Mershon

Dogs Save

Stories of Canine Redemption in US Culture



Stories about people and dogs saving one another are everywhere in US culture—on TV, in Hollywood movies, on social media, and even on bumper stickers. Yet these seemingly heartwarming stories of mutual rescue revolve around redemption through suffering, a narrative profoundly interwoven with Christian beliefs, white racial anxieties, and US national myths. Katharine Mershon examines the unacknowledged religious underpinnings of stories about dogs, revealing deeply rooted cultural assumptions about who can be saved and how redemption ought to occur. She identifies the “canine redemption narrative” as the defining cultural script for the stories people in the United States tell about dogs and, in turn, the nation. Exposing unexamined assumptions about the relationships between people and dogs, Mershon sheds light on the central place of animals and religion in defining racial boundaries. Dogs Save considers examples including the Michael Vick dogfighting case; Samuel Fuller’s controversial B-movie White Dog; the TV show The Dog Whisperer, from the celebrity dog trainer Cesar Millan; Laurie Anderson’s film Heart of a Dog; and Eileen Myles’s Afterglow (a dog memoir). Bringing together religious studies and animal studies, this book shows that redemption narratives shape who is allowed to survive and thrive in US society.

Stories about people and dogs saving one another are everywhere in US culture--on TV, in Hollywood movies, on social media, and even on bumper stickers. Yet these seemingly heartwarming stories of mutual rescue revolve around redemption through suffering, a narrative profoundly interwoven with Christian beliefs, white racial anxieties, and US national myths.Katharine Mershon examines the unacknowledged religious underpinnings of stories about dogs, revealing deeply rooted cultural assumptions about who can be saved and how redemption ought to occur. She identifies the "canine redemption narrative" as the defining cultural script for the stories people in the United States tell about dogs and, in turn, the nation. Exposing unexamined assumptions about the relationships between people and dogs, Mershon sheds light on the central place of animals and religion in defining racial boundaries.Dogs Save considers examples including the Michael Vick dogfighting case; Samuel Fuller's controversial B-movie White Dog; the TV show The Dog Whisperer, from the celebrity dog trainer Cesar Millan; Laurie Anderson's film Heart of a Dog; and Eileen Myles's Afterglow (a dog memoir). Bringing together religious studies and animal studies, this book shows that redemption narratives shape who is allowed to survive and thrive in US society.

31,00 €
31,00 € (zzgl. MwSt.)

vorbestellbar, Erscheinungstermin ca. April 2026

Artikelnummer: 9780231206976
Medium: Buch
ISBN: 978-0-231-20697-6
Verlag: Columbia University Press
Erscheinungstermin: 21.04.2026
Sprache(n): Englisch
Auflage: Erscheinungsjahr 2026
Serie: Critical Perspectives on Animals: Theory, Culture, Science, and Law
Produktform: Kartoniert
Gewicht: 324 g
Seiten: 256
Format (B x H): 216 x 138 mm

Kundenservice Verlag Dr. Otto Schmidt KG
Neumannstraße 10, 40235 Düsseldorf | kundenservice@otto-schmidt.de | 0221-93738-997 (Inland)