

The Others: How Animals Made Us Human

Paul Shepard



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Paul Shepard has been one of the most brilliant and original thinkers in the field of human evolution and ecology for more than forty years. His thought-provoking ideas on the role of animals in human thought, dreams, personal identity, and other psychological and religious contexts have been presented in a series of seminal writings, including "Thinking Animals," "The Tender Carnivore and the Sacred Game," and now "The Others," his most eloquent book to date."The Others" is a fascinating and wide-ranging examination of how diverse cultures have thought about, reacted to, and interacted with animals. Shepard argues that humans evolved watching other animal species, participating in their world, suffering them as parasites, wearing their feathers and skins, and making tools of their bones and antlers. For millennia, we have communicated their significance by dancing, sculpting, performing, imaging, narrating, and thinking them. The human species cannot be fully itself without these others.Shepard considers animals as others in a world where otherness of all kinds is in danger, and in which otherness is essential to the discovery of the true self. We must understand what to make of our encounters with animals, because as we prosper they vanish, and ultimately our prosperity may amount to nothing without them.

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