

Animals And The Human Imagination A Companion To Animal Studies

“Beautifully written essays” on animals, “the real and mythological, the ordinary and the exotic, the wild and the domesticated” (Publishers Weekly). Humans were surrounded by other animals from the beginning of time: they were food, clothes, adversaries, companions, jokes, and gods. And yet, our companions in evolution are leaving the world—both as physical beings and spiritual symbols—and not returning. In this collection of linked essays, Alison Hawthorne Deming examines what the disappearance of animals means for human imagination and existence. Moving from mammoth hunts to dying house cats, she explores profound questions about what it means to be animal. What is inherent in animals that both leads us to destroy and leads us toward peace? As human animals, how does art both define us as a species and how does it emerge primarily from our relationship with other species? The reader emerges with a transformed sense of how the living world around us has defined and continues to define us in a powerful way. “Beautifully written essays on animal and human behavior and biology . . . highly recommended for lovers of words

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and nature.” —Publishers Weekly “Human beings live in an age in which industrialization and mass extinction are facts of life. But as Deming suggests in this collection, the more people denude the planet of animals, the more diminished they become in spirit . . . Eloquent, sensitive and astute.” —Kirkus Reviews “Serpentine intellect and wry humor.” —Booklist

This interdisciplinary and cross-cultural collection reflects the growth of animal studies as an independent field and the rise of 'animality' as a critical lens through which to analyze society and culture, on par with race and gender. *Living Beings* examines the vital characteristics of social interactions between living beings, including humans, other animals and trees. Many discussions of such relationships highlight the exceptional qualities of the human members of the category, insisting for instance on their religious beliefs or creativity. In contrast, the international case studies in this volume dissect views based on hierarchical oppositions between human and other living beings. Although human practices may sometimes appear to exist in a realm beyond nature, they are nevertheless subject to the pull of natural forces. These forces may be brought into prominence through a consideration of the interactions between human beings and other inhabitants of the natural world. The interplay in this book between social anthropologists, philosophers and artists cuts across species

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divisions to examine the experiential dimensions of interspecies engagements. In ethnographically and/or historically contextualized chapters, contributors examine the juxtaposition of human and other living beings in the light of themes such as wildlife safaris, violence, difference, mimicry, simulation, spiritual renewal, dress and language.

“A remarkable combination of biology, genetics, zoology, evolutionary psychology and philosophy.” —Richard Powers, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Overstory* “A brilliant, thought-provoking book.” —Matt Haig, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Midnight Library* A wide-ranging take on why humans have a troubled relationship with being an animal, and why we need a better one Human are the most inquisitive, emotional, imaginative, aggressive, and baffling animals on the planet. But we are also an animal that does not think it is an animal. How well do we really know ourselves? *How to Be Animal* tells a remarkable story of what it means to be human and argues that at the heart of our existence is a profound struggle with being animal. We possess a psychology that seeks separation between humanity and the rest of nature, and we have invented grand ideologies to magnify this. As well as piecing together the mystery of how this mindset evolved, Challenger's book examines the wide-reaching ways in which it affects our lives, from our politics to the way we distance

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ourselves from other species. We travel from the origin of homo sapiens through the agrarian and industrial revolutions, the age of the internet, and on to the futures of AI and human-machine interface. Challenger examines how technology influences our sense of our own animal nature and our relationship with other species with whom we share this fragile planet. That we are separated from our own animality is a delusion, according to Challenger. Blending nature writing, history, and moral philosophy, *How to Be Animal* is both a fascinating reappraisal of what it means to be human, and a robust defense of what it means to be an animal.

Examines the overlap and blurring of boundaries among humans, animals, and machines.

A bold new synthesis of paleontology, archaeology, genetics, and anthropology that overturns misconceptions about race, war and peace, and human nature itself, answering an age-old question: What made humans so exceptional among all the species on Earth? Creativity. It is the secret of what makes humans special, hiding in plain sight. Agustín Fuentes argues that your child's finger painting comes essentially from the same place as creativity in hunting and gathering millions of years ago, and throughout history in making war and peace, in intimate relationships, in shaping the planet, in our communities, and in all of

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art, religion, and even science. It requires imagination and collaboration. Every poet has her muse; every engineer, an architect; every politician, a constituency. The manner of the collaborations varies widely, but successful collaboration is inseparable from imagination, and it brought us everything from knives and hot meals to iPhones and interstellar spacecraft. Weaving fascinating stories of our ancient ancestors' creativity, Fuentes finds the patterns that match modern behavior in humans and animals. This key quality has propelled the evolutionary development of our bodies, minds, and cultures, both for good and for bad. It's not the drive to reproduce; nor competition for mates, or resources, or power; nor our propensity for caring for one another that have separated us out from all other creatures. As Fuentes concludes, to make something lasting and useful today you need to understand the nature of your collaboration with others, what imagination can and can't accomplish, and, finally, just how completely our creativity is responsible for the world we live in. Agustín Fuentes's resounding multimillion-year perspective will inspire readers—and spark all kinds of creativity. Alice Crary offers a transformative account of moral thought about human beings and animals. Instead of assuming that the world places no demands on our moral imagination, she underscores the urgency of treating the exercise of moral imagination as necessary for arriving at an adequate world-guided understanding

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of human beings and animals.

Mesopotamian Blue cat, Varjak Paw, has never been Outside before; he and his family have always lived in the isolated house at the top of the hill. But Varjak is forced out into the city when the sinister Gentleman and his two menacing cats take over his home. With help from his mystical ancestor, Jalal, Varjak manages to overcome challenges such as self-survival and a threat from the gangland cats, and he ultimately discovers the terrifying secrets behind the Vanishings. But can he save his own family from their fate? With wonderful integrated illustrations from acclaimed comic book artist Dave McKean, this book will appeal to all ages. An elucidating collection of ten original essays, *Making Animal Meaning* reconceptualizes methods for researching animal histories and rethinks the contingency of the human-animal relationship. The vibrant and diverse field of animal studies is detailed in these interdisciplinary discussions, which include voices from a broad range of scholars and have an extensive chronological and geographical reach. These exciting discourses capture the most compelling theoretical underpinnings of animal significance while exploring meaning-making through the study of specific spaces, species, and human-animal relations. A deeply thoughtful collection — vital to understanding central questions of agency, kinship, and animal consumption — these essays tackle the history and philosophy of constructing animal meaning.

Animals and the Human Imagination A Companion to Animal Studies Columbia University Press
An intelligent, amusing, and affectionate look at cats in history, literature, and art

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In this illuminating and evocative exploration of the origin and function of storytelling, the author goes beyond the work of mythologist Joseph Campbell, arguing that mythmaking evolved as a cultural survival strategy for coping with the constant fear of being killed and eaten by predators. Beginning nearly two million years ago in the Pleistocene era, the first stories, Trout argues, functioned as alarm calls, warning fellow group members about the carnivores lurking in the surroundings. At the earliest period, before the development of language, these rudimentary "stories" would have been acted out. When language appeared with the evolution of the ancestral human brain, stories were recited, memorized, and much later written down as the often bone-chilling myths that have survived to this day. This book takes the reader through the landscape of world mythology to show how our more recent ancestors created myths that portrayed animal predators in four basic ways: as monsters, as gods, as benefactors, and as role models. Each incarnation is a variation of the fear-management technique that enabled early humans not only to survive but to overcome their potentially incapacitating fear of predators. In the final chapter, Trout explores the ways in which our visceral fear of predators is played out in the movies, where both animal and human predators serve to probe and revitalize our capacity to detect and survive danger. Anyone with an interest in mythology, archaeology, folk tales, and the origins of contemporary storytelling will find this book an exciting and provocative exploration into the natural and psychological forces that shaped human culture and gave rise to storytelling and mythmaking.

The idea of human cruelty to animals so consumes novelist Elizabeth Costello in her later years that she can no longer look another person in the eye: humans, especially meat-eating ones, seem to her to be conspirators in a crime of stupefying magnitude taking place on farms

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and in slaughterhouses, factories, and laboratories across the world. Costello's son, a physics professor, admires her literary achievements, but dreads his mother's lecturing on animal rights at the college where he teaches. His colleagues resist her argument that human reason is overrated and that the inability to reason does not diminish the value of life; his wife denounces his mother's vegetarianism as a form of moral superiority. At the dinner that follows her first lecture, the guests confront Costello with a range of sympathetic and skeptical reactions to issues of animal rights, touching on broad philosophical, anthropological, and religious perspectives. Painfully for her son, Elizabeth Costello seems offensive and flaky, but--dare he admit it?--strangely on target. Here the internationally renowned writer J. M. Coetzee uses fiction to present a powerfully moving discussion of animal rights in all their complexity. He draws us into Elizabeth Costello's own sense of mortality, her compassion for animals, and her alienation from humans, even from her own family. In his fable, presented as a Tanner Lecture sponsored by the University Center for Human Values at Princeton University, Coetzee immerses us in a drama reflecting the real-life situation at hand: a writer delivering a lecture on an emotionally charged issue at a prestigious university. Literature, philosophy, performance, and deep human conviction--Coetzee brings all these elements into play. As in the story of Elizabeth Costello, the Tanner Lecture is followed by responses treating the reader to a variety of perspectives, delivered by leading thinkers in different fields. Coetzee's text is accompanied by an introduction by political philosopher Amy Gutmann and responsive essays by religion scholar Wendy Doniger, primatologist Barbara Smuts, literary theorist Marjorie Garber, and moral philosopher Peter Singer, author of *Animal Liberation*. Together the lecture-fable and the essays explore the palpable social consequences of uncompromising moral conflict and

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confrontation.

How can literary imagination help us engage with the lives of other animals? The question represents one of the liveliest areas of inquiry in the humanities, and Mark Payne seeks to answer it by exploring the relationship between human beings and other animals in writings from antiquity to the present. Ranging from ancient Greek poets to modernists like Ezra Pound and William Carlos Williams, Payne considers how writers have used verse to communicate the experience of animal suffering, created analogies between human and animal societies, and imagined the kind of knowledge that would be possible if human beings could see themselves as animals see them. *The Animal Part* also makes substantial contributions to the emerging discourse of the posthumanities. Payne offers detailed accounts of the tenuousness of the idea of the human in ancient literature and philosophy and then goes on to argue that close reading must remain a central practice of literary study if posthumanism is to articulate its own prehistory. For it is only through fine-grained literary interpretation that we can recover the poetic thinking about animals that has always existed alongside philosophical constructions of the human. In sum, *The Animal Part* marks a breakthrough in animal studies and offers a significant contribution to comparative poetics.

How cross-species companionship is figured across a variety of media--and why it matters. Consider Miles Davis, horn held high, sculpting a powerful musical statement full of tonal patterns, inside jokes, and thrilling climactic phrases—all on the fly. Or think of a comedy troupe riffing on a couple of cues from the audience until the whole room is erupting with laughter. Or maybe it's a team of software engineers brainstorming their way to the next Google, or the Einsteins of the world code-cracking the mysteries of nature. Maybe it's simply a child playing

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with her toys. What do all of these activities share? With wisdom, humor, and joy, philosopher Stephen T. Asma answers that question in this book: imagination. And from there he takes us on an extraordinary tour of the human creative spirit. Guided by neuroscience, animal behavior, evolution, philosophy, and psychology, Asma burrows deep into the human psyche to look right at the enigmatic but powerful engine that is our improvisational creativity—the source, he argues, of our remarkable imaginational capacity. How is it, he asks, that a story can evoke a whole world inside of us? How are we able to rehearse a skill, a speech, or even an entire scenario simply by thinking about it? How does creativity go beyond experience and help us make something completely new? And how does our moral imagination help us sculpt a better society? As he shows, we live in a world that is only partly happening in reality. Huge swaths of our cognitive experiences are made up by “what-ifs,” “almosts,” and “maybes,” an imagined terrain that churns out one of the most overlooked but necessary resources for our flourishing: possibilities. Considering everything from how imagination works in our physical bodies to the ways we make images, from the mechanics of language and our ability to tell stories to the creative composition of self-consciousness, Asma expands our personal and day-to-day forms of imagination into a grand scale: as one of the decisive evolutionary forces that has guided human development from the Paleolithic era to today. The result is an inspiring look at the rich relationships among improvisation, imagination, and culture, and a privileged glimpse into the unique nature of our evolved minds.

How do animals perceive the world? What does it really feel like to be a cat or a dog? In *Understanding Animals*, Lars Svendsen investigates how humans can attempt to understand the lives of other animals. The book delves into animal communication,

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intelligence, self-awareness, loneliness, and grief, but most fundamentally how humans and animals can cohabit and build a form of friendship. Svendsen provides examples from many different animal species—from chimpanzees to octopus—but his main focus is on cats and dogs: the animals that many of us are closest to in our daily lives. Drawing upon both philosophical analysis and the latest scientific discoveries, Svendsen argues that the knowledge we glean from our relationships with our pets is as valid and insightful as any scientific study of human-animal relations. With this entertaining and thought-provoking book, animal lovers and pet owners will gain a deeper understanding of what it is like to be an animal—and in turn, a human.

What does the Christian tradition say about the condition and rights of animals? This helpful and timely anthology of selections from the Bible and from the great Christian thinkers of all times is an essential primer for those who care about animals. The book is organized around four themes--Attitudes to Creation; the Problem of Pain; the Question of Animal Redemption; and Reverence, Responsibilities, and Rights--and concludes with a section on practical issues--Animal Experimentation, Fur-Trapping, Hunting for Sport, Intensive Farming, and Killing for Food. This book includes selections from the following: the Bible, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Augustine, Karl Barth, St. Bonaventure, John Calvin, René Descartes, Austin Farrer, John Hick, St. Irenaeus, St. John of the Cross, C. S. Lewis, St. Thomas More, E. F. Schumacher, Albert Schweitzer, Paul Tillich, Leo Tolstoy, Alec Vidler, John Wesley, and others

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In eighteenth-century England, the encounter between humans and other animals took a singular turn with the discovery of the great apes and the rise of bourgeois pet keeping. These historical changes created a new cultural and intellectual context for the understanding and representation of animal-kind, and the nonhuman animal has thus played a significant role in imaginative literature from that period to the present day. In *Homeless Dogs and Melancholy Apes*, Laura Brown shows how the literary works of the eighteenth century use animal-kind to bring abstract philosophical, ontological, and metaphysical questions into the realm of everyday experience, affording a uniquely flexible perspective on difference, hierarchy, intimacy, diversity, and transcendence. Writers of this first age of the rise of the animal in the modern literary imagination used their nonhuman characters—from the lapdogs of Alexander Pope and his contemporaries to the ill-mannered monkey of Frances Burney's *Evelina* or the ape-like Yahoos of Jonathan Swift—to explore questions of human identity and self-definition, human love and the experience of intimacy, and human diversity and the boundaries of convention. Later literary works continued to use imaginary animals to question human conventions of form and thought. Brown pursues this engagement with animal-kind into the nineteenth century—through works by Mary Shelley, Charles Dickens, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning—and into the twentieth, with a concluding account of Paul Auster's dog-novel, *Timbuktu*. Auster's work suggests that—today as in the eighteenth century—imagining other animals opens up a potential for dissonance that creates

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distinctive opportunities for human creativity.

New York Times Bestseller A Summer Reading Pick for President Barack Obama, Bill Gates, and Mark Zuckerberg From a renowned historian comes a groundbreaking narrative of humanity's creation and evolution—a #1 international bestseller—that explores the ways in which biology and history have defined us and enhanced our understanding of what it means to be “human.” One hundred thousand years ago, at least six different species of humans inhabited Earth. Yet today there is only one—homo sapiens. What happened to the others? And what may happen to us? Most books about the history of humanity pursue either a historical or a biological approach, but Dr. Yuval Noah Harari breaks the mold with this highly original book that begins about 70,000 years ago with the appearance of modern cognition. From examining the role evolving humans have played in the global ecosystem to charting the rise of empires, *Sapiens* integrates history and science to reconsider accepted narratives, connect past developments with contemporary concerns, and examine specific events within the context of larger ideas. Dr. Harari also compels us to look ahead, because over the last few decades humans have begun to bend laws of natural selection that have governed life for the past four billion years. We are acquiring the ability to design not only the world around us, but also ourselves. Where is this leading us, and what do we want to become? Featuring 27 photographs, 6 maps, and 25 illustrations/diagrams, this provocative and insightful work is sure to spark debate and is essential reading for

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aficionados of Jared Diamond, James Gleick, Matt Ridley, Robert Wright, and Sharon Moalem.

"Highly entertaining...Mabey gets us to look at life from the plants' point of view."
—Constance Casey, New York Times

The Cabaret of Plants is a masterful, globe-trotting exploration of the relationship between humans and the kingdom of plants by the renowned naturalist Richard Mabey. A rich, sweeping, and wonderfully readable work of botanical history, The Cabaret of Plants explores dozens of plant species that for millennia have challenged our imaginations, awoken our wonder, and upturned our ideas about history, science, beauty, and belief. Going back to the beginnings of human history, Mabey shows how flowers, trees, and plants have been central to human experience not just as sources of food and medicine but as objects of worship, actors in creation myths, and symbols of war and peace, life and death. Writing in a celebrated style that the Economist calls "delightful and casually learned," Mabey takes readers from the Himalayas to Madagascar to the Amazon to our own backyards. He ranges through the work of writers, artists, and scientists such as da Vinci, Keats, Darwin, and van Gogh and across nearly 40,000 years of human history: Ice Age images of plant life in ancient cave art and the earliest representations of the Garden of Eden; Newton's apple and gravity, Priestley's sprig of mint and photosynthesis, and Wordsworth's daffodils; the history of cultivated plants such as maize, ginseng, and cotton; and the ways the sturdy oak became the symbol of British nationhood and the giant sequoia

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came to epitomize the spirit of America. Complemented by dozens of full-color illustrations, *The Cabaret of Plants* is the magnum opus of a great naturalist and an extraordinary exploration of the deeply intertwined history of humans and the natural world.

In exploring these modern philosophers of the animal and its instinctual life, the author inevitably rebiologizes them even against efforts to debiologize thinkers whose works can be studied profitably for their models of signification.

Simone Weil once wrote that "the vulnerability of precious things is beautiful because vulnerability is a mark of existence." With these words, she established a relationship among vulnerability, beauty, and existence that transcends the boundaries separating the species. Her conception of a radical ethics and aesthetics could be characterized as a new "poetics of species," that forces us to rethink the significance of the body, both human and animal. Exploring the "logic of flesh," or how art and culture use the body to mark species identity, Anat Pick reimagines a poetics that begins with the vulnerability of bodies, not the omnipotence of thought. Offering a powerful alternative to more personalist visions of morality, Pick proposes a "creaturely" approach based on the shared embodiedness of humans and animals and a postsecular perspective on human-animal relations. She turns to literature, film, and other cultural texts that prioritize the inhuman and challenge the familiar inventory of the human (consciousness, language, morality, and dignity). She reintroduces Weil's crucially important work and its

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elaboration of themes such as witnessing, commemoration, and collective memory, and she moves away from assumptions about animal "otherness" and nonhuman subjectivities. Pick identifies the "animal" within all humans, emphasizing the corporeal and its issues of power and freedom. In her creaturely view, powerlessness is the point at which both aesthetic and ethical thinking must begin.

From medieval bestiaries to Borges's *Book of Imaginary Beings*, we've long been enchanted by extraordinary animals, be they terrifying three-headed dogs or asps impervious to a snake charmer's song. But bestiaries are more than just zany zoology—they are artful attempts to convey broader beliefs about human beings and the natural order. Today, we no longer fear sea monsters or banshees. But from the infamous honey badger to the giant squid, animals continue to captivate us with the things they can do and the things they cannot, what we know about them and what we don't. With *The Book of Barely Imagined Beings*, Caspar Henderson offers readers a fascinating, beautifully produced modern-day menagerie. But whereas medieval bestiaries were often based on folklore and myth, the creatures that abound in Henderson's book—from the axolotl to the zebrafish—are, with one exception, very much with us, albeit sometimes in depleted numbers. *The Book of Barely Imagined Beings* transports readers to a world of real creatures that seem as if they should be made up—that are somehow more astonishing than anything we might have imagined. The yeti crab, for example, uses its furry claws to farm the bacteria on which it feeds. The

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waterbear, meanwhile, is among nature's "extreme survivors," able to withstand a week unprotected in outer space. These and other strange and surprising species invite readers to reflect on what we value—or fail to value—and what we might change. A powerful combination of wit, cutting-edge natural history, and philosophical meditation, *The Book of Barely Imagined Beings* is an infectious and inspiring celebration of the sheer ingenuity and variety of life in a time of crisis and change.

Fire-breathing dragons, beautiful mermaids, majestic unicorns, terrifying three-headed dogs—these fantastic creatures have long excited our imagination. Medieval authors placed them in the borders of manuscripts as markers of the boundaries of our understanding. Tales from around the world place these beasts in deserts, deep woods, remote islands, ocean depths, and alternate universes—just out of our reach. And in the sections on the apocalypse in the Bible, they proliferate as the end of time approaches, with horses with heads like lions, dragons, and serpents signaling the destruction of the world. Legends tell us that imaginary animals belong to a primordial time, before everything in the world had names, categories, and conceptual frameworks. In this book, Boria Sax digs into the stories of these fabulous beasts. He shows how, despite their liminal role, imaginary animals like griffins, dog-men, yetis, and more are socially constructed creatures, created through the same complex play of sensuality and

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imagination as real ones. Tracing the history of imaginary animals from Paleolithic art to their roles in stories such as Harry Potter and even the advent of robotic pets, he reveals that these extraordinary figures help us psychologically—as monsters, they give form to our amorphous fears, while as creatures of wonder, they embody our hopes. Their greatest service, Sax concludes, is to continually challenge our imaginations, directing us beyond the limitations of conventional beliefs and expectations. Featuring over 230 illustrations of a veritable menagerie of fantastical and unreal beasts, *Imaginary Animals* is a feast for the eyes and the imagination.

Explores the latest beliefs about why people tell stories and what stories reveal about human nature, offering insights into such related topics as universal themes and what it means to have a storytelling brain.

"Renowned ethicist Margaret Somerville tackles some of the most contentious issues of our time and proposes a brilliant new kind of ethical language and thought to help us deal with them." "Somerville asks: What does it mean to be human today, when mind-altering scientific breakthroughs are challenging our fundamental ideas of ourselves, how we relate to others and the world around us, and how we find meaning in life? Touching on such controversial subjects as our growing acceptance of new reproductive technologies and the genetic

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modification of plants and animals, she argues that only if we are willing to undertake a journey of the human imagination will we be able to see, understand, and relate morally to the world around us, allowing us to develop an ethics to guide us."--BOOK JACKET.

In the Eye of the Animal: Zoological Imagination in Ancient Christianity complicates the role of animals in early Christian thought by showing how ancient texts and images celebrated a continuum of human and animal life.

A NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOK OF 2020 "In this superbly articulate cri de coeur, Safina gives us a new way of looking at the natural world that is radically different."—The Washington Post New York Times bestselling author Carl Safina brings readers close to three non-human cultures—what they do, why they do it, and how life is for them. A New York Times Notable Books of 2020 Some believe that culture is strictly a human phenomenon. But this book reveals cultures of other-than-human beings in some of Earth's remaining wild places. It shows how if you're a sperm whale, a scarlet macaw, or a chimpanzee, you too come to understand yourself as an individual within a particular community that does things in specific ways, that has traditions. Alongside genes, culture is a second form of inheritance, passed through generations as pools of learned knowledge. As situations change, social learning—culture—allows behaviors to

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adjust much faster than genes can adapt. *Becoming Wild* brings readers into intimate proximity with various nonhuman individuals in their free-living communities. It presents a revelatory account of how animals function beyond our usual view. Safina shows that for non-humans and humans alike, culture comprises the answers to the question, "How do we live here?" It unites individuals within a group identity. But cultural groups often seek to avoid, or even be hostile toward, other factions. By showing that this is true across species, Safina illuminates why human cultural tensions remain maddeningly intractable despite the arbitrariness of many of our differences. *Becoming Wild* takes readers behind the curtain of life on Earth, to witness from a new vantage point the most world-saving of perceptions: how we are all connected.

Unfortunate Destiny focuses on the roles played by nonhuman animals within the imaginative thought-world of Indian Buddhism, as reflected in pre-modern South Asian Buddhist literature. These roles are multifaceted, diverse, and often contradictory: In Buddhist doctrine and cosmology, the animal rebirth is a most "unfortunate destiny" (*durgati*), won through negative karma and characterized by a lack of intelligence, moral agency, and spiritual potential. In stories about the Buddha's previous lives, on the other hand, we find highly anthropomorphized animals who are wise, virtuous, endowed with human speech, and often critical

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of the moral shortcomings of humankind. In the life-story of the Buddha, certain animal characters serve as "doubles" of the Buddha, illuminating his nature through identification, contrast or parallelism with an animal "other." Relations between human beings and animals likewise range all the way from support, friendship, and near-equality to rampant exploitation, cruelty, and abuse. Perhaps the only commonality among these various strands of thought is a persistent impulse to use animals to clarify the nature of humanity itself--whether through similarity, contrast, or counterpoint. Buddhism is a profoundly human-centered religious tradition, yet it relies upon a dexterous use of the animal other to help clarify the human self. This book seeks to make sense of this process through a wide-ranging-exploration of animal imagery, animal discourse, and specific animal characters in South Asian Buddhist texts.

Examines the role of plants in botanical mythology, from Aboriginal Australia to Zoroastrian Persia. Plants have a remarkable mythology dating back thousands of years. From the ancient Greeks to contemporary Indigenous cultures, human beings have told colorful and enriching stories that have presented plants as sensitive, communicative, and intelligent. This book explores the myriad of plant tales from around the world and the groundbreaking ideas that underpin them. Amid the key themes of sentience and kinship, it connects the anemone to the

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meaning of human life, tree hugging to the sacred basil of India, and plant intelligence with the Finnish epic The Kalevala. Bringing together commentary, original source material, and colorful illustrations, Matthew Hall challenges our perspective on these myths, the plants they feature, and the human beings that narrate them. “Whether or not we believe that any plant actually has an imagination, the rhetorical flourish in Matthew Hall’s title sends us into his book with a serious interest in what he has to say. This is a valuable addition to our knowledge about mythic tale-telling and awareness of those elements of the animate world that science, since the Renaissance, has always placed on the lowest scale of value. Hall wants to redress this imbalance, and he does so by revealing just how essential (to Indigenous cultures) the plant kingdom was to humanity’s place in the universe.” — Ashton Nichols, author of *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism: Toward Urbanatural Roosting*

This book explores the phenomenon of animal imagination and its profound power over the human imagination. It examines the structural and ethical role that the human imagination must play to provide an interface between humans’ subjectivity and the real cognitive capacities of animals. The book offers a systematic study of the increasing importance of the metaphors, the virtual, and figures in contemporary animal studies. It explores human-animal and real-

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imaginary dichotomies, revealing them to be the source of oppressive cultural structures. Through an analysis of creative, playful and theatric enactments and mimicry of animal behaviors and communication, the book establishes that human imagination is based on animal imagination. This helps redefine our traditional knowledge about animals and presents new practices and ethical concerns in regard to the animals. The book strongly contends that allowing imagination to play a role in our relation to animals will lead to the development of a more empathetic approach towards them. Drawing on works in phenomenology, contemporary animal philosophy, as well as ethological evidence and biosemiotics, this book is the first to rethink the traditional philosophical concepts of imagination, images, the imaginary, and reality in the light of a zoocentric perspective. It will appeal to philosophers, scholars and students in the field of animal studies, as well as anyone interested in human and non-human imaginations.

Why do poets write about animals? What can poetry do for animals and what can animals do for poetry? In some cases, poetry inscribes meaning on animals, turning them into symbols or caricatures and bringing them into the confines of human culture. It also reveals and revels in the complexity of animals: poetry, through its great variety and its inherently experimental nature, has embraced the multifaceted nature of animals to cross, blur, and reimagine the

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boundaries between human and animal. In *Poetry and Animals*, Onno Oerlemans explores a broad range of English-language poetry about animals from the Middle Ages to the contemporary world, revealing how poetry can contribute to our understanding of animals and our relations with them. He presents a taxonomy of the kinds of animal poems, breaking down the categories and binary oppositions at the root of human thinking about animals. The book considers several different types of poetry: allegorical poems; poems about “the animal” broadly conceived; poems about species of animal; poems about individual animals or the animal as individual; and poems about hybrids and hybridity. Through careful readings of dozens of poems that reveal generous and often sympathetic approaches to recognizing and valuing animals’ difference and similarity, Oerlemans demonstrates how the forms and modes of poetry can sensitize us to the moral standing of animals and give us new ways to think through the problems of the human-animal divide.

Those nonhuman beings called “animals” pose philosophical and ethical questions that go to the root not just of what we think but of who we are. Their presence asks: what happens when “the other” can no longer safely be assumed to be human? This collection offers a set of incitements and coordinates for exploring how these issues have been represented in contemporary culture and theory, from Jurassic Park and the “horse whisperer” Monty Roberts, to the work of artists such as Joseph Beuys and William Wegman; from foundational texts on the animal in the works of Heidegger and Freud, to the postmodern rethinking of ethics and animals in figures such as Singer, Deleuze, Lyotard, and Levinas; from the New York Times investigation of a North Carolina slaughterhouse, to the first appearance in any language of Jacques Derrida's recent detailed critique of Lacan's rendering of the human/animal divide.

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It is well known that children's activities are full of pretending and imagination, but it is less appreciated that animals can also show similar activities. Originally published in 2002, this book focuses on comparing and contrasting children's and animals' pretenses and imaginative activities. In the text, overviews of research present conflicting interpretations of children's understanding of the psychology of pretense, and describe sociocultural factors which influence children's pretenses. Studies of nonhuman primates provide examples of their pretenses and other simulative activities, explore their representational and imaginative capacities and compare their skills with children. Although the psychological requirements for pretending are controversial, evidence presented in this volume suggests that great apes and even monkeys may share capacities for imagination with children, and that children's early pretenses may be less psychological than they appear.

There exists an undeniable chasm between the capacities of humans and those of animals. Our minds have spawned civilizations and technologies that have changed the face of the Earth, whereas even our closest animal relatives sit unobtrusively in their dwindling habitats. Yet despite longstanding debates, the nature of this apparent gap has remained unclear. What exactly is the difference between our minds and theirs? In *The Gap*, psychologist Thomas Suddendorf provides a definitive account of the mental qualities that separate humans from other animals, as well as how these differences arose. Drawing on two decades of research on apes, children, and human evolution, he surveys the abilities most often cited as uniquely human -- language, intelligence, morality, culture, theory of mind, and mental time travel -- and finds that two traits account for most of the ways in which our minds appear so distinct: Namely, our open-ended ability to imagine and reflect on scenarios, and our insatiable drive to

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link our minds together. These two traits explain how our species was able to amplify qualities that we inherited in parallel with our animal counterparts; transforming animal communication into language, memory into mental time travel, sociality into mind reading, problem solving into abstract reasoning, traditions into culture, and empathy into morality. Suddendorf concludes with the provocative suggestion that our unrivalled status may be our own creation -- and that the gap is growing wider not so much because we are becoming smarter but because we are killing off our closest intelligent animal relatives. Weaving together the latest findings in animal behavior, child development, anthropology, psychology, and neuroscience, this book will change the way we think about our place in nature. A major argument for reconsidering what makes us human, *The Gap* is essential reading for anyone interested in our evolutionary origins and our relationship with the rest of the animal kingdom.

Perhaps only the animals can tell us what it is to be human. The souls of ten animals caught up in human conflicts over the last century and connected to both famous and little-known writers in surprising ways tell their astonishing stories of life and death. In a trench on the Western Front, a cat recalls her owner Colette's theatrical antics in Paris. In Nazi Germany, a dog seeks enlightenment. A Russian tortoise once owned by the Tolstoys drifts in space during the Cold War. During the Siege of Sarajevo, a starving bear tells a fairy tale. And a dolphin sent to Iraq by the U.S. Navy writes a letter to Sylvia Plath. Exquisitely written, playful, and poignant, Ceridwen Dovey's *Only the Animals* is a remarkable literary achievement by one of our brightest young writers. An animal's-eye-view of humans at our brutal, violent worst and our creative, imaginative best, it asks us to find our way back to empathy not only for animals but for other people, and to believe again in the redemptive power of reading and writing fiction.

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The Imagination Gap helps leaders in every sector apply their imagination effectively to explore new, creative approaches to survive and thrive. Examples from a range of industries and settings, from Broadway to Silicon Valley, with simple steps and exercises, help you stop thinking the way you "should" and start making extraordinary things happen.

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