

Pet companionship and depression: Results from a United States Internet sample. *Roni Beth Tower and Maki Nokota, Teachers College, Columbia University, USA. Anthrozoos Vol. 19, (1) 2006*

Using Internet survey data from 2291 respondents from the United States, we examined socio-demographic predictors of living with a cat or dog. Logistic regressions showed that, for men, being married, living with children, being Midwestern and non-urban increased odds of living with a pet. For women, being White, having a high income, living with children, and living in a rural setting increased odds for pet ownership. Multivariate analyses examining influences of gender, marital status, and pet ownership on depression (CES-D) scores, adjusting for potential confounders, revealed that unmarried women who live with a pet have the fewest depressive symptoms, and unmarried men who live with a pet have the most. These findings suggest that single women benefit from pet companionship, whereas single men may be burdened by it.

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