

The Porn Craze

Why are so many adults and children getting hooked on pornography? In The Bahamas, the Caribbean, and around the world more and more students from the primary to secondary schools are watching pornography on television or viewing it on the internet. More and more homes, where young minds are being nurtured, are actually pornography theaters. I wonder if parents understand what pornography is all about and why, from a business perspective, it is so successful. Al Haffner in his book "The High Cost of Free Love" states that "Pornography is the third highest profit enterprise of the mafia, after gambling and narcotics, with roughly 90 percent of all pornography being produced and distributed by organized crime."

THE STATISTICS

Here are some 2006 pornography global statistics taken from "Family Safe Media . . . Pornography Statistics."

- Pornographic websites: 420 million: (12% of total websites)
- Daily pornographic search engine requests: 68 million (25% of total search engine requests)
- Daily pornographic emails: 2.5 billion (8% of total emails)
- Monthly pornographic downloads (Peer-to-peer): 1.5 billion (35% of all downloads)
- Sexual solicitations of youth made in chat rooms: 89%
- Worldwide visitors to pornographic web sites: 72 million visitors to pornography: monthly
- Received unwanted exposure to sexual material: 34%
- Internet users who view porn: 42%
- Average age of first Internet exposure to pornography: 11years old
- 15-17 year olds having multiple hard-core exposures: 80%
- 8-16 year olds having viewed porn online: 90%
- In 2006 total internet porn revenue was \$97.06 billion

The statistics are startling. We can see why so many of our young people are being trapped into a maze of sexually charged material often, at first, not aware of the intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual dangers. Al Haffner points out that "Many studies show that repeated exposure to pornography, whether simple and soft or hard and perverse, leads to alterations in attitudes, appetites, and even behavior." Exposure to pornography causes men to devalue their wives or other women as mere sexual beings—using women to gratify their own perverted desires. Pornography has also impacted our view of manhood and masculinity. David Feddes in his article, "The Pornography Trap," states: "Pornography provides false manhood to men who are starving to be masculine. If a woman, or lots of women, is willing to get naked just for you, you must be a man!"

Researchers of pornography are further saying that "Internet pornography is the new crack cocaine, leading to addiction, misogyny, pedophilia, boob jobs and erectile dysfunction, according to clinicians and researchers." "According to Dr Judith Reisman, pornography affects the physical structure of your brain turning you into a porno-

zombie. Porn, she says, is an "erototoxin", producing an addictive "drug cocktail" of testosterone, oxytocin, dopamine and serotonin with a measurable organic effect on the brain."

THE SCHOOL AND HOME LABS

In 2005 a research was reported on MSNBC that at least 90 percent of first-time sexual experiences by teenagers were done right in parents' homes. Similarly, places we consider sacred and protected spaces are virtually open territory for viewing pornography. The saddest truth is that parents or guardians are the ones who are watching the porn in the homes and doing it so openly that the little ones are watching too.

A father stayed up late one night to watch hard core sex on a pay-per-view channel. Deep into the night, while his entire family was asleep, he too fell asleep in front of the television leaving the television screen flashing its images through the darkness. His five-year-old son was awakened around 2 am, having been attracted by the flashing lights and came and sat beside his sleeping dad and stayed there watching the hard-core sex for more than two hours. Around 4 a.m. the mother was also awakened by the lights in the TV room. What a shock she had when she saw her five-year-old innocent son watching with wide-eyes, sex on television, while his father was in a deep, deep, sleep! What was he learning? Did it affect his mind?

The earlier our children are introduced to pornography, the greater is the damage to their future lives. "According to one study, early exposure (under fourteen years of age) to pornography is related to greater involvement in deviant sexual practice, particularly rape." Pornographic photos seen very early in life introduces concept of communication and expression long before a child is able to articulate feelings effectively. Thus, sex becomes an easy medium of expression and the risk of addiction even greater.

Adults become addicted also because pornography gives one a feeling of euphoria and the photos are embedded in the mind and make one wants to return over and over to obtain the same pleasurable feelings again, just like drugs.

Parents, what can you do? Next week, I will continue with Part II to give you the answer to this question and much more. **Barrington H. Brennen is a marriage and family therapist. Send your questions for comments to P.O. Box N-896, Nassau, The Bahamas. Or call 242-323 8772, or email question@soencouragement.org or visit the website www.soencouragement.org**