

Master's Thesis - Olivia Zivot BA.

Millennial Women and Pornography: A Unique Temporal and Social Perspective

Opponent: Lucy Císař Brown MA.

This thesis represents a well-researched and authoritative investigation into pornographic consumption which engages effectively with existing debates in the literature. The research design, methodology and execution of the empirical element of the research are reasonable with demonstrated understanding of the need for reflexivity in search scenarios. All statements are well supported with relevant citations and demonstrate broad knowledge of the subject. The structure, language and presentation of the thesis is well thought out and to a high academic standard.

In her deployment of the grounded theory approach however, the student has somewhat limited the extent and focus of her final analysis which is lacking in a deeper theoretical engagement of her own stemming from the concepts identified in the interview data. The 'narrowing' of the research is not entirely successful in this instance and the benefit of using grounded theory neutralised by the lack of producing a novel theoretical perspective. The conclusion that her research supports the conclusions of existing research is legitimate in general, however I would have liked to see a further exploration of the tentatively suggested concept of 'cultural trauma' as it relates to the millennial experience specifically. The crucial significance of the uncensored access to pornography of millennials as adolescents appears to be where this thesis represents the most novel contribution to knowledge.

Some considerations for the author:

The expression of a 'personal connection' to the participants mentioned by the researcher may have influenced the responses she received (positive or negative) and potentially undermine the grounded theory approach. How was this mitigated?

'Education' is fundamentally designed to inform individuals through guidance on a topic however as it is not the primary directive of pornography and the individual self-selects so it may educate young people through reinforcing sexual gender norms as well as exploring alternatives. Marilyn refers to pornography not being 'actively' educational and there seems to be a disconnect between the pornography described in the interviews (as accessed in their sexual developmental stage) versus intentionally selected/created content they engaged in as adults with understandings of consent and fantasy/reality. 'Consumptive self-exploration' may be a more appropriate term because it is a personal rather than collective experience.

Overall this thesis represents a very high-level of academic engagement and inquiry with some weakness related to the full development of a theoretical conclusion. On that basis I would recommend the grade of **2 (Very good)**.

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