

- Exploring the furry fandom
  - I'm Matthew Scott, or Makyo
  - Write for [adjective][species] along with Klisoura the collie, Zik the otter, Rabbit, and the awesome JM, an Australian horse in the UK.
  - Want to talk about exploring furry through data
- Why?
- Furry is interesting
  - Growing fast
  - No membership requirements
  - Spans boundaries
- There's a lot to explore
  - Understanding individual aspects
  - Understanding change over time
  - Making sense of the fandom as a whole
- So what is exploring?
- Collection
  - First we need to collect information
  - Two main resources
  - Surveys and spelunking for outside data
  - Introspection for inside data
- Understanding
  - Looking through data
  - Searching for stories
  - Verifying against other sources
  - Deciding on interesting points
- Giving back
  - Data presentation
  - Data visualization
  - Data accessibility
  - Data description

- Dialog
  - Sharing - social currency
  - Commenting
  - Differing opinions
  - What's missing
- Explore cycle
  - Exploration is really a cycle
  - Collect data
  - Piece it together into a story
  - Pull it into a presentable format
  - Start a dialog
  - Learn what/where/how to collect next time
- For example
  - Here's a small example of a story told through data
  - JM wanted to explore how furry might help one re-evaluate their sexual preference
  - Collected pertinent data to work with - years in the fandom correlated with sexual orientation
  - Trend was visible
  - Pulled into a vis (slide)
  - Started dialog with article (slide)
  - Learn where to go next
- What do we have to work with?
  - Gerbasi et al.
  - Anthropomorphic research project
  - Klisoura
  - [a][s]
  - Some others
  - Introspection, but will get into that later
- What have we learned so far?
  - Quite a bit, really
  - Diverse fandom in some ways, not others

- Growing fandom
- Problems with our own definition
- But that’s okay, leads to looser membership “requirements”
- Before I continue. . .
  - Want everyone to pay attention to something
  - I am going to talk about the following things:
    - \* sex and gender
    - \* sexual orientation
    - \* importance of sex
    - \* age
  - Pay attention to your own reaction
  - What is surprising and new?
  - What did you already expect was the case?
  - Will explain why this is important after.
- Sex and Gender
  - Wide gap here
  - The 80-20 numbers are telling
  - Ties in with the next slide
- Orientation
  - Kind of heartening
  - Oft-quoted 10%
  - More even spread along kinsey scale
  - Tie in with last slide: large number of same-sex relationships due to the skewed gender numbers (i.e.: many who identify as bi wind up in same-sex relationships)
- The importance of sex
  - Perhaps a little surprising?
  - Explain numbers:
    - \* Blue: importance to respondent. Not terribly important
    - \* Green: perceived importance to rest of fandom. More important than self
    - \* Red: perceived importance to fandom by public. Big difference
  - What does this say?

- Are we really crazy sexual, or are we just defensive about sexuality?
- Age
  - Not too surprising that furry is young
  - Still a long tail
  - Does this also imply that there's a drop-out age?
- Population distribution - US
  - This is one way to correct for population density
  - California in the lead, not too surprising, maybe
  - Doing pretty well in Colorado!
- Doxa and Introspection
  - What is doxa?
  - What we accept as truth without needing proof, common belief and judgement
  - What is the doxa within the fandom?
  - Look at the data:
  - What is intuitive?
  - What is surprising?
- Letting go of doxa
  - Sometimes necessary to let go of an idea
  - Can be difficult to do, but necessary
  - For example, wanted to explore average charity donation per con attendee
  - Expected donation/attendee to increase as attendance increased due to social aspect of giving
  - Reality is more complicated (slide)
  - Total donations have increased, but donations aren't just from attendees (slide)
  - Have to let go of a concept in order to get down to the truth of things
- Where do we go from here?
  - This was part of our dialog
  - There's a lot of data (slide)
  - Needs to be sorted, stories need to be found (slide)

- What do we need to collect? (slide)
  - Where can studies be improved?
  - Where can we gain more information?
- (Open for questions)