

Reviews

The Review Section of Ethics & Animals 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 Opinion' and contains second (and usually dissenting) reviews of works reviewed in the first part in earlier numbers of Ethics & Animals. After a review appears in Ethics & Animals (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.

Tom Regan, "The Nature and Possibility of an Environmental Ethic," Environmental Ethics, Vol. 3, No. 1, Spring, 981

This valuable article contributes to discussions of the possibility, necessity and nature of an environmental ethic primarily by clearing away some (philosophical) underbrush, planting some seeds and indicating the kinds of fruit that need to be grown. An "environmental ethic," according to Regan, is one that accords moral standing not only to non-humans, but to non-conscious objects, as well. The two kinds of underbrush impeding the growth of such an ethic are arguments purporting to show that it is impossible, and others purporting to show that it is unnecessary.

Regan considers three arguments of the first kind. Each is basically of the form: Z is necessary for a being to have moral standing and non-conscious objects lack Z, so they cannot

have moral standing. An environmental ethic which accords them moral standing is therefore impossible. In these arguments Z is either sentience, having a good of one's own or having interests. Regan does not show any of these arguments to be unsound, but rejects all three because each has at least one problematic premise.

He turns next to four arguments purporting to show that because other ethical principles suffice to prescribe appropriate behavior toward the environment, an environmental ethic (one attributing moral standing to non-conscious objects) is unnecessary. 1) He rejects the argument based upon the claim that brutality toward the environment leads to brutality toward fellow human beings. 2) He points out that the ideal of non-destructiveness does not replace, but presupposes an environmental ethic. 3) Utilitarianism does not protect non-conscious environmental objects because a growing percentage of people are increasingly pleased by Disneyland and plas-

tic trees rather than real redwoods. 4) Cultural ideals do not suffice to protect the environment because they differ from culture to culture and change over time. So a specifically environmental ethic is necessary if the environment is to be adequately protected from people.

In the course of clearing away this underbrush, Regan plants some seeds. The first is his definition of an environment ethic. In addition, there are his views that to have moral standing, non-conscious environmental objects must have inherent value independent of any conscious being's appreciation of it, which (value) must be an objective property of the object that is

consequent upon the object's other objective properties. And the proper attitude toward such an object is admiring respect, which should lead one to promote its preservation.

Regan ends with two questions that a fruitful theory must answer: what makes something inherently good, and how can we know which things are inherently good? This helpful article clarifies the issues with which it deals and prepares the ground for further work in the area.

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS

All material submitted for publication in Ethics & Animals should be addressed to the Editor. Reviews and articles should be typed, on one side of the paper only. One copy is sufficient for all submissions except articles, of which three copies are requested. To facilitate 'blind' reviewing of articles the author's name should not appear on the manuscript, but should be on a separate sheet of paper which also bears the title of the article. If possible, authors should also remove internal references which would identify them (such as "as I argued in my article on animal liberation in The Journal of Beasts"). Such references can be re-inserted before publication.
