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Editorial Reviews

From Publishers Weekly The publication of this volume kicks off the Great Ape Project, a worldwide effort to extend the rights commonly afforded humans to chimpanzees, gorillas and orangutans. Proponents of the project would accord the rights to life, protection of individual liberty and prohibition of torture to all of these creatures. Singer (Animal Liberation) and freelance writer Cavalieri present 30 essays that make a persuasive case for equal rights. Contributors include field biologists, psychologists, lawyers, philosophers and anthropologists. Bernard Rollins, who teaches at Colorado State, where he developed the first college course in veterinary ethics and animal rights, suggests that the first step is to prohibit the importing of apes for zoos, entertainment or research. Other contributors are Jane Goodall, Roger and Deborah Fouts and Harlan Miller. As presented here, this revolutionary and controversial idea merits consideration. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

From Library Journal Proclaiming "the extension of the community of equals" to human beings to include chimpanzees, gorillas, and orangutans, this book presents "A Declaration on Great Apes," demanding the right to life, the protection of individual liberty, and the prohibition of torture. Thirty scientists, philosophers, and others contribute essays supporting this position. The most interesting essays explore the behavioral, genetic, and evolutionary links among the great apes, including humans, even expressing a view of man as "the third chimpanzee." The ethical articles are more abstract and redundant; this reviewer wanted less philosophy and more information on the practical ramifications of extending moral and legal equality to great apes. A heart-rending account of chimps in roadside zoos made me impatient with the overall theoretical tone. For academic and larger public library collections. - Beth Clewis, Prince William P.L., Va. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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15 of 15 people found the following review helpful: 4.5 stars Fascinating, April 21, 1997

By A Customer I have to admit, our family's copy of the Great Ape Project sat on the shelf for a few years before I got around to looking at it. I had deep reservations about the book, fearing that it would lead to a reinforcement of anthropocentric criteria for moral standing. However, once I started reading I was hooked. The huge number of contributors with many different viewpoints ranging from rather anthropocentric to radical animal rights make for a lively read. In addition, the book is chockablock full of fascinating information about the great apes--they really are more similar to us than even I, an animal rightist for years, would have thought possible. A challenging book that raises the questions: what does it mean to be human? And how can we justify treating our fellow great apes the way we do?

13 of 14 people found the following review helpful: 4.5 stars Tearing down the walls that divide, October 8, 2000

By Lee Hall (United States) - See all my reviews This book is an excellent source of information provided by a variety of scientific and legal experts. The authors show us the rich emotional and cultural lives of non-human great apes. Researchers who use other apes because of their genetic and psychological complexity ought to be required to read this book. Indeed, the one flaw of this book is the fact that a few chapters are the works of researchers who have used, for example, the linguistic talents of other apes to advance their own careers. Other sections of the book, including a chapter vividly comparing the non-human and human slave trade, and a description of the case for legal rights based on the personhood of hominids, underscore that flaw with haunting and brilliant sensitivity.

Overall, The Great Ape Project lucidly demonstrates the unconscionability of continuing to use the other apes for experimentation, for teaching, for trade in their body parts, and in the entertainment industry. Moreover, it inspires us to broaden our definition of slavery to include our nearest living relatives.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful: 4.5 stars Well written and fascinating, May 15, 1999

By J. Mackenzie (Toronto, Canada) - See all my reviews The essays in this book are remarkable and well done. A very important work for the animal rights movement. I did find it a little repetitive at times, but this did not detract from the point of the book, to make us aware of how closely related great apes really are to us, and their capacity to communicate in a human language.

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