

Reviews

The Review Section of E&A consists of three parts. The first is made up of brief reviews of books and articles (and perhaps films etc.) which are concerned in some way with the rights and wrongs of human treatment of non-human animals. These reviews will be both critical and reportive--primarily reportive in the case of most scientific and historical material, and increasingly critical as the material is more argumentative and philosophical. The second part of this Section is entitled 'Second Opinions' and contains second (and usually dissenting) reviews of works reviewed in the first part in earlier numbers of E&A. After a review appears in E&A (and after the 'second opinion' if one appears within the next two numbers) the Editor will invite the author of the original work to submit a brief rejoinder to the review(s). Rejoinders received will appear in the third part of the Review Section. Members of the SSEA who wish to submit reviews (first or second), or recommend works for review, should contact the Editor.

Books

LIBERATION, that factory-farm conditions frustrate animals' innate natures and desires. "Here the fundamental liberal assumption is placed on its naturalistic basis--that all creatures should be left to do what comes naturally to them, since the natural inclinations naturally lead to what is most wholesome and advantageous for a creature, and thus a life according to unhampered natural inclination is assumed (romantically) to be the best kind of life." This is not in fact correct as an account of the position held by Singer and other "contemporary defenders of animal rights." Singer's argument is that animals have unlearned desires which are frustrated under factory-farm conditions, causing suffering; the fundamental assumption here is not that all creatures should be left to do what comes naturally to them (though of course one might believe that), but that suffering is bad.

In Goodman's long introduction we encounter Kant, in the midst of a discussion of the fable's mystical ecology. Goodman correctly notes that "from the [Kantian] notion that the moral law commands the creation of a kingdom of ends it does not follow that only persons can be objects of moral treatment", though I doubt that "the argument extends to plants and inanimate objects as well as to animals." The central moral concept in the fable, according to Goodman, is "the concept that every animal species and in a way every animal individual is an end in itself (despite the fact that none is a moral subject or in a human sense a conscious subject) through . . . the possibility of human subjects projecting themselves into any creature's position." Goodman discusses Darwin, Maimonides, Spinoza, Plutarch, Descartes, Plato, Mary Midgley and many others whose ideas he believes can be usefully compared to those in this work. The fable itself is often charming and sometimes wise. Anyone who enjoyed Stephen R. L. Clark's THE MORAL STATUS OF ANIMALS would, I expect, enjoy this book, though it is obviously not essential reading for philosophers.

GOODMAN, LENN EVAN (TRANS.), THE CASE OF THE ANIMALS VERSUS MAN BEFORE THE KING OF THE JINN (BOSTON: TWAYNE) 1978.

This book is a philosophical curiosity: a tenth-century Arabic ecological fable running about 150 pages. Goodman, the translator, provides another hundred pages of introduction and notes, in which we encounter such surprises as a comparison between the Case of the Animals and Peter Singer's argument, in ANIMAL

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