Book Notes


The 400 or so pages which constitute the Encyclopedia consist of alphabetical entries of approximately two pages each containing a general description of a topic eg. ‘student objection to dissection’, or author and a selected bibliography. The topics summarise contemporary debates. The authors are mainly the historical fathers and mothers of contemporary debates.

The Encyclopedia also contains a fairly extensive list of organizations that provide humane education materials directly pertaining to animals and a ten page list of some key writers on animal issues with their affiliations.

There is also a chronology of some historical events (mainly in the UK and US) related to the use of animals and to animal rights and animal welfare. The chronology runs from 1822 to 1995.

This is an important reference book and will be particularly useful for people new to the field now or in the future.


This book traces the historical moves against cruelty to animals in England in the last 200 years. Kean is not concerned with the argument about whether animals have rights or not, which might mean the title is somewhat misleading. Rather she looks at particular issues, such as vivisection in the nineteenth century and the actions that people took to change this practice. In looking at specific examples she attempts to say something about how animals have been integrated in different ways into British cultural life. This is a very well researched book with a wealth of historical detail and a few fascinating historical illustrations of animals.

*Animal Rights* shares the title of the previous book but is very different. It is a sociological account of the animal rights and animal welfare movements and Guither also discusses the role of certain key figures. The movements are mainly US based. An outline is provided of some contemporary debates, eg. over animals in research, testing and teaching, intensive animal production for food, hunting, vegetarianism. One chapter deals with the organizations critical of the animal rights movement such as the Farm Animal Welfare Coalition, National Pork Producers Council, and Putting People First. The issue of how animals are protected in US law is also examined.


A wonderful collection of articles and extracts from ancient Greece to the present containing arguments for ‘abstinence from animal food’ or against ‘carnivorous callousness’. The pieces are neatly organized into four sections: antiquity, the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There are some twentieth century authors who may surprise and from antiquity it is probably not commonly known that Ovid said

...Earth is generous
with her provision, and her sustenance
Is very kind; she offers, for your tables,
Food that requires no bloodshed and no slaughter.

when writing of the teachings of Pythagoras who lived in the 6th century BC.
conference announcement

Representing Animals at the End of the Century
a conference at the
Center for Twentieth Century Studies
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
April 13-15, 2000

By tracing how animals have been represented in different contexts, in
different practices, and by different disciplines over the course of the last
hundred years, this conference will explore the connections between our
understandings of animals and the historical and cultural conditions in
which those understandings have been formed. The conference will move
from discussions of the material presence of animals -- studies, for example,
of the changing place of animals in urban spaces and modern sensibilities --
to explorations of how contemporary media culture is shaping our
fundamental cultural expectations of animals, of ourselves, and of our
environments.

Selected papers from the conference will be included in a book planned for
publication in the Center series, Theories of Contemporary Culture with
Indiana University Press.

Special Guest Speaker: Jane Goodall
Other speakers include: Marcus Bullock, Katherine Grier, Kathleen Kete,
Masumi Iriye, Andrew Isengerg, Alphonso Lingis, Arther McEvoy, Clay
McShane, Lisa Naughton, Jennifer Price, Karen Rader, Sheila Roberts, Nigel
Rothfels, Joel Snyder and Karen Warren.

For further information contact: Nigel Rothfels and Andrew Isenberg,
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