



Cow (Reaktion Books - Animal)

Hannah Velten

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From the milk we drink in the morning, to the leather shoes we slip on for the day, to the steak we savor at dinner, our daily lives are thoroughly bound up with cows. Yet there is a far more complex story behind this seemingly benign creature, which Hannah Velten explores here, plumbing the rich trove of myth, fact, and legend surrounding these familiar animals.

From the plowing field to the rodeo to the temple, Velten tracks the constantly changing social relationship between man and cattle, beginning with the domestication of aurochs around 9000 BCE. From there, *Cow* launches into a fascinating story of religious fanaticism, scientific exploits, and the economic transformations engendered by the trade of the numerous products derived from the animal. She explores in engaging detail how despite cattle's prominence at two ends of a wide spectrum: Hinduism venerates the cow as one of the most sacred members of the animal kingdom, while beef is a prized staple of the American diet. Thought provoking and informative, *Cow* restores this oft-overlooked animal to the nobility it richly deserves.

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