

Sex Pigs: Why Porn Is Like Sausage, or The Truth Is That—Behind the Scenes— Porn Is Not Very Sexy

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SUMMARY. The author examines the gay adult video industry from an insider's perspective. The workaday reality of making porn is contrasted with the skin trade's glamorous myths, and the idea that porn consumers prefer these myths to the "truth" is outlined. [Article copies available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service: 1-800-HAWORTH. E-mail address: <docdelivery@haworthpress.com> Website: <<http://www.HaworthPress.com>> © 2004 by The Haworth Press, Inc. All rights reserved.]

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I am a writer in the gay adult video industry. I have reviewed literally thousands of tapes, interviewed the newest models¹ and veteran direc-

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tors, and visited porn sets. I have even tried my hand at writing and directing skin flicks. Half of my adult life has been spent immersed in erections and cum shots; I have seen how difficult it can be to light, shoot, and edit a double-penetration, which is why you rarely see them in gay porn. I have been mesmerized by a rose (not the floral variety) and been splashed with semen even whilst standing 20 feet from men in the throes of climax.

At parties, my profession is an ideal icebreaker. Most people, male or female, straight or gay, are inevitably fascinated with the idea of porn. If they do not watch it, they want to know all I can tell them. If they do consume it, they usually bubble over with questions about their favourite model. And whatever their orientation or proclivity, they always get around to The Question: What is it like on a porn set?

The short answer is it's boring. Anything repeated over and over for eight hours is boring, whether it is flipping burgers, folding sweaters, or giving someone a blow job. Making porn is definitely titillating but after an hour, one's mind starts to wander to lunch, bills, and who is going to get voted off *Survivor* tonight.

Sure, the partygoers say, but what is it *really* like? This is neither a strange nor unexpected question. After all, for most of us, sex is only shared periodically with one other person in the darkened privacy of a bedroom. To watch it happen live can be pretty damn thrilling. Which is not to imply that filmed sex is the same as *live* sex; an average scene can take up to eight hours to film. The set has to be dressed and lit properly and the director generally has a mandate to capture certain positions for a certain period of time. The usual formula for an average sex scene is kiss-kiss-suck-suck-rim-fuck-change positions-fuck-cum-cum. It's that last bit—waiting for the cum shot—that can easily derail a shoot.

I know a director of bisexual videos who swears that he will only direct lesbian porn because he can shoot the sex, have the women fake their cum shots, and be done with the scene in ninety minutes or less. Conversely, the men in his videos have been known to take hours. In an attempt to achieve orgasm, one hapless gentleman in a male-male scene took almost four hours, and even then could not quite manage it. His co-star had already provided his pop shot and was showered and dressed. Out of desperation, the director asked the co-star if he was up for another go and promised a bump in pay. The co-star agreed, unzipped his pants, and kneeled over his partner—who lay back with a camera tightly framing his upper chest and face. He faked the motions of masturbating (moans included) as his co-star quickly brought himself to

orgasm and shot several ropes of semen neatly into frame and across the guy's chest. On camera, you could never tell the difference.

When I talk about the industry with non-porn civilians, it is the heterosexuals who are most fascinated. They appear highly intrigued by the concept of two strangers meeting in the parking lot, shaking hands, going into makeup, ducking into the bathroom to take off their clothes, then joining on a brightly lit set to have sex for a few hours. To gay men, the concept of screwing a stranger is not beyond the pale of everyday life.

Generally, the models don't know each other beforehand and occasionally don't even like each other. But stick around the industry long enough and you naturally begin to make friends. On one set I visited, a model balked at fucking his co-star because the pair weren't merely good friends, "we're like sisters!" There wasn't time to locate a replacement, so the performer had to make do. Later, I asked him how he got through it. He said it wasn't *really* a problem. "He's got a hot body and a big honking dick, so it wasn't like work," he explained, "but you know what we were talking about?" (They had done a lot of whispering and sharing secret smiles during their sexual encounter.) "Cyndi Lauper! I just saw her in concert with Cher."

Most directors hope for a bit of chemistry between their scene partners. Companies like Falcon Studios and Titan Media discourage their performers from fraternising beforehand in the hope of capturing, on camera, that first flame of attraction. Others, such as Eastern European director George Duroy (who runs the powerhouse studio Bel Ami) and auteur Kristen Bjorn (of Sarava Productions), labour intensely to manufacture that fire; Bjorn has been known to spend three days on a scene until he gets what he wants.

But what if the performers simply cannot stand one another? It usually does not matter. Most gay porn stars regard what they do on film as work and not as something intrinsically pleasurable. One performer, who recently retired, says his worst experience was during a scene with a straight model that couldn't manage an erection. "I was kneeling in front of him, waiting to blow him, and it was taking forever, so I closed my eyes and kind of drifted off. I woke up when he balanced a porn magazine on my goddamned head! A *straight* porn magazine! I got through that scene by totally compartmentalizing. I was so pissed, I didn't even want to pretend I was enjoying myself." And this example encapsulates the problem: porn is like sausage and politics; you don't want to see how they are made.

It is often said there are two types of “legitimate” Hollywood fans: those wishing to escape the reality of their lives for a couple of hours and those wanting to uncover every moviemaking secret, including the name of the person inside the rubber Godzilla suit. The same two groups of people watch porn. At parties, when The Question invariably arises, it is the former group that usually asks it. Consequently, I do not tell them about the sausage factory. My ready answer is: “It’s great. Totally hot. You’d love it.”

NOTE

1. When I say “newest models,” I am not necessarily referring to “Twinks.” Basically, if you are under 30 or over 45, but not quite 55, you are the right age for the job and, thus, technically could be called a “new model.” (I know an early 30-something performer whose small stature and youthful demeanour have allowed him to carry off being in his “early twenties” for his entire career, and thus far no one has done the math.) Porn is not strictly for the young. Although a muscular daddy with a salt-and-pepper beard, explains one director, “is a niche. Twinks are a genre. Daddy-types are a niche.” In fact, at the *Adult Video News’ GayVN Awards* show, a new category was added this year: Best Specialty Release, 18-23 (translation: best non-middle-of-the-road video featuring models whose “public age” falls between 18 and 23 years). Apparently, the days of encountering any 24-year-olds in porn are now essentially over.

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