

SCIENCE

IS GOING TO THE DOGS (AND CATS!)

Walker Storey '02 was interested in Veterinary Science, but as she held her scalpel over the cat corpse pinned to the tray in front of her, she was having second thoughts. Her mind crowded with images of past pets: a tiny orange tabby lapping kitten formula from a saucer; a small, silky Siamese purring in her lap; a large, long-haired tom warming her feet as she read by the fireplace.

Had the cat in front of her now been someone's pet? How had it ended up in a specimen tray in a lab? Could she cut it open? Take it apart? Walker hesitated.

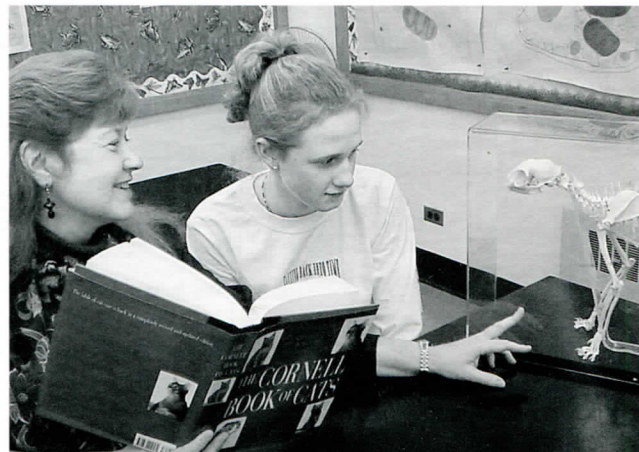
June Tuttle, Head of Chatham Hall's Science Department and teacher for Chatham Hall's Veterinary Science class, understood the feeling.

"Dissection can be upsetting," Tuttle said. "We have to be sensitive to our students' feelings. The point of the Veterinary Science class is to let the girls explore their interest. I don't want to scare them off."

In the end Walker decided to make the first cut. She was glad she did.

"Once I was in, it was okay," Walker said. "My cat had cancer of the mammary glands. I could see the changes in the glands, and the changes that had occurred throughout the body. It was clear. The cat had been diseased and humanely euthanised. I could relax and learn. Getting in there and seeing for myself — that's the best way to learn!"

And learn they do. Students in Ms. Tuttle's Veterinary Science class learn feline, canine, equine, and some bovine anatomy, physiology, and diseases. They learn introductory clinical pathology, and even conduct some diagnostic tests in parasitology, hematology, and urinalysis. At the end of the course students take a practical as well as final exam, a practice not usually started until students reach the college level.



Veterinary Science is a class that Ms. Tuttle is well suited to teach. She has a B.S. in Animal Science from Ohio State and an M.A. in Science Education from Cornell. She worked at Cornell's College of Veterinary Medicine and at the Cornell Feline Health Center, and she is a major author and associate editor of *The Cornell Book of Cats*. She also worked as supervisor for the veterinary health services of a medical laboratory in New York State. She brings both experience and expertise to Chatham Hall's Veterinary Science class.

Ms. Tuttle also knows where to find strong supportive print material. She contacted Ralston Purina, and they gladly donated copies of their *Clinical Handbook Series* to Chatham Hall. *The Clinical Handbook Series* covers various veterinary topics and includes actual case studies. Chatham Animal Clinic and Southside Large Animal Clinic provide blood and urine specimens so the students can perform basic diagnostic tests.

The current Veterinary Science class is one trimester. Ms. Tuttle may expand the curriculum to three trimesters, one each in: Anatomy and Physiology, Diagnostic Tools, and Preventive Medicine, including nutrition, genetics, and vaccinations.

Chatham Hall's Veterinary Science class gives the students a unique edge as they enter college. Ms. Tuttle plans to make that edge even broader.