

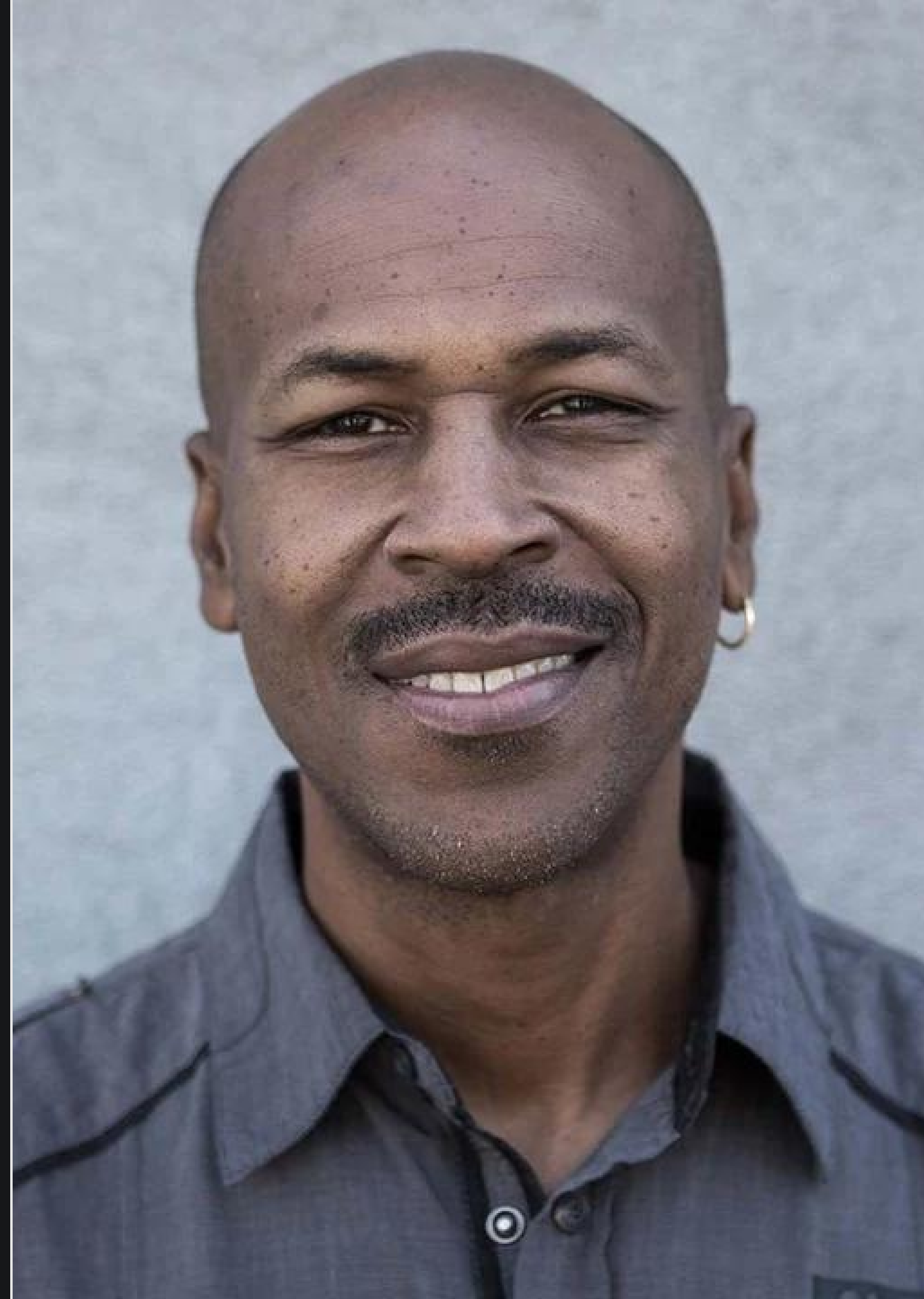
TEN TO MEN · WAVE 5

DEPRESSION AND PROBLEMATIC PORNOGRAPHY USE AMONG AUSTRALIAN MEN

A nationally representative cross-sectional study

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WHY THIS STUDY

Pornography use, and problematic use, is consistently higher among men – and the association with depression appears bidirectional.

Yet existing studies are small, cross-sectional, and adjust only for demographics – not the psychosocial factors that shape both.

None have used gender-sensitive measures that capture men's externalizing depression symptoms alongside internalizing ones.



02

WHAT WE DID

SAMPLE

12,939

Australian men aged 18-67, Ten to Men Wave 5 (2023-24) – the first wave to measure pornography use and male-type depression.

MEASURES

Brief Pornography Screen (≥ 4 = at risk)

PHQ-9 – internalizing symptoms

MDRS-7 – externalizing symptoms

Combined into four depression profiles: none, internalizing, externalizing, mixed.

ANALYSIS

Sequential linear and multinomial logistic regression on multiply imputed data.

Adjusted for loneliness, social support, masculine self-concept, age, employment, sexuality and relationship status.

WHAT WE FOUND

29%

of men screened at risk for
problematic pornography use
(n=3,776).

Depressive
symptoms

Risk was independently
associated with internalizing *and*
externalizing symptoms – each
holding after the other was
controlled.

59-94%

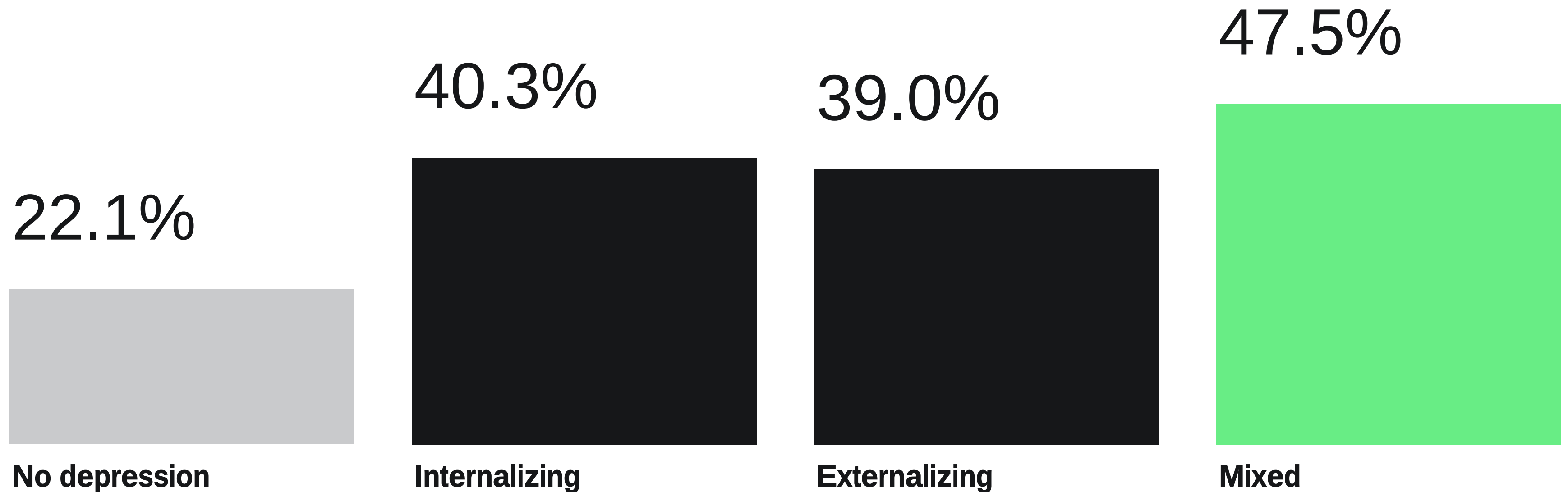
greater odds of reporting any
depression profile, relative to non-
depressed men.

Fully adjusted models: adjusted $R^2 = 0.58$ (internalizing), 0.49 (externalizing). No interaction by depression scale ($b=0.01$, $p=.506$).

03

WHAT WE FOUND – BY DEPRESSION PROFILE

Share of men at risk for problematic pornography use



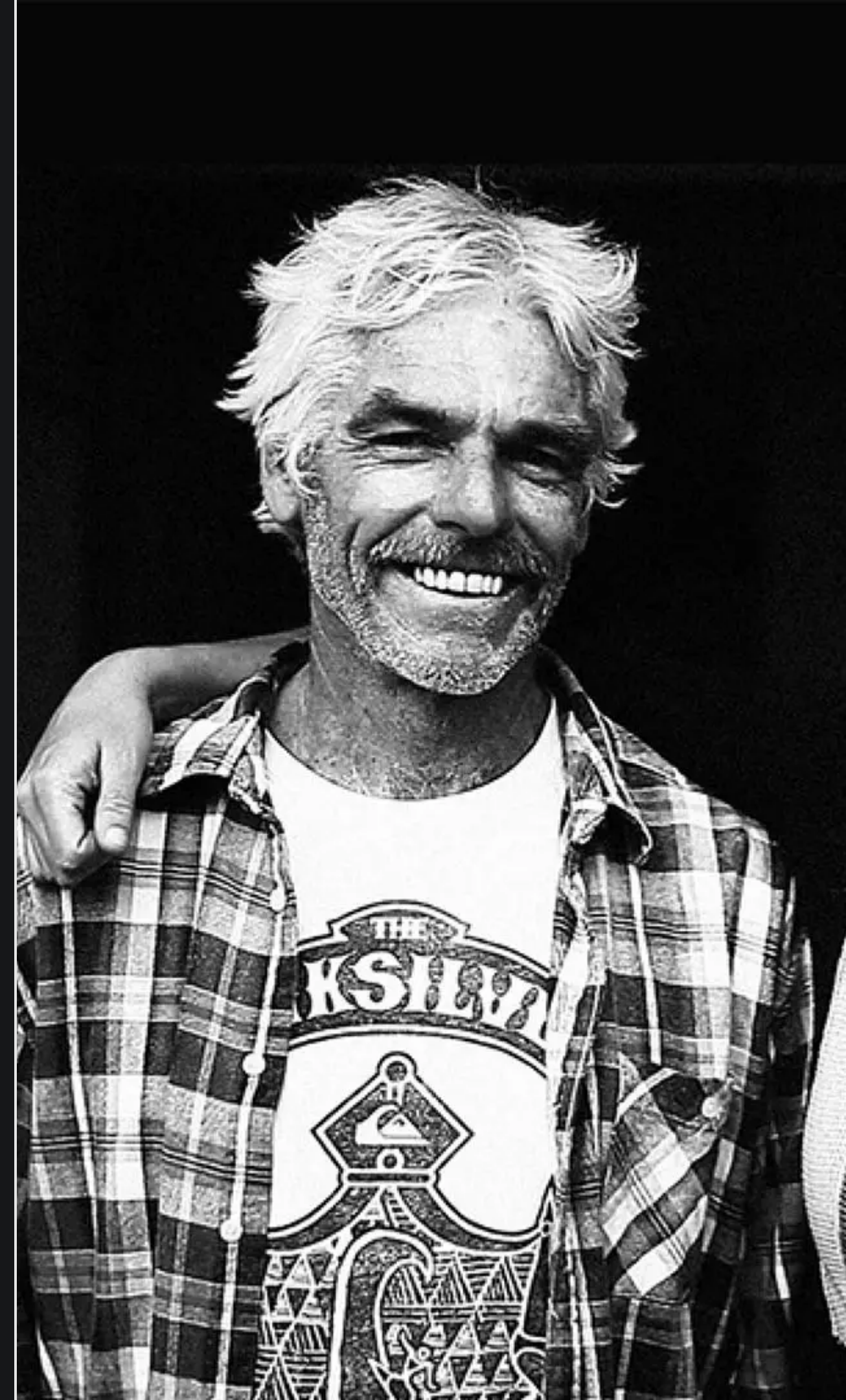
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WHAT IT MEANS

Pornography use explained as much variance in men's depressive symptoms as social support – and, for externalizing symptoms, more than masculine self-concept.

That argues for routine, non-judgemental inquiry about pornography use with men presenting with depression, and for including it in prevention alongside loneliness and connectedness.

Cross-sectional design; the Brief Pornography Screen does not separate non-users from unproblematic users. Longitudinal work is the next step.



IN SHORT

Problematic pornography use is an independent correlate of both internalizing and externalizing depression in Australian men – and one we rarely ask about.

Ten to Men is managed by the Australian Institute of Family Studies and funded by the Australian Government Department of Health.

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