



Thinking about Animals in the Age of the Anthropocene (Ecocritical Theory and Practice)

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The term “Anthropocene”, the era of mankind, is increasingly being used as a scientific designation for the current geological epoch. This is because the human species now dominates ecosystems worldwide, and affects nature in a way that rivals natural forces in magnitude and scale. *Thinking about Animals in the Age of the Anthropocene* presents a dozen chapters that address the role and place of animals in this epoch characterized by anthropogenic (human-made) environmental change. While some chapters describe our impact on the living conditions of animals, others question conventional ideas about human exceptionalism, and stress the complex cognitive and other abilities of animals. The Anthropocene idea forces us to rethink our relation to nature and to animals, and to critically reflect on our own role and place in the world, as a species. Nature is not what it was. Nor are the lives of animals as they used to be before mankind’s rise to global ecological prominence. Can we eventually learn to live with animals, rather than causing extinction and ecological mayhem?

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Editorial Review

Review

This book, a collection of a dozen scholarly chapters that address various aspects of the anthropocene and human/animal relationships, is fascinating.... I think anyone in an animal studies programs will see this book as a 'must read,' because it speaks to the challenges animal rights activists face in raising awareness of animal issues. (*EcoLit Books*)

In the throes of ecological crisis, it is heartening to encounter an ensemble of essayists determined to critique and remediate human violence (both literal and semiotic) against other animals. *Thinking about Animals in the Age of the Anthropocene* offers intricately detailed pathways toward empathetic interspecies connections that resist the isolated, narcissistic arrogance of anthropocentrism. (Randy Malamud, Professor of English, Georgia State University)

This important collection probes the dangers of the Anthropocene beyond the human perspective. If other animal species are not our slaves but co-authors of our planetary lives, what becomes of nature and of that species once upon a time known as man? These provocative essays draw on a rich diversity of disciplines to address the looming crisis. (Cynthia Willett, Professor of Philosophy, Emory University)

The ramifications of climate change are already creating a strange, precarious world for all life on Earth, where the challenges of the Anthropocene extend far beyond the controversies of its labeling by the human animals that have so influenced this moment in geologic time. Examining the roles humans have played in evolving global ecosystems and toward specific animals, this ambitious and provocative collection explores some of the overlapping and interwoven issues of species to argue for human humility and modesty as we all face an uncertain future. This evocative collection comes just at the right time. (Sarah McFarland, Northwestern State University)

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