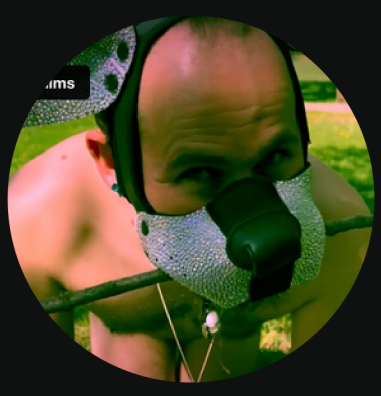
PUPPY PHILMS

A cellphilming project that seeks to understand the connections between being a pup and body image for gay, bi, trans, and queer (GBTQ) men though their own voices.

We spoke to 17 self-identifying GBTQ pups who also created cellphilms. Below are the major themes.

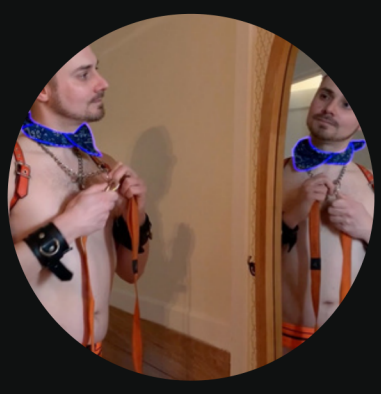


Reinforcing Body Standards

This theme discussed how some pups believed that the pup community can (re)produce dominant body ideals for GBTQ men. As on pup said, “the body expectations for pup communities are not really different from the body expectations from the cis gay man culture.”

Capacity For Changing Feelings About Bodies

Many pups felt that pup communities were spaces in which hegemonic body standards for gay men were changed, either lessened or lacking altogether. As one participant noted, “body image doesn’t really matter in the pup community, and that’s sort of the point. Just be a puppy.”



Becoming a Pup

Becoming a pup for some participants was a way for them to navigate harmful body ideals and to find relief from body image concerns, often through a pup identity or pup headspace. As one participant noted, “So I guess that's maybe one of the greatest strengths about pup play is that it is an altered state”.

Final Thoughts

The pups in this study viewed pup play as positive experience that allowed them to find a sense of community, promote self-acceptance, and navigate body image concerns. Engaging in pup community and practices permitted participants to find new ways of being that move beyond binary concepts of gender and thinness and fatness.

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CHECK OUT THE FILMS

HTTPS://PHILLIPJOY.CA/PUPPYFILMS.HTML

This work was supported by with funding provided by:

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada | Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada | Canada