

Porn; fiction, fantasy, or a dream... perhaps a fabricated reality of response to trauma?

There is a distinct difference between the pornography written by the male and female authors; for instance in *Philosophy in The Bedroom*, De Sade, who later on contributed to the messy world is BDSM (Sado-Masochism) is heavily focused on the act of violence, which only indicated the use of sex as a means of power play and to domination — requiring discipline to perform acts for a partner during sexual intercourse, or to simply enjoy the acts of violence in the facade of ‘sex’ is quite vague. As told in class, this may have been a social rebellion, some kind of anarchistic evolutionary manifesto of some kind — however it has been occurred in my thoughts that perhaps the book being banned in its time had made it some sort of class only because of the regulations of freedom of writing/ speech, and therefore it has been made a ‘classic’. Not to mention, why it made an artist like myself so curious as to why De Sade would write a novel so full of kinetic violence and rage against sexual acts. In modern society, where psychology and science reexamines the individual's past and trauma to ‘analyze’ one's sexual preferences (also discussed in class), it may just have been a trauma response from his childhood. This is merely porn; if we were to compare the BDSM on Pornhub to real sex between two individuals, it would be deemed quite abusive or perhaps it's how desensitized modern couples derived in this act of violent sexual act; however if one engages and enjoys these sexual behaviors is it still considered immoral? In *Venus in Furs* the desire is quite the opposite; the male wants to be dominated, humiliated, and wants to worship his ‘lover’ (Quite funny how I thought the protagonist was lame during my reading of this book). I am convinced it all derives from a place of sexual frustration, repressed childhood sexual trauma, etc.. — As I'm not a psychologist nor a professional in the matter I cannot prove that my statements are absolutely

true. The truth is men write pornography with the absence of ‘love’ — sex is simply a series of acts that one must win or play in order to feel pleasure, immoral or moral. Perhaps the reason why the author of *Fanny Hill* disguised himself as a woman first publishing his book, was for it to be read by women — and the truth is women love to read porn as much as men did. Or did they? However I ask myself, why am I so drawn to De Sade and Sacher-Masoch’s more than others? Perhaps the fact that *Venus in Furs* was adapted into a film, and the idea of being worshipped as a woman seems not so bad; or it may seem like the only writing that is so brutally honest about the male psyche — how violent, lure, aggressive, dissociated from reality, immoral, and most of all profane. I would compare these writers to directors such as Gaspard Noe and Lasrs Von Trier (Also these are old ancient European texts... who takes them seriously?)

*Helen of Desire* describes the protagonist's journey through her travels around her country and her need for freedom through sexual revelation; as mentioned in class, writing porn for women is an act of rebellion for women who were —for a very long period of time— repressed by religious values of chastity and virginity. The desire to be ‘dirty’ or ‘promiscuous’ is conspicuous. Religion has always been merely a ‘tool’ for those in power to rule those in the bottom of the hierarchy, and in this patriarchal world, in the name of ‘sex’: *women*. If *Philosophy in The Bedroom* and *Venus in Furs* perpetuate only the ‘power structure’ of sex, using it as a weapon; *Helen of Desire* detains the social structure and values a woman must chastise in order to be ‘pure’ or ‘innocent’. There is a desire to be ‘read’, and this is a female desire — the desire to fuck, to be fucked, or more likely to be free from all the marginalized societal expectations of being a *women*; to find the self, release the self, lose the self and therefore being

free from the self (Ironically his is exactly what *Siddhartha* —a novel about the Buddha written by a German writer Herman Hesse— is all about). There is a desire to surrender to the Dionysian aspects of simply being a *human* rather than merely a *women*; when it comes to desire of the brain or the groins, isn't this what makes men and women equal? — the sexual desires?

There is a term in the modern youth 'written by a man' or 'written by a women'; meaning the 'femme fatale' or 'manic pixie dream girl' or the 'bombshell' commonly depicted in the screenings of Hollywood moving pictures. The stereotypes are too specific and the roles that women play in these screenplays only exist to serve the protagonist who is often an 'alpha male' or a 'broken hearted man'. As for characters written by a women, it's always love and love only. Of course in porn, love does not exist nor should it exists. The purpose of pornography is to arouse the viewer, not to engage in it nor imply it into real life; as it is a *fantasy* not a romance. What intrigues these writings are the 'language of sex'; as in *Fanny Hill* the texts are simply too straight forward regarding the sexual acts and the vocabulary describing the genitals are extremely humorous to modern viewers; it fails as porn for it did not around myself as a viewer (could this be considered a scam for the author was male and perhaps he thought the book would have more popularity amongst reader if it were told to be written by a woman). The 'machine' is too pathetic to be taken seriously, yet the 'fire burning inside' or words implying (an orgasmic) death ("I'm dying", "Oh you're killing me") makes the acts sound more convincing.

As technology advanced, the (visual) porn industry has expanded — there is porn about almost everything. The moral values of what keeps a human being virtuous is absent... is there a sense of liberation or shame when encountered into these categories of visuals of genitals being shoved into another? The truth is that because the works discussed in class are written, I must

admit the language is beautifully written — not for all of them but to intricately emphasize the movements of the body, describing it as a monumental explosion of some sort, inspires to write rather than to arouse. It may seem like a long text of just fucking but there have been definitive characters who seldom are able to express the internal provocations through the act, or some viewers can interpret it as. Visual pornography does the opposite; it's no question that the act of watching two (or many more) engage in a specifically choreographed, categorized content of sexual activities can surely desensitized the brain — even in modern visual pornography the 'films' made by men are inherently different from the ones made by women which are deemed as 'erotica'. There is somewhat of an intention to create a narrative or a shot to make it more 'beautiful' or 'alluring', and focused on the pleasure of the women instead of the act of degrading them. This, 'erotica' is 'happy pornography', written by women, seen by women, performed by women (willingly), shot by women. It is prevalent the porn industry is toxic yet I will not further discuss that in this paper because it is not a topic I want to pursue — the theme is to talk about sex, and how sex is taboo to some, and liberating to others.

My visual works are often 'psycho-sexual' not only because I talk about love and sex and pain and death — I have an obsession with filming food in an extremely sexual manner; let's call this 'food porn' (quite literally). The need to document everything I eat delves from my long suffering from various eating disorders, and relating it to a sexual anecdote is somehow extremely fulfilling to my artistic nature. The juxtaposition of the erotically filmed food and parts of the body reveals the nature of how I (to be frank the core 'subject' of my artistic practices), who has to be the one to 'sell' my psyche to make the viewers feel, conjured up the hidden *desires* I must have that I cannot speak about publicly. Isn't this what all artists strive for? Even

the authors of these ancient 'smut'? To be understood for their desires moral, or immoral, to find themselves through the journey of writing, filmmaking, painting, etc.,? In my most recent film, I have expressed the pain of being a female from childhood to womanhood as being regarded as 'meat' — and the word 'cunt' being used as a derogatory term. The use of graphic images of sewing up the vagina after birth was to indicate how I wanted to go back into the womb because of the pain I had to endure just because I felt I had no other qualities to prove other than being an 'Asian female artist' —in which the Art world forces artists like myself to talk about politics rather than my actual repercussions of being tormented by a very specific religious G/god. Because I've used archival BDSM porn from the 70s does that make my film... pornographic? Or is it merely a metaphor for how I feel punished everyday by judgement made by people (or g/God) who is probably a male and must marginalize me in the 'perfect' innocent girl category? Isn't there a 'virgin' section in Pornhub or xHamster?

Film is a dream, but pornography is a fantasy.