

gURLs NVR die on the Internet



“ ‘Hello, World!’ Is the first executable run prompt for any programming language. Blinking into existence, is it a newborn or an alien? It looks out at you from the screen: it, not you, says ‘Hi!’”ⁱ

I’m 14, it’s 2015 and I’m *on the internet*. Specifically, I’m on my Mum’s 13-inch Apple MacBook INTEL 2.26 GHz Core 2 Duo with 4GB RAM *on the internet*. I open an incognito window and create a user on Tumblr.com. I give it the namesake @all-my-bright-places inspired by my favourite YA novel by Jennifer Niven at the time.

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<html>
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<header><title>All My Bright Places</title></header>
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<body>
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<p>Hello, World!</p>
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<p>I am #bicurious #depressed #sad #anxious #hormonal #arty #photographer</p>
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</body>
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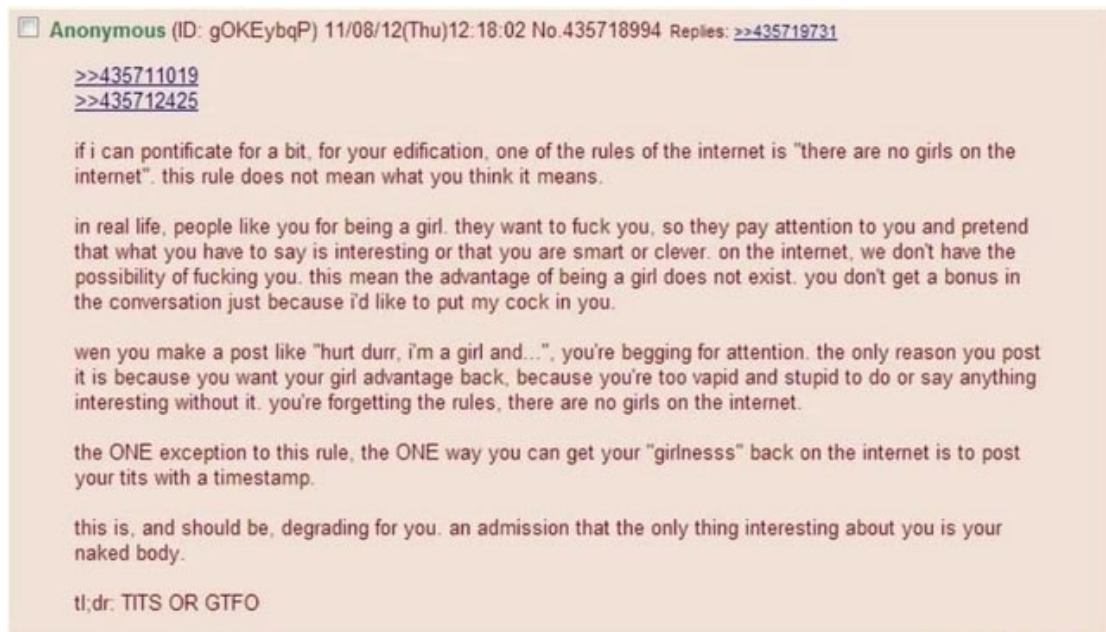
I am so hungry to connect, know and understand. At this age I collect and cluster knick knacks to make myself a little gIRL (girl In Real Life) nest. Therefore, it’s only natural that my function as *girl online* stays true to my biological and technological feminine urges! Now I **click**, cluster and collect. I encounter two girls one cup, sepia filters, Willow Smith, The Free the Nipple movement, Alex Turner, American Apparel and the Lesbian Masterdoc.

I am a girl <3 and so is every other user (◡̈>◡̈<◡̈)!

What is a girl *online*?

'Dislike's will say that the term girl operates as a projection of cishetero schoolgirl fantasies, in an act to oppress autonomy and infantilise women. A girl *online* is unserious and holds no real potential for radical action. 'Like's will say she is loved, admired, neutral evil, cute, #inspo but confined to rainbows, the colour pink, malls, cosmopolitans, and doomscrolling. Whether you dislike or like the girl *online*, most view her as harmless and opposed to the 'controversies' of feminism. But the girl *online* has incorrectly been labelled as a politically ambivalent state.

In her book "Girl Online" Joanna Walsh argues that everyone becomes a girl when they log onto the internetⁱⁱ, countering Anonymous' famous Rule 30 of the internet "There are no girls on the internet" which appeared on 4chan in 2007 ⁱⁱⁱ



She puts forth that inherent to being a girl *online* is confessional writing. A girl online user oscillates between earnest critiques, memes, political solidarity, and spilling their guts about crushes.

I agree with both parties, but not in the way Anonymous would hope. There are no girls on the internet, but there are indeed gURLS on the internet. gURLS are forever.

15TH FEB 2012



I'm just so bored and so pretty and not white

iv

6TH OCT 2011

BROWN PEOPLE LOVING OTHER BROWN
PEOPLE AUDRE LORDE SOMETHING OR
OTHER BLAHBLAHBLAH

v

@CALLOUTQUEEN is the username Mark Aguhar a “trans*, trans-questioning, genderqueer, non-male, girl etc” Filipino artist worked within to create a site of “**BLOGGING FOR BROWN GURLS**”^{vi}. The blog calls out white, male, thin, heterosexual privilege to affirm their own “brown, fat, femme agency”^{vii}. The website pumped out over 9,000 posts and reblogs between May 2010 and May 2012.

@CALLOUTQUEEN bounces from critiques of academics to documentation of successful body glitter application, to smart one-liners, to tips on seducing leather daddies, to reflections on her sister’s death.

@CALLOUTQUEEN is:

Confessional

Rhetorical

serious

trolling

documentary



it started with a *

“The asterisk, a diminutive astral symbol miming a starfish’s limby reach, follows trans and attaches to it, attaches it to something else, a spikey allergenic pollen soliciting immunological mobilization, a viral latching-on to membranous surfaces of words... the multi-pointed asterisk is fingery; it both points and touches.”^{viii}

“The asterisk modifies the meaning of transitivity by refusing to situate transition in relation to a destination, a final form, a specific shape, or an established configuration of desire and identity. The asterisk holds off the certainty of diagnosis; it keeps at bay any sense of knowing in advance what the meaning of this or that gender variant form may be, and perhaps most importantly, it makes trans* people the authors of their own categorizations.”^{ix}

In my time across the internet I have witnessed and identified gURLS, (Girl Uniform Resource Locators). gURLs are cyber-scouts for queer kinship. gURLs were accidentally created by a glitch in the coding of a gIRL online user. The glitch caused a rupture which expanded the title of the i into an asterisks. When inserted into code, asterisk causes exponentiation and multiplication. As a result, the user became permanently untethered to the gIRL who first made contact with the screen and typed, ‘Hello, World!’. The *girl online* is emancipated and now lives at her [URL](#) instead of the domestic family home. She becomes a gURL online. Her confessions become detached from the corporeal body which she shed from.

Two years before @all-my-bright-places became a gURL, THE gURL @CALLOUTQUEEN committed suicide AFK.

15TH FEB 2012 | 10,457 NOTES



x

(via [allnaturallywashedlipsterbitch](#))

On May 15th, 2015, I turned on the motherboard, enter(ed) my (web)space and reposted @allnaturallywashedlipsterbitch's GIF, of a gold-armour-clad femme serving cunt in a church.

I scrolled through the 10,457 post notes and there she was-

@CALLOUTQUEEN reblogged this from **femininechrist**

She invited me to her home(page). Whilst Mark was no longer gURL, her gURL is immortal. In that moment we linked our arms at the [hyperlink](#). It felt familiar, like we came from the same mother(board).

Mark too had turned on the motherboard, enter(ed) her (web)space and reposted @allnaturallywashedlipsterbitch's GIF on the 15th of February 2012. If you turn on the motherboard and repost @allnaturallywashedlipsterbitch's GIF, you can hug us back.

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gURLS are 4eva

In *Kinship is Anarchy*, Beringa states, “whether a virus is living, dead, or undead is the wrong question because its animated copresence is world-making.”^{xi} Butler’s conceptualisation of the, “derealization of the ‘Other’”, is comparable to the glitch foundations of gURLs, “it is neither alive nor dead, but interminably spectral.”^{xii} Because a gURL is a universal resource locator, she collects and interacts to de-establish linear ideas of identity and ‘alive-ness’. @CALLOUTQUEEN is mother gURL because she lives through ever-encountering and touching other internet objects and users via the forces that make up blogging: reposting, reblogging, screenshotting and referencing.

Many misunderstand the undertaking of a *girl online* to already be a fantastical disorientation, that allows for alternative worldbuilding outside of the prescribed IRL cisheteropatriarchy. However their existence is still tied to an IRL user. Whereas, gURLs are opaque and very capable of living 4eva in cyberspace as self-reproducing phenomena that are ever-encountering. We can imagine Aughar’s legacy as its own autonomous space- not instead of a body but supplementary to it, as fellow user Tournamline attests, it encourages “proximity without appropriation” rather than a quest for authenticity and final actualisation. Aughar’s birthing of gURL, @calloutqueen, “turned the inevitable into an opening towards elsewhere.”^{xiii}

Her continuous reproduction counters the sentence of DOSM (dead on social media). Russel contends, “Glitched bodies vivify and live on via the material of the Internet; thus these bodies, always online, remain current in their presence, and, as such are not placed within the quiet annals of history. They stretch beyond an archival construct as yoked to or embedded within a specific moment in time.”^{xiv}

A gURL user online is incapable of death as the microblog is the greatest mutator. Re: Anonymous’ Rule 30- not ONLY are there girls on the internet but there are gURLs on the internet! And gURLS are 4eva

2ND JAN 2012



moments before arriving at the bar that night I had been crying my eyes out with one of my besties and you can't even tell because I'm so stunning/my emotionality makes me stunning

xv

“Anyone with a healthy Tumblr feed will eventually encounter a Call Out Queen post, and her posts would frequently drift into the crosshairs of Internet trolls and haters.”^{xvi}

“The glitched self is always on the move. This diasporic journey of online to offline is a mode of parthenogenesis, reproducing oneself without fertilization-spitting, merging and emerging. This is the rubric for an embodied political technology that queers proudly, creating space for new bodies and cosmic selves”^{xvii}

According to Legacy Russel, a glitch is not part of an amalgamated whole^{xviii}. A glitch is a gesture which has the ability to disrupt social and ideological ways of being which oppress. Her theory of glitch embraces error, articulating its occurrence as a desirable correction to the various “machines” and mechanisms which displace marginalised bodies. A glitch is not passive but relentless, what Russel pronounces, “a political agent that adroitly threatens the capital of consumption, aimed at infiltrating and complicating systems, testing boundaries, traveling along limens, defying limits.”^{xix}

The transformation into becoming a gURL online is one of disaggregating identity politics. She now floats free across digital time, which is neither measured IRL or tied to offline circumstances. gURL online is an important mutation in the web, as the zeitgeist is controlled by what Laura Bennet coins, “the first-person industrial complex”^{xx}. All IRL’ers are dependent on the commodification of the self to precipitate click-cacophonies and virality. It has resulted in a culture in which the *girl online* is viewed as a singular identity synonymous with the gURL at the keyboard. The *girl online* is screened by *-you are what you*

post. gURLs as glitched selves are not shackled to this fraught idea, they play in and across cyberspaces to create new bodies and cosmic selves.

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repost

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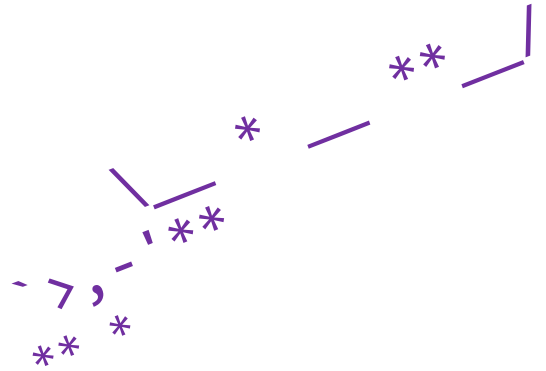
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until I inevitably find you again*

and again

and again

and again and again and again and again and again and again and again and again and
again and again and again and again and again and again and again

And again



“YEAH THAT’S RIGHT I’M STILL ALIVE” - most recent post from [gURL](#) @all-my-bright-places, 06/02/2018

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- ⁱ J. Walsh, *Girl Online: A User Manual*, Verso, Brooklyn, 2022, pg 77.
- ⁱⁱ Walsh, *Girl Online: A User Manual*.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Anonymous, 'Rules of the Internet', 2009-02-19 08:44:57, viewed on 3 October 2023, <<https://archive.org/stream/RulesOfTheInternet/RulesOfTheInternet.txt>>.
- ^{iv} M. Aguhar, 'I'm just so bored and so pretty and not white', BLOGGING FOR BROWN GURLS, Tumblr, 2012, 23 November 2023, <https://calloutqueen-blog.tumblr.com/post/17663654111/im-just-so-bored-and-so-pretty-and-not-white#notes>
- ^v M. Aguhar, 'BROWN PEOPLE LOVING OTHER BROWN PEOPLE AUDRE LORDE', BLOGGING FOR BROWN GURLS, Tumblr, 2011, 23 November 2023, <https://calloutqueen-blog.tumblr.com/post/11094661055/brown-people-loving-other-brown-people-audre-lorde>
- ^{vi} M. Aguhar, *BLOGGING FOR BROWN GURLS*, Tumblr, 2012, 23 November 2023, <https://calloutqueen-blog.tumblr.com/>
- ^{vii} M. Aguhar, *BLOGGING FOR BROWN GURLS*.
- ^{viii} E. Hayward, J. Weinstein; *Introduction: Tranimalities in the Age of Trans* Life*. 2015.
- ^{ix} J. Halberstam, *Trans: A Quick and Quirky Account of Gender Variability* (1st ed.). University of California Press, (2018), pg 4.
- ^x M. Aguhar, 'BLOGGING FOR BROWN GURLS', 2012, 23 November 2023, <https://calloutqueen-blog.tumblr.com/post/17696381094#notes>
- ^{xi} C Berringa, 'Kinship is Anarchy', E-flux, October 2022, <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/130/491388/kinship-is-anarchy/>
- ^{xii} J Butler, *Precarious Life*, 2006, p. 3.
- ^{xiii} Tourmaline, et al., editors, *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility*. 2017, pg 287.
- ^{xiv} L Russel, *Glitch Feminism: A Manifesto*, Verso, Brooklyn, 2020, p. 28.
- ^{xv} M. Aguhar, 'moments before arriving at the bar that night', BLOGGING FOR BROWN GURLS, Tumblr, 2012, 23 November 2023, <https://calloutqueen-blog.tumblr.com/post/15221612163/moments-before-arriving-at-the-bar-that-night-i#notes>
- ^{xvi} R. Damon, 'Safe Spaces', Bully Bloggers, 2020, last modified August 2012, <https://bullybloggers.wordpress.com/2012/08/04/mark-aguhars-critical-flippancy>
- ^{xvii} Russel, *Glitch Feminism*, pg 35.
- ^{xviii} Russel, *Glitch Feminism*, pg 40.
- ^{xix} Russel, *Glitch Feminism*, pg 10.
- ^{xx} L Bennett, 'The First-Person Industrial Complex', Slate, last modified September 2015.