



Beastly Possessions: Animals in Victorian Consumer Culture

Sarah Amato

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In *Beastly Possessions*, Sarah Amato chronicles the unusual ways in which Victorians of every social class brought animals into their daily lives. Captured, bred, exhibited, collected, and sold, ordinary pets and exotic creatures – as well as their representations – became commodities within Victorian Britain’s flourishing consumer culture.

As a pet, an animal could be a companion, a living parlour decoration, and proof of a household’s social and moral status. In the zoo, it could become a public pet, an object of curiosity, a symbol of empire, or even a consumer mascot. Either kind of animal might be painted, photographed, or stuffed as a taxidermic specimen.

Using evidence ranging from pet-keeping manuals and scientific treatises to novels, guidebooks, and ephemera, this fascinating, well-illustrated study opens a window into an underexplored aspect of life in Victorian Britain.

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