

RICHARD GORMAN<sup>1</sup>

Irus Braverman, ed.

MORE-THAN-ONE  
HEALTH: HUMANS,  
ANIMALS, AND THE  
ENVIRONMENT  
POST-COVID

Routledge, 2022.

*More-Than-One Health: Humans, Animals, and the Environment Post-Covid* is part of Routledge's 'Studies in Environment and Health' series.<sup>2</sup> It comprises thirteen substantive chapters by scholars across disciplines and geographies, alongside a detailed introduction by Irus Braverman, a provocative foreword by Stephen Hinchliffe, and a reflective afterword by Warwick Anderson.

One Health is a transdisciplinary framework that attempts to unify approaches to public, animal, and environmental health by recognising their interdependencies.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Gorman is Assistant Professor in Ethics and Social Science at Brighton and Sussex Medical School in the UK. His research explores the social and ethical dimensions of medical and healthcare practices, with a particular interest in the roles animals play within them.

<sup>2</sup> Irus Braverman, ed., *More-than-One Health: Humans, Animals, and the Environment Post-COVID* (Routledge, 2022).

<sup>3</sup> Despite its 'transdisciplinary' aims to interweave domains of knowledge and break down silos between individual academic disciplines and between academia and stakeholders outside of academia, as Braverman's volume explores, One-Health's imagination of 'transdisciplinarity' is one that frequently prioritises Western scientific narratives.

In a world of climate change and pandemics, the premise that ‘health’ is relational, co-produced, and entangled between human and non-human lives and ecosystems might seem obvious and attractive. Indeed, organisations including the World Health Organisation (WHO) have embedded and operationalised ‘One Health’ thinking to coordinate global health surveillance, prevention, and response.<sup>4</sup> A real strength of Braverman’s collection is that it resists simply celebrating this integrative vision, instead probing the tensions that such a framework entails. Because, as Hinchliffe’s foreword sets out, the elegance of One Health also belies risk: by bundling everything and everyone together, we obscure the uncomfortable trade-offs and compromises that are ever at play within multispecies worlds.<sup>5</sup>

As Braverman’s introduction highlights, despite its promise of interconnectedness, One Health risks reifying an anthropocentric view, overly concerned with zoonotic (infectious diseases transmissible from non-humans to humans) threat and securitisation. One Health must be more-than-human and more-than-zoonotic to fulfil its mission of promoting a more ecological perspective. Likewise, Braverman notes that despite its transdisciplinary hopes, One Health frameworks make limited space for social-scientific, humanities, and Indigenous perspectives. Instead, a preference for ‘one-ness’ risks reproducing neoliberal and neocolonial logics, rather than pluralising how health is understood and governed. Whilst endorsing the interconnection underpinning One Health, Braverman’s text instead invites us to imagine a One Health that “is more transparent, relational, transdisciplinary, plural, processual, and just”—a critical orientation the volume dubs as “More-Than-One Health.”<sup>6</sup>

In Part One, “Situating One Health: Histories and Practices,” Woods traces the entangled histories of human and veterinary medicine, demonstrating how current health frameworks rest on historical, social, and political choices rather than inevitabilities.<sup>7</sup> The section then moves to contemporary perspectives, with a chapter by Kahn exploring the nexus of food, faecal waste, and climate change.<sup>8</sup> Subsequent chapters comprise interviews between Braverman and leaders in One Health, discussing the increasing incidence of the transmission of viruses between species with wildlife veterinarian Walzer, and exploring the potential of One Health for global pandemic preparedness with Amuasi, Co-Chair of the Lancet One Health

<sup>4</sup> World Health Organization, *One Health Joint Plan of Action (2022–2026): Working Together for the Health of Humans, Animals, Plants and the Environment* (World Health Organization, 2022); Jakob Zinsstag et al., “Advancing One Human–Animal–Environment Health for Global Health Security: What Does the Evidence Say?,” *The Lancet* 401, no. 10376 (2023): 591–604, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(22\)01595-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(22)01595-1).

<sup>5</sup> Stephen Hinchliffe, “Foreword: The Lure of One Health,” in *More-than-One Health* (Routledge, 2022).

<sup>6</sup> Irus Braverman, “Introduction: More-than-One Health, More-than-One Governance,” in *More-than-One Health* (Routledge, 2022), 2.

<sup>7</sup> Abigail Woods, “One Health: A ‘More-than-Human’ History,” in *More-than-One Health* (Routledge, 2022).

<sup>8</sup> Laura H. Kahn, “The Case for a One Health Approach from a Physician’s Perspective,” in *More-than-One Health* (Routledge, 2022).

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The second part, “Expanding One Health: Beyond the Human-Animal-Environment Triad” begins with Johnson and Dickinson exploring how attempts to position jellyfish and shrimp waste as health-giving biomaterials obscure the possibility that these species have their own forms of health and ecological value, and are driven more by economic logics than concern for non-human flourishing.<sup>10</sup> This is complemented by Reisman’s chapter focusing on plant health and the politics of care. Reisman shows how responses to plant disease expose whose lives and landscapes count as worth protecting, arguing that One Health must grapple with uneven politics of care if it is to move beyond a narrow biosecurity frame.<sup>11</sup> The final chapter in this section takes a different approach as Squier examines how visual-narrative forms, such as comics, might help communicate One Health’s complexity by visualising and storying multispecies entanglements.<sup>12</sup>

Part Three, “Othering One Health: Toward Multibeing Justice” focuses on putting non-humans at the centre of discussions about One Health. Here Deckha argues that industrialised animal agriculture fundamentally undermines both human and non-human wellbeing. Deckha contends that unless One Health initiatives explicitly confront this and call for a transition away from animal agriculture, any vision of interspecies health remains compromised and elusive.<sup>13</sup> Building on this politico-ethical perspective, Nadal’s chapter discusses the underexplored issue of emotions in One Health through a multispecies ethnography of free-roaming dogs in India.<sup>14</sup> Recentring emotion reminds us of the many facets guiding policy and public engagement around One Health initiatives. The section is rounded off by Kristensen’s chapter which shows how human-made habitats and routines create animal dependencies. Kristensen calls for One Health to acknowledge these ‘relational spillover’ events that entangle human and non-human bodies and unsettle ‘wild’ categories.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Irus Braverman, “One Health, Surveillance, and the Pandemic Treaty: An Interview with John H. Amuasi,” in *More-than-One Health* (Routledge, 2022); Irus Braverman, “Spillover Interfaces from Wuhan to Wall Street: An Interview with Chris Walzer,” in *More-than-One Health* (Routledge, 2022).

<sup>10</sup> Elizabeth R. Johnson and Hannah Dickinson, “Between Healthy and Degraded Oceans: Promising Human Health through Marine Biomedicine,” in *More-than-One Health* (Routledge, 2022).

<sup>11</sup> Emily Reisman, “More-than-Almonds: Plant Disease and the Politics of Care,” in *More-than-One Health* (Routledge, 2022).

<sup>12</sup> Susan Merrill Squier, “What Can Graphic Medicine Contribute to One Health?,” in *More-than-One Health* (Routledge, 2022).

<sup>13</sup> Maneesha Deckha, “The One Health Initiative and a Deeper Engagement with Animal Health and Wellbeing: Moving Away From Animal Agriculture,” in *More-than-One Health* (Routledge, 2022).

<sup>14</sup> Deborah Nadal, “Can Camaraderie Help Us Do Better than Compassion and Love for Nonhuman Health?: Some Musings on One Health Inspired by the Case of Rabies in India,” in *More-than-One Health* (Routledge, 2022).

<sup>15</sup> Bjorn Ralf Kristensen, “Anthrodependency, Zoonoses, and Relational Spillover,” in *More-than-One Health* (Routledge, 2022).

In Part Four “Decolonizing One Health: Toward Postcolonial and Indigenous Knowledges,” Keck traces the enrolment of birdwatching societies in the monitoring of avian influenza, bringing new perspectives that reorientated birds as being more-than-disease reservoirs, towards signifiers of ecological vulnerability and resilience. For Keck, this points toward the potential of comprehending shared risks and relations across species.<sup>16</sup> Kim and Chun follow, showing how biosecurity measures privilege economic stability and human health (for some) over animal lives. They highlight how the implementation of animal culls involves shifting burdens onto precarious workers, securing health benefits for select populations by outsourcing vulnerability to marginalised human and animal groups.<sup>17</sup> McHugh continues this theme, discussing how the culling of Inuit sled dogs—ostensibly for the purpose of rabies eradication programmes—“accelerated Canadian nationalism, capitalism, and cultural genocide.” McHugh uses these narratives to showcase the need for more culturally sensitive, participatory adaptations of One Health that allow “for the negotiation of more workable solutions than the all-or-nothing, top-down models that have been the cause of so much harm already.”<sup>18</sup>

These concerns about the limits of current One Health framings carry directly into Anderson’s afterword where they suggest One Health’s future depends on reconceptualising its ontologies of ‘animal’ and embracing more heterogeneous, relational, and ecological ways of understanding health. Anderson’s concern is that whilst One Health may enable greater sensitivity to human entanglements with certain species, it has conversely muted other ways of appreciating organism–environment relatedness.<sup>19</sup> This collection makes a good start in widening the lens on the animals, environments, and humans whose experiences are centred within One Health, but there is clearly further work to be done.

For scholars and practitioners working at the intersections of medical humanities, critical public health, and animal or environmental studies, this volume makes an important contribution, showing how One Health can be unsettled and reimagined. The thematic flow between chapters is not always seamless, but this unevenness is inevitable in such a diverse collection and perhaps adds to the multiplicity of perspectives and voices needed to pluralise and decolonise the framework. The collection offers a timely provocation to think more expansively about what health is, who it includes, and how it might be governed otherwise. ▣

<sup>16</sup> Frédéric Keck, “Birds as Sentinels of the Environment in Hong Kong and Taiwan,” in *More-than-One Health* (Routledge, 2022).

<sup>17</sup> Kiheung Kim and Myung-Sun Chun, “The Spatialization of Diseases: Transferring Risk onto Vulnerable Beings,” in *More-than-One Health* (Routledge, 2022).

<sup>18</sup> Susan McHugh, “Rabies on Ice: Learning from Interspecies Suffering in Arctic Canada,” in *More-than-One Health* (Routledge, 2022), 260.

<sup>19</sup> Warwick Anderson, “Afterword: Among Animals, and More: One Health Otherwise,” in *More-than-One Health* (Routledge, 2022).