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The Pornographic Body and Non-Desire

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In pornography, the body is void of subjectivities at the very moment it is on the screen, regardless of the visual representation: Point-of-View shots or Objective shots. What is off-screen, that is the spectator-body, is involved in a process marked by the illusion of the desire. I argue that desire in both the Freudian (unconscious) sense or in the Lacanian sense (Lack) plays up to no role at all neither inside, nor outside the screen: production and perception. However, the notion of tabu is embodied in the guise of a “representational theater.” Only this representational theatre is not the unconscious, it is the screen.

Pornography is the perfect space for the reappropriation of power, control and norms. In terms of gender, the female body, no matter the genre, is the object of power assertion, control and colonialization for and by the male body. In terms of race, colonialist racist practices flourish. In the pornographic genre, “Interracial,” the colonialist and slavery notions of the black body are freely reproduced.

In this paper, I would like to discuss what I call, non-desire in relation to the concept of the pornographic body. Non-desire here as it is assembled in pornography is, I argue an inversion of Deleuzo-Guattarian concept of desire. Desiring-production for Deleuze and Guattari is explosive and incapable of being assembled without demolishing entire social structures: a circuit breaker and disrupter of the social norms. What takes place in pornography is the non-desiring reproduction of the stratified and hierarchal spaces of the social machine. This process of non-desire also relies on the notion of tabu as a an exaptational space in which power, oppression, racism and control are legitimately practiced. I aim at exploring the concept of non-desire with the example of racist/racial representation in pornography.