

4 Countershame, Startle, and the Unsolicited Pussy Pic

“No one gives a flying fuck what you have to say cunt,” comments a Twitter user “Doberman_Dad” on a tweet by the adult film performer Stormy Daniels. “You sure seem to care, Mr. Doggie Fucker,” she tartly replies, pointing to both his engagement with her online activities and the multiple meanings that his user name involves. Mundane as such, this exchange had over four hundred of Daniels’s followers joining in to mock Doberman_Dad and articulate their support for her. In other words, we have here a failed attempt at online bullying and shaming where a comment meant to silence is countered with a chorus of voices ridiculing the attempt.

A discussion on humor and feminist resistance in social media would be lacking without analysis of tactics for countering harassment, abuse, and shaming. Tackling this and moving further below the belt, this chapter examines slut-shaming (also addressed in chapter 5), tactics for outing and shaming harassment occurring via dick pics, and the diverse, intricate functions that the less common phenomenon of pussy pics can serve. We open with a discussion of one of the most immediately recognizable feminist social media tactics—the public and sometimes nonconsensual recirculation and commenting of hateful, disturbing, or otherwise undesired social media messaging. Rendering harassment visible is a widespread, successful, and to a degree risky feminist tactic. It is used widely at, for example, the @everydaysexism Twitter account “documenting experiences of sexism, harassment and assault” and at tumblrs and Instagram projects that make public the abusive flow of social media backchannel messaging.

Examples remain abundant, but we focus on two. In the aftermath of the disclosures of her sexual encounter with Donald Trump and the attempts to silence her on the matter in the interest of his presidential campaign,

Daniels has been an object of broad media interest and vitriolic personal attacks, developing a unique tweeting style in response (as already sampled above). Our second example brings in some Nordic flavor through Linnéa Claeson's Instagram account @assholesonline, a gallery of hundreds of unsolicited advances paired with Claeson's responses to insults or abuse and confrontations with the senders.

We then move to examine what seems to be the stuff of legend—the unsolicited pussy pic—starting out with one attempt at turning the tables on the widespread phenomenon of unsolicited dick pics. The Los Angeles-based writer Kerry Quinn (2015) decided to send preemptive “vagina pics” to a number of men on the dating app Bumble to, “in [her] own twist on revenge porn,” let them have a taste of their own medicine. The experiment failed in the sense that the men did not respond in the way she expected them to. The failure highlighted how acts of sending and receiving unsolicited pictures of one's genitals are caught up in a heterosexual imaginary that determines what such surprise appearances might mean and how they might feel. At the same time, this does not foreclose other ways in which such images may travel, affectively as well as symbolically. We investigate such ambivalences in the traffic in genital pics to open up feminist analysis and critique on a topic that is currently overdetermined by an interpretative framework of heterosexism and violence.

Finally, we expand our focus on feminist tactics of creative pussy-pic making as forms of intervention in the culturally pervasive dick-pic culture, by evoking genealogies of feminist “cunt art” and its activist uses. Our main example in this section consists of the work and social media presence of feminist artist Stephanie Sarley, particularly her sassy, absurdist pictorial treatment of vulvas on Instagram. Her work has generated a wide range of reactions, from enthusiastic praise and fan love to shock, disgust, and aggression. As an echo of feminist 1970s gynocentric art, this is a digital instantiation gone viral, right at the intersection of copyright infringement, harassment, and platform politics that strike down hard on content that is deemed sexually suggestive.

Rerouting Hate

Online hate aims at silencing those it targets. As the Gamergate movement made evident, beginning in August 2014, online hate campaigns targeted

against women and other others online make use of slurs and rape and death threats, can be highly organized, and can efficiently bar contributions in online publics. In different combinations and variations, hate sticks with a sharp racist edge to nonwhite bodies, with a homophobic edge to nonstraight bodies, and with a trans-phobic edge to trans bodies. Pointing out the conceptual limitations of euphemisms such as *offensiveness* in tackling hostile and hyperbolic misogyny, Emma Alice Jane (2014a, 559) identifies this misogyny as “gendered e-bile” involving “a distinctive semiotic flavour.” E-bile may grow vitriolic, vary in its intensities, or remain something of a persistent hum, yet its misogynistic tones remain clear in how it targets bodies marked as female, too feminine, inappropriately feminine, or not feminine enough (Jane 2014b, 2016). Although femininity in these discussions is at risk of being something that belongs to or marks merely female bodies, we find it vital to make a distinction between the two because femininity, rather than femaleness, often gets the most heat. So trans and gay male femininities, for example, also need to be part of the consideration. The default mode of femininity is failure. You are bound to perform it incorrectly or improperly (see Skeggs 1997; Sundén 2015), yet the retribution for such slipups can be severe.

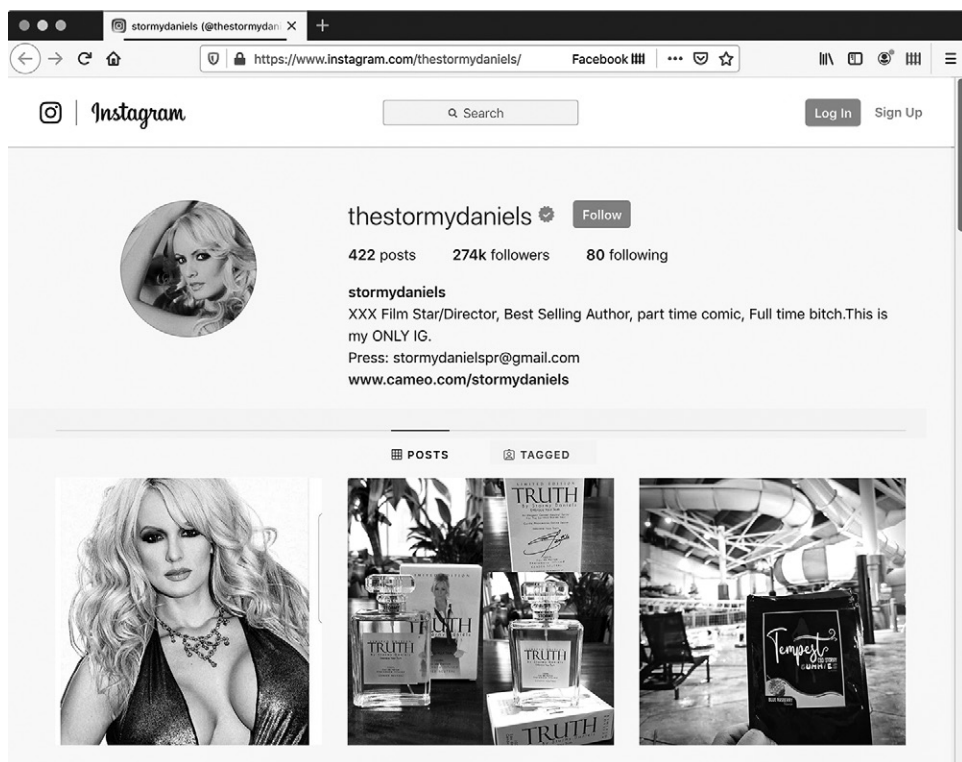
The retweeting of hateful tweets and the publishing of private social media messages are probably the best-known tactics for countering online hate and harassment by rendering them objects of public witnessing, engagement, and debate. The whistleblower, activist (and trans woman) Chelsea Manning was long known to retweet her haters with comments such as “We got this” and with additional rainbow, heart, and unicorn emojis. This was a means to make visible both the style and volume of hateful commentary and to frame it as something for her followers to relate to and possibly react to. Retweeting, especially when practiced by a social media influencer such as Manning, greatly amplifies the visibility and reach of individual tweets and, in this sense, potentially amps up the affective reverberations of hate. This, again, may inspire novel attacks. When hateful messaging is continuous, daily, and voluminous, its force may grow too heavy, making it easiest to leave the platform in question—as Manning temporarily did in February 2019. Since hateful messaging aims at silencing, this tactic of self-preservation is perfectly aligned with the aims or goals of such campaigns.

At the same time, retweeting dislodges the tweets from their original dynamics of communication and serves them as different kinds of messages

(cf. Sadowski 2016). Reframing thus makes it possible to undo the premise of shame involved in being the recipient of such communication. To the degree that harassment (such as being called an idiot, fat, or a whore or facing rape threats) is also a tactic of shaming, visibility makes it possible to turn the tables by shaming the shamer. Given our interest in the dynamics of shame, shaming, and shamelessness that cuts through this book, the retweeting practices of Stormy Daniels (the stage name of Stephanie Clifford) are particularly pertinent. After entering the adult film industry in the early 2000s, Daniels has had a highly successful career in the industry as a performer, director, and producer. In 2010, she launched a bid for the US Senate as a Republican in Louisiana, following a grassroots campaign that encouraged her to run against Republican Senator David Vitter, who was accused of belonging to a prostitution ring. Reacting to news that the Republican National Committee had reimbursed its members for their expenses at a topless, bondage-themed nightclub called Voyeur, Daniels announced that, despite having long been a registered Democrat, “I cannot help but recognize that over time my libertarian values regarding both money and sex and the legal use of one for the other is now best espoused by the Republican Party” (Condon 2010).

Daniels was no newcomer to either political debate or ironic rhetoric when news of her nondisclosure agreement with Donald Trump’s lawyer, Michael Cohen, became public in 2017. The following year, Daniels launched a strip tour titled “Make America Horny Again” and published an autobiographical book, *Full Disclosure*, detailing her interactions with Trump and the attempts to silence her, all to much media attention. Daniels has been on Twitter since 2009, but after she became the most searched-for porn star of 2018 on Pornhub, the leading porn video aggregator site, her followers increased to one million. Her Instagram account, with some 287,000 followers, focuses mainly on promotional materials, news coverage, and photos of Daniels at work and at leisure, with occasional live events, such as one during Trump’s 2019 State of the Union address. “If you’re looking for anything even remotely worth watching tonight at 9 pm EST, I will be folding laundry in my underwear for 8 minutes on Instagram live,” Daniels announced on Twitter, gaining an audience of around 100,000 viewers.

In addition to posting largely promotional materials on her Twitter account, Daniels makes sharp rebukes to hateful tweets. In many cases, the



Stormy Daniels's Instagram page, <https://www.instagram.com/thestormydaniels>.

original tweets sent to her have been removed or the tweeters' accounts deactivated or suspended, leaving Daniels' responses—or burns—as the last words:

Really? I think it's epic and I'm proud that I'm still able to have my career.

What is REALLY sad is another woman using ageism in a (failed) attempt to shame another woman. I haven't even reached my sexual peak. Watch out world! (January 10, 2019)

News to me. My STD test (every 14 days for over a decade) says I am 100% clean of ALL diseases. Let's see yours? (January 17, 2019)

I am not cheap! Ha ha! And I don't judge people based on religion but I do judge people based on their grammar and spelling. I am confident that you are actually the ignorant one. (January 20, 2019)

I think you meant “whore” and . . . you do know how birth control and condoms work, right?? (Please say yes) (January 21, 2019)

Daniels’ tweeting style is witty and often ironic. Impervious to any attempts at slut-shaming, she ridicules people who take offense at her work or actions while rerouting the intended circuits of offense, often to the effect of ending the exchange. Consider these examples:

Ok lady who sucks dicks for a living

Ok! Boy, who poorly tweets at lady who sucks dicks for a living. (January 20, 2019)

I have met and talked to topless dancers before in political conversations, this Stormy Daniels, has not the intelligence of a nat. The others spoke to had more intelligence, and understood people. Stormy is as dumb and sand.

It’s spelled “gnat” and “as sand” . . . this one was too easy. (January 21, 2019)

tell me this, how are you always spewing nonsense? I mean rumor has it you’re mouth is always full and the spewing your doing is because you don’t swallow!

That is a disgusting and vicious lie! I absolutely DO swallow! (January 23, 2019)

Worn out porn horse. Are you still yapping. Man

What kind of porn have you been watching? Your whole tweet is confusing and . . . well . . . I won’t judge on your fetishes. (January 23, 2019)

WTH, when did they start giving out trash of the year awards?

Years ago. I have an entire trophy case of them. Pretty awesome! (January 28, 2019)

Routinely attracting thousands of likes and lively participation among Daniels’s followers, these exchanges open up as social theater of sorts, one that she has expanded to comedy club performances (Marks 2020). Daniels’s rhetorical tactics include deliberately misunderstanding people’s intent, critiquing their grammar, and using *slut* as a point of proud self-identification. Her tactic of slut pride ignores views of sex work as offensive and as violating moral norms and instead pokes fun at the offense, annoyance, and resentment of the people who claim to consider it as such.

Meanwhile, she performs offense at not being identified as a slut of the correct, high caliber, turning the dynamics of shaming around and serving this as entertainment for other tweeters to participate in. We develop our discussion of shamelessness as a feminist social media tactic further in chapter 5, but argue that Daniels has developed and mastered her own variation of it.

Daniels's embrace of shameless, active, and advanced sluttiness involves a detachment from the label of victim, and she has separated her complaints concerning Trump from those voiced within the #MeToo movement: "I have NEVER compared myself to rape victim or been a part of #metoo. I've been very vocal about both" (January 12, 2019). "Victim of what? I've been VERY vocal about just the opposite and how it's not even a #metoo thing. I stood up for myself INSTEAD of being a victim" (January 28 2019). In an interview with *The Cut*, one year into #MeToo, Daniels similarly denied connections to the movement: "I'm not a victim. It's really annoying. It takes power away from the people who've been assaulted or raped or sexual-harassed by their boss." After arguing against overly expansive and generalizing labels of harassment and victimhood, she continued to describe the pleasure she gets from Twitter traffic: "They'll be like, 'Whore.' And I'm like, 'Yes?' I mean, I guess I feel the most powerful when someone tries to take my power or belittle me or insult me and it doesn't work. I've sort of taken all their power away from *them*" (Nuzzi 2018).

All this seems to make it more than easy to identify Daniels a contemporary feminist hero figure, but she is swift to refuse the label, arguing that she is no feminist because her primary interest is not helping women and because gender should not matter: "What's between somebody's legs. I used to be really annoyed that people would be like, 'Oh, Stormy Daniels is the best female director.' And I'd be like, 'What does my vagina have to do with it? She hasn't directed shit.' . . . I feel sorry for men right now. It's not a good climate to have a penis" (Nuzzi 2018). Daniels's concern is explicitly about social power, but rather than framing the issue in terms of gender, the key lens of #MeToo, she foregrounds sex instead. Her lack of allegiance to #MeToo—or, in her view, feminism—does not mean that she approves of rape culture but rather expresses her disinterest in the gendered relations of power within which rape culture and slut-shaming emerge.

All this needs to be considered in the context of debates on pornography, the primary professional field through which Daniels has gained her

public status. According to a popular damaged-goods hypothesis, women end up having careers in porn as result of childhood abuse and trauma rather than through knowing choice, and they are under the power of the male-dominated adult industry during their careers. Although this myth has been debunked in empirical inquiry (see Griffiths et al. 2013), it continues to hold much power and is efficient in downplaying the agency and experiences of the women involved. The damaged-goods hypothesis remains key to feminist antipornography critiques that position female adult performers as victims who are to be exploited. Daniels's firm refusal of victimhood means refusing the damaged goods label and political alignment with those who might label her thus. Meanwhile, she remains highly vocal in sex worker rights activism (see Marks 2020).

Slut-shaming is not practiced by male users alone but is widely deployed by women toward other women (Miller 2014), although this is rarely fully accounted for in feminist discussions. Such gender dynamics in the affective economy of shame highlight how the nexus of sex, power, and agency may be differently put to use by women as a way of controlling other women, their bodies, and their sexuality. Lewis Webb (2015) argues that women have always been complicit in slut-shaming (from ancient Rome to the age of the internet) because shaming other women for their sexual behavior comes with its own set of benefits. If sex is seen as a power source with limited access (for straight men), then (straight) women who are deemed promiscuous and more than willingly giving "it" away would distort the power balance, undermining the power of other women. To call out such promiscuous women on their slutty behavior rebalances the scale and restores the order in which sex functions as proper hard currency (see also Dragotto, Giomi, and Melchiorre 2020).

Considering the volume of insulting tweets hurled at Daniels by users identifying as female, some of which have been quoted above, it is not surprising that she refuses to align her interests along the axis of binary gender in the general service of womanhood. Hers is a sexual politics that builds on strategic gendered body performances (as exemplified by her extensive pornographic work) but has no patience with mapping out agency in terms of gender binaries. This politics is paradoxical inasmuch as it is provocative, and it implies a narrow understanding of feminism. The possibilities that its shamelessness affords should not, however, be ignored.

Outing the Dicks

Daniels is likely to remain as unfazed by unsolicited dick pics as she is by attempts at slut-shaming. Dick pics nevertheless remain the most recurrent symbol of gendered online harassment—indicating interest and desire in the form of unsolicited sexual advances as well as symbolizing phallic male aggression and toxic masculinity in connection with rape threats. Unwanted dick pics are ubiquitous in both hook-up apps and social media backchannels. Attempts at fighting dick pics and the affective intensities of shame connected to receiving them are a dominant theme in media coverage of women's resistant social media tactics. Reports abound of turning the tables by publishing dick pics and sometimes ridiculing their senders, some of these reports growing viral through shares and likes (Paasonen, Light, and Jarrett 2019). Meanwhile, projects such as the Instagram-based Bye Felipe, which since 2014 has focused on “calling out dudes who turn hostile when rejected or ignored,” remain popular.

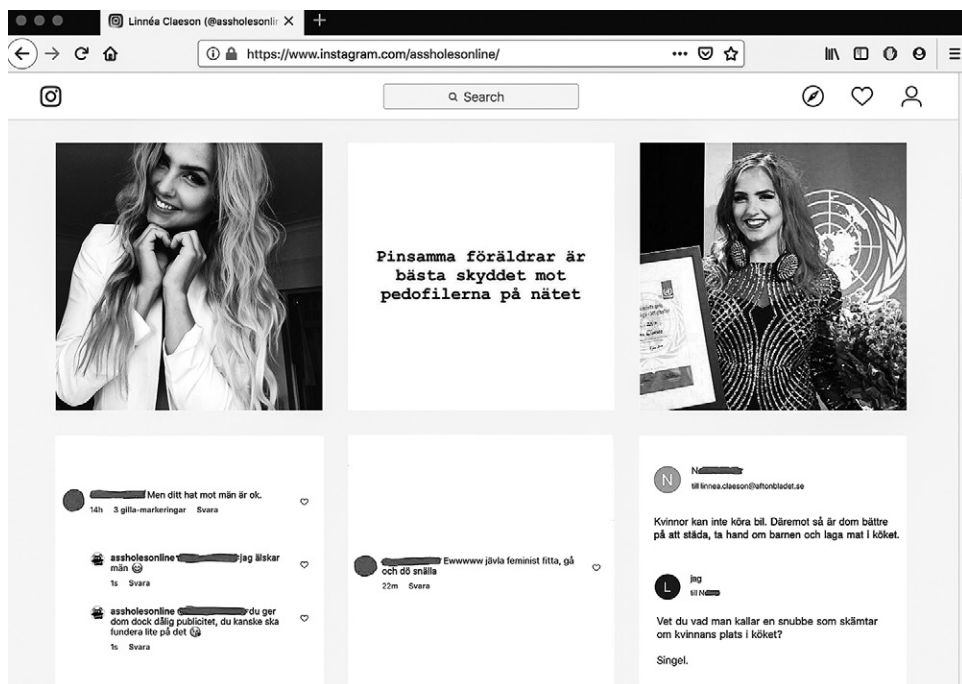
The rationale of Bye Felipe, which, at the time of this writing, had 496,000 followers, is simple: participants share screen grabs of unwanted private dating app and social media exchanges without the knowledge of the communication partners in order to reveal their hostile, sexist, and offensive behavior. These screen grabs may come with or without the user names and profile pictures attached. According to a repeating dynamic, when men's sexual advances are not returned or acknowledged fast enough or not at all, the senders turn to body-shaming, slut-shaming, and other dismissive behavior, fueled by what Frances Shaw (2016) identifies as a sense of straight male sexual entitlement that is vulnerable to challenge and is both volatile and predictable in the speed with which it shifts to hostility. Similar feminist projects have been addressed as critical witnessing and resistance through strategies of ridicule, mockery, humiliation, and public shaming (Vitis and Gilmour 2016). By making assumedly private exchanges public, countershaming detaches the messaging from the personal—that is, from being about the individual woman in question—and helps to frame these exchanges as an issue of gendered routines and hierarchies.

The platform is key in terms of the degree of assumed publicness involved. A public tweet is intended and performed for an audience, lending a particular dynamic to Daniels's gleeful social theater that integrates

the original tweeters in its loops. Meanwhile, dick pics or insults sent as WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, or Twitter direct messages operate with the premise of backchanneling. Since these are not meant for public consumption on any feed, posting them on Instagram means turning the tables through the refusal of privacy. This is a simple tactic of outing. Many social media platforms have archival functions in that the data posted remains present unless specifically removed, and a sender cannot remove personal messages received by another. Meanwhile, Snapchat is built on the principle of transience: chats disappear once they have been seen, affording a temporal sense of flashing.

Independent of the platform, messages can be saved as screen grabs, stored with the aid of additional software, and recycled across platforms for sharing in ways impossible for the senders to control. There is no cause to believe that an unsolicited dick pic could not enter social circulation under terms other than those set by the sender. This, however, does not efface the ethical questions connected to shaming and the nonconsensual recirculation of dick pics as feminist tactics of resistance. Outing can be gleeful in the joy that shaming affords. Especially when the posts outed grow viral without having been anonymized, the repercussions for the men involved can be considerable and long-term, given the tenacity with which the data circulates and remains available (van der Nagel 2016). Someone's name and face may be connected to and haunted by a dick pic incident in top Google search results for years and years to come.

Linnéa Claeson, a Swedish handball player, human rights activist, and law student, has published a gallery of hundreds of unsolicited messages on her Instagram account @assholesonline, which, at the time of this writing, had 278,000 followers. The earliest posts date to 2014 and involve diverse comments and invitations that grow increasingly aggressive with her lack of response, such as "Wanna blow me?" / "Please" / ??? / Respond bitch / Respond bitch!," accompanied by Claeson's complaint to her followers, "It's hard out here for a bitch" (March 13, 2014). Claeson's Instagram selections soon expanded to include dick pics, and those posts started to include responses from Claeson, who framed the exchanges into dialogues of sort. Ranging in content that includes random come-ons, dick pics, and explicit expressions of hate, @assholesonline is a public documentation of unsolicited feedback from strangers, much of it with Claeson's snappy responses and the ensuing exchanges attached.



Excerpt from Linnéa Claeson's Instagram account, <https://www.instagram.com/assholesonline/>.

Sporting a striking, rainbow-colored hairstyle, Claeson has written on her childhood experiences of online sexual grooming and abuse and engages in activism well beyond social media as a celebrity figure. As Claeson has become known for her vocal defense of feminist, queer, and antiracist politics, the messages she publishes have shifted to address, dismiss, and ridicule her and her assumed hatred of men—although uninvited sexual approaches also remain constant. In clear contrast to the gender dynamics involved in Stormy Daniels's Twitter feed, no instances of female-presenting users dismissing or aiming to shame Claeson appear on her Instagram account. Meanwhile, her feminist stance clearly functions as a red flag for many men—whose responses may consist of simply an unsolicited dick pic.

Claeson's rebukes can be harsh, but her response style is often gentle, if not kind: "You are so bloooooody tedious, whining, and pathetic" is encountered with "And still you hang around post after post. Maybe you like me a little in secret? ;)," Her manner can be pedagogical and patient, as when

she counters a critique of her wearing sexually provocative outfits if she is not looking for sexual company with this reply: “Because I want to be a free person, a free woman with free access to my body, identity, and sexuality. I want to be free to express myself without judging looks. I want to be free to choose to fuck or not to fuck when I want, with whom I want, on my terms. I want to be a whole person. Erotic or not erotic. Sexy and ugly. That’s the reason.” Claeson gets political and serious, and yet her responses share some of the witty and surprising qualities of Daniels’s tweeting style. Her rebukes are often funny, which is a central component of their popularity. A hostile message can be countered with the wish that the sender will step daily on a Lego block, or a sender will be accused of being unkind, as one would chasten a child. Many verbal assaults, sexual come-ons, and rape and death threats come without any commentary at all.

In order to comply with Instagram’s content policy of banning nudity or sexual content, Claeson has placed emojis on top of dick pics. The earliest posts included the full name and profile image of the man in question, but in more recent ones, last names and profile photos have been removed. This implies a transformation in the ethical framing of the project, which otherwise remains coherent in its focus and goals. The men in question are still identified as “assholes” in accordance to the account’s title, yet partial anonymity means that, rather than being specifically identified as and shamed for being assholes, they become representatives of broader, structural issues. Launched the same year as Bye Felipe, @assholesonline bears considerable similarity to it while also being distinct in that the exchanges it documents have taken place outside hookup apps or dating platforms. The posts are drawn from email and private social media traffic of the unsolicited kind, affording the project a different kind of resonance as documentation of sexual desire, gendered aggression, resentment, and hate.

We would like to highlight the importance of a contextual take on dick pics and the notion of harassment that is used to encompass all kinds of unwanted or unpleasant advances. This makes it possible to obscure differences between the contexts and platforms where harassment occurs, as well as to efface nuances that this involves. As we have suggested in chapter 2, the hashtag #MeToo both makes visible the ubiquity and volume of sexual harassment and violence and helps to obscure differences between groping and rape, cat-calling and abuse. The quickness and sharpness with which offense is given and taken in social media similarly helps affect flare high,

effacing contextual gradation. An offer to lick someone's anus, for example, although possibly experienced as offensive, means something quite different when delivered on a hook-up app where people are looking for sexual partners than it does in a professional email exchange or in a random private message, such as those shared by Claeson. Although one may not wish to receive a dick pic as a prequel to hooking up, it is not altogether outlandish for the outcome of sexual self-shooting practices to be shared on an app like Tinder, given the motivations and purposes of its use. Treating all unsolicited dick pics horizontally as signs of male violence and offense, without paying adequate attention to contextual detail, obscures the possible ambiguities and diverse intentions involved.

Since November 2019, Claeson has been accused of fabricating and exaggerating instances of sexual harassment, particularly those of the physical kind. Because her career as a social media influencer is underpinned by the experiences she documents and shares, she has been critiqued for building a cult of personality based on inaccurate and partly nonfactual accounts of harassment in a context where factual examples do not gain similar publicity and for undermining a broader feminist project in the process (Gustafsson 2019; Roslund 2019). Accusations of fabrication have been leveled at Claeson by feminist journalists, by predominantly male far-right antifeminist Twitter users, and by the leftist podcast "Haveristerna." According to these critiques, the dick pics she claims to have received actually have been harvested from online porn sites and hook-up apps such as Grindr and hence are not real instances of harassment. Here, the investigation takes a turn toward the absurd. We can envision straight men trolling through gay sites and apps in search of a matching penis and comparing image backgrounds to identify the country where just this kind of a bathroom might exist. Aiming to question the veracity of an antiracist and feminist public figure, this homosocial fieldwork does, after all, necessitate careful and expansive close visual analysis. Although it is entirely possible to send a dick pic to someone without the pic in question being that of one's actual dick—but, let us say, sourced from the rich image file masses of the internet—authenticity operates here as a broader guarantee and proof of trustworthiness.

In an answer to her critics, Claeson (2019) apologizes for not being clear enough about her work methods as well as her overall objective of creating feminist comedy. She does edit messages and conversations from other

platforms and formats so that they fit the image logic of Instagram. For this reason, she has also translated messages into English and sometimes has published the same content twice. Despite critiques concerning the high volume of instances of sexual harassment, online as well as off, she argues that @assholesonline was never a site for displaying sexual harassment targeted only at herself but that it also has functioned partly as an aggregator where she posts conversations and examples that other women have sent her. Regarding the physical advances from men, she persistently stands her ground and refers to documented legal procedures and court cases involving the more difficult ones. In an earlier newspaper chronicle about how dick pics have more to do with power than with sex, she puts the phenomenon of repeat or duplicate dick pics in a comic light. It indeed seems to be the case that different men have used the same dick pics in their unsolicited correspondence and hence have unwittingly, much to her amusement, displayed “the same taste in dicks” (Claeson 2017). Claeson emphasizes that her feminist project always has entailed comedy and humor as weapons for fighting sexism: “This is my shield. This is my self-defense. A willy satire, a penis parody, and cock comedy” (Claeson 2017). This cock comedy comes with its own share of what we might call dick-splaining—for, once again, the question of “truth” seems to hinge on the dicks being presented in a believable manner.

A Feminist Dating App?

As a straight single woman living in Los Angeles and frequenting dating apps, Kerry Quinn had her fair share of unsolicited dick pics interloping into her everyday life. To interfere in a dynamic in which men become the insistent senders and women the reluctant recipients of dick pics, she wanted to reverse the order of operations: “What would guys do if I turned the tables and sent them an unexpected vagina pic?” (Quinn 2015). In her experiment, Quinn decided to not use images of her own private parts, which seemed far too intimate. Following the general trend of ethical laxness connected to the sharing of identifying data in repurposing private messages for public consumption through a feminist lens, Quinn did not comment on the ethics of using a picture of someone else’s body part or on the ethics of rendering parts of the men’s responses public, although these were, to some extent, anonymized in the article she published on the

experiment. Profile names were included, and profile pictures and those parts of the exchange that were (supposedly) too graphic were blurred.

She went online to find, as she put it, “the perfect vagina pic. . . . I searched the Interwebs, and after extensive research I have to give props to straight guys and lesbians—vaginas are like fingerprints except you really don’t know what you’re going to get. After a lot of ‘Whoa!’s and ‘Oh my!’s I found a vagina that somewhat matched mine (correct skin tone!) and seemed ‘cute’” (Quinn 2015). Armed with this new “cute” vagina avatar, which in actual fact most likely was a picture of a vulva (the pictures in the article have been blurred, so we cannot be sure but can make an educated guess), she proceeded to send forty men surprise “vagina pics” on the dating app Bumble.

The choice of Bumble was no coincidence. Bumble allows for image transfers as part of the platform rather than via text messaging, which keeps the interaction safe in a way that interplay involving phone numbers does not. Founded by Whitney Wolfe Herd, also a cofounder of Tinder, Bumble has come to brand itself as a “feminist dating app” (e.g., Lott-Lavigna 2015) that both empowers and protects women. On Bumble, women in straight configurations need to make the first move, nudity is forbidden, and kindness a company motto. In an attempt to challenge the dynamics of straight dating games, Bumble has women taking the lead, makes it easy to report harassment, and has banned male users for fat-shaming and for calling women “gold-digging whores” (Bennett 2017; Tait 2017). To Wolfe Herd, having women initiate contact encourages a more assertive attitude, but also makes men “calm down” (Tait 2017).

As a dating app designed to counteract sexism and abuse, Bumble figures feminism and heterosexual relationality in highly specific ways along the lines of gender, sexual agency, and safety. Caitlin MacLeod and Victoria McArthur (2018, 11–12) argue that gender on Bumble is binary and static because participants have only one option for selecting their gender. Rena Bivens and Anna Shah Hoque (2018, 445, 455) further point out that Bumble optimizes control and safety for cisgender straight women at the expense of other users. Its sense of safety is connected to the absence of both nudity and harassment and to an assumption that straight masculinity includes overt sexuality and aggression. In other words, because the platform’s main concern is the safety and protection of its straight female users, men are positioned as potential sexual harassers and compulsive

dick-pic senders. Although women get to be proactive, this involves a limited, fully clothed form of agency: within Bumble's logic, following the ban on nudity, female sexuality and female sexual agency in fact become oxymorons. Women get to make the first move as long as they comply with the norm of white, bourgeois, demure femininity. Quinn's choice of Bumble for her experiment makes sense because image transfers are safely part of the platform dynamics and women making the first move is a design feature. But Wolfe Herd probably did not foresee that her platform and her work for eradicating dick pics by designing for "active" women, kindness, and decency could be used as a hotbed for a wave of unsolicited vulva pics and, in a sense, a more sex-positive feminism.

Quinn opened up the experiment with a few flirtatious lines and then hit the receivers with the "v-pic." She received not the shock and appall she expected but detailed sexual descriptions of what the receivers wanted to do with her lady bits, so she amped up her game by sending the v-pic right after initial hellos. When this did not seem to make anybody uneasy either, she then simply sent the v-pic instead of a hello as soon as she matched with someone. Not even this changed the rhythm of the interaction or appeared to throw anybody off. Men seemed more than willing to continue the exchange. Three of the men who got a v-pic as a conversation starter did not respond, but nobody unmatched with Quinn (which regularly had been her own strategy when receiving unwanted dick pics). Out of the forty men visually proposed, thirty-seven wanted to meet up. Quinn ended up not meeting with anybody because "how do you come back from a level of pseudo-intimacy generated by a fake body part?" (Quinn 2015). She admits, however, that she felt oddly empowered when men were tripping over themselves to meet her and when many of them genuinely seemed to like vulva pics.

Taken by Startled Surprise

Kerry Quinn's experiment failed in the sense that the men who received the images did not respond in the way she expected. She had hoped that the images would come across as being as invasive as the dick pics she had received. Instead, these exchanges turned out to have their own sense of humor. According to Quinn, by far the most common response was sexually explicit, such as "my tongue needs to be there asap." Tapping into a

different repertoire, one man quite ingeniously replied with a picture of a dog looking all alert, whereas another became more of an art critic by claiming that "Lighting is a little off." The most out-of-tune response was probably the one from a man who wrote to Quinn as if she was an old school friend: "Nice. Let's catch up some time" (Quinn 2015). She does not seem to notice or acknowledge the unmistakably enthusiastic and happy tone of many of the responses, such as "Oh wow wasn't expecting that haha what do you do in LA?," "Best girl I matched with on Bumble so far," and "You just took my productivity at the office to zero." Or consider this exchange in the form of a compliment, testifying to the scarcity of the unsolicited vulva pic phenomenon:

Man: "I bet the rest of you looks equally as good. Maybe better"

Quinn: "you made me blush" "Do girls usually send vagina pics?"

Man: "I've gotten one before. So no lol"

In considering such seemingly pleasant and sudden interruptions in focus and attention, Silvan Tomkins (2008) writes about the neutral affective dynamic of "surprise-startle," which covers everything from mild surprise to a more intense form of startle. Surprise-startle is, for Tomkins, a general interrupter to an ongoing activity triggered by a sudden, brief stimulus. An unsolicited vulva pic can certainly cause such an interruption in the fabric of everyday life of the men who receive them as something that, all of a sudden, demands attention. Surprise-startle is a "resetting affect" that orients the body by swiftly demanding a shift in attention or focus: "It is ancillary to every other affect since it orients the individual to turn his attention away from one thing to another. Whether, having been interrupted, the individual will respond with interest, or fear, or joy, or distress, or disgust, or shame or anger will depend on the nature of the interrupting stimulus and on the interpretation given to it" (Tomkins 2008, 273).

Surprise-startle is thus always dependent on what the interruption involves (a firecracker or a vulva pic?), on how the interruption feels, and on what it means. It can evoke positive or negative affects or combinations thereof, and it entails a moment of openness as such. Surprise-startle functions as a reset button of sorts, something that clears body and mind of whatever the engagement might have been only a short moment earlier. "You just took my productivity at the office to zero" can be understood as such a reset when the surprising appearance of a stranger's vulva inserts

itself into the rhythm of office life, calling for a sudden change of attention from, say, spreadsheets to the promise of sexual encounters. Its surprise appearance may certainly have reset or short-circuited the current activities of the recipients as a form of bodily reorientation and shift in focus generating a stream of sexual fantasies and scenarios.

As readers of Quinn's piece, we are not too surprised (or startled). The only truly surprising part in Quinn's story might be her own surprise at the reactions she received—the ways that these men replied in kind to her overtly sexual opening. The "failure" of the experiment thus draws attention to the affective economy in which unsolicited genital pics tend to move and make sense within straight settings—an economy where gender and heteronormal desires shape what the appearance of a stranger's genitals on one's phone might mean and how that might feel (see Paasonen, Light, and Jarrett 2019). The expressions of enthusiasm and excitement of these men are clearly not in line with how someone would respond to an attempt to shame or sexually harass. Nonetheless, in covering Quinn's experiment for the *Washington Post*, Britni de la Cretaz (2015) points out that "When women send unsolicited naked pictures, it isn't revenge—it's harassment," arguing for the need for women to hold themselves to a higher standard. She continues, "When photos of penises are sent without being requested, they are not consensual and sending them is an electronic form of sexual violence. Unexpected vulva photos are no different." This categorical statement is somewhat nonsensical in the context of Quinn's experiment, given the responses of joy and excitement from the men allegedly subjected to sexual violence. Although receiving an unrequested genital picture can certainly constitute a form of sexual violence, our point is that it also can be experienced as something else. As Tomkins points out, surprise-startle is a neutral affect that can tilt any odd way.

Any object can be linked to any affect, and vice versa: the autonomy of affect means that there is no general causality to how a certain object, such as a dick pic or a vulva pic, becomes sensed and made sense of (Tomkins 1995b, 54–55). In other words, the affect or meaning produced through a dick pic (or vulva pic) exchange does not reside in the object or in the bodies that are momentarily tied together through these digital transactions. How these images feel and what they mean are questions of relation because particular pictures are produced, consumed, and felt in encounters with particular bodies. Most of the public discussion of unsolicited nudes

is pervasively straight in that it excludes pictorial transactions between trans and queer bodies, such as the playful use of dildo pics between queer women and other nonmen or the steamy dick-pic sharing between gay men (on dick pics in dating practices among men who have sex with men, see Paasonen, Light, and Jarrett 2019). Yet so-called straight image practices also hold more complexity than crude gender binaries such as active and passive can comfortably embrace.

In the popular imagination, the unsolicited dick pic seems to occupy a sliding scale between sexual violence and harassment at one end and milder forms of inconvenience or irritation at the other. A lion's share of feminist analyses focus on unwanted dick pics as a form of sexual exposure that makes women feel victimized and violated (Hayes and Dragiewicz 2018; Powell and Henry 2017; Salter 2015; Vitis and Gilmour 2016). Strange penises that pop up on one's phone can indeed have a distinctly violent, abusive feel to them. At the same time, the affective edge of the dick pic makes for volatility and unpredictability in the encounter. What one person finds highly offensive and invasive, another may find arousing, silly, ridiculous, funny, or simply unbearably boring in its repetitiveness (Waling and Pym 2019). And conversely, even if a common response among straight men to receiving surprise vulva pictures is one of joyful surprise at being sexually propositioned in such a way, there will be other ways of feeling and reacting.

Pussy Pics and Cunt Art

The relative scarcity and rarity of the surprise pussy pic sent between strangers becomes obvious in online searches for its occurrence, even when these searches are careful, creative, and deep. Since pussy pictures are a pornographic leitmotif, there is no shortage of them online and they—like the even more ubiquitous tit pic—are routinely shared in sexting practices. But finding evidence or traces of image practices involving women and other pussy-bearers snapping pictures for unsolicited image-sharing purposes is a case apart. One witty testimony to the rare existence of uninvited pussy pics can be found in a 2015 tweet from the Tumblr-born DIY porn performer and film maker Vex Ashley (with 100,000 followers on Instagram and 50,000 on Twitter): "I just got my first unsolicited pussy pic in my inbox (with added bonus buttohole) so I guess . . . it is a thing?" The tweet engendered a range of crafty responses (April 25, 2016):

"i send those . . . a lot but usually its because I need a job"

"bonus buttohole" is AMAZING! haha"

"What happened to my dichotomic world? The borders of gender behaviours are blurry now"

"I . . . I got one too and I'm very very confused. A sea of dicks and all of sudden . . . Is it the same pussy? Is it a new thing?"

"definitely a thing. little less common tho"

"those are as rare as mew"

"rare but I've had one or two :p"

As part of playful exchanges in "a sea of dicks," the surprise pussy pic has the potential to interrupt simple views of gender and heteronormal desire, as well as to provide a kind of resistance to dominant understandings of these image-sharing practices as merely a matter of sexual harassment and abuse. Nearly all of the replies to Ashley's tweet were sent from female-presenting Twitter accounts, most of which were part of similar circles of sex workers, DIY porn makers, and queer kinksters. Admittedly, such a milieu of sex positivity would be a relatively safe space for sending and experimenting with surprise pussy pics—yet these did not seem to be particularly common or clearly recognizable as "a thing," even here.

To the extent that sending pussy pictures is an expression of "female" desire—either within straight configurations or in lesbian, queer, and trans networks of desire between women and other pussy bearers—the relative absence of the phenomenon has everything to do with how such desires are virtually nonexistent in the cultural imagination. Elizabeth Grosz (1995) has formulated a critique (which sadly still holds) of the conventional understanding of desire along the lines of a Freudian ontology of lack. According to this logic, desire figures intimately as part of a heterosexualized binary arrangement where men are active, desiring subjects and women are passive objects of desire, which renders impossible the sexual autonomy or agency of women (a figuration also examined in chapter 2). Desire expressed as a form of lack or negativity is a desire for what is unobtainable because it can work only if it remains unfulfilled. The more you want it, the more you cannot have enough of it.

Furthermore, if desire, following Sigmund Freud, can be only masculine, this makes the notion of female desire a contradiction in terms. The only

way in which “she” can be understood as a desiring subject is if she abandons her femininity and instead desires as a man. Grosz seeks to reverse the terms of this sexual equation by thinking women as desiring subjects and also to find a way for thinking something even more unthinkable—desire between women (cf. Sundén 2012). If women can figure as subjects of desire within a heterosexual dynamic only with great difficulty, imagine how hard it would be to think of desires that circumvent the male subject altogether and play out between women and other nonmen, such as in the circulation of unsolicited (but perhaps rarely unwanted) pussy pics.

For Grosz, the term *lesbian* does not disappear in order to become queer, and it does not include trans. Yet with respect to experimental vulvacious social media practices, it is vital to expand the discussion not only beyond heterosexual exchanges but also beyond subjects assigned female at birth. In other words, the discussion needs to include everyone with a pussy, all of whom do not belong to the category of “women.”

As a feminist reverb of sorts in and through 1970s feminist “cunt art,” vulvas seem to enjoy something of a revival in current feminist artistic and activist practices and their intersections with social media platforms. The pink “pussy hats” that became the viral symbol of feminist resistance (of primarily white, cisgender women) within the international #womensmarch and the rallying cry “pussy grabs back” (to counter Donald Trump’s infamous 2005 statement that he could “grab ‘em by the pussy,” which aired in 2016 during his presidential campaign) indicate how female genitalia continue to both shape the anatomy of contemporary sexism (Boryczka 2017) and provide grounds for reappropriation and resistance (Bore, Graefer, and Kilby 2017). As a battleground for both controlling and taking control over female-encoded sexuality and desire, depictions of vulvas retain their affective charge and ability shock and provoke, attract and entice.

As Amelia Jones (2012, 180) points out in her discussion of feminist cunt art, “In spite of 40 years of feminist anti-essentialist critique, the cunt won’t disappear. Clearly the image of the female sex is working in ways not fully comprehended or encompassed by the critical dismissal of such practices as essentializing or self-fetishizing. The cunt explodes the frames of critical analysis. . . . For younger generations the ‘snatch’ still speaks.” By tending to how cunt art by Judy Chicago, Miriam Shapiro, Faith Wilding, and others has persistently been immobilized by particular essentialist and binary understandings of gender, sexuality, desire, and anatomy, Jones traces more

unexpected flows of desires and shifting modes of identification in this work and its contemporary reverberations. Alexandra Kokoli (2016, 134) takes this line of reasoning a step further by arguing that “the quest for a visual vernacular for women’s genitalia” is not automatically discriminatory of people identifying as nonbinary or transgender, the point being to open up a multiplicity of bodies “by challenging phallic monism.”

In revisiting the 1970s and the time when feminist artists reclaimed and made use of the cunt in various ways, two perhaps surprising themes emerge. First, in the minds of the artists, these art practices had little to do with actual cunts. Second, the risk of essentialism was present from the beginning, fostering analytical disconnections between the biological and the political. Vulva-shaped forms provided artists with what Chicago referred to as “central core-imagery” (which she fleshed out ceramically as plate settings in her epic collaborative installation *The Dinner Party* from 1974 to 1979), and their swirling labiaesque folds framed both clitoral and orificial action. Yet, cunt art was considerably more political and cultural than biological in its references (Broude and Garrard 1994; Kokoli 2016).

Following the logic of synecdoche, the (body) part came to signify the whole in that a particularly fleshy metaphor contributed to ways of revisiting and rectifying the politics connected to female bodies and sexualities, not as sites of patriarchal oppression but as opportunities for feminist interventions (cf. Jones 1996, 22). Essentialism was imminent from the start, threatening to collapse female anatomy into biological destiny, and Chicago and others used the shape of the vulva as “a metaphor for an assertive female identity” (Chicago 1996, 6). Such artistic modes involved their own sense of humor. In the parodic sexual comedy, *Cock and Cunt Play* (1972), Chicago and her students made visible the ridiculousness in how gender is inscribed in human anatomy. Dressed in black leotards equipped with a giant pink vulva and a huge satin penis, respectively, the actors moved from the kitchen sink (“a cock means you don’t wash dishes”) to the bedroom, the play ending rather darkly with a self-castrating scene where “he” ripped off his penis and beat “she” to death for demanding sexual pleasure.

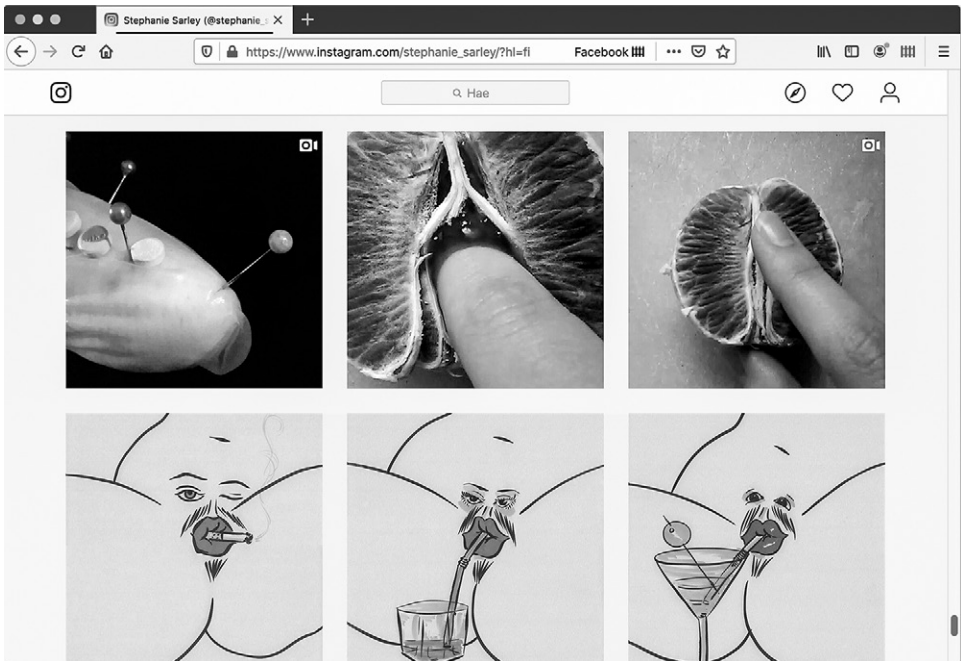
The claim that the vulva in cunt art has little to do with actual vulvas also needs to be understood in a context where close-up representations of female genitalia had only recently begun to be included in mainstream porn. Working with vulvacious shapes while claiming to stay clear of sex could therefore also express fear of having these depictions of female sexual

anatomy appropriated and dominated anew by phallic desires. But the longer you dwell in the archives of cunt art, the more difficult it becomes to think that it has nothing to do with cunts. Kokoli (2016, 136) makes a similar observation in considering today's visitors to the Brooklyn Museum (which permanently houses Chicago's *The Dinner Party*): "Unless the work is approached historically and in full awareness of its context in feminist art practice, would the contemporary viewer see 'central core-imagery' and a struggle against the invisibility of women's (always embodied) experience, or rather glistening, idealized and vaguely appetizing vaginas on a plate?" (Kokoli 2016, 136). While taking into account the risk involved in letting cunt art be about cunts at the time, it is nevertheless possible to think that 1970s cunt art was in fact *at least a little bit* about cunts.

Inappropriate Content

By building on particular bodily morphologies, which may or may not belong to female-identified bodies and speak of heterosexual flows of desire, artistic vulvas in digital formats are no less provocative than their feminist forerunners. One particularly vibrant example of twenty-first-century cunt art as a volatile site of affective intensity is the work of the feminist artist Stephanie Sarley, who has an Instagram following of 435,000. Sarley's art consists of playful takes on female sexuality—with a particular penchant for the pussy itself. This has repeatedly led to her Instagram account being disabled for not following the service's community guidelines and then being restored. She is particularly known for a series of videos in which she is fingering pieces of juicy fruit resembling vulvas, leading the *New York Magazine's* art critic Jerry Saltz leave the comment "You. Are. Genius" when a video in which she is working an especially ripe blood orange went viral on YouTube (e.g., Frank 2016).

Judging from the hot stream of comments on Sarley's Instagram photos, videos, and drawings, her work gives rise to a wide range of reactions from fan love, laughter, and bemused arousal to offense, shock, and repulsion. As in the case of Stormy Daniels, Sarley has noticed that many young women feel the need to voice their disgust online (Sisley 2016). Such expressions of disgust at the sight of sexually provocative art could, again, be understood as a form of female slut-shaming, one building on a causal link of sorts between the artwork as slutty and, consequently, the artist as slut. Sarley's



Excerpt from Stephanie Sarley's Instagram account, https://www.instagram.com/stephanie_sarley.

work has been subject to copyright infringement as meme accounts regularly recirculate her videos with unauthorized edits and no credits attached. This process has involved notable harassment when those who are using her videos and pictures attempt to discredit or shame her and particularly when she has tried to fight back and enforce her copyright (see Lefebvre 2016).

Her fruit fingering has also proven to be sexually charged to the point where it has repeatedly become censored due to Instagram's ban on sexual content. According to the service's community standards, no nudity is allowed. "This includes photos, videos, and some digitally-created content that show sexual intercourse, genitals, and close-ups of fully-nude buttocks. It also includes some photos of female nipples, but photos of post-mastectomy scarring and women actively breastfeeding are allowed. Nudity in photos of paintings and sculptures is OK, too." The regulations have gradually tightened, and in April 2019, Instagram made a move to

demote “inappropriate” content that may not even violate community guidelines. Although the platform has yet to explain what is meant by such borderline inappropriateness, the examples it gives are posts deemed sexually suggestive (which by appearing less on the Explore and hashtag pages remain invisible to the broader community). Back in 2016 when Sarley’s work went viral, Instagram’s content moderation was similarly both strict and vague: “You may not post nude, partially nude, or sexually suggestive photos.” Users can react to images they see as violating the guidelines by reporting offenses for content moderators to review. In an online climate involving high intensities of offense and ever more rigid forms of content moderation connected to sexuality, even artistic renderings of fruit can become forbidden. At the same time, reports of harassment on the platform and beyond may go ignored.

Sarley’s cheeky anthropomorphic drawings of vulvas in the series “Crotch Monsters,” published on Instagram similarly to her vulva-like fruit, involve explicit potential to insert themselves into or otherwise challenge ubiquitous dick-pic culture (cf. DiDomizio 2016; Frank 2016). Rife with absurdist humor, these pussies are embellished with faces and lips that smoke, sip stiff drinks through straws, and eat spaghetti. These minimalist drawings consist of a few well-placed black lines adorned with some color to bring out the makeup on the faces. Sometimes the eyes get a bit of eye shadow, the brows are plucked and stenciled, and the red pouting lips hold a cigarette or a straw. The smoking pussy has one of “her” eyes closed, as if leisurely taking a deep drag on the cigarette. Although these “faces” surely belong to bodies with pussies, the ways in which the pubic hair masquerades as moustaches and beards make the question of gender complex. Rather than letting the vulva straightforwardly become the face of a “woman,” Sarley’s “Crotch Monsters” are rather instances of queer drag in their juxtaposition of makeup and facial hair. These queer queens exude a lazy laidback-ness of not giving a fuck, indulging as they do in all kinds of oral pleasures. The smoking pussy is then aptly titled, “Fuck it.”

As the smoking pussy winks at its audience, it may also be winking at previous generations of feminist artists who had a passion for cunt shapes and forms, but it does so without pretending to be otherwise. This cunt art is clearly about cunts and (once again) about making space for their political, sexual, and affective power. Yet by flirting with queer drag, they more

readily open up for analyses across bodies and genders. These drawings are rather upbeat and cheerful in their humorous approach, but they come with a darker, existential edge that comments on the simultaneous sexualization and policing of (bodies with) cunts. These cunts are shameless.

Absurdism below the Belt

Returning to the question of feminist absurdist humor that frames this book, Stephanie Sarley's "Crotch Monsters" are certainly in humorous discord with reason, a (non)sensical breakdown with bodily logics and with the idea of appropriate sites or loci of human subjectivity. They are apparently also unseemly: the links to them kept breaking during the time of our analysis ("Sorry, this page isn't available. The link you followed may be broken, or the page may have been removed," Instagram advised). Although Sarley's videos and stills of fruit fingering may have been subject to harsher censorship in being repeatedly reported as being indecently out of tune with the service's content policy, even her comical vulva drawings seem incongruous with the platform's community standards.

As a platform for feminist cunt art and visual experimentation connected to vulvas, Instagram is volatile indeed. After Tumblr's ban of nudity and adult content in December 2018—preceded by eleven years during which the service became known for the lively presence of sexual subcultures, erotic art, pornographic content, and queer world building—the spaces for the sharing of sexual content, even in more indirect and suggestive forms, have grown ever more narrow on social media. As sexual content and communication are marked out as offensive and unsafe, they are also labeled as lacking in value and importance. Through content policies, Puritan echoes associating sex with risk and shame influence the visual practices of social media users on a global scale.

Our feminist absurdism traffics in the unreasonable, the illogical, and the inappropriate. Its material is quite dark, which in this chapter takes the shape of online hate and harassment, on one hand, and shaming or censorship of female sexuality and agency, on the other. Despite this darkness or rather because of it, its tone is considerably lighter. In his treatment of absurdist humor, Will Noonan (2014) highlights it as being concerned with a refusal of meaning, often understood to be split in two: rational or logical absurdism on one hand and existential absurdism on the other. The

rational absurd is concerned with a logical breakdown exemplified in the technique *reductio ad absurdum* (in which a logical proposition is led to a ridiculous or impossible conclusion), whereas the existential absurd deals with the absurdity and meaninglessness of human existence (often related to French existential philosophy and the postwar theater of the absurd). Following this division, Noonan (2014, 1) holds that the rational absurd tends toward lighthearted playfulness and that the existential absurd has a darker bend. Although such distinctions between playful nonsense and the absurdity of human existence can be useful to differentiate, say, Lewis Carroll and Albert Camus, they are much less productive for our understanding of feminist absurdist humor.

Defining humor is notoriously risky, yet we find in our examples of feminist absurdism—whether these consist of witty recirculations of offense or drawings of smoking pussies with beards—a compound of the lighthearted and the darkly existential. Put differently, the utmost absurd or surreal qualities of everyday life for women and other nonmen provide a sounding board for (seemingly) lighter forms of humor that combine the illogical with the indecent. In this sense, “absurdist humor can in fact help bring out the brighter side of the lack of meaning it highlights” (Noonan 2014, 4). Feminist absurdist humor has a lightness to it yet remains grounded in something considerably heavier—a paradox that forms a tactic for dealing with a ludicrous reality (cf. Massanari 2019).

In this chapter, Stormy Daniels, Linnéa Claeson, Kelly Quinn, and Stephanie Sarley provide us with rather delightful responses to the absurdity of online sexism and sexual harassment. They put a serious spin on attempts at slut-shaming along the lines of shamelessness, strategies that for Daniels and Sarley were partly responses to slut-shaming by other women. Sex and power are intricately linked, and yet explaining the slut-shaming of women by women as merely a question of safeguarding the power of straight female sexuality sidesteps how pleasure and agency may figure in notions of sluts and sluttiness. As Nishant Shah (2015) points out, “The slut is a verb—to slut, or to be slutty, indicates that there is an action and agency embedded in ‘slutty’ bodies. A slut is also a noun—a name—and thus reduced to nothing but a static object which, in its naming, is robbed of its agency.” The distinction between subjecthood and objectness may be less than clear, but female slut-shaming could be a tactic of immobilizing other women’s sexual agency and, by deferring onto another such

sticky labeling, could allow people to avoid being labeled as such themselves. As becomes apparent in Daniels's exchanges as well as in Sarley's "Crotch Monsters," such ways of being rendered into the object of the slut are everything but stable as these objects may be rather witty agents that fight back.

We have showcased a number of feminist strategies and humorous interventions in an otherwise pervasive dick-pic culture. When a load of unsolicited vulva pics is sent out, even as part of an experiment, something happens to the affective economy in which these images circulate: the happy excitement of the recipients indicates that something in the balance has shifted. The sudden appearance of an image of a man's genitals may be a surprise yet not surprising or serendipitous, in that its arrival is rather to be expected within the framework of heterosexual dating apps. The truly startling surprise arises when the dense traffic in dick pics is disrupted by a different set of images, creating an unexpected opening in the heterosexual choreographies of flirting, hooking up, and dating. By moving from Quinn's experiment to Sarley's art, we followed images of the pussy (as it were) and a logic of surprise, virality, and also censorship. Through this journey, it became possible to disentangle questions of harassment and platform politics that strike down hard on content deemed "sexually suggestive" and also to think through how such charged scenes are currently underpinned by very particular notions of gender, (hetero)sexual agency, and desire.