

tradition, and thought concerning the absence and presence of God are a worthwhile addition to the discussion. They flesh out and explore various philosophical and theological perspectives, including trust and suspicion, pantheism, and panentheism, making insightful suggestions as to how to understand this particularly complex issue.

Third, *Contemporary Philosophy of Religion* consists of four profound papers. 1) 'The Dialectic of God's Presence and Absence in the World,' Anselm K. Min. 2) 'The Knowledge of God in the Cloud of Unknowing,' John H. Whittaker. 3) 'God as Present and God as Absent,' Stephen T. Davis. 4) '>>Indra's Ear<< - God's Absence of Listening,' Roland Faber. In these four essays, several philosophical outlooks are considered with reference to the presence and absence of God, including metaphysics, ontology, epistemology, phenomenology, mysticism, and divine hiddenness.

Four, *Literature and Politics* presents two astute essays. 1) 'Simone Weil and Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*: Conditions for the Possibility of Beauty, Justice, and Faith in God,' Patrick Horn. 2) 'Religious Neutrality and the Secular State: The Politics of God's Absence,' Richard Amesbury. These two papers are a welcome addition to the volume in exploring two important domains where the discussion of God's presence and absence proliferate.

Such an important topic as this should not be ignored. As we find ourselves further and further in post-god cultural environments, where the weight is so frequently put on the absence of God, this book will help tip the scales back in the direction of the centrality of dialogue and the search for a reflective equilibrium on this crucial issue. Highly recommended.

Gregory J. Laughery

Verbs, Bones, and Brains.

Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Human Nature

Augustín Fuentes and Aku Visala eds

Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2017 (293 ss).

This remarkable volume, from a conference held at the University of Notre Dame, is a ground-breaking contribution to current understandings of human nature. Composed of an Introduction, five chapters, several responses to each chapter, and a dual contribution epilogue, the book offers an interactive blend of perspectives, including the scientific, philosophical, and theological, concerning the hotly debated question of 'being' human.

Considering the complexity of our evolutionary heritage various views of human nature, for example, sociobiology, evolutionary psychology, and cultural repertoire, have been proposed, along with many other possibilities, in the attempt to explain our human(ness). Hence the need for a volume such as this, which builds off the past, yet seeks to carefully evoke new directions for beginning to understand more about who and why we are who we are.

In the useful Introduction to the book, Fuentes and Visala underscore three issues of common ground and three topics of division among the scholars that contributed to the volume.

First, the common ground.

1) The importance of Transdisciplinarity, where disciplines actually may have the capacity to change each other. 2) A rejection of strong forms of evolutionary psychology and sociobiology. 3) The notion of Human nature has traction. Second, the areas of disagreement. 1) What it means to have a nature. 2) Who humans are. 3) Is naturalism a viable option.

This brings us to the various chapters in the book. Chapter one, by anthropologist Jonathan Marks, is an argument against overdoing biology when it comes to seeking to better understand human nature. For Marks, culture and sociality have to be given their place in the wider debate. There are three responders to Marks.

Chapter two, anthropologist Tim Ingold offers insights on a similar topic to Marks. Ingold is opposed to notions of something innate as human nature and stresses the unfolding of our development in the context of the environment. He shares with Marks the picture that culture has a significant place in discussions of becoming human. There are four responses to Ingold's essay.

Chapter three, proposed by neuroscientists Warren Brown and Brent D. Strawn, explores how human brains play extraordinary and diverse roles as they interact with the environment throughout human development, resulting in phenomena such as language and multifarious thought patterns. There are three responses to Strawn and Brown.

Chapter four, written by theologian J. Wentzel van Huyssteen, underscores the importance for theologians to engage with human evolution and archeology as they consider and reflect on human nature.

There are two responses to van Huyssteen.

Chapter five, philosopher Grant Ramsey, opposes what he refers to as 'normative' approaches to human nature. His aim is to offer a fitting 'descriptive' and ethical alternative that does not ignore or contradict a contemporary scientific worldview. There are two responses to Ramsey.

In the two reflection epilogue, the first by anthropologist Agustín Fuentes, and the second by theologian Celia Deanne-Drummond, we find a thought provoking set of concluding insights concerning the book as a whole and then several directions for moving forward in the debate regarding our understandings of human nature.

Not only do the contributors make sterling contributions; in the Introduction, each essay, response, and the Epilogue, but this book sets out in an exemplary fashion what a dialogue on the vital issue of human nature should look like in terms of both rigor and respect. In my view, it will no doubt be a highly useful research source for the present, but also for many years in the future. I highly recommend it.

Gregory J. Laughery