

The Erotics of Pain: BDSM Femslash Fan Fiction

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Abstract

Fan fiction writers use an existing fictional universe (film, novel, etc) to develop scenarios and characters in creative ways within the logic of the original universe. In this paper, I examine the representations of the erotics of pain in two fan-produced, so-called femslash texts describing romantic and sexual relationships between the two super powered slayers Buffy and Faith from Joss Whedon's TV series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

In the 'adult' Buffy/Faith femslash analysed here, the authors describe pain as inextricably linked to sexual pleasure and intimacy, especially in BDSM sex scenes. Drawing on intertextual links to the TV show, such as the preternatural resilience of Slayer bodies which can take extreme amounts of pain, the fanfic writers create graphic, hard-core descriptions of safe, sane and consensual BDSM as key elements in Buffy and Faith's relationship.

I argue that such representations are transgressive in that they break the rules of how sexualities can be represented in the prime-time TV series that the two female characters are borrowed from. Furthermore, they challenge stereotypical ideas about female sexual behaviour as 'vanilla'. The potential for transgression may explain fan writers' attraction to Buffy/Faith femslash centring on BDSM relations and the resulting depicted transgressions may account for and readers' interest in these stories.

Key Words: Sexualized pain, pornography, intertextuality, Buffy/Faith femslash, fan fiction, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

1. Buffy, Faith and fan fiction

Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Joss Whedon's cult TV series about the adventures of a teenaged vampire hunter, was aired in the US between 1997 and 2003 and continues to fascinate fans around the world. Buffy's universe, the Buffyverse, is the subject of numerous fan fictions (fanfics) posted on the internet. In fan fiction texts, writers elaborate various aspects of *Buffy the*

Vampire Slayer and its spin-off series *Angel*, such as alternative plot developments and relationships between characters. The pairing of characters is central in Buffyverse fanfic as in most other kinds of fan fiction. Fanfic writers often choose to develop homoerotic stories about characters who are not couples in the TV show. Homoerotic fan fictions about male characters are called ‘slash’¹ and its female equivalent is called ‘femslash’.

In Buffyverse fan fiction, the most popular female pairing consists of the two vampire slayers Buffy and Faith, two super-powered tough girls who spend their nights patrolling the cemeteries of Sunnydale to round-kick and stake vampires in order to stop the constantly threatening apocalypse. The pairing of two extremely tough and strong girls in fan fiction, where a general rule is to stay true to the original characters’ ‘personalities,’ gives the opportunity to create non-stereotypical or transgressive representations of female characters involved in a love story. In opposition to conventional romantic texts (for example Harlequin) where a virile, active hero pursues a passive, inexperienced heroine whose ultimate goal is to find true love, the Buffy/Faith femslash texts analyzed here focus on graphic descriptions of BDSM rather than on the purportedly feminine themes of love and caring, thus challenging stereotypes about female sexuality.²

Femslash writers queer the relationship between Buffy and Faith, basing their pairing of these two Slayers on the character descriptions and plot developments in the TV show. As free and creative as fan fiction may be, it is a general rule that good fanfic texts should respect the logic of the fictional universe they ‘borrow’ characters from. Hence, the two fan fictions I analyse contain a number of intertextual references to *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. I will discuss these intertextual links in order to highlight which features from the TV show the fanfic writers use to develop Buffy and Faith’s collegial relationship into a romantic one where bondage and discipline, dominance and submission, sadism and masochism – BDSM in short – play an important part.

The pain I will try to make sense of, from my socio-literary perspective, is the sexualized pain described in graphic detail in two fan fiction texts. It is important to note that my study concerns textual representations of sexualized pain in scenes involving two fictional characters. These representations are more likely to say something about the fanfic authors’ perceptions of BDSM, and about their fantasies concerning two female superheroes engaging in such sexual activities, than about real-life BDSM.³

The two fan fictions I analyze in this short paper are *Faith’s Fantasies*, by Rebelrsr, and *New Desires*, by Naughti. Both texts are categorized as ‘adult’ since they contain explicit sexual material.⁴ In other words, they are erotic or pornographic, which I take to mean that they are intended to arouse. More specifically, *Faith’s Fantasies* is described as ‘[a]

collection of PWPs containing mild, but consensual, BDSM' and is rated 'NC-21' (PWP is a fan fiction acronym which reads 'Porn Without Plot' or 'Plot? What Plot?'). Naughti describes *New Desires* in the following way: 'Buffy and Faith dive into a kinky, dark relationship with each other' and provides a number of key words, such as 'BDSM', 'D/s', 'Bond', and 'FemDom'⁵ which function both as content markers and as warnings to potentially sensitive readers. *New Desires* is accessible on AdultFanfiction.net, a site devoted to erotic/pornographic fanfic, as the name indicates. This text is rated 'Adult++', which means that it belongs to the most adult category available on this site. Fan fictions inspired by a number of source texts (books, TV series, cartoons, etc) are accessible on AdultFanfiction.net, where the focus is on adult fanfic rather than on a specific fandom or textual universe. *Faith's Fantasies*, on the other hand, can be found at two internet sites that both focus specifically on fan productions about Buffy and Faith (including fan art and fan video remixes): WickednDivine.com and SlayersTime.com.⁶

2. Kinky sex in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

The Buffyverse lends itself especially well to so-called kink-fic, not only of the male slash version analyzed by several scholars,⁷ but also of the femslash variety pairing Buffy and Faith. As media scholar Esther Saxey points out,

in *Buffy* fandom, there is an added interest in the sexualization of emotional suffering, which is that suffering is already so much part of the series and the slash. Writers combine these two ejected themes – suffering and kinky sex – and play them against each other.⁸

Saxey's observation concerns male/male slash about characters in the Buffyverse, but it is valid for Buffy/Faith femslash as well. Buffy and Faith are women with Slayer powers, which means, among other things, that they are both preternaturally strong and capable of suffering extreme amounts of pain, not least because they have extraordinary healing capacities. Furthermore, they are the female heroes of a TV show which frequently alludes to, and even to some degree depicts, kinky sex although in a veiled manner (*Buffy* is a prime-time show and, as such, it is restricted by a number of regulations concerning the ways in which sexuality may be represented). *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* abounds with 'moments of kink',⁹ as Saxey calls them: sexy leather clothes are common in the series, as are half-naked, injured or tortured characters. There are chains next to beds, sexual scenes in

cages, and both Buffy and Faith are seen chained up in erotically charged scenes.¹⁰

There is no doubt, then, that kinky sex is present in the TV series. It is also true that sexy leather clothes, chains and other kinky attire are depicted in visually pleasurable ways. However, on an explicit level, non-normative sexual practices are presented as morally wrong. The tortured and half-naked characters that are depicted – mostly the male vampires Angel and Spike – are presented as victims of cruel and sadistic treatments, often carried out by villains, and not as sexually pleased ‘submissives’. *Buffy* scholar Vivien Burr states that, although ‘*Buffy* goes some way towards endorsing forms of sexual expression that are commonly seen as lying beyond the pale of the normal and healthy, ultimately it chooses to align these with evil rather than good’, for instance in associating BDSM with sadistic sexuality, connected to the evil vampires, in a manner that conflates the two.¹¹ It should be noted that there is an on-going debate concerning interpretations of the kinky sex depicted in the series, where some *Buffy* scholars (Crusie, for instance) argue for a ‘kink-positive’ reading of *Buffy*. Regardless of what values kinky sex is associated with on the TV show, its many allusions to such sexual practices form a base for Buffyverse fan fiction containing kinky sex.

The ‘moments of kink’ in the show which femslash authors draw on can be specific scenes from the series, as well as more general, recurring allusions to kinky sex, but also the characterizations of the two Slayers. Faith is undisputedly familiar with BDSM practices; in a sexual banter scene with the vampire Spike, she talks about her experiences as a ‘top’ in sexual relations with ‘a guy with a bull whip’.¹² She also displays sexually violent behaviour towards Buffy’s friend Xander, as she initiates a kind of foreplay so rough that she nearly strangles him. Her behaviour in this scene is explicitly connected to BDSM, since Buffy’s boyfriend Angel asks Faith, as he saves Xander, if she forgot about the ‘safety word’. Her reply suggests that such mutual agreements matter little to her: ‘Safety words are for wusses’.¹³ Buffy is depicted as more conventional and less expressive when it comes to sexuality, especially in the first three seasons of the series during which she is still in high school. However, she is not always portrayed as ‘vanilla’.¹⁴ In season six, Buffy is the one who initiates sex with the no longer evil vampire Spike in what will become a clearly BDSM-influenced relationship. *Buffy* scholar Jenny Alexander notes that

Their relationship is depicted as ‘unhealthy’ by the story arc. Buffy is portrayed as continually ashamed and disgusted with herself for enjoying these assignments. However, the camera tells a different story. It continually lingers on the unzipping and re-buckling of black leather.¹⁵

In other words, the show makes clear that Buffy's rough This ambiguity between overt moral messages and visually pleasurable and/or eroticized scenes reflects the way kinky sex is represented in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: 'morally wrong yet illicitly delicious', to quote Jenny Alexander.¹⁶

3. Kinky sex in Buffy/Faith fan fiction

The fan fiction *Faith's Fantasies* takes place in a so-called alternative universe set after the seventh and last season of the series. In this text, Buffy and Faith no longer function as vampire slayers, but live in 'domestic bliss'. *Faith's Fantasies* is written as Faith's story about how BDSM enters into her and Buffy's relationship, with Buffy as the 'top.' Initially, this kind of sexual power play starts as Buffy's Valentine's gift to her lover, but 'the Game', as she and Faith call it, becomes an integrated part of their love life.

In the beginning of this fanfic, kinky sex is presented as deviant in the sense that it is a practice that turns away from the norm. This echoes *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* since non-normative sexual practices are marked as unhealthy in the series. In the opening lines of the fanfic, Faith recounts how she had to explain 'about leatherdykes, femme tops, and Daddies', as she declared her feelings to Buffy.¹⁷ Those practices are thus unusual enough to require explanation. Furthermore, they are perceived as shameful: 'I thought my face was going to burst into flames I was blushing so hard', Faith thinks. But the most difficult part is admitting that she dreams of a partner who '[likes to be called Sir or Ma'am'. The fact that Buffy doesn't 'get it', but rather laughs at such a wish, stresses its non-normative character. The inflicting of sexualized pain is the main obstacle to the erotic scenarios that Faith dreams of in *Faith's Fantasies*: 'You never could get passed [sic] the idea that I really wanted you to hurt me', she thinks.¹⁸ However, once Buffy passes the initially rather high threshold to BDSM games, she does not hesitate to let the blows fall on Faith's body. The sexual role play is Buffy's surprise gift to Faith who is described as astonished, and even frightened, at the beginning of the role play because she is uncertain of what is going on. As Buffy without warning or explanation grabs Faith from behind and blindfolds her, Faith feels 'creeped out', until Buffy grabs her breasts and whispers in her ear, which makes clear that the situation is erotic. Faith responds to these moves in a very physical manner: 'I nearly moaned at the deep, husky sound of your voice, and moisture gathered between my legs'. The mix of insecurity and sexual excitement that characterizes the beginning of the sex scene turns into a blend of excitement and pain as Faith receives a series of blows: 'I lost count of the times you painted my ass with fire. [...]

Each time the paddle landed, I could feel my wetness increase and my nipples ached under my shirt'. The countless blows is an intertextual reference to the supernatural resilience of the Slayers' bodies. Faith's physical reactions to this treatment make clear that pain is linked to arousal in this fan fiction.

The representation of kinky sex in the fan fiction *New Desires* turns away from the TV series since 'kink' is something that Buffy here is more than comfortable with. In the TV series, she feels undecided about her BDSM-influenced relationship with Spike. In *New Desires*, by contrast, Buffy's preference for kinky sex is unproblematic, even if the title of the fan fiction stresses the novelty of the various kinky sexual practices performed by Buffy and Faith in 24 short chapters with descriptive titles like: 'Spanking', 'Handcuffs', 'Blood play', 'Clamps', 'Leather' and 'Voyeur'.

In *New Desires*, in contrast to *Faith's Fantasies*, Faith takes for granted that Buffy is not 'vanilla' in bed: '[...] couldn't be, she had dated a vampire after all'.¹⁹ The vampire referred to here is not Buffy's BDSM partner Spike, but Angel, the ensouled vampire who is Buffy's first and true love in the TV series. The TV scenes displaying Angel and Buffy in intimate situations tend to emphasize the romantic aspects of their relationship rather than the purely sexual attraction between them, and there are no explicit signs of them engaging in kinky sex. In Naughti's fan fiction, however, Faith's supposition is that sex with a vampire includes some degree of 'kink,' which is confirmed by Buffy's thoughts at the end of the same fanfic chapter. As she lets Faith be 'on top' after some struggle about this dominating position, Buffy thinks: 'She was thrilled with the power Faith was having over her. It reminded her of the nights she had spent with Angel. He had control over her and it wasn't until now that she was reminded of just how much she missed it'. Although Buffy's reference to Angel's 'control' does not explicitly mention BDSM games, the connection between her memories of Angel and Faith's physical and psychological 'power' over her suggests that his control also had to do with sexual domination.

4. Therapeutic pain

The fan fiction authors describe sexualized pain not only as arousing, but also as psychologically satisfying. This mirrors the TV series, where both Buffy and Faith are seen needing physical 'punishment' in order to deal with their personal problems. In the series, Faith is depicted as a psychologically unstable character who is in need of 'redemption' after she has turned to the dark side and left Sunnydale for Los Angeles (which makes her briefly enter *Buffy the Vampire Slayer's* spin-off series *Angel*). Faith's way to redemption is closely linked to physical punishment, which is highlighted by a question posed by Angel: 'still looking for someone to help beat the bad out of you?'²⁰ In the TV series, Faith's need for punishment is

presented as mentally unstable behaviour. Angel eventually manages to make Faith realize this and turn herself in to the police instead of acting out her traumas in a destructive manner. In the fan fiction *Faith's Fantasies*, the same way of handling psychological trauma is played out in the sexual setting of a dominance-submission scene. Buffy, acting as the dominating 'Mistress', helps Faith struggle against her 'evil twin' by 'beat[ing] the bad out of [her]', only in a sexually pleasurable way.²¹ By following Mistress Buffy's directives and receiving corporal punishment – some fifty swats of a leather whip and a paddle – Faith manages to deal with her dark side, her 'evil twin'. In contrast to the destructive beatings in the TV series, the pain inflicted is sexually stimulating which is emphasized through the descriptions of Faith's physical reactions to Buffy's treatment. In addition to the pleasures of pain, there is psychological satisfaction. By the end of the whipping session, Faith thinks: 'Despite the flaring pain and the arousal, my mind was floating, and I was relaxed'. Rebelrsr thematizes the therapeutic gains of pain in a positive manner rather than depicting the need for corporal punishment as unstable and destructive behaviour, as the TV series does.

In a similar manner, fanfic author Naughti describes, in *New Desires*, how a spanking session based on mutual love and care releases both sexual and psychological tension for the partner who receives the punishment. Moreover, it enhances the emotional intimacy between the two lovers. In this fan fiction, it is Buffy rather than Faith who is struggling with problems that she is unable to verbalize. This characterization alludes to the traumatized Buffy depicted in season six of the series, where she is depressed but chooses to keep her problems to herself; the only – temporary – release she finds is through rough sex with Spike. Whereas their violent sexual encounters in the TV series are presented as unhealthy, especially since they do not lead to healing but only to self-hatred, the blows distributed in *New Desires* are based on love and care. In a chapter appropriately titled 'Spanking', Buffy and Faith argue about Buffy's reluctance to share her problems with Faith. Naughti describes how Buffy needs a spanking to let her feelings out and emphasizes Faith's concern with Buffy's unhealthy silence:

Faith [...] wanted her lover to be able to confide in her. She didn't mind the fights; they happened. What she did mind was that there was clearly something on Buffy's mind and she wasn't sharing it with her. Faith had worked hard to provide them both with a safe environment since they began dabbling in BDSM. She didn't want it all to come crumbling down because Buffy refused to share with her.²²

Buffy's tendency to keep her problems to herself is described as unhealthy in this fan fiction, as it is in the TV show. However, in the fanfic text, the rough sex results in Buffy 'allowing herself to cry and let it all out' in her lovers' arms, which then enhances their intimacy.

The importance of verbally 'sharing' psychological problems is explicitly linked to the 'safe environment' that is required in BDSM, according to the standpoint Faith expresses in *New Desires*. The concern about safety reflects what BDSM scholars and practitioners refer to as the 'ethics of care', which implies a 'safe, sane and consensual' basis for sexual power play.²³ Faith's line underscores that it is important for the dominating partner to make sure the sexual games stay within the limits of what her lover enjoys. Buffy's response to the spanking shows that the scene is both 'sane' and 'consensual': 'She enjoyed the control Faith had over her and she knew everything the other girl did to her was out of love and respect'. Sexualized pain is both sexually gratifying and psychologically healing, then, because it is based on love and respect, and also because both partners know the limits of their games.

Focus in the consecutive sex scenes which constitute both fanfic texts is on the sexually pleasurable aspects of pain, especially from the submissive partner's point of view. The characters' moans, gasps, husky voices, bodily fluids, orgasmic cramps and other physical reactions that bear witness to sexual excitement and satisfaction are represented in graphic detail – as is the pain that causes the pleasure. Even when the pain is extreme, it provokes sexual arousal. In *Faith's Fantasies*, Faith 'screamed and jerked at the bonds holding [her] arms' when Buffy puts clamps on her nipples; 'everything exploded in a haze of pain' and Faith 'swallowed hard against a surge of nausea'.²⁴ Alongside the details about this excruciating pain, a couple of brief notes regarding Faith's arousal are inserted, such as the following sentence which describes Faith's feelings at the end of the clamp session: 'My world narrowed to the burning in my chest and the desire dripping from my body'. Such sparseness of details about the submissive character's pleasure give the impression that the sexually gratifying aspects of pain literally go without saying. Considering that the text is a pornographic account of consensual BDSM,²⁵ it is reasonable to suppose that pain is inextricably linked to sexual pleasure, rather than to suffering. In other words, the detailed descriptions of painful sensations may appear as pornographic as the portrayal of sexual arousal and release.

5. Contextualized and transgressive BDSM

The 'adult' femslash texts discussed here provide explicit, graphic representations of kinky sex between familiar female characters. The fact that the characters' background and previous relationship are known to the readers is important, as Anne Kustritz has demonstrated in an analysis of

male BDSM slash fiction.²⁶ In relation to Buffy/Faith femslash, knowledge of their strength, their healing capacities and the erotic tension that exists between them in the TV show makes a BDSM-influenced relationship seem like a natural development. Furthermore, the sexualized pain described in fan fiction can be extreme and yet remain 'safe and sane'. Given the emphasis on the 'ethics of care' in the fanfic texts analyzed, the authors apparently consider it important to show that Buffy and Faith's rough sex is based on mutual consent, love and respect.

Another possible explanation to the interest of the fan fiction texts discussed here,²⁷ is their transgressive nature. Creating BDSM femslash about the two Slayers may seem logical, considering Buffy and Faith's 'personalities' and relationship in the TV series. However, it also entails a transgression of the rules that govern *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, a heteronormative prime-time show. Here, sex scenes are never explicit, lesbian love is clearly 'different', and kinky sex is presented as unhealthy. The fanfic texts, on their part, abound with graphic and explicit BDSM (or other kinky) sex scenes which may be labelled hard-core pornography. With their focus on kinky and rough sex, the fanfic depictions of Buffy and Faith furthermore transgress stereotypical ideas about female desire and sexual behaviour as 'vanilla'. These ideas are still wide-spread in our culture, Clarissa Smith²⁸ states in her recent reader-response study of women's pornography, even as representations of strong women as well as of 'alternative' sexualities are no longer unusual. What is titillating about pornography, according to Laura Kipnis, is 'its theatrics of transgression, its dedication to crossing boundaries and violating social strictures'.²⁹ Perhaps the mix of the pre-existing/restricted – two powerful Slayers from a 'tamed' TV series – and the new/challenging stories about these two female superheroes inflicting sexually gratifying pain on each other is a key to making sense of the pain in BDSM femslash about Buffy and Faith.

Notes

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¹ From the sign ‘/’ which is used to indicate which characters are paired.

² This argument is further developed in Isaksson, ‘Buffy/Faith Adult Femslash: Queer Porn With a Plot’, *Slayage: The Online International Journal of Buffystudies*, no 28, Summer 2009.

³ In her article ‘Deconstructing Myths: The Social Construction of “Sadomasochism” Versus “Subjugated Knowledges” of Practitioners of Consensual “SM”’, Andrea Beckman shows that filmic or textual representations of BDSM in general have very little to do with real-life practices. BDSM in film or text tends to be seen as sexual violence and/or pathological sadism, whereas real-life practitioners emphasize the importance of safe, sane and consensual BDSM.

⁴ The content and type of a fan fiction is signaled next to its title; the pairing and the story-type (femslash, alternative universe, kink-fic, romance, etc) are usually provided, as well as a rating such as ‘adult’ or R (for ‘restricted’), often accompanied by an explanation of the reason for the rating (sexual content, language, violence).

⁵ ‘D/s’ stands for dominance/submission, ‘Bond’ for bondage and ‘FemDom’ for female domination or female dominatrix.

⁶ In order to access the texts on AdultFanfiction.net, the users must certify that they are over 18. On SlayersTime.net, the users have to register and participate actively in the forum discussions in order to gain access to the fan fictions rated NC-21. Other fan fictions are open to all users. On WickednDivine.net, there is open access to fanfics of all ratings.

⁷ See for instance V Keft-Kennedy, ‘Fantasising Masculinity in *Buffyverse* Slash Fiction: Sexuality, Violence, and the Vampire’, *Nordic Journal of English Studies* 7:1, 2008, and L Call, “‘Sounds Like Kinky Business to Me’”: Subtextual and Textual Representations of Erotic Power in the Buffyverse’, *Slayage: The Online International Journal of Buffystudies* 24, Summer 2007.

⁸ E Saxey, ‘Staking a Claim: The Series and Its Slash Fan-fiction’, in *Reading the Vampire Slayer: An Unofficial Critical Companion to Buffy and Angel*, Roz Kaveney (ed), New York: Tauris Park, 2001, p. 206.

⁹ Saxey, p. 203.

¹⁰ The ‘rogue’ Faith is chained up by Angel after nearly having strangled Xander during rough foreplay (‘The Zeppo’, *Buffy* 3.13); Buffy is seen in the same chains watching Faith and fake Angelus (Angel’s evil alter ego) tease each other sexually (‘Enemies’, *Buffy* 3.17).

¹¹ V Burr, ‘Bad Girls Like It Rough (-And Good Girls Don’t?): Representations of BDSM in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*’, *Phoebe* 18:1, Spring 2006, pp. 47-9. As an example of this linking of BDSM and evil, Buffy’s friend Willow is seen torturing Angel in an episode that depicts an alternative universe (one where Buffy would never have arrived in Sunnydale) where Willow is an evil vampire and Angel her chained “puppy” which she cuts and burns for her sexual excitement (‘The Wish’, *Buffy* 3.09).

¹² ‘Dirty Girls’, *Buffy* 7.18.

¹³ ‘The Zeppo’, *Buffy* 3.13.

¹⁴ When used in a sexual context, ‘vanilla’ refers to standard and conventional sexual practices, which exclude BDSM. ‘Vanilla’ is often used as the opposite of ‘kink’.

¹⁵ J Alexander, ‘A Vampire Is Being Beaten: De Sade through the Looking Glass in *Buffy and Angel*.’ *Slayage* 15, December 2004, par. 20.

¹⁶ J Alexander, par. 8.

¹⁷ *Faith’s Fantasies*, ‘Valentine’s Surprise’.

¹⁸ *Faith’s Fantasies*, ‘Valentine’s Surprise’.

¹⁹ *New Desires*, ‘Virgins’.

²⁰ ‘Five by Five’, *Angel* 1.18.

²¹ *Faith’s Fantasies*, ‘Making it Clear’.

²² *New Desires*, ‘Spanking’.

²³ See for example G Taylor & J M Ussher, N Rambukkana and P Califia.

²⁴ *Faith’s Fantasies*, ‘Let’s Start at the Beginning’.

²⁵ ‘Non-con’ fanfic, about non consensual sex, is another fan fiction variety.

²⁶ A Kustritz, ‘Painful pleasures: Sacrifice, consent, and the resignification of BDSM symbolism in *The Story of O* and *The Story of Obi*.’ *Transformative Works and Cultures* no. 1, 2008.

²⁷ Both texts have received positive reviews from readers, and *New Desires* is mentioned as one of the most read texts on AdultFanfiction.net.

²⁸ C Smith, *One for the Girls!: The Pleasures and Practices of Reading Women’s Porn*, Bristol & Chicago: Intellect Books, 2007, p. 47.

²⁹ L Kipnis, ‘How to Look at Pornography’, in *Pornography: Film and Culture*, Peter Lehman (ed.), New Brunswick, New Jersey and London: Rutgers U P, 2006, p. 119.