

Porn-stars do you measure up?



By [Siphosethu Stuurman](#)

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I recently found myself on a production set for a local pornographic programme called Porn-stars. Now, before you judge me, I was invited to the set by the programme's producers as a member of the press. But, in all honesty, I attended the press briefing because I was actually interested in seeing how a porn production studio operates. I will admit that I've seen my fair share of X-rated movies and I'm sure a lot of people out there have as well. However, if you happen to be one of the few people who have honestly never seen a pornographic image, then kudos to you, but I really don't envy your status.



Jamaican bamboos!

The programme Porn-stars is based on reality TV hit shows like Idols and Pop Stars. Contestants have to be over 18 years of age and STD free. Porn-stars hopefuls will be paired up with a random partner and will be required to get it on under the lights, with a production crew of about 10 people watching and a director who is constantly shouting Kama Sutra sex positions that the contestants need to perform. Unfortunately for the guys, the average little twinkie won't cut it - they are looking for men with Jamaican bamboos!

The producers also told me that the response has been "overwhelming", to the point that they had to postpone the Johannesburg auditions to find a bigger venue. I was informed that the average contestant's age is 23, i.e. a youth. Some of my older colleagues at work are "disgusted" by this reality show and said that it's typical of young people to engage in such behaviour. Now I think there are multiple ways to construe young people's apparent willingness to participate in such a controversial adult reality show.



Ray J & KimKardashian

Open legs equals open doors

I also think the youth of today are under a lot of pressure to be successful and make money. But the reality is that South Africa has a high unemployment rate; even recent university graduates find themselves sitting at home staring at their fancy degrees. A reality show like Porn-stars promises two things that matter the most to a lot of young people: fun and money. And please make no mistake, the porn industry is a very profitable business, so there is indeed money for those who are brave - and talented enough, of course.

It would seem that being an adult entertainer (the politically correct term to refer to porn stars) opens a lot of doors to success for certain individuals. Kim Kardashians fame increased dramatically after the 2007 release of her explicit home-made pornographic video with now-defunct R&B singer, Ray J. Kim also pocketed a cool USD5 million from American porn giant Vivid Entertainment, which was responsible for the release of the video.

New career heights via porn videos

Another name that's on the rise to stardom is Laurence Fishburne's daughter, Montana Fishburne. You may know Laurence better as Morpheus, from the Matrix movies. His 19-year-old daughter, Montana, who was largely unknown until she released her first pornographic video in August last year, is also gaining a certain level of fame. These two are but a few of the well-known stars who blasted their careers to new heights via porn videos.

I am not advocating that youths get into pornography, though, but with unemployment, no financial independence or any foreseeable opportunities, there is almost nothing that will stop young people from entering a controversial reality shows like



Montana Fishburne

Porn-stars. Without sounding like Dr Phil, I think a lot of young people are still searching for a sense of purpose, belonging, and identity and added to this is the stress of starting a successful career. Often, success is defined by financial wealth and the media glorifies this by giving front-page coverage to men who spend up to a million on flashy sushi parties. Consequently, this creates envy amongst the young and some will seek fame and potential riches from just about everything, including Porn-stars.

Though the local production may not take one to Hollywood, or make one an instant millionaire (for that you would have to be friends with the Gupta family), it does promise a certain level of success and recognition. And to young people who don't have much going in their lives, this may just be all that they need.

ABOUT SIPHOSETHU STUURMAN

Siphosethu Stuurman studied towards a Bachelor of Journalism (Honours-level degree) at Rhodes University, specialising in Radio & TV broadcasting and also majored in Industrial Sociology.

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