

1931

Agatha Christie's book *The Murder at Hazelmoor* (later titled *The Sittaford Mystery*) refers to character Miss Caroline Percehouse as owning five cats because, her nephew said, "I think it's just the kind of thing old maids grow into."

1956



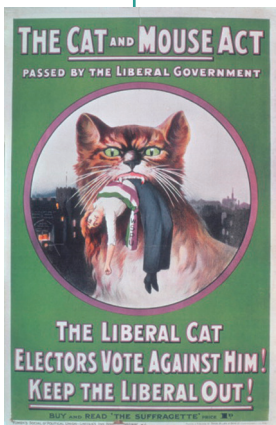
Sylvia Plath pens the poem *Ella Mason and Her Eleven Cats*, about a woman who is "addled" and "accommodates" many cats. She refers to her as Cat-Lady Mason.

1975

Grey Gardens documentary on the Beales, where mother-and-daughter duo Big Edie and Little Edie had more than 300 cats altogether. "It's true about old maids," said Little Edie, "they don't need men if they have cats."



Early 1900s



British conservative male propagandists belittled women suffragettes by using pictures of cats in their printed propaganda.

1940

First appearance of "the Cat," a cat burglar, in DC Comics' Batman, who later becomes Cat Woman, and is portrayed through the years as a strong, sexy villain and antiheroine on television and in movies.

1965

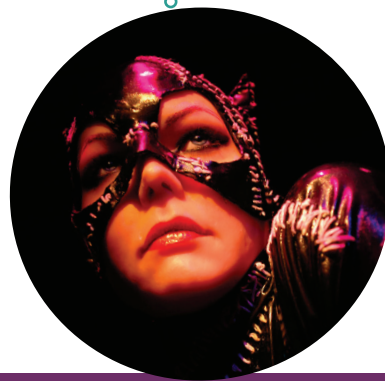


Cat Fancy magazine, a national magazine celebrating cats and their owners, launches

1970s-1976



Josie and the Pussycats animated television series ran on CBS, ABC and NBC. The series features a sexy all-girl feline-themed pop band that solves mysteries on the side.



of millions of social media followers; and large-scale events like CatCon, the Internet Cat Video Festival and the Cat Art Show.

Slickly designed furniture for felines and fashion forward cat-centric clothing and jewelry for humans also began to appear. "Being a cat lady is easier than it's ever been," Kate said. "These women are posting beautiful photos and videos of their cats on Facebook and Instagram, buying designer cat furniture and wearing hip cat fashions with pride."

Crucially, while the original conception of the crazy cat lady alluded

to mental health issues and suggested these were women who accumulated cats to remedy emotional and psychological gaps in their life, the reclaimed cat lady is all about pawing it forward and getting involved in rescue, fostering and TNR programs.

As one of the many leaders of this new cool club, Hannah said her path to becoming a cat lady began with animal welfare concerns: "I discovered how vulnerable cats and kittens are in U.S. shelters and became driven to change that."

"Now we're taking it as a badge of pride," said Clea, summing up the modern image of the cat lady. "We're

saying, yes, we love these beautiful animals, we've domesticated them, so we have a responsibility toward their welfare. We are remaking what cat lady means." There's nothing crazy about that.



Phillip likes to consider himself the world's foremost expert on rappers' cats. When not chronicling the antics of his rescue, Mimosa, on Catster.com, his musings on music can be found at *Red Bull Music Academy*, the *Village Voice* and *NYLON*. He snagged a couple of awards at his first Cat Writers' Association Communication Contest, one of which is proudly on display at his local bar.

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