



**Linzey, Andrew, ed. *The Global Guide to Animal Protection*. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 2013.**

*The Global Guide to Animal Protection* succeeds in corraling the often disparate voices across the broad spectrum of animal advocacy and scholarship, from animal welfare to animal rights. Simply put, animal protection, as an unsentimental concept, acknowledges that the way human cultures act upon animals makes humans, in turn, responsible for their well-being. As a global guide, the book reaches beyond the modern humane movement of the West to explore changing global perceptions of animals, long and short histories of non-European animal advocacy and thought, and new models for advancing causes for animals across human cultures and in international law.

The guide collects over 180 articles by various scholars and animal advocates and is organized around seven nodes of global interest. First, "Histories and Global Perspectives" includes articles on the histories of modern animal protection movements in Europe, North America, and Russia, as well as global perspectives on animals and recent protectionist movements in Africa, Asia, South America, Scandinavia, and Australia. Second, "Aquatic and Marine Life" focuses on the sentience and complex cultures of various fishes and sea mammals, as well as the countless threats to their lives and well-being, from the potentially fatal effects of military sonar on whales to the wasteful methods and devastating outcomes of commercial fishing. Third, "Free-Living Animals" explores the trading, captivity, preservation, and killing of various species of non-domestic animals often referred to as "wild." Fourth, "Companion Animals" offers detailed information on caring for and living with various species of companion animals, as well as several areas of concern for their welfare. Fifth, "Areas of Worldwide Concern" examines the current state of animal agriculture, animal-based research, and animal exploitation in sports and entertainment. Sixth, "Changing Perspectives" surveys new ethical, legal, religious, and scientific developments relevant to animal protection, concluding with three recent declarations of animal rights and welfare. Finally, "Animal-Friendly Living" provides advice and arguments for pursuing animal advocacy in politics, education, and private life, including a detailed article on the development of animal studies in academia.

The guide embodies how animal studies, as an interdisciplinary field, is ethically diverse, rapidly growing, and inextricably connected to public concerns for animal protection. Throughout we see how animal studies scholars and animal protectionists have distinguished human engagement with animals from human engagement with the natural world: sometimes animal protection is environmental protection, and sometimes it is not.

Despite functioning as a guide that occasionally seems more suited to non-specialists, the text frequently revisits three core concerns for academics working in animal studies, not abstractly but in relation to specific topics. First, animal culture and human culture, animal cruelty and human cruelty, are deeply interconnected. In addition to several articles that discuss the link between violence directed toward animals (especially among youth) and violence toward humans, as well as the benefits of humane education in preventing violence toward humans, the guide also offers more specific examples of how human well-being is entangled with the exploitation of animals. For example, Anne Kent Taylor

discusses “subsistence poaching” in Kenya, where many teenagers engage in poaching out of economic necessity, such as to earn money to attend school (71). In another range of examples, we see how the spread of disease depends on animal exploitation, from the spread and increased resistance of viruses due to intensive animal agriculture to a possible future where xenotransplantation increases the availability of human organs grown in transgenic laboratory animals—who serve as sentient incubators, or organ “pharms”—while also increasing the likelihood that new animal diseases may jump the species barrier (196).

Second, thinking globally about animal protection involves making difficult ethical calculations about the relative value of both cultural and species difference. Elly Maynard discusses the recent growth of dog farming for food in China, which favors many beloved Western breeds, such as the Saint Bernard, German shepherd, Dalmatian, and Newfoundland (150). Like many, Maynard calls for an absolute end to dog farming through a strengthening of international law. Here, we are forced to consider the improbability of universal ethical standards with regard to what animals we deem killable, whether the illusion of such standards hinders incremental progress, as well as to what degree such aspirations promote entrenched forms of xenophobia and racial discrimination.

Third, though it seems unlikely, positive change is taking place, even where forms of animal exploitation are often considered ethically excusable or culturally entrenched. On many occasions, the guide dismantles the false dichotomy between scientific progress and laboratory animal protection; as Aysha Akhtar notes, “[s]cience is revealing how other animals are unlike humans in *medically* relevant ways but are like us in *morally* relevant ways” (260). It would seem that the question concerning when it is ethical to conduct research on animals if the research may benefit humans is becoming less relevant with the increase in alternatives to animal testing and experimentation, such as the reconstituted human epidermis test, which tests for skin irritation from chemicals, and the Ames test, which uses bacteria instead of mice to test whether a substance will damage genes (178). Likewise, the subsection on animals in sports and entertainment discusses the recent decline of several threats to animal welfare, such as greyhound racing, bull fighting, rodeos, blood fiestas, horse steeplechase (or jumps racing), and animal circuses. This is not to say that such changes happened overnight and with no effort, which would diminish the work of animal advocates; it is only to emphasize that this guide does tell a story of cultural change, of various human cultures responding to the realities of animal cruelty once these realities are understood and made public.

It is unfortunate that one of the major strengths of the guide may also be its core flaw. While the many voices brought together in the guide do offer a diverse view of the global picture of animal protection from various academic fields and disciplines, as well as distinct areas of nonacademic animal advocacy, this structure leads to many cases of topic overlap, repetition of details, factual inconsistencies, and direct contradiction. Much of this could have been resolved through authorial collaboration and further editorial intervention. On a macro scale, especially when viewed as a reference, the guide is difficult to navigate. Rather than adhering to a single organizational scheme, the sections jump from vague and overlapping conceptual categories, such as “Changing Perspectives” and “Histories and Global Perspectives” to specific types of animals, such as aquatic, free-living, and companion animals. There is also little organizational distinction made between argumentative, informational, and instructional articles. Further organization and condensing of existing material would make room for certain topics excluded since, at times, the guide can feel more like a sampler than a comprehensive or exhaustive reference for animal protectionist issues. The guide would benefit by including some discussion of extreme forms of animal activism (e.g., the Animal Liberation Front) and the growing trend among governments to categorize diverse forms of animal advocacy as eco-terrorism; specific articles devoted

to insect welfare (e.g., colony collapse disorder, humane beekeeping, or the growing use of insects in art and entertainment); a survey of animal protectionist sentiment among naturalists and scientists, past and present; an article on orca captivity and the use of orcas in entertainment; as well as expanded focus on animal protectionist topics outside of the United Kingdom, especially among informational and instructional articles.

Despite these oversights, the current guide remains an essential reference for scholars working in the field of animal protection, as well as environmental critics who wish to move beyond holistic environmentalism, animal theorists who seek to more fully engage ethically with their abstract objects of inquiry, and students in various fields of animal and environmental studies.

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**Siewers, Alfred Kentigern, ed. *Re-Imagining Nature: Environmental Humanities and Ecosemiotics*. Lanham, MD: Bucknell UP, 2014.**

“The river can swell overnight to such proportions that it steals away all the canoes in the village.” Katherine M. Faull, “The Experience of the World as the Experience of Self,” *Re-Imagining Nature*

As the environmental humanities scholar John Elder threads together narrative layers in the final chapter of his 1995 natural history memoir *Reading the Mountains of Home*, he describes the “confusion of waters” that is at once the confluence of rocky New England waterways and the complexity of writing the natural, cultural, and personal histories of the woods surrounding his home in Bristol, Vermont. Through the lens of Robert Frost’s poem, “Directive,” Elder invites us to follow along as he “reads the landscape” and “hikes the poem” throughout the seasonal cycles of central Vermont’s mountains.

The landscape of ecocriticism has itself matured tremendously in the twenty years since Elder’s book, with university programs, conferences, and publications all taking root in the unfortunately fertile ground of our planet’s many ecological crises. As conversations about interdisciplinarity and fashioning new approaches to ecocriticism continue apace, collections such as Alfred Kentigern Siewers’ *Re-Imagining Nature* take pains to give a palpable texture to this often ethereal and theoretically-bounded terrain.

The anthology’s “Introduction,” prefaced with no fewer than six epigraphs ranging from Emily Dickinson and Maurice Merleau-Ponty (x2) to Jakob von Uexküll, Kenneth Burke, and Charles Saunders Pierce—and a separate introductory quote from Haudenosaunee spiritual leader Tadodaho Sid Hill—demonstrate the breadth of the book’s intention, while at the same time making explicit the challenges often implied by stepping off the well-worn paths of discipline-centered thinking. This collection succeeds in limning the disparate branches of environmental humanities as well as demonstrating where they might be further encouraged to fruitfully intertwine. This tension between disciplinary transgression and integration is tangible throughout *Re-Imagining Nature*’s essays in an effort to demonstrate, as Siewers writes in the “Introduction,” “how ecocriticism itself can morph into a type of cultural ecological restoration, capable of building new coalitions of human communities in support of renewed ecological networks” (47).

This book is an effort to enact—with some success—the complexity of an ecosemiotic approach that can engender new conversations across disciplinary approaches, historical periods, and cultural identities. The text aims to build a solid foundation for scholars interested in applying ecosemiotic inquiry to work in pre-modern European and Native American cultures in order to affect real ecological repair or change.

In his introduction, Siewers references Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus's oft-cited caution in *The Death of Environmentalism* that 'environmentalism' as a discrete concept is no longer a useful or viable approach to making ecological progress. Rather, a methodology that is at the same time more nuanced and more integrated is required: "an ecosemiotic outlook [that] can meld aspects of rhizomic and arboreal perspectives on life [as well as] the immanent and the transcendent" (10).

The contributors to *Re-Imagining Nature* represent a cross-section of some of the leading voices in a developing international conversation across the boundaries of ecosemiotics, posthumanist studies, environmental humanities, and regional studies.

Among the standout and accessible chapters in this collection is Timo Maran's "Place and Sign: Locality as a Foundational Concept for Ecosystems," which poses the utility of "locality" as a centering concept for ecosemiotic study—and indeed for re-envisioning the relationship between biological organisms and their environment. Maran offers, "the concept of *locality* emphasizes the qualitative character of environmental relations" (81)

This could serve to reexamine the relationship between a living organism and its environment in a more critical and qualitative way: "The relation between a living organism and its environment becomes special and unique as soon as we examine the living organism as a subject, allowing it a certain freedom of interpretation and choice" (81). This is significant particularly with respect to creating an effective context.

Cary Wolfe's contribution to this collection, "Learning from Temple Grandin, or, Animal Studies, Disability Studies, and Who Comes after the Subject," traces a route through the thoughtfully applied and prolific approach that Grandin herself brings to animal husbandry and humane meat production.

Wolfe identifies Temple Grandin's "visual prowess" as an alternate way of engaging with, and thus, knowing the world. It is from this perspective of thinking in pictures that Grandin has been able to situate herself in the subjective position of animals' own engagement with the human world—itsself a transgressive move that reframes Grandin's autism from disability to a unique ability to bridge the binaries that are at the heart of Siewer's thesis across the essays in this collection.

The final three chapters renegotiate Native nature and culture as their authors identify opportunities for, as Sarah Reese writes (through the lens of Linda Hogan's *Solar Storms*), "opposition replaced with interdependence, imposition with deliberate cultivation of request, and alienation with connection and community"(242). This theme is further rearticulated in Katherine Faull's thoughtful reading of the interbraided cultural and natural landscapes of the Susquehanna River watershed as a "confluence of cultural semiotics at the Susquehanna's geographical confluence" (210) in the book's tenth chapter.

No collection with *Re-imagining Nature's* broad and ambitious goals can hope to be comprehensive, yet the authors offer a range of nuanced approaches to cultural semiotics, literary theory, critical regionalism, as well as ecological readings of Native American and Medieval texts. To fill in the contextual interstices left by the *Re-imagining Nature's* "Introduction," the editor includes a

bibliographic essay, which although perhaps a bit brief, will be helpful to readers new to the field or wishing to explore further. Overall, the essays in this collection represent integral and important voices in environmental humanities that here present themselves as a rich estuary for new directions in ecological thinking and future research.

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### **Jaquette Ray, Sarah. *The Ecological Other: Environmental Exclusion in American Culture*. Tucson: U of Arizona P, 2013.**

In *The Ecological Other*, Sarah Jaquette Ray argues that mainstream US environmentalism, while seeking to establish equitable and harmonious relationships between the human and non-human worlds, is actually complicit in reinforcing and maintaining social hierarchies, particularly those regarding disability, race and immigration. In her analysis of texts, including recent memoir and fiction, Jaquette Ray argues that environmentalist discourse has created a binary between the ecologically good, environmental body – able, fit, athletic, risk-taking, existing happily in pure American nature – and the “ecological other” of the title, who in contrast, is disabled, dirty, impure, and threatens to overrun and spoil pristine nature. Building upon the work of Elizabeth Wheeler, Rachel Stein, Stacy Alaimo and other theorists interested in the body, Jaquette Ray makes her case for a “corporeal” reading of cultural and literary texts. A corporeal reading can elucidate how mainstream environmentalist images of able-bodied and fit people are matched by counter-images, which include, in this study, disabled, indigenous, and migrant bodies. These images create what Jaquette Ray identifies as “environmentalist disgust,” a type of negative discourse that attributes unnaturalness and environmental destructiveness to the “ecological other.”

Jaquette Ray explores the historical roots of the discourse of disgust, drawing out the connections between then nascent US environmentalism and the Progressive Era’s concern with US national identity. Jaquette Ray exposes environmentalism’s questionable past, noting that the beginnings of the preservationist and conservationist movements coincided with US imperialist expansion abroad, while, not coincidentally, at the same time national wilderness preserves were established in areas where indigenous populations had lived but had since been removed. The image of the frontier as a “purification” ground found expression in the eugenics movement and social Darwinism, which comfortably posited that inferior races had to make way for the stronger ones.

Jaquette Ray presents three in-depth case studies as examples of the “ecological other,” respectively disability, race and immigration. The first of these case studies explores Eli Clare’s 1999 memoir *Exile and Pride*, considered groundbreaking in its exploration of the intersections of queerness, disability, class and environmental damage. For Jaquette Ray, Clare’s memoir sharply contrasts with the environmentalist outdoor adventure ableist discourse she also discusses in this chapter. Jaquette Ray argues that disability as a social construct emerged alongside the eugenics movement, and that its legacy persists as discourse that idealizes the fit and able body as the means for an environmental experience that is not accessible to a disabled, environmentally “othered” body. American environmental thought abounds with examples of this fitness ideal – Emerson’s “rugged individual,” Thoreau’s “self-reliant man,” and the doctrines of Manifest Destiny and Social Darwinism, among others. Jaquette Ray contrasts these “sociobiological geographies of exclusion” with the insights of

disability studies that theorizes bodies in constant flux, *becoming* rather than *being*, recognizing that all bodies exist within “geographical, historic, economic, political and social” contexts.

The second of these case studies explores the tension between the “Ecological Indian” of much mainstream environmental thought and the deteriorating Native American body found in Native American literature. It is this body that bears the brunt of colonial-capitalism’s exploitation of nature and of indigenous peoples and their resources, and leaves its imprint in the form of alcoholism, illness, and exposure to nuclear fallout, and thus, as Jaquette Ray notes, colonial-capitalism “disables the Native American body.” Through an exploration of a Sherman Alexie short story and a lengthier analysis of Leslie Marmon Silko’s novel *Almanac of the Dead*, Ray finds a challenge to the nostalgic view of the Ecological Indian of an environmental movement that often uses the symbol of the Indian to indicate healthy human-nature relations. Instead, Silko’s view of Native American bodies offers insight into the exploitation of resources, the dispossession of land and the attack on culture that has marked native encounters with white society. In her corporeal reading of Silko’s novel, Jaquette Ray shows how Silko both underscores the tension between mainstream environmentalism and indigenous social and environmental justice movements and at the same time offers hope that the two can find common ground and mutual support.

The third case study builds upon the previous two with an exploration of Arizona’s Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument as an example of the conflation of environmental and Nativist/racist discourse regarding undocumented workers crossing the border illegally. Jaquette Ray explores the “poetics of trash” that stigmatizes undocumented migrants as an “invasive species” that threatens to “trample to death” the national project of pure wilderness (the Monument as a “playground for the able-bodied elite”), while the nativist discourse falsely posits the area as historically free of the human presence, as well as the hypocrisy of denying the negative environmental impact that border control activity causes. Jaquette Ray argues that by “greening” the case of the undocumented immigrants crossing the Monument, environmentalists have actually put both the immigrants and the landscape they travel through at greater risk, an example of what she views as a “green veneer” that covers conservative social policy. This chapter, while outlining the sad social, cultural, political history of the region, noting the recent construction of a 31 mile wall intended to keep out the “ecological other” that “threatens” the wilderness park, also presents a positive moment of this story: the activist group Coalition to Bring Down the Wall, which did for a brief period unify indigenous environmental justice groups and mainstream environmentalists by finding common ground through putting social justice at the center of its agenda.

Jaquette Ray’s book will have wide appeal among environmental humanities scholars, students and professors from across many disciplines, with great potential as a college text. Those already conversant with the tension between bioregionalist thinking and its emphasis on place/“staying put” and the postcolonial interest in displacement/migration/mobility will find much of her argument familiar, yet the specific cases she explores and the connections between them are unique and compelling. Her book is comfortably situated among the growing body of work that seeks to push mainstream environmental thought beyond its identity as “full-stomach” or “first-world” environmentalism (Ramachandra Guha<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See *Environmentalism: A Global History*. New York: Longman, 2000 and *Varieties of Environmentalism: Essays North and South*. London: Earthscan, 1997 (co-authored with Joan Martinez-Alier).

and Joan Martinez-Alier<sup>2</sup>) to an inclusive global environmentalism that includes the “empty-belly” environmentalism “of the poor” (Rob Nixon<sup>3</sup>) and confronts the political and economic structures that have been responsible for so much environmental destruction in the past and present.

Jaquette Ray draws from a wide range of sources that exemplifies the breadth and inherent cross-disciplinary nature of ecocriticism. She incorporates critical geography, anthropology, environmental history, critical race theory, and environmental justice criticism as well as cultural and literary studies to make her arguments, and also relies on field research methods (her personal visits to Organ Pipe Monument and interviews with community activists among others) to deepen and ground her textual and theoretical claims. By doing so, Jaquette Ray shows that ecocriticism, if it aligns itself with the environmental justice movement, can be not only theory but praxis—ecocriticism offers a way to put thought into action in the quest for a more just, equitable and sustainable relationship between peoples, and between the human and the non-human worlds.

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**Jacques Derrida. *The Beast and the Sovereign*. 2 vols. Trans. Geoffrey Bennington. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2009-2011.**

Jacques Derrida's *The Beast and the Sovereign* collects his fully written lectures for "La bête et le souverain," the final seminar he gave at the École des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS) in Paris before his death in 2004. Derrida, not surprisingly, follows the Continental philosophical tradition in not primarily being concerned with questions of animal welfare or rights, though these do appear. Instead, the animal for Derrida is a revealing and resonant site of difference, definition, and regulation—themes explored in an earlier text, *The Animal that Therefore I Am* (Fordham UP, 2008). In the seminar, Derrida questions historically accepted borderlines that divide human and animal, such as rationality, language, deceit, culture, technology, mourning, and a sense of death. These challenges lead him to consider longstanding binaries between words and concepts. The title itself, "La bête et le souverain," already suggests these manifold oppositions: human and animal, outlaws above or below the law, the feminine (la bête) and the masculine (le souverain). It is the animal as such that then embodies questions of liminality, of life and death, and of the rooting of power and violence in the sovereign.

Volume I represents the first year of the seminar: thirteen sessions from December 12, 2001 until March 27, 2002. Herein, Derrida juxtaposes the animal and the sovereign and exposes how they are linked by existing outside of the law—the beast below, the sovereign above (I:17). Derrida's broad-ranging assortment of texts include the seventeenth century fables of La Fontaine, especially "The Wolf and the Lamb," Hobbes's *Leviathan*, D.H. Lawrence's poem "Snake," Machiavelli's *Prince*, Paul Valéry's marionettes, and a fascinating account of Louis XIV watching the autopsy of an elephant from his own menagerie. The seminars interact with thinkers including Rousseau, Plutarch, Schmitt, Freud, Lacan, Deleuze, Cixous, Agamben, Foucault, and Celan while invoking topics as diverse as terrorism, the

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<sup>2</sup> See *The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of the Ecological Conflicts and Valuation*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2003.

<sup>3</sup> See *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2011.

werewolf, ipseity, the trickery of language, the phallus, bestiality, Noah's Ark, and *bêtise*, animal-referenced stupidity. The content of these seminars builds upon and opposes itself to similar well-known formulations, such as Carl Schmitt's state of exception and Giorgio Agamben's Homo Sacer Project (indeed, there is a certain amount of tension between Derrida and Agamben that becomes particularly apparent in Sessions 3 and 12 regarding Agamben's influential ideas of *homo sacer* and *bios vs. zoē*).

Volume II is composed of the second year of the seminar, given over ten sessions from December 11, 2002 until March 26, 2003. Derrida continues his study but with a much narrower selection of texts: Martin Heidegger's 1929-30 course, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, and Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719); since he methodically reads the two texts in tandem, Derrida's second volume is more cohesive than his first. He here questions how humans and animals differently experience phenomena such as the world, solitude, despair, and death by focusing on Crusoe's stories of invention, domestication, and fear on the island that is his world. Sessions consider Crusoe learning to pray, reinventing the wheel, his seclusion from women, and his fear of death by being buried alive or being eaten by cannibals. One of the most compelling topics regards the possibility and nature of knowledge for humans and animals. Present always in Vol. II are three familiar Heideggerian theses, "'the stone is without world,' 'the animal is poor in world,' 'man is world-configuring,'" and his preliminary question, "*What is world?*" (II:11). Derrida further investigates Heidegger's use of the German verb *walten*, meaning to reign or to govern, which he believes has been overlooked. As in Vol. I, multiple thinkers are pulled into the orbit of the world of the seminar in Vol. II, including Marx, Joyce, Woolf, Coetzee, Freud, Kant, Aristotle, Genet, Pascal, and Lacan.

Derrida's last words in the seminar return to unanswered questions of human-animal difference. As he states, the central question of the seminar is "that of knowing who can die. To whom is this power given or denied? Who is capable of death, and, through death, of imposing failure on the super- or hyper-sovereignty of *Walten*?" (II:290). Throughout, Derrida considers death as such through parallel investigations of nostalgia and homesickness, cremation and inhumation, and the possibility of mourning. Frequently, he inserts mourning into the seminar by referencing the passing of colleagues, especially Maurice Blanchot, at whose memorial service Derrida spoke (II: Session 7). The idea of mourning leads Derrida to question the assumption that animals do not mourn because they remain *alogos*—without language and, therefore, alien to human structures of power and dominance that rely on violence and immediacy as functions of thought. Again with the animal, Derrida's overriding question regards the ability to die or to think death with a recognition of Heidegger's notion that death alone can "immediately shatter" violence.

Throughout the seminars, it becomes apparent that Derrida's investigations of life and death are multiple in their intent. He questions the nature of life itself in a world inhabited by other human and non-human animals. Looking at Crusoe alone on the Island of Despair, Derrida asks, "Does solitude *distance* one from others? What am I saying when I say 'I am alone'?" (II:62). This train of thought about solitude raises questions of the experience and knowledge of life *qua* life:

Now we can determine the animality of the animal only if we have already shed light on life, the essence of the life of the living, what makes life life . . . as opposed to the inanimate, the lifeless . . . of what cannot even die. For what does not live does not die: the stone does not die, because it does not live. But all that presupposes already that the animal lives and that we have access to what it feels as a living being. (II:113)



At once, Derrida challenges assumptions both about life and the knowledge of life as experienced by others—be they human or animal. These questions are not merely academic.

Some North American readers in particular may believe that ecocriticism should overtly be in step with the environmental and animals rights movements. Though Derrida does not offer this, he does shed light on how power and governance can result in brutality and, subsequently, what must be rethought to challenge and indeed to change a worldview that permits the practice of cruelty towards animals and humans. As he poses the question,

What at bottom? Who at bottom? And what if, at bottom, the distinction between *what* and *who* came to sink into indifference, in to the abyss? To die, basically, just as the common condition of both beast and sovereign, qua living beings, is to be exposed to death, and to a death that always risks coming back from *who* to *what*, to reduce *who* to *what*, or to reveal the "what" of "who." Is to die not to become "what" again? A "what" that anybody will always have been. (I:137)

For Derrida, the consequences are plain. If we speak of obligation only to those "who closely share my life," then cruelty becomes acceptable aimed towards "humans not recognized as true humans and true brothers" and, certainly, also "one would have the right to inflict the worst suffering on 'animals' without ever being suspected of the least cruelty. There would be no cruelty in industrial abattoirs, in the most horrific stockbreeding establishments, in bullfights, in dissections, experimentations, breaking and training, etc., in circuses, menageries, and zoos (of which more soon). I need not belabor the point" (I:109). Derrida here assumes assent as to the cruelty inherent in practices such as factory farming, and he urges us to consider not only the cruelty of the act but the unchallenged assumptions that lay behind a cruel system.

These last themes of power and violence particularly tie the volumes to world events. The seminar began on Dec. 12, 2001, three months following 9/11 and two months after the U.S. led invasion of Afghanistan and overthrow of the Taliban in October. The final session dates from March 26, 2003, one week after the U.S. led invasion of Iraq. Derrida's analysis of sovereign power cannot help but consider the events of its time and the war rhetoric of George W. Bush. For example, in reference to the linkages between animals and the concept of "rogue," Derrida explores the animal-based definition of a rogue and Noam Chomsky's use of the term to characterize the U.S. in his book *Rogue States* (South End Press, 2000). Writes Derrida,

The "rogue," be it to do with elephant, tiger, lion, or hippopotamus (and more generally carnivorous animals), [the "rogue"] is the individual who does not even respect the law of the animal community, of the pack, the horde, of its kind. . . . The United States, which is so ready to accuse other states of being rogue states, is in fact allegedly the most rogue of all, the one that most often violates international right, even as it enjoins other states (often by force, when it suits it) to respect the international right that it does not itself respect whenever it suits it not to. Its use of the expression "rogue state" would be the most hypocritical rhetorical stratagem, the most pernicious or perverse or cynical armed trick of its permanent resort of the greater force, the most inhuman brutality. (I:19)

Attentive always to language and power structures, Derrida joins both in examining the use of animal based rhetoric by a sovereign as an exercise of power and military might.

It is a propos to review these two volumes now as we recognise how little has changed in our current problems with animals and sovereigns from 2001-03 when Derrida first gave these lectures. The importance of the seminars is further revealed by the ecocritics who have made use of them thanks to the continuing work of the "Derrida Seminars Translation Project," which dates from 2006 ([www.derridaseminars.org](http://www.derridaseminars.org)). *The Beast and the Sovereign* opens that series, which is directly tied to efforts to edit and publish all of Derrida's lectures in French by Éditions Galilée in Paris. These fully written lectures span 40 years and some 14000 pages from seminars on a wide variety of themes. The English translation series is edited by Geoffrey Bennington and Peggy Kamuf and published by the University of Chicago Press. To this point, the series has published the two volumes of *The Beast and the Sovereign* and the first of two volumes of *The Death Penalty*. Upcoming volumes include *Heidegger: The Question of Being and History* and *Perjury and Pardon*, closely following their appearance in French. The English editions include alternate page numbers in the margins that link to the French version of the text. Likewise, with *The Beast and the Sovereign*, the index of names for Vol. II is based on that of the French. Unfortunately, Vol. I does not provide an Index; as is typical for Derrida, the list of writers and thinkers whose work he considers is extensive and even encyclopaedic, so the lack of a full index is regrettable.

The publication of these seminars will be welcome, but it will pose some challenges for Derrida's editors and readers. One wonders how Derrida might have edited his seminars had he lived to publish them himself. While the series editors note there is some indication that Derrida thought he would eventually publish them, they certainly cannot be said to be in the final book form he would have used (I:xi). However, the finished quality of the seminars as lectures is impressive; each chapter runs to approximately 30 pages and represents one two-hour session of the weekly seminar. As these are, in reality, teaching documents, Derrida's text includes what the editors call his "stage directions," such as "(Board)" or "(Reread)." Derrida's teaching voice is pleasant to read and is not unlike the tone he used for his finished books although more conversational. The seminar project represents a considerable editorial undertaking. Derrida's useful habit of completely writing out all his lectures and seminars goes back to the 1960s, so his editors will have to contend with handwritten sessions from the 1960s, typewritten and annotated papers from the 1970s and 1980s, and electronic documents from 1988 until 2003 (I:ix-x). It is no wonder that the release of the seminars is beginning with the most recent computerized files first. Indeed, these two volumes are also double checked against available audio recordings of the seminars; these recordings are vital in transcribing some sessions not given from notes (such as the session on D.H. Lawrence's "Snake") and in indicating rare occasions when Derrida went off script. Unlike completed books, the projected material in Derrida's seminars was understandably bound to change from week to week due to pressures of time, world events, or his own peripatetic mind. He on occasion points towards issues he promises to come back to in the next session that he in fact omits. He finishes one session with a lengthy quotation from Heidegger followed by what he calls "a very risky French translation"; this quotation is followed by his own stage direction "(Comment at length)," which is then overturned by the editor's note that in fact he added no comments at all. What lengthy remarks did he leave unsaid? The text itself is frequently friendly and even funny. In one instance, Derrida remarks upon American archivists and librarians inquiring about what would happen to his papers, as they euphemistically put it, "after his lifetime" instead of "after his death" and thus trying to mask their interest by asking such a question "politely, modestly, courteously, like they do in funeral homes, between the fruit and the cheese" (II:140).

Fittingly for his last seminar, Derrida's attention to matters of life and death and to the animal as an animated creature influence his characterization of reading:

Like every trace, a book, the survivance of a book, from its first moment on, is a living-dead machine, sur-viving, the body of a thing buried in a library, a bookstore, in cellars, urns, drowned in the worldwide waves of a Web, etc., but a dead thing that resuscitates each time a breath of living reading, each time the breath of the other or the other breath, each time an intentionality intends it and makes it live again by animating it. (II:131)

It is certain that with the publication of *The Beast and the Sovereign* and the rest of the Derrida Seminars that new life will continue to be breathed into Derrida's books, even as Derrida's ideas breathe new life into debates surrounding human-animal interactions.

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**Houser, Heather. *Ecosickness in Contemporary U.S. Fiction: Environment and Affect*. New York: Columbia UP, 2014.**

“[H]ow do interventions into the very stuff of life make us feel? And how do these feelings reconfigure environmental and biomedical ethics and politics?” (6) These are two of the provocative questions raised by Heather Houser’s *Ecosickness in Contemporary U.S. Fiction: Environment and Affect*, an ambitious study whose conclusions extend far beyond the realm of American literature. *Ecosickness* theorizes the genre of “ecosickness fiction,” an emergent literary mode that “joins experiences of ecological and somatic damage through narrative affect” in order to move readers toward environmental consciousness (2). Empirical thinking alone, Houser argues, rarely inspires pro-environment action: emotion, too, plays a powerful, though unpredictable, role in developing individuals’ environmental awareness. Focusing on discord, wonder, disgust, and anxiety in ecosickness narratives, Houser explores how affects engender particular ethical stances, and how these stances, in turn, dispose us (or do not dispose us) toward action. Scholars working in virtually any subfield of literature will find *Ecosickness* useful, for, while Houser’s analysis of her archive is compelling, the book’s greatest value lies in the methodology it models. *Ecosickness* opens vast new critical territory at the nexus of ecocriticism, affect studies, and the medical humanities.

There is much to recommend *Ecosickness*, especially its timeliness. The book deals with “hot topics” including materiality, the body, and agency. Like other works of third-wave ecocriticism, it capitalizes on the rise of literature and science: Houser draws on cognitive science, psychology, and other disciplines to demonstrate how literature and other art informs environmentalism. Before delving into the specific chapters of *Ecosickness* it is helpful to briefly explain its relationship to affect studies, an enterprise that ecocritics have only just begun to embrace. Similar to ecocriticism itself, the so-called “affective turn” emerged in a moment when “nature” and “emotion” were both considered rather suspect, dismissed by New Historicist critics as ideological smokescreens. To these scholars, “feelings” in literature seemed too vague, or too overdetermined, or simply too Romantic to merit serious attention. Soon, however, developments in cognitive science began to unsettle the notion that feelings are merely byproducts of cultural conditioning. Research into the brain has revealed that emotions and cognition are complicatedly intertwined; while the precise relationship of feeling to thinking remains undetermined, the basic premise that affects “think” has inspired an interdisciplinary return to emotional life. As it appears in recent humanities scholarship, including *Ecosickness*, “affect” refers to our autonomic responses to sensory stimulation. Affect, according to Brian Massumi’s widely-cited definition, is best

characterized as an “intensity” that our bodies instantaneously qualify as a felt emotion; affects are states of potential that resist taxonomization.<sup>4</sup> Affect suits Houser’s purposes, because affects as they are currently understood do not bear a determinate relationship to “emotions,” conscious thoughts, or action. Instead, affects represent possibility—they position us to think and to act.

Similarly, ecosickness fiction does not posit a causal relationship between environmental degradation and illness. “Sickness” for Houser refers to “pervasive dysfunction” that “cannot be confined to a single system and [that] links up the biomedical, environmental, social, and ethicopolitical”; sickness emerges in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries as a result of the shift from a medicalized society to a *biomedicalized* one in which the tech-driven redefinition of “life” itself exploits human and non-human nature alike as “sites for technological intervention” (13). Vitality, ecosickness narratives do not employ sickness to dictate a single course of political action. Instead, ecosickness fiction affiliates environmental and somatic sickness conceptually. It experiments with representational strategies, testing the affective charge—and therefore, the potential political utility—of different literary devices.

Examples from Houser’s textual analyses help to illustrate how sickness serves as a “conduit” to environmental awareness and how affect serves as “the conduit to awareness of the double nature—bodily and planetary—of contemporary sickness and the obligations that sickness entails” (15). In a chapter focused on nonurban AIDS memoirs, Houser considers how sickness alters individuals’ experience of the countryside, contrasting Abraham Verghese’s *My Own Country* (1994) with two lesser-known texts by Jan Zita Grover and David Wojnarowicz.<sup>5</sup> Whereas Verghese’s memoir relies on representational commonplaces, associating rural space with health and retreat, the country creates a powerful sense of discord for Grover and Wojnarowicz, whose lived experience of AIDS unsettles the notion that nature is healthy, harmonious, and balanced. For these writers, encounters with the landscape give rise to an embodied sense of irritation; this affect, in turn, causes them to reassess familiar conceptions of nature, health, and even beauty. Grover, for instance, finds that her experience caring for AIDS patients colors her perception of the north Minnesota woods: instead of the healthy, vital forest mythologized by other writers, she sees a landscape marred by destruction and decay. Her sense of discord is ultimately enabling, though, for it allows Grover to cultivate a stance toward the woods that “holds in suspension the seemingly incompatible: affection and recognition of injury” (50). To elaborate: discord prompts Grover to reassess her criteria for identifying the “natural” versus the “degraded.” She is then able to disarticulate nature from health and beauty, recalibrating dominant models for apprehending “ugly” landscape *and* diseased bodies.

Houser thus demonstrates that discord—an affect not normally associated with environmentalism—has at least two potential payoffs. First, while it begins as “an affect that we feel in the gut,” discord ultimately reshapes “conceptual habits”; it thereby “confers on [Grover and Wojnarowicz] an epistemic agency that is based in the body” (39). Second, because it alters perceptual habits, discord, in this case, undermines “calcified regimes of thought about nature, in particular the tropological chain that links it with harmony, beauty, and health” (27). Subsequent chapters of *Ecosickness* reveal the potential utility of other unlikely affects. A chapter focused on David Foster Wallace’s *Infinite Jest* (1996) takes up disgust, an affect that might at first seem inimical to ethical action (on behalf of the environment or anything else). In her analysis of the novel, Houser contends that Wallace utilizes the push-pull tension

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<sup>4</sup> See Massumi’s *Parables for the Virtual*, especially Chapter 1, “The Autonomy of Affect.”

<sup>5</sup> *North Enough: AIDS and Other Clear-Cuts* (1997); *Close to the Knives: A Memoir of Disintegration* (1991).

present within disgust, setting this affect against the enervating sense of detachment that pervades the novel's postmodern U.S.

The other chapters of *Ecosickness* offer a new take on affects more familiar to ecocriticism: wonder and anxiety. Wonder, of course, has long been seen as a touchstone for environmentalism. In recent years, its role in natural science and literary naturalism has been the subject of much nineteenth-century studies scholarship.<sup>6</sup> Yet wonder, like any other affect, is not a reliable vehicle for ethics, a dilemma Houser explores in her analysis of Richard Powers's *The Gold Bug Variations* (1991) and *The Echo Maker* (2006). As theorized by Descartes, Michel Foucault, and others, wonder is what happens when we encounter the strange made familiar, or the familiar made strange; it is a state in which we become "conscious of perception itself," "astonished not only by the wondrous object but also by our capacity for awareness and our place in larger wholes" (89). Because it generates a sense of connectedness, wonder often seems like a "path to care"—yet as *The Echo Maker* reveals through its intertwined plots about neurological and ecological damage, the interest generated by wonderment "can in fact cut off generative relations of care," morphing into paranoia and projection (81). Similarly, Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead* (1991) portrays anxiety as a double-edged sword. Anxiety in the novel—over biomedicine and technoscience run amok—is central to Silko's dystopia, a world blighted by "sickness" of many kinds. However, Houser sees anxiety in this and other narratives of ecopolitical revolution as both helpful *and* harmful: anxiety may indeed generate resistance, but in the case of Silko's novel, its pervasiveness also "neutralizes the capacity to resist its penetration of all domains of existence" (30). Whereas many critics find in *Almanac of the Dead* a template for healing land-body connectedness, Houser suggests that Silko does not ultimately resolve the tension between horrific technoscience and justice. More important than her specific argument about Silko is the general issue Houser probes in this chapter: do the "anxious apocalypses . . . prophes[ied]" by writers of ecosickness fiction "invite or foreclose their visions for environmental and somatic renewal?" (168)

These brief sketches cannot do justice to the full force of Houser's analyses—the individual chapters of *Ecosickness* are both nuanced and eloquent. Ultimately, Houser's book issues a challenge to ecocriticism, one that is multifaceted, and that positions us for various courses of action, much like the affects she writes about. Ecocriticism, she contends, must engage more fully with a wider range of affective states, including those that do not at first seem conducive to "green" thinking. As *Ecosickness* amply demonstrates, unlikely affects can propel us to action: there can be utility, for instance, in how disgust orients us somatically. This is not to suggest, of course, that we could, or should, set about indexing literary affects and their possible outcomes: as Houser stresses throughout her study, literature is not "a perfect conversion engine that turns images and stories into biomedical and environmental knowledge, ethics, and politics" (223). Still, a broader lesson I take from *Ecosickness* is that ecocritics should cast a wider net in our efforts to discover the forms that might move people toward concern for the environment. Ecosickness fiction "attest[s] that our understanding of affect's effect is provisional"; at the same time, the stories Houser analyzes "trust that it is emotion that can carry us from the micro-scale of the individual to the macro-scale of institutions, nations, and the planet" (223).

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**Caminero-Santangelo, Byron. *Different Shades of Green: African Literature, Environmental Justice, and Political Ecology*. Charlottesville, VA: U of Virginia P, 2014.**

In *Different Shades of Green*, Byron Caminero-Santangelo brings together works by environmentalists, major literary figures, and lesser-known writers of sub-Saharan Africa in order to illustrate the depth of environmental consciousness in African writing. Ranging broadly across time and space—from Nigeria to Somalia to South Africa, and from Okot p'Bitek's 1966 *Song of Lawino* to Tanure Ojaide's 2007 *Tales of the Harmattan*—*Different Shades of Green* is both a welcome contribution to African literature scholarship and an interdisciplinary project with implications for the study of environmentalism, political ecology, and postcolonial theory.

In approaching African literature ecocritically, Caminero-Santangelo asks for a reevaluation of what counts as environmental literature, arguing that African environmental writing can challenge Western assumptions about wilderness conservation and the opposition between the human and the nonhuman. His four chapters on the “nature” of things—“The Nature of Africa,” “The Nature of African Environmentalism,” “The Nature of Justice,” and “The Nature of Violence”—are organized to critique both imperialist notions of wild African “nature” and notions of “natural” (i.e. unexamined) ways of approaching environmental literature and activism. His readings highlight the environmental imaginary at work in a variety of African texts, showing how p'Bitek's *Song of Lawino* uses the figure of the pumpkin to fuse nature and culture, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's *A Grain of Wheat* connects capitalism to environmental degradation, and Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God* employs Igbo cosmology to historicize the natural world. In addition, each set of texts is read against a related environmental struggle, revealing the links between text and context. A particularly strong example is the study of Nadine Gordimer's novels *The Conservationist* and *Get a Life*: in bringing together works separated by thirty years with the history of the South African environmental justice movement, Caminero-Santangelo is able to comment on shifts in attitude and expression that shed light on the entanglement of race, privilege, environment, and politics in both pre- and post-Apartheid South Africa.

Caminero-Santangelo calls his readings “contrapuntal,” and while it's not clear how the word, as he uses it, differs from “comparative,” some of the most significant moves in *Different Shades of Green* do resonate with Edward Said's notion of contrapuntal reading. Where Said reads the literature of colonizing nations together with their dependence on imperialism, Caminero-Santangelo reads African literature together with the environment: quite simply, he assumes that African writers have something to say about the environment and that their expression of environmental consciousness may not always be as widely accessible as that of activists like Ken Saro-Wiwa and Wangari Maathai. Thus while Caminero-Santangelo addresses the work of both of these activists—and in fact critiques them both: Maathai for her pastoral nativism and Saro-Wiwa for his Ogoni nationalism—his most powerful

contribution in *Different Shades of Green* is to offer a model of how to read for the environmental and the environmentalist in African literature.

The word “Anglophone” is missing from the book’s title, and at no point does the author acknowledge that, aside from the brief attention paid to Camara Laye’s *L’Enfant Noir* and a passing critique of Negritude poetry, his archive is entirely in English. A gesture toward environmental writing outside this enclosure would have helped to position this work as an intervention rather than an exhaustive or even extensive study. As it is, while scholars of African literature will appreciate the book for what it is, newcomers are in danger of taking it for what it is not. That said, the gaps in *Different Shades of Green* are likely to inspire new scholarship: the reading of Nuruddin Farah’s *Secrets*, for example, suggests ways of bringing the novel into conversation with Ibrahim al-Koni’s environmentalist fable *Nazif al-Hajar (The Bleeding of the Stone)*, or Malika Mokkeddem’s novel of the desert *Les hommes qui marchent*. *Different Shades of Green* is both an impressive demonstration of the possibilities of interdisciplinary scholarship and an important contribution to the small but growing body of ecocritical works on African literature.

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**Moe, Aaron M. *Zoopoetics: Animals and the Making of Poetry*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014.**

Over the course of the last ten years or so, animal studies—originally an aspect of the environmental humanities—has been transformed into a flourishing field in its own right. In part, this shift can be credited to the groundbreaking work of certain well-known and highly influential theorists, such as Jacques Derrida, Peter Singer, Donna Haraway, and Cary Wolfe. It can also be attributed to the fresh, inventive research of newcomers, such as Aaron M. Moe, whose book *Zoopoetics: Animals and the Making of Poetry* makes an important contribution to the steadily growing body of scholarship that addresses interspecies contact zones. Moe grounds *Zoopoetics* on a claim that Aristotle advances in *Poetics*, namely that poetry originates from the human impulse to imitate the “gestures and vocalizations” of other organisms (7). Arguing that animals possess both agency and imitative capabilities, Moe suggests that they, too, are capable of producing or “making” poetry. To theorize his understanding of the interspecies origins of poetry, he draws on the writings of Paul Shepherd, George Kennedy, and David Abram, and, to further conceptualize his claims, he introduces the term “zoopoetics,” defined as “the process of discovering innovative breakthroughs in form through an attentiveness to another species’ bodily *poiesis*” (10). Throughout the remainder of the book, Moe examines the zoopoetics of various humans and animals, as well as examples of their imaginative interspecies poetic productions.

Structurally speaking, *Zoopoetics* is divided into five chapters and a series of alternating interludes. The first chapter represents a theoretically dense but legible introduction to the book and its argument. Here, Moe defines many of the important terms he uses throughout *Zoopoetics* and grapples with contentious concepts, such as animal agency and anthropomorphism. Each subsequent chapter engages with a particular poet—Walt Whitman, E. E. Cummings, W. S. Merwin, Brenda Hillman—and analyzes aspects of their zoopoetics. Moe argues that Whitman’s poetics of the body extends to animal bodies; he suggests that Cummings’s experiments with iconicity reflect animal gestures; he indicates that

Merwin's preoccupation with absence stems from apprehensions of mass extinction; and he demonstrates that Hillman's political and poetic commitments include animals.

If the chapters address "human makers" and their attentiveness to the bodily *poiesis* of animals, then the interludes address "animal makers" and their attentiveness to the bodily *poiesis* of humans. In the prelude, Moe explains how horses and their human riders communicate through a series of intricate gestures (3). In subsequent interludes, he describes the Protean qualities of octopi, the acrobatic aspects of cats, the imitative capacities of belugas, and the violent tendencies of elephants (33, 57, 91, 117-18). In the more personal postlude portion of the book, Moe describes an incident in which he "glimpse[d] the interiority" of an owl perched beside its dead mate in the middle of the road (145-46). Although shorter than the chapters, these interludes serve to underscore Moe's point that human poets are not the only ones who benefit from being attentive to the bodily *poiesis* of other species.

In *Zoopoetics*, Moe advances several bold claims and innovative arguments likely to unsettle more traditionally minded readers. For example, he posits that "anthropomorphism is only a fallacy when one is a staunch humanist who does not see continuity between ANIMAL↔HUMAN spheres" (17). A bit later, he thoroughly endorses the idea that animals possess agency, that they act in the world with "conscious intention" (19). To support these claims, Moe cites Cary Wolfe who emphasizes that scholars working in the humanities should reconsider their stance on anthropomorphism—and by extension, animal agency—by taking into account the research of ethologists and field ecologists (17-18). Here, Moe makes an important and astute point, but he does not support it with specific examples or scientific evidence. Unfortunately, this instance is not the only one of its kind. Throughout *Zoopoetics*, Moe often elects to engage with critical theory as opposed to scientific research, a strategy which renders many of his claims about animals less compelling than they could be. Admittedly, *Zoopoetics* is a book about poetic form and the poetic process; it is not a book about animal intelligence or animal culture. Still, the addition of more significant scientific evidence would make Moe's arguments—particularly his more controversial contentions about anthropomorphism and animal agency—more convincing.

Scientific missteps aside, *Zoopoetics* offers innovative close readings of both familiar and unfamiliar poems, and this is its greatest accomplishment. In each chapter, Moe highlights several poems that demonstrate attentiveness to animals. Then, he proceeds to analyze each poem according to its rhythm, meter, form, diction, and content. What makes Moe's close reading particularly insightful is his attention to iconicity and "pantomime-opoeia," a term he invents to describe what happens when "the form of a performing mouth...mimes the meaning" of a poem (14). This approach enables Moe to examine how form and meaning merge with sound and performance, especially in poems that involve the bodily *poiesis* of animals. In so doing, he advances new understandings of the formal breakthroughs that occur in Whitman's "Song of Myself," Cummings's "r-p-o-p-h-e-s-s-a-g-r," Merwin's "For a Coming Extinction," and Hillman's "Rhopalic Aubade." Through his compelling close analysis, Moe deftly demonstrates that "The poets explored in this argument cultivate an imagination that sees animals as much more than a 'nicety' or a 'metaphorical convenience' in the poetic tradition and in human culture. Animals, in all of their agency, animate the human sphere and rarify that space where and when species meet—rarify, that is, for beings with a disposition willing to *stretch toward* another species" (140). Certainly, readers willing to stretch themselves in this manner will find Moe's book full of ingenious ideas and insights.

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**Kahn, Douglas. *Earth Sound Earth Signal: Energies and Earth Magnitude in the Arts*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2013.**

Responding to a lack of discussion about nature in the history of communications technologies, historical media theory, and the history of electronic media, Douglas Kahn's *Earth Sound Earth Signal* rethinks cultural engagements with electromagnetism. The message Kahn communicates is that media and nature do not inform antipodal theoretical terrains of telecommunications but that the two have been and are increasingly becoming inseparable. Media is not only ambient but natural, and this necessitates energetics at an earth scale from and with musicians, artists, scientists, and engineers.

Kahn is quick to establish that *Earth Sound* is fundamentally interdisciplinary, which suggests that as a work aimed at artists and musicians interested in the history of science and emergent technologies, this book commits to unfamiliar processes and properties that at times may unsettle but will always return with connections to the familiar aesthetic and poetic domains of media arts, experimental music, visual arts, and eco-arts. This gives Kahn's content a touch of the uncanny as he playfully yet powerfully interrogates the aberrated image projected by late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century history that the affiliation of nature and media is violent and disruptive.

More to the point, this interdisciplinary study informs a transdisciplinary focus on Anthropocene planetary politics. At worst, natures of the recent past have appeared to obstruct communications with natural electromagnetic noise. At best, the potential energetics of nature stimulates the violent breaking of interdisciplinary silos. Reinforcing a relatively new discourse in response to these histories, Kahn discusses what it means not just to listen to the earth but to think about, with, and for energy at "earth magnitude." He feeds this approach with discursive loops that embed the discussion in impressively researched, technical and poetic detail and scales thought, from literal brainwaves to their aesthetic and political considerations, up to the size of the earth.

While his concept of thinking energy at "earth magnitude" looks forward, furthering the studies of those like Timothy Morton, who uses it in his Dark Ecology 2014 keynote lecture, it also speaks backwards to historical discussions in media theory, ecology, and green media. Attention to technology in the sphere of media arts history is commonplace, but Kahn differs from influential theorists like Friedrich Kittler when he gives primacy to transmission media and telecommunications (e.g. telegraphy, telephony, wireless telegraphy, radio, television, and Internet) over inscriptive media (e.g. the gramophone, film, and typewriter). He privileges the live sounds and signals of terrestrial and extraterrestrial sources and thus his book converges upon an abiotic nature typically associated with the physical sciences and only recently recognized as having a discursive presence in ecological discourses. He refuses to abandon the word "nature" despite tension stimulated this last decade by those like Kate Soper and Bruno Latour over the term's usefulness, and instead Kahn grounds his question of media and nature in the earth where the sender is not always human and sometimes communications technologies are not just about the well-established subject of nature programming in green media (e.g. carbon neutrality and resource extraction) but about artistic activities and environmentalist possibilities.

Kahn does not make a study of the allegorical implications of technological developments, but he does place great emphasis on the poetics of invention and aesthetics of the electromagnetic wilderness, and he takes structural inspiration from earth circuits. Just as he traces the passage of radio waves leaving and returning back to earth, his book traces the histories in telecommunications, media theory, and electronic media. Beginning with the mechanical, Aeolian sounds of the earth and ending with the electromagnetic signals of natural Aeletrosonic activity, he makes sense of oscillating anthropogenic

relations with nature. He articulates the aesthetic and political sounds of the earth, from atmospheric currents in wind and temperature to whistlers and earthquakes, from the nineteenth century to present, from Henry David Thoreau to Pauline Oliveros, and in doing so, he gives voice to a history that until recently has been disorganized. Kahn creates a rhetorical circuit that insists that just as humans were once consciously close to nature, our media are now and must continue arriving at a state of conscious closeness again.

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**Carpenter, Andrew and Lucy Collins, eds. *The Irish Poet and the Natural World 1581-1819: An Anthology of Verse in English from the Tudors to the Romantics*. Cork: Cork University Press, 2014.**

This new anthology collects an astonishing variety of “distinctively Irish” poetry and illuminates the vexed but uninterrupted poetic relationship between England and Ireland from the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries. That several of the best-known writers in the volume are frequently taught and usually recognized as “British” only further highlights the problem of separating Irish and English literature in the early United Kingdom, and this collection brings a new and welcome richness to our understanding of the period. The colonial conversation went both ways: as British landlords and administrators traveled to Ireland, so did Irish intellectuals seek new opportunities in England. The relationship was more than literary, of course, and while political and economic ambition shaped discourse, it also determined the human relationship to the natural world that this volume explores.

Carpenter and Collins stress the uneasiness of the connection between English metropole and Irish periphery, especially following the 1801 Act of Union when well-known political and cultural differences still distinguished the two islands, and literary unification, even in the English tongue, was no less strained. Including Irish-born authors in this collection who are usually taught in a British context is a valuable corrective to existing anthologies that reinforce a colonial canon. Reading Jonathan Swift, Edmund Burke, and Oliver Goldsmith in company with Thomas Sheridan and Laetitia Pilkington on one hand, or the later William Drummond and Mary Leadbeater on another shows the more frequently anthologized figures as parts of a dense tapestry of Irish culture that only partially “translated” to English. Carpenter and Collins explain their selection criteria as excluding those Irish poems which “adhered to classical or English models so closely that they can be said to have little that is distinctively Irish about them” (17). Footnotes and an ample bibliography direct interested readers to corresponding collections of Irish-language literature.

And Irish poets did not write for Irish readers only: “Irish poets writing in English at this time were published in London as well as Dublin and their work shows how close two cultures could be, as well as how distinctively they might differ” (17). James Delacourt’s poem “To Mr. Thompson, on his Seasons” (1734) shows the influence of an English poet on Irish poetry, yet also explains the singular ways that the Irish writer developed his response. If James Thompson’s *The Seasons* (1730) reinvigorated Delacourt’s zest to represent Irish nature—“the Irish harp [is] new-strung once more”—it also provided a ground against which to define a new Irish national cultural identity in verse that retains the specificity of Irish landscape and history (18).

This is a very good anthology in an attractive, readable volume from Cork University Press. The attractive dust jacket illustration reproduces *The Kilruddery Hunt*: a 1740 painting of men on horseback “riding to hounds” in pursuit of a fox. Surrounding the riders, who are seen galloping through partitioned fields, are images of other animals: deer, cattle, horses, and in the center, the grand aristocratic country house. From an American perspective, this is an unusual image for a book on the human relationship to the natural world. In the United States, many picture nature as pristine wilderness, but as both the selections and the comprehensive introduction make clear, the “natural world” in Ireland during the period under consideration was anything but wild. Long cleared and largely put to use, Ireland by the Tudor era was an English agricultural colony, and political as well as poetic convention favored classic pastoral and georgic modes of encountering nature.

The selections included illustrate both the Irish writers’ adoption of the classical modes as well as their distinctive critiques, and a strength of the book is the ideological variety of the poems collected. An excerpt from Charles Coffey’s 1727 “The Bason” places Apollo in eighteenth-century Dublin prophesying the glorious future of the city represented by the construction of a reservoir decorated with elegant gardens and grounds: “A Stately City then for Arts renown’d, / This Isle’s Metropolis, with Blessings crown’d; / In thy salubrious Waters rich shall be, / And chiefly owe their Beings all to thee” (167). Almost at the same time, in 1726, Murrough O’Connor (the poet’s first name is in question) wrote about his native County Kerry, on the western shore of the island: “What land can such a store of jewels boast, / As daily shine upon our plenteous coast: / Rome in her grandeur, never cou’d produce, / Such stones as we in common houses use: / Her Gothick structures and her marble domes / Were far inferior to our Kerry stones” (165-66).

Carpenter and Collins provide a detailed introductory essay that reviews important scholarship on literature and nature from John Barrell’s *The Idea of Landscape and the Sense of Place* (1972), and Raymond Williams’s *The Country and the City* (1976), to Timothy Clark’s important *Cambridge Introduction to Literature and the Environment* (2011) and a rich selection of recent essays and monographs that may broadly be described as “ecocritical” but favor rigorous literary analyses over more philosophical approaches. The introduction and valuable headnotes succeed in placing the poems and a rich array of critical and theoretical literature in historical context as well as forcefully arguing for the importance of early-modern to romantic era Irish poetry and culture in current ecocritical and literary discourse.

This volume will be an essential resource for scholars of poetry and colonialism as well as those interested in foundational representations of nature in English-language literature. To restrict the book to Irish literary studies would be a great disservice to the scholarship it represents. Its easily accessible and comprehensive editorial apparatus—and the endlessly fascinating collection of little-known poetry it contains—make it a valuable book for the general reader with an interest in poetry as well as for the student or researcher.

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