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Dismantling 'You Get What You Deserve': Towards a Feminist Sociology of Revenge Porn

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Abstract: *With this research, we seek to formulate a feminist sociology of revenge porn, defined as the non-consensual circulation of intimate images with the intent to harm, to bring together two existing explanations for critical interrogation: that revenge porn is a gendered crime that disproportionately affects women and that these women get what they deserve. We look at focus group data to target this tension between why women are both victimized and held responsible for their own victimization. We contribute to a small but growing body of research that sees revenge porn and other types of cybersexual assault through a theoretical framework that explains violence against women as systemic, as a range of symbolic and physical actions of masculine domination, as punishment for women's sexual agency, and as facilitated by unmarked structural and behavioral features of the Internet and social media.*

Revenge porn first gained visibility in 2011 when internet entrepreneur Hunter Moore's website isanyoneup.com invited its users to shame their ex-partners by uploading nude photos alongside personally identifying information (Fairfax Media 2012). Defined as the non-consensual distribution of explicit images to incite embarrassment or shame, revenge porn has become increasingly common in the last 5 years as highly visible cases, such as 2014's the Fappening, in which celebrities' smart phones and cloud files were targeted and hacked, with their private explicit images leaked on the Internet, have made national and global headlines. Revenge porn, and other types of serious cyber harassment, has been widely recognized as a category of crime that disproportionally affects women (Duggan 2014). Responses to revenge porn victims echo a bifurcation found in broader discourses on violence, especially sexual violence, against women: one, that women are more likely than men to be victims of sexual violence because of their gender; and two, that women victims of sexual violence bring it on themselves.

Our goal with this research is to look closely at meaning-making strategies that reflect these two different stances in the context of revenge porn. Thus, we ask broad questions about revenge porn's definition, its victims and perpetrators, whether or not it is a crime, and what should be done. By reviewing the literature on cybersexual assault and analyzing focus group data on revenge porn, we posit this framework for a feminist sociology of revenge porn: revenge porn is systemic sexual violence; revenge porn exists within a range of violent actions against women, from symbolic to physical expressions of masculine domination; revenge porn is punishment for women who hold power, especially sexual power; and revenge porn is facilitated by non-gender neutral structures of the internet.

We are two researchers, a faculty member and a student, at a large university in the southwestern United States. Like all of our study's participants, we know individuals, all of whom identify as women, who have been, and in some sense continue to be, victims of revenge porn. Though only one of these victims had intimate images posted to a revenge porn website, all of them experienced horrific life-changing consequences because of the non-consensual circulation of their private images. One person's career was seriously jeopardized, another person was stalked, while another person felt forced to transfer to a different university. At one time or another, all of the victims felt shame, with some voicing deep regret for participating in the initial taking or sharing of the images. Some said they felt unsafe in public places. All expressed anxiety because they were constantly aware that anyone around them might have viewed those images. Their experiences do not comprise the data of our study. Rather, the responses that they engendered in their conversations with us, in discussions between the two of us, and in wider dialogues within our social networks, form the impetus for this study because the two stances discussed above — that women can be victims of revenge porn in particularly gendered ways and that they can also be held responsible for their own victimization — were both present, often simultaneously.

To develop our feminist sociological framework of revenge porn, we want to examine how people can perceive revenge porn as a gendered crime but also as a crime that women bring on themselves. First, we look to the relatively small but growing academic literature on revenge porn, which largely defines it as a type of systemic, sexual violence, often situating it in a feminist violence against women theoretical framework (Fairbairn 2015). We also look at some targeted concepts associated with feminist studies of the internet which generally theorize it as a hegemonic masculine space highly antagonistic to women (Henry and Powell 2012; Massanari 2015; Megarry 2014;

Melander 2010; Nabil 2014). Finally, we analyze focus group data on revenge porn, specifically targeting the tension between recognizing the gendered nature of revenge porn and blaming women for it. Rather than isolate and remove our own experiences with victims of revenge porn, in the tradition of feminist scholarship, we look to those experiences as a standpoint from which we can testify to the authenticity of our findings (Hekman 1997). Thus, our epistemological starting point is that victims of revenge porn are never responsible for their victimization, regardless of whether they consensually participated in the producing, sexting, or initial distribution of an explicit image. Further, their victimization reflects larger patterns of sexual violence against women which manifest through non-neutral structures of the internet.

Revenge Porn as Systemic Violence Against Women

For scholars who study revenge porn, or other kinds of cyber harassment, it is essential to see revenge porn as part of a larger pattern of a culture of violence against women. Specifically, revenge porn must be positioned within a feminist paradigm that makes explicit the systemic connections between gendered violence and gender inequality (Fairbairn 2015). Women are targeted for revenge porn or other forms of cyber harassment as a means to prevent them from enjoying full access to the opportunities, increasingly linked to their online reputations, necessary to live productive lives (Citron 2014). To see cases of revenge porn as isolated events instigated by angry ex-partners is to miss the ways that the internet and social media applications facilitate hegemonic masculinity (Henry and Powell 2012; Massanari 2015; Megarry 2014; Melander 2010; Nabil 2014).

Fairbairn argues that revenge porn is a type of gendered violence reflective of larger cultural patterns of sexual violence against women and girls (2015). Writing in an overview of girls' experiences online in Canada, Fairbairn outlines how revenge porn operates as a discursive filter in media representations in ways that reinforce sexist understandings of gender. Fairbairn sees in media accounts that 'discursive tendencies surrounding revenge porn are similar to those surrounding sexual violence generally, such as victim blaming ("What was she thinking taking that photo?") and viewing men as inevitable perpetrators ("Of course he shared it, what did you expect?")' (2015, 239). Relatedly, Citron, in numerous pieces on cyber harassment, sees cybersexual assault as a cultural problem. To the discourse on revenge porn that includes victim-blaming and toxic masculinity, she also adds a gross failure on the part of law enforcement and internet service providers due to long-standing trivialization of reported cyber harassment incidents (2009, 2010, 2014). Further, the trivialization of crimes that

disproportionately target women has a long history that includes sexual harassment in the workplace and domestic violence (2014). For both Fairbairn and Citron, specifically calling revenge porn a type of gendered violence against women, like sexual harassment and domestic violence, means that it can be targeted, regulated, and, to some extent, banished through a deliberate change in cultural values and socialization processes. Doing so would enable women to fully utilize the internet and social media to pursue opportunities for a productive life without fear.

Sexting, or the consensual texting of explicit images, is seen as a factor that contributes to revenge porn because it can generate an initial image of someone that can then be further circulated without their consent. Sexting as a gateway into cybersexual assault, including revenge porn, gets a feminist theoretical reframing in works by Hasinoff (2013, 2015), Gong and Hoffman (2012), and Henry and Powell (2015). Hasinoff, in a series of articles and a book, argues that the moral panic regarding sexting, especially girls' sexting practices, has a range of negative consequences which are useful for this discussion: the focus on girls' sexting obscures the actions of perpetrators of cybersexual assault; it leads to biased cyber education initiatives, rules, laws, and policies, that target sexting rather than further non-consensual distribution of sexted images or other kinds of cybersexual assault crimes; and, it ignores girls' agency in using sexting as a material practice of relationship management.

Gong and Hoffman, in a study of proposed sexting policies, identify the inclination toward slut-shaming in efforts to police self-sexters. They define slut-shaming as the act of criticizing or insulting individuals, mostly women and girls, for their perceived sexual availability, behavior, or history, to 'shame or degrade them' (Gong and Hoffman 2012, 3). Their study claims that proposed regulation of sexting reflects public sentiment grounded in slut-shaming, and, as such, suggests that self-sexters should feel ashamed of their behavior.

Henry and Powell's study of technology-facilitated sexual violence and harassment asserts that harmful digital communication is mistakenly defined through 'user naiveté instead of gender-based violence' (2015, 105). Their study of youth sexting regulation in Australia claims that existing and proposed legislation reinforces negative assumptions of youth and sexuality and takes attention away from technology-facilitated sexual violence and harassment (Henry and Powell 2015). Like Hasinoff, they contend that policies directed at sexting deny youth sexual agency while promoting victim-blaming.

Blaming self-sexters for any resultant revenge porn is similar to victim-blaming: holding women for real life sexual violence.

A feminist conceptualization of revenge porn also questions the taken for granted notions that the internet is a gender-neutral and "colorblind" space, instead arguing that the internet amplifies existing patterns of racism, ethnocentrism, religious intolerance, sexism, and heteronormativity (Nakamura 2002, 2008, 2014; Phillips 2013). In her ethnography of Reddit users who participated in Gamergate and the Fappening, Massanari attributes, in part, a culture of misogyny to the website's platform (2015). She finds that specific technological features of Reddit, including users' ability to 'upvote' user-generated content into highly visible spaces or 'downvote' it into obscurity, as well as the potentially extraordinary gatekeeping power of volunteer moderators to either moderate or not moderate questionable content, coupled with the overall unwillingness of Reddit's upper-level administrators to intervene in any way, facilitate hegemonic masculinity. Reddit's hegemonic masculinity makes women, especially LGBT women and women of color, the other, and thus, subject to horrific sexist and racist vitriol that is upvoted by thousands of like-minded Redditors. Similarly, a case study of Twitter hashtag #mencallmethings by Jessica Megarry calls attention to the structures of the online world as tools for silencing women's voices (Megarry 2014). Megarry's review of Twitter data that contained online name-calling shows how the internet is a gendered space where women routinely experience considerable harassment, especially 'women who disobey prescriptive gender roles' [who] 'are disproportionately targeted for harassment' (Megarry 2014, 48). Harassment via Twitter happens because users can post from multiple fake accounts, can marshal like-minded users from other sites such as Reddit and 4chan for attacks, can hijack and subvert hashtags, and, until recently, were not likely to be reined in by Twitter's higher-ups. For example, Twitter recently banned Milo Yiannopoulos, a conservative commentator with a lengthy history of offensive tweets, after a highly visible campaign of racism and misogyny against Leslie Jones, an African American actress who starred in the 2016 reboot film, Ghostbusters (Ohlheiser 2016).

Viewing revenge porn through a feminist theoretical lens means situating it within a broader culture of violence against women instead of seeing it as isolated, individual acts against a woman. It also means seeing revenge porn as a phenomenon that reflects cultures of hegemonic masculinity on the internet and social media. Next, we turn to focus groups as another site for meaning-making strategies about revenge porn.

Focus Groups and Revenge Porn

Thus far, we have reviewed literature to develop our feminist sociological framework for revenge porn, specifically the claims that revenge porn is systemic violence and that it exists within a range of violence, from symbolic to physical actions of masculine domination of women. To further elucidate meaning-making strategies for revenge porn, we analyze data from two focus group discussions on revenge porn. Focus groups in academic research can be used to gain knowledge of participants' perceptions of a particular topic (Litosseliti 2013, 8). Though the discussions centered around answering basic questions about revenge porn, its victims and perpetrators, whether or not it is a crime, and what, if anything, should be done, we pay particular attention to the earlier discussed bifurcation of claims regarding revenge porn: that women are more likely to be victims and that women victims are responsible for their victimization.

Methods

We submitted and gained approval for our research protocol from our university's Institutional Review Board to solicit focus group participants from our university's student body. We went through three rounds of focus group attempts before we finally had participants. During our first attempt, we found a written message on one of the posters hanging in a residential hall that we include below in Figure 1 and address further in our discussion. Given that two rounds of focus groups failed, we reason that revenge porn is difficult to talk about for many of the same reasons that motivate our study of it: it is a horrible, life-altering sexual violence that has likely happened to students or their friends and acquaintances and, like other forms of sexual violence, induces feelings of shame in the victim.
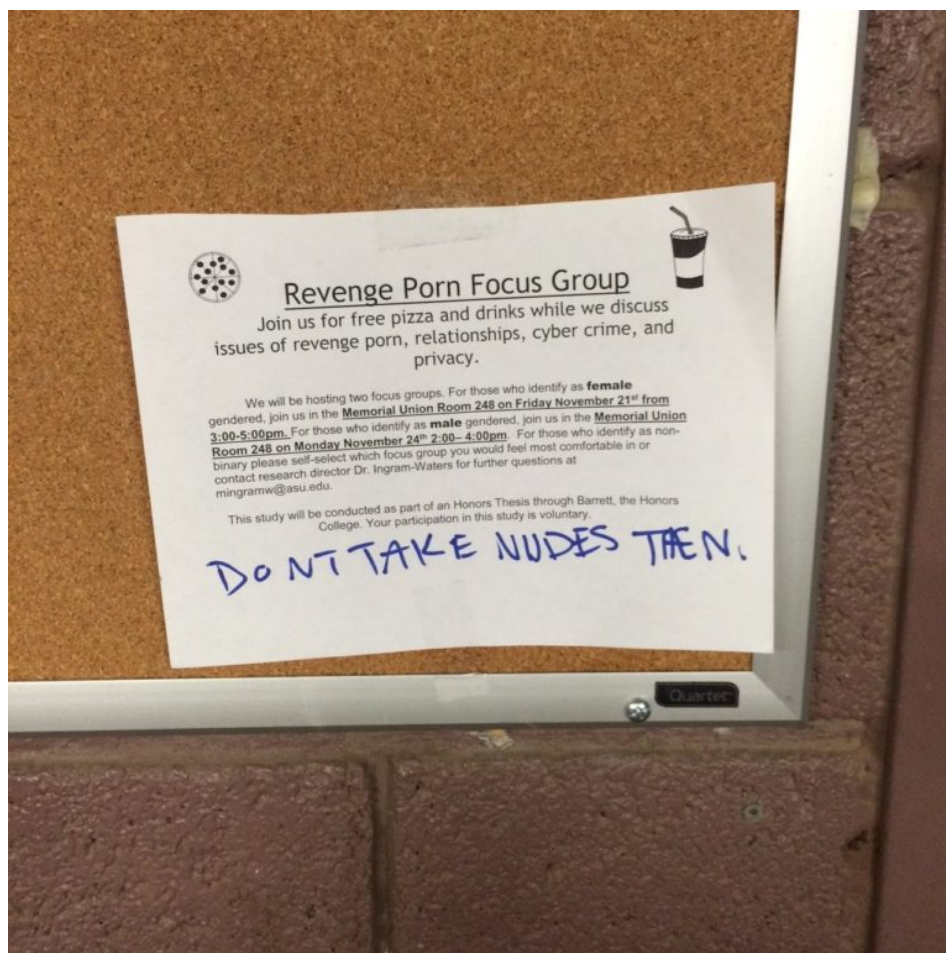
Figure 1. Revenge Porn Focus Group graffiti.

Our third attempt at reaching participants yielded two focus groups: one with eight mixed gender students and one with two mixed gender students. Four participants identified as female and six participants as male. Participants were between 18-22 years old. Our focus groups are small in number and only represent a fraction of the hundreds of students who likely encountered our fliers and emailed requests for participation. However, smaller sized groups did mean that everyone was able to participate in discussions, though some participants did speak more than others. Though we did not directly ask what motivated participants to attend the focus groups, we found that all of them knew victims of revenge porn and moreover, seemed to deeply appreciate being able to speak about their experiences and opinions.

Focus group discussions lasted about 30-45 minutes. Trained moderators led open discussions, which were recorded as audio files. We transcribed the discussions and coded them for these emergent themes: definition of revenge porn, responsibility for revenge porn, women as victims, sexting and slut-shaming, the futility of laws, and the role of education.

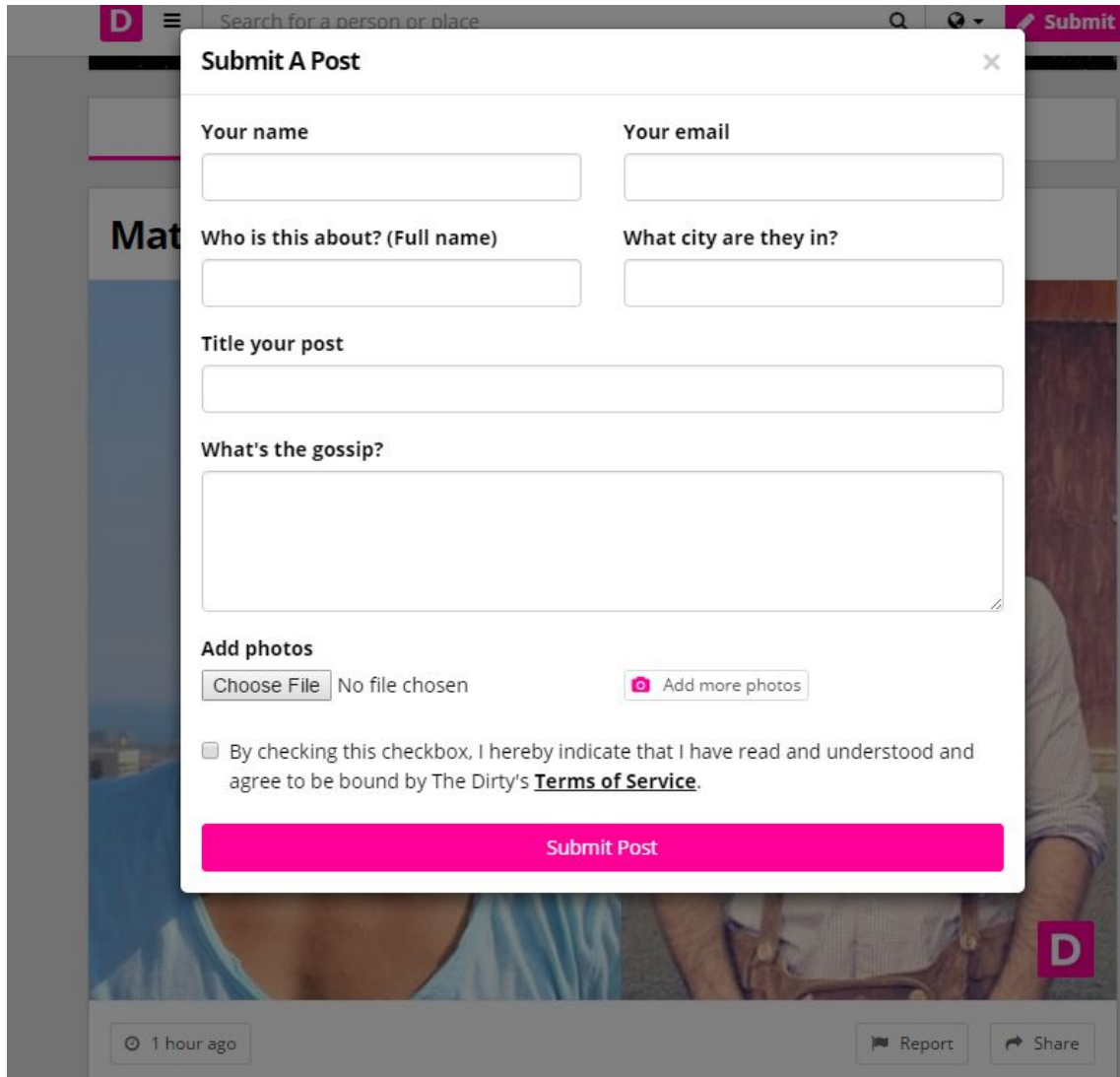## Data Analysis and Discussion

As an overview, we find that as participants try to define revenge porn, they all have personal connections to victims, and as such, 'know it when they see it.' They also perceive that women are more likely than men to be victims of revenge porn and, to some extent, explicate a gender-specific theory of violence to explain why that is the case. They see revenge porn as both the actions of angry ex-partners and also hackers, though they do differentiate between the presumed motivations of ex-partners and hackers. Participants assign blame fully to individual perpetrators of revenge porn but they also see hosting websites as having some responsibility. While none of the participants hold victims accountable for any aspect of revenge porn, they do recognize that others do, particularly when revenge porn stems from sexting. Participants struggle with explicating the role of viewers in revenge porn. Participants see that laws and their enforcement seem to be futile in stopping revenge porn. Alongside laws to regulate revenge porn, even given their perceived futility, participants advocate education about the internet.

What is revenge porn?

When asked initially for a definition of revenge porn, all of the participants recognized it as non-consensual distribution of intimate images and further, personally knew victims. One participant described revenge porn as: 'You take something that was either nude photos or videos or something compromising of somebody that you obtain in a relationship and you put it up online with malicious intent' (Tyler, 21 years old). Another participant described it thusly: 'I found out about it in high school, websites that have pictures of people and explicit content in a sort of like a fashion if they broke up with their significant other they would post it on that website' (Sam, 21 years old). Once these two participants shared these particular definitions, all of the other participants agreed that they, too, understood the concept of revenge porn similarly, saying things like: 'I also heard of it like that in high school, used in that manner to shame or to blackmail' (Raquel, 21 years old).

For all, revenge porn was something they could define primarily in highly personal and local terms because they knew someone who had been victimized. Two participants spoke of a recent case of revenge porn that had happened at their university in which a video of a female student (the victim) having sexual intercourse with a male student (the perpetrator) at a party was circulated via social media. Two other participants had known victims from their respective high schools. In both of those cases, ex-boyfriends had circulated previously sexted images of female students to others via their phones.

One participant knew of someone who had been victimized in middle school. Two participants knew of individuals who had been on a local website, 'TheDirty,' in which anonymous posters submitted images alongside identifying information (see Figure 2 below). All of the participants knew about the 2014 celebrity hacking scandal, the Fappening, and directly referenced the nude pictures of Jennifer Lawrence and Kate Upton.

Figure 2. Screen Capture from thedirty.com

Revenge porn and women

Most participants said that women were more likely to be victimized than men by revenge porn, though one participant said that it could happen to anyone with a vengeful ex-partner and did not see women as particularly at risk. As mentioned above, all participants directly knew of someone who had been victimized by revenge porn, and all of those victims were women. For example, one participant said, 'I've known girls who have gotten their naked pictures passed around,' (Lydia, 22 years old) while

another said, 'In high school, a girl sent a picture to a guy and his friends took his phone and sent the picture to their friends and it just grew and grew' (Jake, 22 years old). Another participant described the outcome of a recent case of revenge porn:

A while back there was girl who publicly had sex at a party and people took pictures and put it up online and everybody knew who she was. It was this big thing because she was supposed to be really awesome and doing really well in her studies and got really intoxicated at a party… and it just went terribly for her and … she ended up moving schools. (Tyler, 21 years old)

In these examples, women had their images distributed without their consent. That none of the three examples involved a vengeful ex-partner did not limit participants' understanding of each as an example of revenge porn.

Participants struggled to explicate why women were more likely to be targets for revenge porn. With the exception of one participant, they all recognized that women are victims of revenge porn more often than men. No one could think of a single case of revenge porn happening to a man. However, participants did try to link victimization of women with a sentiment about holding power over women who 'deserved' to be shamed. One participant likened revenge porn to slut-shaming: 'It's like a form of slut-shaming, so it's saying you deserve to have these pictures leaked, obviously as you enjoy this in the first place … if you took a picture' (Marco, 20 years old). That same participant said something similar when discussing the Fappening: 'I know a lot of the rhetoric around people consuming [nude pictures of celebrities] was that this was a malicious thing to put the celebrities in their place because they [the celebrity victims] deserved it' (Marco, 20 years old). Other participants nodded their heads in agreement at Marco's explanation.

Who is to blame for revenge porn?

Participants had no trouble assigning blame for revenge porn to anyone who did anything without the consent from the subject of the focal image, including those who photographed or recorded images without consent, distributors of images without consent, and websites that hosted images without consent. One participant said, 'If [an explicit image is] taken already without permission it should be considered revenge porn because if you're not getting consent from that person you must already have ulterior motives for doing that action' (Sam, 21 years old). When defining revenge porn, this participant said it was 'Posting the sexually explicit pictures on any social media

site or even showing friends, in a private space, pictures of the person that didn't give permission to show to other people' (Michelle, 20 years old). Another participant said, 'In my high school there was a situation where it didn't just start off being spread on social media, it was just a couple of people in a room that saw the picture and then everyone was aware that it was out there and talking about it, which is in itself revenge porn' (Raquel, 21 years old). When addressing hosting websites, one participant said, 'But if [the hosting website is] making a ton of money off of [revenge porn images] like these websites that have ads for other porn then there should be legal action because they're making money off of pictures posted that are not theirs and were posted without permission' (Marco, 20 years old).

Participants, overall, did not hold victims responsible for any aspect of revenge porn though they recognized that others often do so, which was the view expressed in the graffiti on our Focus Group flyer shown in Figure 1 above. That flyer had been posted on one residence hall floor's communal board. Though we cannot know who wrote on the flier, we can clearly see that the person, whether seriously or flippantly, was blaming victims for their participation in the production of the initial image, at the very least. Only one participant came close to saying that victims might be somewhat responsible: 'It's so tricky because I feel like you should have a right to your body being displayed but if you are putting it out there you do release some of that' (Lydia, 22 years old). One participant said that others blamed victims because they were critical of any initial sharing of an intimate image by a victim:

Someone's personal choice to do something should not be held against them. You wouldn't tell someone it's their fault that they got hit by a car because they chose to … drive the car. They did not make the choice to have their photos shared. It should not be held against them. (Sam, 21 years old)

The other participants were in agreement.

What was far more difficult for participants to assess was what responsibility viewers of revenge porn content possessed. Participants engaged with the idea that viewers could be held accountable for viewing revenge porn images if any legal actions were enacted to combat revenge porn. One participant talked of viewer responsibility in personal terms: 'I'll give you my personal example: a friend of mine was like "dude you gotta see this …it's called the Fappening' and"… he clicked on it and it was all these nude celebrities and I thought "oh shit" … I didn't mean to see it but I saw it' (Jake, 22 years old).

Another participant maintained a broad view of blame, including for viewers: 'I feel like if someone else's rights are infringed upon and their privacy, I think that should be taken into account in the legal system' (Sam, 21 years old). But another participant countered such a broad approach with this hypothetical situation: 'I agree that's really hard because then you have someone that's like maybe 9 years old who sees the photo and maybe they didn't know and they just clicked it out of curiosity?' (Michelle, 20 years old). Another participant who countered any kind of call for legal action against viewers said, 'And it's just a naked picture you don't know whether or not, if I'm going to have to question, oh did this person get permission, am I going to get in trouble for watching this, will I be in trouble for watching this because I don't know that these people gave permission' (Tyler, 21 years old).

The futility of revenge porn laws

Participants unanimously called for legal consequences for revenge porn even though they doubted the effectiveness of such laws due to the perceived openness of the internet. One participant agreed there should be consequences but then discussed its complexities:

I mean the ideal thing would be to have a law but I think it is tough to do anything about this because it has such a gray blurred line kind of thing … Maybe somebody puts it up on a website, decides to take the website down, and people still repost it maliciously. I just don't think a law would be able to handle the range of what this could be. (Tyler, 21 years old)

Moreover, participants cited the open nature of the internet as problematic for regulating revenge porn. One participant cited the impossibility of deciding who should be charged: 'So are we talking about the guy who hacked it, the guy who posted it, then all the people who viewed…should all those people go to jail? That's a lot of people' (Jake, 22 years old).

Not only did participants worry about innocent bystanders, but they also worried about the First Amendment. Participants felt uncomfortable with the idea of strict internet content monitoring because they recognized the internet as a free speech zone. One participant identified the futility of government regulation, explaining that convoluted laws may harm the desirability of being online: 'Does that mean every time you want to send a photo to somebody or post something you'll have to write up legal documents? It

becomes a whole legal ordeal that completely takes away from the fun of the Internet' (Tyler, 21 years old).

For this participant, sharing photos and viewing content online helps make the internet an interesting space. While he agreed revenge porn perpetrators should be held responsible, he worried about unintended consequences that might result from creating new laws.

These examples show participants' doubts about revenge porn laws. They agreed somebody should be protecting victims online but the system in place either will not or cannot. It is notable that the majority of participants shaped the discussion on how the government could effectively police revenge porn. Though this seems like a narrow view, categorizing revenge porn as solely a legal issue and discounting any cultural constructs, the ways they discussed the futility of laws demonstrated that they also saw revenge porn as a social issue: 'I think overall it's an issue that needs to change socially rather than just laws. The government only has so much say and can't take down everything on the Internet. As a society we need to stop being jerks' (Tyler, 21 years old).

Stopping revenge porn

Despite a consensus on the futility of revenge porn laws to stop revenge porn, all participants wanted to see revenge porn laws. But they also advocated a range of other solutions including rules for hosting websites and general internet education initiatives, further recognizing that revenge porn is a social issue as much as it is a legal issue. For hosting websites, participants wanted to see modified user agreements that would enable victims to easily request removal of images: 'I think they [revenge porn victims] should still be able to have it taken down at their request' (Lydia, 22 years old). Relatedly, one participant suggested, 'I think [websites] should be required to change their user agreement and go from there,' so that posters' identifying information could be released to facilitate legal action initiated by victims (Sasha, 20 years old). While acknowledging the difficulty of the proposed solution, one participant wanted to see hosting websites monitor user-uploaded content: 'Maybe just the content should be monitored but then when you start monitoring content it becomes really tough because you not only are monitoring the original content but what other people post' (Tyler, 21).

Some participants also thought that young people should receive better education about the Internet to specifically curtail abuse. One participant said: 'I think it's the

government's responsibility to educate people like in sex education. … they should teach kids sex extends beyond the act itself' (Tyler, 21 years old). Following up on that idea, another participant said, 'I think it's really interesting just because so much of our lives are on the Internet and most people are ok with that but this seems like an area where we should be drawing the line' (Lydia, 22 years old).

Conclusion: Dismantling the idea that women are victims because they had it coming

For our participants, revenge porn is the act of non-consensually sharing an intimate image of another person. This includes sharing an image with one's friends without the image's subject's consent, posting an image to a revenge porn website, and the Fappening. Further, revenge porn is often paired with intent to humiliate or otherwise harm the subject of the intimate image though it is not a necessary condition, as some participants noted that images could be initially shared consensually and then could end up online and result in great harm for the image's subject(s). To some extent, the hosting websites are also at fault. Notably, viewers have some responsibility, too, though participants struggled to define what that might be and how impossible it might be to enforce. For the most part, while participants recognized that victims could be held to blame for revenge porn, they did not attribute blame to that group, calling it victim-blaming and likening it to slut-shaming. Future research might explore these same tensions at a larger scale than our small focus groups or tackle different demographics than our traditionally aged college students. It would be useful to know if one-on-one interviews or anonymized surveys might yield different insights on revenge porn. Moreover, while this research study did not set out to explore how revenge porn is materialized across race and sexualities, these attributes demand further exploration and we urge future research that examines revenge porn intersectionality.

Participants struggled with understanding why revenge porn is a gendered phenomenon. While they knew the victims were largely women and that the perpetrators were largely men, they could not explain why. Thinking about why women were victims was mostly voiced through a conceptualization of holding the power to blame and punish women: that women were victims because they deserved it. They deserved it because they participated in sexting, engaged in sexual activity, or were successful celebrities, all of which seem to be reason enough for perpetrators to engage in revenge porn. Let us be clear: the participants did not think that victims of revenge porn deserved to be victimized. Rather, they said that they thought what motivated perpetrators to engage in revenge porn was to hold power over women for exercising

their sexuality. Moreover, they recognized that victims would be held responsible for 'their role' in their own victimization by others even though they did not personally believe this to be the case and, further, they also recognized the harm that such a set of beliefs would have for victims.

A feminist sociology of revenge porn starts with the recognition that revenge porn is systemic and expressly not the actions of one person against another. Secondly, revenge porn is one manifestation of a culture of violence against women. As such, it exists within a range of symbolic and physical actions of violence. Thirdly, revenge porn is an expression of masculine power that is meant to dominate women by punishing and humiliating them for exercising their own sexuality. Lastly, revenge porn is facilitated by unmarked structures and normalized behaviors of the internet and social media. A feminist sociology of revenge porn helps us understand why participants could say this much about revenge porn, focusing on individual victims and perpetrators, while also struggling to see it as a product of a culture of violence against women. Furthermore, it helps us understand why participants wanted to see Internet regulations, but also worried about how regulations of any internet content would 'ruin the fun' or violate First Amendment rights, and had trouble seeing the internet and social media applications as gendered technologies or, at the very least, technologies that could facilitate misogyny. Finally, a feminist sociology of revenge porn lets us comfort the victims we know personally by reminding them that it is never their fault. In short, a feminist sociology of revenge porn helps us dismantle the notion that when women are victimized through revenge porn, that they get what they deserve.

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