



Animals and Society: An Introduction to Human-Animal Studies

By Margo DeMello

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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.

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Animals and Society: An Introduction to Human-Animal Studies By Margo DeMello Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #566180 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Columbia University Press
- Published on: 2012-08-21
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 10.10" h x 1.10" w x 7.00" l, 1.85 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 488 pages



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Editorial Review

Review

As one of the founders of this field and someone who has helped guide its development, DeMello is uniquely situated to write this book. She does an admirable job detailing the history of human–animal studies, its intricate relations to other fields, and its multi/interdisciplinarity. The right book at the right time.

(Claire Jean Kim, University of California, Irvine)

A 'must' book to own and read. Each chapter is filled with insights extending our understanding of the role and meaning of non-human animals in the modern age. *Animals and Society* is an essential addition to our bookshelves, required readings, citations lists, and textbook adoptions.

(Arnold Arluke, Northeastern University)

The first published text in human–animal studies, this volume undoubtedly sets the standard. Comprehensive in scope, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary in approach, painstakingly researched and wonderfully written, it should be the choice for human-animal studies courses in a variety of disciplines. A most impressive accomplishment.

(Clifton P. Flynn, University of South Carolina Upstate)

A valuable resource.... Recommended.

(*Choice*)

Animals and Society is a substantial encyclopedic resource for understanding the nature of our interactions involving animals.

(D. Wayne Dworsky *San Francisco Book Review*)

DeMello's book surpasses the typical textbook in offering a well-written overview of the field, with historical and cultural coverage of the changing categorizations of animals, the social construction of animals, the various human use of animals, attitudes toward animals, and symbolic manifestations of animals.

(*Zeteo*)

A well-considered and artfully structured work that provokes thoughtful reflection and stimulates ideas for both theoretical and applied study; it is a worthwhile addition to my library.

(Anne McBride *PsycCritiques*)

Organizing a new, interdisciplinary field is no easy task, and overall DeMello has done a very fine job.

(Humanimalia: A Journal of Human/Animal Interface Studies)

About the Author

Margo DeMello teaches anthropology and sociology at Central New Mexico Community College. Her books include *Speaking for Animals: Animal Autobiographical Writing*; *Teaching the Animal: Human-Animal Studies Across the Disciplines*; *Stories Rabbits Tell: A Natural and Cultural History of a Misunderstood Creature*; and *Why Animals Matter: The Case for Animal Protection*.

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Gayle Oconnell:

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Irene Parker:

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Jack Godina:

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