

Meet Zoe: a cat with degrees

adapted from an article by Esther Inglis-Arkell

- 1 Zoe D Katze, PhD, CH, DAPA, has a wall of diplomas, despite being unable to sign her name. She doesn't have the opposable thumbs for it. This goes to show that a diploma doesn't necessarily indicate 32.
- 2 Steve Eichel, PhD, ABPP, who I can assume earned his degrees the hard way, got upset with the amount of credentialing being given out to uneducated hacks. These degrees were concentrated in the less rigorously controlled professions, such as hypnotherapy and diet counseling, but could branch out to academic degrees – 33 the impressive PhD diploma clutched in the hairy Doctor Katze's claws. He wanted to prove that diploma mills were happy to sell diplomas to anyone, turning them into worthless pieces of paper for people who want to seem educated.
- 3 Which doesn't mean the process didn't take some perseverance. One doesn't get a PhD overnight. Eichel started with a crappy little hypnotherapy organization, comprised mostly of people without formal academic backgrounds, and paid some fees for certification. After a few of those certifications piled up, 34.
- 4 Eichel applied for a degree (for Zoe) from the American Psychotherapy Association, an organization of which he'd been a member. They requested a listing of academic credentials, and he went ahead and made a few up, including doctorates from mail-order colleges and a position at "Tacayllaermi Friends School" – Tacayllaermi is "I'm really a cat" spelled backwards. They made Zoe a Diplomate.
- 5 Zoe's academic and professional career is actually pretty 35. A great number of animals have professional or academic certifications. My advice for diploma mills? Don't give degrees in life experience, and automatically reject anyone named "Sassafras".



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