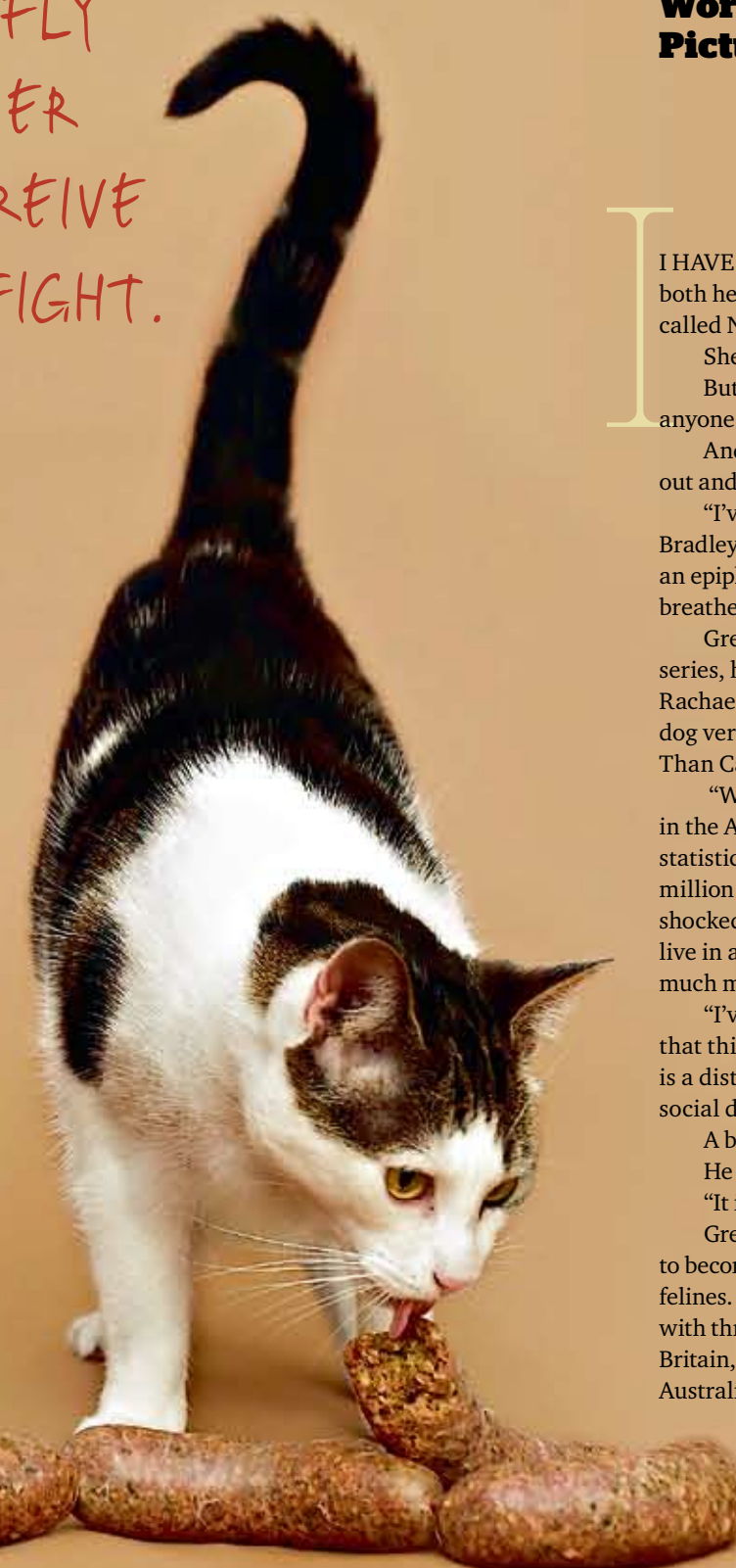


Truth about cats and dogs



FUR WILL SURELY FLY
AS FORMER SOLDIER
BRADLEY TREVOR GREIVE
WADES IN TO A DOGFIGHT.



Words **Belle Taylor**
Pictures **Rachael Hale**

I HAVE A FRIEND who insists she would rather chop off both her arms and legs than lose her cat, a grey moggie called Nutball.

She is insane.

But hey, she's a cat lover — they're like that. Face it: anyone sensible knows dogs are better than cats.

And now someone has finally had the guts to come out and say it.

"I've always known dogs were better than cats," Bradley Trevor Greive says. "I don't think there was an epiphany. It's like waking up and remembering to breathe. It is a truth, a profound and enduring truth."

Greive, author of the hugely popular Blue Day Book series, has teamed up with pet portrait photographer Rachael Hale to deliver the definitive argument on the dog versus cat debate, simply titled *Why Dogs Are Better Than Cats*.

"What shocked me into action was I got involved in the American pet statistics and then worldwide pet statistics," Greive explains. "I found there were 200 million more known domestic cats than dogs and it just shocked me ... I thought: 'How is it possible that we live in a world where people would want to have cats so much more than dogs?'"

"I've looked into this and I've come to the opinion that this huge disparity, this enormous number of cats, is a disturbing indicator that the world is in genuine social decline."

A bit dramatic perhaps?

He laughs.

"It is and it isn't," he says.

Greive took what was perhaps an unlikely route to become the self-styled authority on canines versus felines. Born in Tasmania, where he lives on a farm with three Great Danes, he spent his childhood living in Britain, Hong Kong and Singapore before returning to Australia where he enrolled in the Royal Military College, Duntroon. He became a paratroop platoon commander in the Australian Army, with a list of specialties including heavy and direct-fire weapons, heavy machine-gun instruction and, handily, survival.



Man's best friend
Bradley Trevor Greive and his Great Danes.

Show offs Pretty pussy or loveable doggies — you choose.



It is not a career path geared towards writing cutesy coffee-table books.

He left the military in 1993 to, as his website puts it, “undertake a series of underpaid but creatively enlightening positions”. Read: “Did odd jobs while being a starving artist”.

Throughout the 1990s he established a career as a cartoonist, before *The Blue Day Book* was published in 2000. Wildly popular, it prompted Greive to turn it into a series. Cute pictures of animals illustrated his quirky snippets of wisdom. Greive became a publishing sensation, selling 20 million books in 115 countries.

So what is the natural career progression for a former paratrooper-cum-cartoonist-cum-inspirational coffee-table book writer? How about training as a cosmonaut for the Russian space program?

Greive has quite the profile in Russia, where the *Blue Day Books* are best sellers. He has also spent a lot of time in the country promoting conservation programs, particularly concerning brown bears.

“One thing led to another and it was like, ‘Aw, you have a profile here, we enjoy your books, you’ve got a connection with conservation, people like you at the zoo in Moscow and you’re an ex-paratrooper — what do you think about doing the space program?’ Who wouldn’t jump at it?”

Is that what celebrities do in Russia? Here they do reality TV and there they join the space program?

“It was an extraordinary experience and I absolutely loved it. I mean, it was hideous in so many ways, a lot of vomiting into helmets, a lot of spinning and upside down and people jabbing you with stuff.”

Finished with the space program for now, he’s waiting for the call to tell him when he’s going to be put into space. “I don’t think I’ll get to the Moon,” he says. “But definitely I’ll get into orbit at some stage.”

In the meantime he’s tackling a topic which could prove more dangerous than heading into space — why dogs are better than cats.

But Greive doesn’t just see dogs as a superior pet; he sees the fact that cats are the preferred pet as an indicator of a much wider problem.

“Basically what happened is this: as the world’s population gets larger, we become more urban,” he explains.

“OWNING A CAT IS LIKE TAKING A PRISONER HOSTAGE.”

Bradley Trevor Greive

“We live in this huge congested throbbing lump of humanity and the paradox is, at the same time we’re becoming more remote; we’re becoming more disconnected from each other the closer we get, and so what we have is not only this great move toward social ambivalence, but we have an entire planet with commitment issues.”

And cats are to blame for this?

“They are more of a symptom of societal decline rather than the cause — but the jury is out,” he says. “They could very well be responsible, who knows? It’s in the nature of cats to be fickle and vindictive. I really couldn’t put a limit on what they are capable of.”


Greive is quick to point out he is not a cat hater, more a dog lover. Cats, he believes, were not meant to be pets. They are wild creatures and while dogs can truly love you, the best cats can do is recognise you.

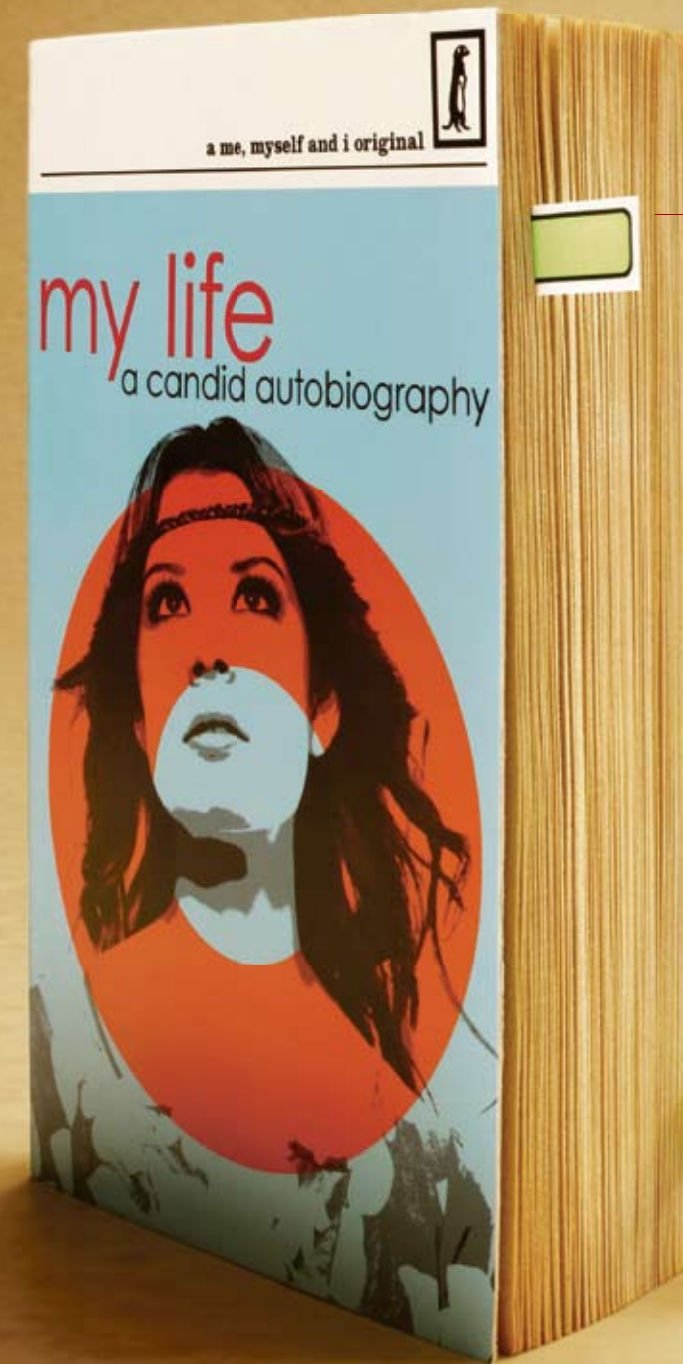
“I say to anyone who has a cat, your responsibility is to look after that cat exquisitely. That cat is independent and you have taken its life away because a cat is not a social creature, it doesn’t have any family sense and every cat is almost a political prisoner.

“I make a point in the book that owning a cat is like taking a prisoner hostage and hoping that at some stage Stockholm syndrome will kick in.”

He’s not ignorant of the controversial nature of his claims and does expect some sort of backlash from the cat-loving community, although he’s trying not to be too worried.

“I do have a slight concern that before this book comes out I’m going to be the victim of some cat person fatwa,” he laughs.

Good thing he’s got that paratrooper training. He’ll need all the personal protection he can muster with a mob of crazy cat lovers after him. 



We recognise what you’ve achieved by here

So you can achieve much more by here

Our postgraduate courses recognise the value of your experience and knowledge.

Take the next step.

Apply now at postgrad.murdoch.edu.au



Murdoch
UNIVERSITY

DISCOVERERS WELCOME