

Questionable sexual representations in media culture are also of strong concern within the GLBT (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender) community. Despite some important advances in gay and lesbian visibility in media culture in recent years, representations of sexuality in mainstream pop culture continue to be, for the most part, rampantly heterosexual. Part of the reason for this is the continuing homophobia that producers assume continues to characterize the majority of media consumers in most targeted audiences. Although progress has been made by activists in raising awareness of new audiences for complex representations of nonnormative sexuality and gender, producers of mainstream media culture still shy away from representing sexual and gender minorities in richly textured ways. For example, gay men are still frequently stereotyped in television culture as feminine, as was the character of Jack on the popular show *Will & Grace* of a few years ago.

Jay Clarkson (V.37) studies "the politics of gay representation" through an examination of "the discourse of the discussion board of StraightActing.com, an Internet discussion board for self-identified straight-acting gay men." He argues that in their discussions about "the nature of their and other gay men's visibility . . . they demonize an effeminate gay stereotype, which they perceive as dominating media representations of gay men" (p. 336). Viewing "the flamer" and other gender transgressives as limiting the progress of full gay and lesbian integration into the society's mainstream, they "argue that increased visibility of straight-acting gay men has the potential to undo what they see as the negative consequences of the prevalence of effeminate gay stereotypes" (p. 340). But for Clarkson, such a conservative and defensive visibility strategy is wrongheaded and would only contribute to the narrowing of public understanding of the complexities of gender and sexuality. In his view, "It does not challenge the fear or hatred of gayness."

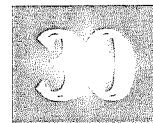
While their argument seems to be that their increased visibility will lead to greater acceptance of homosexuals, they fail to

acknowledge that the root of homophobia remains homosexuality. (p. 340)

In the case of lesbians, most media scholars and activists would acknowledge that *The L Word*, a drama series introduced in 2004 about a largely lesbian community in Los Angeles, has been groundbreaking. Marmie Pratt (V.38) argues that by making the majority of its main characters lesbians and by depicting their lives, relationships, and social and political issues as the focus of the show, *The L Word* sets itself apart from other shows that have lesbian characters. Moreover, according to Pratt, the show

deserves to be commended for a wealth of great features. For example, the characters are believable and complex and the series has dealt with a variety of tough topics in smart ways, such as coming out, child-bearing, abuse/exploitation of women, substance addiction, and gay marriage. The show has also been cutting edge in many of its depictions of sexual encounters. Sexual practices are discussed frankly and realistically through the depictions of both long-term committed and "one night stand" relationships. (p. 340)

But for all this, it has also been criticized by its fans for its lack of racial and ethnic diversity, for its use of actresses who conform completely to beauty standards from Hollywood, and for its overemphasis on "femmes" ("feminine"-appearing and -acting lesbians). Taking these criticisms seriously and acting accountable to the community of fans who offer them, the show's producer, Ilene Chaiken, moved after the first season to introduce new characters, new plots, and more gender diversity. While Pratt does not argue that all the representation issues in the show have been resolved through such changes, she sees *The L Word* as a hopeful example of collaboration between producers and loyal fans in generating a more responsible presentation of a community's sexual and gender diversity—something that could inspire future producers and fans concerned with other kinds of diversity as well.



The White Man's Burden

Gonzo Pornography and the Construction of Black Masculinity

Gail Dines

Recent articles in *Adult Video News* (AVN)¹ have called attention to the fact that the fastest growing and most bootlegged internet pornography is "interracial pornography" (IP). While web sites advertise a multicultural mix of males and females, by far the dominant performers are black men and white women. With titles such as *Black Poles in White Holes*, *Huge Black Cock on White Pussy*, and *Monster Black Penises* and *Tight White Holes*, the male viewer knows what to expect when he punches in his credit card numbers. Although there are sites that advertise Asian and Latina women, there are very few sites with Latino and Asian men and white women. Indeed, if the heterosexual male wants to gaze at Asian or Latino men, then he has to move into a truly forbidden world for straight pornography, namely gay pornography.

Analyzing the role of racial representations in pornography is, I argue, key to understanding how pornography works as a discourse, as it explicates taken-for-granted assumptions about what makes pornography pornographic. If, as radical feminists argue, pornography is pleasurable because it sexualizes inequality between women and men, then the more degraded and abused the woman, the greater the sexual tension and thrill for the male viewer. It is hard to conceive of a better way to degrade white women, in a culture with a long and ugly history of racism, than having them penetrated again and again by a body that has been constructed, coded, and demonized as a carrier for all that is sexually debased, namely the black male.

Pornography and Masculinity

In order to explore the way that race functions in pornography, it is important to first examine the contemporary world of internet pornography, since the explosion of electronic

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pornography has had enormous implications for content as well as form. Mainstream pornography today looks nothing like the scrubbed, sanitized world of *Playboy*. In place of the “girl next door,” smiling suggestively at the camera with her legs partially spread, is the girl that pornography consumers wish lived next door. Mainstream movies today are populated with what the male performers call “cum buckets,” “sluts,” and “cunts,” who love pounding anal, oral, and vaginal sex, who enjoy being smeared with semen, and who see their lives’ goals as breaking the record for the greatest number of “gang bangs” within a twenty-four-hour period. Threaded throughout all these movies is an overt hatred for women that is evidenced in the dialogue and the fascination with body-punishing sex, such as frequent references to how much the woman can take before she breaks. Paul Little, AKA Max Hardcore, became famous (and rich) for his particular style of pornography that specializes in extremely violent and degrading sex. . . .

This type of violent pornography popularized by Max Hardcore helped to define the contours of present-day gonzo pornography.² By far the biggest moneymaker for the industry, this type of pornography makes no attempt at a storyline, but is just scene after scene of violent penetration in which the woman’s body is literally stretched to its limit. . . . To argue that the pleasure of heterosexual pornography for men is not somehow wrapped up in the degradation of women is to ignore the multiple verbal and image-based cues that form the codes and conventions of mainstream pornography.³ Moreover, failure to see pornography as a text about the elevation of men and the degradation of women also misses the role that pornography plays in the production of masculinity as both a category of material existence, and an identity that is contested, negotiated, and in need of constant reproduction.⁴

It is now a given in much of academic feminism that masculinity and femininity are social constructs that work together to

produce a gender system that is fused with inequality, hierarchy and violence.⁵ Until recently, much of the analysis of masculinity sought to explain how hegemonic masculinity is defined in opposition to femininity, where hegemonic masculinity is unproblematically coded as white. However, as many black scholars have argued,⁶ white hegemonic masculinity is always in negotiation with black masculinity, as the two exist in what James Snead calls “a larger scheme of semiotic valuation,”⁷ in that the elevation and mythification of white masculinity relies on the debasement of black men as sexual savages, Uncle Toms, and half-wits such as Stepin Fetchit. Patricia Hill Collins goes further by arguing that black masculinity is so debased by white culture that it becomes a fluid category whereby any man of color can become marked as black should he in any way fail to conform to the strict disciplinary practices of white masculinity.⁸

However, what constitutes hegemonic white masculinity is itself a moving target that depends on the socioeconomic dynamics of a given time and place. In the United States, and indeed most of the Western world, there is a general consensus that a real man (read: white) works hard, puts food on the table and an SUV in the driveway, shows some interest in his children’s welfare, and exhibits a somewhat restrained set of sexual practices within state-sanctioned heterosexual marriage. On virtually every level, black men are defined by white culture as failing to meet the standards of white hegemonic masculinity. They are portrayed as shiftless, they need welfare to get food for their families, they drive pimp cars (when they can afford cars), and they engage in what Cornel West mockingly refers to as “dirty, disgusting, and funky sex.”⁹ And this is the problem for white men. While they would not swap their material privileges with black men, many white men would indeed like “black” sex as it is seen in the white racist imagination, as “more intriguing and interesting.”¹⁰ It is argued in this chapter that this white racist construction of black male sexuality is what drives IP and serves to heighten the sexual

tension in the pornography, while simultaneously making this country an increasingly hostile and dangerous place for people (especially blacks) who fall outside the markers of whiteness. . . .

According to AVN, IP is emerging as the biggest single growing category, with nearly one in four new films fitting into this subgenre.¹¹ A recent article quotes a producer, who says, “[r]ight now interracial gonzo is probably the strongest genre. . . . The demand for interracial far outweighs all the other formats of gonzo.”¹² While there are both black and white pornography producers and directors, the audience for IP is overwhelmingly white, according to the ongoing studies conducted by Dr. Robert Jensen.¹³ The obvious question here is: why do white men want to gaze at, and masturbate to, black penises penetrating white women’s vaginas, mouths, and anuses, given the historical coding of the black penis as defiler of white womanhood and emasculator of white masculinity?

Interracial Pornography: Looking for the Primitive (Black) Male

The most startling fact that jumps out at anyone who surfs these sites is the absence of men of color who are not black. A more precise term for interracial would be black men and white women, but in a society where the color line is defined by the binary black/white categorization, such precision would be redundant. This binary system has engaged many theorists who seek to interrogate how race has been constructed in American history against the backdrop of slavery. One insightful analysis is offered by James Snead, who writes, following W.E.B. Du Bois, that the “Negro” is “the metaphor . . . the major figure in which these power relationships of master/slave, civilized/primitive, enlightened/backward, good/evil, have been embodied in the American subconscious.”¹⁴ This does not mean that other

racism don’t exist in America, but that blacks are the “idealized” other, and different racial groups float between the two poles of the color line, depending on their economic, social, and cultural status.¹⁵ And since pornography is not a genre known for its subtlety, when it deals with race, it deals with the clear, uncomplicated racial categories that define American society, ideologically if not materially.

Since the race of the performers is the key to marketing IP, it is not surprising that the black male tends to be very dark-skinned and the white woman very blonde. While skin color can vary among blacks, blonde hair is a clear signifier of white womanhood. . . .

One of the most popular series of IP movies is called Blacks on Blondes, which features blonde women with multiple black men. As in most IP, the blonde performer is “applauded” for being able to take a black penis in her white mouth, vagina, and anus. In one particular movie with “Liv Wylder,” we see an example of a theme running through IP, namely the emasculation of the white man by the big black penis. The text on the site reads:

Bring out the cuckold mask again! Time for another white couple to live out their naughtiest fantasy, and thanks to Blacks on Blondes for making it happen! Liv and Hubby have been married for a few years, and she wears her ring proudly. But lately the spark has left the bedroom, if you know what I mean. A few e-mails later, and we’ve got Hubby in a cage while Boz and Mandingo work Liv over. And when I say they work her over, we mean it. She takes so much black dick it amazed even us. The best part of this whole deal was the end: after Liv has about a gallon of cum all over her face and clothes, and grabs a plastic bowl—for Hubby to beat off in. He does, and his wad was weak, and Liv lets him know that.¹⁶

The white man’s body is literally and metaphorically contained in this movie by

both his whiteness and the physical cage in which he is locked during the sex scenes. References to his poor performance in bed ("the spark has left the bedroom") and his ineffectual semen ("his wad was weak") stand in sharp contrast to the size of the black men's penises, the skill of their sexual performance ("they work her over, we mean it") and the amount of semen they produce ("a gallon of cum"). And to illustrate where the white woman's allegiance lies, the last line lets us know that Liv is only too happy to ridicule the husband in front of the black men. Indeed, in many such movies, regular reference is made to the white woman's distaste for white penises after she has sampled a "real man's" penis. It is thus apparent why one popular series of IP films is called *Once You Go Black . . . You Never Go Back*.¹⁷

In heterosexual non-interracial pornography, it is the woman's body that is scrutinized, talked about, focused on, and visually interrogated. In IP it is the black penis that becomes the star of the show. Indeed, on one site where users post their reviews of movies, there is a debate going on about the apparent authenticity of the black penis in the movie, *White Meat on Black Street*.¹⁸ Some of the viewers are clearly disturbed by what they see as the fake quality of the penis, while others express a desire to have such a penis. While the race of the user is not clear from the name (most use "anonymous"), the tone of the posts suggests white male readers. One particularly observant viewer, "ramjet" wrote on February 9, 2006:

If you want the best available proof of the fake penis being used, check out the 5th MPEG video in respect of Ruby at the 1:30 mark. The dick is a different color to its "owner" and, more importantly, YOU CAN SEE WHERE IT ENDS AND HIS REAL COCK FITS IN TO IT. The fake has fully come away from his body and his real balls have fallen out underneath. Case closed.¹⁹

This "heterosexual" viewer seems more entranced by the black penis than by the white woman's body: his sense of betrayal at having paid to see a real black penis, and instead getting what he sees as a fake one, is palpable. . . .

In addition to the text that foregrounds the black penis, there are secondary themes that suggest that it is not just any black man who can perform. The black men are often described as thugs, pimps, hustlers, Hip-Hoppers, mofos, and bros who live in the "hood" and drive "pimp-mobiles." The class markers here make apparent that it is working class black men who are sexual savages, and the most esteemed is the "black pimp," who keeps his girls in line and has taught them all they need to know about being a "ho." Pimp-themed movies abound in IP, where the black pimp is defined as the "king of the hood," who uses the particular skill that black men "innately" have, of combining sex and violence, to turn black "bitches" into "hos." . . .

The pimp, thug/hustler black man of the "hood" with the out-of-control body is not only a favorite of white straight men, but also seems to be a popular object of desire for gay white men. Titles such as *Blacks on White Boys*, *Ebony Dicks in White Ass Holes*, and *Black Bros and White Twinks* make clear who does what to whom in interracial gay porn. The "hood" once again figures largely on the websites where users are encouraged to become site members by clicking the mouse, which will let them "Join Our MemberHood."²⁰ It seems that white gay men can buy their way into the hood for a short, and contained, time.

In his analysis of the visual and verbal clues that inform the fetishized and commodified black males in IP gay porn, Dwight A. McBride suggests that such images "presume a viewer who is other to the experience of the man represented in the films."²¹ Moreover, the racial ideologies that make these images intelligible

and pleasurable are the very ideologies that underscore mainstream white racism. As McBride argues:

[H]ere in the form of typical images of black men in the mediated context of black gay porn, the viewer can enjoy fantasies about his sexual relationship to blackness, without having to account for the possibly troublesome dimensions of the brand of thinking about race that he must necessarily bring to these images for them to work their magic, so to speak.²²

These "troublesome dimensions" are what need to be explained, not only for gay IP but also straight IP, and indeed for many of the images that have circulated and continue to circulate in white-owned and white-consumed media. IP does not exist in a world of its own, but rather draws from, and contributes to, the hegemonic ideologies of race in America that have justified, legitimized, and condoned deeply-rooted systems of racial oppression. However, the way that IP articulates and rearticulates these ideologies is linked to the particular form of pleasure that it offers its readers, namely (white) masculinized sexual pleasure.

Interracial Pornography as the New Minstrel Show

The pleasure that white audiences receive from consuming images of blacks is complex and rooted in the politics of whiteness as an identity that affords status, privileges, and a sense of belonging to some mythical (glorified) racial group.²³ The above mentioned argument articulated by James Snead, that the debasement of blacks is linked to the elevation of whites, is not hard to grasp, given the vicious stereotypes of blacks as savages, Coons, half-wits, Mammies, and Jezebels. Whiteness, as an

identity, is a meaningless concept outside of the constructed notions of blackness that whites have produced and circulated in popular culture. Thus, in this wholly mythical world, to be white is to be the opposite of black: hardworking, law abiding, intellectual, rational, and sexually restrained and controlled. These are all traits that in the everyday world have very real currency, providing status to those who operate with a clear allegiance to the culture of whiteness.

However, the world of pornography is actually a parallel universe where, for at least the time it takes to get aroused and ejaculate, the currency is one that is in direct contradiction to whiteness. In this world, the traits of whiteness are indeed a burden for the white man, since restraint of any type threatens to undermine the full sexual pleasure that can be achieved with a bevy of "sluts," "whores," and "cum buckets," willing to do anything you want. In this world, the mythical black man, who is uncontrolled, unrestrained, animalistic, and savage, will always trump the uptight, contained, and penis-challenged white guy. Why, then, do white men who do not, in the real world, take kindly to seeing themselves as demasculinized by black men, buy IP?

To look for possible answers to this conundrum, I suggest we go back in time and examine another genre that poses similar questions for historians of race, namely, the blackface minstrel shows that swept through America in the 1830s and 1840s. Much has been written about the politics of these shows, the ways in which they encoded blackness, and the pleasures they afforded the white, mostly male, audiences through displays of white actors in blackface performing "blackness" by singing and dancing.²⁴ Gerald R. Butters suggests that once given the mask of blackness, white men could "sing, dance, speak, move, and act in ways that were considered inappropriate for white men."²⁵ While there is

general agreement that these shows were unapologetically racist, historians suggest that multiple and contradictory pleasures were afforded to the audiences, in that they identified both with and against the white performers in black face.

Part of the identification process was facilitated by the fact that these shows did not employ unrecognizable songs or melodies; instead, the musical style and structure borrowed heavily from European patterns. What was different, however, according to Deane Root, was the style of the performance of the songs, which was "much cruder. It was . . . foreign. Out of the culture. . . . They were trying to exaggerate and make [something] (sic) exotic."²⁶ In IP, the "songs or melodies"²⁷ are indeed similar to white-on-white porn, since the sex acts between black men and white women are the recognizable anal, vaginal, and oral penetrations. However, the style is, in a sense, exaggerated and cruder, in its focus on "big black dicks" pounding away at "small white orifices" that are stretched. . . to foreign proportions.²⁸ The aim here, however, is not so much to make the performance exotic as it is to make it erotic, since the sexual pleasure of IP is intensified by the increased sexual abuse of the woman, and the (partial) identification of the viewer with the hypersexual black male.

The fact that black men perform black pornography, rather than white men in blackface, speaks to the ways in which white ownership of media and pornography has defined, and continues to define, the contours of blacks playing blacks as *whites see them*. When black men were eventually allowed on to the stage in minstrel shows, they also had to cork their faces and behave as the whites did in black face.²⁹ The reason for this, argues Mel Watkins, is that whites assumed that the minstrel shows depicted something real and essential about blacks, because the shows "[w]ere advertised as the real thing. In fact, one group was called 'The Real

Nigs' . . . they were advertised as 'Come to the theatre and get a real look into what plantation life was like' . . . It was advertised as a peephole view of what black people were really like."³⁰

Rather than a peephole, IP porn is a peepshow for whites into what they see as the authentic black life, not on the plantation, but in the "hood," where all the conventions of white civilized society cease to exist. The "hood" in the white racist imagination is a place of pimps, ho's and generally uncontrolled black bodies, and the white viewer is invited, for a fee, to slum in this world of debauchery. In the "hood," the white man can dispense with his whiteness by identifying with the black man, and thus can become as sexually skilled and as sexually out-of-control as the black man. Here he does not have to worry about being big enough to satisfy the white woman (or man), nor does he have to concern himself with fears about poor performance or "weak wads," or cages, like poor hubby in Blacks on Blondes. Indeed, the "hood" represents liberation from the cage, and the payoff is a satiated white woman (or man) who has been completely and utterly feminized by being well and truly turned into a "fuckee."

But before we celebrate the IP text as subversive and liberatory, we need to put the text in the context of the material world of racist America. The body that is celebrated as uncontrolled in IP is the very same body that needs to be controlled and disciplined in the real world. Just as white suburban teenagers love to listen to hip-hop and white adult males gaze longingly at the athletic prowess of black men, the white pornography consumer enjoys his identification with (and against) black males through a safe peephole, in his own home, and in mediated form. The real, breathing, living black man, however, is to be kept as far away as possible from these living rooms, and every major institution in society marshals its forces in the defense of

white society. The ideologies that white men take to the pornography text to enhance their sexual pleasure are the very ideologies that they use to legitimize the control of black men: while it may heighten arousal for the white porn user, it makes life intolerable for the real body that is (mis)represented in all forms of white controlled media.

Notes

1. See, e.g., DRM Versus P2P: Point, Counterpoint (Tripp Darnels ed.), Adult Video News Mag., May 2003, http://www.avnonline.com/index.php?Primary_Navigation=Editorial&Action=Print_Article&Content_ID=105809 (last visited Apr. 10, 2006).

2. For a discussion of Max Hardcore's role in making pornography sexually violent, see Max Hardcore Porn Star, <http://maxhardcore.excaliburfilms.com/AVN/Max-Hardcore-Biography.htm> (last visited Apr. 16, 2006).

3. For a fuller discussion on the ways that the pornographic text constructs women as the degraded "other," see Robert Jensen, Cruel to be Hard: Men and Pornography, Sexual Assault Report 33 (2004), available at <http://uts.cc.utexas.edu/%7Erjensen/freelance/pornography&crucelty.htm>.

4. For an analysis of how pornography is implicated in the construction of hegemonic masculinity, see John Stoltenberg, *Refusing to Be a Man* (1989).

5. See, e.g., R. W. Connell, *Masculinities* (1995); Hazel Carby, *Race Men* (1998).

6. See, e.g., Dwight A. McBride, *Why I Hate Abercrombie and Fitch: Essays on Race and Sexuality in America* (2005); Mark Anthony Neal, *New Black Man* (2005).

7. James Snead, *White Screens/Black Images: Hollywood from the Dark Side* 4 (1994).

8. Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Sexual Politics* 186–87 (2004).

9. Cornel West, *Race Matters* 83 (1993).

10. *Ibid.*

11. Ethnic Diversity in Adult: Can't We All Just Fuck Along?, *Adult Video News Mag.*, May 2003, http://www.adultvideonews.com/cover/clover0905_01.html (last visited Apr. 18, 2006).

12. *Ibid.*

13. Telephone Interview with Dr. Robert Jensen, Professor of Journalism, University of Texas at Austin (Apr. 3, 2006).

14. Snead, *supra* note 7, at 2.

15. The study of how different racial and ethnic groups became "white" illustrates the fluid nature of "race" and identity in this country. For a particularly insightful analysis, see Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (1995).

16. BlacksonBlondes.com, <http://blacksonblondes.com/main.php?pg=6> (last visited Mar. 20, 2006).

17. For a description of the content of these movies, see searchextreme.com, *Once You Go Black . . . You Never Go Back*, http://www.searchextreme.com/series/Once_You_Go_Black...You_Never_Go_Back/97899206841 (last visited Mar. 20, 2006).

18. See Sir Rodney's Guide to Online Erotica, <http://www.sirrodneys.com/singlereview/White+Meat+On+Black+Street#readerreviews> (last visited Apr. 3, 2006).

19. Sir Rodney's Guide to Online Erotica, <http://www.sirrodneys.com/singlereview/White+Meat+On+Black+Street#readerreviews> (last visited Apr. 3, 2006).

20. Twinks from the Hood, <http://www.twinksfromthehood.com/?revid=14522&pid=51&track> (last visited Apr. 2, 2006).

21. McBride, *supra* note 6, at 103.

22. *Ibid.*

23. For a fuller discussion on how whiteness is socially constructed, see George Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics* (1998); Ignatiev, *supra* note 15; and David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness* (1991).

24. For a fuller discussion of the politics of black face, see Gerald R. Butters, Jr., *Black Manhood on the Silent Screen* (2002); Eric Lott, *Love and Theft: Black Face Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (1995); and Michael Rogin, *Blackface, White Noise: Jewish Immigrants in the Hollywood Melting Pot* (1998).

25. Butters, *supra* note 24, at 10.

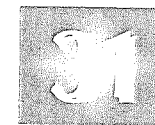
26. Excerpts from the PBS program, American Experience, Stephen Foster, http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/foster/sfeature/sf_minstrelsy_3.html (last visited Mar. 20, 2006).

27. For an analysis of how pornographic films can be likened to musicals, see Linda Williams, *Hard Core: Power, Pleasure and the 'Frenzy of the Visible'* 130–52 (1989).

28. See *infra* p. 284 and note 8.

29. This is not to argue that blacks simply mimicked the whites in black face as there were some real attempts by black actors to provide a more humanized, authentic version of black life. However, there were very real limits to this. Butters, *supra* note 24, at 11–12.

30. Excerpts from the PBS program, American Experience, Stephen Foster, http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/foster/sfeature/sf_minstrelsy_5.html (last visited Mar. 20, 2006).



No Money Shot?

Commerce, Pornography, and New Sex Taste Cultures

Feona Attwood

This chapter is concerned with new internet websites where sex is the focus of participatory cultures and where commerce and community are combined. . . . The chapter focuses on two sites—Nerve, a magazine launched in the late 1990s and dedicated to what it calls 'smart smut,' and SuicideGirls, an altporn' site created by duo 'Spooky' (Sean Suhl) and 'Missy Suicide' (Selena Mooney), in 2001. It investigates how these sites combine commerce and community, how they classify their modes of production and consumption as sexy and sophisticated, and how they may be understood in the broader context where the boundaries between sexual representation and self-presentation are increasingly blurred, and where commerce is increasingly part of the way identity and community are produced.

Participation and Consumption: New Sex Cultures Online

The notion of participatory culture is crucial in understanding the emergence of new kinds of cultural production and consumption at the beginning of the 21st century. Writers such as Henry Jenkins (2006) have documented a move towards an era of cultural convergence, in which commercial and amateur media production increasingly sit side by side, and in which people take hold of media technologies to construct communities in ways that have not been possible in the past. As Jenkins writes, 'Rather than talking about media producers and consumers as occupying separate roles, we might now see them as participants who interact with each other according to a new set of rules that none of us fully understands' (2006: 3). This is

From Attwood, F. (2007). No money shot? Commerce, pornography, and new sex taste cultures. *Sexualities*, 19(4), 441–456.