Carr & Broom, 2018; Gillett & Gilbert, 2013). Carr and Broom (2018) discuss a plethora of positions of animals in tourism such as animals being objectified for enjoyment, animals hunted for thrill and bragging rights, animals consumed for exotic pursuits of something novel or animals utilized as unpaid employees for "enjoyment of the customer and the financial gain of the owner"(p. 36). Zoos—one of the contexts underpinning this paper— have been a focus of much of the criticism, although there has been progress by some zoos engaging actively in wildlife education and preservation programmes (Carr & Broom, 2018). Nonetheless, overall, zoos still predominantly "exist within the neo-liberal capitalist reality" (p. 50) seeking income from tourists who objectify animals in order to be entertained (ibid). Important to note, however, zoo administrations have also taken the ethical decision to formalise the progressive move towards a more animal-welfare centred approach, evidenced by programmes such as breeding sites for endangered animals and educational programmes (Carr & Broom, 2018; Carr & Cohen, 2011).

Another context underpinning this study is trophy hunting, a controversial phenomenon which has been the subject of extensive research from a variety of angles (Batavia et al., 2018; Lindsey, Roulet, & Romanach, 2007; Lindsey, Alexander, Frank, Mathieson, & Romanach, 2006; Macdonald, Jacobsen, Burnham, Johnson, & Loveridge, 2016; Macdonald, Johnson, Loveridge, Burnham, & Dickman, 2016; Mkono, 2018; Packer et al., 2011). Within that literature, in recent years, moral debates have been amplified (Macdonald et al., 2017, MacDonald, Jacobsen, Burnham, Johnson, & Loveridge, 2016; Macdonald, Johnson, et al., 2016; Nelson, Bruskotter, Vucetich, & Chapron, 2016). Morally, deliberately killing or harming animals for hedonistic reasons or social status is still a critical topic widely unresolved in the literature (see Carr, 2018; Goodall, 2018; Lovelock, 2008, 2018; Von Essen, 2018). For instance, on one end, Goodall (2018) argues the value of trophy hunting as a conservation funding tool is a questionable proposition as monies rarely reach conservation efforts. Further, she asserts, the killing of animals in their prime has debilitating biological impacts for the species and their young ones. Other researchers posit that hunting tourism can be more sustainable than ecotourism in not only animal conservation, but also in funding infrastructure, expressing cultural practices, population control mechanisms, and supplying communities with a good meat source (Lovelock, 2008, 2018). Nelson et al., 2013; Von Essen, 2018).

Noteworthy, Carr (2016a, 2016b) observes that not all animals are ascribed as ideal for tourism consumption; to be attractive to tourist, they should possess certain traits. For example in the case of zoos, popularity and attraction was ascribed mostly by the level of activity displayed and their visibility to visitors, if they were entertaining or cute, as well as if they were deemed an endangered species (Carr, 2016b, 2016c). Nonetheless, other factors were their appearance of exoticness or appeal, the presence of babies and them being fed or performing bodily functions such as defecating (Carr, 2016c).

More broadly, from an animal ethics perspective, for its part tourism has also been highly criticized as following 'anthropocentricism', a stance where humans are accorded intrinsic value while all other entities in the natural world are assigned only instrumental value (Kortenkamp & Moore, 2001). Anthropocentrism has more recently been termed 'human chauvinism' (Payne, 2010), where humans are considered the apex animal, manipulating most ecosystems and even

the climate (Fleming & Ballard, 2017). Critics point out that animals possess emotional life such as feelings of pleasure and pain, thus giving them a distinctive value, and suggesting they are not to be viewed or treated as mere objects of amusement and exploitation (Carr & Broom, 2018; Cohen, 2013; Fennell, 2012a, 2012b; Regan, 2004). It is clear that morality in the context of animals in tourism, as indeed in any context, will always remain contentions, as various groups and individuals approach the subject with divergent assumptions and understandings. The next section outlines the methods used in the present study.

4. Study approach

Critical Animal Studies (CAS) is adopted as the broad theoretical framework for the study. The core interest of CAS is ethical reflection on relations between people and other animals (Best, 2009; Corntassel, 2008; McCance, 2013). As such, CAS is appropriate for examining the moral quandaries that attend the four case studies. As a discursive approach, CAS also analyses "how the Western world fractures the evolutionary continuity of human/nonhuman existence by reducing animals to (irrational, unthinking) "Others" who stand apart from (rational, thinking) human Subjects" (Best, 2009, p. 16).

Consistent with the principles of CAS (Best, 2009; McCance, 2013), the study emphasizes the *subjectivity of animal ethics*, as well as the importance of *critical dialogue*, taking into account the perspectives of a range of interested groups, including activists, political actors, individuals, and non-profit sectors. CAS recognises the complexity of moral debates surrounding animal ethics, and seeks to *deconstruct binaries* that oversimplify moral representations. It also encourages *interdisciplinary approaches* that draw on various fields of research and schools of thought, with a view towards deeper and more comprehensive understanding.

It is also worth pointing out that the research question engages with the wider space of anthrozoology (Irvine, 2012), a field or research which also deals with interactions between humans and other animals. In addition, the study positions its CAS approach within a broader social constructionist leaning. Social constructionism allows us to explore the different ways in which both animals and animal ethics are constructed by tourists (or visitors), and by the industry actors (the hunting industry and the zoo industry). Social constructionist theory emphasizes the role of framing activities and cultural processes in interpreting the world. From this perspective, human-animal ethics are not absolute, they have to be "argued and contested as an issue in interaction with sympathisers and critics" (Munro, 2012, p. 4). Akin to 'standpoint theory' (Swigonski, 1993), a social constructionist stance posits that an individual's own perspectives are shaped by his or her social and political experiences. A broad theoretical framework, rather than a narrow, specific one, allows the study to draw on and inform a wider body of knowledge, which may be seen as a strength of the study.

5. Method

The study adopts a multi-case study approach to draw insights from four human-animal incidents in various recreation contexts: the killings of Cecil-the-lion, Marius the Giraffe, Harambe the Gorilla, and Xanda (Cecil's cub). In order to unearth the ethical positions that surround the varying narratives about animal welfare in tourism, this paper exploits the User Generated Content (social media posts) in response to the incidents. These four cases will form the empirical foci of this paper. The case study approach has its advantages—because of "the depth of the description which characterizes this method … the case method may thus be considered as a cornerstone of the new theoretical and methodological strategies." (Hamel, 1992, p. 7).

Background data for the cases were generated through extensive review of existing studies, and a range of online sources, including blogs and the websites of non-government organisations concerned with animal issues. For the exploration of the public's moral reflexivity in response to the four incidents, initial online searching was conducted on Twitter and Facebook between October 2017 and March 2018, with the search terms: 'Cecil the lion', 'Xanda', Marius giraffe', and 'Harambe'. This generated 138 pages of results, including complete posts and links to external articles. The results were then narrowed down to 43 pages, keeping the most relevant and most dense stories (that is, stories with the highest numbers of comments). Readers' comments posted in response to the articles were then copied and pasted onto a word document for analysis. From this process, a total of 817 posts were collated for analysis. Where present, the researchers conducted purposive selection based on the 'virality' of these cases, that is, how much times a post was liked, commented on and shared. The data were subjected to a thematic analysis.

Thematic analysis identified key themes, arguments and narratives contained within the collected texts. Thematic analysis is a systematic process comprising several stages, commencing with the assembling of data (Singh, Hu, and Roehl 2007; Conaway and Ward- rope 2010). The texts were each printed and assembled in an archive for each case. Each text was closely read several times for the researchers to immerse themselves in the data. Data immersion necessitates an active approach to reading each text to discover manifest and latent meanings and patterns (Braun and Clarke 2006). Several stages then followed of open coding and assembling into themes and sub-themes, dominant narratives and counter-narratives. The initial analysis was undertaken by one of the researchers and a second researcher checked this for agreement on themes and sub- themes generated.

In relation to (online) research ethics, it should be stated that data were extracted from publicly available posts; that is, data were not actively solicited from the social media users. As such, no consent was sought from posters. However, no identifying information of posters is given in the presentation of findings, although the data may be verified through a reverse search on the online platforms.

6. Description of cases: Cecil, Xanda, Marius, and Harambe

6.1. Culling of surplus/unwanted animals— Marius the giraffe (9 February 2014)

On February 8, 2012, "a cute baby giraffe" photo was posted on Visit Copenhagen's Facebook page. Reviewers requested a contest to name the baby giraffe. In February 2014, the 18 month old giraffe was killed, publicly dissected and fed to lions, a presentation observed live by zoo visitors, mostly children, sparking significant uproar globally (Eriksen & Kennedy, 2014; Morell, 2014). 'Keyboard warriors' posted images of Marius' dismembered body, describing the Copenhagen zoo and its director as "barbaric psychopaths "and "disgusting and sick" in social media. Online petitions were also shared, raising over 169,071 signatures (Cohen & Fennell, 2016). However, according to the zoo's official statement, Marius was euthanized because he came from a genetic pool that has bred over 38 offspring since the 1960s, making him a declared "surplus to the population". Marius being born a male also offset the sex ratio of the zoo's giraffe population making him a prime target for being eliminated to prevent inbreeding and overpopulation (Cohen & Fennell, 2016; Holst, 2014).

Despite the many demands to cancel the killing of Marius by members of the public and different animal welfare groups, with some recommending he be sent to another zoo, the Director of Copenhagen zoo Bengt Holst lamented, "Just moving this surplus to other places will just move the problem, out of sight out of mind. And that is in my eyes NOT a solution" (Copenhagen Zoo). Other social media users questioned why the closely related giraffes were allowed to breed in the first place. Holst asserted that breeding is essential for the animals' well-being, further noting that contraceptive methods such as the segregation of different genders or chemical contraceptives have negative side effects and reduce the wellbeing of the species.

A public autopsy and feeding of the giraffe's carcass to captive lions residing in the zoo also raised international outrage (Cohen & Fennell, 2016). This act was expressed by the director as an act of transparency and an opportunity to educate visitors about the scientific and biological makeup of the species which enriches both the animals (fed lions) and the viewing public (fed knowledge). Holst explained that visitors, most of whom are children, also learnt about nature and animals' natural order, what he labelled the "demystification" of life and death (Holst, 2014, p. 4).

6.2. Trophy hunting—the shootings of Cecil the Lion and Xanda

On July 1, 2015, Cecil, Zimbabwe's iconic lion, was bow-hunted on the Antoninette Farm bordering Hwange National Park. Cecil was the focal point of the international lion research project implemented by Oxford University where they tracked the species in minute detail since 2008 (Jacquet, 2015; MacDonald, Jacobsen, et al., 2016). The main issue of this case was not that the lion was killed, but that it was killed illegally, or at least unethically. Investigations reveal the owner of the area where Cecil was killed was not allocated a lion on his hunting quota for 2015 (StarTribune, 2015). It was also revealed that the hunter had used a bait to lure the lion out of the Hwange National Park (MacDonald, Jacobsen, et al., 2016). The event triggered a maelstrom of attacks on social media targeting the alleged killer, Walter Palmer, an American dentist, and Theo Bronkhorst, the professional hunter accompanying Palmer, and their accomplices (Howard, 2015).

In the aftermath, the hashtag #CecilTheLion was trending on Google and Twitter. Conversations were had by all cross-sections of stakeholders, the public bodies directly related to parks and wildlife, travel airline companies, animal rights organisations, international celebrities and the general public (Jacquet, 2015). Previous visitors to Hwange voiced their dismay about the incident. One regular visitor reckoned Cecil was Hwange's biggest tourist attraction and this incident can be considered, "not only a natural loss, but a financial loss. Tourists from just one lodge collectively paying US$9800/day, Zimbabwe would have earned more in just 5 days by having Cecil's photograph taken, than being shot by someone paying a single one-off fee of US$45,000 with no hope of future revenue" (Cruise, 2015). On social media, Twitter accounted for 670,000 tweets within 24 h of Cecil's death (Valinsky, 2015). The outrage also was covered on the popular American late night television talk show, "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" where the host Jimmy Kimmel questioned "Why are you shooting a lion… why a human being would feel compelled to do that... how is that fun?" He also went on to call the act "vomitous".

Attacks on Walter Palmer also escalated to attacks on one of the online customer review sites, Yelp targeting his dentist practice. One reviewer writes, "Murdering Barbarian!! Do not give your money to this heartless waste of humanity. Anything can be hunted, even a business! Congratulations to you Adolf Palmer and good luck!" Another wrote, "I would think twice before allowing this murdering jerk-wad stick is hands in my mouth Oh wait, I would love to bite his fingers off so he could never shoot a bow again!:)" and "This man Walter Palmer and by association his business which funds the eradication of our earth's precious species should be brought to trial for crimes against nature. A truly soulless person is the one who tortures, kills, skins, decapitates, and then leaves the body of a beautiful creature to rot. What a wasted life, justice will be served. #CecilTheLion" (Dewey, 2015).

Three years after the shooting of Cecil, on July 20, 2017, Xanda (Cecil's cub) suffered the same fate as his father Cecil and was shot by a trophy hunter outside Hwange National park, not too far from where Cecil was killed. Xanda was six years old and had several cubs at the time of his killing. Like Cecil, Xanda had been fitted with an electronic tracking collar by Oxford University's Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU) who later made calls for policy reform to enforce a wider 5 km (three-mile) "no-hunting zone" around the Hwange National Park, noting that the hunt was legal and this exclusion zone could mitigate accidental killing of collared lions that wonder outside the boundary of the Park (BBC, 2017).

According to the Telegraph, a UK news site, when the Zimbabwean professional hunter on the shoot, Richard Cooke from RC Safaris, realised that the dead lion had a collar, he handed it back to the researchers (Thornycroft, 2017). This act by Richard Cooke was praised by Andrew Loveridge working with the Department of Zoology at Oxford University responsible for monitoring Xanda. Loveridge characterised Richard Cooke as "one of the 'good' guys"; as an ethical hunter who had acted with honesty. His hunt was ruled legal as Xanda was over six years old, thus meeting the stipulated regulations and ethical guidelines (Thornycroft, 2017).

In marked contrast, using the hashtag #Xanda, the general public and animal welfare groups shared their views on Xanda's killing as being "senseless", "disgusting, "sadistic" and "disgusting", across social media networks and online news websites. Overall, however, the online traction received in connection to Xanda's death was not as sustained and did not afford similar virality and uptake by celebrities as his father Cecil's did. While the story served to reignite the trophy hunting debate, Xanda's killing and the significantly lower coverage illustrates the ephemerality of digital movement momentum in some cases.

6.3. Child in danger—the killing of Harambe

On May 28, 2016, Harambe, a 17-year old western lowland gorilla, was killed in an effort to protect a 3-year-old boy who accidentally fell within his zoo enclosure (Greshko, 2016). The western lowland gorilla is listed as a critically endangered species (Maisels et al., 2016). The general public shared the story on various online social media platforms, the majority of whom expressed their outrage, demanding that the mother of the child be held responsible. The hashtag #Harambe was soon trending on Twitter and Facebook. Animal experts in animal behaviour, psychologists, primatologists, and zoo officials based elsewhere also added to the conversation, some in support of the decision to kill Harambe, while others were against the action (Bekoff, 2016).

Support for the decision to kill Harambe came from primologist, ethologist, anthropologist and animal rights activist, Jane Goodall. Goodall noted, "Harambe could have hurt the child even without intending to cause harm... It certainly appeared at times that he was being gentle, but he was nervous and agitated by the unexpected arrival of the child and the shouting of the people watching… when people come into contact with wild animals, life and death decisions sometimes have to be made" (Downes, 2016). Azzedine Downes, President and Chief Executive Officer of International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) maintained a supportive stance in agreement with Goodall, pointing out the realistic underlying issue of keeping wild animals in captivity and the potential risks of safety to the general public and captive animals (Downes, 2016).

On the other hand, Professor Gisela Kaplan, an expert in animal behaviour, was critical of the zoo's action, commenting "The silverback would've understood that it was a defenceless small child. They would not normally attack, they are not an aggressive species (and) in the wild I'm certain the boy wouldn't have been killed…" She further asserted the gorilla's behaviour to be one of protecting the boy form the screaming crowds (Daily Mail, 2016).

Anti-zoo activism and conversations continued on social media and in the news, questioning the role of zoos and animal sanctuaries in the twenty-first century. A number of experts stressed their role in creating visitor awareness of animal conservation and welfare, noting many wild animals can have a reasonable life in the care of zoos or sanctuaries, providing that a very high level of care, adequate space, and socialisation opportunities should be standard (Downes, 2016; Gallucci, 2016). Others acknowledged that zoos reach a wide audience and in some instances life in the wild may not be ideal for certain animals (Downes, 2016). However, it was noted, other mediums such as the internet, television, films, and books, and visiting the animals in their

natural habitat can be more ethical ways for the general public to learn about wildlife rather than promoting animals in captivity (Downes, 2016; Gallucci, 2016).

7. Analysis and discussion

7.1. Collective moral reflexivity (CMR) in digital spaces and its implications

From the four cases, we conceive of social media as digital spaces of *Collective Moral Reflexivity (CMR)* which signal heightened public engagement in human-animal recreational ethics. The large majority of posters expressed fervent criticism of what they perceived as the gratuitous killing of animals, demanding a more robust and compassionate model of operation from the tourism (animal) recreation industry: "We humans are failing as the stewards to our planet and our animal friends such as Harambe. We humans killed that poor gorilla". Others added:

> There is something inherently wrong with a person who would rather claim a bloodied animal's body as a success in life than capture that same body in an exhilarating photograph.

> Hunters every time you pose for a photo with the dead body of an animal you killed, you are simply making a fool of yourself. Showing he entire world you are MORALLY VOID…. TROPHY HUNTING IS MURDER.. you have NOTHING to be proud of.

> "Murderers!! Opposite to conservation!"

The framing of trophy hunting as murder in the above narratives expresses the strength of moral objection felt by the posters: murder, a phenomenon normally associated with the killing of humans, is then applied to animal treatment, in an implicit deconstruction of the human-animal binary. The deconstruction of binaries is an important tenet of CAS (Best, 2009; McCance, 2013), and as tourism recreation elicits this kind of moral introspection, problematising the differential treatment of animals in comparison with humans, thresholds for socially acceptable animal treatment are challenged and potentially shifted. The future of animals in tourism recreation, from that viewpoint, is in transition. As Best (2009) describes it, the bifurcation between 'human' and 'animal' is being slowly dismantled by scholars and the public alike. Critical animal studies are demonstrating that "humans constructed their own natures and that of other animals as well principally through fallacious dualisms and the distorting lens of speciesism" (Best, 2009, p. 15). Nelson et al. (2016) put it simply, positing that people are increasingly asking: what constitutes a good reason to kill an animal?

However, it should be noted that there were also voices defending the industry, pointing to the polarising nature of animal ethics. In particular, in the cases of Xanda and Cecil, commenters in support of trophy hunting, who were a minority, noted the need for the sport of trophy hunting to ensure conservation of wildlife. As one commenter stated "The permits paid by hunters for lions and other animals are what keeps these animals alive in many parts of Africa. …Stopping legal hunting sounds good but is not the answer to future survival of these wild animals." Another wrote "its how they fund their wildlife protection programs. These governments need the money to pay people to protect them from poachers." Other users provided a biological rationale for trophy hunting stating for instance, "… in any event, periodically killing off the alpha male lion does have the advantage of increasing genetic diversity in the population since only one male fathers all of the cubs. Once he's gone, another male fathers the cubs and you'll have less inbreeding."

Online narratives in relation to hunting also revealed a broader understanding of the African contexts, highlighting the socio-economic and cultural factors of the destination: "There's a huge divide between Africa and the west on the value of lions. People in America and Europe have sentimental views of lions, while Africans who live near them regard them as dangerous pests who kill their cattle and endanger their children". Another user stated, "if the (trophy hunting) programs end more animals will die. The problem is the criminal poachers will continue to kill these animals. Countries use these funds to pay guards to protect the animals." Commenters further highlighted the politics latent in hunting debates, wherein the West dominates developing economies by projecting their judgments as normative:

> Typical first worlders judging a third world country. News Flash: You don't live there! It's they're country and they'll run it the way they want to. …You're using your first world morality to judge people who struggle to survive EVERYDAY!!!!!!!

In relation to animals in captivity, commenters also expressed discomfort at the 'dark side' of zoos which had been exposed in the case of Marius and Harambe: "Hopefully the Marius giraffe case raises international awareness about what goes on in zoos"; and "I naively thought that zoos helped animals. I will never visit a zoo again".

The realisation in these posts that zoos are not what they appear to be, and the suspicion which such a realisation elicits in the public, engenders greater curiosity about the treatment of animals in backstages: "The Marius giraffe murder was horrific but it has exposed the darker side to zoos. It was done in the open but, how much isn't". It would not be surprising, in future, if the public demand, more forcefully, greater transparency and accountability from zoos and similar animal facilities. Doubtless, zoos are increasingly under the glare of public scrutiny, as they must continue to justify their existence in the eyes of a suspicious and disapproving public (Keulartz, 2015). Indeed, it is clear from the posts that a significant number of users are also questioning whether zoos are becoming redundant, in light of advancements in technology: "With tech and animation advances, do we really need zoos? What really killed Harambe the Gorilla".

It is also true, as the above commenter points out, that scientists have made significant strides in building the capacity to learn about and observe animals in their natural habitats (for example through satellite tracking devices), obviating the need to keep animals in enclosed spaces in order to achieve the same ends. Therefore, this view is not without basis, and is likely to form part of the discourse on zoos into the future.

7.2. Rejecting consequentialism in favour of Kantian ethics

The four cases also brought to the fore the public's rejection of the consequentialist and anthropocentric justifications the animal recreation industry, particularly the pro-hunting lobby, has always turned to (Nelson et al., 2016). Adopting a stance traceable to the deontological moral philosophy of Immanuel Kant (Macdonald et al., 2016), the majority of posters on social media repudiated this reasoning, highlighting for instance how in their view trophy hunting works against conservation: "No bloody saviours there! They kill the best & the pride's Cubs can die too. Very despicable!!"; and "Yeah, cause the best way to save a species is to kill it for no reason. Geeee wiz, how more stupid can humanity get?"

These sentiments echo the arguments made by Nelson et al. (2016), who assert that judging whether the killing of wildlife is justified requires analysis not just of the consequences for the population or species, but also of the consequences for the individual organisms that are being killed, and of the motivations and actions of the killer. Thus, they suggest, a new ethical model is required to satisfy the public; one that does not minimise the emotions evoked by the suffering of animals in people. The legalism and consequentialism of the hunting community fall short of that model, even though they may be able to demonstrate conservation and/or community benefits.

The Kantian view which is latent in much of the public discussion on social media is in principle opposed to cruelty against animals, as according to that school of thought humans have an inviolable duty to cultivate compassion. Thus, in rejecting consequentialism, posters engaged with discourses of animal suffering and brutality, emphasizing

the experiences of individual animals: “Cecil suffered in agonizing pain hours before he died at the hands of Palmer”, and “Once you commit an act of brutality against Nature, you are accountable!” Each animals' soul will have redemption, do not fear! That is Karmic law!”. Posters here presuppose a view of animals as sentient beings capable of suffering and possessing a soul. Such a characterisation of animals moves away from the anthropocentric position where humans may act as they please towards animals as long as they ensure the survival of the species in perpetuity.

Further discrediting consequentialism, one poster provides an apt analogy, in which the ends do not always justify the means: “If a pedophile paid a very high price for abusing a child in an orphanage and that money went to the care and feeding of other orphan children, some that will also be allowed to be abused, would this make his abuse ok?”. A similar analogy is applied by Nelson et al. (2016) who argue that human trafficking would still be wrong even if its proceeds were to be used to for philanthropy or other noble cause. Other researchers have similarly been asking the question, if ends are to be held as justifying the means: “Where do we draw the line?” (Fennell, 2014, p. 988).

Nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge, a Kantian view might be appealing with its universalist moral high ground, but it might be difficult to operationalise under the current industry conditions. A ‘compromise’, *pragmatic ethics* position might be more useful in mediating the moral transition called for by consumers. Pragmatic ethics (LaFollette, 2000) views any moral standard and practice as open to interrogation and revision, based on experience, context, and practical considerations. Thus pragmatism might offer a less drastic guiding philosophy, stimulating change while remaining cognisant of the myriad complexities that the industry faces in balancing competing goals and pressures.

It is worth noting as well the increasing consumer power in the digital era, which arises from their ability to mobilise boycotts of destinations they consider unethical or otherwise undesirable. Shaheer, Insch, and Carr (2018) note that destinations have increasingly been boycotted in recent years, for various reasons including human rights and animal welfare, highlighting the influence of social media in the trend: “tourism boycotts had a noticeable increase from 2008 onwards, coinciding with the time when a large percentage of people adopted Facebook and Twitter” (p. 130). With digital mobilisation tools at their disposal, and as part of a larger trend in ethical consumerism, consumers have the potential to generate greater momentum around ethical causes and drive change. A recent case in point is the use of social media by animal rights activists to organise a “Boycott SeaWorld” movement via Facebook, Tumbler, Twitter, and similar platforms, reaching millions of users (Makarem & Jae, 2016), in the aftermath of the release of the documentary film, Blackfish.

Clearly, recreation providers do have to evolve in tandem with changing socio-cultural expectations, as Carr (2016b) notes in the case of zoos, which have had to “redefine themselves as something other than a site of human entertainment at the expense of the animals they house” (p. 38).

8. Conclusion

The paper sought to analyse moral reflexivity in digital spaces, conceiving of *social media as spaces of Collective Moral Reflexivity,* in relation to the treatment of animals in tourism recreation contexts. Using a CAS approach, a framework which foregrounds ethicality in the study of human-animal relations, it was apparent that the public is increasingly dissatisfied with the status quo, demanding a more morally robust and compassionate approach to treating animals in recreation contexts. Secondly, in response to the incidents described in the cases, the majority of social media commenters reject consequentialist and anthropocentric justifications of actions they see as causing unnecessary suffering of animals.

On a broader level, it is also clear that a new model of practice is imperative for practitioners in related industries, including zoos, hunting destinations, theme parks, and others. What that new model will entail is a matter of evolving discourse which will require further and sustained investigation. However, in pursing that research agenda, a CAS framework will be useful, if morality is to take precedence, as the public appears to believe it should. Economic models no longer suffice.

From a CAS perspective, greater *interdisciplinarity* in future studies will also be beneficial. For travel, recreation, visitor, and tourism studies, this means research frameworks that draw on other disciplines and areas of study: geography, human psychology, ecology, economics, and politics, among others. Further, as CAS progresses on its trajectory of building knowledge, “humanist and anthropocentric conceptions of subjectivity must be called into question” (Best, 2009, p. 15). Dualistic fallacies and the distortions of speciesism (Best, 2009) need to be confronted within both human participation and non-participation frameworks. In this regard, there is scope in future research to unpack the roles humans play in ecological preservation over economic development within the tourism settings.

The rejection of consequentialism, which emerged as a strong common denominator in the case studies, should be a focal point of future research. But, crucially, moving beyond consequentialism entails proffering viable alternatives to the status quo. Thus, for example, if trophy hunting is to be banned, how may wildlife conservation be otherwise financed?

The role of digital movements in shaping the future of animal ethics requires further analysis, in and outside of tourism recreation. The dynamics between viral organisation and real action, for example, remains a grey area. It is clear that digital activity does not amount to real change—the shortcomings of ‘clicktivism’ should not be overlooked. The Cecil-Xanda scenario highlights this fact—“Cecilgate” did not become the turning point it was hailed as, and two years on, his cub suffered the same fate as he, albeit under slightly different circumstances. It is easy to become complacent after a movement goes viral, even though no real success is achieved in the real world.

Notwithstanding these qualifications in respect of the limitations of digital protests, it is not premature to ask, in view of some of the discourses raised in the narratives, whether fifty years from now, there will still be zoos and theme parks in their current forms, or whether we will still have them at all. Will trophy hunting still be legal? For establishments that offer experiences of animals in captivity, these are worthwhile questions; for them a crossroads might be approaching, if it has not already arrived. For their part, strategies for engaging meaningfully with their customers' ethical concerns, greater transparency, and showing a demonstrable commitment to be more humane towards animals, are likely to engender more goodwill from the public, to ensure their continued support in the longer term, failing which they might bring forward their own demise. In any event, the public expects to see greater moral introspection by all players.

On the whole, our hope is that this paper will stimulate further inquiry into digital reflexivity in relation to the use of animals in tourism. Of course, other researchers will be able to use alternative approaches and methods, including more extensive quantitative studies, that would produce findings which might corroborate, elaborate, or refute, ours, and we would welcome that.

Acknowledgements

The study is funded under the Australian Research Council DECRA scheme, project DE170100385

References

Ballantyne, R., Packer, J., & Falk, J. (2011). Visitors' learning for environmental sustainability: Testing short-and long-term impacts of wildlife tourism experiences using structural equation modelling. *Tourism Management, 32*(6), 1243–1252.

Batavia, C., Nelson, M. P., Darimont, C. T., Paquet, P. C., Ripple, W. J., & Wallach, A. D.

(2018). The elephant (head) in the room: A critical look at trophy hunting. *Conservation Letters,* e12565.
Bauer, I. (2017). The plight of the cute little lambs: travel medicine's role in animal welfare. *Journal of Ecotourism, 16*, 95–111.
BBC (2017). Xanda, son of Cecil the lion, killed by hunter in Zimbabwe. *BBC News Services.*. (Retrieved from) http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-40671590.
Bekoff, M. (2016). Why was the Gorilla harambe killed at the cincinnati zoo? (Retrieved from from) https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/animal-emotions/201605/why-was-the-gorilla-harambe-killed-the-cincinnati-zoo.
Best, S. (2009). The rise of critical animal studies: Putting theory into action and animal liberation into higher education. *Journal for Critical Animal Studies, 7*(1), 9–52.
Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101.
Buhalis, D., & Deimezi, O. (2004). E-tourism developments in Greece: Information communication technologies adoption for the strategic management of the Greek tourism industry. *Tourism and Hospitality Research, 5*(2), 03–130.
Carr, N. (2014). *Dogs in the leisure experience.* Wallingford: CABI.
Carr, N. (2016a). An analysis of zoo visitors' favourite and least favourite animals. *Tourism Management Perspectives, 20*, 70–76.
Carr, N. (2016b). Ideal animals and animal traits for zoos: General public perspectives. *Tourism Management, 57*, 37–44.
Carr, N. (2016c). Star attractions and damp squibs at the zoo: a study of visitor attention and animal attractiveness. *Tourism Recreation Research, 41*(3), 326–338.
Carr, N. (2018). Tourist desires and animal rights and welfare within tourism: a question of obligations. In B. Grimwood, K. Caton, & L. Cooke (Eds.). *New moral natures in tourism* (pp. 134–148). London: Routledge.
Carr, N., & Broom, D. M. (2018). The position of animals in tourism. In N. Carr, & D. M. Broom (Eds.). *Tourism and animal welfare* (pp. 26–44). Wallingford: CAB International.
Carr, N., & Cohen, S. (2011). The public face of zoos: images of entertainment, education and conservation. *Anthrozoös, 24*(2), 175–189.
Carty, V., & Onyett, J. (2006). Protest, cyberactivism and new social movements: The reemergence of the peace movement post 9/11. *Social Movement Studies, 5*(3), 229–249.
Caton, K. (2012). Taking the moral turn in tourism studies. *Annals of Tourism Research, 39*(4), 1906–1928.
Cohen, E. (2013). Buddhist compassion and “animal abuse” in Thailand's Tiger temple. *Society and Animals, 21*, 266–283.
Cohen, E., & Fennell, D. (2016). The elimination of Marius, the giraffe: Humanitarian act or callous management decision? *Tourism Recreation Research, 41*(2), 168–176.
Conaway, R. N., & Wardrope, W. J. (2010). Do Their Words Really Matter? Thematic Analysis of U.S. and Latin American CEO Letters. *Journal of Business Communication, 47*(2), 141–168.
Corntassel, J. (2008). Toward sustainable self-determination: rethinking the contemporary indigenous-rights discourse. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political, 33*(1), 105–132.
Cowie, H. (2014). *Exhibiting animals in nineteenth-century Britain: Empathy, education, entertainment.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
Cruise, A. (2015). Death of Zimbabwe's best-loved lion ignites debate on sport hunting (Retrieved from) https://blog.nationalgeographic.org/2015/07/21/death-of-zimbabwes-best-loved-lion-ignites-debate-on-sport-hunting/.
Czyzewski, M. (1994). Reflexivity of actors versus reflexivity of accounts. *Theory, Culture and Society, 11*(4), 161–168.
Dewey, C. (2015). A vengeful internet trashed the Yelp page of the Minnesota dentist who shot Cecil the lion. *The Washington Post*. (Retrieved from) https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-intersect/wp/2015/07/28/a-vengeful-internet-trashed-the-yelp-page-of-the-minnesota-dentist-who-shot-cecil-the-lion/?noredirect=on.
Downes, A. (2016). Jane Goodall. *Azzedine downes together offer thoughts on tragic Harambe killing*. (Retrieved from) http://www.ifaw.org/united-states/news/jane-goodall-azzedine-downes-together-offer-thoughts-tragic-harambe-killing.
Eriksen, L., & Kennedy, M. (2014). Marius the giraffe killed at Copenhagen zoo despite worldwide protests. *The Guardian*. (Retrieved from) http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/09/marius-giraffe-killed-copenhagen-zoo-protests.
Fennell, D. A. (2006). *Tourism ethics.* Clevedon, UK: Channel View Books.
Fennell, D. A. (2011). *Tourism and animal ethics.* London: Routledge.
Fennell, D. A. (2012a). Tourism and animal rights. *Tourism Recreation Research, 37*(2), 157–166.
Fennell, D. A. (2012b). Tourism, animals and utilitarianism. *Tourism Recreation Research, 37*(3), 239–249.
Fennell, D. A. (2014). Exploring the boundaries of a new moral order for tourism's global code of ethics: an opinion piece on the position of animals in the tourism industry. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 22*(7), 983–996.
Fennell, D. A. (2015a). Ethics in tourism. In G. Moscardo, & P. Benkendorff (Eds.). *Education for sustainability in tourism* (pp. 45–57). London: Springer.
Fennell, D. A. (2015b). The status of animal ethics research in tourism: A review of theory. In K. Markwell (Ed.). *Animals and tourism: Understanding diverse relationships* (pp. 27–43). Bristol: Channel View.
Fleming, P. J., & Ballard, G. (2017). Homo sapiens is the apex animal: Anthropocentrism as a dionysian sword. *Australian Zoologist, 38*(3), 464–476.
Gallucci, J. (2016). Wild animals belong in the wild: Opposing view (Retrieved from) https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2016/06/01/wild-animals-belong-wild-opposing-view/85270242/.
Gillett, J., & Gilbert, M. (2013). *Sport, animals, and society.* Taylor & Francis.
Goodall, J. (2018). Sport hunting tourism. In N. Carr, & D. M. Broom (Eds.). *Tourism and animal welfare* (pp. 145–146). Wallingford: CAB International.
Greshko, M. (2016). Harambe's death a stark reminder of zoo accidents (Retrieved from) https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2016/05/harambe-gorillas-zoos-safety-incidents-animals/.
Gretzel, U. (2017). Social media activism in tourism. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism, 15*(2), 1–14.
Hamel, J. (1992). *Introduction: New Theoretical and Methodological Issues*. Retrieved from http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/001139292040001002.
Harris, R. B., Cooney, R., & Leader-Williams, N. (2013). Application of the anthropogenic Allee effect model to trophy hunting as a conservation tool. *Conservation Biology, 27*(5), 945–951.
Holst, B. (2014). Why does Copenhagen zoo euthanize a giraffe? (Retrieved from) https://www.zoo.dk/files/2014_giraffe_case-explanation_15_may.pdf.
Howard, B. (2015). Killing of cecil the Lion sparks debate over trophy Hunts *National Geographic* (Retrieved from) https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/07/150728-cecil-lion-killing-trophy-hunting-conservation-animals/.
Irvine, L. (2012). Sociology and anthrozoology: Symbolic interactionist contributions. *Anthrozoös, 25*, s123–s137.
Jacquet, J. (2015). The shaming of Walter Palmer for killing Cecil the Lion (Retrieved from) https://theconversation.com/the-shaming-of-walter-palmer-for-killing-cecil-the-lion-45689.
Keulartz, J. (2015). Captivity for conservation? Zoos at a crossroads. *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics, 28*(2), 335–351.
Khoo-Lattimore, C. (2018). The ethics of excellence in tourism research: A reflexive analysis and implications for early career researchers. *Tourism Analysis, 23*(2), 239–248.
Kortenkamp, K. V., & Moore, C. F. (2001). Ecocentrism and anthropocentrism: Moral reasoning about ecological commons dilemmas. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 21*(3), 261–272.
Lafollette, H. (2000). Pragmatic ethics. In H. LaFollette (Ed.). *The blackwell guide to ethical theory* (pp. 400–419). Malden: Blackwell.
Lindsey, P. A., Alexander, R., Frank, L., Mathieson, A., & Romanach, S. (2006). Potential of trophy hunting to create incentives for wildlife conservation in Africa where alternative wildlife-based land uses may not be viable. *Animal Conservation, 9*(3), 283–291.
Lindsey, P., Roulet, P., & Romanach, S. (2007). Economic and conservation significance of the trophy hunting industry in sub-Saharan Africa. *Biological conservation, 134*(4), 455–469.
Lovelock, B. (2008). *Tourism and the consumption of wildlife: Hunting, shooting and sport fishing: London.* New York: Routledge.
Lovelock, B. (2018). Ethical hunting In. In N. Carr, & D. M. Broom (Eds.). *Tourism and animal welfare* (pp. 147–150). Wallingford: CAB International.
MacDonald, D. W., Jacobsen, K. S., Burnham, D., Johnson, P. J., & Loveridge, A. J. (2016). Cecil: A moment or a movement? Analysis of media coverage of the death of a Lion, panthera leo. *Animals, 6*(5), 26.
MacDonald, D. W., Johnson, P. J., Loveridge, A. J., Burnham, D., & Dickman, A. J. (2016). Conservation or the moral high ground: Siding with Bentham or Kant. *Conservation Letters, 9*(4), 307–308.
Mail, D. (2016). Animal expert says Harambe the gorilla KNEW boy who fell into his enclosure was 'defenceless' and would never have attacked him (Retrieved from) http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3617102/Australian-animal-behaviour-expert-doesn-t-believe-gorilla-Harambe-gorilla-hurt-boy.html#ixzz5EVs4Ovlu.
Maisels, F., Strindberg, S., Breuer, T., Greer, D., Jeffery, K., & Stokes, E. (2016). *Gorilla gorilla ssp. gorilla. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2016: e. T9406A102328866*.
Makarem, S. C., & Jae, H. (2016). Consumer boycott behavior: An exploratory analysis of twitter feeds. *Journal of Consumer Affairs, 50*(1), 193–223.
McCance, D. (2013). *Critical animal studies: an introduction.* Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
Mkono, M. (2016a). The reflexive tourist. *Annals of Tourism Research, 57*, 206–219.
Mkono, M. (2016b). Sustainability and Indigenous tourism insights from social media: worldview differences, cultural friction and negotiation. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 24*(8–9), 1315–1330.
Mkono, M. (2018). The age of digital activism in tourism: evaluating the legacy and limitations of the Cecil anti-trophy hunting movement. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism,* 1–17.
Mkono, M., & Markwell, K. (2014). The application of netnography in tourism studies. *Annals of Tourism Research, 48*, 289–291.
Morell, V. (2014). Killing of Marius the Giraffe exposes myths about zoos: For the Copenhagen zoo, it seems marius was worth more dead than alive (Retrieved from) http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/02/140212-giraffe-death-denmark-copenhagen-zoo-breeding-europe/.
Munar, A. M., & Jacobsen, J. K. S. (2013). Trust and involvement in tourism social media and web-based travel information sources. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism, 13*(1), 1–19.
Munro, L. (2012). The animal rights movement in theory and practice: A review of the sociological literature. *Sociology Compass, 6*(2), 166–181.
Nelson, F., Lindsey, P., & Balme, G. (2013). Trophy hunting and lion conservation: A question of governance? *Oryx, 47*(4), 501–509.
Nelson, M. P., Bruskotter, J. T., Vucetich, J. A., & Chapron, G. (2016). Emotions and the ethics of consequence in conservation decisions: Lessons from Cecil the Lion. *Conservation Letters, 9*(4), 302–306.
Newsome, D., Dowling, R. K., & Moore, S. A. (2005). *Wildlife tourism.* Clevedon, UK: Channel View Publications.
Packer, C., Brink, H., Kissui, B., Maliti, H., Kushnir, H., & Caro, T. (2011). Effects of trophy hunting on lion and leopard populations in Tanzania. *Conservation Biology, 25*(1), 142–153.
Payne, P. G. (2010). The globally great moral challenge: Ecocentric democracy, values, morals and meaning. *Environmental Education Research, 16*(1), 153–171.

Powell, R. B., & Ham, S. H. (2008). Can ecotourism interpretation really lead to pro-conservation knowledge, attitudes and behaviour? Evidence from the Galapagos Islands. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 16*(4), 467–489.
Regan, T. (2004). *The case for animal rights*. Berkeley University of California Press.
Sandoval-Almazan, R., & Gil-Garcia, J. R. (2014). Towards cyberactivism 2.0? Understanding the use of social media and other information technologies for political activism and social movements. *Government Information Quarterly, 31*(3), 365–378.
Shaheer, I., Insch, A., & Carr, N. (2018). Tourism destination boycotts–are they becoming a standard practise? *Tourism Recreation Research, 43*(1), 129–132.
Singh, N., Hu, C., & Roehl, W. S. (2007). Text mining a decade of progress in hospitality human resource management research: Identifying emerging thematic development. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 26*(1), 131–147.
StarTribune (2015). Press statement on the illegal hunt of a collared Lion at antoinette farm. *Gwayi Conservancy, Hwange District on 1 July 2015 by Bushman Safaris Professional Hunter*Theo Bronkhorst. (Retrieved from) http://stmedia.startribune.com/documents/zimbabwestatement.pdf.
Swigonski, M. E. (1993). Feminist standpoint theory and the questions of social work research. *Affilia, 8*(2), 171–183.
Thornycroft, P. (2017). Exclusive: Cecil the Lion's son Xanda killed by trophy hunter. *The Telegraph*. (Retrieved from) https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/07/20/cecil-lions-son-xanda-killed-trophy-hunter-nearhwange-national/.
Valinsky, J. (2015). Outrage and backlash: #CecilTheLion racks up 670K tweets in 24 hours (Retrieved from) https://digiday.com/marketing/outrage-backlash-cecilthelion-racks-670k-tweets-24-hours/.
Von Essen, E. (2018). The impact of modernization on hunting ethics: Emerging taboos among contemporary Swedish hunters. *Human Dimensions of Wildlife, 23*(1), 21–38.
Watson, P. (2008). *Insights into tourism and hospitality experiences using netnography*.
Woodside, A. G., Cruickshank, B. F., & Dehuang, N. (2007). Stories visitors tell about Italian cities as destination icons. *Tourism Management, 28*(1), 162–174.
Zhang, Y., & Hitchcock, M. J. (2017). The Chinese female tourist gaze: a netnography of young women's blogs on Macao. *Current Issues in Tourism, 20*(3), 315–330.

Mucha Mkono is an Australian Research Council (ARC) DECRA Fellow in the Business School, University of Queensland, Australia. Her main research interests are digital social movements, ethical tourism, tourism social media, tourist experiences, African tourism, and sustainability.

Afiya Holder is a PhD candidate in the Business School, University of Queensland, Australia. Her main research interests are indigenous tourism, Caribbean tourism, and tourism marketing.