



How to Make a Human: Animals and Violence in the Middle Ages (Interventions: New Studies in Medieval Culture)

By Karl Steel

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How to Make a Human: Animals and Violence in the Middle Ages tracks human attempts to cordon humans off from other life through a wide range of medieval texts and practices, including encyclopedias, dietary guides, resurrection doctrine, cannibal narrative, butchery law, boar-hunting, and teratology. Karl Steel argues that the human subjugation of animals played an essential role in the medieval concept of the human. In their works and habits, humans tried to distinguish themselves from other animals by claiming that humans alone among worldly creatures possess language, reason, culture, and, above all, an immortal soul and resurrectable body. Humans convinced themselves of this difference by observing that animals routinely suffer degradation at the hands of humans. Since the categories of human and animal were both a retroactive and relative effect of domination, no human could forgo his human privileges without abandoning himself.

Medieval arguments for both human particularity and the unique sanctity of human life have persisted into the modern age despite the insights of Darwin. *How to Make a Human* joins with other works in critical animal theory to unsettle human pretensions in the hopes of training humans to cease to project, and to defend, their human selves against other animals.

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Editorial Review

Review

“In *How to Make a Human*, Karl Steel uses a series of beautifully articulated readings to argue that a foundational violence against animals that defines the human is pervasively at play in medieval texts. Medieval texts define the human through violence against animals, he argues: violence secures human mastery through the submission of the animal and identifies the human as grievable, in opposition to the animal that is not. Steel moves confidently among many different primary and secondary texts and traditions, and he writes about them with remarkable clarity. The research is inventive and extensive, the examples are varied and rich and often surprising, and the analysis is based on often brilliantly insightful close readings. This book is a pleasure to read. “ —Peggy McCracken, University of Michigan

“Compared to work that has already appeared on animals, *How to Make a Human* is more astute when it comes to theory, more careful when it comes to close reading of evidence, more eloquent in its argument, more forceful, more audacious, and more beautiful. Karl Steel is a creative thinker whose approach is fresh, unorthodox, and groundbreaking. This is an astonishing work of scholarship.” —Jeffrey J. Cohen, George Washington University

About the Author

Karl Steel is assistant professor at Brooklyn College, City University of New York.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Helen Thibodeaux:

Spent a free time and energy to be fun activity to perform! A lot of people spent their free time with their family, or all their friends. Usually they doing activity like watching television, planning to beach, or picnic inside the park. They actually doing ditto every week. Do you feel it? Do you wish to something different to fill your own free time/ holiday? Could be reading a book may be option to fill your totally free time/ holiday. The first thing that you ask may be what kinds of e-book that you should read. If you want to test look for book, may be the guide untitled *How to Make a Human: Animals and Violence in the Middle Ages (Interventions: New Studies in Medieval Culture)* can be good book to read. May be it is usually best activity to you.

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How to Make a Human: Animals and Violence in the Middle Ages (Interventions: New Studies in Medieval Culture) can be one of your nice books that are good idea. Most of us recommend that straight away because this guide has good vocabulary that may increase your knowledge in vocabulary, easy to understand, bit entertaining however delivering the information. The copy writer giving his/her effort to get every word into joy arrangement in writing *How to Make a Human: Animals and Violence in the Middle Ages (Interventions: New Studies in Medieval Culture)* although doesn't forget the main level, giving the reader the hottest and also based confirm resource information that maybe you can be one among it. This great information may drawn you into brand-new stage of crucial imagining.

Bryan Jones:

The book untitled *How to Make a Human: Animals and Violence in the Middle Ages (Interventions: New Studies in Medieval Culture)* contain a lot of information on the item. The writer explains the woman idea with easy means. The language is very clear to see all the people, so do definitely not worry, you can easy to read it. The book was compiled by famous author. The author will take you in the new period of time of literary works. It is possible to read this book because you can read more your smart phone, or gadget, so you can read the book within anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can wide open their official web-site and also order it. Have a nice read.

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