

Impact case study (REF3)

Institution: University of Chester		
Unit of Assessment: 31 Theology and Religious Studies		
Title of case study: Motivating Changes in Attitudes and Practice towards the Consumption of Animals		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2007 – 2019		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): David L. Clough	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Professor	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: 2007 – ongoing
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2015 – 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		

1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)

Research published in Prof. David L. Clough's two-volume *On Animals* monograph has led to:

- (1) the establishment of the new US non-profit organization CreatureKind, which was awarded \$749,000 in funding in the period 2015–2020;
- (2) changes in Christian attitudes and practice through the activities of CreatureKind and influence on books and periodicals for a popular Christian audience;
- (3) changes in organizational policy through the DefaultVeg campaign encouraging organizations in the UK and US to adopt default plant-based catering;
- (4) impact on the policy and practice of partner organizations, including through the AHRC-funded Christian Ethics of Farmed Animal Welfare project.

2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)

The implications of Christian theology and ethics for human relationships with the more-than-human world is a pressing current question, with relevance for Christian thinking about the current climate crisis, the current anthropogenic mass extinction of wild animals, the growth of industrialized animal agriculture, and the intersections with human health, food and water security, poverty, sexism, and racism. David Clough's research on non-human animals is an internationally leading contribution to this research area. His focus on addressing the human use of animals for food connects with a growing public awareness about the environmental impacts of food.

Clough's two-volume monograph *On Animals* has been widely recognized as a landmark contribution to consideration of the place of animals in Christian theology and ethics. Volume 1, *Systematic Theology* (2012) deconstructs theological rationales for considering humans to be the sole or primary object of God's care, and argues that Christians have reason to recognize core theological principles that affirm the place of other animals as fellow creatures of God, fellow recipients of God's reconciling work in Jesus Christ, and fellow participants in Christian visions of the new creation. A key implication of this analysis is that Christians have strong faith-based reasons to be concerned about animals. Volume 2, *Theological Ethics* (2019) assesses the implications of this Christian understanding of animals for the human treatment of animals today for food, textiles, labour, research experimentation, sport and entertainment, pets and companion animals, and human impacts on wild animals. The key finding of Volume 2 is that the use humans make of other animals for food is by far the most urgent ethical issue to address for reasons of scale, intensity, and scope of impacts.

The key findings from this research that Christians have strong faith-based reasons for being concerned about animals and that the human use of animals for food is priority concern led to two clear action points for policy and practice: the need to reduce consumption of animal products and move to sources of higher welfare animal products.

David Clough joined the University of Chester as Senior Lecturer in September 2007, was appointed as Professor of Theological Ethics in 2009, and remains in post. Animals has

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been the main focus of his research activity throughout this period. His research for *On Animals* took place between 2007 and 2019. It incorporates engagement with Christian theological texts, biblical scholarship, scientific perspectives on animals, contemporary animal studies, animal ethics, and statistical data relating to the human use of animals. To supplement accounts of human practice in relation to animals in the literature, his research for Volume 2 included visits to farms, slaughterhouses, laboratories, and racing stables.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

Clough, D. (2012; 2019). *On Animals: Volume 1 – Systematic Theology; Volume 2 – Theological Ethics*. London: T&T Clark/Bloomsbury. ISBN: 9780567139481; 9780567660862. (Vol. 1 can be supplied on request; Vol. 2 is listed in REF2)

Evidence of quality: Volume 1 was described in a review as ‘indisputably the most important and comprehensive theological treatment of animals to have appeared in any language at any time in the Christian tradition’ (Brian Brock, book review in *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 17(3) (2015), 357-360, DOI:10.1111/ijst.12054); Volume 2 was described in a review as ‘an absolute triumph’ ‘the undisputed seminal text in the field, it will likely stay that way for years (and maybe decades) to come’ (Charles C. Camosy, book review in the American Academy of Religion’s *Reading Religion*, March 4, 2020 <<http://readingreligion.org/books/animals>>).

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)**1. Creation of the new US non-profit organization CreatureKind (2015–2020) (B5-1)**

The first impact of Clough’s research is the creation of a new US non-profit organization. Clough founded the organization CreatureKind in 2015 with a partner in the US specifically to engage an audience outside the academy with the key findings of his two-volume *On Animals* monograph: that Christians have faith-based reasons to be concerned about other animals, and that practical action in relation to the use of animals for food is the top priority. CreatureKind’s key strategies derive directly from Clough’s research: focussing on farmed animal issues and seeking to engage a broad and diverse Christian audience with arguments engaging in depth with Christian theology and ethics. Since 2015, CreatureKind has worked in the UK and North America to engage churches, theological colleges and seminaries, universities with Christian foundations, and other Christian institutions with farmed animal welfare as a faith issue. It is the first Christian organization to focus on the consumption of animals and farmed animal welfare. From 2015–2019 it worked in partnership with Eastern University in Philadelphia and the non-profit organization Farm Forward as fiscal sponsors, but it incorporated as an independent non-profit organization in the US in February 2020. By December 2020 it had been awarded \$749,000 in funding and had grown to employ one full-time and two half-time staff members alongside part-time contractors. Alertness to intersectional issues and diversity has been a key organizational value throughout. The inaugural board of 10 has 5 women and 5 people of colour; Clough has transitioned from co-director to co-president of the Board alongside an African American woman, and CreatureKind’s co-directors are now two women, one of whom is Latinx. CreatureKind has a website with a blog that has been actively updated since February 2016, and social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Its website attracted 91K page views in the period 2015–2020, and it has 2400 followers on Facebook, 813 on Twitter, and 491 on Instagram. In addition to the impact of creating this new non-profit organization, CreatureKind work in the three key areas of education, institutional engagement, and community have each had their own impacts, which are outlined in sections 2(a)–2(c) below.

2. Changes in Christian attitudes and practice through the activities of CreatureKind and influence on books and periodicals for a popular Christian audience**2(a) Impact on attitudes and practice via CreatureKind educational programme (2016–2020)**

CreatureKind’s educational strategy is strongly informed by Clough’s research and has had three main foci: a course for church groups and speaking events and media interviews by Clough.

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- The six-session course on Christianity and animals includes video presentations, resources for study of biblical and theological texts, a leader's guide, and publicity resources. It has been available since May 2017 from the CreatureKind website, and has been downloaded 521 times. In online feedback from a group of 20 participants in the course, all respondents who were not already vegetarian or vegan reported their intention to reduce consumption of animal products, with 6 committed to stop consuming animal products entirely (B5-1).
- Interest in Clough's *On Animals* has resulted in speaking invitations at over 40 universities and seminaries between 2016 and July 2020 to address Christian reasons for rethinking the consumption of animals. International demand led to a 2019 book tour that included 5 weeks in North America and a month in Australia and New Zealand. The combined audience for these tour events was over 1500. 86% of respondents to a post-event audience questionnaire not already vegetarian or vegan agreed that the event had made a difference for their attitudes towards animals and 77% agreed that it would make a difference for their food choices (B5-1).
- An extensive range of broadcast and podcast interviews in the UK, North America, Australia, and New Zealand has enabled Clough to influence the attitudes and practice of wider audiences: UCB Radio interview on Christianity and Animals (UK, February 2019), BBC Radio 4's 'Beyond Belief' on Veganism (UK, May 2019), 'On the Way' podcast (Australia, June 2019), 'Department of Conversation' podcast (New Zealand, June 2019), 'Our Henhouse' podcast (US, June 2019), 'The Good Earth' podcast (Australia, June 2019), ABC Radio's 'Soul Search' (Australia, July 2019); 'Panpsycast' podcast (UK, February 2020). Clough was interviewed about his AHRC-funded Christian Ethics of Farmed Animal Welfare project for Premier Christian Radio and BBC Radio Merseyside in July 2018 and on BBC Radio 4's Sunday Programme in 2020. He has also published blogs for non-academic audiences: The Vegan Society published Clough's blog 'Should Christians Be Vegan' in January 2019; ABC Religion and Ethics in Australia published an article based on his book tour lecture 'Should Christians eat animals? The challenge of Christian animal ethics' in June 2019, and he regularly publishes blogs on the CreatureKind website.

2(b) Impact on practice via CreatureKind institutional programme (2015–2020)

Since 2016 CreatureKind has worked with Christian seminaries, theological colleges, universities, and other Christian organizations about implementing strategies to reduce consumption of animal products, move to higher welfare sourcing, and consider wider implications of attending to animals such as in their curriculum. The University of Winchester, Friends' House in Euston, and Regents Theological College became formal CreatureKind partners in 2016, 2017, and 2020 respectively. In the 3-year period from 2016-2019, the University of Winchester achieved significant reductions in consumption of animal products, reducing carbon emissions by 14% or 345 tonnes CO₂ annually. They have decided to eliminate beef entirely, which will achieve further reductions of 3,387 kg of beef and 89 tonnes of CO₂ annually (B5-2). Following their decision to partner with CreatureKind, Friends' House decided to make their restaurant entirely vegetarian. CreatureKind has been in discussion with over 60 other institutions in the UK and US about food policy. Impacts of this work cannot yet be quantified in the same way, but many of these institutions are reviewing catering policy and considering implementing changes (B5-1).

2(c) Impact on attitudes and practice via CreatureKind community programme (2015–2020)

CreatureKind has responded to a need to resource individual church leaders or church members who want to influence their churches but are unsure about how and often feel isolated. In 2019 CreatureKind held a two-day retreat for vegan women attended by 8 people. Since 2019, CreatureKind has held two monthly conference calls for church leaders and church members interested in sharing experiences with others. 33 clergy and 81 animal advocates have participated. CreatureKind has also hosted two interns, an MDiv student from Columbia Theological Seminary and an undergraduate from Eastern University, each of whom have worked on projects within their own institutions and helped with other CreatureKind project work, and in 2020 launched a student fellowship programme resourcing and mentoring students in a range of contexts to undertake projects relating to CreatureKind's mission. The first year's cohort consists of 7 students from three countries representing 6 different denominations (B5-1).

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2(d) Impact on attitudes via books and periodicals for a popular Christian audience (2019–2020)

- In 2019 Michael Leyden, published *Faithful Living: Discipleship, Creed, and Ethics* (SCM, 2019) with a chapter on food and animals drawing on Clough's research and commending both CreatureKind and DefaultVeg as resources for Christian action. As Director of St Mellitus North West he also oversaw the college adoption of the DefaultVeg policy.
- The Archbishop of Canterbury's 2020 Lent Book is Ruth Valerio's *Saying Yes to Life* (SPCK, 2019). Valerio affirms Christian reasons for concern for animals and makes connections with dietary choices. She credits Clough as 'a significant influence on my thinking about Christianity and animals', devotes a chapter of the book to human relationships with animals, and quotes from *On Animals* in that chapter. The book had sold over 18,000 copies by December 2020 and is the most successful ever Church of England Lent Book. It was studied by many church Lent groups, and was used as the basis of the Church of England's 'Live Lent: Care for God's Creation campaign' including a study guide, app, and online resources. 'Humans and Other Animals' is the topic of Week 6 of the campaign, and resources make connections with consumption of animals. The 'Live Lent' campaign was the most successful ever Church of England Lent campaign. Valerio also reports that Clough's research 'continues to influence my public engagement work with Tear Fund, in talking about concern for animals in a Christian context and the implications for dietary choices' (B5-3).
- In its 22nd May 2020 issue the *Church Times* ran a full-page feature on Clough titled 'Should Christians eat less meat?' (p. 18) which quoted Canon Andrew Davison, Starbridge Lecturer in Theology and Natural Sciences at Cambridge University, saying of Clough 'He has brought the topic of animals into the mainstream of theological study. His work is both rigorously scholarly and enormously effective. It has the sort of impact on public policy and human behaviour that academics can usually only dream of' (B5-4).

3. Impact on organizational policy through the DefaultVeg campaign encouraging organizations in the UK and US to adopt default plant-based catering (2017–2020)

One of the key conclusions of Clough's research was the need to reduce consumption of animal products. One of the strategies CreatureKind developed to effect this was to encourage organizations to make their catering plant-based by default while allowing those who wished to eat animal products to request them. This successfully reduced consumption without triggering resistance on the basis of reducing choice. Since the initiative had appeal beyond a Christian constituency, Clough approached the Better Food Foundation to promote the initiative in the US (<http://defaultveg.org>) and was approached by the Vegetarian Society about taking it up in the UK as part of their 'Eat to Beat Climate Change' campaign. By December 2020, the DefaultVeg campaign had persuaded 38 organizations to adopt its catering policy, ranging from UK academic societies and university faculties to US NGOs and conference organizers. The combined commitment of these adopters represents 74,400 meals per year which achieves average reductions in demand for animal products equivalent to 1600 animals, 72,000 kg CO₂ in greenhouse gas emissions, and 10 million litres of water (B5-5).

4. Impact on policy and practice of partner organizations (2016–2020)

4(a) A Rocha UK

Eco Church is an awards scheme run by Arocha UK enabling churches to help reflect care for God's creation in their practice. It has been running for 5 years and now has 3100 churches registered with over 1000 having qualified for awards. Arocha UK contacted Clough to draft the Eco Church material on animals and food, which led to consumption of animals becoming a stronger element within the programme. The Eco Church resource guide points users to CreatureKind for further help (B5-3).

4(b) Green Seminaries Initiative (GSI)

GSI run a certification programme for seminaries in the US, encouraging an environmental audit and action plan to improve their sustainability. They run regular conferences and webinars for the 10 seminaries in their certification programme and the many more seminaries registered with them. In 2019 CreatureKind and GSI signed a partnership agreement to collaborate on food policy.

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Prof. Lauren Kearns, GSI co-founder, reports 'this partnership has resulted in farmed animal welfare and reducing the consumption of animals becoming a more significant focus within the GSI framework, the production and distribution of more resources for seminaries to take action, and changed food policies and actions at a range of theological schools' (B5-6).

4(c) AHRC-funded Christian Ethics of Farmed Animal Welfare project

In 2017 Clough was awarded £458K by the AHRC as PI on a project on the Christian ethics of farmed animal welfare. A key part of the rationale for the project was the argument made in Clough's *On Animals* that Christians should give attention to the welfare of animals with farmed animals as the most urgent priority for action. The project has 14 institutional partners including major UK churches (Church of England, Church of Scotland, Church in Wales, Methodist Church, Roman Catholic Church, United Reformed Church) and other Christian organisations including the Church Investors Group. Each partner organization committed in-kind resources of at least 2 days of staff time per year to participate in the project. Gaining this level of participation from church partners for a project on farmed animal welfare is itself an impact on their activity. The project was designed from the start to enable impact on organizational policy. Alongside academic outputs, a key part of the project is developing and encouraging the implementation of a policy framework for churches and Christian organizations. This 60-page report was completed and launched in November 2020 together with a short animated video introducing the project. The launch was reported in detail by the *Methodist Recorder* across its front page and onto page 2, covered in an article in *The Tablet*, and in an item on BBC Radio 4's Sunday Programme. By the end of December 2020, the Policy Framework had been downloaded 190 times in PDF format and 192 print copies had been sent out on request (B5-7). Partner churches are now considering its implications for policy at a national and local level.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

1. CreatureKind Activity Report 2015–2020, January 2021.
2. HSI Forward Food Report on the University of Winchester 2015–2019.
3. Letter from the Global Advocacy and Influencing Director, 23/2/21.
4. Church Times article, 'Should Christians Eat Less Meat?', May 2020.
5. Report on DefaultVeg Campaign Impact, January 2021.
6. Letter from the Green Seminaries Initiative Co-Founder, 17/2/21.
7. CEFAW Policy Framework download report, January 2021.