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Giffing a fuck: non-narrative pleasures in participatory porn cultures and female fandom

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Pornography has long been associated with the development of leading-edge technologies and new media forms, so it should be of little surprise that adult entertainment now circulates online in the form of moving-image GIFs – the 256-colour compressed image files ubiquitous within digital culture. Several critics and cultural commentators have picked up on the rise of this so-called ‘microporn’, linking sexually explicit GIFs with supposedly diminished attention spans in the internet age. These discussions emerging around microporn can be somewhat problematic in that they risk replicating and intensifying many of our culture’s uncritical assumptions about porn’s consumers – that their engagement with the image is passive, thoughtless, and wholly receptive. In this article we argue that microporn is in fact a key indicator of the centrality of participatory practices to twenty-first-century female porn fandom. We undertake an analysis of audience engagement with microporn to ask: what are GIFs and how do they function within the realm of porn and microporn? What are their distinctive pleasures? In what ways do GIFs augment or displace long-form hardcore? In what ways might this emergence challenge conventional scholarly theorizing of the role of narrative within the genre and what might it tell us about female fan culture and pleasure? Existing understandings of the porn consumer, we suggest, are complicated by the proliferation of pornographic GIFs, and new understandings of consumption and pleasure practices can emerge through a consideration of microporn fan cultures.

Keywords: GIFs; microporn; prosumer; narrative; fan pleasure; audiences

Introduction

Pornography has long been associated with the development of leading-edge technologies and new media forms, so it should be of little surprise that adult entertainment now circulates online in the form of moving-image GIFs – the 256-colour compressed image files ubiquitous within digital culture – and GFYs, which can be broadly understood as next-generation GIFs using HTML5 technology. These materials typically take the form of a ‘captured moment on a 4–6 second loop, devoid of sound, easily annotated and usually ripped’ from an existing source (May 2014), and lend themselves to easy sharing via mobile, on free porn commercial sites or within fan communities. Several critics and cultural commentators have picked up on the rise of this so-called ‘microporn’, including the journalists Tracy Clark-Flory (2012), Lizzie

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Crocker (2014), Amanda Hess (2013), Gareth May (2014), and Lucia Peters (2014), all of whom discuss sexually explicit GIFs and GFYs in relation to supposedly diminished attention spans in the internet age. These discussions emerging around microporn can be somewhat problematic in that they risk replicating and intensifying uncritical assumptions about porn's consumers – that their engagement with the image is passive, thoughtless, and wholly receptive.

While the GIF originated as a compressed format to transmit animated files over dial-up, its recent popularity has been fuelled by 'the coincident rise of Tumblr, which plays host to so-called GIF walls driven by its use as a lexicon, where familiar animations act as visual shorthand' (Uhlín 2014, 518). The image is transformed into an object of play, dependent as much on its subsequent uses as its original context:

GIF creation entails liberating the image from its source, not to possess it, as Mulvey indicates, but to give it away, to pass it over to a community of users who then determine its meaning. (Uhlín 2014, 524)

This mode of creating, consuming, and circulating GIFs imagines 'a new media landscape of micro media and active audience productions' (Trammell and Gilbert 2014, 401), and the distribution and redistribution of microporn GIFs on Tumblr demonstrates this active audience as well as an emerging female porn fandom. Work undertaken in fan studies enables us to examine microporn and its audience in a more nuanced way. Studies such as Henry Jenkins' (1992) *Textual Poachers* and Camille Bacon-Smith's (1992) *Enterprising Women* examined fan communities and suggested that activities such as fan fiction – the writing of stories about pre-existing characters by fans of a series – and vidding – in which fans of a series create videos, often set to songs, depicting some aspect of the series – were forms of resistance, enabling fans to reclaim ownership of popular culture. Subsequent work (Dell 1998; Harris 1998; Hills 2002) has reflected on these ideas and examined the ways in which the attitudes and behaviours of fans may, however unwittingly, reproduce many of the same cultural, gendered, and economic hierarchies found problematic in the so-called mainstream. This is mirrored in some of the common current conversations taking place around pornography, in which women are seen as reproducing heteronormative, patriarchal attitudes to sex and sexuality or as attaining empowerment through watching porn.

Work on 'prosumption' (Ritzer and Jurgenson 2010) and on fans gives weight to fans' voices, whereas '[a]ctual porn consumers are absent from public debate and are represented by figures which stand for consumption and sexuality' (Attwood 2007). Contemporary scholarly work on porn, however, has begun opening up larger debates on porn audiences and the means of consumption, particularly with regard to female audiences, although these are still framed as consumers (for instance, Dyer 2004; Patterson 2004; Parvez 2006; Paasonen 2007; Smith 2007). We suggest that looking at active, participatory porn fans and their production or prosumption can pave the way for further study of porn audiences and a more nuanced debate.

Situating microporn: ephemeral pleasures and the internet attention span

Several critics and cultural commentators have remarked upon the rise of microporn, often predictably framing it as symptomatic of a distracted and desensitized culture. In an article entitled 'Are GFYs Bad for Your sex Life?', for example, journalist Lizzie

Crocker (2014) talks about ‘choice overload’ and suggests that the proliferation of microporn might lead to an escalation of pornographic imagery which will eventually make it impossible for viewers to ‘derive the same pleasure during real sex’. Tracy Clark-Flory (2012) states that:

[i]t’s hard not to see this phenomenon as yet more evidence of shrinking attention spans. When you gaze upon a wall of hundreds of different girls giving endless blow jobs, it seems like an especially poignant representation of modern overstimulation and never-ending consumption.

This type of moving-image porn is positioned as exacerbating all of the most worrying trends surrounding contemporary consumption of pornography, and part of this is as a result of GIFs’ short-form format. It is fleeting, fragmentary, repetitive, and stripped of any wider context, and the absence of an overt narrative framework appears to render it more problematic for critics.

Significantly, the role of narrative within hardcore pornography represents a major focal point for both scholarly research and attempted legal interventions. The Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 – the so-called ‘extreme images’ legislation that criminalizes possession of certain kinds of pornographic images of consenting adults – explicitly tackles the issue of narrative. Section 63 states that where ‘an image forms an integral part of a narrative constituted by a series of images’ and ‘having regard to those images as a whole, they are not of such a nature that they must reasonably be assumed to have been produced solely or principally for the purpose of sexual arousal’, an image ‘may, by virtue of being part of that narrative, be found not to be pornographic, even though it might have been found to be pornographic if taken by itself’ (UK HMSO 2008, Part 5, Section 63). In other words, the context in which a still or clip is embedded ultimately determines whether or not it is legally pornographic.¹ A violent rape scene, for example, may thus count as porn if taken on its own, but is not considered so if it forms part of a feature film narrative. This sets the concept of narrative against the pornographic, suggesting that a narrative context is somehow capable of redeeming or at least legitimizing the image, stripping it of its pornographic power. Conversely, the removal or disruption of narrative context is capable of transforming an image from part of an acceptable larger work into something that can be considered pornographic and made subject to prosecution (2008, Part 5, Section 64). This process of decontextualization is common to microporn, typically severing moments of sexual action from longer works (including commercial hardcore scenes, feature films, amateur porn, etc.) in order to recontextualize them within dedicated pornographic GIF aggregator sites or fan-curated Tumblrs.

Narrative not only plays an important role in recent juridical ideas about what constitutes pornography, but is also a recurrent topic of interest for Porn Studies where its significance has long been the cause of much debate. In her influential text *Hard Core: Power, Pleasure, and the ‘Frenzy of the Visible’*, for example, Linda Williams (1999) challenges the notion that pornographic visual works (often associated with decontextualized sexual spectacle) are inherently and necessarily inhospitable to narrative or indeed to ideas. Comparing the cinematic genre of pornography with that of the movie musical, Williams uses close textual analysis of a selection of 1970s and 1980s classics, such as *Deep Throat* (Damiano 1972) and *Behind the Green Door* (Mitchell and Mitchell 1972), ‘to demonstrate that number and narrative work

together to form a syntax of feature-length hardcore: patterns of meaning that formulate sex as a problem and then try to solve this problem through sexual performance' (1999, 182). In place of 'the musical's utopian solution of a couple united through the harmony and rhythm of song and dance', she argues, 'hard-core narrative offers a materialism of different varieties, quantities, and qualities of sexual pleasure as the utopian solution to all sexual ills, including that most fundamental ill: the lack of sexual accommodation between men and women' (1999, 152). In the wake of this analysis, the role of story within moving-image hardcore texts has become a cause of much scholarly concern. However, a number of critics have disputed Williams' claims about the centrality of narrative and diegesis. Theorists such as Chuck Kleinhans (2006, 161) have argued that 'the dominant, hard-core, heterosexual porn today displays quasi-documentary, episodic scenes or a casual skit structure rather than a developed narrative', whilst Richard Dyer (2004, 109) has suggested that the textual pleasures of certain strands of gay pornography may depend upon suspending or overlooking any fictionalized 'narrative circumstances' in order to allow the free play of authenticating and sexually-charged self-reflexivity.

Peter Lehman has been particularly vocal in his rejection of the idea that narrative is a predominant or pivotal aspect of pornography, suggesting not only that 'Williams overemphasizes the function of narrative in the hard-core feature' but that 'much of the appeal and meaning of the sexual number lies outside its narrative contextualization' (2006, 88). Much of Lehman's argument connects with the contemporary debates about microporn, specifically those stressing the role that technological advances have in side-lining narrative, creating practices that inevitably serve to disrupt and undermine narrative structure.² For Lehman, Williams' account 'misses the instabilities that result from the contradictory tensions that arise from wanting to narrate and thematize while simultaneously arouse with images and sounds that lie at the furthest extremes from narration' (2006, 95). In his opinion, many of the 'erotic pleasures of hard-core porn lie outside narration, characterization, and thematization' (2006, 95), and any account of the genre must recognize and respond to this. Lehman's attempt to counter the overvaluation of the role of narrative within pornography is an understandable and critically valuable gesture in a theoretical landscape in which, after Williams, the 'heterogeneous, brief, and fleeting nature of many of porn's pleasures' have been frequently neglected in favour of an analysis of elements of story-telling (2006, 92).

Certainly the rise and popularity of the GIF and the GFY suggests that the viewer-consumer of pornography may derive pleasure not only (or primarily) from elements of narrative context, but also, as Lehman puts it, from the 'brief, fragmentary visual [...] moments such as a passing facial expression' which occur within a moving-image hardcore text (2006, 89). Through the selected decontextualizing of specific moments, microporn facilitates a tighter focus on those gestures or movements most sexually affecting. This affective experience is furthered by the loop aesthetic of GIFs in which a single privileged moment is replayed repeatedly (and perhaps obsessively). Against the linearity of Williams' 'Golden Age' narratives we find instead the insistent circularity of moments barely passing before jerkily restarting – no beginning and no end, instead only an endlessly repeating middle.³ What appears to be required then is an approach which avoids the overvaluing of narrative at the expense of 'porn's less reputable pleasures' (Lehman 2006, 96), and which attempts to develop a more nuanced understanding of the concept of narrative and its myriad variations across

different media and micropornographic texts, as well as multiple audiences with divergent interpretive repertoires, reading strategies, and positions of involvement.

GIFs: a cursory quantitative exploration

Returning to Clark-Flory's (2012) article, the assertion that porn GIFs comprise 'a wall of hundreds of different girls giving endless blow-jobs' speaks to a dominant discourse of what pornography – as a singular homogeneous entity – is, and what it does. Curiously, the editorial choice of image accompanying the article depicts quite the opposite, instead displaying a selection of 'safe for work' stills which range from cross-sectioned clothed female bodies, including headless bikinied mid-sections and work-out DVD materials of female abs, to a humorously disgusted Frodo reaction meme, captioned 'HOT!'. In short, no endless wall of blowjobs is included. Such a disjunction offers a visual discord and raises the following question: when we speak of pornographic GIFs, what exactly do we mean? Before beginning to theorize individual microporn examples and audiences it is therefore necessary to undertake a brief quantitative exploration of its broader content through a cursory methodology.

To attempt a study of such material poses multiple challenges, and we acknowledge that our analysis should be understood as exploratory. The vast quantity and fleeting immediacy of online content means that the passage of time between the undertaking of research and its final place in print also rendered the following data relatively obsolescent. This is a challenge facing contemporary scholars of internet pornography, and it is this fluidity that makes vital an attempt to quantify this material. We recommend that the following analysis be contextualized temporally within a developing, expanding, and shifting medium.

An important logical start point is to establish the simplest search term that internet users might use to access pornographic GIFs, and we determined through discussion that 'porn GIFs' would be most probable. Searched in Google, the term resulted in five top 'hits' – which were replicated across three volunteers' browsers, thus reducing the potential for targeted results, although it is worth noting that sites were ranked in differing order. In no particular order, this top five consisted of: 'Porn Gif' (xxxsexxx/tumblr.com); 'sexo gif' (sexo-gif.tumblr.com); 'madporn gifs' (madporn-gifs.tumblr.com); 'GIF PORN TUBE' (gifporntube.com); and 'The Worst Drug' (theworstdrug.com). While the aggregate commercial porn tube site and Tumblr both rank material as 'most recent' or 'newest' by default, 'The Worst Drug' utilizes a randomizing, refreshable landing site. The organization of GIFS on these sites therefore may additionally problematize the data in that they are not ranked by popularity.

By selecting the first five images across the five highest Google-ranked sites found with the search term 'porn gifs', the data pool consisted of a total of 25 visual texts which displayed a surprising variety in content. Putting aside the presence of a heterosexual fellatio scene (4%), bestial anime (4%), and the inexplicable inclusion of a non-pornographic GIF (4%) in which a young man at the end of a pier turns to the camera with shock, the remaining 88% ranged from segments selected from amateur and artistic queer pornography to commercial productions. While the most recurrent sexual acts were male-to-female vaginal or anal penetration and female-to-male oral sex, these account overall for just over half at 56%, indicating that straight fellatio factors in as less dominant than previously assumed. While homogeneous in their heteronormative content, the images vary nonetheless from a seemingly amateur coupling

showing a male penetrating a female from behind in an everyday bedroom interior, to a GIF in which a kneeling slim brunette pulls down the underwear of her co-star to reveal his bouncing erect penis. Her expression of surprise creates an unexpectedly comedic image which ought to be accompanied by the sound effect of 'Boing!'

There are traditionally acceptable acts of: female masturbation (4%; a black-and-white artfully framed orgasmic woman reclines nude on a sofa angled adjacent to the viewer), a male and female non-penetrative embrace (4%; in an interior hallway, a suited man forcefully kisses a woman, whose camera-facing buttocks are exposed as he hikes up her skirt), male-to-female cunnilingus (4%; on white bed sheets, a man sits and orally stimulates a female whose rear is framed towards the camera), and MMF threesomes (4%; framed simply around the participants' genitals during double penetration). The potentially obverse microporn images of FF scenes (8%; two typically attractive slender blondes enjoying strap-on sex; another couple engaged in cunnilingus, one kneeling while the other is suspended in a bubble-shaped glass chair), trans bodies (4%; a woman of colour's penis erect and central to the image as she fellates a man off-screen),⁴ and potentially queered sexualities (4%; the sex of two performers engaged in oral sex unknown) suggest a wider breadth of representation. However, the space remains dominated by white, able-bodied, heterosexual and cis-gendered bodies. This admittedly small sample does, however, indicate an evolving space for possible resistance against dominant representations of heterosexual acts, and potentially counters the commercial nature of pornography and its narrative linearity. Here lies the possibility for pornographic consumers to critique and deconstruct such dominant paradigms, choosing for themselves instead the bodies and fragmented sexual inter/activities they desire to see presented.

Considering the porn prosumer: a 'Deenager' case study

As we have noted, in the last 30 years or so audiences have increasingly being understood as active, and more recently – facilitated in large part by the internet and new communication technologies – fans have moved to a position of intermediaries, engaged in the act of productive consumption or 'prosumption'. First proposed by Alvin Toffler (1980) and subsequently developed by George Ritzer and Nathan Jurgenson (2010), prosumption is the simultaneous role of being a producer of what one consumes, but it has been absent from Porn Studies' discussions of audiences outside 'amateur' user-generated pornographic content. Evident in fan communities in the writing and posting of fan fiction, fan art, fan videos, meta (fan analysis of texts, generally presented in the form of online essays), campaigning, and the various other unpaid activities which fans undertake, prosumption is evident on sites which demonstrate the user-generated and social turn the internet has taken, such as Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, Vimeo, YouTube, and Tumblr.

Tumblr differs from popular contemporary pornography video upload/download sites, and from traditional 'fan' spaces, in that users can comment on posts and photographs when they re-blog them, but it is difficult to respond directly to other users' posts. Despite this, there is a large and active community of users on the site who take pleasure in sharing their love of pornography. Fans of porn actor James Deen⁵ refer to themselves as 'Deenagers' and form fan communities, sharing pictures, making fan art, and creating Deen-inspired memes. Among the many dashboards on the site dedicated to Deen are: 'Only james deen bitch'; 'Deen Me'; 'James

Fucking Deen'; and 'All things James Deen'. These four were chosen for the following case study because they are specifically dedicated to Deen as opposed to porn actors in general, and rather than being interspersed with other aspects of the bloggers' lives.

Many of the GIFs posted to these blogs are scenes taken from Deen's films, featuring a female co-star (often locked in a direct eye-contact embrace with his off-screen partner Stoya) being pleased by him. Additionally, many of these are posted in black and white, which serves to distinguish them from porn films and situates them as art-house images. The hashtags accompanying these GIFs demonstrate the dual address of the GIF as both porn and romance. Tags such as '#love' and '#sigh' and emoticons like '<3' demonstrate that it is as much Deen's character and attitude towards his co-stars which fans respond to as his physique, while tags like '#hard', '#hot', and '#fuck', particularly when accompanying GIFs of Deen ejaculating over a partner's face or penetrating her whilst grasping her neck, illustrate the sexual pleasures offered by the images. Crucially, however, these fans are not only consuming each others' images, but also actively producing their own. As such, GIFs form part of the fannish gift economy. Uhlin suggests that 'while the reciprocity of exchange between creator and user in the production of the GIF does entail a gift relation, the increase associated with this gift is a function of its circulation throughout a community of users' (2014, 525). Just as other fan activities like fan fiction and vidding work to create a sense of community in media fandom, GIFs can work to foster a sense of community within female porn audiences. Drawing on Lewis Hyde (1983), Karen Hellekson (2009) argues that exchange in the fan community is made up of three elements related to the notion of 'the gift': giving, receiving, and reciprocating. This concept is central to fan economy because gifts are designed to create and cement the fannish social structure:

Fans engage with their metatext by presenting gift artworks, by reciprocating these gifts in certain approved, fandom-specific ways, and by providing commentary about these gifts. Writer and reader create a shared dialogue that results in a feedback loop of gift exchange, whereby the gift of artwork or text is repetitively exchanged for the gift of reaction, which is itself exchanged, with the goal of creating and maintaining social solidarity. (Hellekson 2009, 115)

A similar process is at play in the sharing, viewing, and re-blogging of Deen GIFs on Tumblr. Among those posted to Deen Me, for example, one black-and-white series with Deen and Ashlynn Molloy has been liked and/or re-blogged 29,997 times as of 27 February 2015.⁶ The notes added include: 'I wanna fuck himmmmmm'; 'Just ... like ... this ...'; 'My favourite position'; and 'Tumble in my bed, please'. Although this number of notes is by no means representative (notes attached to GIFs of Deen generally number in the low thousands), it nonetheless speaks to the shared dialogue which takes place in this sharing of GIFs. Each viewer can see and read the notes attached to it, as well as seeing who shared, liked, and commented on the post. In this way the community attached to an image increases, with the original poster aware of each of these interactions.

Female enjoyment of Deen GIFs is more complex than simply the pleasure of arousal through watching. The GIFs of Deen created and shared on Tumblr problematize Dines and Jensen's assertion that only the women in pornography are 'constantly orgasmic' and even the giving of pleasure seems to produce an 'immense pleasure' in the woman not seen in the man (1998, 77). Deenagers' focus is instead

on Deen and the way he gives pleasure to his female partners, even while those women are the focus of the camera's gaze. While Parvez (2006) found that female porn consumption was primarily used for erotic arousal and masturbation, followed by curiosity about sexual practices, Smith identified the reasons for consumption as being 'acquisition of knowledge: new techniques, ideas and means of achieving orgasm' (2007, 175). This seems, at least in part, to explain fans' love for James Deen. As one fan wrote:

I'm a virgin (I'm abstinent). I actually did not have an orgasm until I found James Deen. When I first tried masturbation, it didn't work for me. But then I read one of James' interviews, and he said people need to know what they like, or they can't expect their partner to. That encouraged me to learn more about my body, and I've been having orgasms ever since. (Anon quoted in Hess 2012.)

As Hurst notes, 'the development of new knowledge is cited so frequently in literature concerning women's reasons for consumption [...] It seems that women need to provide a reason for their consumption that goes beyond gratification; possibly as alleviation of guilt' (2011, 24), yet it seems to be the opposite amongst Deenagers. The emphasis, as seen here, is instead on the enjoyment and gratification this predominantly female audience get from watching and discussing Deen. Seen this way, fan production of microporn may be less about acts of resistance than a means of reinforcing community amongst audiences previously absent from the discourses of pornography.

Conclusion

The popularity of pornographic GIFs and GFYs speaks to the ephemeral pleasures of contemporary adult entertainment. As we have seen, much of the legal discourse surrounding pornography stresses the importance of narrative as a contextualizing framework possessing a redemptive quality; the presence or absence of narrative has a transformative effect upon a text's legal status and upon its perceived dangers. Similarly, the idea of pedagogic potential – of porn's abilities to educate and inform its audience about sex – can be mobilized as a way of excusing or explaining women's engagements with visual materials that have a purposive intention to arouse. These kinds of framework act as justification for spectatorship – they mitigate hardcore's raw appeal to the genitals by gesturing toward a different set of cultural concerns. Micropornographic texts and their circulation, however, resist such redemptive readings. The snipping of sexual imagery from its wider context, and the repetitive looping of fleeting moments, stands in opposition to attempts to address diegetic narrative within long-form hardcore, whilst the manner in which prosumers can be seen to engage with and respond to microporn eschews discourses of sex education in favour of the frank recognition of sexual excitement. GIFs and GFYs foreground 'porn's less reputable pleasures' (Lehman 2006, 96), and given the changes in circulation and distribution facilitated by new media, and the rise of decontextualized and recontextualized micropornographic texts, we would argue that scholars need to develop more nuanced ways of taking account of short-form porn – ways that fight shy of searching for overt narrative patterning or problem-solving plot progressions in favour of thinking through the non-narrative pleasures of participatory porn cultures.

As Attwood (2007) notes, '[s]exually explicit media takes on a range of meanings; different decodings and uses are reported and consumers display both critically distanced and highly engaged audience behaviour'. Ignoring porn prosumers – or worse, dismissing them as fannish teenage girls – fails to take into account female pleasures and thus continues the subordination of women's agency in relation to sex and sexuality. John Fiske noted that fandoms are 'associated with the cultural tastes of subordinated formations of the people, particularly those disempowered by any combination of gender, age, class, and race' (1992, 30) and female Deenager fan voices certainly seem to reflect this. However, their prosumption – we believe – creates a new kind of cultural space in which female audiences feel neither subordinate nor disempowered. Instead, fans' actions are the norm and the balance of power shifts, offering the potential for pleasures not possible elsewhere.

Notes

1. This relates to Saxey's (2006; original emphasis) assertion that 'the obscenity of a text is not solely based upon the presence or absence of sexual depictions; it is rather a matter of *context*. This can be seen in many jurisdictions: the 1959 Obscene Publications Act in the UK and article 235 of the New York Penal laws both state that publications should be "taken as a whole." Aspects of context which have historically influenced judgements of obscenity [...] include the literary or artistic "merit" of the text [...], and the class, gender or age of its "wide likely viewership".'
2. In her discussion of 'Porn Futures', Susanna Paasonen makes the following statement: 'Porn sites may be rife with the terminology of "cum-drinking sluts" used to spice up standard videos and images [...] but this hardly makes extreme scenarios the norm' (2007, 169). This suggests that although the role of narrative within pornographic images is undeniably ambiguous, narrativizing utterances play an influential but as yet poorly understood role in the way pornographic texts are organized, categorized, and classified online, and how the viewer-consumer accesses and relates to these texts. Paasonen sees the linguistic tags which accompany pornographic images (including, of course, GIFs and GFYs) as being separate from and subservient to the images themselves. It may be possible to argue though that the terminology deployed in relation to pornographic images not only influences the manner in which visual texts are received and understood, but also helps to build up a sense of significance around particular types of bodies, texts, and sexual acts.
3. The potential relationship between this insistent repetition and jouissance is unfortunately beyond the purview of the current article, although there is surely work to be done elsewhere to extend the existing body of research on pornography and the compulsion to repeat. See Boulter (2000) and Schaschek (2014).
4. The penetration of a transfemale by a male should fall under the heading of heterosexual pornography. However, we have reflected industry standards by classifying this image separately as it would be within porn under the tags of 'fetish', 'she-males', and so forth (again cf. Paasonen 2007).
5. There are, of course, issues with examining online fan culture and focusing on one specific site. The internet is not the only space in which fans engage with texts, and in relation to pornography is perhaps not a site of participatory fandom, as it is for other texts. In discussing the 'active networker' in relation to pornography, Susanna Paasonen notes that 'Interacting, rating, or uploading files is a possibility but it is not the default form of engagement' (2007, 67). We suggest that subtle differences exist between porn fans on sites such as Tumblr and creators on user-generated content sites like YouPorn and RedTube. This difference is evidenced through our theorizing of Deenagers on Tumblr in line with fan studies approaches to participatory fandom. For more on James Deen, Deenagers, and Deen fandom, see Harman and Smith (2013).
6. See <http://deenme.tumblr.com/post/78284800439>.

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