



Watching Porn: And Other Confessions from an Adult Entertainment Journalist

Lynsey G.

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Watching Porn is seductive work that approaches its subject respectfully and from every conceivable angle, working toward wholly satisfying conclusions.

In her enticing memoir and expose, *Watching Porn*, “jizz journalist” Lynsey G. deconstructs the medium and its global fanfare, exploring how people enjoy, and often simultaneously deny, smut. Hers is a project laden with humor, incisive insights, and titillating, winking bawdiness.

Lynsey G.’s first paid writing gig found her reviewing porn for seventy-five bucks a film. It was a crash course in the graphic ingenuity of the industry in the early 2000s, and left her crafting clever euphemisms while wearing out the fast forward button on her remote. So, too, did it challenge her perceptions of porn—something that she’d always privately enjoyed, but about which her feminist instincts left her feeling conflicted.

Watching Porn unpacks the industry, discussing how porn is implicated in almost every social evil, despite its high levels of diversity, sex positivity, and the hard work of its performers. It is blunt about industry flaws, including underlying racism and heteronormativity in porn, and real instances of coercion that occur in its shadier corners. It shows porn to be less fringe than intrinsic—if not to our outward culture, then certainly to the way that we’ve come to think about sex.

Lynsey turns the closed-door consumption of contemporary porn over and around, examining its implications for the actual experience, and enjoyment, of sex with others. Confusion is the cost of reducing sexuality to an illicit expression; while enticing puns and insider information permeate the text, this reality also pervades its chapters.

Lynsey’s rise through porn writing to a *McSweeney’s* gig and television pilot negotiations makes for consumable reading, and meditations on consent, and on what it means to be an assault survivor interacting with the porn industry, are both sobering and moving. Her introduction to, and of, queer porn provides space for provocative feminist commentary.

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MICHELLE ANNE SCHINGLER (March 15, 2017)

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