



PornBusters: Men, Sex & Desire

Background Paper

Once Upon a Time

Just about every man has had to deal with the question of pornography at some point in his life. Most men got their first look at pornography at an early age - when we were young and impressionable, while our brains and our personalities were still being formed – and it has become a habit if not an addiction for many men.

In the old days, pornography was magazines – mostly soft core but some hard core – and you had to pluck up the courage and go the newsagent or the corner store to buy it, or shoplift it. Then there were 'blue movies' – videos and later DVDs – that you could get on mail order or at the local video shop. It became more widely available. Then came the Internet and pornography was everywhere – approximately one-third of all internet traffic is pornography and the pornography industry is worth over one hundred billion dollars per annum. It has become mainstreamed and 'normalised,' widely accepted in our society.

What Do You Think?

How you think about pornography will determine what you do about it – whether you use it a lot, a little or not at all.

- Some people think it's harmless, some people think it's good for you and some people think 'anything goes' in our society. They believe that so long as nobody is being forced into it there is no harm. Some people think pornography is a civil liberty, regardless of the question of any harm that is being done in the production or viewing of pornography.
- At the other end of the spectrum, some people say it's evil, it's addictive, it's an illness etc, and it needs the 12 Step (AA) approach. They believe it ought to be stamped out. They see it as spreading like a cancer through society and undermining healthy relationship values and the sanctity of the human person.
- In between these two opposing views lie the insights of the evolutionary psychology movement. They say, 'What do you expect when you tap into *primitive instincts* using *super-normal stimuli*?' In other words, men are wired for desire. Pornography is a designer drug, designed to tap into that ocean of desire. At the click of a mouse, you can have your own private orgy, in your head at least.



Does it Really Matter?

There are many reasons to question patronage of the pornography industry. One of the most commonly cited is that it's an industry that exploits vulnerable, often drug-addicted, and possibly sexually abused, young women. As one Australian comedian said, 'I'm not sure I want to get off on some poor girl's broken dreams.'

But maybe there's another reason, closer to home – maybe it's bad for your sex life. Looking at pornography wires your brain to expect sex in a certain way and under certain conditions – it conditions you to expect your partner/s to have a super-normal sex drive and respond just like the actors in the porn movie – and this can ruin your capacity to enjoy the real thing.

Real love-making with a real person - where you show up emotionally as well as physically - can be scary. It's understandable that you might opt for the quick fix – like fast food – particularly if you no longer enjoy the process of preparing and sitting down to a home-cooked meal! But is it what you really want?

Thinking About Pornography & Making Changes

I say three key things to the men who do the *PornBusters* programme:

- Firstly, if you're hooked it's not your *fault* but it is your *responsibility*. It's not your *fault* that you're in this position – you're one of billions of men who got hooked by this designer drug – but it is your *responsibility* what you do about it from now on... you probably got hooked at 10 or 12 or 14 years of age; how old do you want to be when you beat it or get it under control?
- Secondly, you need an effective approach – a *clear goal*, an *effective strategy*, and an *overarching framework* that will carry you through to your goal. For example, I think that being a man is a remarkable thing. My main objection to pornography is that it's junking *the viewer*, not just the so-called 'pornstars' in front of the camera. Once you get in touch with the true marvel of being a man, and what it takes to build a healthy relationship, pornography loses its appeal.
- Finally, in the *PornBusters* programme (and with the clients who prefer to address the issue on an individual basis), we work on how to build healthy desire habits and how to build a real, loving, sexually satisfying relationship. That takes balls and some skills that we don't necessarily have.

For more information about the *PornBusters* program, please see attached or go to www.noelgiblett.com.au or email noel@noelgiblett.com.au or call 0431 848 835.