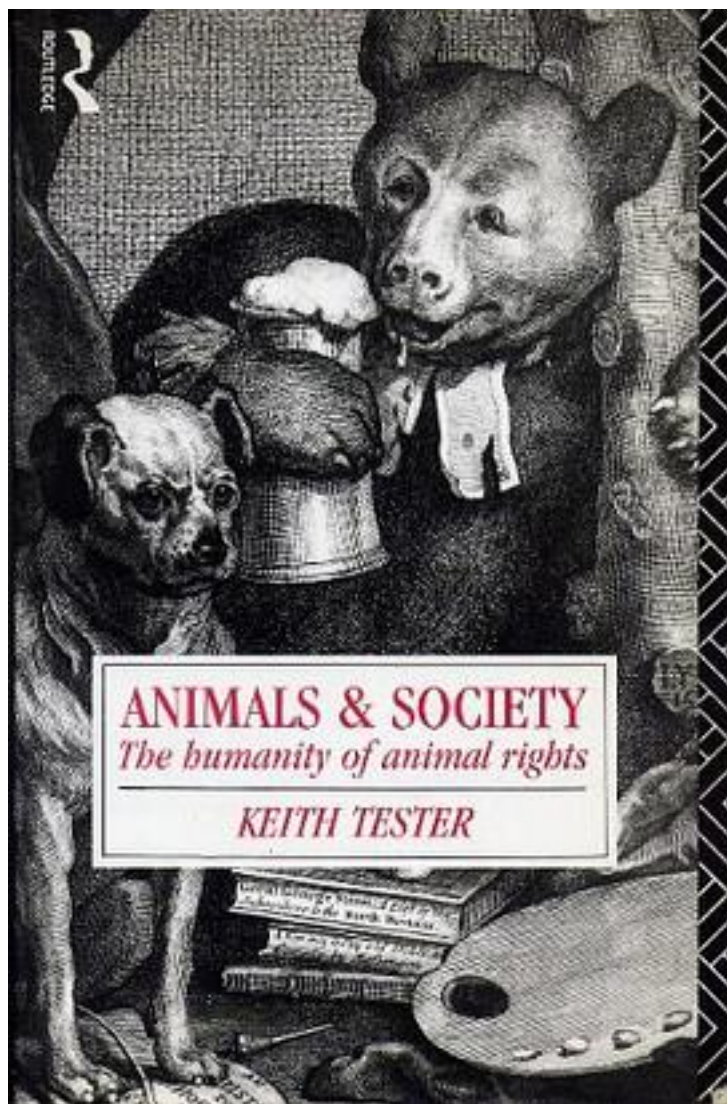


Animals and Society



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Animals are crucial to the functioning of any society: they provide humans with food, labour, raw materials, modes of transport, companionship, scientific knowledge through observation and experimentation, and forms of leisure and entertainment. Given both the wide variety of ways in which animals are involved in human societies, and also the broad range of controversies (from vivisection for scientific and commercial purposes, to factory farming) that have arisen, the study of animals is by its very nature interdisciplinary. Each social scientific discipline has distinctive and interesting things to say about the relations that pertain both historically and in the present day between humans and animals. In subjects such as anthropology and geography, the study of human-animal relations has become in recent years a key area of analysis. Other subjects, such as sociology, are now increasingly recognising the need to put animals firmly on their research agendas. This collection brings together the rich diversity of research work from across the social sciences on the topic of human-animal relations, and also provides overviews of research that has been carried out within particular disciplines in this area.

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