

BOOKS ON CATS PUBLISHED IN THE PAST YEAR

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With the steady growth of the Cat Fancy and the ever-increasing number of cat-owners, more and more books on the subject of the cat are published in the U.S. and England each year.

The most comprehensive study ever written about the cat is "The Life, History and Magic of THE CAT" by the French vet Fernand Mery (\$9.95). It examines the role of the cat in civilization, culture and the arts from the origins of mankind to the present. It investigates the derivation of the domestic cat through the wild cats and the relation of the feral creatures to the tame cats of the ancient world. It gives many extracts from famous writings about the cat. It discusses anatomy, physiology, psychology and aspects of feline behavior; it also gives detailed descriptions of the various breeds. As this book was originally published in France, much of the material used in text and illustrations is European and not to be found in other books. It is a large (10 x 10½), sumptuous, very beautiful book, illustrated with many magnificent colorplates, art reproductions, portraits of outstanding cats, photographs and drawings, which will delight and inform all cat lovers.

Winifred Carriere wrote "Cats 24 hours a Day" (\$4.95), a charming blend of good, practical advice on care, feeding, grooming and living with cats, a lot of catlore and many delightful reminiscences. Photographs.

Just published is the latest book on care by J. J. McCoy, a well-known authority on cats and for many years the manager of the Bide-a-Wee Home for Animals in New York City: "The complete Book of Cat Health and Care" (\$5.95). In clear, non-technical language it gives comprehensive information on every aspect of cat health and care during every period of its life, from kittenhood to old age. Excellent chapters on major and minor diseases, parasites, homecare of the sick cat, injuries from accidents, first aid, reproduction, nutrition and much more. Also a special chapter on owning exotic cats.

In fiction, several excellent novels on the cat were written. Undoubtedly destined to become a catnovel-classic is "Particularly Cats" by Doris Lessing (\$3.50) — an incomparable perceptive analysis of the cats she knew in childhood in Africa and later in London, the homeless ones and particularly the two she owns.

An excellent chronicle of a family of New York City cats, written with deep understanding of cat character, is "A Back-Fence Story" by Augusta Walker (\$4.95). Their owner, a genuine cat-lover, leaves her cats free to enjoy the care of humans and to go exploring "beyond the back-fence" to live a full cat's life! Excellent illustrations.

Well-known writer Richard Lockridge tells in "One Lady, two Cats" (\$4.95) how he and his two Siamese wooed and won a dogloving lady-writer, who ended up as happy, catloving Mrs. L.!

In "The Cat's Pajamas and related episodes", R. L. Duffus (\$4.50) describes a life time of cats remembered by a lifelong admirer.

A nature-story, written with perfect knowledge of life in the wild, is "The Crossbreed" by Allen W. Eckert (\$4.95). It is a compelling novel of the offspring of a housecat gone wild, and a bobcat and his odyssey of over 2000 miles through the U.S. Beautiful illustrations.

Hartley and Joan Ramsay, in "Cats' Kingdom" (\$5.00) have given us the delightful story of their seven cats, seen with an unsentimental eye. Illustrated with reproductions of Joan's magnificent paintings and drawings of cats, in color and black/white. A very beautiful book.

Another art-book is "Grabianski's Cats" by Janusz Grabianski (\$3.95) — stunning watercolor portraits of cats of all shapes, hues, sizes and breeds, with short but very apt text.

Although it is not really a book, I would like to mention "Cats Themselves" by Robert Kuhn (\$4.95), a portfolio of 12 outstanding plates (11 x 17 with wide margins for framing), showing the superb drawings of the various breeds plus an explanation sheet (text by Faire Edwards). A spectacular collection, especially at this modest price.

And last but not least of the U. S. publications is a most delightful little cat-book by Rosalind Welcher: "There is nothing like a Cat" (\$1.95). In just 25 pages beautiful, expressive drawings illustrate the distinct thoughts that occupy the furry feline heads.

In England, too, the number of catbooks is steadily growing. A very important book published there is "Fifty Years of Pedigree Cats" by the well-known breeders and judges May Eustace and Elizabeth Lowe (\$6.00). It gives the history of pedigree cat breeding, management, cat clubs and shows in England, with many references to the U.S. One chapter is devoted to the development of the Cat Fancy in the U.S. (Incidentally, a book on the start, growth and development of the Cat Fancy in the U.S. is long overdue—any budding authors reading this?). The book discusses all breeds, recognized and unrecognized new breeds, cats shows, notes on breeding and Standards of Points as approved by the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy (England). Many excellent photos.

The well-known English breeders Sidney and Helen Denham wrote a welcome addition to the existing books on the Siamese Cat, entitled: "The Complete Book of the Siamese Cat" (\$6.00), for the beginner and the experienced breeder. A full account of the origins of the breed is given; also the newly recognized varieties. The authors provide guidance on all problems of care, health, showing and breeding. Siamese genetics are discussed in detail; a unique table shows expectations from matings of the four basic Siamese colors. 22 illustrations of all Siamese varieties.

"The World of Cats" by John Montgomery (\$5.00) is a large (8¼ x 11¼) book, profusely illustrated with more than 220 photographs (43 in color); fascinating and informative text on history, care, catlore and catlove.

At important reprint, published this year, is "A Dictionary of Cat Lovers XV Century B.C. — XX CENTURY A.D.", with five legends concerning cats and with notes on "The Cat in Ancient Egypt" by Lady Christabel Aberconway (\$12.50). This book was originally published in 1949 and has since become a rare collector's item, much in demand. It is an anthology of rare quality, ranging from the earliest days of ancient Egypt up to modern times (no living authors are included), comprising extracts from the writings on cats by many of the greatest writers, artists and statesmen, with a large number of outstanding illustrations.

In "Searle's Cats" by Ronald Searle (\$4.95) you will find twenty excellent drawings by the famous English cartoonist.

In fiction, too, England has brought us many excellent books.

Doreen Tovey has written another addition to the delightful saga of those irrepressible Siamese Solomon and Sheba, their friend Annabel, the donkey and the humans they own: "Raining Cats and Donkeys" (\$4.75).

As delightful as the many novels on cats are, there is a certain similarity in many, as they describe the happy or unhappy lives of the authors' cats. A very different novel is "Salt on her Whiskers", the story of a ship's cat by William O'Donoghue (\$4.50). Mia belongs to no one and is beholden to no one. A moving story of her travels on the high seas, subtly told with deep understanding of the nature of the cat. Excellent illustrations. Olivia Manning, the well-known English authoress, gave us "Extraordinary Cats" (\$4.50). This is not a story and not a technical book of breeding or upbringing. It is simply a book about the ways of Siamese and Burmese cats, written by someone who loves them. Superb photographs illustrate this "extraordinary" book.

A Christmas story to be enjoyed all year long is "White Christmas" by Nina Warren Hooke (\$3.50), a touching little novel. The author, with skill and tenderness, without sentimentality but with perception and profound understanding of Nature, feels her way into the heart of an abandoned kitten. Excellent line-drawings illustrate this well-written story.

In this list are not included technical and textbooks written for veterinarians, as they would not be of any value to the layman.

(Many of these books may be found at Cat Book Center, see ad in advertising pages.)