

About the Author

Katherine C. Grier

(BIO COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE)

Katherine C. (Kasey) Grier joined the Department of History as a full professor and Director of the Museum Studies Program in September 2008. A graduate of Princeton University (B.A. 1975), the Cooperstown Graduate Program in Historical Museum Studies (M.A. 1980), and the University of Delaware (Ph.D. American Civilization, History, 1988), Dr. Grier is a specialist in material culture studies whose research interests lie in the history of everyday life in America, especially household routines, domestic interiors, and foodways. Her most current book, *Pets in America: A History* (University of North Carolina Press, 2006) grew out of a developing interest in the history of animal-human interaction. Her current research interests in this field include the development of the pet food industry, the lives of animals in American cities, and selective breeding of small animals for ornamental purposes. Dr. Grier is also the curator of "Pets in America: The Story of Our Lives with Animals at Home," a travelling exhibition that has been touring the United States since 2006.

Publications

Books:

- *Culture and Comfort: Parlor Making and Middle-Class Identity, 1850-1930* (Smithsonian Books, 2010).
- *Pets in America: A History* (University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

Author website:

<http://thepethistorian.com/>



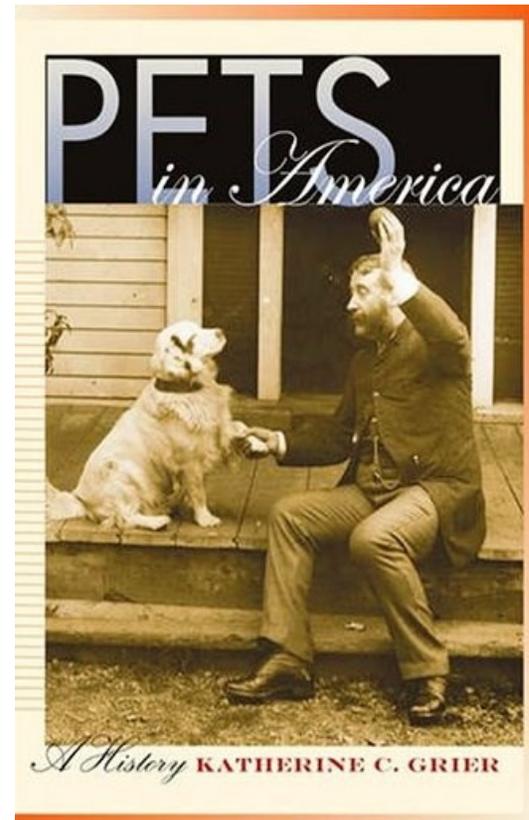
ROSENBERG LIBRARY MUSEUM BOOK CLUB

PROGRAM AGENDA

Winter 2015 / 2016

Dec 16 · Feb 18

12:00 noon	Welcome & Introductions
12:00-12:15	Historical Presentation
12:15-1:00	Book Discussion



Rosenberg Library's Museum Book Club provides a forum for discovery and discussion, linking literary selections with artworks and historical objects from the permanent collection.



EL GRECO THE CAT

Grace Spaulding John

Gift of Patricia John Keightly, 87.052.1

"My mother, who has the most reliable memory of anyone in the family, informs me that my first word was *kitty*. This fact alone is probably sufficient as an explanation for the existence of this book."

-Introduction, p. 1

Discussion...

The author is a pet-owner and expresses a great fondness for animals. How might this book have been different if it was written by someone who has not experienced owning pets?

Did the author use good source material in her research? Do you feel the findings reflect the experiences of most Americans or was it too urbane in its approach?

"Pets were carried to photographic studios beginning in the 1840s. The resulting images record moments when animals participated in a social ritual that was important to people."

-Chapter 2, p. 58



BABY WITH HIS DOG

Paul Naschke Studio

Galveston and Texas History Center

Discussion...

Did this book change your attitudes on contemporary pet keeping? In what ways are today's pets and pet owners better off than in the past? Would you have desired to own a pet in the 19th century? Why or why not?

Do you feel that parents today still view pet-keeping as an opportunity to teach certain skills to their children? What role did family pets play in your own upbringing?

"For some pet owners today, life with animals seems to offer contact with a particular kind of goodness that cannot be found elsewhere."

Like our 19th century predecessors, we still view pets as a force for good."

-Epilogue, p. 318



THREE PUPPIES (copy)

Maria C. Kimball

Gift of W.R.A. Rogers, 79.220

Discussion...

What was the most surprising thing that you learned from this book? Which topics were most interesting to you?

Do you think Grier spent enough time on the 20th century? Was there a topic you wish she would have tackled but didn't?