

# Pornography and Sexual Offense

Pornography viewing and sexual offense are inextricably linked.

## Violence and Rape

A study of sex offenders and non-offenders revealed significant differences in [adolescent pornography](#) use as well as current use. Significant proportions of different types of [rapists and molesters](#) had used hard-core pornography during their adolescence: 33 percent of heterosexual child molesters, 39 percent of homosexual child molesters, and 33 percent of rapists. The [current use](#) of hard core pornography was even greater for these groups: 67 percent of heterosexual child molesters, 67 percent of homosexual child molesters, and 83 percent of rapists, contrasted with 29 percent of non-offending pornography viewers. About a third of the sex offenders reported using pornography as a deliberate stimulus to commit their sexual offenses.<sup>1)</sup>

## Child Sexual Abuse

One study of convicted Internet sexual offenders reported that they spent more than eleven hours per week viewing pornographic images of children on the Internet.<sup>2)</sup> Another study compared two groups of offenders: those convicted of Internet collection and distribution of child pornography images, and those who commit real life child sex abuse. The results showed that a majority of those who were convicted of only Internet-based offenses also had committed real life sexual abuse of children. Moreover the study also found that real life offenders had committed an average of over thirteen different child sex abuse offenses, irrespective of whether they had formally been convicted of any real life incident.<sup>3)</sup>

Another study examined the beliefs of three groups: real life “contact-only” child sex offenders, Internet-only child sex offenders, and mixed offenders (contact and Internet). While all groups were more likely to minimize the gravity of their offense, the Internet-only group was more likely than the contact-only group to think that children could make their own decisions on sexual involvement and to believe that some children wanted, even eagerly wanted, sexual activity with an adult.<sup>4)</sup>

<sup>1)</sup> W.L. Marshall, “The Use of Sexually Explicit Stimuli by Rapists, Child Molesters, and Nonoffenders,” *The Journal of Sex Research* 25, (1988): 267-288, 279.

<sup>2)</sup> Sarah Laulik, Jane Allam, and Lorraine Sheridan, “An Investigation into Maladaptive Personality Functioning in Internet Sex Offenders,” *Psychology, Crime & Law* 13, (2007): 523-35, 527.

<sup>3)</sup> Michael L. Bourke and Andres E. Hernandez, “The ‘Butner Study’ Redux: A Report of Incidence of Hands-on Child Victimization by Child Pornography Offenders,” *Journal of Family Violence* 24, (2009): 183-91 (187).

<sup>4)</sup> Dennis Howitt and Kerry Sheldon, “The Role of Cognitive Distortions in Paedophilic Offending: Internet and Contact Offenders Compared,” *Psychology, Crime & Law* 13, (2007): 469-478.

This entry draws heavily from [The Effects of Pornography on Individuals, Marriage, Family and Community](#).

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