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Political Animals and Animal Politics by Marcel Wissenburg and David Schlosberg (eds). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. 180pp., £60.00 (h/b), ISBN 9781137434616

This collection contains ten original papers (plus a substantial introduction) broadly in the burgeoning field labelled 'animal political philosophy' (p. 1). Chapters vary in methodology and focus and, perhaps inevitably, some of the papers are a better fit than others. The book is split into three sections which correspond to three key themes identified in the introduction: first, the transition from the traditional 'moral' animal ethics to the newer 'political' animal ethics; second, the putative 'rapprochement between animal ethics and ecologism' (p. 2); and, third, the real-world politico-legal developments which benefit nonhuman animals. The first section contains Manuel Arias-Maldonado's suggestion that sympathy is the appropriate political tool for thinking about nonhuman animals within a framework of human exceptionalism, followed by Marcel Wissenburg's challenge to both the 'old' and 'new' liberal frameworks of animal rights with an alternative (but provocatively underdeveloped) species-sensitive proposal, and Chad Flanders' critical examination of the status of nonhuman animals and animal political advocacy in Rawlsian thought. These chapters, along with the introduction, establish the volume well. Wissenburg's paper is particularly strong, although I confess that I disagree with his claims.

The second section feels weaker, as it does not clearly address the second theme identified in the introduction. The contributions from Christie Smith and David Schlosberg are fairly light on animal ethics, concerned instead with the use of particular approaches in political theory (recognition theory and the capabilities approach, respectively) to defend the environment. Similarly, Mihnea Tanasescu's chapter (part of the third section) looks at the grounding and application of the 'rights of nature'. None of these are weak papers, but I struggle, especially with Tanasescu's chapter, to see that they fit comfortably into a collection on 'animal politics'.

It is perhaps no coincidence that two of my favourite contributions seem to challenge the book's second stated goal: Clemens Driessen's paper on the communicative, deliberative and political interactions of nonhuman animals, despite being in the second section, says little about environmental ethics, and Kurtis Boyer's look at the motivations, practicalities and limitations of species advocacy, from the third section, exposes real problems with a particular kind of environmentalist aim. The other (more empirical) papers in the third section are examinations, respectively, of the Dutch Party for Animals (by Simon Otjes) and the development of animal welfarism in Sweden (by Per-Anders Svärd). Despite their apparent specificity, these, especially the latter, likely have comparatively wide theoretical and practical consequences, and are worthwhile inclusions.

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"Introducing Animal Politics and Political Animals". Marcel Wissenburg and David Schlosberg. Radboud University/University of Sydney. Part I: The Politicization of the Animal Advocacy Discourse.Â Smith or Garner himselfâ€”in the book, meaning that Political Animals and Animal Politics "takes on the role of an observer of this debate rather than directly contributing to it in a leading sense".[8] In addition, he felt that the book offered little consideration of the details of the work of these leading theorists, identifying the absence of discussion of Cochrane's. Political Animals and Animal Politics is a 2014 book edited by the green political theorists Marcel Wissenburg and David Schlosberg, and published by Palgrave Macmillan. The first edited collection to address the emergence of academic animal ethics informed by political philosophy, its chapters variously cover institutional change for animals, the relationship between animal ethics and ecologism, and real- world laws made for the benefit of animals. Recurring features include discussions of human exceptionalism, exploration of ways that animal issues are or could be present in political dis Editors: Wissenburg, Marcel, Schlosberg, David (Eds.) Free Preview. Investigates the specific place of animals and the non-human in the political realm. Builds bridges between mainstream and environmental political theory and animal ethics. provides a realistic assessment of the hopes and doubts of animal rights skeptics and enthusiasts. see more benefits. Buy this book.