

Effects of Pornography on Men versus Women

Synthesis Paper: [The Effects of Pornography on Individuals, Marriage, Family and Community](#)

1. Differences in Use

Men and women use pornography differently. Men are more than six times as likely to view pornography as females,¹⁾ and more likely to spend more time viewing it.

In a study of self-identified female “cybersex” addicts, women reported that they preferred engaging in “cybersex” within the context of a relationship (via email or chat room) rather than accessing pornographic images. This preference may contribute to the significant difference one study found in the proportion of women who have real-life sexual encounters with their online companions compared to men. It found that 80 percent of women who engaged in these online sexual activities also had real-life sexual encounters with their online partners, compared to the much lower proportion of 33 percent for men.²⁾ Also, as stated above, such women are much more likely to have had very high numbers of such sexual encounters and partners.³⁾ However in another study, this time of men who flirted in Internet chat rooms, 78 percent reported they had at least one face-to-face sexual experience with someone they had met through a chat room in the past year.⁴⁾ Thus, it seems that a very high proportion of both men and women who engage in “cybersex” may go on to have physical sexual encounters with their online partners.

A study of sex-addicted men also found that 43 percent used online sexual activity to engage in sexual activities they would never otherwise perform.⁵⁾ Similarly, self reports also reveal that the tendency to explore new behaviors in “offline” relationships increases with increased online sexual activity.⁶⁾

2. Different Reactions

The way men and women view infidelity is very different. One study, using undergraduates from a large university in Northern Ireland, investigated how men and women perceive online and offline sexual and emotional infidelity. When forced to decide, men were more upset by sexual infidelity and women by emotional infidelity. Only 23 percent of women claimed they would be more bothered by sexual infidelity, compared to the 77 percent of women who would be more bothered by emotional infidelity. Males felt the opposite way. Eighty-four percent of the men reported they would be more bothered by sexual infidelity, whereas only 16 percent say they would be more bothered by emotional infidelity.⁷⁾

In a study which examined different types of degrading pornography, featuring themes such as “objectification” and “dominance,” both men and women rated the same three major themes as the most degrading of all, but with different intensities: women rated them as even more degrading than men did.⁸⁾

1)

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4)

Brian Dew, Michael Brubaker, and Danica Hays, "From the Altar to the Internet: Married Men and Their Online Sexual Behavior," *Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity* 13 (2006): 195-207 (199).

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