

# The Money Shot: The Business of Porn

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## Introduction

In 2002, it was estimated that the pornography business, so vital to California economics and turgid male fantasy around the world, generated more than \$57 billion dollars in revenue, \$12 billion in the United States alone.<sup>1</sup> North American statistics indicate that porn makes more money than Hollywood at the box office, more than the sum of NBC's, CBS's and ABC's revenues, more than the music industry generates from record sales, and more than all major professional sports in the United States combined.<sup>2</sup> In other words, porn is no longer flirting with the mainstream; it *is* the mainstream.<sup>3</sup> Companies like VCA and Vivid have erected promotional billboards in Los Angeles and New York, sitting cheek to jowl with advertisements for the latest Hollywood blockbuster. Vivid plugs their releases in airport lounges, while Metro is now a publicly traded company on NASDAQ.<sup>4</sup> The 2005 re-release of *Deep Throat* and a related documentary, as well as invigorated interest in pole-dancing workout routines and racy primetime soap operas such as *Desperate*

*Housewives* (which airs on Disney-owned ABC) have all conspired to make porn seem almost, well, banal.<sup>5</sup> Gone are the days of underground productions in seedy warehouses, the “raincoat brigade” lurking in Times Square theatres, and sleazy producers plying performers with cocaine and confidence. Well, almost gone. For the most part, the contemporary video porn industry is a well-oiled machine of profits more than prostitutes, making money hand over fist, and it’s picking up in popularity. But while academic discussion surrounding porn over the last twenty-five years has focused on textual analysis, sociological study, and on issues of gender and violence, one aspect has been for the most part overlooked—the staggering success of the business itself.

This paper will examine the economic structure of the video pornography industry, primarily housed in the San Fernando Valley area of Los Angeles. It is my belief that the crucial ingredient in the success of the porn business is its adoption of an industrial model based on the studio system that dominated Hollywood from the 1920s until the late 1960s. In order to evaluate the impact of this system on the adult entertainment industry, we have to examine the points of convergence and divergence of these two businesses. The development of the pornography industry in California from pubescence to adulthood is inextricably linked with the successes and failures of mainstream cinema’s organization. No business is successful without a clearly defined plan and system for producing and promoting its service, and the pornography business is extremely lucrative. However disorganized it may have seemed initially, the porn industry has grown at a rate that requires it to become highly stratified in order to maintain its rate of success.

I will examine specific elements of the contemporary porn industry’s business model in comparison to the Hollywood studio system, such as the contract system, studio ownership of production facilities and distribution networks, reliance on product differentiation, branding and marketing, as well as the distinct advantages that geographical proximity to the mainstream film industry provide. How and why did porn adopt these

strategies? Why have they worked so well, when major studios abandoned (or requalified) them thirty years ago? And ultimately, will it be porn's financial success that will allow it to enter the mainstream market, despite the cultural and political disconnect it still struggles with in wider society?

## The Star System and Product Differentiation

Arguably, the most visible evidence of pornography's success is in the elevation of performers to international celebrity status, even household names. Linda Lovelace, John Holmes, Marilyn Chambers, Asia Carrera, Traci Lords, and Jenna Jameson, for example, are known to many. Even for the uninitiated, the names of porn stars are vaguely, perhaps embarrassingly, familiar. And though adult performers' paycheques may not be comparable to their Hollywood counterparts, the adulation they receive from fans is on par, if not at a premium. For the porn-savvy, the attention paid to popular performers can be overwhelming, but the rabid loyalty of porn fans is supported by the industry itself. Unlike favoured Hollywood stars who lend their presence to glitzy premieres and press junkets, adult stars get up close and personal with fans at conventions, video and poster signings, and through copious websites. In the pornography business, the performer *is* the product, and a staggering amount of work goes into promoting that product.

Entering the industry is easier than achieving success within it, however. The vast amount of porn being produced in the United States, in fact, makes introduction into the business fairly simple—performers are always needed, whether for low-budget home-based porn or bigger studio pictures. But the very nature of porn's popularity creates an extremely competitive environment in which it can be difficult for performers to distinguish themselves. According to *Adult Video News*, the *Variety* of adult entertainment, there were approximately 11,000 adult titles released in 2000—nearly thirty times as many movies as offered by Hollywood studios, with much less financial

backing for promotion.<sup>6</sup> Under such cutthroat conditions, it becomes imperative for the performer to set him or herself apart from the pack. This might be accomplished by specializing in a particular sub-genre or skill set, but primarily the star has to rely on studio promotion, which can be haphazard at best.

The professional obligations of a porn star are expanding to include conventions, special issue magazines, DVDs and websites, but personal incomes have not risen proportionally with the increasingly intimate relationship with producers. The most successful adult film company, Vivid, holds their average female performer to a contract of approximately eight films per year. Being a “Vivid Girl” is the pinnacle of success in this industry; performers for other production companies might do up to three times as many films in a year, in addition to moonlighting in other sex industry positions. But the luxury of having less frequent and more highly compensated work has a tradeoff—the contract system, in which stars like Jenna Jameson have an unprecedented seven-year contract.<sup>7</sup>

In exchange for the professional support and protection they receive, porn stars are expected to assist with their own promotion. This means appearing at public signings at both smaller, independent stores and large chains such as Tower and Virgin, conventions and expositions, and cable television promos. For some performers, their status in porn can help them segue into more legitimate stardom (i.e. appearances in mainstream Hollywood movies). Actors and producers seem to agree that mutual promotion is the way to go, but the balance of power always falls on the side of the studio.

One of the ingredients for success for any star is successful branding of the studio to which he or she is contracted. In studio era Hollywood, product differentiation was key to defining success for many companies. Stars were associated with their home studio, for example Judy Garland at MGM or Bette Davis at Warner Bros. Particular skill in genre production also distinguished studios from one another. MGM was known for its musicals, Universal for horror pictures, and RKO for screwball

romantic comedies. Adult film companies have their own kind of genre specialization, usually by special skills or qualities that their stars possess. Some, such as John Stagliano's popular *Buttman* series, are self-evident. These are often organized by fetish, for example large breasted women or interracial couplings. For the most part, each studio offers a diverse range of content, but identifies itself through production quality, especially specific locations or *mise en scène*, and starring performers.

### Flexible Specialization

In *Pornocopia*, Laurence O'Toole scoffs at the suggestion that the agglomeration of the porn industry in Van Nuys, California, is due to the lure of "carnal pioneers" to a romanticized ideal of the American West.<sup>8</sup> In truth, the reason for porn's proliferation in the San Fernando Valley is mostly economic—discounted real estate, cheap equipment and crew rental, and a bevy of beauties either rejected or already digested by Hollywood. But is there something more to the decision by porn producers to center their industry in southern California? The success of the porn industry has even frightened away legislation that would in fact attempt to provide tax incentives for indigenous Hollywood production. Despite mounting concern over runaway Hollywood production in Canada, California politicians are so afraid of the power of porn that proposed tax incentives to low-budget, regional film projects were stalled in 2000.<sup>9</sup> These proposals are part of an ongoing debate raging on both sides of the border on production financing, but despite the panic of the unions in southern California, production continues to funnel north, thanks to a sagging Canadian dollar and inhospitable filming permit environments in the Los Angeles area. Porn, because of its reliance on indoor, fixed locations, has managed to avoid some of this controversy. The common sense projection of how the porn industry exists, however, still does not account for its continued *success* in the region.

Beginning in the 1930s, most North American and European historiography on industrial organization privileged the ideal that the definition of a “mature” business is one that links large commodity firms with mass production methods.<sup>10</sup> Over the last twenty years, however, a variant of this theory termed “flexible specialization” has gained momentum as an alternative view of economic success in vertically integrated industries such as the film industry. While flexible specialization theory has been found mostly under the purview of urban planning and geographical economics, it helps illuminate some key reasons for the success of both the old Studio System and the continued success of the adult entertainment business in Southern California.

In a challenge to the ideal of increasingly integrated sectoral development in large-scale firms, Berger and Piore demonstrated that mass production ultimately creates much more unstable market niches than previously believed.<sup>11</sup> Michael Storper and Susan Christopherson further developed this, suggesting that one antidote to the imprecise prediction of market demands in large-scale production economies may in fact be a more dynamic network of small, connected firms working towards a common goal.<sup>12</sup> Storper and Christopherson have been most successful in applying this theory to the “disintegration” of the Hollywood film industry in the post-studio system era. Vertically integrated business models, such as the studio system, are largely dependent on economies of scope, rather than economies of scale. In such a model, labor is increasingly divided and hierarchical, incremental transaction costs are minimal, and profit can be spread more evenly.<sup>13</sup> They suggest that in some industries, vertical disintegration may be positive in reducing labour costs by subcontracting. In essence, this describes the majority of studio business models in Hollywood today. While some economists support this “artisan” production model as an extension of a successful democracy, others suggest that this kind of “industrial divide” signals a crisis that stymies efficient regulation and pits small firms against big corporations.<sup>14</sup> Cooke and Morgan have pointed out that technological change and increasing market

differentiation, such as are prevalent in the porn industry, favor flexible specialization, and point to several trends encouraging it—for example, shorter product life cycles and refined decision-making hierarchies.<sup>15</sup> The pornography business is an excellent example of how flexible specialization and regional agglomeration can “ease the managerial coordination associated with the production of a non-standardized product.”<sup>16</sup> However, while some elements of the porn business seem to fit this fragmented post-Fordist firm model such as niche marketing, financial flexibility in the form of wage rate adjustment, and increased short-term, part-time work, it is not a perfect fit, because it also presumes a level of vertical *disintegration* not evident in the industry.

But was this vertical disintegration in Hollywood and, in turn, vertical integration in the porn business, predictable or even planned? Easily, one of the distinct advantages that the contemporary adult film industry enjoys over its cousin on the other side of the San Fernando Valley is the loyalty (or, some may suggest, captivity) of its workers. Alan Paul and Archie Kleingartner have argued that the diversification of post-Classical Hollywood made the biggest impact on collective bargaining and union power.<sup>17</sup> In fact, they hold that by the late 1980s, non-union productions accounted for approximately half of Hollywood’s craft and technical employment.<sup>18</sup> Robert Faulkner and Andy Anderson determined in their analysis of Hollywood success that there are three mechanisms crucial in determining a production’s success: minimization of fixed overhead, mutuality of choice for both buyer and seller, and short-term contracts, an ingredient list that seems to correspond strongly to the porn industry.<sup>19</sup> They ultimately conclude that personal success in the entertainment business is greatly dependent on your affiliations and track record among peers, not any inherent talent, which lends weight to Storper and Christopherson’s “unplanned” theory.<sup>20</sup>

Without union ties, workers in mainstream Hollywood are bound primarily by personal income demands rather than a

contract system. But in the porn business, these income demands are often secondary to continued association with and obligation to specific studios or production companies. Similar to the above discussion of the star system, technical workers in adult entertainment exist in an unofficial contract system, where their skills and talents are determined and recompensed project by project, usually for the same producer. In this way, the porn industry more closely resembles “independent” film, but without the interdependence between art and commerce.<sup>21</sup> Some technicians and skilled workers are more than willing to go on the porn payroll in the event of a union strike. Prior to highly anticipated (but ultimately non-manifesting) strikes by the Screen Actors Guild and the Writers’ Guild of America, Hollywood crew members jammed switchboards at adult studios trying to line up work, regardless of a marked difference in the pay scale.<sup>22</sup>

Asu Aksoy and Kevin Robins presented a similar argument in response to Storper and Christopherson’s thesis.<sup>23</sup> Aksoy and Robins read the flexible specialization thesis (rightly or wrongly) as a simple equation: flexible specialization = inter-firm collaboration + regionalization + local control. While Storper debated this narrow interpretation, Aksoy and Robins maintained that any vertical disintegration process in Hollywood was due more to corporate maneuvering than to short-term cost-cutting and product diversification. Storper *et al.* and Aksoy *et al.* agree to disagree on the scope of power that the studios hold over production as well as distribution, but not on the economy of scale it engenders.

Ultimately, Storper and Christopherson conclude that the vertical disintegration accompanying flexible specialization is the driving force behind regional agglomeration of the entertainment industry in the Los Angeles area. Further, these external economies are fortified by the dynamic nature of this industrial organization, particularly through an increasingly horizontally integrated production system.<sup>24</sup> Aksoy and Robins have a much more conspiratorial view of this system, suggesting that such disintegration was simply incidental in the multinational

conglomerates' fight to acquire and control diverse media properties. Perhaps these are both astute assessments of contemporary mainstream Hollywood. Certainly if the pornography industry could indeed be reduced to such a simplistic formula, it would make this analysis easier, but also less accurate. The reason for porn's lasting success is possibly not the point-by-point borrowing of the studio system business model, but instead the dynamic imitation of that model. If the porn industry is to flourish, it will do so by modifying its industrial organization to fit the unique needs of adult entertainment, both in production and marketing.

### Distribution and Technology

It can be argued that the primary reason for the proficiency of the Hollywood studio system is also that which ensures the adult film industry's success—the tight rein over distribution. It was the first to mass-market distribution technologies such as videocassettes, laser discs, CD-ROMs, and DVD. Now, the most significant growth in the business over the past five years has been in multimedia and Internet porn. It occupies a staggeringly huge amount of virtual space and real time for many people, but it is so inherently dynamic that it is practically impossible to accurately monitor.

Even before the introduction of the Internet, the most dramatic changes in the porn industry occurred thanks to the refinement of technology that moved film from the big screen into the home. The strict control over the distribution of pornography in the 1970s was most often enforced by organized crime. The mafia, in other words, was the only organization confident enough to risk distributing sexually explicit materials over state lines, an offence exacerbated by *Miller v. California* in 1973. The *Miller* decision placed the interpretation of obscenity law on the shoulders of local jurisdictions, but federal courts upheld local community standards *outside* that community.<sup>25</sup> The immediate effect of the ruling was a virtual stampede to buy

up pornographic materials before they were banned. In the long term, however, porn producers had to become more cognizant of the risks of distributing their work over municipal and state lines. But being aware of the risks did not mean reducing traffic, and organized crime set up a system of “sweepers” and “checkers” to create effective underground distribution.<sup>26</sup> It was a complicated, still profitable endeavour, but it put an increasing amount of control into fewer and fewer hands. This would change with video.

Home video was a key technological innovation for the industry because it made films easier to produce, transfer and distribute. With Sony’s introduction of the camcorder in 1983 (which sold three million units by 1990), making a porno was “reduced to little more than the cost of a blank videotape, a bottle of wine, and some baby oil.”<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, each video could be sold to retailers for up to \$300, widening the profit margin. By the late 1990s, adult rentals accounted for forty percent of retail video, with most video stores stocking an average of 700 titles.<sup>28</sup> Some customers tried to minimize their embarrassment by outright purchase of the tapes, thereby avoiding the shame of becoming porn store “regulars,” but rentals still made up the biggest portion of the video business. After all, pornographic movies usually require a limited attention span, and the quality of the films is not stellar enough to warrant multiple viewings.<sup>29</sup> Because video was cheap to shoot and easy to reproduce, the market was soon flooded with adult titles, some professional and some less so. By the late 1980s, video porn was a godsend for retailers, as they could purchase a movie for around \$35 (the best bulk rate) and then rent it out 200 times at \$5 a pop. The biggest dilemma, in fact, was deciding which titles to stock in a dizzying array of monthly releases. While video gave fans a different kind of active viewing experience, it also gave porn studios more control over the distribution of their films than they had before under organized crime. In the end, the impact of videotape and DVD technology was threefold—it spurred growth in production,

brought industry costs down, and lured a whole new audience to adult entertainment.

As the success of the video market proved the loyalty of a homebound audience, the next logical step in exhibition was on television. Pay cable was a natural window for the porn videos now glutting the market, and in many ways a much more positive indicator of the demographics of the audience. It is easier for market researchers to determine exactly who was watching porn based on cable subscription than video store membership. Unfortunately, the rate of penetration of cable television never matched that of household VCR purchases.<sup>30</sup> Nonetheless, the increased level of viewing privacy (i.e. no required trips to the neighbourhood video store) ensured that cable porn would be just as successful as video porn. Adult channels, while attractive sources of revenue to cable system operators, are facing increasing disdain from parents and anti-pornography groups. The preponderance of hardcore on cable, although reaching a larger target demographic, has also meant that it is too easily accessed by audiences for which it was never intended, in particular, children. As a result, cable offerings were restricted in the late 1990s; roughly one in three households had access to adult broadcasting channels by 1998, far less than had access to adult videotapes.<sup>31</sup> Add to that the increasingly fuzzy line between “cable” and “soft core,” where shows on non-X-rated cable channels such as HBO and Showtime include much more sexually explicit content, and the difficulties that cable porn face are obvious.

Regardless of the problems delineating content, the atavistic goals are clear. Major players in cable pornography have historically been Playboy, Spice, Adam & Eve, Adultvision, and Hot. Within the last few years, especially, the names and owners of these enterprises have shifted, bearing remarkable similarity to the trend of multinational entertainment conglomerates snapping up broadcasting interests a decade ago. Playboy purchased its biggest competitor, Spice Entertainment, in 1998 for \$95 million. At the same time, the company acquired Adam & Eve with the intention of consolidating it with Adultvision (Playboy’s pay-

per-view service).<sup>32</sup> The plan was to create a network of branded digital cable and pay-per-view hardcore and soft core channels, using primarily material harvested from the Playboy, Vivid, and VCA libraries. Compare this strategy to Disney's purchase of ABC, or the creation of the UPN and WB networks by movie studio parents. It is both logical and trendy in Hollywood for companies to vertically integrate, thus ensuring the maximum revenue generation on a minimum number of original entertainment properties. By exercising control over video and DVD distribution, as well as cable and pay-per-view broadcasting, the porn business is merely following the extremely successful example the mainstream set. Where porn has exceeded its cousin's expectations, however, is in the utilization of new media technology, such as the Internet.

The advantages of the Internet, namely its anonymity, speed, interactivity, low distribution cost, global reach, and freedom from censorship, have suited the adult entertainment business very well, particularly in countries where the culture or law discourages "in person" customer activity.<sup>33</sup> In a rapidly changing environment, Frederick Lane has suggested that "the true significance of the online pornography industry lies instead in its success at demonstrating the economic potential of the Internet both as a catalog supplement and replacement, and as a storefront."<sup>34</sup> Porn is one of the few profitable online ventures; so profitable, in fact, that any in-depth discussion of it must be limited here. Although saturation of Internet porn is high, it cannot be assumed that all adult sites are money-making ventures. Revenues from sites offering "free" porn come in the form of click-through advertising and links to paid subscriber sites. Regardless of how little money these sites appear to make on the surface, their start-up costs and overhead is minimal; much of the income generated is pure profit. The popular search engine Google estimates that the number of individual sites on the World Wide Web offering pornographic content is larger than the population of the United States, and growing at a near geometric rate.<sup>35</sup> Certainly the influence of the Internet has been

felt more by porn distributors than producers; adult content online is not an industry of creation, but dissemination. While E-commerce websites jumped from 230 in 1997 to 1100 in 2000, sites offering *free* content outpaced that growth by more than ten times, soaring to nearly 300,000 in the same period. It is a phenomenal indicator of success in a growing field; despite the anecdotal evidence to the contrary, Internet use is not as widespread as video and cable.

The importance of the Internet to the porn business cannot be overstated, and builds on this basic question: how can content be effectively and cheaply marketed to a technologically savvy audience? Traditionally, the business has relied on smaller sites offering free adult content to feed traffic to the larger pay subscription sites. But with the saturation of free sex sites, the average viewer is becoming increasingly distracted and less likely to click through to the pay sites. Subscription sites are feeling the pinch, but no more so than the feeder sites, which depend on referral fees for their survival.<sup>36</sup> The true democratic nature of the World Wide Web is the one thing that is devaluing much of the studio porn content online—if anyone can download free pornographic images, why would people pay for them? It is an argument being faced in all entertainment industries right now, not just porn. The fragmentation of the online audience means that it is harder than ever for adult sites to make a profit, unless they are backed by the more powerful studios that can use their contracted superstars, branded to their advantage.

## Vivid Dreams

By far, the most successful adult film studio in operation today is Vivid. Thanks to hefty profit margins and seemingly endless demand, few major production companies are in fact *not* successful, but Vivid Entertainment still stands above the rest. Vivid's revenues since its inception in 1984 have fluctuated depending on the source, but industry estimates currently place it at around \$100 million per year.<sup>37</sup> Considering that its biggest

production in the last five years capped out at \$150,000, it is a company that makes lots of money, but then invests a large portion of that money back into the studio. Most importantly, Vivid has consciously emulated the old Studio System. The “Vivid Girls” define not only the epitome of the current porn star system, but also the company’s most obvious attempt at branding. But is Vivid a typical or unique example of an adult entertainment company? In order to prove that Vivid’s resurrection of the Studio System has been successful, I examine the following: What are the biggest and most important porn studios? Where are they located and how are they organized? Why is Vivid an ideal case study for this project? How precisely does Vivid’s production and promotion process mimic the Studio System? How can we measure Vivid’s success with regard to sales and rentals, industry presence, and even within popular culture?

First, we must place Vivid within its geographic context. Seventy percent of all adult videos are produced in southern California by dozens of adult entertainment production studios, the most notable being VCA, Wicked, Metro, and Vivid. Other companies, such as Evil Angel, Elegant Angel, Anabolic, Extreme Video Associates, and Odyssey, are quickly gaining ground in sales and rentals. The reach and exposure of porn content has been delineated elsewhere in this paper, but it is crucial to understand the competitive nature of the marketplace. Though distribution is international, production is centered in the San Fernando Valley north of Los Angeles, so much so that it is nicknamed Silicone Valley. Chatsworth and Van Nuys are particularly hot spots, housing enormous studios with permanent sets, including locales such as hospitals and restaurants.<sup>38</sup> Performers and skilled technicians take advantage of the proximity to Hollywood, as well as the entertainment culture that flourishes in the region. Porn releases outnumber Hollywood pictures every year nearly thirty times over. Many of the successful porn companies cater to niche markets, but even the “mass market” porn available on pay per view networks outsell Hollywood movies despite higher prices and non-existent promotion.

The larger and more successful adult film companies are well-organized and well-staffed; VCA has nearly 100 salaried employees and state-of-the-art facilities that can duplicate 400,000 videotapes a month.<sup>39</sup> Even smaller companies run by performers-turned-producers distribute their videos internationally and use the Internet to market their products more effectively. There are a handful of studios that have achieved both success and vertical organization. Vivid is not only the most lucrative adult content company, it also prides itself on borrowing the Studio System model to create quality entertainment. Vivid's conscious adoption of these kinds of business practices characteristic of the Studio System has been effectively revived in the adult film industry.

The production process at Vivid is more reminiscent of old school Hollywood than back room bacchanalia. At the major porn studios, as in mainstream Hollywood today, the basic procedure consists of development, casting, production, post-production, and marketing. Some of these steps are simplified in the adult film industry; some are infinitely more complex than on the other side of the San Fernando Valley. Regardless of the similarities, Vivid strives to stand out from the rest of the business. Co-chairman Steve Hirsch claims that Vivid's main goal these days is "brand name recognition as a quality company."<sup>40</sup> That "quality" translates into bigger budgets and better revenues, as well as more diversified and vertically integrated holdings. For example, Vivid recently launched its own brand of condoms and a street-savvy clothing line.

Development at Vivid involves more imagination than focus groups. "Greenlighting" is swift, often unofficial, and usually unfiltered. Although the studio executives will express support for and disagreement with project pitches, there must be extraordinary reasons to reject a proposed film—boundaries are most likely to be set by budgets rather than taste. Compared to many of its competitors, however, Vivid is somewhat selective about the movies it makes. The studio releases approximately 150 videos per year, twelve of those considered major projects. This may seem like a staggering amount of output, but not

compared to companies like Odyssey Group Video, which produces an average of 240 movies a year, each on lower budgets. It is a mere drop in the ocean of the more than 10,000 adult videos released in North America every year.<sup>41</sup> This number does not reflect entirely original products, either; most of the 150 Vivid films will be different versions of the same thing. Hard-core versions will be released on video, soft-core versions intended for cable networks, and versions distributed through hotel video networks will be somewhere in between.<sup>42</sup> One of the benefits of owning the performers' contracts is Vivid's ability to recycle their images—scenes from the big monthly release may be reused in different video compilations without penalty. The big projects may cost up to \$150,000 each, but can generate ten times that in revenue through different exhibition windows. What sets Vivid videos apart is the company's aforementioned commitment to quality, and the branding of its performers.

The cornerstone of Vivid's success is the Vivid Girls. This contract system is the most blatant example of how the porn business has borrowed the studio system model, particularly shades of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. To be a Vivid Girl is considered the apex of a porn star's career, only to be topped by actually making a successful transition to mainstream Hollywood. The first Vivid Girl was Ginger Lynn, back in the mid-1980s. The current roster of actresses, which includes Kira Kener, Jenna Jameson and Briana Banks, earn in the ballpark of \$100,000 per annum, instead of a salary determined per project and per scene. While this income is anemic compared to the salaries of Hollywood actors, it still rates highly within the porn industry, where the average *successful* female performer may earn between \$300 and \$1000 a day. Male performers often earn only a fifth of that. This contracted sum of \$100,000 is earned by performing in perhaps nine films a year, two scenes per film, supplemented by promotional appearances.<sup>43</sup> Contracts can last anywhere from one to three years. It is a significantly higher income to work ratio than most actors in adult movies enjoy. The top stars may also augment that income by selling autographed pictures (and

other more prurient items), enjoying special runs at strip clubs, or running a subscription-service website devoted to them. Being a “Vivid Girl” usually means you can command a higher fee for non-Vivid related work, such as exotic dancing; some high profile clubs will pay up to \$20,000 a week for the privilege of hosting these performers.<sup>44</sup>

The status also affords them a creative control not shared by other actresses in the business. As Vivid president Bill Asher notes, strong female characters “are not only in charge of the sex but the rest of the plot.”<sup>45</sup> And similar to the studio system in old Hollywood, porn maintains a mystique by rigidly closing sets to the public, except for lucky contest winners. As one performer has put it, “if they want to watch me have sex, they should buy the video.”<sup>46</sup> Like professional athletes, porn stars have to worry about the length of their careers. While an adult entertainer’s knee injury, although still surprisingly common, is less likely to bench them for a season, workplace risks such as drugs and sexually transmitted diseases, especially HIV, can significantly limit a performer’s salad days.<sup>47</sup> Competitor studios such as VCA and Wicked have similar star systems now, but can still only support up to three performers at any given time.

Digital technology has been a mixed blessing for Vivid in this way, making video production not only cheaper for them, but also for all their competitors. Up to a third of all adult films currently made in the United States are courtesy of handheld consumer-range camcorders, and produced by amateurs rather than professionals.<sup>48</sup> Vivid’s dedication to shooting features on film makes the cost of transferring to video and DVD more expensive than for its competitors. The studio does everything possible to maintain a distinct look, including contracting an “in house” director and makes specific demands from the production and marketing department to sustain the “Vivid look,” even on videocassette boxes. In addition to gifting Vivid contract actresses with gold logo necklaces, Vivid packaging is sexy, but subtle enough to engineer placement in large chain outlets such as Tower Records and Virgin Megastores. Some stores have increased

their adult video sales by using soft core packaging that appeals to couples rather than single individuals—Castle Superstores, for example, boasts a clientele that is 50 percent couples, rather than the average 20 percent.<sup>49</sup> Vivid peddles its video wares through the popular Adam & Eve catalogue, which is mailed to more than 2.5 million subscribers monthly.<sup>50</sup>

Until now, Vivid's main source of distribution has been cable and pay per view sales. The price of selling distribution rights to cable channels is surprisingly low—from \$1,000 for a 90-minute hard core film to a satellite station to \$25,000 for a soft core version to something like Playboy.<sup>51</sup> But the revenue stream to both the cable company and the network, owned by the originating porn studio in many cases, is significant. If the channel sells the film in \$10 blocks of time to even five million households, the 20 percent accounting for the network's share can mean \$10 million being fed back into the studio's coffers for one film, which likely cost less than \$100,000 to produce.

With Playboy, Vivid owns Adultvision, Hot Spice, and other adult-oriented cable channels. In 1999, the fifteen-year-old Vivid bought a small cable channel called the Hot Network, and quickly expanded its base of subscribers from six million to sixteen million, then signed ten million households to an equally explicit sister channel, the Hot Zone. Vivid's successful move into cable porn boosted its bottom line to \$14.3 million in 1999, compared to \$5.6 million the year before. In May 2000, AT&T began carrying the Hot Network on its digital systems, and by the end of the year, five of the top eight major cable systems in the United States were carrying the channel, as well as direct satellite broadcasters like DIRECTV. Vivid's biggest cable competitor, Playboy, has been in the unenviable position of relying on the Vivid video library to fill their programming, largely due to the fact that their styles and appeal to audiences is very similar.<sup>52</sup> Both Vivid and Playboy work hard to appeal to couples and mainstream audiences, using soft lighting, attractive performers, and artistic standards that resemble Hollywood movies more than low-budget porn. Outside of traditional cable channels, adult films

comprise 50 percent of pay per view revenues.<sup>53</sup> Hotel chain entertainment systems such as LodgeNet and On Command Corporation reach nearly two million rooms worldwide and continue to grow, despite a recent backlash spearheaded by the conservative group Citizens for Community Values, which encourages travelers to work with hotel groups in order to provide “clean hotel” options.<sup>54</sup>

In order to compete with aggressive up-and-coming companies, Vivid has paid close attention to the importance of video store distribution and Internet promotion. During the 1990s, hardcore video releases shot from 1,275 to 8,948. In 1998, adult rentals accounted for 686 million units in the United States alone. It is a huge market. Vivid’s relatively tasteful titles and packaging has allowed its videos to be marketed in mainstream video stores and retail outlets. Titles are vague enough to encourage enquiry *sans* embarrassment, such as “Jekyll and Hyde” or ambiguously artsy like “Pimp.” Compared to the more obvious and pun-filled films like “The Bare Bitch Project”<sup>55</sup> or “Cumback Pussy,”<sup>56</sup> Vivid’s title decisions are positively dull. As stated earlier, Vivid is able to make significant profit, averaging a 15 percent net return annually, by reusing material from one feature in a number of different video and DVD releases. The DVD market in particular has propelled the company into new growth; 30 percent of Vivid video sales and rentals are estimated to be in DVD format. Like Hollywood studios did with new technology such as sound, color, even video, Vivid is careful to use the medium’s capabilities to enhance the viewing experience.

The company’s approach to the Internet has undergone growth as well. After a few years of providing minimal content online, Vivid now promotes downloadable versions of their most popular releases, online chats with Vivid stars, and provides video material to other sites for a price. In fact, Vivid’s decision to farm out its product to other Web sites (similar to Hollywood studio decisions to sell their film libraries to television networks in the 1970s) has meant greater exposure, a larger audience, and increased revenue just in the company’s Internet division, while still

maintaining the company's brand. The trafficking of adult content on the Web has been of concern to international governments and regulatory agencies, but is also a seemingly unstoppable force, and has opened up previously closed markets, such as the Middle East, for American pornography.

The efforts that Vivid makes in branding and promotion is necessary in an age where the bulk of the consumer audience has grown up with VCRs, cable TV and the Internet, and wherein increasingly sexual content is normalized. Despite the widespread availability (if not use) of the V-chip, which allows TV viewers to block out unwanted channels, implied or even graphic sexuality is not limited to adult cable networks. Television and magazine advertising, video games and the Internet are easily accessible sources of material considered by many to be questionable. Simply put, Vivid is not the sole source of porn in the United States. It is, however, one of the higher profile and well-regarded producers, at least among its peers. Much of its success can be attributed to the conscious effort that the company has made in emulating the Studio System style of organization and management. "We have always been the most mainstream of adult companies," said co-chairman Steve Hirsch. "We did that for a reason, to attract the largest audience."<sup>57</sup> Their business decisions have been made based on the lowest common denominator, and seem to be well-founded. No other adult entertainment company has enjoyed the exposure and success that Vivid has, even companies outside of the hardcore business.

## Methodology Problems

Due to the cultural stigma attached to the sex industry, and the constantly shifting legalities, there is considerable debate over just how much money the business makes and, *ergo*, what kind of power it has. Porn films are at less risk of grand failure than big budget Hollywood pictures—porn production budgets are small and profits are certain. But most academics and journalists are placed in the precarious position of trusting anecdotal and

published statistics stemming from the porn industry itself, or its bible, *Adult Video News* (AVN). The problem with this is that, as in every industry, facts are often misinterpreted or figures inflated to suit the industry. The “porn chic” that died a quick death in the 1970s fluttered back to life in the late 1990s, and esteemed periodicals such as the *The New York Times* and *Fortune* created a “porn beat” to cover the rapidly growing business. London-based *The Economist* ran a series of articles investigating the sex industry, including an insightful assessment of Vivid’s recreation of the studio system (which we will explore further later on).<sup>58</sup> The crux of most of these published reports in mainstream magazines is the impressive feat of how the business was flourishing and expanding at a time when other industries (namely, Internet start-ups) were going bust. This is true—porn’s empire expanded, but the question is “how much?”

By most accounts, pornography is a \$10 billion dollar business. Yet, there seems to be little basis in fact for this number. The original source can be traced to a report on adult content on the Internet, released by Forrester Research in 1998. It estimated revenue at approximately \$1 billion; the \$10 billion was an aggregate measure mentioned in passing. Video sales statistics from *Adult Video News* largely corroborated the impressive girth of the business, and have subsequently been trotted out by journalists covering the business for MSNBC and *Time*, among others. In response to criticism of Frank Rich’s feature in *The New York Times Magazine*, *Forbes* writer Dan Ackman attempted to account for these statistics line by line. He found that the figures offered by AVN were unsupported by any reliable methodology, and that the Forrester report was largely unsubstantiated.<sup>59</sup>

While any or all of these numbers *may* be incorrect, the inherent problem is in deciding what to include in any assessment of the industry’s revenues. Some published reports only account for domestic video sales and rentals; some include cable and pay per view transactions, magazines, books, and sex toys. In addition, while sales and rentals are tracked in general interest

video outlets, adults-only stores are not included in the statistics.<sup>60</sup> The widest discrepancy comes in the form of Internet transactions, which are dizzyingly dynamic—do you count advertising click-through on free adult content sites, or only subscriber services? Can you include potential lost revenue for images and streaming video circulated on free servers and file trading networks? Is it possible to accurately assess “domestic” revenue on sites whose servers and clients may be international in scope? Do you count adult content sites that may be illegal in some or many localities? Are online purchases of videos and DVDs double counted? How do you distinguish between softcore and hardcore Internet porn, genuine or fake (such as digitally enhanced pictures of celebrities)?

## Conclusion

It is apparent that the contemporary adult film industry has skimmed the best features of the studio system, and disregarded the less successful detritus. This paper attempts to answer in part the question, “How has the pornography industry successfully resurrected the studio system?” I have tried to draw parallels between the two systems through comparison of the respective industries’ star system, use of new technology, and the organization of production and distribution. Some characteristics of the porn industry, such as flexible specialization, can be seen to some extent in the studio system, but are more relevant to the post-Classical period of Hollywood when studios were jockeying for position after the abandonment of the Production Code and the boom in television popularity. Specifically, the contemporary porn production industry in southern California shares the following salient characteristics with the studio system:

1. Performers are contractually obligated by one particular studio at a time. In comparison, modern Hollywood actors are “free agents,” and are available project by project based on salary demands and creative requirements. Porn stars are bound to a particular producer or production

company, similar to actors in Studio era Hollywood. This obligation includes willingness to participate in studio-arranged publicity and image “branding.”

2. Similar to motion pictures in the 1930s and 1940s, porn products (e.g. movies) are differentiated by style and content, making each adult studio distinct and identifiable. The recent spate of mergers and acquisitions in the industry may dilute individual styles, however.
3. The pornography business and Studio-era Hollywood have both adapted quickly to new technology that helps them reach audiences better. Innovations in the Studio System such as sound, colour, and Cinemascope were all quickly appropriated in attempts to attract a sometimes fluctuating audience. Porn latched on to technology such as video, DVD and the Internet in a similar fashion, but with slightly different motivations. Whereas Hollywood is attracted to technological novelties in order to keep existing audiences and draw in new viewers, porn’s use of technology is primarily motivated by the desire to provide enhancements to an already loyal audience.
4. Both porn and the Studio System are characterized by a highly stratified mechanism of mass production, distribution and exhibition. Ownership and management is centralized, and each studio maintains tight control over product marketing and retail/rental distribution.

However, there remain several points of divergence between the studio system and contemporary porn production. The economic risk undertaken by porn producers, regardless of the popularity of the genre overall, is much greater than in Studio-era Hollywood. Film studios in the 1930s maintained a stranglehold over the market that porn simply cannot reproduce. Thanks to audience fragmentation due to home video, gaming, the Internet and other media activities, the captivity of movie viewers is no longer guaranteed, or even hoped for. Also, there remains a moral distinction between studio system movies and porn—ultimately, the purpose for these entertainment products is very different, and not equally acceptable in contemporary society.

Issues of censorship constantly shroud the porn business, while self-regulation was an important part of 1930s Hollywood. Admittedly, the Production Code that guided the morality of Hollywood films (if not also their audiences) was abandoned when the studio system collapsed, but the desire to guide audiences by rating content remains a concept relatively foreign to the porn industry.

Also, the very nature of pornography demands an increasingly private viewing environment, which distinguishes it from not only studio system Hollywood, but also the current mainstream film industry. The response to this need for discretion is guided by technology and theme specificity, not a move to increasingly generic content in a desperate attempt to attract dwindling audiences. It could easily be argued that the current porn business and the studio system have as many points of difference as they do of similarity, but ultimately we have to decide which of these distinctions are materially *characteristic* of each industry.

In any case, it may be that despite porn's financial success, it will never be able to get out from under the shadow of social protest from feminists, AIDS activists, and conservatives. Academics and audiences alike are still struggling with how to reconcile porn's profit margins with 'cultural loss leaders' and the hostility the industry still faces. How can such a successful business be so reviled? In the 1970s, anti-porn activists rallied it was the genre's popularity that made it particularly loathsome, and threatened to unravel the moral fabric of society. Calls to ban pornography were supported by odd couplings of conservative Christians and radical feminists, each group claiming societal injury from hardcore pornography. Now that porn is "mainstream," much of the original protest has been muted. Instead of attacking porn for "gender violence" which has proven difficult to substantiate in a clinical setting, critics have turned their focus towards the effect of normalized explicit sexuality on children, despite the fact that it is the children of the Andrea Dworkin/Catherine MacKinnon generation who are huge porn consumers. The current administration in the United States may

in fact support increased anti-porn legislation, as new Attorney General Alberto Gonzales has promised, but is facing a much wealthier and more powerful industry lobby, even if it's "obscene." The Internet has complicated things further, by introducing new issues of protest such as copyright protection and freedom of speech that were of little real concern twenty years ago. It is pointless to close the barn door after the horse has bolted; in this case, prosecutors and the anti-porn lobby may be more threatening (and effective) if they went after the *money* instead of cultural critique. Admittedly, it would be difficult to argue a class action suit against the porn industry for moral damages.

The question that perhaps should be asked next is "Based on the vast success of the business model that porn is now using, why hasn't Hollywood reappropriated it?" One answer may be that porn's success is considered by many to still be unproven. Regardless of the true statistical breakdown of the industry, it seems clear that pornography continues to be prominent in both the local entertainment economy and popular culture. The "creative accounting" problem that porn shares with Hollywood is only an indication of flagging self-esteem, not flagging box office. Many of the conditions that led to anti-trust suits against the Hollywood studios in the 1940s and 1950s are in fact reoccurring today as attractive byproducts of conglomeratization. For example, block booking and blind bidding, which were concluded by the Paramount Decree to be unfair business practices, have been re-energized in the form of in-company cable and network sales. The addition of new technology over the last fifty years, such as television, video, cable and satellite networks, has effectively encouraged massive synergistic media mergers and led to an increasingly vertically integrated industry. Possibly, the "new" Hollywood has simply evolved too far from the studio system to return to such an insular model. Such an organizational structure would be stymied by multinational corporation ownership, management, and the complexities inferred by electronic production and distribution of content.

Perhaps this is ultimately the reason why mainstream Hollywood has not breathed new life into the studio system—the infrastructure is simply too large and unwieldy to make it effective. One way that disgruntled employees fought against the studio system in the 1950s was to establish unions and independent agencies. The difference in the porn business is that few performers, if any, have the clout to bend the studios to their will this way. “Vivid girls are a lot easier to replace than the likes of Julia Roberts, not least because they appeal to the least discriminating parts of the consumer’s brain.”<sup>61</sup> But as long as there continues to be a demand for adult entertainment, porn studios are unlikely to give up control over the business and product, including their stars. Ultimately, porn’s success may be its downfall—as it becomes more accepted in the mainstream and more profitable, the subsequent growth of production companies in America and around the world will lead to conglomerates similar to those in Hollywood. Under such infrastructural pressure, the industry may continue to adjust their business practices to changing circumstances.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Family Safe Media, *Pornography Statistics 2003*, available online at [http://www.familysafemedia.com/pornography\\_statistics.html](http://www.familysafemedia.com/pornography_statistics.html). (last accessed April 2005)

<sup>2</sup> Frank Rich, “Naked Capitalists,” *The New York Times Magazine* 20 (May 2001): 51. Also H.W. Jenkins, Jr., “Porn Again: An Industry Fantasizes About Respect,” *Wall Street Journal* (April 1, 1998): A19.

<sup>3</sup> T.L. Stanley, “Porn Crosses Over to Media Mainstream,” *Advertising Age* (Midwest region edition) (January 26, 2004): 4.

<sup>4</sup> Rich, “Naked Capitalists,” 55.

<sup>5</sup> Barbara Lippert, “From Sexy to Sleazy,” *Adweek* (January 3, 2005): 8.

<sup>6</sup> Rich, “Naked Capitalists,” 52.

<sup>7</sup> Paul Keegan, “Prime-time Porn,” *Business 2.0* (June 2003): 96.

<sup>8</sup> Laurence O'Toole, *Pornocopia: Porn, Sex, Technology and Desire* (London: Serpent's Tail, 1998), 164.

<sup>9</sup> Kristina Sauerwein, "X-Rated Topic in Breakup Debate," *Los Angeles Times*, 2 Nov. 2002. Available online at <http://www.latimes.com/la-110102porn.story> (last accessed November 2004).

<sup>10</sup> See S. Kuznets, *Secular Movements in Production and Prices* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1930); J. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1942); A. Burns, *Production Trends in the United States since 1870* (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1934).

<sup>11</sup> S. Berger & M. Piore, *Dualism and Discontinuity in Industrial Societies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980). In contrast to this, and for a direct analysis of Hollywood, see J. Sedgwick and M. Pokorny, "The Risk Environment of Film Making: Warner Bros in the Inter-War Years," *Explorations in Economic History* 35 (1998): 196-220. Outside of Hollywood, see Helen Blair, "Flexible Films?" *Media, Culture & Society* 22 (2000): 187-204 for an analysis of flexible specialization in the British film industry.

<sup>12</sup> Michael Storper and Susan Christopherson, "Flexible Specialization and Regional Industrial Agglomerations: The Case of the U.S. Motion Picture Industry," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 77 (Winter 1987): 105. See also Susan Christopherson and Michael Storper, "The City as Studio, The World as Back Lot: The Impact of Vertical Disintegration on the Motion Picture Industry," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 4, no. 2 (1986): 305-320; and Michael Storper, "The Transition to Flexible Specialization in the U.S. Film Industry: The Division of Labour, External Economies, and the Crossing of Industrial Divides," *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 13 (September 1989): 273.

<sup>13</sup> The biggest incremental change in the entertainment industry has come in decreasing costs of video technology. In the 1980s, Laurence O'Toole notes, the initial investment in a porn production could be returned ten times over within a few months. But as the wholesale cost of videotapes (for copying) has plummeted from more than \$90 to \$5 or less, it makes it much more difficult for producers (but much less so for retailers) to achieve the bulk sales needed to turn a significant profit. O'Toole, 215.

<sup>14</sup> Paul Hirst and Jonathan Zeitlin, "Flexible Specialization: Theory and Evidence in the Analysis of Industrial Change," in *Contemporary*

*Capitalism* ed. J. R. Hollingsworth and R. Boyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Michael Piore and Charles Sabel, *The Second Industrial Divide: Possibilities for Prosperity* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1984), 73.

<sup>15</sup> P. Cooke and K. Morgan, "The Network Paradigm: New Departures in Corporate and Regional Development," *Environment and Planning Development* 8 (1993): 7-34.

<sup>16</sup> Storper and Christopherson, "Flexible Specialization," 112.

<sup>17</sup> A. Paul and A. Kleingartner, "Flexible Production and the Transformation of Industrial Relations in the Motion Picture and Television Industry," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 47 (1994): 663-78.

<sup>18</sup> Paul and Kleingartner, "Flexible Production," 665. The authors do note that the relationship between union membership and employment is often complicated. Even on non-union productions, the majority of positions may be filled by union members, who have contracts that allow them to move continuously from project to project.

<sup>19</sup> R.R. Faulkner and A.B. Anderson, "Short-Term Projects and Emergent Careers: Evidence from Hollywood," *American Journal of Sociology* 92 (1987), 887.

<sup>20</sup> Faulkner and Anderson, "Short-Term Projects," 907.

<sup>21</sup> J. Augros, "Le mythe de la production indépendante dans le cinéma américain," *Revue Française D'Etudes Américaines* 56 (mai 1993), 123-133.

<sup>22</sup> R. Frammolino and P.J. Huffstutter, "Can Porn Keep Hollywood Afloat During Strike?" *Los Angeles Times* (April 23, 2001).

<sup>23</sup> Asu Aksoy and Kevin Robins, "Hollywood for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Global Competition for Critical Mass in Image Markets," *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 16 (March 1992), 1-22. See also Michael Storper, "Flexible Specialisation in Hollywood: A Response to Aksoy and Robins," *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 17 (1993): 479-484.

<sup>24</sup> Storper and Christopherson, "Flexible Specialization," 115.

<sup>25</sup> *Miller v. California*, 413 US 15 (1973).

<sup>26</sup> A checker would carry the film across state lines to adult theatres, and the sweeper would travel the theatre circuit collecting commissions. Frederick S. Lane, III., *Obscene Profits: The Entrepreneurs of Pornography in the Cyber Age* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 32.

<sup>27</sup> Lane, *Obscene Profits*, 51.

<sup>28</sup> O'Toole, *Pornocopia*, 165.

<sup>29</sup> This is changing. Kenneth Guarino, president of publicly traded X-rated company South Pointe, compares his retail video sales with those of Disney, particularly in box chains like Tower Records. J.R. Wilke, "Porn Broker: A Publicly Held Firm Turns X-Rated Videos Into a Hot Business," *Wall Street Journal* (July 11, 1994): A1.

<sup>30</sup> Lane, *Obscene Profits*, 34.

<sup>31</sup> Lane, *Obscene Profits*, 34.

<sup>32</sup> J. Schlosser, "Adult Channels Mate," *Broadcasting & Cable* (March 15, 1999): 38.

<sup>33</sup> E. Duncan, "Survey—E-entertainment: Sex, News and Statistics," *The Economist* (March 7, 2000): S7. See also "Adult Retailers Enjoy Limitless Possibilities By Being Online," *New Media Age* (January 20, 2005): 15.

<sup>34</sup> Lane, *Obscene Profits*, 70

<sup>35</sup> D. Goldman, "Consumer Republic," *Adweek* (April 23, 2001), 12.

<sup>36</sup> R. Barrett, "Trouble in Porn Land," *Interactive Week* (April 23, 2001): 14.

<sup>37</sup> Stanley, "Porn Crosses Over," 4.

<sup>38</sup> "The Sex Industry: Giving the Customer What He Wants," *The Economist* (February 14, 1998): 22.

<sup>39</sup> Rich, "Naked Capitalists," 52-54.

<sup>40</sup> E. Duncan, "Technology and Entertainment: Vivid Imagination," *The Economist* (November 21, 1998): S15.

<sup>41</sup> *Adam Film World Guide 2001 Directory* (Los Angeles: Knight Publishing, Inc., 2001).

<sup>42</sup> I.e., no anal sex or extreme close-ups. Duncan, "Technology and Entertainment," S15.

<sup>43</sup> Duncan, "Technology and Entertainment," S15; Rich, "Naked Capitalists," 56.

<sup>44</sup> "Branded Flesh," *The Economist* (August 14, 1999), 56.

<sup>45</sup> Rich, "Naked Capitalists," 56.

<sup>46</sup> O'Toole, *Pornocopia*, 185

<sup>47</sup> The health hazards of the porn industry have been well-documented elsewhere. By the same token that Hollywood stars of the 1930s and 1940s were slaves to morals clauses and studio-controlled relationships, porn stars today are subject to random drug and HIV testing. Disease, and even death, is considered an occupational hazard, and is impossible to eradicate.

<sup>48</sup> "The Sex Industry," 22.

<sup>49</sup> Joel Stein, "Porn Goes Mainstream," *Time* (September 7, 1998): 55.

<sup>50</sup> Stein, "Porn Goes Mainstream," 55.

<sup>51</sup> R.C. Morais, B. Nelson, and R. La Franco, "Porn Goes Public," *Forbes* (June 14, 1999): 216.

<sup>52</sup> Schlosser, "Adult Channels," 38

<sup>53</sup> Morais *et al.*, "Porn Goes Public," 214.

<sup>54</sup> Matthew Cooper, "Looking for a Clean Room," *Time* (February 14, 2005): 14.

<sup>55</sup> Midvid, "The Bare Bitch Project," 1999.

<sup>56</sup> Elegant Angel, "Cumback Pussy," volumes 1-32.

<sup>57</sup> Sally Beatty, "Cable Operators Find New Profit in Pornography" *The Wall Street Journal* (November 28, 2001): B1.

<sup>58</sup> "Branded Flesh," 36.

<sup>59</sup> These heady statistics are the subject of an on-going debate about the accuracy of porn industry reporting. See E. Richard, "The Naked Untruth," available online at <http://www.alternet.org/story.html?StoryID=13212> (last accessed May 23, 2002). Also E. Richard, "The Perils of Covering Porn," *Online Journalism Review* (June 6, 2002) available online at <http://www.ojr.org/ojr/business/1017866651.php>; D. Ackman, "How Big is Porn?" *Forbes* (May 25, 2001) available online at <http://www.forbes.com/2001/05/25/0524porn.html>; M. Bruner, "The Sultans of Smut," MSNBC (August 9, 2000) available online at <http://www.msnbc.com/news/438846.asp?cp1=1>; and "In Face of Criticism, AVN Issues Strong Endorsement Of Its Annual Statistics," *Adult Video News* (August 2001) available online at [http://www.adultvideonews.com/bone/by0801\\_02.html](http://www.adultvideonews.com/bone/by0801_02.html).

<sup>60</sup> Wilkie, "Porn Broker," A1.

<sup>61</sup> "Branded Flesh," 56.