



WRAP Week – 10 Harms of Pornography Harms #1 and #2

By Janice Crouse and Brenda Zurita

October 28 – November 4, 2012, marks the 25th annual WRAP Week campaign (White Ribbon Against Pornography), and Concerned Women for America once again joins the national effort to raise awareness against the scourge that is pornography.

The purpose of the White Ribbons Against Pornography Campaign is to “educate the public about the extent of the pornography problem and what can constitutionally be done about it.”

Concerned Women for America has a [fact card](#) with 10 Harms of Pornography [add link when live] and each weekday during the 25th annual WRAP Week we will have articles about two of the ten harms.

CWA warns its readers that the nature of pornography is perverse and ugly. Some of what you may read in these articles will be offensive, but it is the truth of what pornography is and helps to explain why it is so insidious.

1 — Pornography is addictive

The anatomy and physiology of the brain changes and those who watch pornography crave more. William M. Struthers of Wheaton College explains why: “Men seem to be wired in such a way that pornography hijacks the proper functioning of their brains and has a long-lasting effect on their thoughts and lives.” Dr. Struthers adds this explanation:

Viewing pornography is not an emotionally or physiologically neutral experience. It is fundamentally different from looking at black and white photos of the Lincoln Memorial or taking in a color map of the provinces of Canada. Men are reflexively drawn to the content of pornographic material. As such, pornography has wide-reaching effects to energize a man toward intimacy. It is not a neutral stimulus. It draws us in. Porn is vicarious and voyeuristic at its core, but it is also something more. Porn is a whispered promise. It promises more sex, better sex, endless sex, sex on demand, more intense orgasms, experiences of transcendence.¹

Who would imagine that viewing pornography could lead to an addiction to it? Donna Rice Hughes, of Enough is Enough, writes, “Pornography is the drug of the millennium

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and more addictive than crack cocaine. ”² As it turns out, science is beginning to study brains to see how they react to pornography viewing. Dr. Judith Reisman explains how brains are altered by pornography.

Thanks to the latest advances in neuroscience, we now know that emotionally arousing images imprint and alter the brain, triggering an instant, involuntary, but lasting, biochemical memory trail.

This applies to so-called "soft-core" and "hard-core" pornography, which may, arguably, subvert the First Amendment by overriding the cognitive speech process.

Once our neurochemical pathways are established they are difficult or impossible to delete. Erotic images also commonly trigger the viewer's "fight or flight" sex hormones producing intense arousal states that appear to fuse the conscious state of libidinous arousal with unconscious emotions of fear, shame, anger and hostility.³

As with drug addictions, addicts need their “fix” and people addicted to pornography will view it anywhere in order to sate their desires. In many instances that place will be where they work even though it could jeopardize their job. Consider these statistics⁴:

- 70 percent of pornography viewing occurs during the business hours of nine to five
- In March of 2006, of the 61 million unique visitors logged onto a pornographic website, one out of five was viewing the pornography from their work station
- Out of 474 human resources professionals surveyed, 66 percent said they discovered pornography on employee computers and 43 percent of those said they found pornography more than once.

How many times have we heard about our tax dollars paying for government workers who spend their days watching porn at work? One *Washington Times* article lists these agencies that have employees with porn problems: Pentagon, Secret Service, Transportation Security Administration, U.S. State Department, Department of Homeland Security, Securities and Exchange Commission and the Missile Defense Agency.⁵

If you knew pornography could become an addiction, to the point of daily distraction, why would anyone start viewing it? Unfortunately, some people, especially children, stumble upon it when they click on the wrong website. It is imperative that people understand that one web click could lead to an addiction and parents need to monitor their children's computer use all the time.

#2 — Pornography warps perceptions

Viewers of pornography think violence and degradation are normal and enjoyable.

Recently there was a story about a restaurant in Australia which made a decision that defies explanation. The urinals, meant to amuse the restaurant's male diners it appears, were shaped like women's red-lipsticked mouths, wide open. Upon second thought and numerous complaints,

the restaurant saw fit to remove them and apologize if they offended anyone.⁶ They did, in fact, offend women everywhere.

Sadly, this kind of misogyny is commonplace in pornography. Treating women like receptacles for men's bodily fluids is standard fare. One of the acts viewers of pornography seek is the "cum shot" where the man ejaculates on a woman's body or in her face. Obviously that action is meant to degrade the woman.

Another consequence of frequent porn use is the perception that everyone is involved in all types of deviant sexual behavior.

Pamela Paul writes in her book, *Pornified*, about the progression. "According to Diana Russell, a sociologist who has researched pornography for decades, men who look at pornography repeatedly 'come to think that unusual sex acts are much more frequently performed in sexual relationships all over the country, because of course that's what they're seeing in porn.' They begin to believe that anal sex and S&M are common practices, part of every happy-go-lucky couple's repertoire. And if they're not doing it, something's wrong with them. They're not adventurous enough. They're missing out. And what to do about it? Bring it home to your wife. Introduce it to your girlfriend."⁷

Teenage boys in the United Kingdom are doing just that. Teen girls have instituted their own chaperone program; they call it the "third wheel" and in order to protect themselves from the advances of the boys, they always have a friend with them so they are never alone with the boy. The boys pressure the girls to dress, act and have sex like porn stars. The way the boys act upsets the girls, and some of the things they wanted the girls to do scares them. The boys watch hours of pornography and think what they see is normal.⁸

Sadly, pornography has invaded college campuses in the U.S., too. There are an estimated 18-22 million male and female sex addicts in America today, and the average American teen is exposed to over 14,000 sexual images and messages every year through our mainstream media.⁹ Gail Dines, a foremost academic authority on pornography wrote, "We are now bringing up a generation of boys on cruel, violent porn." She added, "And given what we know about how images affect people, this is going to have a profound influence on their sexuality, behavior and attitudes towards women."¹⁰

It is no surprise that if people watch hours and hours of pornography every day or even every week, they will become desensitized to what they are seeing and begin to think it's normal and everyone is doing it. The real tragedy is that young children are watching this porn and will grow up thinking sex as depicted in pornography is how it should be.

ENDNOTES

¹ William M. Struthers, *Wired for Intimacy: How Pornography Hijacks the Male Brain*, (Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity Press), 2009.

² Rachel B. Duke, "More Women Lured to Pornography Addiction," *Washington Times* July 11, 2010, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/jul/11/more-women-lured-to-pornography-addiction/?page=all>

³ Judith Reisman, Ph.D., "The Brain Science Behind Pornography Addiction and the Effects of Addiction on Families and Communities," Testimony before the United States Senate, Subcommittee on Science, Technology, and Space of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, November 18, 2004, 1, http://www.drjudithreisman.com/archives/Senate-Testimony-20041118_Reisman.pdf (accessed October 11, 2012).

⁴ Gloria McDonough Taub, "Porn at Work: Recognizing a Sex Addict," CNBC.com, July 16, 2009, <http://www.cnbc.com/id/31922685> (accessed October 11, 2012).

⁵ Lori Handrahan, "Handrahan: Executive Branch Porn Problem," *Washington Times*, August 10, 2012, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/aug/10/executive-branch-porn-problem/> (accessed October 12, 2012).

⁶ AFP, "Restaurant removes urinals shaped like women's mouths," *France 24*, October 10, 2012, <http://www.france24.com/en/20121010-restaurant-removes-urinals-shaped-like-womans-mouth> (accessed October 11, 2012).

⁷ Pamela Paul, *Pornified: How Pornography is Transforming Our Lives, Our Relationships, and Our Families* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 2005): 160.

⁸ Penny Marshall, "Teenage boys watching hours of internet pornography every week are treating their girlfriends like sex objects," *U.K. Daily Mail*, March 8, 2010, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1255856/Teenage-boys-watching-hours-internet-pornography-week-treating-girlfriends-like-sex-objects.html> (accessed October 11, 2012).

⁹ Michael Leahy, *Porn University: What College Students are Really Saying About Sex on Campus*, (Chicago: Northfield Publishing), 2009. http://www.amazon.com/dp/0802481280/ref=rdr_ext_tmb

¹⁰ Julie Bindel, The Truth about the Porn Industry, *The Guardian*, July 1, 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2010/jul/02/gail-dines-pornography>