



## Empire and the Animal Body

Violence, Identity and Ecology in Victorian Adventure Fiction

*John Miller*

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**A critical reassessment of the significance of exotic animals in Victorian adventure literature.**

‘An excellent inquiry into the inscription of environmental violence in imperial adventure fiction and its bearings on the genre’s popularity. Lucid, rigorous and assured, it promises to be a foundational text at the juncture of Victorian studies, ecocriticism and colonial history.’ —Dr Anthony Carrigan, Keele University

‘A compelling and original contribution to its deftly combined fields of study. Miller tracks the fascinatingly unstable division between human/animal identity as it emerges in late Victorian adventure writing, examining its effects on the overlapping rhetoric of racism, speciesism and colonialism at the height of Britain’s empire.’ —Dr Christine Ferguson, University of Glasgow

‘Using ideas from animal studies and ecocriticism, Miller reveals the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century genre of imperial romance to be a crucial and fascinating site of anxiety about that being called the human. “Empire and the Animal Body” will be essential reading for everyone interested in thinking about how we live in the world: who it is that we have been and who it is that we are today.’ —Professor Erica Fudge, University of Strathclyde

‘Empire and the Animal Body: Violence, Identity and Ecology in Victorian Adventure Fiction’ develops recent work in animal studies, eco-criticism and postcolonial studies to reassess the significance of exotic animals in Victorian adventure literature. Depictions of violence against animals were integral to the ideology of adventure literature in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, the evolutionary hierarchies on which such texts relied were complicated by developing environmental sensitivities and reimaginings of human selfhood in relation to animal others. As these texts hankered after increasingly imperilled areas of wilderness, the border between human and animal appeared tense, ambivalent and problematic.

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### About the Author(s) / Editor(s)

John Miller is currently a lecturer in nineteenth-century literature at the University of Sheffield. He has published widely on animal studies and ecocriticism, particularly in relation to British Empire writing and postcolonial studies.

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