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Writing in Digital Environments

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2/23/2006

Wholesome Explorations: Pornographic Constructions on the Internet

Pornography is not a new thing. It has existed in nearly every medium humans have invented, and the internet is no exception. The advent of the internet, though, has brought pornography into the home in unprecedented ways – not just the homes of the consumers of “adult” websites, but also the homes of the creators of such sites. As the proprietress of one porn site says, with her service “you can email [her], read [her] journal, and see intimate porn that brings you right into [her] bedroom” (FurryGirl.com). Where pornographic images used to be controlled by individuals and organizations with significant financial resources and access to distribution channels, the internet has allowed women to create their own pornographies which are less objectifying than those which preceded them.

The cost of starting a magazine, once the creation of content, the publication of the physical magazine itself, and the distribution are taken into account, is prohibitive (Balderston 2004). While the cost of producing an amateur DVD or video is lower, especially with the increasing availability of consumer digital video products, the cost of distribution still remains high. Given these high entry fees as obstacles, most economically viable traditionally distributed pornographies are created and controlled by established companies with significant capital.

The cost of creating an amateur internet pornography site, though, is much lower (Balderston 2004). A camera capable of taking pictures of quality appropriate for the web can be purchased for a couple hundred dollars or less and a more-than-adequate computer can be found

for well under a thousand dollars. Model costs can be as low as nothing if the site's creator is also its subject. Perhaps most important is the low cost of distributing pornography on the internet – domain names can be registered for as little as \$10 per year and reliable hosting can be found for less than \$20 per month.

Hustler and Penthouse, two of the most well-known and popular pornographic empires, have significant web presences. Both feature a small number of photos available for free, designed to entice visitors to become paid subscribers to the full content of the sites. The corporate nature of these sites means that they are designed to appeal to as broad an audience as possible. The women featured are objectified models, there for the pleasure of the viewer only, completely depersonalized. The Penthouse site also features links to the “individual” sites of two women. Even these spaces, though, feature greater objectification than that of owner operated sites like FurryGirl.com and Seska.com.

The front page of Hustler includes very few words. There are links for “Instant Access”, “Hustler Movies”, “Online Magazines,” “Exclusive Galleries”, and one to “Join Hustler Now”. There are also banners touting their “XXX MOVIES UPDATED 3 TIMES A WEEK”. Mostly, though, there are pictures of naked women sporting full blonde manes and shiny hairless bodies. These women are thin, big breasted, and heavily made up. The largest picture features a (dyed) blonde with red lips parted to reveal her tongue positioned just behind her teeth, as if she is about to lick the viewer. Her head is tilted to one side, and she is holding her impossibly large and round breasts so that they point straight ahead like headlights. She is fully naked and completely shaved. An inch to her





left is a small box listing the site's "Recently Added Movies" and featuring the most descriptive words of the page. Added on Valentine's Day, in addition to "Barely Legal #53" were "Bitches in Heat #2" and "Desperate Housewhores". These women are sexual

objects, with anatomy and features so far removed from the human that it is nearly impossible to think of them as people.

Penthouse's reputation is for being less explicitly vulgar than Hustler, and its web presences seem to live up to that. The front pages for "Sexy Jamie" and "Sexy Cassia" feature far more text than Hustler does, and don't use words like "bitch" or "whore" in their descriptions. Because these are, ostensibly, the individual pages of the respective models, they are written in a first-person perspective. However, the pages for both women follow the same layout, and neither mentions anything personal about either woman other than how much she wants to please the viewer. Even on the "About Me" sections of each site, visitors learn very little other than that Jamie lives in California and enjoys the outdoors, while Cassia is "a very sexual person" who "always take[s] care of [her] lover first." It is clear that these representations, despite the medium, are still being filtered through the "traditional" pornography industry standards.

On the other hand, the front page of Furry Girl's website, furrygirl.com, features a single picture of the site's creator and proprietress – who calls herself Furry Girl – next to five full paragraphs of text. The picture is of a young woman with long brown braids and high argyle knee socks. She is sitting at the base of a flight of wooden stairs, her knees out in front of her, her elbows supporting her as she reclines against the steps. Her face is turned to the side, and she is peering out at the viewer from behind her brown rimmed glasses, an almost impish smile

furrygirl.com
you're invited into the bedroom of a naughty all natural girl

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Hello, and thanks for visiting me! I'm Furry Girl, a fuzzy amateur girl with a full bush, hairy legs, and hairy arm pits, and this is my personal homemade porn site. (Click to see sample pics, I'm rewarding you for paying attention to my words as well as my pussy. You'll find more "hidden" photo links throughout my free tour if you're reading.)

Everything about my body is all-natural: no shaving, silicone, or makeup. Most noticeably, I don't let a razor anywhere near my pussy or any place else! I have very long soft brown hair that comes to my waist, which I usually wear down or in braids.

I've always been a bit of an exhibitionist, and I opened this site in January of 2003 to share that part of my life with everyone. In those two years, I've created over 5500 original erotic photos, and you see them all instantly by **joining now**.

Why should you consider joining furrygirl.com instead of a fancy mega site? Unlike any of them, you can email me, read my journal, and see intimate porn that brings you right into my bedroom.

I'm in complete control of my photos and how I present myself, and I don't do anything that makes me feel uncomfortable to make a buck. I think you'll agree: porn is a lot hotter when you're watching someone who's enjoying the action as much as you are.

Join me today >>

All Models Are Over 18 | Copyright 2002-2006 | Lookup/Cancel Membership

across her face. On this page Furry Girl describes herself as “a fuzzy amateur girl”, “all-natural”, and “a bit of an exhibitionist.” She says, “I'm in complete control of my photos and how I present myself, and I don't do anything that makes me feel

uncomfortable to make a buck.” Through the rest of the tour of her site and the FAQ, Furry Girl builds an identity for herself not only as an intelligent and sexual young woman who maintains her website because she enjoys doing so, but also as a woman with broad interests “from sex to gardening to cryptography to history to film to medicine.” Visitors to Furry Girl's site are looking not simply at a sexual object, but at a human being.

Seska, of seska.com, says that her site is an extension of her “alternative lifestyle”, and the images offered as previews are more amateurish – her site as a whole is less professionally constructed than Furry Girl's – and more hardcore. The captions for some of her pictures point to a more primarily sexual attitude than Furry Girl's as well, with language and scenes more like what might be expected from Hustler. Like Furry Girl, though, Seska also constructs an identity beyond her sexual persona. She lists favorite TV shows (“Boston Legal”, “Gilmore Girls”, and “Smallville”, among others) and movies (including “Pride & Prejudice”, “Finding Nemo”, and “The Princess Bride”), as well as music, food, clothing, and more. She also makes it clear that she is in control of what happens on her site, and, in doing so, creates a site about her own sexuality rather than simply a gallery of sexual objects.



Furrygirl.com and seska.com likely target different audiences than do the Hustler and Penthouse sites, but they illustrate a trend toward personal pornographies that does not exist in mainstream and traditional media. Even magazines featuring amateur photos are not controlled by the creators of the pictures they publish. Sites like furrygirl.com and seska.com, though, allow the creators and subjects of the images to maintain ownership of their bodies by controlling both the distribution of those images and the identity which accompanies them. Through this pairing of sexuality and identity, the internet allows for an exploration of a less objectifying and more wholesome pornography than has traditionally been possible.

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