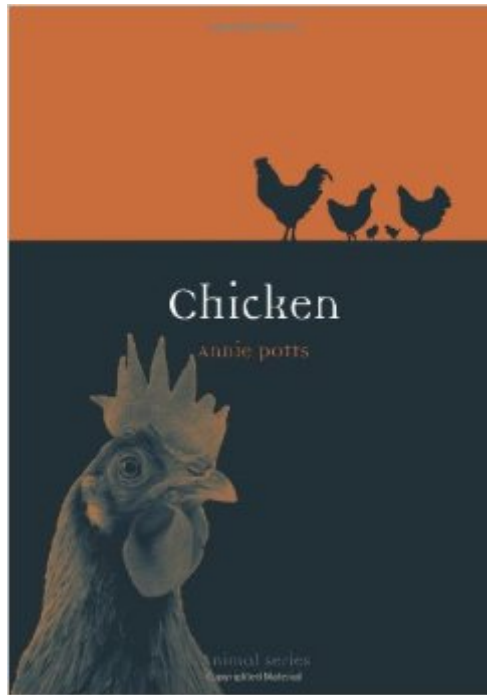


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# Chicken (Reaktion Books - Animal)



## Synopsis

Â No creature has been subject to such extremes of reverence and exploitation as the chicken. Hens have been venerated as cosmic creators and roosters as solar divinities. Many cultures have found the mysteries of birth, healing, death and resurrection encapsulated in the henâ™s egg. Yet today, most of us have nothing to do with chickens as living beings, although billions are consumed around the world every year.Â In *Chicken* Annie Potts introduces us to the vivid and astonishing world of *Gallus gallus*. The book traces the evolution of jungle fowl and the domestication of chickens by humans. It describes the ways in which chickens experience the world, form families and friendships, communicate with each other, play, bond, and grieve. *Chicken* explores cultural practices like egg-rolling, the cockfight, alectromancy, wishbone-pulling and the chicken-swinging ritual of Kapparot; discovers depictions of chickenhood in ancient and modern art, literature and film; and also showcases bizarre supernatural chickens from around the world including the Basilisk, Kikimora and Pollio Maligno. *Chicken* concludes with a detailed analysis of the place of chickens in the world today, and a tribute to those who educate and advocate on behalf of these birds.Â Numerous beautiful illustrations show the many faces (and feathers and combs and tails) of *Gallus*, from wild roosters in the jungles of Southeast Asia to quirky Naked-Necks and majestic Malays. There are chickens painted by Chagall and Magritte, chickens made of hair-rollers, and chickens shaped like mountains. The reader of *Chicken* will encounter a multitude of intriguing facts and ideas, including why the largest predator ever to walk the earth is considered the ancestor of the modern chicken, how mother hens communicate with their chicks while they're still in the egg, why Charlie Chaplinâ™s masterpiece required him to play a chicken, whether itâ™s safe to take eggs on a sea-voyage, and how âœchicken therapyâ• can rejuvenate us all. This book will fascinate those already familiar with and devoted to the *Gallus* species, and it will open up a whole new gallinaceous world for future admirers of the intelligent and passionate chicken.Â Â

## Book Information

Series: Reaktion Books - Animal

Paperback: 216 pages

Publisher: Reaktion Books (January 15, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1861898584

ISBN-13: 978-1861898586

Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 0.6 x 7.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (9 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

ChickenBy Annie PottsREAKTION BOOKS 2012Review by Karen Davis, PhD, President of United Poultry ConcernsChickens are creatures of the earth who have been forced off the land. In Western countries billions of chickens are confined in industrialized buildings, and billions more are similarly confined in Africa, India, China, Russia and other parts of the world where poultry factory farming is rapidly supplanting, or has already supplanted, traditional farming. If there is such a thing as "earthrights," the right of a creature to experience the earth from which it derived and on which its happiness in life chiefly depends, then chickens have been stripped of theirs.Chicken traces the history of chickens, from their earliest known ancestry dating to a "pre-chicken" fossil record of 50 million years ago, to the "post-chicken" of industrialized animal farming - "post-chicken" meaning that the worldwide chicken industry is doing everything possible, from genetics to advertising, to destroy the chicken intrinsically and in public perception as a living being and fellow creature. Author Annie Potts, a professor of English and Cultural Studies and Co-Director of the New Zealand Centre for Human-Animal Studies at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch, does not view the human stranglehold on chickens lightly or approvingly. Growing up in a rural town surrounded by poultry farms, she says she stopped eating chickens at an early age and cherishes a "strong love for chickens." Her book is "dedicated to all chickens born to and killed for agribusiness, scientific research and entertainment, and to those special humans who educate, advocate and provide refuge for these birds.

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