



Loving Animals: Toward a New Animal Advocacy

Kathy Rudy

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The contemporary animal rights movement encompasses a wide range of sometimes-competing agendas from vegetarianism to animal liberation. For people for whom pets are family members—animal lovers outside the fray—extremist positions in which all human–animal interaction is suspect often discourage involvement in the movement to end cruelty to other beings. In *Loving Animals*, Kathy Rudy argues that in order to achieve such goals as ending animal testing and factory farming, activists need to be better attuned to the profound emotional, even spiritual, attachment that many people have with the animals in their lives.

Offering an alternative to both the acceptance of animal exploitation and radical animal liberation, Rudy shows that a deeper understanding of the nature of our feelings for and about animals can redefine the human–animal relationship in a positive way. Through extended interviews with people whose lives are intertwined with animals, analysis of the cultural representation of animals, and engaging personal accounts, she explores five realms in which humans use animals: as pets, for food, in entertainment, in scientific research, and for clothing. In each case she presents new methods of animal advocacy to reach a more balanced and sustainable relationship association built on reciprocity and connection.

Using this intense emotional bond as her foundation, Rudy suggests that the nearly universal stories we tell of living with and loving animals will both broaden the support for animal advocacy and inspire the societal changes that will improve the lives of animals—and humans—everywhere.

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