

# CRITICAL PORN ANALYSIS

*an educational response to pornography as a public health crisis*



## BUILDING RESILIENCE AND RESISTANCE TO PORN CULTURE

**Critical Porn Analysis** is an educational response to the researched harms of pornography as a public health crisis. **Critical Porn Analysis** moves beyond the micro focus of how the individual interacts with pornographic content, to consider a more holistic approach on how porn's proliferation and ease of access impacts the health & wellbeing of individuals, relationships, families, communities and cultures.



**Critical Porn Analysis** requires a critique through 5 interconnected lenses: global industry; sex, gender, power & relationships; sexual exploitation; child sexual exploitation; and mental health & addiction. **Critical Porn Analysis** provides educators, decision makers, and community a greater understanding of the scope of impacts, and frames the discussion to respond to pornography as the public health crisis of the digital age. **Critical Porn Analysis** builds upon the work of **Natalie Collins**, a UK-based Gender Justice Specialist. This inquiry begins a difficult, but necessary conversation. Questions are by no means exhaustive.

*Pornography is a **social problem** and cannot be addressed by placing the burden on parents and educators alone. It requires a multisectoral, collaborative, coordinated, integrative response. It calls upon government & community leaders; mental health, medical & legal professions; educators; parents; child, youth, women, men & family advocates; activists & survivors; and digital technology experts to engage in preventative and proactive responses. **Public health** focuses on safeguarding and improving the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of the community as a whole.*

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## GLOBAL INDUSTRY

How has the porn industry normalized consumption of its product? How has the industry shaped sexual attitudes and behaviors? How does the industry commodify human sexuality and desires? Why does the industry fight any attempt to implement health, safety, and employee care guidelines? Why does the industry produce increasingly abusive and exploitative content? What support is there for performers exploited by the industry, who go on to live with post-traumatic stress disorder, permanent injury or disease? How does the industry use PR and media to promote their wares and manage the image of its product?



## SEX, GENDER, POWER & RELATIONSHIPS

How does porn shape people's fantasies, sense of gender and sexual identity, relationship expectations, behaviors, and treatment of others? How does pornography impact women's and men's sexuality? (e.g. body image issues, performance anxiety, feelings of inadequacies etc.) How does porn create or reinforce toxic masculinity? Does porn link to increasing levels of sexual violence in relationships? What is the difference between porn and sexual intimacy? How does porn normalize gender power imbalances and violence? What messages do same sex attracted & gender diverse people receive from porn? Why does hidden porn use trigger insecurity, trauma, rejection and broken trust for partners? How does porn impact commitment and relationship satisfaction?

## SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

What social and cultural impacts are there to normalizing sexual exploitation? How does porn promote messages which normalize and groom viewers into being subjected to exploitation? How does porn promote oppression of women, racism, and same-sex attracted and gender diverse people? How does consumption fuel trafficking of women and children? How does porn increase the harms for women in the sex trade? How does porn normalize illegal behaviors? How does porn normalize the perpetuation of sexual exploitation and bystander behavior? How does porn normalize rape, sexual harassment, hate slurs and 'revenge porn'?

## CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Given the research on the impact of early exposure to porn, could children and young people's exposure to pornography be considered sexual abuse in and of itself? The impact of exposure (whether via adults, children or themselves) can induce trauma and premature sexualization that is a form of child sexual abuse. Previous generations would have only been exposed to such graphic and violent sexual content through sexual abuse. Relating to pornography harms, why are the laws that are in place to protect children from sexual and wider harms, not enacted? How is pornography grooming children to be at risk for both online and offline exploitation? How is pornography being used as a 'how to' manual for engaging in sexually abusive behaviors towards other children? How does toxic porn culture normalize exploitation (e.g. sexting) amongst young people? What messages does porn provide to youth who are exploring their sense of self and sexuality?



## MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTION

What is the impact of pornography on the brain and arousal physiology when viewing 'scenes' and sex acts that are not part of most sexual relationships? What is the addictive potential of internet porn? Given child and adolescent brains are still in development and therefore, most vulnerable to addiction, what long-term impacts does ease-of-access to porn present? What mental health conditions and arousal disorders are linked to porn use? How does porn impact body image, performance anxieties and depression? What improvements to wellbeing occur after porn use stops?