

# q book: FROM TWINK TO KINK

**From twink to kink: Academic study into gay porn reveals a multitude of 'saturated' masculinities**  
Gay pornography, online and onscreen, is a controversial and significantly under-researched area of cultural production. In the first book of its kind, 'Gay Pornography: Representations of Sexuality and Masculinity' explores the iconography, themes and ideals that the genre presents.

The new research by Professor John Mercer at Birmingham City University argues that gay pornography cannot be regarded as one-dimensional, but that it offers its audience a vision of plural masculinities that are more nuanced and ambiguous than they might initially seem.

Professor Mercer examines how the internet has generated an exponential growth in the sheer volume and variety of this material, and facilitated far greater access to it. He uses both professional and amateur examples to explore how gay pornography has become part of a wider cultural context in which modern masculinities have become 'saturated' by their constantly evolving status and function in popular culture.

The book is the culmination of almost 20 years' research into gay pornography; its timeline reflects the changing social, cultural, political and technological developments during that time – evolving from the aftermath of the first wave of the AIDS pandemic to gay culture being assimilated by the mainstream.

Discussing the themes of the book, John Mercer, Professor of Gender and Sexuality, Birmingham City University, said: *"People will talk about 'gay culture' in isolation, but it is based on interaction with, recycling and appropriation of aspects of the wider culture. Masculinities are a multitude and are represented, likewise, in a multitude of ways, and this is vividly evidenced in the types that populate the fantasy worlds of gay porn – from the obvious 'twink' and 'jock', but also 'chavs' and the hypermasculine gay male.*

*"Plus, we must also consider how the rhetoric and iconography of gay porn is informing the ways in which heterosexual men produce their bodies for erotic consumption, which is in itself contributing to the perpetual flux of masculinities men must contend with in modern times.*

*"My book is as much about contemporary constructions of masculinity as it is a work that is a contribution to the ongoing pornography debate. The intention of my study is to challenge a monolithic interpretation of gay porn and an equally monolithic comprehension of contemporary masculinities."*

Published by I.B. Tauris, 'Gay Pornography' will be released on Wednesday 29 March

