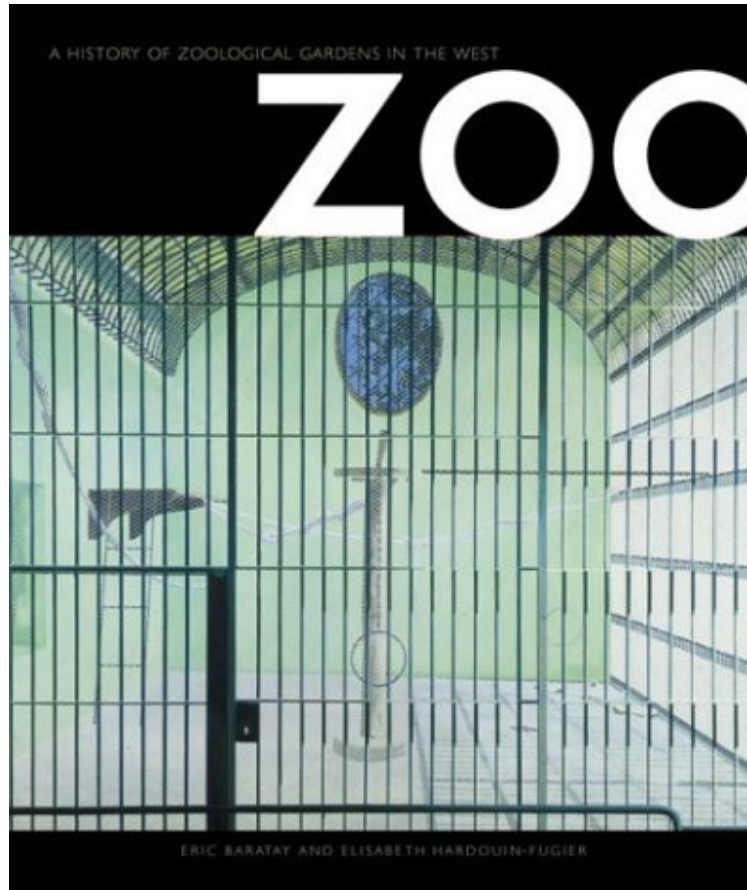


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Zoo: A History of Zoological Gardens in the West

Eric Baratay, Elisabeth Hardouin-Fugier
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Eric Baratay, Elisabeth Hardouin-Fugier : Zoo: A History of Zoological Gardens in the West before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Zoo: A History of Zoological Gardens in the West:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. ExcellentBy K. G.I am working on a paper about the San Diego Zoo and needed some books to help with my research. My expectations were not high for this - but it is actually a book I will keep and treasure. The illustrations are fantastic - historical, artistic, curious images that present the non-idealized and historical perspective of the zoo - much as the writing tries to flesh out an ethical and cultural one. This book began to form my awareness of our relationship to animals as a measure of our cultural ideas about the "Other" and our perception of their subjectivity and its expression. Important to understanding our relationship to all beings!3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A critical and educational look at the history of the zooBy ToadspotterAs an artist interested in the historical role zoos have played in forming people ideas and relationships to animals this book is very informative. The images are really great and artistic as well. It could almost be a contemporary art book. Thus, this book would not be for everyone. It is not a celebration of modern zoo practices. I think the posted book

journal reviews are more truthful about the book's great content. I am an animal and nature lover too and that is why I'm interested in the perceptions and relationships of humans to animals and nature. 4 of 9 people found the following review helpful. biased book
By Fotofred
The only real value of this book are the interesting historical photos. The authors are clearly anti-zoo (while I am a zoo lover) and portray zoos in a negative light. Certainly there were many substandard enclosures in old zoos and this seems to be the focus of this book (highlighting primarily European zoos). This may be fair enough, but I get the impression the authors have not personally visited a zoo in the last two decades. Zoos today are vastly improved and do important conservation work, something these authors choose to ignore. Unless you are a zoo history buff and want to see some interesting historical photos, I would not recommend this book.

Wild animals have fascinated human observers since time immemorial. The story of our interest in collecting, classifying and dominating Nature looms large; thus it is surprising that the history of menageries, zoological gardens and zoos as we know them today has been so poorly documented. This gap is addressed by *Zoo*. In the Renaissance, wealthy aristocrats showcased exotic beasts in private menageries. Safely caged, animals inspired the interest of naturalists and fed the curiosity of the masses. By the 19th century, increased urbanization and colonization aided the expansion of zoos in which animals were tamed to serve as domesticated livestock. Nowadays, with many natural habitats under threat of extinction, the social function of zoos is less clear. Such institutions both present the illusion of wild animals in a natural state to a nostalgic public and find themselves justifying their existence as saviors of endangered species.