



## 2013 Issue No. 23 — The Internet as Politicizing Instrument

### Gendered Uprisings: Desire, Revolution, and the Internet's "Unintended Consequences"

By Karyl E. Ketchum

How to read *Uprising* – both Marcus Breen's text and, the kinds of "unintended effects," (Breen 152) "alternative, bizarro universe[s]" (Krugman qtd. in Breen 152) and "grubby worldliness" (Hall qtd. in Breen 9) made newly manifest through the unregulated speech that careens across geographies, nation-states, and the virtual social landscapes and screens of the Internet? In *Uprising: The Internet's Unintended Consequences*, Breen methodically develops a thesis that ultimately concludes where transgressive ideologies of all shades, hitherto formally constrained by class relations and "Enlightenment logic," now flourish via the unregulated information channels powered by the Internet. According to Breen, these unregulated channels create unprecedented opportunities for the democratisation of information and the liberation of stifled and even abject knowledges. After weaving his reader through a rich and varied genealogy of trans-disciplinary thought, ranging from classical philosophy, to key Cultural Studies canonical texts, to a discussion of the foundations of computing and contemporary debates and policy decisions pertaining to the regulation, or deregulation of internet speech, Breen settles on two cultural sites/ cites: pornography and jihad as examples of the Internet's "unintended effects" (152). The Internet as "extraordinarily unregulated 'carnival'" – Mikhail Bakhtin's apt metaphor for temporary licensed reversal of aesthetic hierarchies – resulting from the deregulation and proletarianisation of Internet speech and, as an extension of the West's neoliberal Enlightenment-based values is, argues Breen, fundamentally at odds with the West's idea of civility, democracy and "decency" : "the code of the *gentleman*" (Murray qtd. in Breen 12, emphasis added). While the managed civility of Enlightenment-based discourses may, in this the age of technology-mediated communication, give way to a proletarianisation of unregulated speech forms (the circulation of hereto unprecedented sights and sounds), similar Enlightenment logics relied upon to define the subject proper -- the entity that *legitimately* speaks behind and through such forms -- also may give way. As Breen points out, new voices and new subjectivities potentially emerge via these unprecedented sights and sounds just as old forms of legitimate speech acts and legitimated speakers may be challenged. Certainly Breen is onto something with his assertion that, to a large extent, this proletarianisation of information-rich communication channels is built into the Internet formally by way of design protocols that, from their inception, defied capitalism's imperative claim to property by insisting on an open system that would "support anything" (77). However, it would also seem important to highlight (as Breen does) that such a system supports both *anything* and *anyone*. This idea of shifting legitimate speakers, systems of recognition, witnessing and the relationships among these to culture, capital, agency and self-determination on a globalising scale is where my own interests lie.

I too propose visiting two over-determined sites/ cites in order to make sense of the latent meanings, signifying power and cultural significance of unregulated Internet speech. One of these: pornography, constitutes a revision, critique and extension of Breen's analysis. The other: the various dispersed sites onto which the viral video of 26-year old, Asmaa Mahfouz appears,

provides an opportunity for us as readers/users in the postcolonial West to experience an inverse of Kelly Oliver's assertions regarding the relationship between the oppressed and their oppressor. Asmaa Mahfouz's viral video tellingly turns Oliver's idea that "the pathology of oppression creates the need in the oppressed to be recognized by their oppressors" on its head (9). I argue that we in the West would do well to take a moment to register the effects of such an inversion. It is not just that Enlightenment logics collide with Post-Enlightenment logics on the Internet, it is also that colonial and postcolonial subjectivities, histories, fantasies and desires potentially clash, collapse, revise, reconstitute, form into new understandings of political economy, race and gender or, seek refuge in old tropes and modalities that can come to deny the multiplicities of the cultural present. This is the inventory of effects that I would like to explore as part and parcel of the Internet's "unintended consequences." My sense is, that in a myriad ways just beginning to appear on the horizon of recognition, all that *stuff* presented to us on the screens and through the endless media flows of our 24-hour news and information channels is demanding a revision in Western, binary-based Enlightenment systems of knowledge/power. These opportunities present themselves in a particularly salient way when instated by a confrontation with the Other – an experience staged several times daily through online interactions and information channels. Through this forced recognition of the limitations of "self," "knowledge" and "truth," may indeed arise new speaking subjects, subjectivities and democracies.

### Internet Pornography

Online pornography of the variety that appears on the top of Internet search results for "porn" is a distorted and distorting reflection targeting first world, white, heterosexual, bourgeoisie, masculinity as it is offered back to itself via the Internet in one of its premiere roles as data mining machine. [1] I agree with Breen when he cites the work of Mikhail Bakhtin on the "carnavalesque" as useful in reference to online porn, as this brand of pornography is definitively a visual discourse that constitutes itself in reaction to the conventions of main-stream, ok-for-prime-time systems of representation; the inherently moralising codes of Enlightenment masculinity and femininity writ proper; and, it surely is "an entire system of crooked mirrors elongating, diminishing, distorting in various directions and to various degrees" (Bakhtin 127). However, my own use of Bakhtin toward an analysis of online porn stops here. Rather than potentially leveling hierarchies, abolishing social classes, and creating opportunities for new forms of speech, mainstream online porn reasserts old historic structures of dominance as the locus of eroticism's authoritative speech and the singular definition of desire (since it is only one single genre of porn whose interpellative *hail* dominates the Internet). The notion that online porn "offers transparency to the lives of those previously hidden," (161) that it provides opportunity to "produce and circulate images and ideas about sexual practices and make them our own," (161) and that online porn as a text addresses itself equally to any subject, thereby potentially providing new opportunities for sexual intensity particularly for women, assumes a consumer-as-producer model and a universal subject that, given the high-tech, data-driven, multi-million dollar, finely-semiotically-tuned globalizing industry that is mainstream online porn, does not hold up (Breen 161). Rather than universal appeal, DIY aesthetics, or the release of women's sexually liberated speech acts, I argue that the phenomenal popularity and economic success of contemporary online *porn* is about the power of computer analytics to harness and hone the shifting meanings of white Western Enlightenment masculinities in new globalising postcolonial contexts, economies and geopolitical struggles. Online pornography has a story to tell us about how contemporary dominant forms of Western masculinity are constructed, maintained, and reassured within and through a particular system of visual representation. However, I would argue that these representations have little to tell us about the lived sexual practices of men and women generally. There are two primary components to my analysis of the online porn industry: the role of data mining and analytics, and the shifting contemporary globalising reconfigurations of meanings around gendered and racialised bodies.

Data mining and analytics offer web content providers new ways of collecting information about online users and behaviors and new tools to target and appeal to particular consumer groups or demographics. While the online porn industry, as the leader in market data analysis, has become increasingly complex, often setting the standard for high-tech content delivery and online interactions, there is at least one thing we can state about porn with relative simplicity: online porn's preferred and targeted customer is U.S. or European, heterosexual, credit-card-carrying men (Dines 48, Yagielowicz "Geo-Targeting - Right Match" 84).<sup>[2]</sup> It is this subject position that is interpellated, reassured and reified by way of porn's remarkably predictable visual codes. Were there any doubt of this, one need only turn to the industry's own trade magazine, *XBIZ*. A July 6, 2012 article written by *XBIZ* Senior Editor, Stephen Yagielowicz states it plainly: "In the real world, the ability and willingness to pay for online products and services is the final arbitrator of a visitor's worth – which in practical terms may mean an affluent American with a credit card – or a German with a bank number, or a Swede with SMS" (84). Yagielowicz's article, along with several others in the "Business" section of *XBIZ*, goes on to discuss the fundamentals of "traffic control" in light of this preferred consumer. In other words, how do porn site administrators attract the customers they want – those first-world, credit-card-carrying men – and how can they "bounce" the "worthless" traffic from "un-billable" countries – meaning those who either cannot afford to pay, do not have the capability to pay online, or do not have the bandwidth or processing speed to access a porn site's sponsors and "affiliates" (Yagielowicz "Geo-Targeting - Right Match" 84). This filtering is accomplished by way of "geo-targeting," a practice whereby a user's geographic location determines what they see on a particular website, how that site adjusts itself to the exigencies of each user's technology (degree of interactivity, graphic quality and resolution, etc.), if attempted access from a particular geographic location results in redirecting to another site or, if a particular user can access a site at all. Geo-targeting is simply good business if you are operating an online porn site, and it joins in with a number of exceptionally complex financial and technical practices that include "link trading," "cascading billing practices," "bulk blocking" and "generic redirects," among others. Along with demographics – who sees your site – the other big concern often discussed by online porn site administrators is "site stickiness," a marketing term used to define the amount of time a viewer spends on a website (Yagielowicz "Leveraging Interactivity to Boost Stickiness" 22). The analytics collected every time a user "clicks" onto a site or any graphic element of a site and, the duration of time spent looking at a particular page – its stickiness – becomes valuable data. User behaviours are measured, plotted, correlated, enumerated, scored and interpolated in order to ensure that the semiotics of contemporary porn attract the most "hits," retain the most eyeballs, prolong and defer orgasm in a perfect capitalist drive of endless desire as lack. In this way, pornography *theorises us*, or rather, to be more precise, it theorises a very particular, highly-targeted group of "us," (Western, heterosexual, middle-class, white, credit-card-carrying men) and it increasingly fine tunes its erotic representations toward those images and sounds that animate and mesmerise the erotic fantasies of this particular demographic.

A cursorial semiotic analysis of porn as a signifying system also quickly confirms this preferred viewing subject, thereby complicating Breen's notion that "pornography offers the means for women to remake their location within the dominant male system of meaning" (173). The porn site, "Public Disgrace," cited by Breen as evidence of how online porn "reconstructs" Laura Mulvey's critical conception of the "male gaze," is an obvious place to turn (167). As of this writing, the website "Public Disgrace," whose full name is "Public Disgrace: Women Bound, Stripped and Punished in Public," contains twenty five images on its homepage. Some of these are "thumbnail images," offering a static glimpse into the streaming video content available to the user if they hover over or "click" on that image. As is convention among online porn sites today, Public Disgrace offers a great deal of low-resolution video shorts to users for nothing, hoping they will ultimately pay for membership on the site with the promise of access to high-definition videos, video purchasing and downloading capabilities along with special member "forums." Each of the twenty five images featured on the site's homepage on the day I accessed it featured a

nude female body that was either tied up, hung, gagged, stretched, spread open to the camera's gaze with objects or male body parts protruding or entering, "gang raped," with her face ejaculated on or otherwise, and, true to the site's name, "publicly humiliated" (kink.com "Public Disgrace: Women Bound, Stripped and Punished in Public"). None of these twenty five images contained an image of a male body being sexually or otherwise humiliated and, in all but one of these images, any men featured were themselves fully clothed. If these visual codes alone don't interpellate their targeted viewer – setting up "Public Humiliation's" preferred subject-as-viewer location as one that benefits from masculine privilege reified by feminine debasement – then the text featured alongside the videos certainly does:

Tegan Tate is super tiny and adorable, but don't let that fool you. This submissive cutie is also a GIANT slut. She has a tattoo under her tit that says "Punish Me" so we do our best to make Tegan's dreams come true! We drag this doe eyed [sic] sweetie into a dive bar full of locals for a heavy duty disgracing. She's manhandled by the crowd, shocked in her asshole by a remote-controlled butt plug, and cattle prodded before Ramon's big cock pounds every last one of her tiny slut holes in front of total strangers! (kink.com "Tiny Cutie Gets a Giant Cock in Her Ass in Front of Total Strangers!")

A more comprehensive content analysis of Internet porn confirms the patterns of gendered violence and power that we observe on the "Public Humiliation" website. Throughout her recent and meticulously researched text on the Internet pornography industry, *Pornland*, Gail Dines discusses how porn's stock representations of the sexually powerful masculine body opposed to the sexually humiliated and disempowered feminine body are, in fact, formulaic across Internet porn. She goes on to list the most popular acts advertised on these sites in a paragraph that mirrors nearly exactly what I found on the day I visited "Public Humiliation" (xviii). Dines, in an earlier article entitled, "White Man's Burden," also lays bare the over determined grossly stereotypical ways in which online porn deploys race: from the near complete "absence of men of color who are not black," (277) to the over representation and fascination with the "primitive" (277) and dangerously over-endowed hyper-sexualised black male body; to the consistent depiction of women of color as always-willing recipients of the most violent and most dehumanising, "barbaric" and exoticised sexual acts (2010). Dines writes: "This is a powerful way to deliver racist ideology, as it not only makes visible the supposed sexual debauchery of the targeted group, but also sexualises the racism in ways that make actual racism invisible in the mind of most consumers" (*Pornland* 140).

There can be no mistake even if one has not read industry trade magazines, mainstream online porn's representations are meant to appeal to, and flatter, a very particular subject as preferred spectator. This is in fact the very same sadistic, voyeuristic male gaze described by Laura Mulvey in her 1978 essay. Likewise, there cannot be any real confusion as to how porn's sexualised violence works – what kinds of coded bodies are the recipients of violence and humiliation and what kinds are powerful sexual agents, asserting their privilege in the form of aggression, dominance and humiliation. Internet pornography does not "reconstruct" the dominant, white, heterosexual male gaze; rather, it reinvigorates it, reconsolidates it, reassures it, and thereby reassures the subject who recognises and constructs his identity through its dominant symbols and behaviors (Dines 167). Unlike Jihad, Asmaa Mahfouz's viral video (discussed in the final section of this paper), or the myriad other forms of proletarianisation of suppressed and abject knowledges made possible by the democratisation of the Internet's signifying channels, contemporary online porn is formed through a crude but technologically sophisticated marketing scheme. It is capitalism's voice catering to an *elite* subject. Those who successfully enact dominant, white, English-speaking, heteronormative, Western, Enlightenment forms of masculinity are, in the visual world of Internet porn, bestowed with a powerfully seductive kind of violent, with context-specific privilege. And femininity's physical and psychic *lack* of sexual agency, power, and

self-determination offers additional assurance to these credit-card-carrying, Western, porn-consuming men of the dominance and power of their masculinity even despite new globalising economies and shifting geopolitics that may otherwise threaten their here-to-secure hegemonic position.

So, I arrive at a conclusion which, while not neatly aligned with Breen's thesis may, in a revealing way, be contiguous with it. Mainstream online pornography, in the form of the unprecedented sounds and images of sexual violence and humiliation directed at the feminine body, authorises the release of any imagined "gentlemen's Enlightenment code of ethical behavior" for first-world, white, masculinist ideologies and ideological formations (Breen 12). This unregulated speech has indeed, as Breen suggests, unleashed the abject, the violent, as surely one of its unintended consequences. It is, however, the sexual fantasies, desires, and expressions of the elite – not the hitherto oppressed and silenced – that find a new and powerful signifying channel. This may be a kind of working through for the first-world heterosexual masculinist subject who sees evidence in all corners of the online world, and in the economies and demographics of globalisation generally, that his hegemonic position is potentially threatened – a *waning* "Empire of sensations" (Breen 157), to use Breen's term, that is perhaps reading the writing on the wall.

### Asmaa Mahfouz's Viral Video:

*"Whoever says women shouldn't go to the protests because they will get beaten, let him have some honor and manhood and come with me on January 25<sup>th</sup>. They don't even have to go to Tahrir Square, just go anywhere and say it: that we are free human beings. [...] If you have honor and dignity as a man, come and protect me, and other girls in the protest. If you stay home, you deserve what's being done to you, and you will be guilty before your nation and your people. Go down to the street, send SMSs, post it on the internet, make people aware [...] do not be afraid"* (Mahfouz).

The excerpt above is taken from an English transcript of a video uploaded to Youtube on January 18, 2011 by a 26-year-old Egyptian, Muslim woman, Asmaa Mahfouz. This video captured the attention of Egypt and much of the world and is largely understood to have contributed significantly to the historic January 25 uprising in Egypt's Tahrir Square that led to the ousting of President Hosni Mubarak (El-Naggar). Some have called the Egyptian uprising an example of "Revolution 2.0," highlighting the interactive, creative, and potentially revolutionary force enabled by Internet technologies that allow proletariat voices and historically suppressed subjectivities and discourses access to speech and communications systems with global reach (Ghonim, Sutton). For Mubarak's government, and the then governments of Tunisia, Libya, and Yemen – all of whom experienced the "unintended effects" of unregulated communication technologies when they were forced from power as part of what has come to be known as the "Arab Spring" – the Web 2.0 revolution is quite clearly far more than merely an abstract effect of unleashed speech. The unregulated speech acts enabled by the Internet "registered a potential" for emancipation that mobilised an entire global region (Breen 11). And, my sense from reading accounts of the Arab Spring online from around the world, is that the courage, conviction and voracious determination unleashed through social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook and Youtube and that resulted in such dramatic regional transformation, was surprising. Perhaps most surprising of all was the fact that it was this young Egyptian woman, wearing a headscarf, speaking in Arabic, looking unflinchingly at the camera-as-viewer, and expertly deploying technology to launch a gendered discourse that was so instrumental in inspiring a revolution and transforming a nation.

Mahfouz was the first of the five anonymous bloggers credited with starting the "We Are All Khaled Said" Facebook page – a page that, as of September 2012, had over 249,303 likes – to break that group's anonymity. The page's namesake, Kalid Said, was a young Egyptian businessman who died while in police custody in June 2010, in the Egyptian city of Alexandria. According to



several witnesses, Said was beaten to death by Egyptian police (BBC World Service). According to the Egyptian government, the cause of Said's death remains in dispute. However, the national outcry resulting from a series of post-mortem photographs documenting his brutal beating became a force through which young tech-savvy Egyptian men and women, including Mahfouz, mobilised tens of thousands of their fellow citizens to join in a series of protests, the most famous of which was perhaps the January 25th protest in Tahrir Square. Using multiple Twitter feeds and anonymous Facebook accounts, these young activists set out to create a revolution through a social media campaign (Sutter). And, while their initial efforts received some attention, it was not until the release of Mahfouz's video that the campaign reached critical Internet mass ("Asmaa Mahfouz & the Youtube Video That Helped Spark the Egyptian Uprising"). At least three things set Mahfouz's video apart from other efforts to organize against the Mubarak regime: she proclaimed her identity by revealing her face in the video; she was a woman; and she self-consciously used gender and national identity as a way of appealing to her fellow Egyptian citizens. By way of her viral Youtube video, Mahfouz lent both face and voice to the struggle for democracy that had begun months earlier in Tunisia and was spreading across Northern Africa and the Middle East by way of new unregulated acts of Internet speech.

In their article "An Arab Spring for Women: The Missing Story from the Middle East," Juan Cole and Shahin Cole write: "The Arab Spring has received copious attention in the American media, but one of its crucial elements has been largely overlooked: the striking role of women in the protests sweeping the Arab world." I too noticed this pattern, and it seemed to me particularly troubling that Mahfouz's video should go almost unnoticed in mainstream US media even while there was a great deal of coverage of the "Arab Spring" generally ("Asmaa Mahfouz & the Youtube Video That Helped Spark the Egyptian Uprising"; Naib).<sup>[3]</sup> One explanation of this might be that the West – including of course, the U.S. and the U.S. Media – was explicitly left out of Mahfouz's revolutionary call. Mahfouz's call out to Egyptian masculinity in Arabic and her exclusion of any plea to the West, may simply not have been understood as significant by a U.S. Media that, like the West generally, is accustomed to seeing its own brand of masculinity called on in times of real global crisis and colonial, and *postcolonial* unrest. In fact, as very well documented in Feminist Postcolonial Theory, the colonial and imperialist discourses historically structuring the struggle over strategic spaces like Egypt (due to its proximity to the Suez Canal among other things) have consistently relied on the deployment of a decidedly gendered discourse in order to make sense of, and enable their various projects both at home and abroad. Cynthia Enloe, amongst others, famously maps this out in her article, "Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics," as she details the myriad ways that women's lives, agency and subjectivities function as the tabula rasa onto which colonial and neocolonial struggles were/are writ large, and the way in which this often comes in the form of a very particular kind of gendered Trojan horse: white men claiming their role as rescuer of brown-skinned women, or, as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has it: "White men saving brown women from brown men" (Spivak 93). One need only look back to the Bush administration's use of the figure of the oppressed and veiled Muslim woman: "women of cover," as proxy for invading Afghanistan for contemporary evidence of the power of such rhetoric (Power).

By way of the Internet's globalising sign systems, which bring us as individual user/subjects within direct signifying distance of each other, we are reminded that hereto relatively stable postcolonial geopolitical orders are potentially shifting. We are likewise reminded, as we "surf" the world and rub up against foreign systems of representation, values, geopolitical histories, and various and even contradictory cultural understanding of "modernity," "progress," and "citizenship," of the shifting economic strengths and dependencies that have lately dominated U.S. economic discourse feeding what seems to be a growing contemporary concern that the United States is no longer the dominating economic and political "world superpower" it once was. Headlines appearing across both conservative and liberal mainstream U.S. media remind us of this as well. Titles such as *Daily Finance's* "10 Ways America Is Losing Its Superpower Status to

China" (Williams), or *The Washington Post's* "The Shrinking Superpower" (Rubin) or The Pew Research Center's "China Seen Overtaking U.S. as Global Superpower" (Pew Research), or a recent series appearing in the New York Times Opinion Pages entitled, "No More Superpower?" (Slaughter et al.) no doubt intend to attract readers by exploiting exactly such fears. And this may in part explain the reason that women like Mahfouz all but disappear from Western accounts of the Arab Spring: her address, so thoroughly and boldly directed at her fellow Egyptians, is both a reconfiguration of gendered scripts and an undoing of "the pathology of recognition" that is the founding and enabling logic of colonial and neocolonial relationships (Oliver 9). She does not turn to the West for assistance or rescue or even for any form of recognition at all. And, given the gendered history of colonial and postcolonial discourse, I wonder if such a call might even be read as a kind of subtle form of Western emasculation.

In her viral video Mahfouz expertly mobilises the mass communication effects of Internet speech and *proletarianisation* – to return to Breen's text – in order to call out to her fellow countrymen as their equal, in their own language, and wearing the traditional hijab. Through this complex heteroglossia she creates an effective Egyptian nationalist femininity that is both undeniably modern and decidedly outside of any imagined or real relationship to the West. Mahfouz stands in opposition to the native woman of phantasmic, Western, colonial and postcolonial fantasies –haunting harems and waiting to be rescued, unveiled and sexually liberated by Western masculinity. To promote her story in mainstream American media may function as an unwelcome reminder of potentially frightening shifts in global economic strengths and dependencies. Better just to ensure that, in such a frighteningly uncertain technologically mediated geopolitical moment, the subaltern *still* do not speak.

## Conclusion

New forms of technologically enabled, unregulated speech and signification create new forms of resistance to, and new forms of complicity with, historically gendered, elite, Western structures of capitalism and power. Their "unintended effects," "alternative, bizarro universe[s]" and "grubby worldliness" do indeed facilitate, at least potentially, "a reconstruction of complex social relations on a global scale" (Breen 199). The results of this unprecedented, unregulated, globalising speech as it careens across geographies, nation-states, and the virtual social landscapes and screens of the Internet cannot be predicted and will unlikely, as we have already seen, fit neatly into any reductive binary categorisation. This inherent unpredictability need not, however, be responded to with pessimism. It might just as easily be read as an opportunity for more discourse, with more complexity, more finely tuned to historical vectors of power and privilege, more consciously enabling voices hereto oppressed, and more effectively revealing of the dynamics that enable such oppressions. Surely it is true, as was recently stated by Eric Schmidt, Executive Chairman of Google, in response to the violence in the Middle East and North Africa allegedly resulting from a series of anti-Muslim videos hosted on Youtube – another instance of the Internet's unleashed speech – that the answer to "bad speech is more speech" – not regulation, or censorship (AFP). And, it is only our vigilant protection and self-conscious democratisation of this speech in all its forms – from porn to Jihad to viral videos inspiring revolution or riots – that can undo, to quote Breen in one of his most moving passages, "the silence that comes from the subservient subsistence that has destroyed any of its claims to legitimacy, dignity, property and the right to self representation" (49). Surely there is no more worthwhile project for a newly globalising world.

---

**Karyl Ketchum** is an Assistant Professor in the Women and Gender Studies Program at California State University, Fullerton. Her broader research interests include the poetics and politics of technology and new media forms, visual culture and theories of representation,

Cultural Studies, Queer Theory and theories and meanings of the body and embodiment. She has published book chapters and journal articles on technologies of surveillance, online porn, virtual technologies and presence, fashion, and the role of new media in social movements.

---

## Endnotes

1. My focus here is on the mainstream online porn industry exclusively, as this segment of the industry is by far the most technologically sophisticated, culturally influential and financially lucrative. The many interesting and varied representations found on porn sites catering to non-heterosexual, non-white and non-hegemonic subject locations are beyond the scope of this article.
2. Sponsors and site affiliates are those companies to whom the porn site administrator has sold visual advertising space in return for revenue generated when users "click through" to these sites.
3. The Washington Post's only mention of Mahfouz's contribution was on Mar 28 2011 -- over two months after the January 25 uprising in Tahrir Square (Ahmed). The New York Times mentions Mahfouz's revolutionary video in one article dated February 1, 2011 (El-Naggar). CNN World mentions Mahfouz one time as a quote attributed to her in a June 27, 2011 online article that never mentions the historic role Mahfouz played in the riots that took place in Egypt 5 months earlier (Amin). Fox News makes no mention at all of Mahfouz's video in its coverage of the Arab Spring, however, they do mention Mahfouz in three separate articles all issued by The Associated Press, two dated August 14, 2011 and the third May 8, 2012. These three articles discuss the sentencing Mahfouz received months after the riots from the Egyptian military court. While my very brief survey certainly cannot be interpreted as exhaustive, it does seem to indicate that main stream US media is far more interested in telling the story of this Egyptian woman's prosecution than her powerful, gendered, technologically brilliant and highly influential revolutionary call.

## Works Cited

- Ahmed, Uzma Mariam. "Middle East Uprisings: The Feminism Makeover." *Washington Post* 28 March 2011, sec. National.  
 <[www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/altmuslimah/post/middle-east-uprisings-the-feminism-makeover/2011/03/28/AFdbwYoB\\_blog.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/altmuslimah/post/middle-east-uprisings-the-feminism-makeover/2011/03/28/AFdbwYoB_blog.html)>
- Amin, Shahira. "For Many in Egypt, Revolution Incomplete." *CNN World* 2011. Accessed 8 October 2012. <<http://www.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/africa/06/21/egypt.after.revolution/index.html?iref=allsearch>>.
- Asmaa Mahfouz & the Youtube Video That Helped Spark the Egyptian Uprising. 2011. Video and audio broadcast. Now, Democracy, 8 February 2011. Accessed 8 October 2012.  
 <[www.democracynow.org/2011/2/8/asmaa\\_mahfouz\\_the\\_youtube\\_video\\_that](http://www.democracynow.org/2011/2/8/asmaa_mahfouz_the_youtube_video_that)>
- Associated Press. "Egypt Activist Charged with Inciting Violence." *Fox News* 14 August 2011. Accessed 8 October 2012. <[www.foxnews.com/world/2011/08/14/egypt-activist-charged-with-inciting-violence/](http://www.foxnews.com/world/2011/08/14/egypt-activist-charged-with-inciting-violence/)>
- Associated Press. "Latest Developments in Arab World's Unrest." *Fox News* August 14, 2011



2011. Accessed 8 October 2012. <[www.foxnews.com/world/2011/08/14/latest-developments-in-arab-worlds-unrest/](http://www.foxnews.com/world/2011/08/14/latest-developments-in-arab-worlds-unrest/)>

Associated Press. "Media Watchdogs Decry Egypt Attacks on Reporters." *Fox News* 8 May 2012. Accessed 23 September 2012. <[www.foxnews.com/world/2012/05/08/media-watchdogs-decry-egypt-attacks-on-reporters449040/](http://www.foxnews.com/world/2012/05/08/media-watchdogs-decry-egypt-attacks-on-reporters449040/)>

AFP. "Google's Schmidt Defends Hosting of Anti-Islam Film." 2012. *Express Tribune*. Accessed 10 October 2012 <[tribune.com.pk/story/443336/googles-schmidt-defends-hosting-of-anti-islam-film/](http://tribune.com.pk/story/443336/googles-schmidt-defends-hosting-of-anti-islam-film/)>.

Bakhtin, Mikhail M. *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. Trans. R.W. Rotsel. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Ardis, 1973.

BBC World Service. "Egypt: 'We Are All Khaled Said'." BBC World Service 2011. Accessed 27 February 2013. [www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/programmes/2011/02/110217\\_outlook\\_egypt\\_protests\\_khaled\\_said.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/programmes/2011/02/110217_outlook_egypt_protests_khaled_said.shtml)

"China Seen Overtaking U.S. As Global Superpower." The Pew Research Center. 2011. Accessed 11 October 2012. <[www.pewglobal.org/2011/07/13/china-seen-overtaking-us-as-global-superpower/](http://www.pewglobal.org/2011/07/13/china-seen-overtaking-us-as-global-superpower/)>

Cole, Juan and Shahin Cole. "An Arab Spring for Women: The Missing Story from the Middle East." *Le Monde Diplomatique* 2011. Accessed 8 October 2012. <[mondediplo.com/openpage/an-arab-spring-for-women](http://mondediplo.com/openpage/an-arab-spring-for-women)>

Dines, Gail, and Jean McMahon Humez. "White Man's Burden: Gonzo Pornography and the Construction of Black Masculinity." *Gender, Race, and Class in Media: A Critical Reader*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2011. 275-82.

Dines, Gail. *Pornland: How Porn Has Hijacked Our Sexuality*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2010.

Enloe, Cynthia H. *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*. Updated ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

El-Naggar, Mona. "The Female Factor: Equal Rights Takes to the Barricades." *New York Times* 1 February 2011.

Ghonim, Wael. *Revolution 2.0: The Power of the People Is Greater Than the People in Power: A Memoir*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012.

Kink.com. "Public Disgrace: Women Bound, Stripped and Punished in Public." unknown. Accessed 10 October 2012 <<http://www.publicdisgrace.com/site/shoots.jsp>>.

Kink.com. "Tiny Cutie Gets a Giant Cock in Her Ass in Front of Total Strangers!" Public Disgrace: Women Bound, Stripped and Punished in Public, 21 September, 2012. Accessed October 10, 2012 <[www.publicdisgrace.com/site/shoot/24311-Tiny-Cutie-gets-a-GIANT-Cock-in-her-Ass-in-front-of-total-strangers.html](http://www.publicdisgrace.com/site/shoot/24311-Tiny-Cutie-gets-a-GIANT-Cock-in-her-Ass-in-front-of-total-strangers.html)>.

Mahfouz, Asmaa. "Egypt: The Viral Vlog of Asmaa Mahfouz That Helped Spark an Uprising." *boingboing*. Ed. Jardin, Xeni 2011. Accessed 11 October 2012. <[boingboing.net/2011/02/02/egypt-the-viral-vlog.html](http://boingboing.net/2011/02/02/egypt-the-viral-vlog.html)>

McLuhan, Marshall, Quentin Fiore, and Jerome Agel. *The Medium Is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects*. San Francisco, CA: HardWired, 1996.

Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Screen* 16.3 (1975): 6-18.

Naib, Fatma. "Women of the Revolution." Aljazeera English 19 February 2011, sec. Features. Accessed 8 October 2012. <[www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2011/02/2011217134411934738.html](http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2011/02/2011217134411934738.html)>

Oliver, Kelly. *Witnessing : Beyond Recognition*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2001.

Power, Carla. "The Politics of Women's Head Coverings." *Time* 13 July 2009. Accessed 12 October 2012. <[www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1908306,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1908306,00.html)>.

Rubin, Jennifer. "The Shrinking Superpower." *Washington Post* 10 March 2011, sec. The Right Turn. Accessed 11 October 2012. <[voices.washingtonpost.com/right-turn/2011/03/the\\_shrinking\\_superpower.html](http://voices.washingtonpost.com/right-turn/2011/03/the_shrinking_superpower.html)>

Slaughter, Anne-Marie, Tim Sebastian, Han Han, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Christine Ockrent, Max Boot, Dmitry Rogozin. "No More Superpower?" *America's global dominance appears to be fading. Is this a good thing for the world, and the United States? Seven prominent world-watchers give their views*. 24 June 2011, sec. The Opinion Pages. Print. Accessed 12 October 2012. <[www.nytimes.com/interactive/2011/06/24/opinion/global/20110624\\_SUPERPOWER.html](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2011/06/24/opinion/global/20110624_SUPERPOWER.html)>.

Sutter, John D. "The Faces of Egypt's 'Revolution 2.0'." CNN.com 21 February 2012 2011. Accessed 12 October 2012. <[www.cnn.com/2011/TECH/innovation/02/21/egypt.internet.revolution/index.html](http://www.cnn.com/2011/TECH/innovation/02/21/egypt.internet.revolution/index.html)>

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorti. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory : A Reader*. Ed. Patrick Chrisman and Laura Williams. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

Williams, Sean. "10 Ways America Is Losing Its Superpower Status to China." *Daily Finance* 16 July 2012. Accessed 8 October 2012. <[www.dailyfinance.com/2012/07/16/10-ways-america-is-losing-its-superpower-status-to-china/](http://www.dailyfinance.com/2012/07/16/10-ways-america-is-losing-its-superpower-status-to-china/)>

Yagielowicz, Stephen. "Geo-Targeting - Right Match." *XBIZ* (2012): 84-85 pp. 6 July 6 2012. <[www.xbiz.com/articles/educational/150504](http://www.xbiz.com/articles/educational/150504)>.

---. "Leveraging Interactivity to Boost Stickiness." *XBIZ* (2012): 22 pp. 7 July 2012. Accessed 11 October 2012. <[www.xbiz.com/articles/educational/152585](http://www.xbiz.com/articles/educational/152585)>.

---. "Regional Traffic Controls Allow Localized Revenue Optimization." *XBIZ* (2012): 62 and 95 pp. 4 August 2012. Accessed 12 October 2012. <[www.xbiz.com/articles/educational/151950](http://www.xbiz.com/articles/educational/151950)>.