



Porn Studies

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Porn Studies From Brand: Duke University Press Books

In her pioneering book *Hard Core*, Linda Williams put moving-image pornography on the map of contemporary scholarship with her analysis of the most popular and enduring of all film and video genres. Now, fifteen years later, she showcases the next generation of critical thinking about pornography and signals new directions for study and teaching. *Porn Studies* resists the tendency to situate pornography as the outer limit of what can be studied and discussed. With revenues totaling between ten and fourteen billion dollars annually—more than the combined revenues of professional football, basketball, and baseball—visual, hard-core pornography is a central feature of American popular culture. It is time, Williams contends, for scholars to recognize this and give pornography a serious and extended analysis.

The essays in this volume move beyond feminist debates and distinctions between a “good” erotica and a “bad” hard core. Contributors examine varieties of pornography from the tradition of the soft-core pin-up through the contemporary hard-core tradition of straight, gay, and lesbian videos and DVDs to the burgeoning phenomenon of pornography on the Internet. They explore, as examples of the genre, individual works as divergent as *The Starr Report*, the pirated Tommy Lee/Pamela Anderson honeymoon video, and explicit Japanese “ladies’ comics” consumed by women. They also probe difficult issues such as the sexualization of race and class and the relationship of pornography to the avant-garde. To take pornography seriously as an object of analysis also means teaching it. *Porn Studies* thus includes a useful annotated bibliography of readings and archival sources important to the study of pornography as a cultural form.

Contributors. Heather Butler, Rich Cante, Jake Gerli, Minette Hillyer, Nguyen Tan Hoang, Despina Kakoudaki, Franklin Melendez, Ara Osterweil, Zabet Patterson, Constance Penley, Angelo Restivo, Eric Schaefer, Michael Sicinski, Deborah Shamoan, Maria St. John, Tom Waugh, Linda Williams

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Editorial Review

Review

“For more than a decade now, Linda Williams has been taking porn seriously. Her latest—*Porn Studies*—does not disappoint. She succeeds, once again, in legitimizing porn as an essential topic for academic study and provides a guide for teaching about it. For all those who want to know more about the place of porn in American culture, this is refreshingly unabashed scholarship.”—Susie Bright, author of *Mommy's Little Girl: On Sex, Motherhood, Porn, and Cherry Pie*

“Thank God for Linda Williams! She is absolutely brilliant. I have learned an enormous amount from her over the years. She boldly goes where few academics dare. *Porn Studies* is a smart, much needed, fascinating book, which paves the way and sets the tone for future porn studies. This book boggles and blows my mind.”—Annie Sprinkle, postmodern pornographer and sexologist

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

Linda Williams is Professor of Film Studies and Rhetoric and Director of the Program in Film Studies and of the Center for New Media at the University of California, Berkeley. Her books include *Playing the Race Card: Melodramas of Black and White from Uncle Tom to O. J. Simpson*; *Hard Core: Power, Pleasure, and the "Frenzy of the Visible"*; and *Viewing Positions: Ways of Seeing Film*.

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