



Perceiving Animals: Humans and Beasts in Early Modern English Culture

By Erica Fudge

University of Illinois Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Perceiving Animals: Humans and Beasts in Early Modern English Culture, Erica Fudge, The boundaries between human and beast forged a rugged philosophical landscape across early modern England. Spectators gathered in London's Bear Garden to watch the callous and brutal baiting of animals. A wave of 'new' scientists performed vivisections on live animals to learn more about the human body. In "Perceiving Animals", the British scholar Erica Fudge traces the dangers and problems of anthropocentrism in texts written from 1558 to 1649.

Meticulous examinations of scientific, legal, political, literary, and religious writings offer unique and fascinating depictions of human perceptions about the natural world. Views carried over from bestiaries - medieval treatises on animals - posited animals as nonsentient beings whose merits were measured solely by what provisions they afforded humans: food, medicine, clothing, travel, labor, scientific knowledge. Without consciences or faith, animals were deemed far inferior to humans. While writings from the period asserted an enormous biological superiority, Fudge contends actual human behavior and logic worked, sometimes accidentally, to close the alleged gap. In the Bear Garden, even a man of the lowest social rank had power over a tortured...



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