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Australia's cat people: a special breed

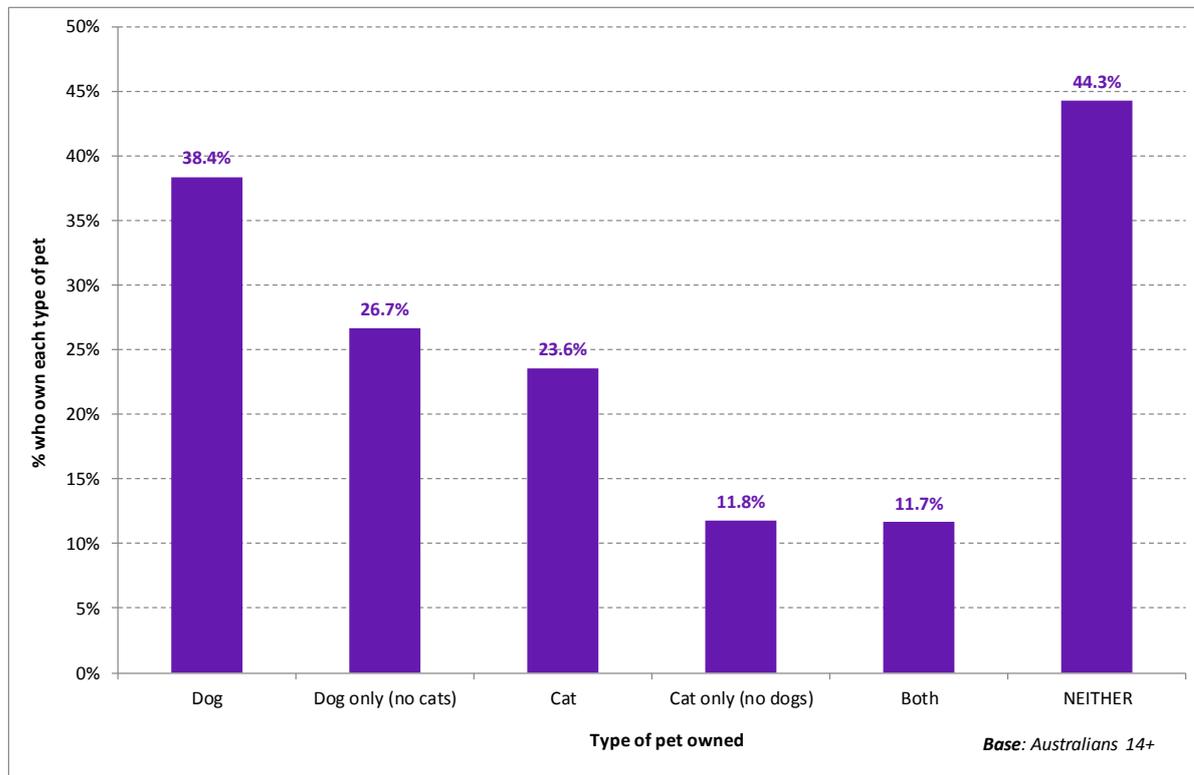
The stereotype of the 'crazy cat lady' is so entrenched in western culture, there's even a crazy cat lady character on *The Simpsons*. But the latest findings from Roy Morgan Research show that male cat owners are just as likely—if not more so—than their female counterparts to diverge from population averages for their gender. Feline curious to know more? Read on...

But firstly, a high-level snapshot of Australia's pet-owning population. In 2015, 38.4% of Australians 14+ reported owning at least one dog, 23.6% reported owning at least one cat, 11.7% reported owning at least one dog and one cat, and 44.3% reported owning neither.

Aussies with dogs but no cats account for 26.7% of the population (5.2 million people), well over double the proportion of those with cats but no dogs (11.8%, or 2.3 million people). This latter group—1.3 million of whom are women, with the remaining million being men—will forthwith be referred to as 'cat people'.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Pet ownership in Australia



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), January – December 2015 (n=15,367).

Cat people and income

Income is one of the areas in which male cat people diverge most markedly—and profitably—from the average Australian man. When it comes to incomes of \$90,000 and above, male cat

people consistently come out ahead. For example, compared to the average Australian man, they are:

- 35% more likely than average to earn between \$90,000 and \$119,999
- 64% more likely to earn \$120,000-\$149,999
- 61% more likely to earn \$250,000 and above

What's more, male cat people are over-represented in certain occupations. Compared to the average Australian man, they are:

- 50% more likely to be employed as a Department Head/Admin or Branch Manager
- 28% more likely to be an IT Professional (eg. Network Manager, Systems Analyst, Data Communications)
- 28% more likely to be a General Manager

Despite being slightly more likely to be in paid employment than the average Australian woman, female cat people are under-represented in managerial and professional IT positions and do not exhibit such a clear-cut salary variation from the average. They are, however:

- 45% more likely to be employed in Sales
- 43% more likely to be an Office Worker, Clerk or Typist.

A question of attitude

Whether male or female, Australian cat people are more likely than the population average to hold particular beliefs and attitudes. Whether owning a cat has influenced their way of thinking, or whether they favour cats because they think a certain way, is impossible to say — but as the table below reveals, a clear distinction exists between cat owners and the average Aussie.

Attitudes of cat people compared to population averages for men and women

Male cat owners Compared to average Australian man, they are...	Female cat owners Compared to average Australian woman, they are...
29% LESS likely to believe 'homosexuality is immoral'	21% LESS likely to believe 'homosexuality is immoral'
14% MORE likely to agree that 'Terrorists deserve the same rights as other criminals'	26% MORE likely to agree that 'Terrorists deserve the same rights as other criminals'
14% MORE likely to self-identify as 'a bit of an intellectual'	13% MORE likely to self-identify as 'a bit of an intellectual'
15% MORE likely to agree that 'I'm shy in social situations'	7% MORE likely to agree that 'I'm shy in social situations'
11% LESS likely to agree they're 'more extrovert than introvert'	5% LESS likely to agree they're 'more extrovert than introvert'
24% MORE likely to vote Greens in the next Federal Election	19% MORE likely to vote Greens in the next Federal Election

Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), January-December 2015 (n= 15,367). **Base:** Australians 14+

Happy at home

Given some of the attitudinal statistics above, it is not surprising that Australian cat people tend to be more likely than the population averages for their respective genders to enjoy certain home-based activities.

In any given three months, men who own cats are more likely than the average Aussie man to play board games, work in the garden, pursue a hobby, read a novel and/or read a non-fiction book. Although they are less likely to have played a sport or gone to a nightclub, they don't spend all their leisure time at home, with above-average proportions going to the movies and/or rock/pop concerts.

Female cat people are also above-average for their gender for playing board games and/or engaging in hobbies. Like cat-owning men, however, they are not complete recluses, and are more likely than the average Aussie woman to go to the cinema and/or rock and pop concerts in any given three months.

Postscript

Contrary to popular misconceptions, female cat people are not overwhelmingly comprised of singletons. On the contrary, the ratio between married/de facto and single/unmarried (separated/divorced/ widowed) cat-owning women is almost even-steven (49.0% to 51.0%). Admittedly, 49% is below the population average for married/de facto women in Australia (57.9%), but it is not nearly as low as the stereotype would suggest.

Meanwhile, at 68.9%, the proportion of male cat people are married/de facto outstrips the population average for men (63.1%).

Andrew Price, General Director – Consumer Products, Roy Morgan Research, says:

“The time has come to get over the crazy cat lady cliché once and for all! While it is true that women—and men—who own cats do tend to differ from the average in many ways (just a few of which are described in this story), this is not a bad thing.

“After all, cats are very much a la mode at the moment: witness the universal popularity of online cat videos, the rise of celebrity felines such as Lil Bub, Grumpy Cat and Karl Lagerfeld’s pampered pussycat Choupette, and the proliferation of cat-themed fashion. Savvy brands and businesses that understand Australia’s cat people and what makes them tick could do a lot worse than tailoring their communications to reach this potentially lucrative consumer group.

“According to Roy Morgan’s in-depth consumer profiling tool Helix Personas, cat people are over-represented in high-value groups such as the older, refined Set for Life, the socially aware and well-educated Worldly and Wise, and the upwardly mobile, trendy Big Future.

“And ‘dog people’? Of course, they too have their own unique features and stand-out Helix Personas, but that’s another story...”

For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research's social and consumer data, please contact:

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Related research findings

View our extensive range of consumer profiles, including the [Pet Care Service Customer profile](#), the [Pet Supplies Buyer profile](#) and our [Pet Food buyer profiles](#).

Compiled with data from Roy Morgan's Single Source survey (the largest of its kind in the world, with 50,000 respondents p.a), these ready-made profiles provide a broad understanding of the target audience, in terms of demographics, attitudes, activities and media usage in Australia.

About Roy Morgan Research

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in Indonesia, the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years' experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
7,500	±1.1	±1.0	±0.7	±0.5
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2