

Phil Berger & Christine Lupo



Christine Lupo & Julius Caesar



Elvia Leclair & Christine Lupo



TICA ELECTION *Christine Lupo* **TICA Ragdoll Breed Committee**

My name is Christine Lupo and since 2008, I have been a proud Ragdoll owner, breeder, and exhibitor who has an established TICA Registered Cattery, NY DIVINE Dolls. I have produced several Regional Winners and Supreme Grand Champion Ragdolls. I am a candidate for the upcoming Ragdoll Breed Committee Election this month. I would advocate for mink, sepia, and solid Ragdolls to be accepted for show. I believe that the current standard needs to be overhauled to reflect logically organized ideas and clear and accurate information using precise language to guide judges, exhibitors, breeders, as well as spectators, as to what all show quality Ragdolls should epitomize. Education, communication, and collegiality should be of the utmost priority of each Ragdoll Breed Committee member, which includes being an advocate for the health, temperament, as well as the aesthetics of the Ragdoll breed.

The "traditional" ragdoll that most people recognize is a medium haired, blue-eyed kitty with a pale body, dark face, ears, legs and tail and is described as being "pointed". This coat color

pattern is the result of the RECESSIVE Siamese gene (cs) and it requires both parents to carry this gene in order to pass it on to their offspring. This is a recessive gene in the cat and therefore to have a cat with "points" the kitty must have two copies of the cs gene. Pointed traditional Ragdoll cats are produced by parents with the genotype of cscs. So, if both Ragdoll parents are cscs, then 100% of the kittens will be traditional. A traditional cscs cat bred to a cbcs mink Ragdoll will produce 50% traditional kittens. A combination of cbcs, or two mink Ragdoll parents mated, will produce 25% traditional kittens. A solid (Ccs) Ragdoll to a traditional (cscs) will produce 50% traditional kittens. A solid (Ccs) Ragdoll bred to a mink (cbcs) Ragdoll will produce 25% traditional kittens. With only one, or no copies of this gene, the cat will have pigmentation over the whole body and is considered a "solid" colored cat (CC or Ccs).

“Traditional” Ragdolls would not exist without the foundation of solid and mink cats. “Traditional” Ragdolls were produced from recessive genes—THEY are the variants of the Ragdoll breed. So in essence, to refuse to acknowledge Solid Ragdolls, Mink Ragdolls, and Sepia Ragdolls is not only egregious, but absolutely ridiculous. This would be comparable to me making the decision to reject my Italian ancestry, over my German bloodlines because I look German (I have recessive blue-eyed genes) and do not express any of my Italian features!

A recessive gene is one that is phenotypically expressed in the homozygous (two copies of the same allele) state, but has its expression masked in the presence of the dominant when heterozygous (one copy of the recessive and a copy of the dominant). Blue (b) eyes are recessive to brown (B). A blue eyed person has an allelic group of bb; whereas, a person with brown

eyes can have either BB, homozygous dominant brown, or heterozygous, Bb, brown carrying blue. A recessive trait is one that must be contributed by both parents in order to appear in the offspring. My mother has blue eyes. My father has brown. My eyes are blue because I received one gene from each parent that were recessive for blue. Dad carried the recessive gene but did not express, or show it. Recessive traits can be carried in a person's genes without appearing in that person.

Traits are characteristics that you possess and show. You may have brown eyes and I have blue eyes--those are traits. My genes decide that I have blue eyes and your genes determine that you have brown. These genes are made of alleles. Alleles consist of one, or two, or more alternative forms of a gene that arise by mutation and are found at the same place on a chromosome. The genes for blue eyes are shown as "bb" because they are recessive. Brown eyes that can be shown through genes, or the genotype of BB or Bb. The uppercase B means that it is a dominant trait that will overpower the recessive and will show in the host. The allele is either B or lower case b. The gene combination of the Bb, BB, or bb and the trait that is shown either blue eyes for bb, or brown eyes for Bb or BB. This can be seen in cats, as well, in regard to coat color.

Seal, or Black, (Allelic group of BB [pure seal] or Bb [seal carrying chocolate]) is the dominant color of Ragdolls. Blue(genotype of BBdd [pure blue] or Bbdd [blue carrying chocolate]) is the dilute of Black. Chocolate is the recessive of black (genotype of bbDD [pure chocolate] or bbDd [chocolate carrying dilute]). Lilac is not an inherited gene, but is the dilute of the already recessive chocolate (genotype of bbdd). It is the total dilution of two recessive chocolate genes.

When Ann Baker bred Josephine to create pointed kittens, along with solid kittens, the female had to possess the colorpoint gene (C cs) and the father did as well. The father of Daddy Warbucks HAD to be either a solid carrying the Siamese gene (C cs), a mink (cscb), or a pointed (cscs) cat.

To be extremely specific, the pointed coat color pattern is recessive and is an *error* in the production of the enzyme tyrosinase. Point coloration in cats is a form of partial albinism resulting from a mutation, an abnormality, in tyrosinase, an enzyme involved with melanin production. The mutated enzyme is heat-sensitive; it fails to work at normal body temperatures, but becomes active in cooler areas of the skin. The Tyrosinase (TYR) gene, also known as the Color gene, produces an enzyme that is required for melanin production. Mutations in TYR have been associated with temperature-sensitive pigment production that results in colors known as Burmese and Siamese, as well as Sepia. As a result, dark pigment is limited to the coldest areas of the body, that is, the extremities (the POINTS). Pointed kittens are born white, since the womb is uniformly warm. As the kitten ages, the cooler areas (or POINTS) darken while warmer areas remain cream to white in color. Points are not limited to solid colors or dark colors. To repeat, the "Traditional" pointed Ragdoll cats would not be in existence without the foundation of solid cats and/or minks.

.

Minks, Sepias, and Solids are not registrable in all cat associations. They are not currently accepted for championship in North America. Many Ragdoll clubs do not allow breeders of this variation to join or advertise their non-blue eyed

kittens. The Minks, Sepias, and Solids may be registered and shown, however, in TICA, **ironically**, under "New Traits." Minks, Sepias, and Solids do not adhere to the breed standard of multiple organizations and clubs, which state that a Ragdoll is a blue-eyed pointed cat. This was, and is, the written standard initially created and commercialized by the Daytons who PURCHASED blue eyed Ragdolls from Ann Baker, the creator of the Ragdoll breed, a cat breeder in the 1960s. The Daytons, and a group of their followers, dismissed Ann Baker's vision of her Ragdoll and made it their mission to establish a small representation of the Ragdoll breed, the "traditional" blue eyed VARIANT, in the multiple cat fancier associations and show halls.

Ann Baker, the pioneer and ORIGINATOR of the Ragdoll breed, bred Buckwheat, a Burmese cat in appearance, to Daddy Warbucks that produced kittens carrying the Burmese and pointed genes. These Ragdolls, Pointed, Minks, and Solids trace back to the ORIGINAL Ragdolls--Raggedy Ann Daddy Warbucks, Josephine, Blackie, and Beauty. This can be seen in many pedigrees registered in TICA, and other organizations. There is no need to outcross Ragdolls to other breeds as the Siamese and Burmese genes were there from the very beginning in the foundation cats!

Yet another group of breeders, followers of Curt Gehm, who PURCHASED cats from Ann Baker chose not to honor contractual agreements with her and decided to outcross to other cats in order to produce these colors and patterns. This group took the remnants of what the Daytons left behind, in regard to Baker's Ragdolls, and promoted them as a "new" breed in the Cat Fanciers Association (CFA) calling them

"Ragamuffins." They are not permitted any outcross. The breed standard for Ragamuffins is very DIFFERENT than that of the Ragdoll. There were breeders who kept Ann's mink and solid lines from the original foundation cats. Some did not hide it. Some Traditionalists did and continue to do so, doing a disservice to the breed. These Ragdolls should be recognized for what they are—RAGDOLLS! This is especially the case, since they are registered with TICA as Ragdolls.

I asked myself a question, a few years ago, before the last Breed Committee election: If I do not advocate for ALL Ragdolls, who will? I found a team of breeders/exhibitors who share my sentiments and understand the facts through evidence based research. We decided that we will work as a team to educate the judges, the Ragdoll Breed Group, and the public about ALL Ragdolls. I ask for collective votes for myself and the following candidates: Elvia Leclair and Jayne Harman. I am asking for you to vote for us to become Ragdoll Breed Committee members to advocate for all Ragdolls and to initiate positive change.

On my website, I have posted a Breed Standard proposal. Be my guest to peruse my understanding, passion, and philosophy as to what the Ragdoll Breed Committee should strive to achieve at the following address:

<http://www.nydivinedolls.com/Breed-Standard-Proposal.html>

Thank you for your time and any help that you might provide in the matter.

In Solidarity,

Christine Lupo

Christine Lupo