



# Holy Dogs and Asses: Animals in the Christian Tradition

*Laura Hobgood-Oster*

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## **Holy Dogs and Asses: Animals in the Christian Tradition** Laura Hobgood-Oster

Analysis of animals in the history of the Christian tradition has been exclusively symbolic, but Laura Hobgood-Oster utilizes the feminist perspective in her examination of the impact of animal presence. In challenging the metaphoric reading of animals that reinforces human superiority and dominance, [Holy Dogs and Asses](#)

underscores animal agency.

Creatures play various active roles, which Hobgood-Oster categorizes as exemplars of piety, sources of revelation, saintly martyrs, and the primary other in an intimate relationship. Drawing from rich oral histories, legends, artwork, and popular stories of saints, this study directs our attention to the animal body-- also a central concern of Christian theology and feminist criticism. Hobgood-Oster invites the reader to venture beyond the exclusive symbolic nature of animals in the Christian tradition to an awareness that we can know ourselves more fully by reference to the animal.

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