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Teleology, First Principles, and Scientific Method in Aristotle's Biology (Oxford Aristotle Studies Series)

Allan Gotthelf

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This volume presents an interconnected set of sixteen essays, four of which are previously unpublished, by Allan Gotthelf--one of the leading experts in the study of Aristotle's biological writings. Gotthelf addresses three main topics across Aristotle's three main biological treatises. Starting with his own ground-breaking study of Aristotle's natural teleology and its illuminating relationship with the *Generation of Animals*, Gotthelf proceeds to the axiomatic structure of biological explanation (and the first principles such explanation proceeds from) in the *Parts of Animals*. After an exploration of the implications of these two treatises for our understanding of Aristotle's metaphysics, Gotthelf examines important aspects of the method by which Aristotle organizes his data in the *History of Animals* to make possible such a systematic, explanatory study of animals, offering a new view of the place of classification in that enterprise. In a concluding section on 'Aristotle as Theoretical Biologist', Gotthelf explores the basis of Charles Darwin's great praise of Aristotle and, in the first printing of a lecture delivered worldwide, provides an overview of Aristotle as a philosophically-oriented scientist, and 'a proper verdict' on his greatness as scientist.

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