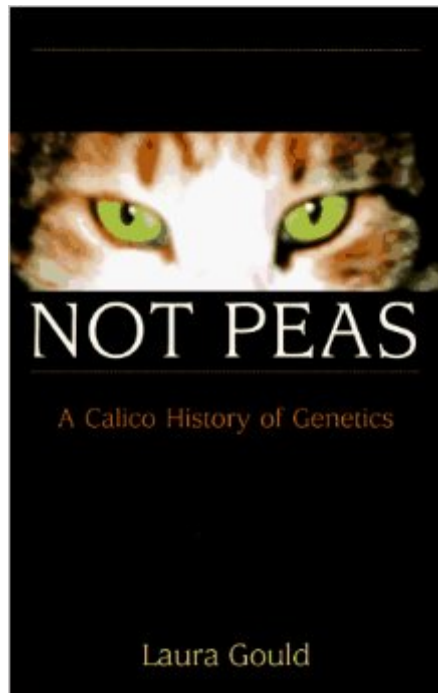


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# Cats Are Not Peas: A Calico History Of Genetics



## Synopsis

Cats are Not Peas, narrated with inimitable grace and wit, takes us through the great discoveries in genetics, from Mendel's studies of inheritance in peas through the discovery of the chromosome and the role of DNA - all from the little-known viewpoint of the pivotal and unheralded role played by cats as experimental subjects in this epic drama. "...the book was difficult to put down...Coherent, witty, and full of historical anecdotes any intelligent reader should be able to accompany Gould on her quest." -NEW SCIENTIST "A delightful and painless introduction to genetics and its colorful history..." -WINSLOW R. BRIGGS, CARNEGIE INSTITUTE OF WASHINGTON

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Cats are Not Peas" by Laura Gould is remarkably well written, and manages to be both very funny and very accurate. Laura discovered that George, one of the two cats she got from the animal shelter was both undeniably male and undeniably a calico. But calico cats are always female, according to legend and some vets. So how did George come to be? Laura's investigations began with the vet who turned pale, and included a charming series of adventures with cats, libraries (with the occasional librarian whose duty it was to prevent books being used), investigations into the history of genetics (thus giving the book its title), and Japanese newspaper archives. This is no dry scientific tome. In fact, Laura's search for an explanation for George is tightly interwoven with delightful stories of George (and his companion, Max) at home in the California hills, blistfully oblivious to their mistress' task, and coping in their delightfully feline way with their unusual

environment. I've already bought 6 copies of this extraordinary book for friends and relatives...

Gould's research into the genetics of calico cats began when she acquired George, one of those creatures that popular wisdom says doesn't exist: a male calico cat. She mixes anecdotes about George along with simple explanations of his not-so-simple genetics. The book is enlivened by historical overviews of strange, antiquated theories about reproduction and stories of frustrated early geneticists who tried to solve the calico puzzle. In her attempts to figure out George, Gould has provided an accessible introduction to genetics (not just feline) that anyone can understand-it doesn't matter if you can only vaguely remember Mendel's name from high school. Cat-lovers in particular will appreciate this book, but even if you aren't interested in cats or you know all about Barr bodies, Gould's inquisitive and humorous style still makes for a fun read

I initially read this book through my local library while looking for books to use in a high school science class room. The science sections of the book might be written at a slightly higher level than I would expect the average high school student to appreciate but the strength of *Cats are Not Peas* is its ability to interest people in a subject they might not have found that appealing initially. I really enjoyed the book and I'm try to find a way to work all or some of it into my class. I have wondered about the price though, seems a bit hefty for a slim hardcover book.

I found this book quite by accident but it was exactly what I was looking for. Not only did this book share my love of cats and interest in calicos but gave a clear and easy to understand explanation of calico genetics.

I still don't get it - but this is what I have wanted for years. Because of my lifetime LOVE of orange cats and my Mendelian curiosity (but not ability to figure out) I have been fascinated by the calico/orange question all that time. In my life the oranges were all male except three. One is nearby now (and she is one of two mothers who had orange kittens - mostly female and one black son). She is 100% orange with golden eyes. I treasure this wonderful book for all it promises if I can figure out the basics. I also have an Orange Cat page on my FB and have recommended "Cats are Not Peas" and will continue to do so. It is one that every orange and calico cat parent should have. I call the calicos "The Mother of Oranges" . And I love this book and encourage cat lovers to get a copy.

OK.... much like the author, I have an odd colored cat... a black tabby.. yes, black with "ghost stripes" that only show up in bright light... and was curious re how he got that way. This is a fun, chatty book that's as much about the story of the author's search for information on HER odd-colored cat -- a male calico cat -- as it is about the science behind how HE got that way. ( If you wonder why that's interesting, well ... on second thought, gonna make you read the book..! )If you're curious about cats, you'll enjoy this. If you're a Cat Person, you'll definitely enjoy this. And if you're curious about how genetics works but don't want to get hip deep in technical verbiage, you'll enjoy this. It's written in a way that gives you the basics but doesn't dumb it down unnecessarily. Where the technical verbiage arises, there's a glossary to define terms.I'm glad I found this book!

Best explanation of the calico phenomenon I have ever read. SHe explains the basics and the history behind the rare male calico in a clear and enertaining way. The lessons on basic genetics as you go is a unique way of presenting things.

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