

**Blatti, Stephan, and Paul F. Snowden, eds. *Animalism: New Essays on Persons, Animals, and Identity*. Oxford University Press, 2016. 334 pp.**

**Cloth, \$85.00**—Stephan Blatti's and Paul Snowden's collection of fourteen essays, most of which are new, features clarifications, criticisms, and defenses of animalism. The editors' primary hope with the volume is that it will "stimulate new discussion, not make converts to [the editors'] own view, which is animalism." To that end, the volume stands to be a success. Approximately equal space is given to animalists and their opponents, and both parties make quite plausible cases. The collection, therefore, is hardly decisive. But the essays bear clear witness to developments on both sides of the debate since animalism first made an appearance in its contemporary form, and they expose issues and questions that will shape how the conversation goes from here.

One pervasive question the essays raise is what exactly animalism implies. Though no one would object that *we are identical to animals* captures something distinctive about the view's central thesis, what to make of that claim and whether there's more to the core of animalism is left quite open. As a result, different chapters target substantively different views. For example, some contributors maintain that animalism "is the thesis that we are organisms, not that we are organisms essentially" (Olson), "is not a theory of personal identity over time" (Johansson), and "does not say what [our persistence conditions] are" (Snowdon). Others maintain that animalism is "the view that the persistence conditions of persons are biological rather than psychological" (Shoemaker), the thesis that "we are always animals" (Johnston), and the thesis that "we are each fundamentally individuals of a certain biological species" (Madden).

There is some degree of variance it would be pedantic not to tolerate. The equivocation here goes beyond that. An episode from the collection illustrates why. Animalism's master argument, the well-known too-many-thinkers argument, goes something like this: human animals can think, and if they can think and are not identical to us, then there are too many thinkers (one for each of *us* and one for each of the human animals which aren't us), and so we and the animals are identical. Johnston points out that this argument does not prove that our persistence conditions are biological or that we are always animals. He thus makes what should be a shocking conclusion: the too-many-thinkers argument is "not an argument for animalism at all." Johnston argues, "animalism is intended to be a distinctive view in the philosophy of personal identity, a view which would give an answer to the question of what changes we can survive." Whatever the too-many-thinkers argument was meant to prove, it doesn't prove that kind of animalism. The reader may wonder where the complete, positive arguments are that do. They won't find them in this volume. (Johansson does guide us to one, but he doesn't develop it.) Perhaps equivocation between multiple senses of 'animalism' has obscured the need for a full argument for the one Johnston has in mind.

Difference of target does not render the essays confusing or limit the scope of their contributions. Each author is clear about the views they address, and together they advance discussions about, for example, constitutionalism (Baker, Robinson, and Sydney Shoemaker), the thinking parts problem for animalism (Parfit, Blatti, Madden, and Hershenov), the normative import of animalism (Hershenov, Johansson, and David Shoemaker), and brain splitting and the unity of consciousness (Reid and Snowdon). Especially noteworthy is the remnant person problem for animalism (pressed by Johnston). The remnant person problem is that if a detached cerebrum can host a conscious perspective of the sort we have now, animalists face a difficult dilemma about the cerebrum before it was detached. If it was conscious at that time, then the thinking parts problem resurfaces. (Were you the whole animal or that conscious cerebrum?) If the cerebrum was not conscious at that time, then we can make something conscious—we can make it a *person*—merely by removing matter external to it that doesn't suppress mental activities. And that seems incredible. Olson resists this problem. Madden rejects one of its presuppositions. Parfit and Campbell and McMahan defend an alternative to animalism that avoids the problem. According to their alternative, we are not animals but instead are whatever parts of our brains are responsible for consciousness. Hershenov raises general problems with this brainist alternative.

This is a well-curated collection that both addresses long-standing issues in the animalist debate and reveals new facets of them. It is clear enough for those who are new to the conversation and deep enough for those who are not.—Allison Krile Thornton, *Baylor University*