

## Chapter 13: Illegal Representations

The purpose of this chapter is to examine recent debates surrounding ‘extreme pornography’. This includes imagery that ‘is grossly offensive, disgusting or otherwise of an **obscene** character’ and which realistically depicts acts that appear to threaten a person’s life or threaten ‘serious injury to a person’s anus, breasts or genitals’ (Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 (CJIA) 2008, s63). In unpacking this, we consider how pornographic imagery has changed from the late 1800s through to the twenty-first century. We then take a step back further to think about representations of the body itself. We explore how the nude/naked body has been represented in art (and, as we shall see, non-art). Doing so allows us to think about the ways in which the body has been rendered ‘obscene’. We then apply this thinking to our main case study: the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008. This particular Act responded to societal concerns about ‘extreme pornography’. As we see in this chapter, it is useful to examine legislative changes surrounding ‘obscene’ material as these give us an insight into a society’s notion of what should – or should *not* – be representable. We will be building upon ideas and themes from Chapter Four in relation to consent, Chapter Nine where we discussed risk and sex, and Chapter Eleven where we discussed sex and the digital world.

By the end of this chapter you will understand more about:

- Representations of the body and how we might differentiate between the ‘naked’ and the ‘nude’.

- What it means to look at bodies in ‘states of excess’.
- How conceptions of the body and representations of sexually violent acts have changed in the digital era.
- How the themes you have addressed so far in this book play out in the context of (illegal) representations.

In March 2020, the news site Vox published the starkly titled article ‘The porn we see – and sex we have – is influenced by the adult industry’s biggest spenders’ (Hay, 16 March 2020). The piece goes on to describe the ways in which a ‘freemium’ economic model has radically changed the production of pornography. It links to a further article (‘My stepdad’s huge data set’) that quotes the CFO of Evil Angel, a production company, describing the industry moving from ‘a perfect one-to-one’ relationship with a consumer to one where ‘now it’s probably 10,000 to one, or something’ (Turner, 1 January 2019). To put this differently, there has been a shift and splintering within the audience. For every one customer that pays for pornography, there are – potentially – thousands of consumers that do not. The thesis of the article is that the producers follow the demands of the *customer*. The content that is produced is effectively dictated by the small number of people that will pay. In the last five years this has led to the rise of particular trends, for example that of ‘family role-play content’ (read, simulated incest). Kal Raustiala and Christopher Sprigman (2019) in their analysis of ‘data-driven creativity’ describe the rise of both digital distribution and free content as fundamentally altering the production model. In the same way in which the music industry sees streaming as a supplement to its principal revenue streams coming from

merchandising and live events, so pornography has seen its model shift. They describe how MindGeek – the parent company of Pornhub, as well as numerous major pornographic production studios – ‘has leveraged streaming data to not only organise and suggest content to consumers but even to shape creative decisions’ (Raustiala and Sprigman, 2019: 101). This, for them, is the ‘second digital disruption’ as user data is harvested in order to shape ‘content promotion, aggregation, dissemination, and investment’ (Raustiala and Sprigman, 2019: 103).

This, then, is our point of departure. In Chapter Eleven, we explored the ways in which the internet has facilitated harassment and abuse. What do troubling representations of sex and **sexuality** look like in the digital era? Here, we will focus on changing perceptions of the body and how they relate to notions of transgression. Later in the chapter we will look at changes to legislation relating to obscenity and how representations of certain acts have been deemed to be obscene. Exploring these points will allow us to unpack the debates relating to what material should – or should not – be considered illegal. For the purposes of this chapter, we are not going to taking a position in relation to pornography in and of itself. We will set out – briefly – some of the stances it engenders. There are writers who consider it to be a clear social problem that leads to violence against women (MacKinnon, 1989). Others see it as a creative art form that provides a space for marginal sexualities (McNair, 2013). We are not aiming to push you towards one or other of these conclusions. Rather, we will ask readers to interrogate their own stance on this and related issues.

Our interest lies in unpacking Peter Stallybrass and Allon White's (1986: 5) notion that '[w]hat is socially peripheral may be symbolically central'. In other words, if we take pornography (and, as we develop later, 'extreme pornography') as 'socially peripheral', but still something that is created and consumed, what questions does it pose about matters that are central to a society? To paraphrase the Vox headline, how might the porn we see change the sex we have and the relationships we have with one another? What are the cultural and social lines that define transgression and how might these have been problematised in the digital era? To unpack these questions, it is useful to first go back and consider the earliest depictions of sex and the moving image.

'Stag films', so-labelled by the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, were first shown in brothels and small clubs in the early 1900s (Slade, 1984). These were the first on-screen depictions of heterosexual intercourse and would be joined by depictions of homosexual intercourse in the 1920s. Although, as Joseph Slade (1984: 150) states, the latter did not prove popular since 'homoeroticism distressed these viewers'. The physical delicacy of the film itself means that few of these early reels exist today. As film technology changed over the twentieth century, various formats were used to capture sex on-screen. These were then played in homes and in individual cabinets in sex shops (8mm), as well as pornographic cinemas (16mm and 35mm). Betamax and VHS cassettes would join them in the 1970s, which meant that pornographic films were more easily played in the home. One curious note is that whilst videocassettes could be easily reproduced and distributed in comparison to the earlier reels of film, the number

of productions diminished between 1972 (120) and 1984 (45) (Slade, 1984). Up until the 1960s, the stag film was black-and-white, silent and 12 minutes long at most (Slade, 2006). Prior to 1965, only five had sound and four were shot in colour. We can compare that to Pornhub's self-reported figures. In 2019 alone, there were 6.83 million uploads, consisting of 1.36 million hours of content. That equates to 169 *years* of content.

## **Reacting to the pornographic industry**

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In 2017, the journalist Jon Ronson (perhaps best known as author of *The Psychopath Test*) released a seven-part podcast series entitled *The Butterfly Effect*. In the series, he explores the effect that the explosive growth of free streaming sites, such as Pornhub, have had on the pornographic film industry. He also speaks with 'customs producers' who make bespoke films for individual customers, as well as the users of life-like sex dolls. As with this chapter, Ronson does not take a pro- or anti-pornography stance. We recommend that you listen to this series and consider the following:

- What is *your* reaction to hearing these stories?
- Does it change your viewpoint concerning the producers or consumers of pornography?

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McNair's (2013) text 'Porno? Chic!' points to the contemporary proliferation of pornography and identifies it as a movement from a 'once heavily stigmatised and

marginalised cultural form' to one that is 'not only more plentiful, and more visible, but also fashionable'. That said, the 'pornification' or 'pornographication' of culture has also been identified by 'Christian activists, neo-con commentators, and moral lobby groups alike' as one of the 'mix of 'terrors' assailing modern society' (Attwood and Smith, 2010: 184). It is intimately tied up with questions of 'moral, ethical and political **discourses** on public health and cultural well-being' (Hines and Kerr, 2012: 5). Writing in 1984, at the time of large-scale distribution via VHS cassette but spiralling production costs and a reduced number of productions, Slade (1984: 162-3) suggested that '[as] producers of pornographic features aim at a degree of respectability, and as increasingly middle-class audiences demand more elaborate plots, directors will doubtless steal from a popular culture already schooled in violence'. We might wonder at the extent to which the growth in pornography has responded to the centrality of violence in popular culture in those intervening 35 years.

Questions relating to the depiction of sexualised violence in particular have been brought into vivid focus with the on-going debates surrounding 'extreme pornography'. Feona Attwood and Clarissa Smith (2010) discuss it in relation to the apparent mainstreaming of pornography. As they state:

in the context of this new visibility and accessibility of sex media and the broadening out of the meanings associated with sex, the extreme porn debate has worked as a way of rearticulating the divide between obscene and on/scene. As some images and practices previously associated with porn and obscenity become recategorized as chic, cool or unremarkable,

others are regulated to the realm of the taboo. And increasingly, obscenity is refigured. (Attwood and Smith, 2010: 186)

Let us unpack this a little more. The definition of 'extreme pornography' used here is derived from phrasing used in the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008. It is defined – in part – by representations of acts that appear to be life threatening or are likely to result in serious, disabling injury. This includes either real or simulated acts such as strangulation. Attwood and Smith make use here of Linda Williams' (1989, 1999) dichotomy of obscene and on/scene. Obscenity is that 'deserving to be kept out of public sight' (Williams, 1999: 282). On/scenity, by contrast, is centrally concerned with the visible: 'the gesture by which a culture brings on to the public scene the very organs, acts, 'bodies and pleasures' that have heretofore been designated ob-off-scene, that is, as needing to be kept out of view...' (Williams, 1999: 282). Relatedly, Laura Nead (1992: 25) suggests that the etymology of 'obscene' may be related to 'scena': 'what is off, or to one side of the stage, beyond presentation'. This reading delineates the representable and the unrepresentable. When thinking about depictions of the body in 'art', the obscene body is non-art and, as such, has no cultural merits. It is – in this sense – worthless. It has an 'absence of artistic value'. Further, it has the 'potential to pervert, debase or defile' (Nead, 1992: 90). So, this suggests that the obscene should be outside of representation. It cannot be shown.

Thus, Attwood and Smith (2010) propose that the mainstreaming of pornography has realigned the obscene in relation to depictions of sex. The explicitness that

once defined this particular type of the obscene is now – to a greater or lesser extent – accepted. It has become on/scene. It has been brought out into the public scene. Contra Williams’ suggestion that ‘obscenity’ – which used to be ‘locked up and kept hidden off/scene – is no longer possible’; Attwood and Smith (2010) suggest that it has been re-configured. Obscenity and sex, then, is no longer concerned with the explicit exposure of the body and associated acts since they have been rendered ‘chic, cool or unremarkable’ (Attwood and Smith, 2010: 186). The purported pornification of culture has normalised them and brought them within the mainstream of representation. Rather, the focus now rests upon the ‘perversity’ and what has been labelled ‘extreme’.

As we shall see, legislation has established a line – one that is somewhat porous and ill-defined – between representations that are normal and ones that are deemed illegitimate or perverse. Judith Butler, (1993; cited by Wilkinson, 2011: 494) frames this as the production of ‘a domain of excluded and delegitimated “sex”’. So, that which is ‘perverse’ has been labelled as ‘extreme’. However, the prefix ‘extreme’ is a loose one. It can just as easily be used as an umbrella term by anti-pornography campaigners as it can by producers to entice consumers with new, as yet unseen transgressions or taboos. That said, this can also be viewed as part of a trend that Williams astutely identified in 1991: ‘pornography is today more often deemed excessive for its violence than for its sin’ (2011: 494).

If we are to follow Slade’s (1984) reading of the changing nature of the ‘stag’, as outlined above, then pornification of culture has seen pornography adopting the



violent underpinnings of that culture. This has been exacerbated by the move to the digital. To reiterate Stallybrass and White's (1984: 5) observation that '[w]hat is socially peripheral may be symbolically central', it is valuable to explore this 'extreme' edge of a cultural phenomenon in order to access that which lies at the culture's centre. To do so, we will first examine representations of the body itself and how it has been rendered ob-off-scene. Further, we will consider how innovations in the digital era have changed representations of the body. Finally, in unpacking these, we can apply this understanding to the body that has been subjected to sexual violence in 'extreme pornography'.

## **The body**

In our bid to understand how the body has been deemed to be obscene or taboo, it is instructive to briefly consider a few key ways in which the 'body' has been subject to a look and, in part, defined by that gaze. As Ann Cahill (2000: 47) frames it, the body is 'far from being in any sense natural or primary'. Rather, it is always and forever subject to competing discourses that shape it. Philip Carr-Gomm (2010: 11), for example, outlines the various 'contradictions and paradoxes' in his colourful exploration of 'nakedness': 'In religion nakedness can signify shamefulness and a lust that must be conquered, or it can symbolise innocence, a lack of shame and even a denial of the body. In the political sphere, nakedness can symbolise raw **power** and authority, or vulnerability and enslavement'. If we take a Foucaultian approach that envisages the body as discursively produced and subject to differing modalities of power and desire, it is important to note that this does not mean that the 'body is wholly or predictably determined' (Cahill, 2000:

47). The body can also be a site of resistance to these dominant discourses. Power itself is diffuse and so 'its effects are scattered and uneven with regard to individual bodies' (Cahill, 2000: 47).

One way to initially unpack this notion is to consider the way in which the naked and nude body have been separated. Nead (1992) begins her analysis of this dichotomy by using Kenneth Clark's (1956) text *The Nude* as her jumping off point. Clark's book investigates the 'nude' in art from the ancient world through to twentieth century modernism. Of course, a key subject within the history of **Western** art is the nude. More specifically, it is the female nude. Simply put, 'the female nude connotes 'Art'' (Nead, 1992: 1). The naked body, by contrast, is a figure of vulnerability, 'huddled and defenceless' (Nead, 1992: 14). The nude is an abstraction. It is 'the body in representation' (Nead, 1992: 14). To move from naked to nude is to move from 'the actual to the ideal' (Nead, 1992: 14). It is also typically the *female* nude that is subject to this evaluative gaze and consideration (and, as Nead highlights, it is often a *male* viewer that does the looking).

Alternatively, we can draw upon another art critic, John Berger, in framing this discussion. For Berger (1972, cited in Carr-Gomm, 2010: 8), '[t]o be naked is to be oneself. To be nude is to be seen by others and yet recognised for oneself. A naked body has to be seen as an object in order to become nude'. A further way of framing the nude in art is that it is to be the subject of contemplation. If it enflames the passions too greatly, it cannot be art. Indeed, it tips into obscenity. When an image prompts an 'incentive to action' it is no longer to be considered art,

becoming pushed into the 'corrupted domain of documentary, propaganda [or] pornography' (Nead, 1992: 27).

Let us consider how the representations of the female and male nude have been differentiated. Again, we owe a debt to Nead's analysis. She highlights da Vinci's *Vitruvian Man*. You will recall that it depicts the artist, his arms outstretched. His anatomical proportions are encircled. He is captured within and defined by squares and circles. The artistic representation of 'man' is co-mingled with the geometric precision of lines and curves. This is male as culture and rationality intertwined. The female nude is juxtaposed against this. Here, the female represents 'nature and physicality' (Nead, 1992: 18).

This dichotomy is well-illustrated by the *cuirasse esthétique*. A cuirass is a piece of armour that shields the torso. An anatomical cuirass is such an armour, but fashioned to resemble an idealised torso. As such, this 'muscle architecture' of the armour provides an heroic rendering of the male form. Clark's (1956) reading of *cuirasse esthétique* separates the interior and exterior; it both contains the body and projects a message of strength. Both elements suggest a sense of control, a mastery of both within and without. Nead, using Klaus Theweleit's (1989) analyses of the German Freikorps (irregular military units of the eighteenth through to early twentieth centuries), suggests a somewhat different differentiation of interior and exterior states. Here the idealised torso is a cage containing a bestial masculine nature. It recognises that primitive interior state, but offers a sense of control such that the individual will not be taken over by it. The muscle-

architecture of the hardened male body also acted as a repudiation of a female form that was perceived as 'soft, fluid and undifferentiated' (Nead, 1992: 17). So, the hard torso is a rejection of the female and a means to tap into, yet also control, the bestial and primitive masculine. As Nead (1992: 17-8) astutely states, this places the idealised form of the *cuirasse esthétique* in a somewhat different light: 'It begins to speak of a deep-seated fear and disgust of the female body and of femininity within patriarchal culture and of a construction of masculinity around the related fear of the contamination and dissolution of the male ego'.

Again, this recalls the contradictions and paradoxes elicited by the body. As Carr-Gomm (2010) succinctly puts it, the body can be prison or temple, condemned or reified. This ambivalence is well illustrated by the ways in which we look at the body.

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### **Considering the 'nude'**

Guerrilla Girls are an anonymous group of feminist activist artists. In the mid-1980s they carried out a survey of the artworks displayed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. In 1989 they produced the artwork titled *Do women have to be naked to get into the Met. Museum?*. The artwork depicted a female nude with their trademark guerrilla mask with the statement that '[l]ess than 5 per cent of the artists in the Modern Art Sections are women, but 85 per cent of the nudes are female' (Tate, n.d.).

You might have seen nudes in paintings, statues or photographic art pieces if you have visited a museum or an art gallery. Was there a **gender** disparity in the nudes that you saw? How were the subjects of these representations presented?

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## **The gaze**

As alluded to above, Clark's (1956) reading of 'the nude' as 'Art' is often premised upon a female nude and a male viewer. T. J. Clark (1980 cited in Nead, 1992: 16) offers a persuasive alternative take on the naked/nude duality where the nude 'is a picture for men to look at, in which Woman is constructed as an object of someone's desire'. Laura Mulvey's (1975) *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* is the key text in unpacking the notion of the male gaze with specific relation to film. Mulvey describes the way in which the '**gendered** scopic regime' governs the way audiences respond to on-screen images. Specifically:

the spectator in the theater is made to identify with the male look, because the camera films from the optical, as well as the libidinal, point of view of the male character. There are thus three levels of the cinematic gaze - camera, character, and spectator - objectifying the female character and turning her into a spectacle. (Smelik, 2016; cited in Nurik, 2018: 537)

These three levels of the gaze ensure that the audience perceive the action on-screen through a lens of an active-male and passive-female. To put this slightly differently, the audience member sees through the point of view (PoV) of the male character and comes to identify with *him* as they observe and objectify the female character.

To provide a comparatively recent example of this, we can apply this idea to the depiction of Harley Quinn in the film *Suicide Squad* (dir. D Ayer, 2016). Quinn is subject to these three layers of the male cinematic gaze. The camera looks at her in a costume of tight top and hot pants. The male characters regard this hyper-sexualised cartoon-like figure. The audience see her through these gendered lenses. She is objectified for the entertainment of the audience. She is made into a spectacle. This disparity in the gaze also extends to the ways in which female and male nudity is received in mainstream cinema.

With particular reference to the certification body the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), Nurik (2018) makes the observation that notions of the male gaze ensure that male and female nudity lead to differing film classifications. Simply put, female nudity 'is commodified and visually subjected for the purposes of profit' (Nurik, 2018: 538). Male nudity, by contrast, is 'anxiety-producing' since it problematises 'traditional' senses of the active-male, passive-female. Depictions of female sexual pleasure are also seen as challenging and have seemingly proved difficult for the MPAA. In 2010, for example, the film *Blue Valentine* (dir. D. Cianfrance) was initially given an NC-17 rating as it included a sequence depicting cunnilingus. An NC-17 rating ('No One 17 and Under Admitted') can prove costly for a film since many cinema and rental chains will not show films associated with explicit sexual content. Nurik (2018) cites the film critic Mary Ann Johnson as arguing that 'watching a woman being murdered is less objectionable than watching a woman have an orgasm'. Indeed, if we think about the ubiquity of

naked female corpses in popular television crime drama (from *CSI* to *Silent Witness*) in comparison to the dearth of depictions of female sexual pleasure, we can begin to see the validity in Johnson's claim. In death, as in life, these figures are objectified, their **agency** removed and they are left 'interchangeable with other objects' (Koppelman, 2005).

So, thus far, we have explored ways of looking at the 'nude' that are inherently gendered, as well as gendered 'scopic regimes' that govern the nature of that look. Before we engage more fully with notions of obscenity, it is valuable to briefly return to the 'classical body' since it is that which – by juxtaposition – helps to define the 'obscene' body.

### **The obscene body**

As Nead (1992) argues, it is the female 'nude' that has established particular ways of looking at and contemplating art. The nude can be juxtaposed with the obscene. The former is to be contemplated in stillness, whereas the latter arouses. This is one way of framing a dichotomy of 'art' and 'non-art'. The nude – the body in 'art' – can be juxtaposed with the fleshy body that elicits an unruly response. Stallybrass and White (1986), similarly, use the figure of the classical statue to explore the notion of transgression. They begin by describing the experience of regarding a classical statue. It is not just that we gaze upon the figure. We gaze *up* at them as they often physically positioned above the viewer. It is 'the radiant centre of a transcendent individualism' (Stallybrass and White, 1986: 21). Imagine regarding such a statue. There is the gaze upwards, the regard of the cool surface. There is

nothing of the physicality of the body; the heat, the smell, its fleshy presence.

Stallybrass and White (1986: 22) get to the point: '[t]he classical statue has no openings or orifices'. The grotesque body, by contrast, is teeming. For example, we might point to the groping, grasping and feculent bodies in the paintings of either Bosch or Bruegel. They are multiple where the classical body is singular. The grotesque body gapes and is protuberant. It is in contrast with the smooth and the sealed classical body. In this way, 'the grotesque body stands in opposition to the bourgeois individualist conception of the body which finds its image and legitimation in the classical' (Stallybrass and White, 1986: 22). Primacy is placed on the fleshy materiality of the body, its 'corpulent excess' as a means to 'represent cosmic, social, topographical and linguistic elements of the world' (Stallybrass and White, 1986: 8).

This takes us to representations of bodily excess. Williams (1991: 4), following Carol Clover's (1987) work on the horror genre, defines the 'body' genres as capturing the body in 'intense sensation or emotion'. This well describes the body as seen in pornography as well as horror and melodrama. Within these genres we see the body in the midst of heightened physical states. In pornography, the body is seen 'beside itself' with sexual pleasure and in a state of 'ecstatic excess'. We hear 'inarticulate cries' where that excess pushes beyond and outside of language (Williams, 1991: 4). Other body genres echo this. In melodrama and horror a body can be wracked in sadness or violently assaulted. The inarticulate cries become sob or scream. In relation to pornography, the body is subject to an excess of visibility. As Williams states (1989, 1999), hard-core pornography has been



defined by 'maximum visibility'. This returns us to the duality of the visible and invisible, as well as the dichotomy of art and non-art. Recall our earlier discussion that saw the separation of art and from non-art as the difference between that which could be the subject of calm contemplation and that which could enflame 'base' passions. An excess of the visibility of sexual drives can be juxtaposed with 'art' that has been defined by the sublimation of those drives. That visibility of course is also directed at the (female) body. It is not simply subject to a gendered gaze, but the body itself is opened out: '[it] is examined and probed for its hidden secrets' (Nead, 1992: 97). Again, recalling the dichotomy of the closed-off classical body and the openness of the grotesque, pornography is defined by a maximum visibility: '[i]n its endless quest for clarity, objectivity and disclosure[, it] endlessly reinvokes that alternative, anxious sense of the female body as dark, mysterious and formless' (Nead, 1992: 98). Specifically, the history of the genre has been concerned with effects to 'overcome the anatomical invisibility of the female orgasm' (Nead, 1992, 98).

It is instructive to think of the ways in which horror and pornography, in particular, intersect in their opening of the body to a total look. Steve Jones and Sharif Mowlabocus (2009: 622), for example, comment on the '[m]ultiple representations of bodily rupture' that have 'become increasingly popular in western culture'. There is a maximum visibility of both exterior *and* interior states. We could think of the body on display (and splayed out) in so-called 'torture-porn' horror films, as well as the autopsies of crime dramas. Indeed, the suffix '-porn' (as

in torture-porn, poverty-porn etc.) denotes 'unwanted and unwelcome excess' (Hines and Kerr, 2012: 5).

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### **The male gaze and the body in sexualised horror**

Content warning: films mentioned in this activity contain scenes of strong bloody violence and sexual violence that some of you may find disturbing. Take your time with this content and take breaks and discuss anything that comes up for you with people you trust.

We have discussed notions of the male gaze and the maximum visibility associated with the 'body genres' of both horror films and pornography. In this activity, we will ask you to compare two examples of 'rape revenge' films. These are films that take the rape of a female protagonist as their inciting incident. This is then followed by her bloody revenge on the male antagonists. Two key examples of this genre are *I Spit on Your Grave* (1978, dir. M Zarchi) and *Revenge* (2018, dir. C Fargeat). During the mid-1980s, the former was considered suitable for prosecution under the Obscene Publications Act 1959. Its current 18 certificate UK release still has 43 seconds of cuts. According to the British Board of Film Classification, this excised material is 'potentially harmful' since it includes 'shots of nudity that tend to eroticise sexual violence and shots of humiliation that tend to endorse sexual violence by encouraging viewer complicity in sexual humiliation and rape' (BBFC, 2010). By contrast, *Revenge* uses the tropes of the rape revenge film, but attempts to invert the male gaze that is typical of the genre.

In watching these two films, consider the following:

- How are the female protagonists and male antagonists filmed?
- Is there full-frontal nudity of both male and female actors?
- Is *Revenge* successful in presenting a *female gaze*?
- Consider the ways in which the internal and external body is made open to a maximum visibility.

If you wish to develop your understanding of this further, the BBFC have produced helpful case studies that unpack their certification process for particular films, including *I Spit on Your Grave* (<https://www.bbfc.co.uk/case-studies/i-spit-your-grave>). Likewise, Carol Clover's (1992) hugely influential *Men, Women and Chainsaws: gender in the modern horror film* insightfully unpacks the rape revenge genre.

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Jones and Mowlabocus (2009: 622) posit a range of explanations for this, including 'an ongoing alienation of the body through late capitalist structures of labour' or 'a reconnection with the flesh in a time of supposed virtual disembodiment'. This raises an interesting point. So far, we have been focused upon the corporeal, the physical body. We have looked at its representation in 'Art' (and non-art), as well as representations of the body in pleasure (and pain). Yet, what of the effects of that supposed virtual disembodiment? How might that change representations of the body? As Barker (2009; cited in Attwood and Smith, 2010: 181) outlines, '[s]upporters of increased regulation claim that the Internet Age has created ever

more disgusting and sickening forms of pornography and make reference to what Martin Barker has termed 'scary futurology' – that if we don't do something now, the decline of public morals will be terrifying'.

A counter argument could be made that there is an appeal to the 'virtual' or 'better-than-real' body. Certainly, pornography has been at the forefront of any technological innovations that seek to capture the image or improve visual fidelity. Charles Baudelaire complained in 1859 that 'photography had been coopted' by the desire to capture naked bodies (Slade, 2006: 27). In the last decade, pornographic production companies have been at the forefront of 3D, streaming and ultra-high definition image reproduction (as we saw in Chapter Eleven). Slade (2006: 27) does make the curious comment that 'sexuality is more stimulating when it is most technological, most divorced from "nature"'. An argument could be made that 3D, high definition films are attempts to bridge the gap between real and reel. Yet, perhaps, there is something to Slade's point. Perhaps the Brechtian-like distancing effect alluded to here renders these representations of sexual acts all the more potent. They are, at once, more immediate, more visible. They are certainly more widespread. This is the always on-demand 'pornotopia' described by McNair (2013). It has re-aligned the 'conceptual apparatus', 'to take into account [...] hitherto unavailable if not unimaginable acts' (Bradley, 2018: 456). Rebecca Saunders (2019) extends this further in considering the production of images and augmentation devices that push beyond the 'real'. Saunders (2019: 244) quotes from Wired.com – a tech website – that asked in 2006: '[i]magine what you could do with erotic entertainment if you weren't bound by the laws of

physics [the limitations of gravity, proportion, body mass] [Or] the federal law that requires [age] records on every performer appearing in an adult film’.

Fourteen years later, sexually explicit machinima (CGI animation) can do precisely this. Photo realistic pornographic deepfakes have seen celebrities’ faces mapped onto pornographic footage. The boundary between the image of the body and the body of the viewer has also begun to dissolve. Kiiroo, for example, produce a range of internet enabled ‘somatic plug-ins’ that can be paired, connected via the Internet and used remotely by couples or with webcam performers. Yet, the remote Wi-Fi-enabled ‘touch’ of a webcam performer or the photo real is insufficient for some. As Saunders highlights, some computer-generated content providers specifically emphasise that their imagery is ‘better than real’: ‘[n]o real female can be compared to these exciting fully 3D babes who can drive you mad with stunning beauty’ (Adult-Empire.com). We might wonder what Mulvey makes of this trend or how it would fold into Clark’s (1956) notion of the body. Indeed, how do *we* feel about it? Is the virtual sexualised image – one that is ‘better’ than ‘real’ – more stimulating as Slade suggests? Does the pleasurable gaze no longer require a ‘real’ body as its focus?

In thinking about changing representations of the body in the digital era, we should take a step back and consider Patrick Devlin’s (1965; cited in Johnson, 2010) thoughts concerning legislative responses to ‘obscene’ materials. The ‘obscene’, for Devlin, should be more than something that prompted a ‘majority [to] ‘dislike’ a practice’, rather it must ‘engender a feeling of ‘disgust’ (Johnson,

2010: 152). We might be reminded here of Mary Douglas' (2002[1966]) notion of disgust being associated with things that are perceived as out-of-place. Cleanliness and dirtiness are determined by whether or not they are in their appropriate place. That which has been labelled as taboo is defined as symbolically dirty. For Devlin (1965), a widely held sense of disgust would indicate not simply that the act prompting this response be done in private, but 'that they not be done at all in order to protect the moral 'soul' of society from *contamination*' (emphasis added, Johnson, 2010: 152). So, that which is deemed obscene should be removed from public view *and* private action. It should be unrepresentable and rendered more than simply off-scene. Devlin (1979; cited in Johnson, 2010: 152) saw the role of law as acting 'as a gatekeeper (but not a protector) of the moral order'. One analogy posits the law as a 'valve' that adapts to society's sense of moral outrage. So, it allows new ideas as they come to be accepted whilst blocking others that fall out of favour. They move in and out-of-place according to changing social norms.

Let us consider the difficulty in applying this to a real-world example. Bondage, Domination, and Sadomasochism (BDSM), which we explored more fully in Chapter Nine, for example, represents a challenge to societal 'norms' of sexual behaviour. As Eleanor Wilkinson (2011) puts it, pornography is typically 'heterosexist' and 'heteronormal'. However, easily accessible recording equipment, technology, and the ubiquity of digital pornography has meant that both professional and amateur productions can explore and represent marginal sexualities. These developments have, then, a 'democractizing potential' (Wilkinson, 2011: 498). Jones and Mowlabocus (2009) frame this slightly

differently. They suggest that the 'valve' could be turned to highlight and exclude extreme acts, thereby creating a 'new category of generally dissident people'. For them to enjoy the extreme material became a 'politically subversive act'.

Particularly with BDSM, there is a 'distinct blurring of the line between reality and fiction, and between practice and representation' (Jones and Mowlabocus, 2009: 617). It is, after all, centrally concerned with role-play. Indeed, as Susan Sontag (1981; cited in Petley, 2009: 426) described it, to be engaged in Sadoomasochism is to 'take part in a sexual theatre, a staging of sexuality'. The importance of role-play requires some understanding on the part of the participant or viewer of the *performance* of BDSM in order to understand this particular text.

Yet, as Wilkinson (2011) asks, what happens when someone without that knowledge and understanding views this kind of material? Without an appreciation of these scripts, do they 'perceive it as an uncontrolled violent act?' (Wilkinson, 2011: 495). Or, should this be viewed as indistinct and inseparable from a pornography that degrades and dehumanises. Specifically, such a viewpoint would see BDSM as another facet of a system of representation that normalises gendered violence. Attwood and Smith (2010: 180) present the counter argument that 'if concern over violence against women is what drives the impulse to legislate, that legislation should be targeting the actual practices of violence rather than representational media'. This all, of course, raises important questions about what both consent and violence *look* like. Andrew Koppelman (2015: 1641) describes the erotic as being concerned with 'primitive or powerfully self-centred urges and elevated aspirations [that] are in competition for predominance'. Sex,

then, can be a demonstration of intimacy, as well as a display of ‘possessiveness, hostilit[y] and humiliation’ (Koppelman, 2005: 1641). The writer Lux Alptraum (2014; cited in Moorman, 2017: 704), for example, makes the important point that ‘consensual sex can look violent and abusive, and abusive sex can look loving and tender’ (see our discussion of the challenges of consent in Chapter Four). So, it is important not to confuse reality and representation. Jennifer Moorman (2017: 704) goes on to argue that we ‘contextualize pornographic texts with the viewpoints, production practices, economic and regulating structures, and taste culture that combine to create them’. Given that, let us explore the ramifications of the 2008 Criminal Justice and Immigration Act as it sought to respond to the moral outrage surrounding ‘extreme pornography’. Debates surrounding the CJIA 2008 touched upon this problem of interpreting pornographic texts. In addressing the problems associated with definition and legislation, we can trace how the Act was part of a wider regulatory history, spoke to various production practices, and both supported and conflicted with various political standpoints.

### **Legislation and ‘extreme pornography’**

The CJIA 2008 was a significant legislative response to the proliferation of what was dubbed ‘extreme pornography’. It was a response to a campaign that followed the murder of Jane Longhurst by Graham Coutts in 2003. During his trial, the prosecution noted Coutts’ fetish for erotic asphyxia, in addition to the ‘extreme’ or violent pornography that he had downloaded. These materials included simulated strangulation and rape. Jane Longhurst’s mother began a campaign to shut down sites hosting this kind of violent pornographic material. A 2006 Home Office paper



- *Consultation on the Possession of Extreme Pornographic Material* - sought to gather feedback on a proposed strengthening of the law that targeted this type of imagery. At that point, the proposed offence was to include material that was pornographic, produced for the purposes of sexual arousal and was 'real' or appeared to be real – 'conveying a realistic impression of fear, violence and **harm**' (Home Office, 2006: 6). The consultation also called upon respondents to consider the legality of materials involving sexual intercourse or oral sex with an animal, sexual interference with a corpse, as well as 'acts that appear to be life threatening or are likely to result in serious, disabling injury' (Home Office, 2006: 6).

Responses – gathered from 'police forces, campaigning groups, charities, religious groups, professional bodies, government, and regulators, as well as individuals' (Home Office, 2006: 3) – were 'sharply divided'. There was either strong support or opposition. Of those in favour, some thought that the proposals should go further and cover *all* pornography. Voices in opposition raised concerns that the proposed changes represented a treat to freedom of speech. In 2007, the Ministry of Justice published a Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) entitled *The evidence of harm to adults relating to exposure to extreme pornographic material*. This research was intended to 'identify, review and assess any evidence of harm associated with extreme pornographic material' (Itzin et al, 2007: 1). The researchers predominantly drew upon 'experimental' studies conducted under laboratory conditions, in addition to some non-experimental studies. Their key findings included:

the existence of some harmful effects from extreme pornography on some who access it. These included increased risk of developing pro-rape attitudes, beliefs and behaviours, and committing sexual offences.

Although this was also true of some pornography which did not meet the extreme pornography threshold, it showed that the effects of extreme pornography were more serious. Men who are predisposed to aggression, or have a history of sexual and other aggression were more susceptible to the influence of extreme pornographic material. This was corroborated by a number of different studies using different methods and different samples. (Itzin, et al 2007: iii)

Attwood and Smith (2010) were unequivocal in their critique of the REA. They questioned the methodology underpinning the empirical research that was used. They cite Jason Toyne (2008; cited in Attwood and Smith, 2010: 175) in their rejection of the kinds of mass communications effects research utilised within the REA:

What's wrong with effects research is that it does not acknowledge the openness of media in society, considered as a system. There is simply no way of isolating the watching of media violence among a complex of putative causes of violent behaviour among research subjects. Thus, any correlation shown between the two (media and violence) may be contingent. More than this, even if one were to accept a causal link there are no means to establish the direction of causality between correlates.

The subsequent CJIA drew upon the definitions outlined in the Home Office consultation paper. It aimed, in part, to protect the wellbeing of those performing in such productions, in addition to the wellbeing of society as a whole (Easton, 2011). It required that the 'act in an image must be "explicit and realistic" so that a "reasonable person" seeing it would think that any person or animal was real'; and [...] an image must be 'grossly offensive, disgusting or otherwise of an obscene character' (Johnson, 2010: 148). These raise some interesting points. How might we define a 'reasonable' person, particularly when confronted with such material? You will also note that there is no reference to, nor requirement to demonstrate, harm. This posed problems for the depiction of consensual harm. Libertarian criticisms of this aspect of the CJIA focused on the notion that private *sexual* activity between consenting adults should not be interfered with by governments. However, you will recall from our earlier discussion of *R v Brown* [1993] 97 Cr App R 44 (in Chapters Four and Nine) that, at that time, '[t]he inability to consent to acts of *violence* is well established in the criminal law. If the activities covered by the Act are themselves unlawful, it is not possible to consent to those activities, so by definition engaging in them means committing a criminal offence' (our emphasis, Easton, 2011: 401). During discussions in the House of Lords relating to *Brown*, Lord Templeman argued, for example, that consensual torture could lead to non-consensual torture. As Susan Easton (2011: 401) phrased Templeman's argument, society 'is entitled [...] to protect itself against a cult of violence that is morally corrupting'.

Anna Carline (2011) offered a useful critique of the CJIA. Echoing comments made earlier in this chapter, Carline highlights that a focus upon representations of violence toward women rather than the everyday harm enacted upon women is misplaced. In particular, if we consider that 173 women were killed in acts of intimate partner violence and abuse in the UK in 2018, or that one in three women aged 16-59 will suffer domestic abuse in her life, more should be done to combat violence within the domestic (BBC, 13 September 2019; Refuge, nd). Simply put, there should be a greater recognition that 'the law has generally been complicit in male violence against women' (Carline, 2011: 318). Further, the element of the Act that points to the producer's intent to sexually arouse is curious. Firstly, as Carline (2011) notes, the agency (indeed, the consent) of the performer is ignored in favour of trying to infer the producer's intent. If we frame this discussion in respect to Roland Barthes's (1977) notion of the 'death of the author', the discussion becomes nonsensical: we cannot know the producer's intent, nor can the producer control the audience member's reaction. Different people will find different media arousing to different extents. Contra Johnson, Carline (2011) argues that the moral judgments being applied to extreme pornography involve a re-affirmation of **heteronormative** behaviour. Yet, '[n]ot all performances of heterosexuality are considered to be culturally intelligible' (Carline, 2011: 329). As we discussed earlier, not all such performances are as easily read and understood as others. As a consequence, those that fall out of the norm risk being censored and punished.

To place the CIJA in context, it is helpful to map out what came before. The Obscene Publications Act 1959 was used in high-profile prosecutions such as those against the publication of DH Lawrence's (1971) novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover* in 1960 and the 'video nasties' campaign against violent and sexually violent films in the mid-1980s. Obscenity within the act was defined as material that 'if taken as a whole' would 'tend to deprave and corrupt persons who are likely, having regard to all relevant circumstances, to read, see or hear it' (Obscene Publications Act 1959 s1). It did allow for exceptions for materials in the 'public good', in other words, those of a benefit to science, literature, art or learning. In these examples, the notion of 'taste' was fundamental to questions to obscenity.

The 1959 Act was followed in 1978 by the Protection of Children Act. This criminalised the production and distribution of indecent images of children. As Jacob Rowbottom (2018) puts it, this Act reflected broader societal concerns relating to obscenity in the late 1970s and was the product of pressure groups and moral crusaders. Here the law acted in the manner of Devlin's 'valve' as it adjusted to reflect social concerns. The subsequent 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order sought to respond to advances in computing technology that facilitated the distribution of such imagery. So, where the offence in 1978 related to 'taking' an indecent image of a child, the 1994 Act amended this to include 'making' an indecent image. This, then, incorporated 'pseudo images'. In other words, it referred to images not taken with a camera but made with a computer or some other electronic device (see Chapter Eleven for our discussion of this). Subsequent decisions relating to this Act found that 'intentionally storing data from the

internet constituted the 'making' of an image' (Rowbottom, 2018: 13). Likewise, a Court of Appeal decision later 'found that opening an email attachment could constitute the making of an image' if the recipient knew the image to be indecent in nature (R v Jayson [2002] EWCA Crim 683 at [19–20]). As Rowbottom (2018: 13) notes, these decisions moved 'attention away from the producers of the illegal content to those viewing the images'. As such, this led to a net-widening and an increase in the number of people convicted. We arrive back at the 2008 CIJA. As we have seen in the legislation that preceded it, discussion flowed around notions of the public and private, and who should be its target. Johnson (2010) summarises the main concern with extreme pornography as being: i) the risk of causing physical harm to 'performers' (thereby acting as a 'record of the sexual abuse'), ii) as with the REA, extreme pornography can prompt or incite violent behaviour in those that consume it and, relatedly iii) it represents 'hate speech' and, as such, 'causes symbolic harm to women as a social group'. As we can see, these three elements each continue debates around public morality, individual freedoms and notions of obscenity apprehended at a societal level. We might be reminded again of Devlin (1965; cited in Johnson, 2010: 151) in stating that '[m]orality is a sphere in which there is a public interest and a private interest, often in conflict, and the problem is to reconcile the two'.

Prosecutions under the 2008 Act typically followed warrants being followed up under other legislation or where registered sex offenders' homes were entered as part of a risk assessment (McGlynn and Bows, 2019). This led them to conclude that – citing Leigh (n.d.; cited by McGlynn and Bows, 2019: 486) – prosecutions

were 'neither consistent, nor coherent but adventitious'. Subsequent legislation has included the 2009 Coroners and Justice Act that introduced a new offence of possessing a 'prohibited image'. This was defined as, amongst other acts, one that 'is grossly offensive, disgusting or otherwise of an obscene character [...] focus[ing] solely or principally on a child's genitals or anal region' (Rowbottom, 2011: 17).

Rowbottom reports that this proved controversial because of the potential lack of harm suffered by the subject of the image. The 2015 Criminal Justice and Courts Act was a response to a perceived gap within the 2008 Act. It included rape pornography into the rubric of extreme pornography. This followed earlier amendments within the Scottish legal system and campaign by both Rape Crisis South London and the End Violence Against Women Coalition.

In 2014, an amendment was made to the 2003 Communications Act. The Audiovisual Media Services Regulation 2014 stated that video on demand services could not show the following acts as they would fall outside of the R18 classification that could be granted by the BBFC: spanking, BDSM, female ejaculation, urinating (also known as watersports), strangling, face-sitting, or fisting. The latter three were claimed to be potentially life threatening. Critics of the amendment pointed out that many of these are specifically targeted toward female pleasure (Press Association, 12 December 2014). These, in turn, were relaxed in 2019. Certain violent acts can now be depicted so long as 'full and freely exercised consent' is provided and that performers do not suffer 'serious harm'. Prior to this amendment, the 2017 Digital Economy Act required 'those providing lawful adult content on a communal basis to operate a system of age verification'

(Rowbottom, 2018: 22). The appointed regulator, the BBFC, has the power to block sites hosting extreme pornography. This has the potential to shift the focus of prosecution away from the consumer (or possessor) and back towards the host (the supplier). However, we might question the ease with which a regulation could combat sites operating across national boundaries and with fluid hosting capabilities. Daniel Hickin (cited in Pett, 2015: 84), writing in 2009, proposed that 'the present era represents the beginning of the end of existing nationalised forms of media censorship as we enter a period in which global culture becomes deregulated'.

[START TEXTBOX]

### **Researching sexually violent material**

Given Jones and Mowlabocus' (2009: 619) call for academic work to 'examine representations of degradation and humiliation, to analyse them as cultural artefacts', we thought that it would be useful to set out the ways in which two of the authors of this textbook have examined sexually violent material. We focused upon the 'sexploitation' films of a particular genre that emerged in the late 1960s and 1970s: 'Nazisploitation'. This saw the 'women-in-prison' genre merge with the 'roughie' sex film and featured the 'repeated humiliation and degradation of women' (Serfozo and Farrell, 1996). These films – some of which are set in concentration camps – depict eroticised and brutalised female bodies against a provocative backdrop of Nazi iconography. Several of the films that we explored (*Love Camp 7, 1969; SS Experiment Camp, 1976; Gestapo's Last Orgy, 1977*) were included in the Department of Public Prosecutions list of 72 'video nasties' in 1983.



These were felt to contravene the 1959 Obscene Publications List. It should be noted though that one of the films within our analysis, *SS Experiment Camp* (dir. S Garrone, 1976), was submitted to the BBFC in 2005 and received no cuts. As the BBFC noted in their 2005 annual report, '[d]espite the questionable taste of basing an exploitation film in a concentration camp, the sexual activity itself was consensual and the level of potentially eroticised violence, sufficiently limited'. Others remain without a UK release. In 2020, for example, *Love Camp 7* (dir. RL Frost, 1969) was refused classification for streaming. The BBFC stated: 'Because *Love Camp 7* is largely comprised of scenes of non-consensual sexual activity, including rape, presented in a manner that is intended to arouse viewers, its central concept is unacceptable and the sexually abusive material it contains too pervasive for cuts to be an effective solution'.

We first adapted Patrocini Schweickert's (1986) notion of 'androcentric reading strategies' (Banwell and Fiddler, 2017). Following Amy Shapiro's (2013) work, we adapted them to cinematic representations and produced 'viewing strategies'. Doing so allowed us to examine '[t]he eroticisation of fascism through the framing of the female body'. So, we looked at the ways in which gender and sexual agency were coded, performed, and represented. In order to do so, we read the texts as they were 'not intended to be read' (Banwell and Fiddler, 2017: 13). As Schweickert (1986) put it, the female viewer has to 'read the text not as Other, but as equal to men'. And, as such, we were able to examine the ways in which the representation of both the female Nazi and the female Jewish victim either conformed to, or problematised, gendered codes.

Our second piece took a different approach (Fiddler and Banwell, 2018). Here we took Graeme Krautheim's (2009: 8) statement as our point of departure: '[t]here is nothing productive about simply accusing Nazi sexploitation of being careless, misogynist, or historically inaccurate – such statements go without saying, and to consider the films with the hostility that they actually invite is completely counterproductive'. We were drawn towards what the 'excesses' of corporeality on-screen as well as the spectatorial experience can be said to do. To put this differently, what value can be ascribed to them in considering the horrors of the concentration camps? In this, we see their 'tastelessness' as important. It is the 'aesthetic vertigo' that they produce in the viewer that pushes them outside of the accepted norms of representation. This is the term Alison Young (2000) uses to describe that backward stagger and sense of dizziness caused by a 'disgusting' artwork. Focusing attention upon Andres Serrano's (1987) *Piss Christ* and Marcus Harvey's (1995) *Myra*, Young unpacks this sense of 'vertigo' as the spectator is left 'teetering on the verge of representational abyss' as the 'disgusting' artwork threatens to 'touch' the viewer (Young, 2000: 264). For some, the response within the spectator to this vertigo, prompted by the disgust, will be to see it 'expelled, outlawed and repressed' (Young, 2000: 262). Our reading is that 'aesthetic vertigo' places them outside of the norm of Holocaust representation. As such, they provide a unique way of tying a *corporeal* response to a representation that moves beyond hegemonic memory. Instead, a 'transgressive' memory is produced that incorporates a bodily sense of disgust and horror.

- Which films, novels or artworks could you unpack to explore the ways in which gender and sexual agency are coded, performed and represented?
- Have you encountered an artwork or film that has prompted this kind of 'aesthetic vertigo'? If so, what did you feel? Did this sensation make you change your mind about the 'value' of the artwork?

[END TEXTBOX]

## **Summary**

In this chapter on illegal representations, we have examined how changes to legislation give us an insight into how notions of obscenity alter over time. These discussions can be placed in the context of debates surrounding representations of the 'naked' and 'nude' body itself. We have touched upon different ways in which the body has been viewed. We narrowed our focus to consider representations in 'body genres' that see the body in states of maximum visibility and excess. We then applied these understandings to unpacking legislative changes relating to obscenity and representations of sexually violent acts.

Nead, writing in 1992, described the history of pornography across the twentieth century as being one of an ever-increasing 'specialization and specification of the obscene' (1992: 92). With the rise of the digital era we have seen an acceleration of this process. Rowbottom (2016) identifies two particular trends within recent changes to obscenity law. Firstly, there is the narrowing of focus from a broad definition of obscenity to a smaller range of content. This has led to the 'contradiction' of more material being legally available where previously it would

have been labelled obscene, yet, at the same time, 'the law has become much stricter and [is] criminalizing more people than ever' (Rowbottom, 2018: 24).

There has been a shift in focus from the producer to the viewer of the content. Yet, as detailed above, recent legislation (such as the Digital Economy Act 2017) has also turned its attention to the online hosts of such material. Where does this leave us?

In writing this chapter we find ourselves coming back to the troubling question at the heart of academic writing on pornography. Is this a question of freedom of speech or a record of abuse? Does it have a democratising effect for marginalised sexualities or is it one facet of a system that enables violence to be enacted upon the bodies of women. In 1989, Catharine MacKinnon (p.304) wrote that pornography 'produces [...] attitude changes in men, such as increasing the extent of their trivialization, dehumanization, and objectification of women'. In those intervening thirty years, how has the proliferation of pornography in the digital era changed things? An alternative position is taken up by Koppelman (2005). In this view pornography does cause moral harm, but 'this effect is too small, its relation to any particular text too uncertain, and the benefits of censorship too speculative to justify legal intervention' (Koppelman, 2005: 1664). We find ourselves asking: does this debate simply not fit within the reductive confines of a binary position?

We would suggest that tracing legislative changes is a useful exercise. It allows us to map changing views and notions of obscenity. Fundamentally, we would echo

Robert Jensen's (2007; cited by Jones and Mowlabocus, 2009) argument that, if there is increasing cruelty and violence within pornography, then this should be of academic interest. We must ask 'why is it increasingly commonplace instead of more marginalized' (Jones and Mowlabocus, 2009: 619). If, as Slade suggested, violence was a rarity in the early stag film, what does the proliferation of more sexually violent material in the digital era reveal about our current society?

### **Review questions**

- How have Nead (1992) and Williams (1989, 1999) defined obscenity? Can you think of examples that fit their definitions?
- How have the 'naked' and 'nude' body been differentiated?
- How is the body subject to a 'maximum visibility' in pornography?
- If, as Stallybrass and White (1986: 5) state, '[w]hat is socially peripheral may be symbolically central', what does the CJIA (2008) reveal about society's concerns?

### **Other chapters that that this links to:**

Chapter 4 (Consent and its discontent)

Chapter 9 (Pleasurable risk)

Chapter 11 (Digital Sex)