
Peep Behind the Curtain - Porn and its Impact on Intimate Partner Violence

Pornography has been a part of human existence since the conception of cave drawings. From caves walls and artistic renderings, to photographs - silent talkies to technicolor - on-line to virtual reality – all mediums beckon from the shadows shaping our culture deep within the core of who we are – or who we pretend to be. While capturing the images of humans involved in sexual acts is a historical consistent, the onslaught of the internet has permanently and dramatically changed the sexual landscape.

Contemporary humans live in a sexual paradox silently swimming in a pornographic culture. Porn sites get more visitors each month than Netflix, Amazon and Twitter combined. In the past 20 years, since the internet entered personal homes, porn use has dramatically increased into a 10-billion-dollar industry. In 2015, the average age a person first viewed hardcore pornographic images was 11 years old. This coupled with a lack of comprehensive sexual education in schools has shifted sexual behaviors and norms in both positive and negative ways.

This presentation will examine the influence of pornography on the neurobiology of the developing and already developed brain. It will seek to articulate that excessive porn use impacts an individual's sexuality and body image taking into consideration that the onslaught of hardcore images shape and inform ones' sexual identity and practice.

One major question often asked about porn is whether there is a correlation of causation between porn and interpersonal violence. After years of research it is clear - the jury is still out on this one. This presentation will however discuss whether porn enhances or detracts from a culture of dignity and respect. The presenters will also discuss how a culture in which dignity and respect is minimized may increase the incidence of interpersonal violence.

The presenters will specifically focus on aspects of pornography that may lead to victimization such as the mainstreaming of choking and strangulation, BDSM (without the typical and learned BDSM safety precautions), revenge porn, child rape and sex trafficking. It will explore how these victimizations are met by the criminal justice and social systems, how victims and perpetrators view their relationship with porn and with each other and how sex industry workers experience the porn industry.

This presentation will be beneficial to any professional working to understand and change the culture regarding interpersonal violence in any form. There will also be discussion on possible solutions, promising practices and methodologies that can be utilized to begin the shift from a toxic sexual landscape to a possible healthy sexual reality.

Learning Objectives:

- Examine the influence, both positive and negative, that pornography has had on the culture of relationship building
- Examine how pornography has influenced the cultural acceptance of interpersonal violence
- Discuss the impact of pornography on sexual and interpersonal behaviors
- Analyze methods to mitigate the negative influence of pornography and interpersonal violence in our society