Book Notice

Alex Rosenberg and Robert Arp (editors): Philosophy of Biology: An Anthology, Wiley-Blackwell, 2010, x + 449 pp.*

This is a new philosophy of biology collection published in the Blackwell Philosophy Anthologies series. The book comprises thirty articles arranged in twelve parts that cover all central areas of the subject. The collection includes a useful historical introduction to the philosophy of biology, short introductions to each part that briefly explain the main problems, as well as lists with suggestions for further reading. Part one, on the 'Basic Principles and Proofs of Darwinism' is particularly helpful, as it provides an accessible introduction to the basic ideas of evolutionary biology and gives some background for what follows. After that, there are parts on evolution and chance, the tautology problem, adaptationism, functions and teleology, evolutionary developmental biology, reductionism, species and classification, the units of selection, sociobiology and ethics, evolutionary psychology and design and creationism. The reader will find some classic pieces of the field, which constitute essential reading for the philosophy of biology student (e.g. by Beatty, Gould and Lewontin, Kitcher, Sober, Sterelny). Moreover, there are several more recent papers (by Brandon, Godfrey-Smith, Perlman, Cummins, Okasha, Rosenberg, Ereshefsky among others), that either review the latest developments or argue for a specific position. Interestingly, there are also many papers by biologists, a fact that reflects the relevance of philosophical discussion for practicing scientists: apart from an extract from Darwin's *Origin*, there are papers by Dawkins, Carroll, Coyne and Orr, Wilson, Mayr and others. In many cases the papers present opposite views, prompting the reader to think deeper about the issues, and are an excellent starting point for further research. This is the case, e.g., for the parts on evolution and chance, species and the units of selection. The part on biological functions is particularly useful in this respect, as is the part on Evo-devo, which discusses some exciting recent

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developments in the field. For some other topics, the reader has to consult the suggestions for further reading in order to identify more recent additions to the literature. The collection focuses primarily on evolution, however there has been much interesting philosophical work recently on other fields of biology that could have been included (e.g. ecology). In general, however, this is an excellent source for newcomers and more advanced students alike. A very useful addition to the philosophy of biology literature.

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