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Edited by Keri Stevenson

Entangled and Empowered

Agency in Multispecies Communities

SERIES IN ANTHROPOLOGY

"Entangled and Empowered: Agency in Multispecies Communities" offers a compelling and imaginative reconfiguration of human engagements with the more-than-human world. In this book, Keri Stevenson curates a diverse and intellectually vibrant collection that traverses multiple terrains—from microbial ecologies in contemporary art to the spiritual entanglements surrounding cacao among the Mopan Maya. These essays illuminate the ways in which humans and other species "live in that web, create art, eat, and make worlds in common." This volume will be of particular interest to scholars and students in environmental humanities, posthumanist theory, and multispecies ethnography, presenting itself not merely as an academic contribution but as a politically urgent, ethically resonant, and conceptually innovative intervention.

Prof. Dr. Krishanu Maiti

Sukumar Sengupta Mahavidyalaya, Keshpur, India

About the editor

Keri Stevenson is an Associate Professor of English at the University of New Mexico-Gallup. She has published multiple book chapters and journal articles on the entanglement of humans with other species in Victorian literature, popular culture, and creative nonfiction, with a specific focus on birds. Her most recent article is "Across So Wide a Sea: Humans, Seabirds, and the Kinship of Mortality" in the 2022 collection 'Avian Aesthetics in Literature and Culture: Birds and Humans in the Popular Imagination', published by Lexington Books. She is currently the Area Chair for Eco-Criticism and the Environment at the Southwest Popular/American Culture Association and is researching a book on the concept and ramifications of scientific heroism in creative nonfiction.

Summary

'Entangled and Empowered: Agency in Multispecies Communities' is a collection that approaches the inevitable reality of entanglement between humans and other beings from a perspective of action and wonder. It argues that actors as diverse as bacteria, snakes, butterflies, ducks, and cacao trees can help us enact joy in fields as different as art, cinema, literature, and anthropology. While acknowledging the imminent reality of climate change, the sixth extinction, and other overwhelming threats to the Earth, this book argues that humans continue to live, and so do the beings whose lives are entwined with ours, for whom we can acknowledge and work to improve their existence. The nine essays in this volume trace that acknowledgment and work through three sections centered on visual media, queer and feminist readings of empowerment, and movements beyond the boundaries enacted by anthropocentric Western society. Drawing on theories such as new materialism, posthumanism, and ecofeminism, and with an international perspective from authors working at American, South Asian, and East Asian universities, 'Entangled and Empowered' finds hope in the shadow of despair. It engages with work by Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing on entanglement, Donna Haraway on kin-making and multispecies communities, and Karen Barad on intra-actions, among others, while also showing how critiques of these ideas can make the world both more promising and more endangered. This collection will be useful for scholars working in all subfields of environmental humanities, especially those intersecting with the theories described above and as an archive of examples analyzing practical aspects of agency in diverse multispecies communities. Scholars studying texts as well-known as 'The Handmaid's Tale' and as obscure as the codices of the Mopan Maya will find value in having both under one cover.

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