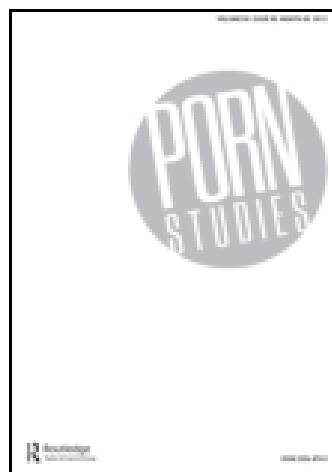




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Opening Pandora's Box: pleasure, consent and consequence in the production and circulation of celebrity sex videos

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Opening Pandora's Box: pleasure, consent and consequence in the production and circulation of celebrity sex videos

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The celebrity sex video is now a well-established part of contemporary audiovisual culture, although it attracts little attention as a phenomenon in itself. Any attention is primarily generated by the profile of the individuals involved, in terms of their relative degrees of celebrity and previously established public persona. Despite the increasing ubiquity of the phenomenon, issues concerning the production and dissemination of these videos are more complex than may first appear. Indeed, celebrity sex video production and distribution constitutes a contemporary media practice with distinct ethical and legal implications. This article provides an analysis of celebrity sex video production as a subset of personal sexual representation and attempts to characterize some of the ethical issues involved. A range of examples is used to illustrate the intertextual and broader contextual issues arising from the material's production and circulation.

Keywords: celebrity sex videos; consent; ethics; personal sex videos

Introduction – intimate pornography and intrusive representation

Jake Kasdan's film *Sex Tape*, released in 2014, features Cameron Diaz and Jason Segal as a middle-aged, married couple who video-record their amorous interactions as a way of enlivening their flagging sex life (Kasdan 2014). The film's comedy derives from Segal's character inadvertently uploading the tape to the cloud, instead of erasing it. As the characters discover, once their material is 'out there', it follows vectors that are highly difficult to impede. The topic is fitting for a Hollywood film given the number of movie stars who have been caught up in such video 'scandals', including an early 'pioneer', Rob Lowe, who plays a supporting role in the film (see discussion in Exposé/extortion section). While the comedy primarily relies on its characters' increasing desperation, it also raises broader issues concerning the production of personal sex videos and the danger of their subsequently being posted on the internet and/or being distributed on DVD without the participants' permission. In this manner, Kasdan's film reflects three strands of sexually explicit audiovisual representation over the last three decades:

- (1) personal sex video production (as an intimate practice not intended for broader circulation);

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- (2) amateur porn production (material produced for circulation either for limited exchange with other amateur producers and/or for broader circulation); and
- (3) mainstream porn production.

Each of these distinct categories merits comment to provide the context for the specific productions we refer to in later sections.

At its simplest, the production of audiovisual representations of individuals involved in sexual interaction (most frequently, but not necessarily, couples) by one or other of those individuals involved, for their own consumption, may be considered as a particular form of intimate pornography, purposed to provide pleasure supplementary to the live experience of the sexual acts recorded. Comprehensive surveys of producers have yet to be undertaken, but discussion on blogs and online forums (see, for instance, Odon [n.d.](#); Berman [2010](#)) – including those offering tips to optimize production and performance practices (see, for instance, SexInfo101 [2011](#)) – suggests that the full knowledge and consent of the parties involved are key to the appeal of these productions. If the video has been made with the full knowledge and consent of parties involved (and when they have been in sufficient states of sobriety and/or alertness to the implications of being filmed), enhanced sexual pleasure may be generated through the awareness of being filmed and/or consciously performing for the camera and its integrated microphone. While these two aspects of pleasure are obviously generated by the knowledge that a recording is being produced, they are performance experiences that precede – and actually do not require – the parties' subsequent watching of the tape, although the aforementioned internet sources clearly indicate this is the ostensible rationale for the video's production. These aspects are most emphasized when the production of audiovisual representations of sexual congress is a relatively unusual aspect of the parties' sex lives. If video-making becomes a routine activity that results in a mass of audiovisual recordings, subsequent playback can be both a less immediate activity and/or can result in the recordings being made effectively as an archival practice. More problematically, in terms of consent, there may be pleasure generated by the subsequent revelation to one of the partners involved that a sex act they participated in was filmed without their knowledge and/or that others subsequently experienced pleasure from watching that representation.

Risk may also be a significant element of the pleasure involved in participation in recorded sexual performance, particularly if fantasized as somehow 'consequence-free'. There are pleasures to be anticipated and experienced in being discovered, in being watched and/or in being identified as the participant in represented sexual congress. The pleasure in the risk is of 'flirting with danger'. If the representation has been informed and consensual, it might be seen by the parties involved as a manifestation of their *amour fou*, a passionate interaction whose intensity transgresses boundaries of usual social interaction. There is a thin line between the thrill of being open to being discovered and the consequences of actually being discovered.

There are therefore significant differences in terms of intent between making personal sex videos and the production of what is usually referred to as 'amateur porn'. Amateur practices developed in the 1980s as a form of 'home movies' intended for viewing by individuals other than those participating on screen. Particularly in its early phases, amateur material featured individuals with a wide range of body types, including those rarely represented in mainstream porn, thereby

embodying aesthetic points of difference from mainstream productions. As Patterson has identified, a ‘central frisson’ of amateur porn is its ‘articulation of a certain proximity to the life of the spectator’ (2004, 111) making the material more ‘real’.

Early amateur porn was distributed in various ways, via audiovisual tape or file exchange, dedicated amateur porn sites or porn industry sites. While there are similarities between personal sex video production and amateur porn in terms of production practices – such as static camera setups, minimal editing of material, and basic lighting arrangements, amateur porn production has increasingly come to encompass a variety of styles. Material ranges from representations of essentially unspectacular ‘everyday’ sexual activities by individuals with ‘ordinary’ body types to the interactions of individuals whose bodies and/or performance appear to imitate those of mainstream porn, particularly in terms of dialogue and vocal exhortation. The latter point to the interface between amateur and industrial porn and mainstream porn’s increasing assimilation of early amateur practices in the 1990s and 2000s. Indeed, as Patterson identified in the early-mid 2000s, ‘the bulk of so-called amateur porn, at least on corporatized web sites’ is ‘professionally produced’ using the ‘visual language and textual cues’ of amateur porn established in the 1980s and 1990s (2004, 110). Writing later in the decade, Hardy contended that the assimilation of an amateur porn aesthetic by the industry was introducing a new ‘era of reality porn’, the latest stage in the porn industry’s ‘attempt to make its representations seem as authentic as possible’ (2008, 60). Hardy’s reference to ‘reality porn’ echoes the millennial phenomenon of ‘reality TV’ and its highly organized and staged formats and scenarios for ‘real’ interactions between individuals, which also attempted to make their ‘representations ... *seem* as authentic as possible’ (2008, 60; emphasis added; see also Paasonen 2010).

There are clear and obvious differences between knowing that you are being filmed in sexual congress and being filmed without your knowledge. Non-consensual representation is an intrusive practice violating personal privacy in an often injurious manner. A well-documented example of this occurred in April 2011 at the prestigious Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) in Canberra. Cadet Daniel McDonald used a webcam in his room to film his sexual interaction with a female cadet without her knowledge. A second cadet, Donald Deblaquiere, live-streamed the encounter to other male cadets assembled in an adjacent room to watch. Subsequently, ‘Kate’ (as she was referred to in the media) became aware of the incident and reported it to the Australian Channel Ten television network – she anticipated that any internal ADFA complaint would lead to a quiet cover-up with little impact on the male cadets concerned. After two years and six internal inquiries, ‘Kate’ sued the Defence Force and recorded a media interview for Australian Broadcasting Corporation TV’s *7.30 Report* (ABC 2013) detailing how being constantly referred to and perceived as ‘that Skype slut’ by other cadets had impacted on her sense of self-worth and left her unable to pursue her planned career. McDonald and Deblaquiere were found guilty of sending offensive material over the internet without consent, and the sentencing judge commented that ‘Kate’ had been subject to a ‘Serious violation of the victim’s right to privacy that had exposed her to humiliation and ridicule’ (ABC 2013), but the offenders’ punishment was essentially minor, in the form of being put on good behaviour bonds. ‘Kate’ suggested this effectively constituted a deterrent to similar victims of sexual misrepresentation (ABC 2013).¹

The events at ADFA have made 'Kate' a media personality of a kind, whose acknowledged lack of consent has sustained her status as victim; for those identifiable individuals who have consented to their being filmed in *flagrante delicto*, victim status is not so readily available. Even so, it is clear that there are also distinct ethical ambiguities and the potential for violation of personal rights where consent for recording was given. Consent issues in participating in audiovisual representation of sexual acts are complex. There is, for example, no evidence that either written prior consent and/or any formal agreements on subsequent use or storage of the audiovisual material is common in consensual participation in intimate sex video production; nor even that this is vocally expressed on tape (and thereby documented) at the beginning (or during any stage) of a filmed interaction. As we go on to demonstrate, these issues become particularly important when relationships between participants change.

Having outlined the broad issues involved in personal sex video production and its relation to mainstream industrial porn production and distribution, this article characterizes and analyzes the production, circulation, consumption and critical reception of celebrity sex videos as a subset of personal sex videos and as a distinct practice. In particular, it considers issues of pleasure, consent and consequence involved in access to and exploitation of celebrity sex videos, and of various participants' engagement with the porn industry for personal and/or professional advantage. These issues are explored through a historically schematized characterization of the emergence of six trends in celebrity sex videos identified by research into the history of the practice²: *exposé*/extortion attempts; revenge porn; single participant exploitation; negotiated release; self-exposure; and celebrity lookalike videos. The article's conclusion draws on discussion of these trends to characterize the key attributes of the practice.

Celebrity productions

Exposé/extortion

While sexually explicit films featuring actors and other public personalities have been made for at least a century, with actors such as Marilyn Monroe appearing in short 'stag films' early in her career,³ the phenomenon of self-recorded sexually explicit audiovisual material featuring known media personalities is largely a product of the availability and relative ease of use of videocassette cameras and digital video technology from the mid-1980s onwards. The nature and extent of sex video activity in the early period is difficult to gauge since little of this material was made available to a broader public. When examples did surface, they were the cause of notoriety and opprobrium. The highest profile early example of this occurred in 1989 when Rob Lowe, a young actor with an alcohol problem, was identified as the man participating in sexual activity with two young women, one of who was later revealed to be only 16 years of age. The women appear to have consented to the sexual activity and its filming but took the videocassette with them when they left the hotel room in which it was shot. They subsequently made duplicates, one of which was discovered by the 16 year old's mother, who threatened Lowe with legal action unless she received a financial settlement, a move that Lowe interpreted and later reported as an attempt at extortion (Associated Press 1989). The girl's mother, Lena Parsons, followed up with a personal injury suit against Lowe, alleging that he had 'used his celebrity status as an inducement to get females to engage in sexual

intercourse, sodomy, and multiple party sexual activity for his immediate sexual gratification, and for the purpose of making pornographic films of these activities' (Dougherty 1989). While prosecution did not follow and details of what, if any, private settlement may have been made are unclear, adverse coverage of the incident, together with subsequent allegations of sexual impropriety made against Lowe, substantially impeded his career progress – and the rehabilitation of his career only came in the early 2000s, after celebrity sex video 'scandals' became more commonplace. The impacts of the incident and attendant publicity on the young women concerned are not known.

Revenge porn

Revenge porn has been characterized as the circulation of intimate photographic and/or video material that shows a recognizable individual in sexually explicit situations in order to cause humiliation to that individual (see Citron and Franks 2014). The revenge aspect is usually – although not exclusively – a form of riposte to a partner who is perceived to have precipitated the break-up of a relationship. Women are, overwhelmingly, the subjects of revenge porn since, as Salter identifies;

Female social status has historically been closely tied to chastity and modesty and women are particularly vulnerable to humiliation when their 'private' sexual life is made 'public' ... In revenge porn male offenders seek to instrumentalise double standards in sexual mores (2013, 1)

In historical terms, one of the earliest incidences of a celebrity revenge porn video release attracting attention was that involving Mimi Macpherson, sister of the Australian model and actor Elle Macpherson. In 1997 a video was circulated in Australia that showed Mimi Macpherson posing for the camera, stimulating herself and having intercourse with her (then) boyfriend Michael Hellwig. At the time that copies of the videos began to be distributed, Macpherson was an award-winning operator of whale-watching cruises around Hervey Bay in Queensland, was establishing a reputation as a motivational speaker, and had no advantage to being exposed in such a manner. The circulation of the tape was widely interpreted as an act of revenge by Hellwig after splitting from Macpherson. As journalist Miranda Devine subsequently characterized it:

At the time, it was great sport in the city for stockbrokers, investment bankers, and journalists to share their copies and watch it in groups. It was a gross assault on her dignity, an invasion of her privacy and tantamount to a psychological gang rape. It shamed everyone who participated. But people then had to physically possess the VHS tape or know someone who had it. It was before YouTube and the social networking revolution that allows people's reputations to be shredded in a nano-second. (Devine 2010)

Devine emphasizes the ethical dimension of spectatorship and of the unauthorized copying (bootlegging) of the video. Were the video copyists aware of copyright issues and, if so, of the implications of violating these? Was the initial wave of video watchers interested in the issue of whether Mimi Macpherson had consented to the circulation of explicitly sexual footage of her? In the absence of research, we can only

hypothesize. But if they had any uncertainty over her consent to the video's public circulation, it might be asserted that their behaviour was similar to that of the ADFA cadets who watched streamed footage of Kate's interaction with her sexual partner in Canberra in 2011.

As Devine identifies, the circulation of the Macpherson video was initially limited, but the footage has acquired renewed prominence via the internet, compounding the initial exposure and raising questions about the ethics of those viewers who have subsequently chosen to watch it. The popularity of the videocassette copies in Australia and subsequent online postings of the material merits comment since it appears to derive from neither the relatively conventional nature of sex acts represented on camera nor the technical and/or aesthetic accomplishment of the production. Rather, it is Mimi Macpherson's status as sister of Elle that constitutes its prime appeal – the XNXX.com site, for instance, spruiks the video in the following terms: 'Mimi MacPherson is supermodel Elle MacPherson's little sister, so you know she's beautiful'. In this regard, Macpherson's textual presence and appeal as a represented sex object can be seen to derive from her sister's own prominence as a represented sexual body (the latter's media nickname actually being 'The Body'). More specifically, Mimi Macpherson's sexual performance for her lover's camera in the original video can be seen to deliver a fully sexual representation that her sister has not provided for her public to date. In this manner, Mimi's representation can be seen to be interlinked to Elle's most overtly sexual onscreen performance (made shortly before her sister's intimate video) as an artist's model in John Duigan's (1994) *Sirens*, a fictionalized biopic of Norman Lindsay, the painter whose nudes scandalized and titillated Australian society in the early 1900s (see Butkus and Hayward 1998). The film shows Elle as model 'Sheila' – naked and apparently revelling in the gaze of onlookers, enjoying gazing at others and willing to explore sexual relations outside the studio space. The nude scenes from the film represented an intensification of Elle's sexualized image and charisma that she has subsequently pulled back from as her career has become established, leaving her sister's public exposure as the nearest point of access to such a representation.

Single participant exploitation

One of the most prominent cases of a participant in a sexually explicit video experiencing high-profile media coverage (and, indeed, enhanced celebrity) from a video released on the internet without their knowledge or consent concerned that of socialite heiress Paris Hilton having sex with her then boyfriend Ricky Salomon. The video material was shot at various times in 2001 and sequences were made available online in 2003. From the earliest stages of its public availability, the video sequences were accompanied by claim, counter-claim, legal action and media publicity (see Siprut 2005), generating further interest in viewing the material. Salomon claimed that the video footage had been released online without his consent and filed lawsuits against Kahatani Ltd, the company behind the online access, and against the Hilton family for alleging wrongdoing on his part. In turn, Paris Hilton also sued Kahatani Ltd for violation of privacy, illegal business practices and causing distress. Seeking actual and punitive damages, Hilton's legal suit stated that the video sequences had been shot for solely personal purposes; she eventually dropped proceedings for a

lesser amount than originally sought in the suit and a percentage of future royalties (Siprut 2005).

While this blizzard of legal action was in progress, Salomon made a deal with Red Light District Video to distribute the footage under the title *I Night in Paris* (Salomon 2004). At this point, the Hiltons decided to acknowledge the inevitability of the material's presence in the public domain and agreed to a deal with Red Light that netted them \$400,000 and a proportion of future profits. When Hilton gained media exposure and high ratings with her reality TV show *The Simple Life*, which debuted in late 2003 (*The Simple Life* 2003–2005, 2006–2007), she sought to distance herself from the porn video, claiming to have been under the influence of unspecified mood-altering substances at the time of the video's production (and thereby unable to provide sufficiently informed consent to its filming) and not to have subsequently approved its release. Salomon sued Hilton again and Hilton counter-sued, with the dispute being settled out of court. As some indication of the tape's popularity, the 2005 Adult Video Network Awards placed *I Night in Paris* top in the best-selling, best-renting and best overall marketing campaign categories.

Given the video's wide distribution and publicity, there have been many interpretations of its significance. Paris Hilton's responses have been couched in terms of her being 'betrayed' by Salomon and being 'heartbroken' and 'embarrassed' that a former lover could behave in this manner⁴ (Morgan 2010). The chief focus of her grievance was her former lover distributing a tape she believed was made for the couple's private consumption. Indeed, this aspect is crucial to the material's appeal and to ethical issues regarding viewers' readiness to watch such a representation. Like the Mimi Macpherson video material, and its links to sister Elle's persona and appearances in films such as *Sirens*, various commentators have sought to place *I Night in Paris* in an expanded intertextual context that attempts to undermine any proposition that Hilton's right to privacy had been violated. Thomas Fahy, for instance, has located the video within public rather than private trajectories, linking it to Hilton's previous appearance in sexually suggestive magazine photo-shoots and suggesting that its 'leaking' on the internet and video sales and rentals were a cross-over between two spheres. Fahy also ascribed the video's prominence to its promise of 'an erosion of the economic boundaries that typically separate the upper class from the rest of society' (2007, 78), allowing the economically disadvantaged to partake of erotic pleasure in consuming the bodies of the affluent. As he argues:

Paris Hilton – at her most glamorous, most erotic, and most embarrassed – provides her audience ... with an outlet for their fantasies and frustrations. Her eroticized body promises intimate access to the world of celebrity and upper-class privilege. (Fahy 2007, 79)

While Hilton's status as a rich heiress prior to her media celebrity makes her the epitome of the tendency Fahy identifies, this aspect of access to the eroticized is also significant for the other videos discussed in this article; giving viewers apparently unmediated access to the 'real' celebrities who are understood to be unaware of and/or complicit in the material's release to a broader audience. Subsequent categories of 'celebrity productions' have adopted this generic conceit, enabling participants to transition from being subjects and/or victims to agents and beneficiaries.

Negotiated release

The contemporary form of celebrity sex video promoted and accessed online began in the mid to late 1990s, exemplified by an early example – and still one of the best known – of the genre produced by and representing Canadian actor and model Pamela Anderson and her then husband, Tommy Lee (drummer with US rock band Mötley Crüe). As the following account details, while the video and its subsequent notoriety may be regarded as a case where a video produced for private purposes goes public, its production and the profile of its performers tie it more clearly into an intertextual pattern and context where it functions as a career move.

Cronin (2010) unpicks the complexities of the story: Anderson's fledgling career as an actor/model famously gained traction when she was featured on video screens during a Canadian Football League game in Vancouver in 1989. During an interval in play, large video screens showed images of Anderson amongst spectators wearing a tight T-shirt emblazoned with Labatt's beer logo. The crowds' responses were enthusiastic and audiences reportedly made telephone calls to Labatts demanding information and more images of her. Shortly afterwards, in 1990, Anderson got her first big break as *Playboy's* February Playmate of the Month. The type of video attention accorded to Anderson at the BC Lions game is routine at sporting occasions so it may be inferred that consent for such filming is given by dint of attendance. That assumption does not so readily translate to the subsequent circulation of such images via YouTube and related services. Whatever her degree of complicity in her representation at the BC Lions game, her career accelerated after the incident (and breast augmentation surgery), landing her a role in the glamorous television drama *Baywatch* between 1992–1997 (*Baywatch* 1989–1990, 1990–1999). In 1995 she met and married Lee and the couple filmed a number of video sequences of themselves having sex. Copies were apparently stolen from their residence and posted online by the Internet Entertainment Group, the pioneering company in pay-for-view online pornography established by Seth Warshavsky in 1995. Anderson and Lee took legal action to stop the Internet Entertainment Group but subsequently dropped their suit after signing a confidential agreement allowing the Internet Entertainment Group to maintain the material online and charge for access to it. Their actions sparked discussion as to whether the reported theft was real and/or whether the decision to settle and enable access was a calculated and hypocritical act by a couple who had previously claimed violation of privacy (see Peline 1997) and for a female star who – like Hilton before her – had previously consented to appearing in sexualized contexts⁵ (see Hillyer 2004).

Self-exposure

If the Anderson/Lee video can be regarded as an example of negotiated release, awareness of the media traction that could be generated through appearances in celebrity sex videos and related publicity led some individuals and couples to plan the production and dissemination of sex videos that were then 'leaked' to the media without their consent as career promotional strategies. A notable example is the 2004 video of World Wrestling Federation circuit wrestlers Joanie Laurie (working under the professional name of 'Chyna') and Sean Waltman (known as 'Syxx' in the early 2000s). Inspired by the success of Salomon and Hilton's video, the wrestlers shot a film during a tour of China, which was edited and released as *1 Night in China* by

Red Light (Laurie 2004), the company responsible for Hilton's release. Unlike Hilton and Salomon's tape, the participants, and particularly, it appears, Laurie, produced the material specifically for release, rather than primarily as an intimate production. The tape achieved considerable publicity, particularly amongst World Wrestling Federation aficionados, providing fans with access to another aspect of the physical performance of two of the circuit's leading performers and providing Red Light with another significant earner. As a result of the media attention accorded to the duo, they managed to break out of their World Wrestling Federation roles and appear in the successful VH1 reality show *The Surreal Life* in 2006 (*The Surreal Life* 2003–2004, 2004–2006), shortly after their video won best selling release in the 2006 Adult Video Network Awards.

Since the mid to early 2000s, celebrity sex video productions have become commonplace, particularly in the United States, leading to the Adult Video Network Awards establishing a 'Best Celebrity Sex Video' category in recognition of the genre's high sales. The 2012 award winner illustrates the scope of celebrities cashing in on the practice, starring Nadya Suleman, who rose to media prominence in the United States by virtue of giving birth to octuplets in 2009. The production, entitled *Octomom Home Alone*, features extended sequences of Suleman masturbating (Armstrong 2012). At a time when her initial media exposure and earnings opportunities based on prodigious maternal accomplishment and subsequent child-raising pressures had subsided, this public image make-over provided leverage for Suleman to commence work as an erotic stage performer, to record a rock single ('Sexy Party', with Adam Barta in 2013), and to appear on various television and radio programmes.

Celebrity lookalike videos

The ubiquity of the celebrity sex video genre in contemporary media culture is evident from the wide range of spoofs available online.⁶ These vary from ingenious engagements by the advertising industry and aired on general broadcast or internet channels⁷ through to more explicit celebrity parodies that require more restricted distribution. A key element in the latter is their degree of plausibility, usually based on an actor's facial and, to a lesser extent, bodily similarity to a recognizable (usually female) celebrity. These parody videos are produced for a variety of purposes, but all play on the element identified earlier by Fahy; that of the celebrity's eroticized bodies offering points of 'intimate access to the world of celebrity and upper-class privilege' (2007, 79). As none of the actual celebrities appear in such videos, issues of consent are not relevant, but these representations do raise ethical issues akin to those pertaining to revenge porn. The nature of 'revenge' here is not so much in terms of showing actual images of a celebrity designed to humiliate, shame and degrade specific celebrities, but rather of impersonations designed for similar purposes; that is, to enact various forms of retribution on women who have achieved media prominence and/or various positions of affluence or power by representing them in an unambiguously sexual manner.

One particular strand of spoof celebrity video production involves the use of 'lookalike' porn stars (usually females), a practice well established in the porn industry (and widely documented online⁸). While lookalikes' appearances in various porn films are premised on their resemblance to stars, confusion can occur. One such

example is the video trailer for a Miley Cyrus lookalike (named Miley May) promoting a film entitled *Molly's Wrecking Ballz* (Blade 2014) that includes sexually explicit parodies of Cyrus's music videos together with a pseudo celebrity sex video sequence in a limousine with a man verbally identified as 'Justin' (as in music producer/performer Justin Timberlake). Internet and Twitter postings reveal that some viewers initially interpreted the footage as an authentic Miley Cyrus product.⁹ Cyrus's previous media activity can be seen to have served as pretext for the spoof footage. More specifically, the widely distributed material can be interpreted as an act of media 'revenge' on a star who has been pilloried for shedding a 'clean' youthful star persona in favour of a more sexually explicit one through activities such as twerking with Robin Thicke at the 2013 MTV Awards and the video for her song 'Wrecking Ball' (Richardson 2013). Miley May's performance offers viewers an approximation of Cyrus's body and bodily actions in a manner that appears to extend the actual star's previous sexualized performances. If Cyrus's audiovisual performances in 2013–2014 can be understood to be those of a young woman consciously choosing to represent herself in a highly sexualized manner, the parody material is obviously out of her control and beyond the horizon of consent.

If such instances as the Cyrus parody and the Hilton material are premised on the stars' own prior complicity in sexualized representations, other spoof celebrity sex videos do not require such a pretext. One of the more notable examples of the latter was a video purporting to show (then) US Republican vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin having sex with her husband, Todd, that received over 3.5 million views on one site alone.¹⁰ The video, featuring Todd in costumed role-play (as a 'naughty' polar bear) and Sarah taking a mobile phone call from Republican presidential candidate John McCain during the couple's interaction, was clearly not intended to be perceived as anything but a parody; however, it raises similar issues to those around authentic celebrity sex videos. The widely-viewed video can be regarded as part of a widespread media campaign (led by Tina Fey's impersonations on *Saturday Night Live* 1975–present). Indeed it is possible to interpret the material as a serious violation of the couple's right to privacy. Politicians such as Palin (and other celebrity individuals) have rights that may be undermined by celebrity porn video practices, spoof or otherwise. The nature of the phenomenon suggests that Salter's characterization of revenge porn against specific (female) individuals by former lovers as representing 'ongoing efforts to use sexual violence to contest women's parity of participation in the public sphere' (2013, 1) is equally applicable to the more general (mis)representation of women in spoof celebrity sex videos.

Conclusion – parameters and implications

This article has attempted to indicate and analyze the complexity of issues concerning pleasure, consent and consequence in the production, circulation, consumption and critical reception of celebrity sex videos. The celebrity sex tape is both 'intimate pornography' and a burgeoning commercial genre in its own right. The discussion of six trends highlighted particular aspects of celebrity sex video presence within the public sphere, including ethical dimensions, and attempted to track some of the consequences of opening the 'Pandora's Box' of overt self-representation of sexual congress. In particular, our discussion raises issues in contemporary audiovisual culture that exist largely outside regulatory frameworks,

censorship regimes and/or any internal ethical self-monitoring by media agencies. The circulation of celebrity sex videos represents a public manifestation of the private spaces of personal intimacy facilitated by the subjects' complicity in the audiovisual representation of their interaction and by the lack of easily enforceable regulation of the internet as a distribution medium. In media (and marketing) studies terms, rather than the porn industry having a parasitic/exploitative relation to mainstream media industries, a far more synergetic – if somewhat contested – relationship is apparent that further blurs the lines of demarcation between them. Indeed, the case studies provided in this article document a particular intensification of the commonplace eroticization of celebrity bodies that parallels mainstream audiovisual media's increasingly explicit representation of erotic interactions in fictional contexts. In this manner, celebrity sex videos are more closely integrated with the general field of audiovisual media production than might first appear.

Notes

1. Subsequent to 'Kate's' experience, a further group of ADFA personnel, including officers, who operated under the name of 'The Jedi Council' (in reference to the film *Star Wars*) were also subject to disciplinary action after having been found guilty of disseminating similar material via email. In reaction to this continuing activity, Lieutenant General David Morrison (2013), Chief of the Australian Army, posted a strongly phrased statement on YouTube condemning such practices and urging enlisted members of the military who condoned such practices to leave the force (and receiving over 1.5 million hits as a result).
2. Particularly in the case of videos that may have been the subject of extortion attempts in which the tapes were not subsequently distributed on video and/or posted online.
3. Monroe appeared in several films in late 1946/early 1947 that later resurfaced in the early 1980s.
4. She has also commented that Salomon should give his profits 'to some charity for the sexually abused or something' (Morgan 2010).
5. Such as appearing as a prostitute in Ken Russell's (1984) sexually explicit film *Crimes of Passion*.
6. See, for instance, '7 Best Sex Tape Parodies.' Accessed May 1, 2014. <http://www.craveonline.com.au/lifestyle/articles/177329-7-best-sex-tape-parodies>
7. See, for instance, the humorous promotional video for the Smartwater brand that was released online with the title 'Jennifer Aniston SEX Tape' in a specific attempt to go viral, despite the fact that it did not feature Aniston in any sexual scenarios. Accessed May 1, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ByFxn98wkVQ>
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