

# CAT LADIES

## TAG LINE

When cats mean Meow to you than people

## SYNOPSIS - short

**Cat Ladies** is a verité documentary that pierces the intimate world of the “cat lady” – women who give and seek love in their world with their cats.

## SYNOPSIS - medium

**Cat Ladies** is a verité documentary that pierces the intimate world of the “cat lady” – women who give and seek love in their world with their cats.

Four different women who have been slapped with the same label: “The Crazy Cat Lady”. Through intimate access with Diane, Margot, Sigi and Jenny, we create a sensitive and emotionally honest portrait of women whose lives and self-worth have become intractably linked to cats.

Some of these women have only a few cats; others share their small homes with hundreds. They’ve created an alternative society for themselves that they share with their feline companions. It’s not however, the number of cats they possess that defines them, but rather their struggle to find acceptance and value in a society that rejects them. A figure of fun, they’re easily dismissed but these women deal with the issues that all of us face to some degree – rejection, loss and loneliness.

# CAT LADIES

## SYNOPSIS - long

**Cat Ladies** is a verité documentary that unravels the real story behind the oft ridiculed 'crazy cat lady'.

Through intimate access with Diane, Margot, Sigi and Jenny, we create a sensitive and emotionally honest portrait of women whose lives and self-worth have become intractably linked to cats.

Some of these women have only a few cats; others share their small homes with hundreds. It's not the number of cats that defines them as a 'crazy cat lady', but rather their attachment, or non-attachment, to human beings. They share backgrounds that usually include abuse, death, rejection and loneliness. Because of this they turn their natural instinct to love and nurture to an alternative society of felines, creating a world with their cats in which they feel reward and acceptance - a world where they ultimately have value.

The cat lady comes in three basic forms. There is the person who is obsessed by cats and has a unique personal relationship with her wards that goes far beyond the average human-pet bond. Then there are the 'cat rescuers', who are self-appointed protectors of abandoned cats. They start taking in cats later in life, often after a failed marriage, the loss of a job, death of a relative, or the estrangement of children. Someone or some incident turns them onto the plight of the unwanted cat and their homes gradually become sanctuaries. Finally there is the 'cat hoarder', perhaps the least understood of all. The hoarder collects cats to the detriment of their health and her own. She may have started with the best intentions, but some crisis or break with reality pushes her past the point of being able to cope.

It's a murky world, secretive by nature and horribly misunderstood. Local authorities are ill-equipped and uneducated and cannot accurately deduce who is a destructive cat hoarder and who is an enthusiastic cat rescuer or an obsessed cat lover. City by-laws are arbitrary and very rarely acted upon. At best, a few cats might be removed from the home, but the women themselves almost never receive treatment or counselling. One thing we know for sure: the recidivism rate for hoarders is 100% when left untreated, which is almost always the case.

They are viewed as nothing more than "crazy cat ladies" but they're dealing with issues that all of us face to some degree - alienation, loss and loneliness.