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Why are women so horny for *Heated Rivalry*?

“There’s something freeing about engaging with sexual content that isn’t directly projecting expectations onto women’s bodies or behaviour.”



BY FLEURINE TIDEMAN

10 January 2026

through these links.

Heated Rivalry has finally landed in the UK after taking the nation by storm at the end of 2025, flooding the internet with memes, fan edits, and a bitter rivalry with *I Love LA*. The predominant fan base? Women.

And here's the twist: they're not just watching — they are devouring it, feeling things they've never felt before, and maybe, just a little, questioning themselves.

Truth be told, there's nothing confusing about it. Straight women are increasingly into gay porn — the reverse of the classic male gaze obsession with two women hooking up. And yes, I've had a front-row seat... and it is *hot*.

Sabrina Lantos/HBO

When porn is [rarely] depicted in mainstream film and TV, we're often led to believe that straight men and women exclusively enjoy heteronormative content — or, at best, lesbian porn. But reality is a lot more interesting.

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BY LUCY MORGAN

According to [Frolicme](#), their most-viewed category by women is “threesomes,” watched twice as much as the next most popular category, “lesbian sex.” Over 67% of women preferred [bisexual](#) threesomes featuring male-on-male action rather than a standard heterosexual threesome. Interestingly, MMF threesomes were predominantly viewed by women aged 24–34.

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Comments on these videos reveal the appeal: “...Male body suddenly appears softer when treated sexually by another man” and “More like this pretty please!! M on M is incredibly hot to me and I know I’m not the only one who feels that way!” One even confessed, “And one with M fucking M would be amazing. Sigh, a gal can dream!”

Ethical porn site [CHEEX](#) also shared that their top-performing keyword was “blowjob,” with 62% of users identifying as female. Meanwhile, [Pornhub’s](#) 2025 Pride Insights found that 47% of gay male porn viewers are women.

So why are women so drawn to watching two men get intimate — whether that’s in porn or on the latest episode of *Heated Rivalry*?

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It's hot stuff.

BY CHARLEY ROSS

The lack of “male gaze” with two men

themselves to other women — often to our own detriment. Watching a sex scene in a film, it's easy to find yourself measuring up (or failing to) against the bodies on screen. The same goes for traditional porn, which often promotes unrealistic ideals.

There's also something freeing about engaging with sexual content that isn't directly projecting expectations onto women's bodies or behaviour.

But with gay male porn, those pressures disappear. We don't have to look like the men on screen — and crucially, we're not being measured against them. Men aren't usually depicted through the lens of the “male gaze,” which objectifies and upholds narrow beauty standards for women.

“There's also something freeing about engaging with sexual content that isn't directly projecting expectations onto women's bodies or behaviour,” explains Annabelle Knight, Lovehoney's sex and relationships expert. “For many, that creates space to enjoy desire without comparison, judgement or pressure, which can make the experience feel more relaxed and enjoyable.”

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A balance of power

There's an inherent power ranking in most heterosexual sex scenes: he leads, she follows. The scene often begins when he penetrates and ends with his orgasm — even if reality doesn't always match that choreography.

“Man-on-man dynamics also tend to have less of a

power imbalance than man-woman dynamics and therefore are less susceptible to typical gender roles, where the woman is the object of desire in the scene,” explains Anna Richards, founder of ethical erotica platform FrolicMe. “Partners may switch roles in terms of who's on top or bottom, or who is dominant or submissive, and there's more of an even balance of pleasure shared.”

Heated Rivalry gives us a masterclass in this. We see Ilya top Shane, but also go down on him in the shower — literally on his knees for this man. By the final episode, they don't just hook up; they make love. It's not wild, raw or desperate — it's sweet, heartfelt and tender, with Ilya topping Shane after they've laid their hearts bare to one another.

Emotional connection

“Something else that might be sexy about gay erotica is that the men are free to explore their feminine sides, which can feel more authentic, so it may depict men experiencing more sensual, full-body pleasure as well as greater emotional connection,” reveals Richards.

“Seeing a gorgeous-looking man showing that vulnerable side of themselves is incredibly appealing to women.”

There is no doubt that Hudson Williams (Shane) and Connor Storrie (Ilya) are both attractive men. Who wouldn't want to see two gorgeous people together?

But men who look like them could easily be typecast as simple hulking brutes, players with no regard for feelings. Instead, we witness their vulnerability together, their gentle touches, their playful banter.

“Desire in gay porn is explored in a more attentive and emotional way, which leads to attraction between those involved becoming less about performance and much more about genuine connection,” Richards continues.

This isn't the first MLM romance to steal the internet's attention, like 2022's adaptation of Alice Oseman's popular 2016 webcomic *Heartstopper*, about two British schoolboys who fall in love. Then, a year later, Amazon dropped *Red, White and Royal Blue*, a feature film about an affair between a president's son and a British royal. But both were PG for sure, while *Heated Rivalry* bares all — pun very much intended.

It includes full nudity, extended sex scenes, depictions of oral and penetrative intercourse, as well as mutual masturbation. But it also features hand acting to rival *Pride & Prejudice*, romantic moments, and a getaway to a cottage. Not to mention the toe touches. Tell me something is female gaze through *literal grazes of shoes*.

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Warning: may cause screen fogging.

BY FLEURINE TIDEMAN

It offers a safe space

Rachel Reid, the author of *Heated Rivalry* and various other MLM hockey romances, has theories as to why women are so drawn to her material. “A lot of my female readers prefer not to have a woman in the book because of their own, usually dark pasts with sex with men,” she told *The Hollywood Reporter*. “They prefer to get lost in a fantasy where there's nobody there that they can relate to directly. They don't want to insert themselves into these sex scenes. It just feels safer.”

The World Health Organisation estimates that one in three women has been subjected to physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime. Many of these women will become readers and watchers of romance, and yes,



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sexual pleasure and porn, and they need to find a way to do so that doesn't take them back to their worst experiences. Perhaps the mere act of not having any skin in the game, aka watching two men, is enough to allow them to indulge in their own sexual pleasure while remaining safe.

Creator Jacob Tierney chimed in on the discussion as well: "I think that women are also, in real life and in culture, endlessly exposed to sexual violence. Seeing things like this, that are depictions ultimately of male vulnerability, can be very refreshing."

"From what I've heard, from the women who have written to me and Rachel and the boys, there's a safety in seeing a woman being removed from the conversation," he continued. "So you're watching something happen between two men, and there is no fear of violence. There is no fear of things turning into stuff that women have to deal with too much in real life, and don't want to deal with in their fantasies, and ultimately, this is a romantic fantasy."

Are we fetishising gay men?

When women have shared that gay porn turns them on, they're often met with criticism and accused of fetishising gay men. It's an interesting double standard, given that lesbian porn is widely accepted — even expected — to be consumed by both straight men and women, with far less scrutiny.

The reality is that the majority of heterosexual porn is created by men, for men, and rarely reflects female desire. So women look elsewhere — often to content made for a community that's similarly marginalised. Gay male porn, and shows like *Heated Rivalry*, offer something different: mutual pleasure, communication, and emotional depth.

In fact, engaging with gay male erotica can even be educational. Some viewers report becoming more aware

LGBTQ+ experiences. Straight women watching *Heated Rivalry* are learning about topping and

bottoming, power dynamics, and consent in ways they'd likely never encounter in mainstream heterosexual porn.

What's framed as fetishisation is, for many, simply curiosity, connection, and a desire to see intimacy portrayed with care — something women have long been denied.

At the end of the day, *Heated Rivalry* isn't just about the [steamy sex scenes](#) (though, let's be honest, those are phenomenal). It's about connection, vulnerability, and watching two people explore desire and intimacy on their own terms — all while giving women the space to enjoy it safely, free from comparison or pressure.

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BY KIYA-ELLEN ROSE AND TANYEL MUSTAFA

Fleurine is a contributing writer at GLAMOUR, covering [entertainment](#), [sexual wellness](#), and whatever timely topic she's currently obsessed with. She's been writing for GLAMOUR since June 2025, and has interviewed celebrities, reviewed the best products, contributed to the brand's [Black Friday](#) and [Amazon Prime Day](#) coverage, and unpacked the chaotic ... [Read More](#)

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