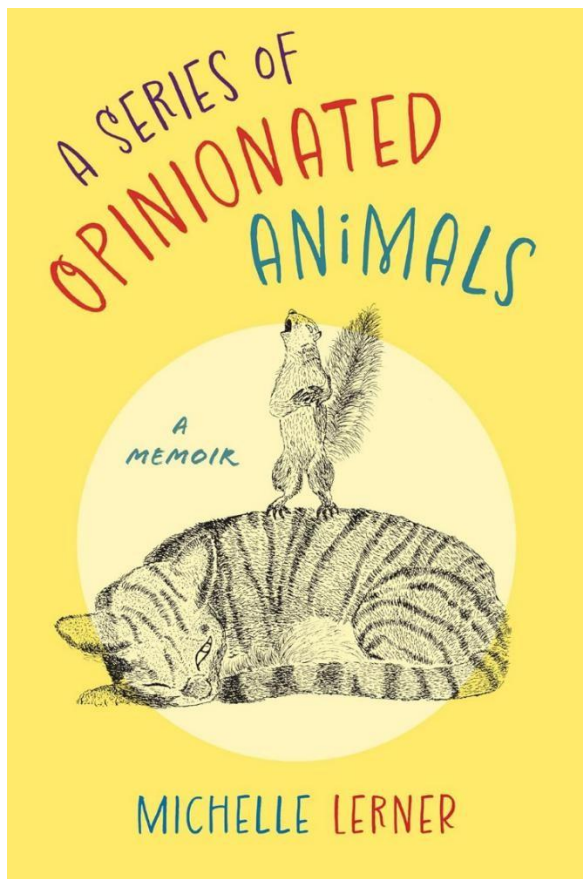


Publicity contact:

Katelynn Dreyer, Kaye Publicity
katelynn@kayepublicity.com



A Series of Opinionated Animals
A Memoir
By
Michelle Lerner



For Michelle Lerner, a Harvard-educated lawyer, the call wasn't just unusual—it was a summons. On the line was a panicked volunteer from a chaotic cat shelter she'd left behind years ago. The problem? A neurologically-impaired squirrel who insisted on being sat on by his rabbit roommate was about to fall into the hands of the state, and Michelle was his only hope. It's a question most people never face, but for Michelle, it was just the beginning of a life lived in loving, chaotic service to the most opinionated animals imaginable.

In *A Series of Opinionated Animals*, Lerner invites readers into her astonishing world, where the line between rescue and civil disobedience is often blurred. This is a world where a disabled sheep named Lamby—the "Woolly Bully"—wears children's skateboarding elbow pads, develops a taste for blue corn chips, and learns to herd cats, all while demanding her meals by ramming her head against the kitchen door. It's a world where Monster, the squirrel, recovers from his mysterious past by throwing

tantrums, serenading the neighborhood with squirrel opera, and forming an inseparable bond with a patient rabbit named Finn. Lerner's story is populated by a cast of unforgettable characters, including a trio of rescue dogs—Nubi, the resident genius; Fern, the speckled pig-like dog who embarks on her own "Outward Bound" journey; and Chip, the lovable fool who joyfully dances on thin ice. From a ferocious chicken who hazes new farmhands to a veritable herd of cats with feline leukemia who teach lessons in love and loss, Lerner shows us that every animal has a story and a distinct, often hilarious, point of view.

A SERIES OF OPINIONATED ANIMALS

October 6, 2026

Bancroft Press

ISBN: 9781610887069

Hardcover: \$27.95

Publicity contact:

Katelynn Dreyer, Kaye Publicity
katelynn@kayepublicity.com



With the sharp wit of a seasoned lawyer and the deep empathy of a lifelong animal advocate, Lerner seamlessly weaves her personal experiences into a broader narrative about justice for those who cannot speak for themselves. She recounts how her profound bond with Shire, a disabled ex-police horse, propelled her into the field of animal law, where she would go on to help establish one of the nation's first student animal law programs, at Harvard no less. *A Series of Opinionated Animals* is a moving and uproarious memoir about the radical, world-changing act of recognizing the personhood in every creature. It is a story of unconventional family, profound grief, and the kind of love that transcends species—a love that is messy, demanding, and ultimately transformative.

About the Author

Michelle Lerner is an attorney, animal advocate, and writer whose lifelong bond with a rescued horse named Shire helped shape her path to Harvard Law School, where she graduated magna cum laude and helped launch Harvard's first animal law program. After more than a decade as a legal aid attorney, Michelle focused her career on animal law and policy, becoming a leading advocate for humane feral cat management programs and co-chairing the New Jersey State Bar Association's Animal Law Committee. She also founded a local Trap-Neuter-Return and cat rescue organization that helped turn her town no-kill through hands-on rescue work and policy reform.



Michelle's advocacy has always been rooted in her experiences caring for a wide cast of rescued animals, from dogs and cats to sheep, chickens, squirrels, and horses, each of whom deepened her belief that animals are individuals with distinct personalities and perspectives. A poet since childhood, Michelle turned to fiction and memoir writing after a disabling illness left her unable to practice law. Her debut novel, *Ring*, was published by Bancroft Press in 2025 and was longlisted for the Aspen Words Literary Prize. *A Series of Opinionated Animals* is her first memoir.

To learn more, visit her online at www.michellelerner.net

Connect on social:

Instagram: @michellelernerauthor

A SERIES OF OPINIONATED ANIMALS

October 6, 2026

Bancroft Press

ISBN: 9781610887069

Hardcover: \$27.95

Publicity contact:

Katelynn Dreyer, Kaye Publicity
katelynn@kayepublicity.com



Talking Points

- How Michelle helped establish one of the nation's first animal law programs at Harvard
- What animals have taught Michelle about being human
- How animal welfare has changed over the past three decades—and what still needs to change
- The unforgettable, highly opinionated animals at the center of Michelle's life and work
- The disabled horse that changed the course of Michelle's life
- What disabled animals taught Michelle about living with disability
- Why every animal deserves to be seen as an individual
- The emotional toll—and rewards—of decades in animal rescue
- What grief taught Michelle about love through the animals she's cared for
- How animal lovers navigate repeated loss while continuing to open their hearts
- What caring for disabled, elderly, and overlooked animals taught Michelle about resilience, dignity, and love

Praise for Michelle Lerner

"This animal lawyer opens her doors and her heart... Engrossing... Animal lovers will be drawn into the memoir by her unwavering love and insights... **YA/S: Teenage animal lovers will be fascinated.**"

—*Booklist*

"Engaging... May remind readers of such animal-centered classics as *All Creatures Great and Small*."

— **Kirkus Reviews**

"An absolutely charming book! You should get it!" —**Quinn Cummings, Oscar-Nominated Actress (The Goodbye Girl) and author of *Pet Sounds and notes from the Underwire***

"A *Series of Opinionated Animals* introduces us to a chicken who attacks people, a squirrel who's in love with a rabbit, a sheep with three working legs, and a host of other distinctive and lovable individuals about whom Michelle Lerner writes with equal parts wit and respect. I adored each hour I spent in their company on these pages. Often hilarious, occasionally heartbreaking, and always compassionate, these true stories will stick with me for a long time."—**Sy Montgomery, NYT Bestselling Author of *THE GOOD GOOD PIG* and *HOW TO BE A GOOD CREATURE***

"Warm, witty, and delightfully told, these stories are a must-read for anyone who's ever loved an animal."—**Gwen Cooper, NYT Bestselling Author of *Homer's Odyssey: A Fearless Feline Tale* and *You Only Live Nine Times***

"From Stephanie the chicken to a horse named Shire, this book brims with enchanting creatures and incredible stories of love and sacrifice. At once hilarious and heart

A SERIES OF OPINIONATED ANIMALS

October 6, 2026

Bancroft Press

ISBN: 9781610887069

Hardcover: \$27.95

Publicity contact:

Katelynn Dreyer, Kaye Publicity
katelynn@kayepublicity.com



breaking, this memoir is a love letter to the humanity of all animals and has much to teach us about our own. In the category of 'you can't make this stuff up,' I'm certain you've never read anything like it and won't soon forget its magic."—**Katherine A. Sherbrooke, Author of *Leaving Coy's Hill***

"Michelle Lerner's *OPINIONATED ANIMALS* is fiercely intelligent, uniquely funny, and emotionally exacting. In her intimate stories, she restores individuality and heart to those most of us are trained not to see. Every sentence is an act of attention and reverence for the animals she has known and loved. From young girlhood through adolescence and adulthood, Lerner's life story—one of moral steadiness and fearlessly, unceasingly meeting the world and her creatures—is impossible to forget."—**Kristen Stilt, Faculty Director of Harvard University's Animal Law & Policy Program**

"At Farm Sanctuary, where farm animals get to live as individuals rather than commodities, people travel long distances to meet them and learn their histories and personality quirks. Over 40 years, I've seen time and time again how getting this window into specific animals' lives changes visitors' hearts and minds. Now, in *A Series of Opinionated Animals*, Michelle Lerner offers you such insights from the comfort of your own home or wherever you like to read. It's a joyful read with powerful ethical implications."—**Gene Baur, President and Co-Founder of Farm Sanctuary and Author of *Farm Sanctuary: Changing Hearts and Minds About Animals and Food***

"In this fabulous and beguiling memoir, attorney Michelle Lerner introduces the animals who shaped her life and guided her path into animal law and advocacy. From Stephanie, an imperious hen who ruled every roost, to Nubi, a canine Einstein with an astonishing vocabulary; from Monster, a bossy squirrel with a love for love songs, to Michelle's soulmate, a lame former police horse named Shire—each unforgettable character leaves a lasting mark. *A Series of Opinionated Animals* is a stirring reminder that animals don't exist for our use and convenience. They are our companions on the walk of life—beings unto themselves, deserving of kindness, mercy, and rights. If you've ever loved an animal, you'll love this sweet, funny, heartfelt book."—**Laurie Zaleski, President, Funny Farm Rescue & Sanctuary, and Author of the Bestselling *My Unexpected Life with 600 Rescue Animals***

"A delightful romp through the lives and loves of (shall we say) unusual companion animals. Their individual stories are told with wit and charm by Michelle Lerner, a Harvard-trained attorney and animal advocate who appreciates the finer points of sheep, squirrels, chickens, and other notable animal family members."—**Joyce Tischler, Professor of Practice, Animal Law, Lewis & Clark Law School; Founder and Former Executive Director, Animal Legal Defense Fund**

"At the heart of *A Series of Opinionated Animals* is the recognition that every animal is a unique, dynamic individual with traits, quirks, and experiences all their own. Through stories that are at once heartwarming and heartbreaking, Michelle Lerner reminds us of the deep emotional bonds that can tie human and nonhuman animals together. Lerner's commitment to changing how we see and think of animals is evident in each story. The result is a joyful and touching ode to family no matter if they have hair, fur, or

A SERIES OF OPINIONATED ANIMALS

October 6, 2026

Bancroft Press

ISBN: 9781610887069

Hardcover: \$27.95

Publicity contact:

Katelynn Dreyer, Kaye Publicity
katelynn@kayepublicity.com



feathers."—**Cameron Harsh, Programs Director/Interim Co-Executive Director, World Animal Protection**

"A hilarious, thought-provoking, and utterly unique memoir. Through rollicking vignettes that explore animal law, rescue, and the rich inner lives of animals, Michelle Lerner takes readers on an entertaining and deeply engaging journey through both animal and human worlds."—**Midwest Book Review**

"Michelle Lerner has written a love letter to the various 'misfits' of the animal kingdom she has thus far encountered in her life. Besides being heartbreaking, inspirational, and wickedly funny, *A Series of Opinionated Animals* is a smart, soulful, and unique journey through the bonds that shaped her and them. I was unprepared to be so deeply moved by her connections to these critters." —**Jeanne Winer, Author of *Her Kind of Case*, Which Received Starred Reviews from *Booklist*, *Library Journal*, and *Kirkus***

"In this courageous memoir, Michelle Lerner shares the story of a life lived and defined through the author's relationships with a succession of rescued animals. With boundless compassion and an open heart, yet always with an ironic and observant eye for life's absurdities, Lerner depicts her loving companionship with a squirrel and rabbit, dogs and cats, horses, a sheep, and a chicken. In tales rich in pathos and comedy alike, we come to see the world as Lerner does, as a complex realm of human-animal connection, reciprocity, love, and heartbreaking loss. Lerner, an early figure in the advancement of animal law education, shows us how our institutions have failed animals, exposing them to abuse, neglect, and violence as they get treated as disposable commodities. But despair, she shows, is not the answer. In relating her own sometimes painful personal development as an activist and intellectual, Lerner models a new way of relating to other beings, a form of universal care. Ultimately, this is a story not only about animals, but of a life 'well-lived' in the ancient Greek sense—a life lived with intention, virtue, and the courage of one's convictions."—**John Sanbonmatsu, Professor of Philosophy, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and author of *The Omnivore's Deception: What We Get Wrong about Meat, Animals, and Ourselves***

A SERIES OF OPINIONATED ANIMALS

October 6, 2026

Bancroft Press

ISBN: 9781610887069

Hardcover: \$27.95