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NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Hetero-Masculinity, Homosexual Desire: A Perfect Gay World

A Thesis Submitted to the

University Honors Program

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Department Of

Women's Studies

By

Khaled Ismail

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HONORS THESIS ABSTRACT
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ABSTRACT (100-200 WORDS): In order to create a world where homosexual desire, masculinities, and sex is reconciled, gay porn challenges and presents new ways of framing our understanding of sexuality, gender and sex. It does so by offering options that are more fluid and interchangeable, and by rearranging normative lines of logic in ways that better fit the gay male experience. Several popular categories of gay porn blur the lines between normative understandings of sexual identity, masculinity and sexual behavior, allowing space for fluidity and a more fulfilling experience of desire. To demonstrate this, I explored three popular experiences in online gay porn; Gay-for-pay websites; websites that depict married men and fraternity guys engaging in same-sex sexual behavior; and websites that depict same-sex behaviors between men in the military, teacher/students in schools, locker rooms, and the work place. What I found is that the experiences in these three categories attempt to construct a world of fluid sexuality and sex by homoeroticizing the dominant frameworks of masculinity and heterosexuality.

University Honors Program

Capstone Approval Page

Capstone Title

Hetero-Masculinity, Homosexual Desire: A Perfect Gay World

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HONORS THESIS ABSTRACT

In order to create a world where homosexual desire, masculinities, and sex is reconciled, gay porn challenges and presents new ways of framing our understanding of sexuality, gender and sex. It does so by offering options that are more fluid and interchangeable, and by rearranging normative lines of logic in ways that better fit the gay male experience. Several popular categories of gay porn blur the lines between normative understandings of sexual identity, masculinity and sexual behavior, allowing space for fluidity and a more fulfilling experience of desire. To demonstrate this, I explored three popular experiences in online gay porn; Gay-for-pay websites; websites that depict married men and fraternity guys engaging in same-sex sexual behavior; and websites that depict same-sex behaviors between men in the military, teacher/students in schools, locker rooms, and the work place. What I found is that the experiences in these three categories attempt to construct a world of fluid sexuality and sex by homoeroticizing the dominant frameworks of masculinity and heterosexuality.

Pornography has existed in various forms throughout history. The etymology of the term itself comes from the Greek origin 'porne' and 'grapbos'; porne means "prostitute", and grapbos means "writing about". The development and growth of pornography over history presents us with difficult questions surrounding desire, sexuality, sex, and gender, and the role that their depiction in pornography plays in society, culture, and even politics. The study of these questions—the theorizing of their implications—is known as porn studies. The integration of pornography into mainstream American culture has its roots in the sexual revolution of the 1960s and 70s. The dominant discourse of the time surrounding sexual liberation and sexuality in general, was coupled with legal and political ramifications that questioned the role pornography played in society. Since the 1960s and up until today, pornography has continuously developed to meet the demands of a continuously expanding understanding of sexuality and sex. As mainstream Hollywood movies and films developed over time to meet the demands for entertainment, so did pornography; growing from underground low-budget studios, to the screens of porn cinemas in the 70s, to a multi-million industry of videos-by-mail and in stores in the 80s and 90s.

There certainly is ample academic scholarship on the topic of pornography and questioning its influence on culture, sexuality, and desire. Over time, scholars have taken various approaches to their analysis. During the 1970s and 80s, much of the literature took on distinct positions for or against pornography. The field of porn studies continues to feel the lingering voices of anti-pornography and pro-censorship feminists, and traditionalists who argued over the morality of pornography. It was not until recently that porn studies moved past structuralist approaches, and refocused the analysis to look at the complexity of pornography in a more pragmatic approach. "It was not until the late 1990s that the "significance of "pornography" as a

cultural and regulatory category and the examination of a diverse range of pornographies both became areas of interest" (Attwood, 2010). So what significance does pornography have on society? Opinions vary depending on who you ask. According to the introduction pages of Linda Williams' notable work, *Porn Studies* (2003), "Hollywood makes approximately 400 films a year, while the porn industry now makes from 10,000 to 11,000. Seven hundred million porn videos or DVDs are rented each year." In terms of revenue figures, Williams put out there a startling figure of revenue "between 10 and 14 billion dollars annually." She notes that this is "not only bigger than movie revenues; it is bigger than professional football, and basketball, and baseball put together" (Williams, 2003). Although these numbers are rather dated at this point, they are still important to the overall understanding of the industry's immensity. Today, porn studies scholars and statisticians rarely try to even collect these numbers in terms of dollar amount because it is almost impossible to concretely do so considering the sheer size of the internet.

Porn studies continue to adapt to changing times and technologies. Nonetheless, the greatest development for the porn industry thus far is irrefutably the internet. As we see new developments in the way people use the internet as an integral part of their daily lives, scholarship on cyber porn is emerging as the new focus of porn studies. The realization that internet pornography has become a major shaping force in today's culture will ultimately shape the field over the next several years. One major example of how influential cyber porn has become in shaping our understanding of human desire is a book titled A Billion Wicked Thoughts. In 2011, the book published the results of a study conducted by neuroscientists Ogi Ogas and Sai Gaddam. It was deemed the largest study of human desire and sexuality since the publication of The Kinsey Reports in the 1950s. Their study was entirely based on what people

looked for behind the anonymity of the internet. Their study analyzed millions of erotic videos, stories, personal ads, and online romance novels in an attempt to understand human desire and behavior. The methodology of this groundbreaking study demonstrates the significance of internet pornography not only as a media form, but as a social phenomenon that has become so deeply intertwined with human desire, identity, and sexual experience. How we understand and experience sex in general has in many ways become heavily influenced by the representations of sex in internet porn.

Porn studies could not exist without the theoretical framework that feminist and queer theorists have laid out. In understanding the experiences depicted in porn, we rely heavily on the findings of feminist and queer studies regarding desire, sexuality, gender and behavior, and then try to understand porn within their framework. In many cases, porn gives new insight into the way we understand these frameworks that have already been put forth; one case being new insight into men's and masculinity studies. In my experience, the field of men's studies and masculinity research can be described as a diverse and complex quest to explain the socially constructed identities, behaviors, and expressions of men in relation to the world. In my opinion, the male dominated industry of porn gives scholars a raw and realistic insight into male desire and sexuality more than any other study of behavior because of our rigid social constraints that limit behavior.

When I first settled on the idea of studying masculinity in gay pornography for my undergraduate thesis, I knew exactly what I was looking for. My initial hypothesis had the dogmatic assumption that the embodiment of masculinity in gay pornography reflects patriarchal heteronormative masculinity. In a certain light it probably does. Having spent a majority of my undergraduate Women's Studies scholarship analyzing systemic oppression, and the way in

which these systems are continuously perpetuated in media and popular culture, my initial hypothesis seemed commonsensical. I thought I could easily analyze the scripts and draw on similarities in language usage, narratives, as well as the plots of these motion pictures. I could also critically analyze the power dichotomy created between the penetrator and the penetrated; ultimately by drawing on parallels between the anus and the vagina arrive at my grand revelation of the penis as the oppressor in all forms of pornography. Logically, the first book I picked up to start my research was Andrea Dworkin's Pornography (1981). Her arguments were compelling. I was entirely captivated by her assertive deductive reasoning and it was exactly what I needed to prove my initial claims.

> Sex, a word potentially so inclusive and evocative, is whittled down by the male so that, in fact, it means penile intromission. Commonly referred to as "it," sex is defined in action only by what the male does with his penis. Fucking—the penis thrusting—is the magical, hidden meaning of "it," the reason for sex, the expansive experience through which the male realizes his sexual power.

With this framework in mind, the end goal was to outline the implications of patriarchal embodiment of gay masculinity as leading to inequality and discrimination within the gay community. It was all rather ingenious.

In my initial process of thinking through my topic, I drew a map in my mind of all the theoretical feminist work that I had studied so far. Following the footsteps of our feminist foremothers, it seemed critical to the success of my analysis that I look at gay pornography from a dualistic approach. In doing so, I could draw on three main parallels. The first would be to analyze the embodiment of Male/Female duality in heterosexual pornography. Then I would remove the gender from my findings, and structure an analysis using a Dominant/Submissive

dualism. Using this framework, I would then reintegrate gender into the equation by analyzing the embodiment of the Dom/Sub roles, or the more popularly known top/bottom duality within Male/Male sex. Modern and liberal feminist theories were the foundations to my initial hypothesis. However, as I started reading more recent porn studies, I realized that examining gay pornography independent of any contextual understanding of gay culture or identity diminishes the significance of, and simplifies the subject matter. It also leaves me as a scholar with rigid intellectual limitations that are not useful in terms of my attempt to understand the complexities of masculinity and sexuality. This academic journey has in every way expanded the lens from which I see the world around me, and in particular, how I understand the complexities of sex, and sexuality.

In order to create a world were homosexual desire, masculinities, and sex is reconciled, gay porn challenges and disseminates the rigid framework that intertwines sexuality, gender, and sex. Although gay porn in many ways does so be recreating dominant forms of masculinities, power, and hegemonic representations of male sexuality, it also presents new ways of framing our understanding of sexuality, gender and sex. It does so by offering options that are more fluid and interchangeable, and by rearranging the normative lines of logic in ways that better fit the gay male experience. Several popular categories of gay porn utilize normative understandings of sexual identity, masculinity, and sexual behavior, which I argue do so in order to create a world where the lines between sexuality, gender, and sex are not so clearly drawn; allowing space for fluidity and a more fulfilling experience of desire. In order to demonstrate this, I explored three popular experiences in online gay porn; Gay-for-pay guys, the depictions of married men and fraternity guys, and lastly, the eroticization of the military, schools, locker rooms, and the work place in gay porn (I will refer to these spaces as masculinized spaces). What I found is that the

experiences in these three categories attempt to construct a world of fluid sexuality and sex by homoeroticizing the dominant frameworks of masculinity and heterosexuality. To put it in simpler terms, what these videos do is take the normative social norm of

Masculine + heterosexual = heterosexual sex (1+1=2)

 and change it to

Masculine + heterosexual= homosexual sex. (1+1=3)

 I argue that by changing the outcome, these categories change the meaning and socially constructed correlations that assume specific normative behaviors resulting from identity. The examples I am examining rebuild the same identity-behavior formula, but change the outcome to homosexual sex in order to change the value that we assign to masculine and heterosexual—the value of "1" is changed—as identities and performances that no longer dictate sexual behavior.

I found that these three examples do so in three steps. First, both the websites and performances construct normative heterosexuality through the use of language and self-declaration with an emphasis on genuineness. Second, the actors construct normative masculinity in at least one of two ways; either stereotypical masculine behavior, or the use of masculinized spaces. I argue that this in turn also emphasizes authentic heterosexuality. The final step in recreating the normative sexual identity, gender, and sexual act formula is done through engaging in gay sex. There are three distinct methods used to make the transition; Paying, convincing, and coercion. I argue that the use of these methods, in juxtaposition with the eventual enjoyment and embracing of the sexual acts by all parties involved, directly undermines the assumption that same-sex sexual acts are bound to rigid identity and gender. Almost all the men in the videos I looked at are depicted to enjoy the sexual act once they overcome the initial discomfort. I argue that the use of external tactics such as money, convincing, and coercion, as

well as the process of overcoming the discomfort and giving in to desire and pleasure, all mirror the external nature of social construction and the initial discomfort that men experience once they step out of the rigid bounds that it creates.

I examined a variety of cited websites that portray all three of the categories. The websites I looked at portray identified heterosexual men performing same-sex sexual acts, identified heterosexual men bound in heterosexual marriages engaging in same-sex sexual acts, and identified heterosexual fraternity men engaging in same-sex sexual acts. In addition, I examined websites portraying the eroticization of masculinized spaces including the military, locker rooms, and offices/work place. In my analysis, I started by looking at the language used to describe the content of the website, and the actors, and then I analyzed the narratives of several videos from each website.

In the pages that follow, I will outline my observations from my video analysis to demonstrate the three-step framework I put forth. Following my findings will be an analysis of the steps' significance within the context of gay male identity development, desire, and/or culture.

Establishing Real Heterosexuality

The first step in redefining the identity-behavior formula is to construct normative heterosexuality throughout website and within the narratives of the videos. I started my analysis by looking at the words and descriptions of content used throughout the websites, then by looking at the narratives in which heterosexuality was established through self-identifications and disclaimers by the actors in the videos. A common theme throughout the websites is the idea of realness, or genuineness of heterosexuality.

In all of the websites I analyzed, the most common method used to establish heterosexuality was to simply label the guys as straight. Banners throughout the websites read "Straight guys, Totally REAL, Totally AMATUER [original emphasis]" (Lik-Em-Straight); "Featuring never seen before straight guys" (Broke Straight Boys); "We make straight guys do gay things" (Bait Buddies); "What does it take for a straight guy to go gay?" (Bait Bus); "Straight marines doing anything to get off…100% real, straight marines in hardcore extreme amateur action. No models. No actors. Totally authentic" (AWOL Marines); "Premier porn site for straight guys gay porn, straight gay sex videos, straight men gay, and first time gay sex" (I'm a Married Man); "The official site for straight college fraternity guys getting hazed into gay sex…Straight guys will knowingly suck a dick or get fucked in the ass, just to prove they can be a brother" (Haze Him); and last but not least, the most forward construction of realness I encountered as a disclaimer at the top of the page

> Real Straight Guys. One of the few sites on the net that still contain genuine straight guys….a site dedicated to those hot straight guys you see getting around day to day. I'm not talking about paid models from agencies that are groomed to near Photoshop perfection, I am talking about the everyday guys you see getting around your neighborhood. The ones driving the 4wds, playing footy, getting dirty and doing the hard yakka on the building sites. The real Genuine Straight Guys (Seduced Straight Guys).

These banner descriptions demonstrate the websites' first attempt to establish genuine heterosexuality by using language to label the performers. The viewer then can initially assume the heterosexuality of the performers solely based on linguistic labels. Titles and labels are central to the construction of sexuality in our society. The use of language to define the men in the videos and throughout the websites reflects the way labels have been used in society to

categorize people. By labeling the men as heterosexual, the viewer can then draw a set of implications and assumptions about the labeled subject. The producers of the websites know that based on socially constructed ideas of what it means to be heterosexual, the viewer will associate the subject with specific expectations. This is not enough to fully establish genuineness, and therefore is combined with several other approaches that attempt to establish real heterosexuality. These approaches include the wording of the titles and descriptions of the videos, and most importantly the disclaimers of heterosexuality in the initial scenes and throughout the narratives of the videos.

Apart from videos depicting masculinized spaces, the titles of almost all videos I looked at included the word 'straight' in them. The website Lik-Em-Straight contains 38 different video series that depict the journey of producer Brendon Marley's quest to satisfy his "obsession for sex with the "unobtainable" straight guy." Out of all 38 series, only three did not include the word 'straight' in either the series description or the title. In the website Straight Bait, The videos are all titled "Straight/Bait" and the descriptions label the sexual orientation of the actors next to their names as either 'straight' or 'bait'. Actors who are labeled as bait are either returning self-identified heterosexual men who explain that they need the money, or are gay men who are filled in on the plot and act as lures for the purposes of the shoot. The titles and descriptions again use linguistic labels to describe the actors. Similarly, in the website Bait Bus, almost all the videos included the word straight in their description or something along the lines of one of the guys experiencing gay sex for the first time. In the examples of the websites that portrayed married men, the website I Am a Married Man, a member of the fantasy pages of Suite703 productions, includes many videos titled 'straight married man' or in some cases 'Married Hetero Guy'. Some titles did not include a reference to sexual orientation and only referred to men as married.

We could assume heterosexuality is established in the title through the use of the institution of marriage itself as a dominantly heteronormative institution. Additionally, all of the descriptions of the videos on the website included a reference to the married man's wife being gone for the day or having been inadequate in satisfying her husband. Most of the titles on the website Haze Him included the words 'straight' 'dude' or 'frat guys'. The latter are words that are stereotypically associated with heterosexual college aged men. Lastly, in the case of videos portraying military men, sexual acts between men in locker rooms, and in the work place, I did not find any commonality in the titles other than words that describe the space in which the video is taking place. These spaces, which I have been referring to as masculinized spaces, have been deemed as predominantly heterosexual spaces; ones where the presence of homosexuality is threatening, or has culturally and/or historically not been welcomed. We can then assume that there is no need to describe the space or the actors as heterosexual due to the socially constructed nature of the space itself.

Almost all the videos I analyzed continue to establish heterosexuality beyond the titles and website descriptions throughout the narratives of the videos themselves. A majority of the videos in the gay-for-pay categories, married men, and fraternity guys, the actors will expressively self-identify as heterosexual at some point in the video. In the website Straight Bait, all the videos follow the same structure. Two men, one 'straight' and one 'bait' come in to do a porn shoot. All the videos begin with an interview like session where the producer will ask questions about the men's lives. At least one of the guys will always express that they are in a relationship with a woman, or are straight. Questions will also address what types of women they are attracted to, and in some cases what sorts of sexual behaviors they enjoy engaging in with other women. They are then asked to demonstrate that they can maintain an erection, and are

comfortable with the cameras, the producer, and another actor being in the room. The producer

will put in straight porn for the guys to watch as they get ready, and they will often discuss the

features of the women in the video they are watching. Once the guys have met these criteria, the

producer will explain that he was just notified the female performer is unable to be there and that

he will double their payment if they do a scene together. The website Bait Bus follows a similar

pattern. The men are lured into the bus by an attractive female performer, then are asked to strip

for her and are blindfolded with the notion that the girl is about to perform oral sex on them.

Another guy on the bus, i.e. the bait, begins giving oral sex to the blindfolded straight guy.

Several minutes of the blindfolded guy enjoying the fellatio lead to him to taking the blindfold

off and realizing that he was enjoying a blow job from another guy. In every video, the guy will

freak out and often get aggressive requesting to be let off the bus. The producer then calms them

down and makes them a very lucrative offer if they satisfy the girl's fantasy to watch two guys

having sex. In addition to the money, the producer promises that the girl on the bus will go home

with them for the night after her fantasy of the two guys having sex is fulfilled. The website Lik-

Em-Straight includes an interview with the producer Brendon Marley, in which he answers the

question of whether the guys in his videos are "really straight" and how he gets them to do the

scenes. He explains that he often lures the guys in with general ads for male porn stars, and then

by having a female companion when he goes "hunting" for them. Heterosexuality is also

established within the narratives of the videos using the same interview style introductions

during which the guys will express that they are straight. In his video series Straight Heaven, the

men will watch straight porn while Brendon performs oral sex and various other sexual acts

depending on the men's comfort level. Heterosexuality in this category is almost always

expressed initially in the videos, and is reaffirmed at the end by asking the guys how it felt to be with a man.

The narratives of the videos depicting married men are more elaborate than the interviews in the preceding examples discussed. The videos on the website I Am a Married Man always begin with an elaborate fantasy-like narrative. In almost every video, the actor playing the married man will start by explicitly saying that his wife is gone for the day or for a couple hours. The videos commonly will feature a gay character that the married man is acquainted with and will begin with the two men alone together having a discussion of the wives' absence, and often expressing a frustration that the married man is having with their sex lives. In almost every video I watched on the I Am a Married Man website, the gay characters will extend an offer to fulfill the needs of the married men. The married men are almost always hesitant, will express again that they are straight and that they do not want their wives to find out, and will take some time to be convinced into engaging in a sexual act with another man. Heterosexuality in this category is established throughout the elaborate narrative.

In the category depicting masculinized spaces, heterosexuality is again not often discussed in the narratives. It is implied through the space itself, and through the power structures depicted in the narratives. Most videos in these categories depict sexual acts between men of distinct power roles; for example a boss and an intern, an officer and a sergeant, a coach and his player, or a team captain and freshman player. It can be argued that the establishment of heterosexuality in this category can be drawn from the hierarchically dualistic framework present within our socially constructed thought processes relating to identities; the framework which places dominant above submissive, mirroring the placement of masculine above feminine, and heterosexual above homosexual. So in creating opposing sets, we understand the

dominant/masculine/heterosexual to be oppositional and placed above submissive/feminine/homosexual. This can explain how the power relations in the narratives of the videos I explored imply heterosexuality by setting distinct power dichotomies in the videos. Heterosexuality can be assumed based on its dualistic relationship to dominance and masculinity.

Establishing Masculinity

The depiction of normative masculinity is the second step in the categories' attempt to redefine the identity-behavior formula outlined. The physical appearance, traits, behaviors, and roles that the performers depict in the three categories I explored portray an embodiment of normative masculinities and dominant masculine roles. Because of our socially constructed conflation of gender and sexual orientation, these characteristics and behaviors are correlated with heterosexuality, and therefore, in part, work to reinforce the realness of heterosexuality established in step one.

The physical appearances of the men portrayed have several distinct commonalities within each category, and ones that are evident across all three categories. Across all three categories, I found that normative masculinity is portrayed as being embodied by white males. If you scroll through the list of models and actors on websites such as Lik-Em-Straight, Bait Buddies, AWOL Marines, I Am a Married Man, Haze Him, Seduced Straight Guys, and almost all 12 other websites I analyzed, you might possibly find one or two men of color out of hundreds of white men on these websites. This demonstrates a core characteristic of masculinity is being white. Other general commonalities involved physical traits such as natural untrimmed body hair, and pale non-tanned skin. The men portrayed in all categories also commonly wear baseball caps, dog-tags in the case of military men, have simple haircuts, messy shaggy hair, or

buzzed cuts, and are often tattooed. Lastly, men across all categories generally embody muscular or toned bodies; particularly in the cases of masculinized spaces and fraternity guys.

In terms of sexual roles portrayed, the penetrating role is hypermasculinized and made to seem as less detrimental to the actors' sexual orientation. Men who are identified as heterosexual in most of the gay-for-pay videos and the married men videos almost always took on the role of being the 'top', or the penetrating partner. Conversations between the producers and the actors often made comments that relegate the anus or the mouth to being 'just another hole'; it does not matter if the penetrated is male or female. In the case of videos depicting a power gap in masculinized spaces, the more powerful, boss/coach/supervisor/officer was almost always the penetrating partner. Websites depicting sexual behaviors between fraternity men, particularly ones portraying hazing activities such as Haze Him or Frat Men, make a clear distinction between the significance of penetrating or being penetrated. The infliction of pain on the penetrated in the fraternity videos was also especially eroticized and encouraged. The videos often have a group of fraternity members surrounding the pledges being hazed, derogatorily yelling and laughing at them, and dictating what they should do. Interestingly enough, the penetrating partner in the act was often only encouraged to fuck harder or last longer. On the other hand, the penetrated is often asked whether they enjoyed being fucked and have their sexual orientation constantly questioned.

In terms of behaviors and demeanors portrayed by the performers in the videos, masculinity is portrayed using stereotypical masculine roles and behaviors. For example, the men in the gay-for-pay videos often speak in unaffected, low-pitched voices, and sit in slouched positions with legs uncrossed and spread open. Aggressiveness, prowess, and violent behavior were most common among videos that took place in masculinized spaces. These videos depicted

more rough sexual behaviors, and used more aggressive language. This was also true in the fraternity videos. Lastly, in the gay-for-pay website Bait Bus, the men displayed aggressiveness and violent behavior after they took their blindfold off and found out they were tricked into receiving oral sex from a guy instead of the girl.

Age and occupation were characteristics that the men within each category had in common, but that differed across the categories. In the gay-for-pay category, many of these videos will ask the guys about their age and occupation in the initial interview scene. These men are almost always between the ages of 18-25 and are currently unemployed or need extra money to support themselves. Websites like Haze Him advertises a $10,000 cash payment to video submissions of fraternity hazing activities involving gay sex. These videos often take place in dormitory-like settings and typical college settings. Common props include solo cups, posters on the walls, and in some cases even school paraphernalia and Greek letters. These characteristics all imply a college aged group 18-22, who are generally strapped for cash. In the case of the married men videos, at least one of the men portrayed can be described as more mature, successful, and generally in their 30s. They will often reference their jobs, and the settings are often in apartments or houses that reflect being part of a working-class/upper-middle class. The men portrayed in masculinized spaces varied in age and occupation depending on the space. Military men being serviced as gay-for-pay on the websites AWOL Marines and Military Classified both portrayed men between the ages of 18-30 who are generally also unemployed or in need for cash. While more elaborative military narratives on the website Drill My Hole often portrays age differences depending on positional roles. In the case of work place depictions on websites such as Hard at Work and Men at Play, men who had a positional power gap often also had an age gap between them; the more powerful character is also older. In the videos were the

two men depicted are close in age and work place position, there was a persistent exchange of power in which both actors appeared to be equally dominant. This leaves the viewer with the question of who will eventually give in to being penetrated. The men in the work place spaces often wear suits, and are in large office settings. Lastly, men depicted in locker room sexual acts also varied in age depending on the roles being performed. Most videos depicting coach/player roles had a distinct age gap between the performers, while videos depicting interactions between 'jocks' include men between the ages 18-40.

The categories I analyzed establish a limited normative masculine role. The corporal of this role is white, physically-able, and muscular. The performance of the role is done by working class, unaffected, and aggressive men. The role is sexually manifested in penetrating. Distinctions in age demonstrate a correlation between manhood, positional power, and age. Older men and young working class men are portrayed as more masculine. The need to support one's self or family is also an important duty to this masculine role. Because gender and sexual orientation are socially conflated, the categories I analyzed leave no room for any characteristics normatively regarded as feminine, i.e. homosexual. Therefore, establishing a normative masculine role works to also reaffirm the heterosexuality originally established and completely dismiss any question of genuineness.

Making The Shift to Same-Sex Sexual Acts

The final step in redefining the identity-behavior formula is to change the outcome from heterosexual sex to same-sex sexual acts. Having established genuine heterosexuality and normative masculinity, the categories I analyzed then make the shift to same-sex sexual behaviors. I found three distinct methods in which these categories do so; paying, convincing, and coercion.

In gay-for-pay websites I noticed that paying was done particularly in combination with sexual pleasure and need. Websites such as Bait Buddies and Bait Bus start by getting their performers aroused and ready to engage in what they believe is going to be a scene with a woman. The men are tricked into becoming aroused and then are offered the extra payment to engage in sexual behaviors with another man instead. The right price is almost always offered only after the men are aroused. Both websites also feature returning self-identified heterosexual men who are now aware of the producer's narrative and often express that the experience was pleasurable and are returning for the money.

Most of the gay-for-pay videos will follow up after the scene is done with another interview like Q&A session. The producers will ask the self-identified heterosexual men what it was like to be with another man, how it felt, and whether they would do it again. The questions are generally the same, but the responses differ depending on the website and the narratives. On the website Bait Buddies, many of the first-timers express that the experience was weird at first but once they became more engaged and aroused throughout the scene it was enjoyable. Some will express that the experience ranked among the most physically pleasurable experiences they have had. Similar responses are present on the site Lik-Em-Straight. On the other end of responses, men on Bait Bus often did not express similar sentiments. The men are initially promised an encounter with the woman on the bus only if they first engage in gay sex with the guy who they were tricked to receive oral sex from while blindfolded. These men will often express that they only did it for the girl, and that they did not enjoy the sexual act. The producer questions their credibility and challenges their sexual orientations by pointing out their ejaculation as proof that they enjoyed the experience. The men often deny this and many expressed that they were thinking about what they are being offered in return.

Lastly, in the case of the portrayal of supposedly real hazing activities in fraternities, Haze Him offers the best video submissions an award of $10,000. The guys often express during the video wanting to create a great scene so that they can get the money. The more extreme the hazing portrayed is, the more likely that the videos receive the award. Winning videos included a wide range of behaviors; oral and anal sex being the simplest examples. Other videos portray more homoerotic kinks and fetishes using toys and inanimate objects to sodomize the pledges. Alcohol is also almost always involved in these videos.

The second method used to make the transition involves convincing narratives. Although almost all the categories involve some form of convincing, videos depicting married men have the most elaborate negotiations. Most of the videos on the website I Am a Married Man depict gay men who attempt to convince heterosexual married men to have sex with them. These narratives and stories depicted in these videos have a distinct element of fantasy in them and depict the men engaging in stereotypically masculine activities such as watching a football game, working on fixing a car, or other laborious household projects. Following a depiction of the men engaging in one or more of the above activities, the conversation will often shift between the married character and the gay friend about frustrations of marriage, and lack of sexual satisfaction. The gay characters at this point begin to make sexual advances towards the married man and the convincing conversation begins. The gay characters will question the other's interest in experimenting, commenting on how pleasurable it could be and reaffirming that no one will find out. The married men most commonly responded by reaffirming their heterosexuality, and expressing their fear of being caught. The gay characters will continue to make sexual advances while the married characters will push their hands off of them all while continuing the negotiations. Eventually, the married men will give in to the advances. I looked at 8 different

videos on the website I Am a Married Man, and the website Men. The lengths of the full videos generally averaged between 20-30 minutes of which an average of about 5 minutes was spent portraying the platonic relationship between the men, and the convincing process.

Several coercive methods are utilized in videos taking place in masculinized spaces; most commonly psychological coercion and in some cases physical coercion. Websites depicting sexual behaviors between men in the work place generally involved more psychological coercion. As I explained before, many of the videos in masculinized spaces depict sexual acts between men who have distinct power relations and/or gaps in positional power. I characterize psychological coercion as the use of positional power to make the transition into gay sex. Many videos on the websites Men at Play and Hard at Work portray sexual behaviors between an intern/worker and their supervisor/boss. A common narrative in these videos in particular involves the lower ranking worker needing something from their boss—asking for a raise, or forgiveness for committing a mistake—and will express that they will do anything they have to do. The boss characters will then commonly emphasize the word 'anything' and request that the worker perform a sexual favor. Similar narratives are present in videos portraying teacher student relationships in which the student will do anything for a better grade. The characters in these cases utilize their positional power to manipulate and coerce the subservient character into gay sex out of need.

Military videos more commonly utilized physical coercion in combination with psychological coercion. In this case, I do not mean physical coercion as in rape, but more along the lines of aggressive behaviors that the dominant characters perform. The website Strong-Men depicts several videos of military men in higher ranks, who discipline lower ranked members by engaging in gay sex. The narratives often portray similar storylines as the ones in the work place

in which the subservient character expresses that they will do anything needed to get what they want. However, in the case of military videos, more often than not, after emphasizing the word 'anything', the higher ranking officers will physically grab the other, forcibly push them into their genital area, and order them to perform a sexual favor. I distinguish this from videos portraying rape because beyond this point, the characters both seem to consensually engage with each other in the video, and unlike rape videos, portray little struggle between the characters.

Analysis

In analyzing the reconstructed sexuality-gender-behavior formula put forth by my observations, I think it is important to indentify the socially and culturally constructed context in which it exists. We must understanding the social framework in which gay men live and how it influences the construction of their identity, in juxtaposition with the definitive role that gay pornography has played in constructing the lived experiences of gay men, the development of their identities, and in bringing visibility to their communities (Fejes, 2002). In doing so, we can then critically evaluate how the three categories of gay porn that I analyzed relate to the lived experience of gay men, their masculinity and sexual experience.

I explained in the opening paragraphs of this project the way pornography has developed into a source of understanding for the sexual lives of both men and women. Gay porn raises some of the same issues that are present in all pornography in regards to objectification, sexual violence and power, and viewer consequences. However, the development of my project made it clear that it is more meaningful for me to analyze tensions between gay male sexuality and masculinity in the context of heterosexual society and its ideals of masculinity—how they are all represented in the categories of gay pornography identified—than to put forth an analysis that theorizes moral implications on the topic. For gay men, because these representations were and

continue to be scarce elsewhere, pornography plays an even more distinct role in their lives. Historically, gay porn has "provided explicit representations of gay sexual behavior not otherwise available... [and] since most gay men become adults without learning the social and sexual codes of their community," much of their understanding and learning of their own desire comes from pornography (Escoffier, pg. 6, 2009). Gay porn occupies a central position in the structure of gay male desire, identity, and community, and has functioned as one the very few representations of gay men's desire (Clark, 1990; Tucker; 1990, Sherman, 1995; Burger, 1995; Waugh, 1996; McKee, 1999). Additionally, with the development of specific gay communities, gay pornography has become "a shaping force within contemporary urban gay culture," producing a "cultural framework through which sexual identity is produced, negotiated, and maintained" (Mowlabocus, 2007, p.64). In fact, in order to understand the complexity of gay porn, we have to recognize its "place within the context of gay men's cultural and social practices," (Chapagne, 1997) and the way It has "been culturally important for gay men, working to make them visible" (Attwood, 2010).

In the three categories of porn that I analyzed, we see the way they depict and sexualize the tensions of gay male sexuality existing within a hetero-masculininized and gendered society. The overall reconstruction of the sexuality-gender-behavior schema I put forth mirrors the discourse of gay men within their social context; working to legitimize and validate their sexual behavior and desire outside of the implications of identity labels and gender roles. Furthermore, how these labels and gender ideas are represented in the three categories reveals the intricacies of these tensions in gay men's lived experience.

A good starting point for understanding the social framework in which gay men live would be to examine the way we continually reconstruct and understand manhood and

masculinities. Manhood and masculinity as ways of socially and culturally doing the male-sex

role are ideas that are continuously constructed and reconstructed through manifestations of

power (Saywer 1972, Kimmel 1994, Stoltenberg 2004). A central priority for the preservation

and promotion of manhood is the task of distinguishing oneself from the oppositional "other",

i.e. anything feminine (Barrett 2000; Kimmel 1996; Nardi 1995; Connell 1992; Pronger 1990).

This is done through both language and performance (Butler, 1990). In essence, men and boys

are expected to live up to an idea of manhood, and perform a form of masculinity that is defined

not in within its own manifestation, but rather within a framework of opposition to the "others".

Throughout their lives, men have to always work to define and distinguish themselves from

femininity in the eyes of others, particularly other men. Initiation rituals into manhood begin at a

very young age, and men grow up and live in a world where they constantly have to prove their

masculinity to other men in order to be accepted into manhood (Connell 1992; Nardi 1995;

Stoltenberg 2004; Kimmel 1994). In fact, as Kimmel points out following a less sexualized

Freudian model, "The father is the first man who evaluates the boy's masculine performance, the

first pair of male eyes before whom he tries to prove himself... [and soon thereafter] the eyes of

role models such as teachers, coaches, bosses, or media heroes; the eyes of his peers, his friends,

his workmates" all work to scrutinize and police masculinity (1994). In effect, the performance

of masculinity becomes a continuous test, one that always has the possibility of being questioned

(Kimmel 1996, 2008). In order to eliminate the threat of being questioned, young men constantly

have to confine themselves within very specific gender-boundaries; constantly "checking the

fences we have constructed on the perimeter, making sure that nothing even remotely feminine

might show through...Never dress that way. Never talk or walk that way. Never show your

feelings or get emotional. Always be prepared to demonstrate sexual interest in women that you

meet, so it is impossible for any woman to get the wrong idea about you" (Kimmel, 1996). Thus, men perform masculinity by carefully avoiding specific behaviors that relate to femininity or might give the "wrong idea" of homosexuality. Obviously in this case, it is not homosexuality in the sense of men who have sex with men, but homosexuality in the sense of the wrong masculinity; one that is effeminate—and, lesser in value than hetero-masculinity.

In recent years, there has been a shift in the way scholars and researchers addressed masculinity in order to better understand the experience of men, including gay men in the. This shift is marked by no longer focusing on a one-masculinity model, and instead on a variety of masculinities in relation to each other and to femininity. This approach looks at the way masculinities are differentiated and hierarchically organized as hegemonic or marginalized. Furthermore, this approach better demonstrates the way hetero-masculinity and systems of patriarchy work hand in hand to define valued forms of masculinity and manhood in society and wok to dismiss "others" (Sawyer 1974; Stoltenberg 1977; Connell, 1987, and 1992; Nardi 1995; Kimmel 1996, 2004, and 2008). Even within the framework of multiple masculinities, scholars still highlight the way scrutiny by other men continues to assure distinctions from femininity and marginalized masculinities, i.e. racial minorities, women, and homosexuals. Conflating heterosexuality and masculinity—as dualistic opposites of homosexuality or femininity—places gay men in the same sphere as women and femininity within a patriarchal framework. Just as gender binary works to privilege men over women, heterosexuality is privileged and valued in society over homosexuality (Barrett 2000; Kimmel 1994; Nardi 1995; Pronger 1990). As a result, the devaluation of homosexuality through the construction of heterosexuality works to dismiss gay men from membership in the realm of manhood in the same way that women and

femininity are dismissed through patriarchal constructions of manhood. This has been described as the gender of sexuality (Schwartz and Rutter, 1998).

In the context of the three categories I analyzed, establishing heterosexuality and masculinity places the men in the videos within the realm of manhood and dominant masculinity. It opens up a space in which these men are able to begin to negotiate their sexual identity as irrelevant to their sexual behaviors. In the gay for pay videos, women were either used as lures into the vans (Bait Bus), lures into the gay porn studios (Bait Buddies), or as objects of desire in the videos where men watch straight porn while a man performs sexual acts on them (Seduced Straight Guys). Eric Anderson studied behaviors of athletes who engaged in same-sex sexual behaviors but retained their claim to heterosexual identity. He labeled plots in which there is a favorable ending whether it be money or sex with women as "good cause scenarios". He argues that the "good cause scenario underscores that it is the subjectivity of desire for another man which is problematized not the sex itself…The good cause scenario retains the subjectivity of heterosexual desire and the need for a woman's sexual presence (and her request for their same-sex sexual behaviors)." Anderson argues that this reinforces heterosexual privilege (2008).

In analyzing the eroticization of hazing videos in fraternities, Michael Kimmel provides an interesting insight into how these rituals correlate to and mirror initiation rituals into manhood (2008).

At first glance, one might be tempted to see these sexualized rituals…as homoerotic. (Indeed, it would be difficult not to see them that way). But they are also about the sexual humiliation of presumed heterosexual males—and part of the degradation is homophobic taunting. Perhaps the more obviously homoerotic the ritual, the more overtly homophobic must be the accompanying narrative…The rituals are often sexually humiliating,

sometimes violent, and almost always about manhood…In a sense, fraternity hazing is

the distorted mirror image of cultural rituals of initiations, where boys actually do

become men in the eyes of their culture.

By making these rituals the objects of gay men's desire, it allows the viewer to affirm gay

identity within rituals of initiation into manhood. Fred Fejes points out that "conflict between

gay male desire and heterosexual masculinity is explicitly incorporated into the narrative as a

basis for subverting and even overturning the domination of heterosexuality" and for the gay

male viewer, makes it "an articulation of his own desires and his own conflict with the

heterosexual regimes of power around him" (2002). So while the men in these videos might be

negotiating Anderson's "good cause scenario" and manifesting their power through degradation

and homophobia, gay men, on the other hand, are negotiating their existence within these

frameworks; making their own claim to being initiated into manhood by making the sexual acts

subjects of their desire.

Another interesting observation made was the racial make-up of the men in the three

categories analyzed. Jane Ward argues that "The appearance of 'authentic' heterosexuality is

also accomplished in interaction with race, socioeconomic class, and gender." Ward analyzes in

her recent studies, the phenomenon of what she refers to as "dude-sex;" heterosexually identified

men who casually have sex with other men (2008). .As my observations pointed out, the men in

these videos embodied white, middle-class identities. This works to solidify heterosexuality

because "heterosexual culture of dude-sex is established by drawing upon available typologies of

white heterosexual masculinities" while for men of color who engage in sex with other men,

their context is framed differently. For black men, it is associated with what is known as the

down-low culture or the 'DL', in which these men are repressing their sexual orientation because

of stigma in the black community. As for Latino men, same-sex acts have been part of Latino male culture in Middle America in which they are not signifiers of sexual identity if the men take on the penetrating role (Ward, 2008). This leaves "the image of a normative middle-class or professional whiteness (i.e. dudes who go to college, participate in sports, wear suit and ties, and so on)…in making heterosexuality legible in the context of men's sexual seduction of other men." So, within the context of a culture that constructed through binaries, white/other and heterosexual/other, both whiteness and heterosexuality define "the 'really, really normal, nothing out of the 'ordinary' subject" ([Original emphasis], Ward, 2008).

Studying the experience of gay men and their masculinities has become essential to the discourse of men's studies and research. Unlike stereotypes of gay masculinities, Nardi points out that gay men "exhibit a multiplicity of ways of "doing" masculinity…Some enact the strongest of masculine stereotypes through body building and sexual prowess, whereas others express a less dominant form…[and] many simply blend the "tradition" instrumental masculinity with the more "emotional" masculinity" (pg. 1-2, 2000). Yet, studying the experiences of gay men reveals much about how powerful gender systems are, and how their models of hierarchy, power, and privilege have also become embedded within them. As gay men worked "to alleviate their nagging sense of inadequacy to straight men" (Harris, pg. 99, 1997), they have also perpetuated a gender-based system of categorization within their own culture (Nardi, pg. 5, 2000). The dominant gendered framework of masculinities, systemically ranking valued expressions thereof, has influenced the way gay men reproduced dominant masculine identities, structured their understandings of effeminate gay men, and created sexual scripts (Connell, 1992; Barrett, 2000; Flowers, & Buston 2001; Nardi, 2000). This insight into gay men's identity within the social framework that they exist helps explain the way in which the porn categories I

analyzed have worked to construct heterosexuality, particularly in masculinized spaces by reproducing ideas of hegemonic masculinity.

Conclusion

The way sexuality and sexual orientation are gendered creates a very problematic and contradictory experience for gay men existing in a male-dominated world. Being a man and performing masculinity are understood to mean you have to distinguish yourself from femininity and everything associated with it. This creates a sense in which homosexuality is understood as a negation of masculinity, and homosexual men are defined and understood to be effeminate (Connell, 1992). As a result, throughout their lives, gay men have to continuously negotiate and reconcile their identities, masculinities and behaviors against a backdrop of hetero-masculinity that carries with it a series of implications. Many gay men are no different from straight men in their continuous gendered attempt to be accepted as men in this world; working "to get cultural confirmation of their masculinity" (Stoltenberg, 1977). However, this experience can be more problematic because of their sexual orientation, and therefore, the quest "to be one of the guys…to have full access to all the powers, prestige, prerogatives, and privileges that other men have" (Stoltenberg, 1977) becomes more problematic. Normative assumptions require that the embodiment of masculine traits have an equivocal relation to the embodiment of sexual identity, particularly heterosexual identity. Further defining our understanding of sexual identities are sexual behaviors. We have constructed sexual behavior scripts that define one's sexual identity; most commonly the example of a man who has sex with other men being understood to be homosexual, or at least not heterosexual. This in effect produces a rigid understanding of human desire that implies a direct correlation between manifestations of desire in sexual behavior, with the socially constructed sexual identities that are conflated in gender expression. Men who

engage in different-sex sexual acts are understood to be doing heterosexuality, which in context

of normative understanding are also doing masculinity. For gay men, the act of same-sex sexual

behavior negates the socially constructed idea of what it means to be male and/or masculine

because society has deemed that the doing of heterosexuality creates the identity of the doer as

heterosexual, and as masculine. So, it becomes central to the identity formation of most gay men

to either consciously distinguish themselves from the feminine through the embodiment of

hypermasculinized identities, or embrace the feminine corporeal. Gay pornography, and

particularly the categories I analyzed in this project create a space in which gay men do not have

to make that choice. The categories I analyzed create a space in which the normative sexuality-

gender-behavior formula is reproduced through normative understanding of each one, but

blended differently in order to make room for fluidity of desire and sexual behavior working to

affirm gay male identity and desire.

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