

The Human Person: Animal and Spirit

Fergus Kerr OP

In 1988 David Braine, who has taught philosophy at the University of Aberdeen for many years, published *The Reality of Time and the Existence of God*, a metaphysical proof of God's existence. Now, in this second book, *The Human Person: Animal and Spirit* (Duckworth, London, 1993) which certainly stands on its own although we are frequently referred back to the earlier book and forward to two (if not three) forthcoming volumes, he reconstructs the argument advanced by Thomas Aquinas in favour of our immortality, an even more audacious enterprise in the present intellectual climate.

The first move is to cut off every form of dualism which splits the animals that we human beings are into parts that then have to be related to one another. The traditional mind/body dualism to which Platonist Christians have always been attracted is, so David Braine argues, no different from the brain/mind identity theories which currently flourish under such labels as physicalism, behaviourism and so on. While of course he conducts the argument with reference in general terms to current literature he is surely right in saying that the modern debates raise no issues that would surprise Aquinas. The Platonists paid attention only to the immateriality of the human intellect while the pre-Socratic Ionians believed that knowledge is simply physical (cf *Summa Theologiae*, Ia 84, 2). The greater threat nowadays to the unitariness of the human being is, as Braine says, various forms of materialism and, in particular, some of the Artificial Intelligence theories. But mind-realized-in-brain theories are no different philosophically from soul-imprisoned-in-body ones. Even distinguished philosophers such as Norman Malcolm and Michael Dummett (themselves Christian) exhibit 'a reductionist tendency of a behaviourist kind' (page 192, cf 392). The idea, on the other hand, that the person is invisible in a private world is 'a peculiar excrecence of post-Reformation thought, whether empiricist or existentialist' (page 495). David Braine, appealing frequently to Wittgenstein, Merleau-Ponty, Ryle and J.L. Austin, steers his way through these extremes and builds up a convincingly holistic account of human beings as animals which is, as he says, essentially the Aristotelian perspective which was mostly abandoned in the seventeenth century.

The Human Person Animal And Spirit

**Marian de Souza, Gloria
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The Human Person Animal And Spirit:

Unveiling the Magic of Words: A Overview of "**The Human Person Animal And Spirit**"

In a world defined by information and interconnectivity, the enchanting power of words has acquired unparalleled significance. Their power to kindle emotions, provoke contemplation, and ignite transformative change is truly awe-inspiring. Enter the realm of "**The Human Person Animal And Spirit**," a mesmerizing literary masterpiece penned by a distinguished author, guiding readers on a profound journey to unravel the secrets and potential hidden within every word. In this critique, we shall delve in to the book is central themes, examine its distinctive writing style, and assess its profound effect on the souls of its readers.

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Table of Contents The Human Person Animal And Spirit

1. Understanding the eBook The Human Person Animal And Spirit
 - The Rise of Digital Reading The Human Person Animal And Spirit
 - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying The Human Person Animal And Spirit
 - Exploring Different Genres
 - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
 - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
 - Popular eBook Platforms
 - Features to Look for in an The Human Person Animal And Spirit
 - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from The Human Person Animal And Spirit
 - Personalized Recommendations
 - The Human Person Animal And Spirit User Reviews and Ratings

- The Human Person Animal And Spirit and Bestseller Lists
- 5. Accessing The Human Person Animal And Spirit Free and Paid eBooks
 - The Human Person Animal And Spirit Public Domain eBooks
 - The Human Person Animal And Spirit eBook Subscription Services
 - The Human Person Animal And Spirit Budget-Friendly Options
- 6. Navigating The Human Person Animal And Spirit eBook Formats
 - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
 - The Human Person Animal And Spirit Compatibility with Devices
 - The Human Person Animal And Spirit Enhanced eBook Features
- 7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
 - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of The Human Person Animal And Spirit
 - Highlighting and Note-Taking The Human Person Animal And Spirit
 - Interactive Elements The Human Person Animal And Spirit
- 8. Staying Engaged with The Human Person Animal And Spirit
 - Joining Online Reading Communities
 - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
 - Following Authors and Publishers The Human Person Animal And Spirit
- 9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books The Human Person Animal And Spirit
 - Benefits of a Digital Library
 - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection The Human Person Animal And Spirit
- 10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
 - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
 - Minimizing Distractions
 - Managing Screen Time
- 11. Cultivating a Reading Routine The Human Person Animal And Spirit
 - Setting Reading Goals The Human Person Animal And Spirit
 - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
- 12. Sourcing Reliable Information of The Human Person Animal And Spirit
 - Fact-Checking eBook Content of The Human Person Animal And Spirit
 - Distinguishing Credible Sources

13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
 - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
 - Exploring Educational eBooks
14. Embracing eBook Trends
 - Integration of Multimedia Elements
 - Interactive and Gamified eBooks

The Human Person Animal And Spirit Introduction

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