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:

Author website: http://thepethistorian.com/
“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

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?

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...
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?

BABY WITH HIS DOG
Paul Naschke Studio
Galveston and Texas History Center

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?

THREE PUPPIES (copy)
Maria C. Kimball
Gift of W.R.A. Rogers, 79.220

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

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?