



Regarding Animals (Animals, Culture and Society)

Arnold Arluke, Clinton R. Sanders

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What is it about Western society, ask the authors, that makes it possible for people to express great affection for animals as sentient creatures and simultaneously turn a blind eye to the most callous behavior toward them? Animals are sold as expensive commodities, used as food and clothing, killed as vermin, and hunted for sport. But they also are treated as members of the family, used as the cause celebre of social movements, and made the subject of art, film, and poetry. Such contradictions motivate these unique ethnographers to venture into social worlds most people know about only in passing, such as veterinary clinics where companion animals are cared for, animal shelters where dogs and cats are "mercifully" euthanized, and primate labs where monkeys are kept for animal experimentation. Arluke and Sanders are not distanced ethnographers. They worked in the clinics, shelters, and laboratories, cleaning cages, assisting in surgery, and participating in "sacrificing" animals for science or helping to provide them with an "easy death." In this book, the people who work with these animals and live through them talk to the authors about the strategies they adopt to cope with the stress of the job. This fascinating book combines sociological analysis with ethnographic description to give us insight into the history and practice of how we as human beings construct animals, and by extrapolation, how we construct ourselves and others in relation to them. Author note: Arnold Arluke is Professor of Sociology at Northeastern University and a Research Associate at the Center for Animals and Public Policy at Tufts School of Veterinary Medicine. He is an Associate Editor of *Society and Animals* and the author of *The Making of Rehabilitation: A Political Economy of Medical Specialization* with Glenn Gritzer and *Gossip: The Inside Scoop* with Jack Levin. Clinton R. Sanders, Professor of Sociology at the University of Connecticut, is the author of *Customizing the Body: The Art and Culture of Tattooing* (Temple) and the co-editor (with Jeff Ferrell) of *Cultural Criminology*.

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