



## **Synopsis**

From Pegasus to Black Beauty, horses have held a unique place in human society and imagination. Elaine Walker tackles the long and multifaceted history of a creature valued for both beauty and usefulness. Spanning the world from the wild steppes of Mongolia to the American plains, Horse chronicles the rich and complex natural history of the animal, from wild feral horses to the domesticated species that once played a central role in daily life as a means of transportation, an instrument of war, and a source of labour. Elaine Walker charts how the long-standing connection between people and horses is reflected in cultures around the world and the implications for both human and animal of such close interaction. She also traces the centrality of the horse in art, entertainment and literature, from the rich global traditions of horse-racing and equestrianism to literary classics such as Follyfoot. Ultimately, Walker contends, the continuing role of the horse in the modern world reveals telling changes in human society.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This is another of the lively Reaktion Books "Animal" series. It is as usual written to a sort of formula, but is well-written, among the best in the series. The publisher is British and this book has a mild European bias in focus. It includes some natural history, horses in human history, horses in art and literature and the horse now. I found Chapter 3, "The Man Made Horse" and Chapter 5, "Into the Valley of Death" to be the most absorbing. The first looks at breeding and the use of horses (traction, mounts, food, etc.) and the other considers the horse in war (most people do not know that

the vaunted German blitz in 1939-1941 used perhaps five times as many horses as motor vehicles). In terms of personal interest, I liked the brief accounts of the Appaloosa and the Iceland horse. The horse in literature and art portion explores the image and idea of horse, which is interesting but a bit duller than the rest of the book. This is a good, fast read but rather substantial despite the shortness and formulaic aspect. If you're interested in the human/ animal interface, this is an informative read. The illustrations are on the whole, quite good. I read the e-book version.

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