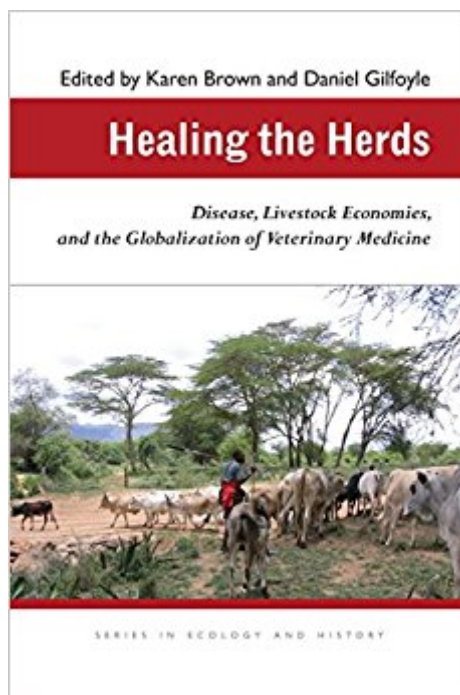


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Healing The Herds: Disease, Livestock Economies, And The Globalization Of Veterinary Medicine (Ecology & History)



Synopsis

Healing the Herds: Disease, Livestock Economies, and the Globalization of Veterinary Medicine offers a new and exciting comparative approach to the complex interrelationships of microbes, markets, and medicine in the global economy. It draws upon fourteen case studies from the Americas, western Europe, and the European and Japanese colonies to illustrate how the rapid growth of the international trade in animals through the nineteenth century engendered the spread of infectious diseases, sometimes with devastating consequences for indigenous pastoral societies. At different times and across much of the globe, livestock epidemics have challenged social order and provoked state interventions, which were sometimes opposed by pastoralists. The intensification of agriculture has transformed environments, with consequences for animal and human health. But the last two centuries have also witnessed major changes in the way societies have conceptualized diseases and sought to control them. The rise of germ theories and the discovery of vaccines against some infections made it possible to move beyond the blunt tools of animal culls and restrictive quarantines of the past. Nevertheless, these older methods have remained important to strategies of control and prevention, as demonstrated during the recent outbreak of foot and mouth disease in Britain in 2001. From the late nineteenth century, advances in veterinary technologies afforded veterinary scientists a new professional status and allowed them to wield greater political influence. In the European and Japanese colonies, state support for biomedical veterinary science often led to coercive policies for managing the livestock economies of the colonized peoples. In western Europe and North America, public responses to veterinary interventions were often unenthusiastic and reflected a latent distrust of outside interference and state regulation. Politics, economics, and science inform these essays on the history of animal diseases and the expansion in veterinary medicine.

Book Information

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“The history of veterinary medicine told from anything other than a triumphalist perspective, usually with a nationalist slant, is rare. Essays in this outstanding collection cover rural as well as urban issues in veterinary disease and science from the eighteenth century to the present. The book will attract a wide range of readers from veterinary historians to all those interested in why livestock has been and is important to society.” — Diana K. Davis, University of California

“This volume represents a compelling call to broaden the territory covered by the history of veterinary medicine and animal health and it is essential reading for those interested in these topics. More broadly, some of its essays should inform studies of colonialism in the modern period, which have too often neglected to examine agriculture, foodways, and notions of environment, health, and disease.” — Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences

“The essays collected in *Healing the Herds* are most welcome additions to the existing scholarship on the history of veterinary medicine and livestock disease. The volume should be mandatory reading for specialists in these fields. Those concerned with eighteenth- through twentieth-century colonialism, European state building, and the ecological dynamics of Old World expansion will also find much on offer here.” — H-Environment

“The fine collection compiled by Karen Brown and Daniel Gilfoyle proves that a comparative history of veterinary medicine can be compelling. By taking the story out of the laboratory and focusing on the political economy of disease and control, they show its significance well beyond animals and vets.” — Journal of Historical Geography

Karen Brown is a senior research officer at the Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine in Oxford, England. She has published a number of articles in journals of African studies, environmental studies, and the history of science. Daniel Gilfoyle specializes in veterinary history in Africa and has published a number of articles on veterinary medicine in South Africa during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He works at the National Archives in London.

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