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Brook, Isis, "Editorial: Ethics Gets Real"

Brook, Isis. “Editorial: Ethics Gets Real.” *Environmental Values* 16, no. 1 (2007): 1–2. doi:10.3197/096327107780160355 .

The remarkable and essentially modern idea of environments, or even just non-human animals, having moral considerability has added layers of seemingly intractable complexity to the field of ethics. That said, we should not be under any illusions that prior to these developments ethics or moral philosophy was somehow easy or was achieving steady progress towards a rationally agreed consensus; inter-human ethics was and remains a minefield of conflicting positions and dilemmas. The addition of moral concern about the environment has, however, contributed more than just further (necessary) complexity. For example, in addition to the critique of anthropocentrism and the idea of non-human entities (animals, plants or ecosystems) possessing intrinsic value, environmental ethicists are at the vanguard of those bringing a significant shift in focus to bear on the very nature of ethical thinking. This shift in focus is being brought about by the recognition that we are situated - environed - beings and that our species has come into existence, like all other life forms, through a process of biological evolution. We have known this for some time and, once understood, the reality of our situation presents us daily with the evidence. However, the ethical import of these facts has been covered over for centuries by alternative stories of who we are, how we came to be and how we should live. (Source: The White Horse Press)

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