

Beat: Miscellaneous

Britain bans spanking, female ejaculation in UK porn

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USPA News - A law that was quietly passed by Britain's parliament last month went into force this week, prohibiting producers of pornography from showing a wide range of consensual acts, including spanking, female ejaculation and bondage, and sparking condemnation from the adult industry. The law, the Audiovisual Media Services Regulations 2014, prohibits on-demand services such as adult websites from offering material that would be refused classification by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC).

It effectively brings on-demand services in line with rules for DVDs, which can be given the R18 classification when sold in sex shops. But while the R18 classification allows sexual content, the BBFC bans explicit content that features a wide range of consensual and legal acts, including spanking, caning, fisting, facesitting, female ejaculation, strangulation and roleplay that features adults pretending to be underage. It also prohibits any form of physical restraints - such as gags - that may prevent a participant from withdrawing consent. Jerry Barnett, who leads the 'Sex & Censorship' campaign, noted that the law only affects porn providers which are based in the United Kingdom and citizens are free to access online pornography of their choice, even if it features material which is legal but is refused classification by the British Board of Film Classification. The new legislation passed last month stems from the European Union's Audiovisual Media Services (AVMS) directives, but, unlike other European countries, the UK's Authority for Television On Demand (ATVOD) adopted a broad definition of "TV-like" to include a wide range of services, including adult websites. "There appear to be no rational explanations for most of the R18 rules - they are simply a set of moral judgments designed by people who have struggled endlessly to stop the British people from watching pornography," Barnett said. "In practice, this means that video of various fetish activities can no longer be sold by regulated UK services - the people most affected will be those running fetish sites of various types." The new law sparked condemnation from the adult industry, with pornographic actresses Brooklyn Blue and Daisy Rock, among others, expressing their anger. "Porn being quietly censored, that just sounds sneaky to me. This is an attack on female sexual choices," Rock said. "Why are my countrymen not able to make choices of their own when viewing adult material? This bill is beyond ridiculous." Some also criticized the law for banning female ejaculation in British pornography. "The new adult film law states that female ejaculation and facesitting is now banned from adult content, yet a man is still allowed to orgasm and ejaculate on set," Blue said. "Why is it fair for a man to be allowed this pleasure and a woman not?" Barnett noted that some porn providers may have a way to avoid the new legislation, explaining that media regulator Ofcom has repeatedly struck down ATVOD's broad definition of TV-like. "Recently, a dominatrix also appealed that her site, 'Urban Chick Supremacy Cell,' was not TV-like, and won. Sites that have removed themselves from ATVOD regulation in this way are not bound by the new law," he said. The EU's AVMS directives which are behind the British law were intended to protect children from content that "might seriously impair the physical, mental or moral development" of those under eighteen, but Ofcom concluded in a 2011 study of 20 European governments that "no country found evidence that sexually explicit material harms minors." Barnett said Britain's new legislation provides the government with a way to censor pornography, regardless of whether there is evidence of harm. "Introducing the R18 test removes the need for objective evidence, and instead allows censors to make arbitrary decisions," he said, adding that such a test should be answered by psychologists, not government censors. 'Sex & Censorship' also fears that the law will be used to justify further censorship in the future and noted that most businesses selling fetish material online have already left Britain for other European countries or the United States. "The well-known fetish site kink.com is run by a Briton who moved to San Francisco to escape our ludicrously censorious climate," Barnett said.

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