

appreciate statements of the apparently obvious! It is in fact the patent understanding of what needs to be drilled into students, and how, that really makes me warm to the author.

This book has much to recommend it and, used in conjunction with others providing a more thorough grounding in day-to-day husbandry, represents a valuable contribution to a developing field where there is a significant lack of introductory material. It will be well received and used and I can only recommend more of the same. Should the author decide to turn her attention to the next level of instruction, at National Certificate and Diploma level, she will encounter a similar void to be filled with appropriate, targeted texts.

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Animal Geographies

Edited by J Wolch and J Emel (1998). Verso: London and New York. 314pp. Hardback and paperback. Obtainable from Marston Book Services, PO Box 269, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4YN, UK (ISBN 1859848311 hardback or 1859841376). Price £40.00 hardback or £14.00.

This publication is subtitled 'Place, Politics, and Identity in the Nature-Culture Borderlands' which gives a little more indication of its orientation and purpose. The preface provides a clearer view where it states: '*Animal Geographies* seeks to contribute to this fundamental rethinking of animals and to suggest how, by looking through geographical lenses, we may be able to bring animals into clearer focus and back into our understanding of social life'. Essentially the authors are advocating 'geographical approaches' to animals and human-animal relations and arguing that this will not only help to resolve some dilemmas but might also generate new and provocative ideas.

There are 13 chapters to the book, in four parts – 'Animal Subjects/Human Identities' (Part I), 'Negotiating the Human-Animal Borderlines' (Part II), 'The Political Economy of Animal Bodies' (Part III) and 'Animals and the Moral Landscape' (Part IV). These rather daunting titles often disguise eminently practical and down-to-earth contributions. Thus, for example, the three chapters in Part III cover the (North American) spotted owl, the role of animals in contemporary North India and pig production in the United States!

There is no doubt that the contents of this book are an interesting and important contribution to the debate on the relationship between *Homo sapiens* and other members of the Animal Kingdom. Unfortunately, however, the collected papers are shrouded in preoccupation with political correctness, jargon and cliché. As a result, this book might be ignored by those who do not identify fully with the editors' views on (for example) sexism. Others may not have the patience to wade through reams of philosophy in order to learn about such important and often overlooked subjects as the Islamic approach to animal welfare – or the diverse factors that influence the survival of golden eagles and other threatened species.

A glance at the index gives some indication of the orientation of the book in so far as the editors are concerned. In an attempt to assess the immediate relevance of this publication to readers of *Animal Welfare*, the reviewer searched the index for the words 'welfare', 'pain', 'slaughter' and 'veterinary'. None of these are listed but, instead, under 'W' one can find 'women and feminism', under 'P', 'politics', under 'S', 'slavery' and under 'V' 'vegetarianism'.

The reviewer also finds it astonishing (but perhaps rather typically American!) that this publication, which so strongly espouses the cause of linking philosophy and thinking with geography, is written almost entirely by people from the USA. How refreshing it would have been to read essays by (indigenous) people from Africa, Asia, South America – and even Europe; perhaps such a mix would have produced a less intense, more realistic, approach to the subject! It does seem particularly inappropriate that the chapters about India and Islamic law are written by authors based in North American universities. Is it possible that this might be a form of (neo) colonialism – a lifestyle and approach to people that is so strongly criticized in some other parts of the book?

Animal Geographies is relevant to all those who are concerned about the excessive exploitation of animals by humans, the conservation of wildlife and the maintenance of biodiversity. It provides pertinent insights into the causes of disparate human attitudes to animals. The philosopher who has time to ponder, to search and to reflect, will probably relish the style of presentation. However, there is, regrettably, a real danger that the practical welfarist – who wants to achieve something for animals today, rather than dream for tomorrow – may feel alienated and thus not heed its very important underlying message.

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If a Lion Could Talk: Animal Intelligence and the Evolution of Consciousness

Stephen Budiansky (1998). The Free Press: New York. 219pp. Hardback. Obtainable from the publishers, Simon & Schuster Inc, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020, USA (ISBN 0684837102). Price US\$25.00/£20.00.

The title of Budiansky's book alludes to Wittgenstein's claim that 'if a lion could talk we would not understand him'. It would be interesting to know what criticisms Wittgenstein would have made of the subject matter of this book – the field of animal intelligence and consciousness – given his sceptical attitude towards knowing another's mind; but in his absence Budiansky does a fairly comprehensive job of taking the field to task.

Budiansky begins with a lament over the general human tendency for compulsive anthropomorphism – we not only see the human in the animal but we judge the animal by its perceived similarity to the human. In part he acknowledges that the connectedness we feel is a result of similarities in non-verbal, non-conscious cognition that we do indeed share. However, this does not excuse ignoring the important differences and Budiansky is very sceptical of behavioural scientists, who he perceives to be driven by a political motive to bring humankind down a peg or two, arguing for human-animal similarities.

He is particularly damning about the tortured efforts of comparative psychologists to show animals' (and particularly primates') abilities in fields that we ourselves are good at such as language, counting, deception etc. Animal intelligence, on the basis of the evidence so far amassed in these areas, ought better be described as animal stupidity. He is unimpressed by the abilities of primates in these human-like activities, commenting that in any case pigeons have a habit of being able to do all the things primates can do and often more reliably. More tellingly, animals' abilities at these activities are most unimpressive when compared to their abilities at tasks that they actually need to perform in their natural habitat, which may be quite astonishing. As Chomsky noted: if you want to find out about an organism, study what it is good at. Compulsive anthropomorphism has led us on a misguided search for the human in the ape.