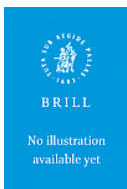




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□ Critical Events in Animal Advocacy: A Legitimacy-Based Examination of the Michael Vick Dogfighting Case



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Abstract Using the quasi-experimental setting of the Michael Vick dogfighting case, the researchers employed rich interview content to explore the question, “When a critical event occurs in the animal advocacy field, what motivates advocacy groups to respond?” The investigation reveals that what was thought to be one critical event was in actuality three unique yet interrelated critical events—(1) the revelation of the transgressions; (2) the punishment of the perpetrator; and (3) the decision about whether to ally with the perpetrator in advocacy. The study shows that legitimacy concerns, occasionally paired with reflections on organizational identity, influenced the decision-making of advocacy organizations across all three critical events, as each held the potential either to legitimize or to delegitimize the advocacy organizations and/or the perpetrator (i.e., Vick).

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