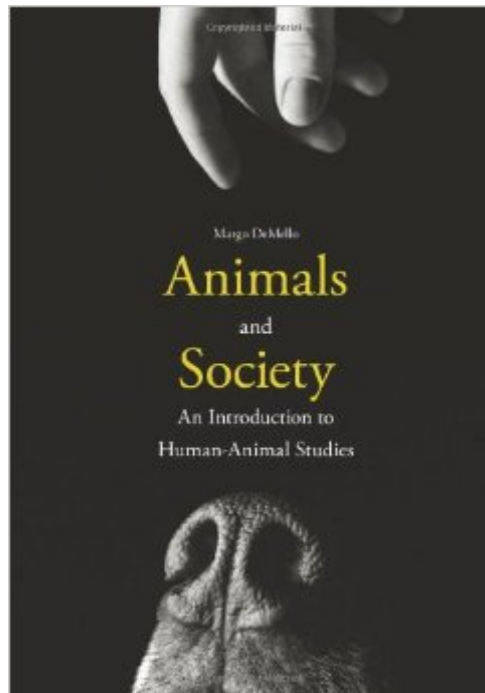


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Animals And Society: An Introduction To Human-Animal Studies



Synopsis

Considering that much of human society is structured through its interaction with non-human animals, and since human society relies heavily on the exploitation of animals to serve human needs, human-animal studies has become a rapidly expanding field of research, featuring a number of distinct positions, perspectives, and theories that require nuanced explanation and contextualization. The first book to provide a full overview of human-animal studies, this volume focuses on the conceptual construction of animals in American culture and the way in which it reinforces and perpetuates hierarchical human relationships rooted in racism, sexism, and class privilege. Margo DeMello considers interactions between humans and animals within the family, the law, the religious and political system, and other major social institutions, and she unpacks the different identities humans fashion for themselves and for others through animals. Essays also cover speciesism and evolutionary continuities; the role and preservation of animals in the wild; the debate over zoos and the use of animals in sports; domestication; agricultural practices such as factory farming; vivisection; animal cruelty; animal activism; the representation of animals in literature and film; and animal ethics. Sidebars highlight contemporary controversies and issues, with recommendations for additional reading, educational films, and related websites. DeMello concludes with an analysis of major philosophical positions on human social policy and the future of human-animal relations.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Animals have been with us since the dawn of man. How have our relationships changed? The

broadest categories include domesticated and wild animals. Animal domestication stretches back thousands of years. The author places the domestication of dogs back as far as 30,000 utilizing various kinds of evidence including DNA from gravesites. Among these, two subcategories arise: pets and livestock. Still other categories include performing animals, working animals and wild animal management. Margo DeMello has immersed herself in the most intensive and complete study and documentation of animals and how humans relate to them ever assembled. While she admits that the work is a textbook, it appears to me more like a handbook. Margo DeMello has amassed a large body of publications, making her a big authority on animals. Her credentials and exposure have heralded her to the top rung on the subject of animal study. The present work primarily represents the acute connection human beings share with their animal counterparts. Indeed, the work is comprehensive, broken into five parts and then 20 chapters, each with several subcategories. It's not an afternoon read. Instead, DeMello builds on the many factors and bonds animals and society, providing a provocative insight into the larger scheme of things. She uncovers the domain of animal rights, anthrozoology, ethology and human-animal studies. She does this with animal institutions, animal studies and numerous case studies. Chronicling our interdependence on working animals, she examines the unique relationships in which certain relationships are forged.

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