

# Jonathan Birch

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Personal website: <http://personal.lse.ac.uk/birchj1/>

Project website: <https://www.lse.ac.uk/cpnss/research/ASENT>

Google Scholar profile:

<https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=uUFuYvYAAAAJ&hl=en&oi=ao>

## Academic positions

- 2018-present Associate Professor at the London School of Economics and Political Science.  
2014-2018 Assistant Professor at the London School of Economics and Political Science.  
2012-2014 Junior Research Fellow at Christ's College, University of Cambridge.

## Education

- 2009-13 PhD in Philosophy of Science, University of Cambridge. Dissertation title: *Kin Selection: A Philosophical Analysis*.  
2008-9 MPhil in History & Philosophy of Science, University of Cambridge.  
2005-8 BA (Hons) in Natural Sciences, University of Cambridge.

## Book

- 2017 *The Philosophy of Social Evolution*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

## Journal articles (single-authored unless otherwise stated)

- In press Materialism and the moral status of animals. *Philosophical Quarterly*.  
In press Should animal welfare be defined in terms of consciousness? *Philosophy of Science*.  
2022 The search for invertebrate consciousness. *Noûs* 56(1):133-153.  
2022 Animal consciousness: the interplay of neural and behavioural evidence. *Journal of Consciousness Studies*. [co-authored with Andrew Crump.]  
2022 Animal sentience. *Philosophy Compass*. [co-authored with Heather Browning.]  
2022 Clinical decisions using AI must consider patient values. *Nature Medicine*. [co-authored with Katie Creel, Abhinav Jha and Anya Plutynski.]  
2021 The cultural evolution of cultural evolution. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London B: Biological Sciences* 376(1828):20200051. [co-authored with Cecilia Heyes.]  
2021 The skilful origins of human normative cognition. *Analyse & Kritik* 43(1):191-201. [published as a target article with 4 commentaries and my responses.]  
2021 Toolmaking and the evolution of normative cognition. *Biology & Philosophy* 36:4.  
2020 Global workspace theory and animal consciousness. *Philosophical Topics* 48(1).  
2020 Unlimited associative learning and the origins of consciousness: A primer and some predictions. *Biology and Philosophy* 35:56. [co-authored with Simona Ginsburg and Eva Jablonka] [published as a target article with 9 commentaries and our responses].  
2020 Dimensions of animal consciousness. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 24(10): 789-801. [co-authored with Alexandra K. Schnell, Nicola S. Clayton].  
2020 Kin selection, group selection, and the varieties of population structure. *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 71(1):259-286.  
2019 Joint know-how. *Philosophical Studies* 176:3329-3352.  
2019 Inclusive fitness as a criterion for improvement. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 76:101186

- 2019 Are kin and group selection rivals or friends? *Current Biology* 29(11):R433-R438.
- 2019 Altruistic deception. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 74:27-33.
- 2018 Animal cognition and human values. *Philosophy of Science* 85:1026-1037.
- 2017 Animal sentience and the precautionary principle. *Animal Sentience* 2:16(1).  
[published as a target article with 20 commentaries and my responses.]
- 2017 The inclusive fitness controversy: finding a way forward. *Royal Society Open Science* 4:170355.
- 2016 Hamilton's two conceptions of social fitness. *Philosophy of Science* 83:848-860.
- 2016 Natural selection and the maximization of fitness. *Biological Reviews* 91(3):712-727.
- 2015 Kin selection and its critics. *BioScience*. 65(1): 22-32 [co-authored with Samir Okasha]. "Editor's choice", January 2015.
- 2014 Gene mobility and the concept of relatedness. *Biology and Philosophy* 29(4): 445-476.
- 2014 Queller's separation condition explained and defended. *American Naturalist*. 184(4): 531-540 [co-authored with James A. R. Marshall].
- 2014 Propositional content in signalling systems. *Philosophical Studies* 171(3): 493-512.
- 2014 Hamilton's rule and its discontents. *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*. 65(2): 381-411. "Editor's choice", June 2014.
- 2013 On the 'simulation argument' and selective scepticism. *Erkenntnis* 78(1): 95-107.
- 2012 Collective action in the fraternal transitions. *Biology and Philosophy* 27(3): 363-80.
- 2012 The negative view of natural selection. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 43(2): 569-73.
- 2012 Robust processes and teleological language. *European Journal for Philosophy of Science* 3(3): 299-312.
- 2009 Irretrievably confused? Innateness in explanatory context. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 40(4): 296-301.

### Policy reports

- 2021 *Review of the Evidence of Sentience in Cephalopod Molluscs and Decapod Crustaceans* [with Charlotte Burn, Alexandra Schnell, Heather Browning and Andrew Crump].

### Book chapters

- 2018 Fitness maximization. In R. Joyce (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Evolution and Philosophy*. London: Routledge, pp. 49-63.

### Special issues

- 2022 Birch, J., Browning, H., Crump, A. and Michel, M. (eds.) (2022) *Animal Consciousness*. Special issue of the *Journal of Consciousness Studies*.

### Commentaries, introductions, editorials, book reviews and review essays

- In press How we got stuck: the origins of inequality (Review of Sterelny: *The Pleistocene Social Contract*). *Mind and Language*. [co-authored with Andrew Buskell.]
- 2022 How should we study animal consciousness scientifically? *Journal of Consciousness Studies*. [special editorial co-authored with 14 others.]
- 2021 The hatching of consciousness (Review of Godfrey-Smith: *Metazoa and Le Doux: The Deep History of Ourselves*). *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences*.
- 2021 Neural organoids and the precautionary principle. *American Journal of Bioethics* 21(1):56-58. [co-authored with Heather Browning.]
- 2020 The meaning of biological signals (Introduction to a special issue on Content in Signalling Systems). *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 84:101348. [co-authored with Manolo Martinez and Marc Artiga.]
- 2020 Zones of precaution (Commentary on Mikhalevich and Powell, 'Minds without spines'). *Animal Sentience* 5(29): 28
- 2020 The evolutionary roots of belief (Review essay on Fuentes: *Why We Believe*). *Current Biology* 30(17): R971-R973

- 2020 The place of animals in Kantian ethics (Review essay on Korsgaard: Fellow Creatures). *Biology and Philosophy* 35: 8.
- 2020 In search of the origins of consciousness (Review essay on Ginsburg and Jablonka: The Evolution of the Sensitive Soul). *Acta Biotheoretica* 68: 287-294.
- 2019 Review essay on Okasha: Agents and Goals in Evolution. *Mind* 128(512): 1408-1416.
- 2019 From the 'coding metaphor' to a theory of representation (Commentary on Brette, 'Is coding a relevant metaphor for the brain?'), *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 42: e220. [co-authored with Joulia Smortchkova].
- 2018 Degrees of sentience? (Commentary on Sneddon et al., 'Fish sentience denial: muddying the waters'). *Animal Sentience* 21(11).
- 2018 The difference between the scope of a norm and its apparent source (Commentary on Stanford, 'The difference between ice cream and Nazis: Moral externalization and the evolution of human cooperation'). *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 41: E97.
- 2017 Dividing the Pleistocene pie (Review of Baumard: The Origins of Fairness). *BioScience* 67(2): 180-182.
- 2017 Review of Tomasello: A Natural History of Human Morality. *BJPS Review of Books* 2017.
- 2014 How cooperation became the norm (Review essay on Sterelny, Joyce, Calcott and Fraser (eds): Cooperation and Its Evolution). *Biology and Philosophy* 29(3): 433-44.
- 2014 Has Grafen formalized Darwin? (Commentary on Grafen, 'The Formal Darwinism project in outline'). *Biology and Philosophy* 29(2): 175-80.
- 2013 Review of Okasha and Binmore (eds): Evolution and Rationality. *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 64(3): 669-673.
- 2013 Explaining the human syndrome (Review of Sterelny: The Evolved Apprentice). *Metascience* 22(2): 347-350.
- 2012 Social revolution (Review essay on Bourke: Principles of Social Evolution). *Biology and Philosophy* 27(4): 571-81.

### Research grants and prizes

- 2020-24 ERC Starting Grant on Foundations of Animal Sentience (ASENT) (€1.5m over five years).
- 2020-21 Defra grant for *Review of the Evidence of Sentience in Cephalopod Molluscs and Decapod Crustaceans* (AW0517) (£33,150 over six months).
- 2015-18 Philip Leverhulme Prize from the Leverhulme Trust (£100,000 over three years).

### Visiting fellowships

- 2018 Visiting Fellowship at the Australian National University, August 2018.
- 2016 Visiting Fellowship at UC Irvine, March-April 2016.
- 2015 Visiting Fellowship at the Australian National University, July-August 2015.

### Selected writing/podcasts for a general audience

- 2022 Octopus farms raise huge animal welfare concerns—and they're unsustainable too. *The Conversation*. [co-authored with Alexandra Schnell and Heather Browning.]
- 2021 Octopuses, crabs and lobsters feel pain—here's how we found out. *The Conversation*. [co-authored with Alexandra Schnell and Andrew Crump.]
- 2021 How to respond to Omicron: Lessons from Alpha. *LSE COVID-19 blog*.
- 2021 Which animals should be considered sentient in the eyes of the law? *The Guardian*.
- 2021 Humans, animals and pandemics: what needs to change? *LSE Festival* [a video and blog post.]
- 2020-21 Science and policy in extremis, parts 1 and 2. *LSE COVID-19 blog*.
- 2020 G. E. Moore's hands vs radical scepticism. *LSE Philosophy blog* [teaching resource]
- 2020 The mind-body problem. *LSE Philosophy blog*. [teaching resource]
- 2019 A conversation [with David Sloan Wilson] about the equivalence of theories of social evolution. *This View of Life blog*.
- 2019 How do we know how to act together? *LSE Philosophy blog*.
- 2019 Five reasons to vote in a safe seat. *LSE British Politics & Policy blog*.

- 2017 Crabs and lobsters deserve protection from being cooked alive. *Aeon*. Syndicated in *The Week*.
- 2017 The philosophy of social evolution [a series of 5 posts summarising the book]. *Brains Blog*.
- 2014-2022 Host of five public events a year for the Forum for Philosophy, recorded and released as podcasts (~35 events).

**Administration**

- 2021-present Doctoral Programme Director (Admissions), LSE Philosophy.
- 2019-present Member of the Research Development Panel, LSE.
- 2019-present Member of the Academic Nominations Committee, LSE (renewed for second term).
- 2018-2021 Doctoral Programme Director, LSE Philosophy.

**Professional service**

- 2022 Interim director of the Forum for Philosophy.
- 2020-22 Associate Editor, *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*.
- 2018-22 LAHP Subject Area Group panel member/chair (Theoretical Philosophy).
- 2014-21 Fellow of the Forum for Philosophy (in this capacity, organizer of five public events per year at the LSE).
- 2017-20 Trustee (Committee Member) of the British Society for the Philosophy of Science.
- 2015-17 Treasurer of the British Society for the Philosophy of Science.