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# Controversial Images

## Media Representations on the Edge

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## 12

# The Beast Within: Materiality, Ethics and Animal Porn

*Susanna Paasonen*

Pornography has often been assumed to lack variety, value, quality, and complexity, and is usually seen as being at the bottom of the aesthetic hierarchy. But pornography is itself distinguished by inner hierarchies which rank artistic creations and porn with high production values higher than gonzo, reality and extreme pornographies. Animal pornography – also known as bestiality or sexual zoophilia – occupies the lowest levels of the strata as an illegal, or at best semi-legal, niche. This chapter explores the interconnections of bestiality and porn in the historical framework of human–animal relations – in relation to taboos and prohibitions that concern 'unnatural acts' and 'acts against nature,' and to the category of the human as it is defined and marked against and through its animal others. By considering spam email adverts for animal porn sites,<sup>1</sup> 'zoo porn' sites and a viral video, I investigate the interconnections of filth, transgression, and authenticity in animal porn as they tie into questions of materiality and ethics.

### The canine stain

In a 1972 'loop' – a silent 8mm stag film titled *Dog 1* (or *Dog Fucker*, *Dog-A-Rama*, *Dogorama*) – Linda Marciano, soon to become Lovelace and the star of *Deep Throat* (Gerard Damiano, 1972), had sex with an Alsatian-like mutt (O'Toole 1998: 65). After the phenomenal success and mainstream visibility of *Deep Throat*, the first porn film to be shot on 35 mm film and exhibited to a mixed cinema-going audience, the loop gained considerable and lasting subcultural fame. In her memoir, *Ordeal*, Lovelace writes about making the film at gunpoint.

If I could have foreseen how bad it was going to be, I wouldn't have surrendered. I would have chosen the possibility of death. I am able

to handle almost everything that has happened to me in my life ... but I'm still not able to handle that day. A dog. An animal. I have been raped by men who were not better than animals, but this was an actual animal and that represented a huge dividing line.

(Lovelace and McGrady 2006: 111)

In Lovelace's account, pornography is a realm of bestial men and degrading acts performed on women while bestiality itself stands for ultimate disgrace and filth. The film acquires heavy symbolic meaning as the worst moment of her life and complete abasement by her violent husband and manager, Chuck Traynor: 'There were no greater humiliations left for me. The memory of that day and that dog does not fade the way other memories do. The overwhelming sadness that I felt on that day is with me at this moment, stronger than ever. (Lovelace and McGrady 2006: 114). This is an image of the ultimate humiliation – of grief, sadness, and disgust – that has been effectively mobilized in anti-pornography campaigns such as those that Lovelace took part in (Lovelace and McGrady 1986: 193–5). Being coerced to have sex with an animal could be seen as an extension of the domestic abuse that Lovelace documents as having suffered throughout her marriage.<sup>2</sup> Here it becomes firmly associated with, and anchored in pornography that is then characterized by depravity, subordination, and the systematic, violent degradation of women.

Legitimacy, being socially recognized and even valued, is a recurring trope in autobiographical texts by North American porn performers and producers: respectability is a kind of Grail searched for in vain by performers as diverse as Lovelace, Traci Lords and Ron Jeremy. While Lords made a transition to TV, Hollywood productions and singing, and Jeremy has achieved a kind of semi-legitimacy at the fringes of mainstream popular culture (Shelton 2002), Lovelace's project failed. As she tried to leave X-rated films, she found herself haunted by the shadow of the dog film, which Al Goldstein of *Screw* had made public in 1973. References to bestiality resurfaced in interviews with her for years to come and the mark of 'dog fucker' refused to wear off (McNeil and Osborne 2005: 47–51, 99–101). Once the 'huge dividing line' separating humans from animals had been crossed, the sexual act performed and recorded on film, Lovelace was stigmatized in ways that prevented her from exiting the lower sediments of the pornographic.

This anecdote points to several issues that are central in terms of animal pornography. First, it illustrates the role of bestiality as one of the extremities of porn – an area of taboo that is considered both disgusting

and fascinating. Second, it indicates the rhetorical uses of bestiality as a symbol for pornography as dehumanizing. Third, the ethical considerations involved have mainly to do with the agency of the female performers whereas that of the canine has been less of an issue. Rewarded for his performance with dog biscuits, the mutt remains an alien other in Lovelace's account, a repelling creature similar to its owner and the people later watching the film. Fourth, the anecdote speaks of explicit boundary work, and traffic, between the categories of the human and the animal.

### Insatiable, uncontrollable beasts

Describing men as 'not better than animals,' Lovelace refers to interspecies boundary work where the human is posed as an ethically, morally, and intellectually superior breed that may nevertheless fall to the level of beasts. This resonates with Western cultural history in which 'animal passions' have been central to the demarcation of the human and the animal since antiquity. Plato, for example, assumed that animals have no sense of reason or justice. As Gillian Clark (2000: 88) notes, according to this logic, "animal passion" is fierce and overpowering. Animals are beasts. They are savage and antisocial. They cannot control their passions by reason and are unrestrained by respect for others, by a sense of fairness or by social order'.<sup>3</sup> In the seventeenth century, René Descartes, addressing the ways in which men (like animals, those automatons driven by immediate sensations) are animated by passions, emphasized the centrality of controlling one's passions, of being their master (Harrison 1992). The separation of 'man and beast' has also been firmly established in Christian theology, echoing the binary division of soul and flesh, mind and matter. Animals have been intimately identified with the sensory whereas, especially in Christian thought, the senses have been considered as the lower, bestial, component of man (Connor 2006). If the human senses are considered properties to be used, animals have been seen as ruled by their senses.

All this is not to say that the notion of animal passions has been uncontested as a means of creating hierarchical divisions where the human stands firmly at the top (see for example Derrida 2008). Porphyry, writing in the third century, argued that not only are animal passions evidence of the likeness of humans and animals, but that human lust is much more unbridled than that of animals: humans procreate when drunk and for the sake of the act itself, whereas animals do so for the sake of offspring (Clark 2000: 91). According to this idea,

morally correct forms of sexual behaviour involve the reproduction of the species. Similar lines of reasoning have reoccurred when marking out so-called natural sexual acts. The broad categories of 'unnatural acts', 'fornication against nature', 'sodomy', and 'buggery' have been, and still are, used in marking bestiality, anal and oral sex apart from acceptable forms of heterosexual coitus (Bolliger and Goetschel 2009). According to Christian notions, unnatural acts involving no procreative function are about the mere 'emission of seed' (Beirne 1997: 322; Laqueur 2003: 14–15). But while bestiality may have been forbidden in the Bible, it was only mildly punished until the 16th century. With modernity, the boundaries of human and animal became more elastic due to advances in the natural sciences and discoveries of 'monstrous races' in the colonies: and as 'animals were moving ever closer ... beasts became a threat' (Fudge 2000: 22). Fears concerning the status of humanity gave rise to acts of policing its boundaries against its various 'intimate others' (Rydström 2003: 1, 29–30). Bestiality became articulated as an act 'beyond words,' a sin against God and nature alike that threatened to pollute the species. Given its seriousness, it was punishable by the death of both the animal and human parties (Beirne 1997: 320; Fudge 2000: 21–3). Yet bestiality has also been considered less taboo and harmful than masturbation, an activity associated with various degenerative effects (Rydström 2003: 64–5; Laqueur 2003).

These 'unnatural acts' may have involved women and men, same-sex couples, or humans and animals: regardless of the exact constellation, they have been seen to break against the natural order of things. Legislation concerning homosexuality, anal, and oral sex has changed in most Western cultures since the mid-twentieth century while the focus of legislation concerning bestiality has shifted from the abuses of property rights and the moral universe towards animal rights and ethics. Animal porn is illegal in most Western countries on the basis of both obscenity and animal cruelty legislation, while bestiality has been identified as a psychopathology (Beirne 1997: 323–4; Earls and Lalumière 2002; Bolliger and Goetschel 2009). Meanwhile, advocates of sexual zoophilia have aimed to rearticulate it as a consensual lifestyle.<sup>4</sup>

Bestiality has been established as taboo at least since the early modern period, which may also explain some of its force, and appeal, as a pornographic genre. Writing on taboo and sexuality, Georges Bataille (1986: 256) argues that 'desire in eroticism is that of transgression of the taboos. Desire in eroticism is the desire that triumphs over the taboo. It presupposes man in conflict with himself.' Acts of transgressing taboos give rise to inner conflict that produces intense desire and pleasure

(Bataille 1986: 63–4, 107). Rather than losing their power or becoming undone in acts of breaching, taboos become both stronger and redrawn, since transgression 'suspends a taboo without suppressing it' (Bataille 1986: 36). Similarly Emile Durkheim has argued that norms themselves give rise to deviance—the 'policed boundaries of acceptability' come to face 'contestation, resistance, and transgression' (Langman 2004: 193; see also Jenks 2003: 16–32). Transgression both exceeds and supports the boundaries in question, as every 'rule, limit, boundary or edge carries with it its own fracture, penetration or impulse to disobey. The transgression is a component of the rule' (Jenks 2003: 7).

Sexual acts once deemed unnatural (from masturbation to anal and oral sex) have become standard fare whereas bestiality has not lost its social stigma. As a genre, pornography involves, and indeed dwells on, the breaching of boundaries, but bestiality represents one of the ultimate sexual taboos. Its taboo nature evokes reactions of disgust, disbelief, abhorrence, ridicule, indifference, and voyeuristic curiosity (Beetz 2009a: 46; 2009b: 98, 115). Bestiality is the focus of jokes, anecdotes, and innuendo as suggested by the inflatable sheep sex toys catered to bachelor parties or the apocryphal stories of the Empress Catherine the Great of Russia satisfying her insatiable desire with the aid of stallions. In the former example, the inflatable sheep, safe in its plastic shape designed to amuse rather than gratify, is a hypothetical channel for the assumedly omni-directional sexual drives of young men ('stags'). In the latter, sexual desire for horses can be seen as a hyperbolic reaction to the power of a female sovereign departing from conventions of gendered demeanour in the eighteenth century. Bestiality involves taboos meant to protect the intactness of the category of the human while, at the same time, they call for acts of breaching.

### Back at the ranch

Spam email adverts for the site *Spunk Farm* feature photo collages with horses, women being penetrated by, sucking on, and licking penises (of species mostly impossible to define), with semen covering their cheeks. The images are accompanied by sentences highlighting the visual spectacle: 'Barnyard Babes Getting Creamed!'; 'Nasty Girls Getting Down and Dirty!!'; 'Sick & degenerate hardcore!'; 'Amazing, bizarre, nasty XXX!!!'; 'Spunkfarm—where harvesting cum is the most important thing!'; 'Girls will do anything for a load!!!' In the site logo, letters forming the word 'spunk' simulate the oozy texture of semen while the letters in 'farm' are rope-like in appearance: [www.spunkfarm.com](http://www.spunkfarm.com) incorporates horseshoes and wooden textures. The popularity of the

term 'farm' in animal porn sites (for example, [www.farmgirls.com](http://www.farmgirls.com), [www.farmsex.com](http://www.farmsex.com), [www.farmsexshow.com](http://www.farmsexshow.com), [www.kinkfarm.com](http://www.kinkfarm.com)) owes to the infamy of *Animal Farm*, an underground bestiality video produced sometime between the late 1970s and early 1980s, and distributed on VHS.<sup>5</sup> The notoriety of *Animal Farm* is based on the description of the few who claim actually having seen it. In the TV documentary *The Real Animal Farm* (Molly Mathieson, 2006), for example, it is described as 'an evil, evil scumbag' and disturbing enough to make 'hard lads' either exit the room or vomit. *Animal Farm* stands for disturbing extremity and some of this aura also seems to stick to farm porn sites. The lexicon of 'nasty,' 'dirty,' 'sick,' and 'degenerate' deployed in the spam adverts frames the sites as 'amazing,' 'bizarre,' and hence attractive in its extremity. The terminology connects the human, the animal, fellatio, penetrative sex, degeneration, sickness, and plain nastiness in an extreme and taboo-defying pornographic spectacle. The co-articulation of image and text in the adverts amplifies a sense of hyperbolic nastiness and titillation.

The absence of male performers in the spam adverts may seem surprising. In the realm of commercial pornography this is much less of a surprise, since these sites are more indicative of how bestiality is 'mainstreamed' to consumers of online porn, than of animal porn as a subgenre. Zoophiles have made use of online forums from newsgroups to websites for sharing experiences, images, videos, and information on sex techniques (Miletski 2009: 18; Beetz 2009b: 114). Farm sites that place young female bodies firmly at their centre are a case apart. They can be associated with the logic of distinction central to online porn and the perpetual promise of novelty that contributes to its constant fragmentation. As the palette of online pornography widens in order to create new niches and markets, and as 'the mainstream' stretches to incorporate previously marginal subcategories, the overall visibility of fetishes and extremities increases (Patterson 2004: 106–7). Sites of the *Spunk Farm* kind seem to be produced for a broader audience desiring to see something extraordinary and bizarre (Beetz 2009: 116).

The advert for *Farm Girls* displays two images against a black background: in the first one, a young blonde woman holds a penis on top of her face covered in semen, and in the second, two women lick a penis dangling above them in what appears to be a barn. The penises are mostly covered with a black oval shape with the text 'censored' spelled in white block letters. Between the two images, captions read:

Forbidden XXX hardcore  
Banned in over 51 states.

You've never seen anything like it!  
Nasty, desperate country girls who will do anything for cock. The bigger the better!  
NOTHING is too TABOO for these young sluts.  
THE MOST SHOCKING & UNBELIEVABLE SEX ACTS.  
You won't believe it till you see it!  
CLICK HERE to live out your wildest fantasies!

The 'nastiness' and 'dirtiness' of interspecies sex is underscored in close-up photos of female faces, animal genitalia, and semen: women, more than the animals, become figures for the taboo. As Jack Sargeant (2006) points out, the figure of the 'nasty girl' is central to contemporary hardcore that aims to constantly push the boundaries of that which can be acted out and shown on the screen: nasty girls act out nasty things, and nastiness is their claim to fame. In the ad for *Farm Girls*, the realm of unbridled animal passions is juxtaposed with both promises and threats of censorship, illegality, and banning. These become guarantees of the shocking and extreme nature of the acts depicted, while also marking them as forbidden fruit. The last caption, however, suggests that the scenarios on offer involve the staging of desires and fantasies concerning, rather than originating from, the 'nasty, desperate country girls' and their animal companions.

The adverts for *Extreme Sex* feature an animation of a brunette woman sucking on the penis of a great Dane, and promise access to an 8-minute video of this; 'Watch Me F-U-C-K My Dog On Video!' and 'Watch Me Get F-U-C-K-E-D By the Familay [sic] Dog!' The senders of the messages are marked as female: 'Susan Fox' and 'Nikita Faust' suggest coy animal features and daemonic qualities with Slavic undertones, respectively. As is common in porn spam email, the female first person invitation disappears in the body of the message which refers to 'extreme sex,' 'Dutch Teen fucking her dog,' and 'Download movie.' This shift in address reframes the potential desires involved: as in the *Farm Girls* advert, they are attached to viewer curiosity and titillation, rather than the inclinations of Susan Fox and Nikita Faust.

Online animal porn tends to feature domestic animals (dogs and cats) and domesticated farm animals (horses, cows, donkeys, goats, etc.), rather than wild, uncontrollable beasts. In other words, the crossing of the inter-species boundary occurs in a highly safe and controlled framework for the human agents. The same goes for the range of animals historically involved in bestiality: companion animals, farmyard animals, livestock, and animal labourers such as cows, horses, sheep,

goats, pigs, chickens, turkeys, and, in urban settings, dogs, cats, and even rodents such as hamsters have been used for sex (Beirne 1997: 328; Rydström 2003; Beetz 2009a: 59; 2009b: 106–8). Such animals are in human possession and under human control in terms of their everyday bodily functions and lifespan. In this sense, bestiality is a variation of their position as someone's property—thing-like rather than 'subjects of a life' (Bekoff 2006: 9). Tame and close enough to be safe, the animals pose little danger to the human performer for whom the risk lies in the defiance of human taboos, laws, and norms concerning sexuality.

### How to form consent with an eel?

The 30-second viral porn video *2 Guys 1 Horse*, named after the equally infamous viral video *2 Girls 1 Cup*, shows a man being anally penetrated by a stallion. The infamy of the video – which is in all likelihood the most widely known instance of online animal porn—owes to the fact that Mr. Hands, the human performer in question, died of internal bleeding caused by a perforated colon soon after the video was shot near Enumclaw, Washington, in 2005.<sup>6</sup> The video is an amateur record of the event and it has been distributed as extreme and shock pornography with the intention to shock and disgust, rather than to sexually arouse its viewers. The video sharing site YouTube hosts numerous reaction videos shot by people watching the video (either alone or in company), experiencing visceral gut reactions and expressing them with exclamations such as 'ewww!' and 'no way, man!' The disturbing qualities of the video owe to its status as a semi-snuff film – for actual bodily harm is occurring in it – but equally to the spectacle of male anal penetration where a horse is the active partner. *2 Guys 1 Horse* seems to be about animal passion out of control, this passion connecting Mr. Hands, the 'gay horse' and the man behind the camera. This impression begins to change, however, when considering that Mr. Hands trained the stallion to penetrate him: the animal passions in question were, then, very much human.

The basic ethics of pornography involves informed consent—that is, the parties should be of the age of consent and perform out of their own choice. This raises some fundamental, albeit potentially banal, questions concerning animal porn: for how exactly does one form consent with, say, an eel? To what degree are acts performed by a canine in return for a dog biscuit or the routines of the abovementioned stallion based on consent? It might just be, as Piers Beirne (1997: 325–6) argues, that we 'will never know if animals are able to assent – in their

terms – to human suggestions for sexual intimacy.' The term 'animal love,' used by some as synonymous with bestiality, marks the activity as taking place between consenting and loving partners (Bolliger and Goetschel 2009: 40) in what can be seen as the anthropomorphic attribution of 'human mental states (thoughts, feelings, motivations, and beliefs) to nonhumans' (Serpell 2005: 122). While I am certainly an advocate of interspecies interaction and attachment that challenges the ideological and ontological 'Great Divides' between the animal and the human (Haraway 2008: 15–16), I find little in the examples of animal pornography that I have encountered to challenge the separateness of these categories, let alone the control of the human over the animal, or the projection of human desires onto nonhumans. On the contrary, the boundary of the human and the animal tends to be rendered spectacular—consider, for example, the links in the web directory [beastheaven.com](http://beastheaven.com) that describe 'Cute little farmgirl eating pony cum,' 'Chunky woman fucking the family dog,' and a 'Farmlut sucking a black donkey cock.'

On the one hand, animals are depicted as objects of sexual activity (as 'sucked' or 'fucked'). They are made to embody hyperbolic, deeply and exclusively human notions of difference, lust, filthiness, transgression, taboo, and unbridled desire, on the other. These are not instances of curiosity about what animals may do, feel, think, or enable humans to do, feel, or think (Haraway 2008: 20). Speaking of the pleasure or desire of animals in porn is very much a ventriloquist act of the kind that Donna Haraway (1992: 311–3) addresses in the context of nature: people speak for animals-as-dummies, say things in their name since animals, for the most part, cannot articulate things for themselves. Such ventriloquism, speaking for others by taking their place, is representative of the continuum of Western human–animal relationships as ones of domination and the exercise of power-knowledge, rather than a departure towards less hierarchical arrangements. These articulations are more telling of the human than the animal, for, as Harriet Ritvo (1991: 70) points out, 'animal-related discourse has often functioned as an extended, if unacknowledged metonymy, offering participants a concealed forum for the expression of opinions and worries imported from the human cultural arena.' Animals function as objects of, extensions and mirrors for human senses and desire, and at the same time as symbols of otherness that mark the boundaries of human sociability, and are fetishized as such.

The elastic boundary separating the human from the animal is drawn largely on the basis that reason and language are properties that are



unique to, and characteristic of the human, whereas the affective – ‘animal passions’ and the sensory in general – represents the mutual ground between the species. If animals ‘speak’ through their bodies rather than through the means of language (Cummings 1999: 27), then the carnal exchanges of porn would seem to erode the carefully constructed boundaries separating the species. This is especially the case given the positive value attached to raw and unbridled lust within the genre where people, driven by animal passions, turn into bitches and studs.

Taboos are a specific feature of human sexuality. Sexuality is a matter of discourse, of ‘sociohistorical material conditions’ (Barad 2007: 147): a fundamentally human framework of intelligibility, and form and source of knowledge, identification, and categorization. As an assemblage of drives, desires, taboos, identifications, labels, and practices, sexuality is very much a human construction, and a relatively recent one (Foucault 1990; Laqueur 1990). It is not the best of frameworks for understanding animal motivations. One alternative would be to consider sexual acts as nodes in a broader nexus of bodily sensations and acts – as parts of an undifferentiated carnal way of being in and experiencing the world. Rather than being presented as an issue of ‘animal sexuality,’ bestiality could then be addressed as an issue of integrity and agency for both the animal and human performers: that which they perform or are made to perform, under what conditions, and how these performances increase or diminish their powers of activity.

Like Beirne (1997: 324), I find it problematic to limit considerations of bestiality to an anthropocentric position while bypassing the position, agency, and role of the animal party. Rather than disturbing the hierarchical relations of humans and (other) animals, animal porn seems to work the other way by making the animals perform according to human scenarios, scripts, and choreographies. Discussing animal porn as exemplary of such renegotiation efficiently blocks from view the ethical stakes involved in interspecies relations, such as the respect for and integrity of the animal partners, their volition and characteristic behaviour. The animals become mirrors for human desires, sexual transgression and extremity, as well as objects for performing them. This is less exemplary of anti-humanist dismantling or critique of the historical ideologies and institutions based on the premise of human specificity and superiority, than it is of exercising power over animal ‘others.’ Lauren Berlant (2006: 21) points out that investments in objects or scenes of desire ‘and projections onto them are less about them than about a cluster of desires and affects we manage to keep magnetized to them.’ When ‘we talk about an object of desire, we are really talking

about a cluster of promises we want someone or something to make to us and make possible for us’ (Berlant 2006: 20). What then are animals as objects of desire performing in the context of pornography? What kinds of desires and affects are magnetized to them?

### Authenticity and materiality

In a short journalistic interview I made in the mid-1990s on the uses of pornography among university students, a male respondent announced his preference for animal porn. When asked for his reasons, he identified the sense of realness and authenticity that it entails. Regular pornography is performed and produced by actors skilled in simulation and there is no guarantee of the realness of the acts and sensations displayed. But animals do not pretend or lie – their arousal and climax is for real. This view seems to echo that of Descartes who saw animals as driven by passions they are unable to control, let alone simulate (Harrison 1992). Consequently, animal porn approximates or even stands in for ‘the real’ as images of raw sex. Realness and authenticity is central in understanding pornography. In animal porn, realness refers to the unstaged, the animalistic (or indeed, bestial), nastiness, and lack of gloss. It appears to carry the status of presentation (mere showing) over representation (the mediated). In addition to the properties of the images and the gut reactions they evoke, realness is also a question of production and its material conditions.

Since the production and distribution of animal porn is illegal in many states and countries, most of the material available through zoophilic portals and web directories is amateur. Independent of the exact nature of emotional or sexual relations between animals and their owners – as elaborated in various documentary films on zoophilia – the acts recorded and circulated online are detached from possible intimacies and affective attachments. There is little to see except for the act itself. Indeed, intimacies and emotional bonds are not the stuff of pornography in general, for the genre is not primarily preoccupied with issues such as psychological complexity or character motivation.

In much online porn, visual and textual hyperbole and excess create a sense of artifice, of ‘as if.’ In the case of animal porn, some of this distance disappears and I find myself inescapably bound to questions of production and agency – who performs what, with whom, and under what conditions. The notions of presentation and representation also become blurry because of ethical considerations: the images document something I cannot, and do not want to, approach as a mere question of diegesis. This response may seem close to those of anti-pornography

authors arguing for porn as material acts and forms of abuse (e.g. Mason-Grant 2004). I am not, however, arguing that the women performing in animal porn must have been either fooled or forced—and that they are in any case abused—but that the impossibility of informed consent with animals renders animal porn unethical by default. A woman and a goat in a 'goat-play' video are not simply labourers of similar standing or agency: the goat, unlike the woman, is not taking up a role as work, nor does it have the option to refuse sexual advances.

In terms of ethics and pornography, the contexts for producing and circulating porn cannot be avoided for the simple reason that pornography's *raison d'être* is to dwell on the materiality of bodies, the resonances that occur in between the bodies performing and watching, and the technologies of recording, distributing, and consuming porn. Porn involves the organization and division of labour, particular forms of commodity production that are obscured if conceptualizing the products as mere 'texts' (cf. Villarejo 2003: 10). Issues of materiality are tied in with ethics in shifting focus to the physicality of bodies (be they animal or human), the conditions of their agency, and the desires that are magnetized onto them.

Animals in online porn symbolize and embody the transgression of sexual taboos concerning interspecies acts, unbridled sexual drive and lust, authenticity, presence, as well as the degeneration and humiliation of their human, and especially female partners. Unsurprisingly yet – at least for me – disturbingly, the desires and affects magnetized to them revolve very much around human sexuality, its shapes, boundaries, and frontiers. Although quintessential and central as porn performers, the animals are ultimately extras in the displays of desire and pleasure offered in pornography. They are symbols of simple lust while, like shoes, accessories, or body hair, they also occupy the role of fetishes as objects, rather than subjects of desire.

## Notes

1. These ten adverts are part of an archive of 366 spam adverts collected in 2002–4. Two of these are for the video *Dutch Girl with Dog* and eight others for farm sites: *Spunk Farm*, *Girl Ranch*, *Farm Girls*, *Jungle Girls* (these four sites no longer exist), *Kink Farm* (<http://kinkfarm.com/>), and *Real Farm Sex* (<http://www.realfarmsex.com/>).
2. Cases of women being forced to perform similar sexual acts have been documented as incidents of domestic violence (Beetz 2009a: 55).
3. This figure is also one of unbridled sexuality, as in the mythological figures of satyrs. In ancient Greece these companions of Dionysus were visualized as

having perpetual and impressive erections. In ancient Rome they morphed into figures half human, half goat, and were often depicted in sexual congress with goats (Kendrick 1996: 6, 237). A boundary creature such as satyr is a figure for transgressive and ultimately uncontrollable sexuality driven by raw, animal passions.

4. See Beetz 2009b: 99–103. These perspectives have been depicted in documentary films such as *Animal Love* (Ulrich Seidl, 1995) and *Animal Passions* (Christopher Spencer, 2004).
5. The episodic film was a patchwork made from Danish 8mm and Super 8 films produced by Color Climax (the largest Danish porn production company) since 1969, and possibly also Alex de Renzy's 1971 *Animal Lover*, shot in California.
6. The story of Mr. Hands is depicted in the semi-documentary film *Zoo* (Robinson Devor, 2007).

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## Part IV

# Engaging with Controversial Images