Jonathan Rose (Passau): “‘The Man with a Pussy’: Trans(ing) Masculinities in/through Pornography”

Abstract

Buck Angel, an adult-film performer and producer, created a space for himself in the adult film industry as “the man with a pussy”. The following analysis of his films is guided by the questions of how they interrogate and disrupt notions of masculinity and male sexuality and how they relate to “pornormativity” (Schorn 2012). With a focus on a selection of Angel's adult-film performances as well as the ongoing docuporn series Sexing the Transman, of which Angel is the producer, this paper examines constructions of masculinity exhibited by the (naked) transmasculine body, which at the same time deconstructs normative notions of masculine bodies. Being “simultaneously composed of multiple determinants” (Stryker at al. 13), trans performers show the queer potential of bodies which do not conform to a binary gender system and thus engage in ‘transing’ gender, “a practice that takes place within, as well as across or between, gendered spaces” (ibid). Positioning trans bodies in relation to and in interaction with others, the films are an example of the possibility to create and establish trans spaces by inhabiting a trans body as a sexual body. The variety of trans masculinities given a voice “challenge what it means to ‘be’ in gender and offer glimpses of new forms of gendered subjectivity” (Drabinski 304). As disorienting bodies, trans bodies “‘queer’ [the social] space” (Ahmed 161) in which they reside. The paper concludes with a critical assessment of this queer potential by assessing the tensions at play between representation, fetishization, profit and pedagogy.

Works Cited