

Pornography and Human Trafficking:
The Beliefs of the Effects of Personal Pornography Use

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Abstract

Each individual has different beliefs about the effects of pornography use in relation to the self, a romantic relationship, the family, and society as a whole. There is research that shows pornography tends to negatively affect these areas of life and there is also evidence for some human trafficking occurring within the pornography industry. Thus, the ultimate goal of this thesis is to not only assess what people believe about those involved in the pornography industry, but to test whether information about the pornography industry might change people's beliefs about their personal pornography use. Human nature tends to not equate one's personal actions with effects, especially negative results. If there were no users of pornography, then there would be no demand. Therefore, one's actions do affect the pornography industry and human trafficking.

A survey was created that assessed beliefs about the effects of one's personal pornography use. Then, these beliefs were assessed again after information about the pornography industry was presented. The research question was whether the information would change one's beliefs about pornography use in relation to the family and society, with an emphasis on the negative aspects of pornography such as human trafficking. The 100 participants were recruited from Amazon's Mechanical Turk through an online format. After being presented with statistics about sex trafficking and the pornography industry, participants did change their beliefs about personal pornography use.

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Pornography use has become very common in recent years, with 42% of Internet users consuming pornography (Family Safe Media, 2007). Every second \$3,075.64 is spent on pornography and 28,258 Internet users are viewing pornography. The typical age of first exposure to pornography is 11 years old (Family Safe Media, 2007). With the increasing acceptability of pornography, connections have been made between the seemingly harmless activity and its effects on the self, others, and society as a whole. Furthermore, research literature has begun to make a direct connection between human trafficking and pornography. This empirical study assesses an individual's beliefs concerning his/her own pornography use in relation to the self, significant other, family and society. Beliefs are re-assessed after various pornography statistics are presented to see if any participants changed in their beliefs, particularly in regards to the connection between pornography use and sex trafficking.

Literature Review

Background

The sex industry can be described as any sort of "sexual commerce" (legal and illegal) and includes prostitution, strip clubs, and pornography to name a few (Weitzer, 2010, p. 1). Weitzer (2010) defines sex work as "the exchange of sexual services, performances, or products for material compensation" (p. 1). It can be direct or indirect sexual contact/stimulation. Specifically, the sex industry includes any business, workers, clubs, investors, owners, and marketers in both legal and illegal sexual commerce (Weitzer, 2010). Pornography is a difficult word to define because its meaning is

different for almost each individual. Overall, various dictionary and encyclopedia definitions consistently include that pornography is anything whose sole purpose is to arouse sexual desire. Amateur porn is a major genre generating the greatest profits and is the longest lasting type of porn in the industry (Attwood, 2007; Patterson, 2004). Amateur pornography is when an actor/actress is performing without pay or if it is his/her first or only paid work. Reality pornography is based on amateur pornography but is professionally made. There are different types of pornography, such as fetishes, child pornography, etc. (Laaser, 2010). Therefore, pornography is an elusive word that includes many different interpretations depending on the user or producer. Therefore, when studying or surveying people about pornography use, one must take into account all the different types of pornography. One does not have to study just one type to argue for its effects on people (Bouche, 2009).

Prevalence. The United States is estimated to account for \$12 billion of a \$57 billion worldwide pornography industry (Family Safe Media, 2007). Schlosser (as cited in Campbell, 2003) found that hardcore pornography in the form of videos, Internet sites, live sex acts, and cable programming is yielding billions of dollars a year, meaning revenues are matching those of the box office. Today, Internet pornography is arguably the most prevalent type of pornography used, profiting over \$7.5 billion dollars which excludes the free pornography also heavily viewed online (Hughes, 2000). According to studies, the U.S. is the primary source of Internet pornography and is where much of the industry's development has occurred (Hughes, 2000). The Internet would not be growing and prospering without the proliferation of pornography and the sex industry, which account for 69% of total Internet content sales (Moore, 1999). In the United States alone,

40 million adults regularly view pornographic websites and the U.S. has the highest number of pornographic websites in the world, making up 12% of all websites, or about 4.2 million websites (Hughes, 2000). One alarming statistic states that 68 million pornographic search engine requests are made daily, along with 116,000 child pornography requests daily (Family Safe Media, 2007).

Current view of pornography. Pornography in some form or another has a long-rooted history. According to the U.S. Justice Department, in the 1980s child pornography was uncommon because it was expensive and risky to buy and produce. Currently, however, the reverse has occurred with child pornography and reproduction of these images being increasingly accessible and affordable (U.S. Department of Justice, 2007). Today's sex industry began to flourish in the 1950s and 1960s and has continued ever since (Hughes, 2000). There are two reasons for the success of the sex industry and pornography today. *De jure* legalization has allowed pornography to thrive through the "liberalization of laws" regulating pornography, as well as *de facto* legalization which occurs in the form of citizens' tolerance to the spread of pornography (Hughes, 2000). As Cooper, Delmonico, and Burg (2000) state, Internet pornography has flourished because it is accessible, anonymous, and affordable. Today, pornography is inexpensive or free, easily accessible through technology, and anonymous to obtain and distribute, making the explosion of pornographic material predictable and unavoidable.

Pornography is generally placed under obscenity statutes. The Obscenity of Production Task Force established in 2005 works to "initiate and conduct investigations and prosecutions under federal statutes prohibiting obscenity crimes involving the transportation of obscene matter via the mails, common carriers, interactive computer

services, or other means or facilities of interstate or foreign commerce” (U.S. Department of Justice, 2007, p. 1). Under the test for obscenity defined by the Supreme Court, the DOJ seeks to investigate and prosecute producers and distributors of hardcore pornography (U.S. Department of Justice, 2007). According to the new edition of the Trafficking in Persons Report, pornography is considered to be trafficking if it is used for commercial use and shows some degree of coercion, deception, or force (Department of State, 2010).

The Effects of Pornography Use

Relationship with significant other. Most of the research on the effects of pornography focuses on the romantic relationship; therefore, background on this research is presented since the Relationship scale is a part of the Beliefs survey. Pornography is shown to have a number of negative effects, one being on relationships (Bergner & Bridges, 2000). When one uses pornography, one’s satisfaction in a current relationship is expected to decrease because of comparison levels between the current relationship and the alternative (pornography) (Yucel & Gassonov, 2010). One’s satisfaction in a relationship is partially dependent on people’s expectations about rewards and punishments they will receive in a relationship (Yucel & Gassonov, 2010). People compare their current relationship expectations to alternative expected rewards and punishments they would receive in a different relationship (e.g., pornography). Pornography provides unrealistic expectations and is fantasy; however, the rewards look much higher and the costs much lower than the current relationship. Pornography use causes a decrease in relationship satisfaction through comparison levels (Yucel & Gassonov, 2010).

Bergner and Bridges (2002) used letters from 4 different Internet message boards for pornography “addicts.” The letters were from 100 women who had found that their male partner was heavily involved in pornography. The degree of the partner’s use was based on the women’s perceptions, and the typical letter reported that one’s partner used pornography several hours a day. Posts were made by spouses, fiancées, and girlfriends writing to seek support and were analyzed for common themes with the goal being to assess any changes in relationships once the women became aware of their partner’s use. The letters were analyzed by two different observers. All participants stated that their partner had become both sexually and emotionally withdrawn and that the quality of the sexual relationship had decreased. Some did not have sexual intimacy anymore, but even those who did stated that the sexual desire in both parties was not present.

In addition, the discovery of pornography use was a traumatic event that affected the women’s self worth and changed the perception of their partners’ character. The secretive nature left the women feeling unloved and betrayed because they tended to view the use as infidelity. Women reported that their significant other seemed to be thinking of someone else or was not present during their sexual encounters, which supports the comparison theory. The researchers described a compulsive pornography user as having a preferred sexual scenario that is based on his experiences with pornography, but that cannot be reached with his significant other. The female partners also developed a new view of self as one who is sexually undesirable, not good enough, and weak and stupid. The partners compared themselves to the women on the pornographic websites and also developed a new view of their partners as untrustworthy, selfish, inadequate in role as father and husband, and sexually degenerate. Thus, the women decreased in their levels

of sexual and relational satisfaction as well. This study showed the decrease in satisfaction for not only the user, but the partner as well (Bergner & Bridges, 2002). Later studies found that women were not as negative towards their partners' pornography use, and that specific factors were associated with high levels of distress such as levels of commitment and frequency and duration of partner's use. The main factor of distress was one's perceived threat or perceived damage of her partners' pornography use (Bergner, Bridges, & Hesson-McInnis, 2003).

Yucel and Gassanov (2010) used the Interpersonal Exchange Model of Sexual Satisfaction (IESS) to look at the effects of various sexual issues, including pornography, on the actor and partner. Their literature review supports the hypothesis that sexual satisfaction was lower when one partner, no matter the gender, looked at pornography. The satisfaction may decrease because the other person feels inferior or unable to compete with pornography. The study used the IESS to explain that levels of comparison between actual levels of reward in marriage versus expected level of sexual rewards in pornography may lead to a significant decrease in relationship and sexual satisfaction. The sample consisted of 433 married couples (866 participants in all) who were asked about their sexual satisfaction, as well as other relationship questions such as if one's spouse uses pornography. The effects were measured through asking married men and women if their spouses engage in pornography, instead of having them self report (Yucel & Gassanov, 2010). This study included both members in a relationship, instead of just the personal accounts of one, and it also used standardized measures and scales to assess pornography use and marital satisfaction.

Yucel and Gassanov's (2010) study displayed a negative correlation between pornography use and sexual satisfaction for both spouses regardless of the user's gender. Therefore, this study supports the theory that pornography use decreases sexual satisfaction, particularly when it is only used by one spouse. Pornography is seen as a cost to a relationship through the comparison of alternatives. Yucel and Gassanov's (2010) study supports Bergner and Bridges' (2002) view that pornography use not only reduces the partner's sexual satisfaction but the user's satisfaction as well.

Manning (2006) builds on the research of the other two and is a literature review based on empirical findings of research in this area to date. Manning suggests that pornography negatively affects the user's view of his/her partner and one's sexual satisfaction. Schneider (2000) discusses the adverse effects of pornography on sexual relationships. In this study, the participants were mostly female partners (91 women, 3 men; ages 24-57) of cybersex addicts but the couples were in various types of committed relationships. This study used a different approach from Yucel and Gassanov's (2010) study in that it reverted to only assessing the partners of pornography users and specifically focused on users who were addicts. It also differed in that it focused on various types of committed relationships instead of just marriage.

The researchers found that two-thirds of the partners of addicts had decreased in sexual intimacy with their significant other from the start of their partner's use, not necessarily when they were addicts. Also, more than half of the users had lost interest in sex with their partner, with one-third of partners losing interest as well. Overall, in 18% of the relationships, both partners and users had decreased interest in sex. Schneider (2000) found that during sex, the user was distant, emotionally detached, and only

interested in his/her own sexual pleasure. The partner typically did all of the initiating for sexual intercourse, while the user blamed the partner for the loss of sexual satisfaction and wanted the partner to participate in objectionable sexual activities (Schneider, 2000). These results display the decrease in sexual satisfaction for both the user and partner and the loss of interest involved in the sexual relationship by both parties. Yucel and Gassanov (2010) state a user perceives pornography as a greater benefit with perceived lower costs and higher rewards. In return, the partner feels sexually rejected, inadequate, and not able to measure up to “someone who is willing to do ‘anything’ ” (Manning, 2006, p. 143).

All three studies support the hypothesis that pornography use decreases sexual and relationship satisfaction for both the user and the partner due to the comparison levels between actual rewards and expected rewards. Pornography creates a false sense of comparison. The user feels his partner cannot measure up to this standard and therefore decreases in satisfaction, and the partner feels inferior to the pornographic actors. The first study reported changing perceptions of both partners. The second study reported decrease in sexual satisfaction, and the third study reported detachment during sex. Therefore, pornographic images can be seen as a preferred alternative which can decrease satisfaction in a real romantic relationship.

Effects on Human Trafficking

There is an increasing popularity and prevalence of pornography use due to accessibility, affordability and anonymity (Cooper et al., 2000). Many view pornography as harmless, but with hundreds of thousands of pornographic actors in the U.S. and the amount of human trafficking victims found, one can be certain not all participants are

involved willingly (Bouche, 2009). Pornography directly and indirectly is a part of human trafficking, and in order to stop trafficking, demand and use of pornography need to be addressed.

Relationship to human trafficking. Human trafficking or modern day slavery can be explained as the exploitation of a person without one's express consent or by deception and manipulation (U. S. Department of State, 2010). There is inherent in this abuse a lack of freedom and basic human rights. Therefore, force, fraud, or coercion are means by which trafficking occurs (U. S. Department of State, 2010). Many enter the industry with a distorted view of what it will be like, and many producers and agents take advantage of this innocence (Hughes, 2000). New performers are thrown right into brutal and traumatic scenes and performances. Even if one initially consents and has signed a contract, if he/she is not allowed to back out, this can be considered trafficking. Additionally, if one ignores a participant's request to stop and uses force to make one finish a scene or continue working in the industry, then this is sex trafficking. Also, preying on an addiction, either from before one's entrance into the industry or after, can be classified as psychological coercion according to the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008. According to the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), child pornography is always seen as coercive in nature even if it is not for commercial purposes because it is preying on vulnerabilities and the inability to consent to something as an adult. The third prong is fraud, which Hughes (2010) states is "tricking someone into something she didn't anticipate" (p. 4). Therefore, it can be argued that fraud occurs in most, if not all, instances of pornography (Hughes, 2010).

Pornography can lead to acting out in the form of sex, including phone/cyber sex, prostitution, one night stands, rape/sexual violence, and adultery (Laaser, 2010). The Internet has allowed the sex industry to become digital in the form of pornographic photos either advertising for actual clubs or using pornography solely as the new sex industry (Hughes, 2010). One author states that pornography defines sexuality and diminishes the capacity for a real relationship (Jacobson, 2002). The prevalence of violent pornography trains users as well (Jacobson, 2002). Pornography has a direct effect on prostitution because the pornography trains men as “tricks” (Farley, 2007, p. 1). As Farley (2007) states, “Pornography is men’s rehearsal for prostitution” (p. 1). Thus, pornography “equates women to prostitutes” (Farley, 2007, p. 2). Men are likely to view pornography and then want those specific sex acts to be performed on them, making the likelihood higher for prostitution and trafficking.

One study tested this hypothesis using clients of street prostitutes in the First Offender Program in Portland, Oregon, San Francisco and Santa Clara, California, and Las Vegas, Nevada. It was found that multiple factors such as “number of sex partners, frequency of sex, age of first sex with a prostitute, and number of times of having sex with a prostitute” are significantly related to a customer’s frequency of pornography use (Monto, 2000, p. 6). Self-reports indicated that 25% of the participants never used pornography, while 90% of those who have used pornography reported using less than once a month. Monto (as cited in Tewksbury & Golder, 2005) found that a majority of clients (70%) rarely or never consume pornography. However, the arrested clients were noted to be twice as likely as the national sample of men to have watched porn movies in past year, 66% compared to 33%. Also, the researcher found that first time users of

prostitution were less likely to have viewed pornography than the regular customers (Monto, 2000). Whereas Monto found a significant relationship between pornographic videos and magazines and support or use of violence in sex, another study stated that these sexually-aggressive behaviors were too infrequent to note a relationship (Tewsbury & Golder, 2005). There was a significant relationship between sex with prostitutes and frequent use of pornography, but it is difficult to distinguish which one is the cause of the other (Tewksbury & Golder, 2005).

Pornography conditions people to view others as commodities, which then in turn drives the demand for the sex industry and sex trafficking (Matyas, 2009). Hardcore pornography is new, just budding over a decade ago, but it is changing the way culture views pornography even affecting those who do not use it (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 2010). Dines (as cited Australian Broadcasting Company, 2010), a noted author and researcher on pornography, believes pornography teaches children a warped view of sexuality, so a young viewer is then led to believe he/she should go have this “porn sex” with others. Pornography has become more graphic over the years, which displays the desensitization that is taking place through the need for more extreme acts to receive the same stimulation. The average career of a pornographic actress is three months because the body can only withstand that much harm (ABC, 2010). Dines continues by stating that there is thirty years of evidence on how pornography affects one’s view of women and how it causes decreased interest in long-term relationships. This is not one’s typical *Playboy* spread, but “brutal, body punishing sex” designed to “debase, degrade, and humiliate” (Australian Broadcasting Company, 2010, p. 1).

MacKinnon (2008) describes pornography as just one of the avenues for sex trafficking. Pornography directly affects trafficking in that many of those involved are in sexual slavery. Pornography is used to train slaves for specific acts and behaviors for the clientele (Bouche, 2009). Farley and Barkan (as cited in Hughes, 2004) conducted a study in the mid-1990s interviewing 130 prostitutes in San Francisco. The researchers reported that 49% stated pornography was made of them in prostitution, and 32% were distressed that they had been pressured to perform acts that men had seen in pornography (Hughes, 2004). The profitability of the porn industry leads to new and more extreme material in which real women and children are used (Hughes, 2000). Even big name companies such as *Hustler* are making waves with allegations of trafficking in the form of pornography. Authorities questioned a *Hustler* photographer who had taken pictures in 2007 of a woman thought to be kept as a slave for over seven years. It is believed that she is mentally disabled and her “owner” coerced her into believing he would give her a better life (Walker, 2010). As degrading images are increasing, so is exploitation and violence in the form of trafficking (Hughes, 2010). According to the U.S. federal laws regarding human trafficking, pornography may very well fit under the definition of trafficking (Bouche, 2009).

Analysis. Pornography’s pervasiveness has left many unable to recognize the link between pornography and human trafficking. While there has not been a great amount of reliable and valid research due to obvious difficulties in uncovering the porn and trafficking industries, there is enough evidence to safely assume that pornography directly and indirectly contributes to slavery (MacKinnon, 2008). The difficulty lies in the fact that pornography is viewed as distinct even from other parts of the sex industry

and popular opinion condones and even encourages pornography. The accessibility and widespread proliferation of pornography contributes to this dilemma. The first step to addressing the demand for and use of pornography is educating the public that many people involved in pornography may in fact be modern day slaves (Hughes, 2000). The issues of accessibility, affordability, and anonymity also need to be addressed (Cooper, Delmonico, & Burg, 2000).

Though pornography has a long history, it was not until very recently that it has become so widespread and more perverse than ever before. According to Hughes (2010), the public believes that those acting/performing in pornography enjoy their work and making pornography. Therefore, more in-depth studies should assess public perception because if this is true then people will see pornography as having positive effects on society. According to many researchers who see the connection with pornography and human trafficking, public perception of pornography, sexuality and humanity must change and the negative effects of pornography must be widely expressed. People need to regain the value of human dignity because as Noel Bouche (2009) states:

As consumers in this context, we not only participate in the continued exploitation of women and children caught in prostitution or pornography (whether technically “trafficked” or not)-- we are exploited ourselves. We are stripped of our money, our emotional and relational health, and our spiritual wholeness by “pimps” and “traffickers” employing every available tactic to ensnare us in a web of seduction and despair. (p. 9)

Individuals need to understand the harm pornography causes to oneself in order to produce change. In order to combat and prevent trafficking, people must not succumb to pornography's myths and invest in the industry so that they do not put themselves or others in harm's way. Pornography is pervading all aspects of life so it is important to know how it is affecting individuals and the broader society.

Method

Purpose

The goal of this research was to assess one's beliefs about pornography use in relation to self, significant other, family unit, and society as a whole. Specifically, it assessed one's beliefs about his/her personal use (positives and negatives of one's use in each of the areas). An underlying component included assessing people's knowledge about the connection of pornography to the sex trafficking industry and people's beliefs of an individual's use feeding into the sex trafficking industry. After the four scales were answered, data and statistics about the pornography industry were presented. The questions included statistics about STDs, child pornography, prevalence and profits of pornography, and the dangers of working in the field. The multi-billion dollar pornography industry is fed by consumers, and research also supports that human trafficking or at least some type of coercion and force are involved in some capacity in the sex industry, specifically pornography. Then, the Family and Society Effects scales were asked again to see if this information changed people's beliefs.

During the test conceptualization phase, the topic was introduced through a review of both human trafficking literature and pornography literature. Based on the literature review, a hypothesis was developed. This hypothesis was that information can help people connect the injustices they see in the world and with their own actions and involvement. It is easy to separate and justify one's actions apart from injustices in the world, so the survey sought to present the connection and make one face the reality that pornography use and belief against human trafficking are cognitively incompatible. The approach this survey used in test construction will be the assumption that test-related behavior predicts non-test related behavior. If there is no correlation between the answers one supplies in this survey to one's actual behavior, then there is no value in this survey. Thus this assessment sought predictive validity, which is the best indicator of the assessment and also provides the best utility for this test because it sought to change participants' beliefs.

Participants

The participants were recruited through Mechanical Turk, which is a site that offers a small monetary value for someone to complete a survey, menial task, etc. Each participant in the Pornography Beliefs Survey was reimbursed one dollar if they completed the survey. This compensation was funded by the faculty advisor. The goal was to have 100 completed surveys on which to complete the analysis. Furthermore, the survey took about 20-30 minutes of a participant's time. Data were then collected and analyzed through SPSS.

Instruments

The Pornography Beliefs survey was developed based on the idea that people's beliefs ultimately do have an effect on one's actions (see Appendix A for full survey). The survey was initially constructed based on research on the effects of pornography. Some of the questions for this thesis were based on the limited number of surveys assessing attitudes towards and effects of pornography (Hald & Malamuth, 2008; Polk & Cowan, 1996). Some specific questions were added with little concrete basis, but theoretical basis. These questions consisted of the last few linking pornography and human trafficking. Special care was taken to ensure that pornography is not portrayed as equal to human trafficking, but human trafficking is a part of pornography in some shape or form.

The survey initially started with questions about marriage, self, and human trafficking, but was broadened to the family and society as a whole after realizing that many would not make the connection to human trafficking unless it was personalized. One questionnaire (Johansson & Hammaren, 2007) used for development of this survey consisted of 138 questions assessing home/family conditions, sexual morals, self-image, gender and attitudes. The researchers divided the 1,331 high school students into categories of pornography enthusiasts, ambivalent, or pornography opponents (Johansson & Hammaren, 2007). Most participants in this survey had an ambivalent attitude toward pornography, suggesting that their beliefs were malleable. Some questions were developed from this study such as "Pornography makes me feel good about myself" (Johansson & Hammaren, 2007, p. 64, see Appendix A: Self Scale in Pornography Beliefs Survey).

Hald and Malamuth (2008) looked at first person and third person effects, or effects on oneself and effects on others. The interesting part of this study was that it was based on perceptual bias looking at the difference in perceived effects on the self and on others. Their sample consisted of those 18-30 who engaged in hardcore pornography use. They designed the Pornography Consumption Effect Scale to look at attitudes towards sex, the opposite gender, general quality of life, sex life, and sexual knowledge. The researchers reported a small number of negative effects, but found that men reported both more positive and negative effects than women, with women more moderate about the effects. They also found that many participants believed others were greater impacted by the media and the pornography industry than they themselves were, which can cause difficulty when assessing one's beliefs. This is known as the third person effect which refers to the tendency to believe and behave as if one is above the norm of society. It is a perceptual bias in which there is a skewed view of the difference between perceived effects on oneself and perceived effects on others (Hald & Malamuth, 2008). Thus, the Pornography Beliefs survey attempted to personalize the scales as much as possible to the participant taking the survey.

Surveys by Polk and Cowan (1996) and Evans and Cowan (2001) were modified to fit the need and goal for the Society Effects scale. Research supports that beliefs are greatly affected by one's view of pornographic actors (Polk & Cowan 1996). Though this was not the ultimate focus of the Beliefs survey, some questions were included. Polk and Cowan found that female pornography actresses were seen more negatively by females but not by men. However, female pornography actresses were seen to come from a more dysfunctional family background with less positive motivations for their work. Polk and

Cowan (1996) conducted a study of college students' beliefs about female pornography actors. This study found that they were viewed more negatively than the average woman or those in other sects of the entertainment industry such as movie stars but were seen more positively than prostitutes.

The Society Effects scale included many questions from a survey conducted by Evans and Cowan in 2001. The researchers conducted a study on people's attitudes towards pornography with 165 male and female college students ages 18-48. The survey included the Attitudes Toward Pornography Scale (13 items) and Beliefs About Pornography Actors Scale both of which were designed by Evans and Cowan. The Attitudes scale included used a 7 point Likert scale to assess effects of pornography, such as if it is harmless or increases violence. Beliefs about Pornography Actors Scale was on a 5 point scale and assessed whether people thought the actors were emotionally healthy, drug users, etc. Also, participants' view on pornographic actors' motivations for working was assessed. Statements such as pornography "is educational," "releases sexual tension," and "breaks down the family structure," were used in the Family and Society Effects scales and the Society Scale adopted a similar ideology to Evans and Cowan's study. Statements consisted of pornography's connection to expectations of the opposite sex, views of males/females (degrades, exploits), and other sexuality questions (Evans & Cowan, 2001). The researchers found that people's attitudes towards pornography in general were correlated to the participants' view of the pornography actors. The authors concluded by stating that more than just assessing beliefs towards pornography actors, further studies should focus on the effects of pornography use on society as a whole (Evans & Cowan, 2001).

Procedure

The four scales (Self, Relationship, Family, and Society Effects scale) were first given to participants after basic demographics were assessed. These scales were based on 7 point Likert scale (1 strongly disagree to 7 strongly agree). There was a mix of positive and negative statements about pornography within each scale. The participants were then presented with five statistics about the pornography industry. In order to make sure the statistics were read, the participants were asked to read the statistics and then answer a multiple choice or true/false question about the information that was just presented. The last part of the survey re-assessed the Family and Social Effects scale in order to see if the information caused any change in these belief scales. The total number of items for the assessment was 112.

Results

Demographics

The sample consisted of 100 participants, 52% female and 48% male with participants ages ranging from 18-60. The majority of participants were either in their twenties or thirties with the average age being 33 years old. When asked about religion, 51% claimed their religion as *Other*, 16% Catholic, 11% Christian, and 11% Protestant. The remaining 10% (1 person did not answer) were Buddhist (1%), Jehovah's Witness (1%), Jewish (3%), and New Age/Wiccan (5%). The ethnicity of the participants were Caucasian/White (80%), African American/Black (6%), Hispanic, Latino or of Spanish Origin (6%), Asian (5%), Other (2%), and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (1%). Seventy percent of the participants were either married/life partner or in a monogamous dating relationship, with 40% of all participants being married or having a

life partner. One fourth of participants were currently single, but the majority of those who were single have been in a serious relationship before. In this survey, 93 out of 98 people (two were excluded because they did not answer) had viewed pornography at least once. The participants were then asked how often in the past year they had used pornography and were given the following options: *never*, *rarely*, *sometimes*, *often*, *heavily*. In the last year, almost 40% of people *sometimes* viewed, which was the middle option. The remaining categories of *often*, *rarely*, and *never* were split evenly between 15-19% each, but only 8% reported *heavy* usage in the last year. Though most people claimed *sometimes* as how often they use pornography, 61% of the total sample had used pornography in the last 30 days ($N=99$).

Scales

The data collected were based on 100 people who completed the survey. No one was excluded based on the small population, but analysis led to exclusions when relevant (i.e., people missed a question). The sample size for the reliability analysis was $N=93$, since this was the number of participants who had ever viewed pornography. The first step after data collection was analyzing correlations for each scale to see what items needed to be recoded. Each scale was recoded in such a way that higher numbers meant negative beliefs about pornography (anything above 4) and lower numbers (anything less than 4) yielded positive beliefs about pornography. Neutral answers were equivalent to 4. After recoding variables, the Personal/Self Effects scale (14 items) had a Cronbach's alpha of .923 ($N=93$) with a mean of 42. This scale had the highest reliability of all the scales. The mean shows that there were slightly positive effects attributed to self. All items in this scale contributed to the high reliability. The Relationship Effects scale had a

strong Cronbach's alpha of .862 with 11 items ($N=92$). This scale also yielded high reliabilities with no statements that were outliers.

Family Effects Scale

The Family Effects scale had an alpha of .787 ($N=93$) with six items. There are two statements that would increase the alpha to .808 and .809 if deleted; however, this would bring the whole scale down to only four statements. The two statements are "If my son/daughter does not know about my pornography use then it does not affect them" and "It would not affect me if my daughter decided to become a pornographic actress." Further analysis on these two items may help shed light on why they would not be as reliable. The Family Effects scale was retested after the information/statistics were presented. In the post-test, the alpha was .808 with $N=92$. Again, the same two questions would increase the alpha if deleted (.832 and .822). After doing a paired t test on the Family scale, it was found that there was a significant difference between the first and second assessment ($t(91)=-3.547, p=.001$). The mean increased from 3.45 to 4.32, indicating an increase in negative effects. Anything above 4 indicates that the sample believed that one's personal pornography use has a negative effect on the family. Therefore, while the pre-test had a slightly positive view or at least harmless view of pornography's effects on the family, the post-test conveys that people had a slight agreement that pornography use does have detrimental effects on the family.

Society Effects Scale

The Society Effects scale yielded an alpha of .895 (30 items) with $N=92$. Only one question would have an impact on the alpha if deleted: "I often wonder who the people are who are subjecting themselves to violent porn," which may have been too

ambiguous. If the statement was deleted the alpha would increase to .906; however, in the post-test the same statement does not have this effect. The Society Effects post scale yielded an alpha of .922. The results for the t test were $t(99)=6.223, p<.001$. There was a significant difference between the two means with the post being higher ($M=3.73, SD=.89$) than the pretest ($M=3.5062, SD=.78$). Therefore, the information changed people's beliefs to have a more negative view of the effects of their pornography use on society, though because the mean was still less than 4, the sample as a whole reported positive/neutral effect of one's pornography use on society.

Discussion

The reliabilities for each scale were strong in this survey, with the Self and Society Effects scales being particularly strong. The Society Effects scale contained a large number of items (30) which assessed different aspects, but still had high reliability as a unified scale. Also, the Society scale was where a majority of the questions linking human trafficking and one's personal use were included. Both the pre and post test of the scale had high alphas, and most importantly this scale showed a significant change between the two tests. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the information presented had an effect on the increase in the mean. The increase showed that the beliefs are moving towards a more negative effect, though the overall mean was still showing positive or neutral effects of pornography on society.

It was particularly interesting to look at the two questions that dealt with human trafficking specifically. The last two questions on the Society Effects scale were directly asking about the relationship between pornography and human trafficking. When a paired t test was conducted for "Sex trafficking is linked to pornography" there was no

significant effect. When “My pornography use does not affect or contribute to sex trafficking” was analyzed the result was $t(99)=2.529, p=.013$. After this item was reverse coded, the comparison of means showed a change in beliefs towards disagreement with this statement. Though people still agreed with the statement above after the statistics were presented, there was a significant difference displaying that people were less sure about this statement and agreement with it. One reason for agreement with this statement is that people do not see a connection between human trafficking and pornography. This belief then may lead them to see their personal involvement and any relation to human trafficking as non-existent. The fact that there was a significant change, however, displays that people were beginning to make connections. The t test for “The pornography industry does not harm the people involved” was also statistically significant with the mean increasing which indicates that people began to disagree or decrease in their agreement with this statement. This is a starting point for people to see that the pornography industry may have negative consequences for the actors/actresses that are involved.

The Family scale also sought to make connections between the people involved in pornography and personalize individual pornography use to one’s family. A possible limitation here is that because the average age was a little over 30, many participants may not have children yet. Surprisingly, the statement, “It would not affect me if my daughter decided to become a pornographic actress” had no significant change between the two tests. Both times this statement was assessed the participants as a whole disagreed with this statement. One explanation for this is the fact that “affect” is a very broad and ambiguous term (could be positive or negative). Also, people do not need negative

statistics to be against their daughters being a pornographic actress. There needs to be a way to distinguish a clearer connection, maybe by reframing the question to be something like “I understand the women I am looking at when using pornography could be my daughter.”

Also, the analysis of, “If my son/daughter does not know about my pornography use then it does not affect them” was not significant as well, but people tended to show stronger agreement to this statement after the information was presented. The statement, “I would be disappointed to learn that my adult son/daughter use(s) pornography” was significant between the pre and post test with the following statistics: $t(99)=-2.737$, $p=.007$. The mean had a significant increase; however, the mean was still less than 4, indicating that though there was an increase in the mean there was still disagreement in this statement. The statement “Once my son/daughter is an adult pornography use is not necessarily harmful” was significant with $t(99)=4.375$, $p<.001$. It was in the desired direction towards more disagreement to this statement but again, the overall mean was still in the agreement range. This was the desired direction because the goal of the survey is to make connections to the negative effects so the survey shows that it made some difference in beliefs towards more negative views of the effects of pornography use.

Each scale showed high correlations meaning that each scale is shown to be measuring the same concepts and has good internal consistency. Therefore, these scales could be used again without much alteration. It was important for the Family and Society scales to be reliable in order to infer that the changes that took place were due to the information and statistics presented instead of the variability and inconsistency of the scales. Also, these scales focused more intimately on the people involved in the

pornography industry than did the Self and Relationship scales. These scales are where the questions relating to human trafficking are involved. Even in questions not directly related to human trafficking, much information can be gleaned that relates to the issue.

The Family Scale subtly related the two with questions about if one would encourage/be disappointed in his/her adult children if they wanted to be involved in pornography, but there are many motivations underlying the answers that have nothing to do with human trafficking. The Society Scale asked participants to answer questions based on how they view performers, such as if they think those performing were abused or if they think positively of the performers, etc. Statements such as “I understand those involved in the pornography industry are mothers, daughters, etc.” increase one’s sensitivity to the performers and the dangers they face. The statistics used included information about STDs, child pornography, etc. These statistics did have a significant effect on people’s beliefs. Though people did not overall see their personal pornography use as negative or as having a negative effect on family and society, the statistically significant change in beliefs displayed that they were beginning to see some sort of effect or view their use as less positive.

Limitations and Future Research

Some limitations of this survey and results could possibly be the small sample size, the analyses that were chosen, and the fact that the survey assessed immediate belief change. For future studies an assessment question should include a measurement about participants’ future use, such as if they will alter their pornography use after having read the statistics and taken the survey. Other variables should be considered in analysis such as religion, relationship status, etc. Overall, the survey accomplished what it was created

to do, which was to show that one's beliefs can be altered when given information. When people were presented with statistics that directly related to pornography and their pornography use, the participants began to see a greater effect of their pornography use on others. The participants decreased in their positive views of pornography use on the family and society. Though it does not mean that people believe their own use plays into human trafficking, the survey was an important first step in making those connections. Stronger evidence for a link between human trafficking and pornography should be presented in the statistics part of the survey.

All scales had fairly high alphas, and both the Family Effects and the Societal Effects showed a significant difference between the pre and post tests. Participants did alter their beliefs about the effects of their personal pornography use on the family and on society, and even showed significant change in their beliefs about their personal pornography use and human trafficking. Though the results indicated a decline in the participants' agreement about the positive effects of pornography, they did not clearly state that their use fed into many negative effects. The survey may cause participants to think more about the connection, however, when they use pornography again. If only five statistics about the pornography industry can make a difference in beliefs, then future research studies may be able to educate people more fully about the relationship between personal pornography use and human trafficking.

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Appendix A: Beliefs Survey

Pornography Beliefs Survey

Thank you for your interest in participating in this survey. As part of this survey, you will be asked several questions about yourself. Some of these questions will be about pornography use and other related behavior. By answering yes to the question below, you are agreeing to participate in this study. Researchers reserve the right to deny participants compensation if you do not agree to participate in this study.

I have read the statement above and agree to participate in this survey.

Please choose only one of the following:

Yes

No

1. What is your gender?

Male

Female

2. What is your age?

3. What is your race?

Caucasian/White

African American/Black

American Indian and Alaska Native

Asian

Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

Hispanic, Latino or of Spanish Origin

Other

4. What is your current relationship status? Please choose only one of the following:

Single (I have never been in a serious relationship)

Single (I am not currently in serious relationship but have been in the past)

Non-committed Dating Relationship

Monogamous Dating Relationship

Married/Life Partner

Married but Legally Separated

Divorced

Widowed

5. Are you currently living with your significant other? Please choose only one of the following:

Yes

No

6. In terms of religion, how would you describe yourself? Choose one of the following answers:

Protestant (e.g. Methodist, Baptist, or some other Non-Catholic Christian denomination)

Catholic

Christian (Non-Denominational)

Mormon

Jehovah's Witness

Muslim

Hindu

Jewish

Buddhist

New Age/Wiccan

Taoist

Other

7. I have used pornography at least once.

Yes

No

8. Over the last year, I have used pornography:

Heavily

Often

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

9. I have used pornography in the last 30 days.

Yes

No

Beliefs of Effects on Self

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree/Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

10. Using pornography is a positive experience for me.

11. Using pornography negatively affects who I am as a person.

12. Using pornography has helped me become more confident.

13. Using pornography is a beneficial activity for me.

- 14. Using pornography has negative side effects to me personally.
- 15. Using pornography helps me with my emotional health.
- 16. Using pornography increases my sexual health.
- 17. Using pornography has a negative lasting effect on me.
- 18. Using pornography helps me release sexual tension.
- 19. It is possible for pornography use to have no side effects to my normal psychological functioning.
- 20. I believe using pornography is wrong.
- 21. I believe the effects of pornography use depend on the individual who is using it.
- 22. If I stopped using pornography, my life would be better.
- 23. It would make a positive difference in my life if I stopped using pornography.

Beliefs on Effects on Relationship with Significant Other

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree/Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Partner's Use

- 24. If my partner uses pornography I would consider it to be equivalent to an affair.
- 25. If my partner uses pornography, I feel like it has an effect on my self-worth.
- 26. My partner's using of pornography does not affect me.
- 27. I know that if my partner uses pornography it is not because he/she does not desire me.

Personal Use

- 28. My pornography use decreases my sexual satisfaction with my significant other.

- 29. My partner’s physical or sexual shortcomings have no influence on my pornography use.
- 30. If I stopped using pornography, my relationships would be more satisfying.
- 29. My pornography use has helped me learn how to sexually satisfy my partner.
- 30. My pornography use has an overall positive effect on my relationship with my significant other.

General

- 31. It is possible for pornography use to aid in a relationship.
- 32. Pornography gives false expectations about the opposite sex.
- 33. Pornography use is detrimental to my romantic relationship.

Beliefs of Effects on Family

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree/Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

- 34. Pornography breaks down the family structure.
- 35. Pornography is something I want to protect my family from.
- 36. I would be disappointed to learn my adult children use pornography.
- 37. Once my child is an adult, pornography use is not necessarily harmful.
- 38. If my children do not know about my pornography use, then it does not affect them.
- 39. It would not affect me if my daughter decided to become a pornographic actor.

Beliefs of Effects on Society

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree/Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

- 40. Pornography is educational.

41. Pornography use leads to pornography addiction.
42. Pornography use leads to other forms of sexual involvement (i.e. prostitution, etc.)
43. Pornography use is only bad if it involves children.
44. People would not be in the pornography industry if they did not want to be.
45. Pornography use has had an overall negative effect on our society.
46. The pornography industry does not harm the people involved.
47. Most people who work in the porn industry do it willingly.
48. My or someone's pornography use does not affect one's view and treatment of women/men.
49. Pornography actors are regular people.
50. The actors/actresses in the pornography industry come from abused backgrounds
51. The actors/actresses are coerced into performing.
52. Pornography exploits sexuality.
53. Pornography promotes equality of the sexes.
54. Pornography allows people to express themselves and their sexuality.
55. Being involved in pornography is a completely independent decision.
56. I think it is acceptable for someone to participate in the making of pornography if it is their only way to make an income.
57. I would be encouraging to my adult son/daughter or spouse if they wanted to be involved in the production of pornography (i.e. a pornographic performer)

58. I understand that those being viewed or described in pornography are mothers, daughters, etc.
59. My pornography use affects many more people than just me (pornographic actors, my family, etc)
60. I realize that the more I consume pornography, the more people are needed to be involved in acting in pornography.
61. Pornography has an impact on culture.
62. Pornography use increases profits for those involved in the making of pornography.
63. With the prevalence of free pornography, I often wonder how they find and pay pornography actors.
64. I often wonder who the people are who are subjecting themselves to violent porn.
65. I would be contributing to the overall good of society if I stopped using pornography.
66. If there were no buyers/users of pornography porn would not be as pervasive in our society.
67. I think positively of the women/men I view when I use pornography.
68. Sex trafficking is linked to pornography.
69. My pornography use does not affect or contribute to sex trafficking.

Please reading the following statistics concerning the pornography industry. These statistics may not be exact figures but were taken from reliable sources. Upon completion of reading each text, please answer the following questions.

The pornography industry profits \$12 billion a year in the U.S. according to National Center for Biotechnology Information (PLoS Med, 2007). The total in the world per year is \$57 billion. Both figures do not account for free pornography online. Some would argue that it is only but still lucrative figure of \$3 billion a year (Mooallem, 2007).

72. The pornography industry generates how much revenue annually?

308 million

1.5 billion

12 billion

1 trillion

According to the same article above, 17% of all adult performers wear condoms. Typically, in order to maintain employment, they do not use condoms.

73. What percentage of adult performers wear condoms while performing?

2%

25%

48%

17%

STDS in some cases, especially HIV, prohibit an actor from working or being paid. The Adult Industry Medical HealthCare Foundation and L.A. County Health Department found that at least 40% of the sample group of primarily adult film workers had at least one disease. The most popular STDs in the industry are Chlamydia and Gonorrhea. Also, “over a 13 month period, 445 STI [Sexually Transmitted Infection] screens were performed in 115 patients, 56 women and 59 men... 38% (44/115) were diagnosed with 77 STIs [Sexually Transmitted Infections], including Non-specific Urethritis (51), Gonorrhoea (10), Chlamydia (6) and Genital Warts (6)” (Coyne, Banks, Heggie, Scott, Grover, Evans, Mandalia, McLean & Cohen, 2009).

74. Sexually Transmitted Diseases or Infections are rampant in the adult sex industry.

True

False

Working as a pornographic actor is dangerous (i.e. resulting in deaths, abortions, drugs). According to Shelley Lubben, a former porn star and her book, *The Truth Behind the Fantasy of Porn*, a porn star dies every month. Drugs are used by the actors themselves to get through humiliating and painful scenes and are many are forced to take them to fulfill the requests of the producers. Furthermore, there are many actors who are forced to get an abortion to maintain employment.

75. Working as a pornographic actor/actress is not dangerous.

True

False

There are 100,000 websites that offer access to illegal child pornography, and 116,000 child pornography requests on any given day (familysafemedia.com). Therefore, child pornography is a less desired market, in comparison to adult pornography.

76. Underage persons are not a huge part of the pornography industry.

True

False

Beliefs Re-assessed

Beliefs of Effects on Family

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree/Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

77. Pornography breaks down the family structure.

78. Pornography is something I want to protect my family from.

79. I would be disappointed to learn my adult children use pornography.

80. Once my child is an adult, pornography use is not necessarily harmful.

81. If my children do not know about my pornography use, then it does not affect them.

82. It would not affect me if my daughter decided to become a pornographic actor.

Beliefs of Effects on Society

- | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly
Disagree | Disagree | Slightly
Disagree | Neither
Agree/Disagree | Slightly
Agree | Agree | Strongly
Agree |
-
83. Pornography is educational.
 84. Pornography use leads to pornography addiction.
 85. Pornography use leads to other forms of sexual involvement (i.e. prostitution, etc.)
 86. Pornography use is only bad if it involves children.
 87. People would not be in the pornography industry if they did not want to be.
 88. Pornography use has had an overall negative effect on our society.
 89. The pornography industry does not harm the people involved.
 90. Most people who work in the porn industry do it willingly.
 91. My or someone's pornography use does not affect one's view and treatment of women/men.
 92. Pornography actors are regular people.
 93. The actors/actresses in the pornography industry come from abused backgrounds
 94. The actors/actresses are coerced into performing.
 95. Pornography exploits sexuality.
 96. Pornography promotes equality of the sexes.
 97. Pornography allows people to express themselves and their sexuality.
 98. Being involved in pornography is a completely independent decision.

99. I think it is acceptable for someone to participate in the making of pornography if it is their only way to make an income.
100. I would be encouraging to my adult son/daughter or spouse if they wanted to be involved in the production of pornography (i.e. a pornographic performer)
101. I understand that those being viewed or described in pornography are mothers, daughters, etc.
102. My pornography use affects many more people than just me (pornographic actors, my family, etc)
103. I realize that the more I consume pornography, the more people are needed to be involved in acting in pornography.
104. Pornography has an impact on culture.
105. Pornography use increases profits for those involved in the making of pornography.
106. With the prevalence of free pornography, I often wonder how they find and pay pornography actors.
107. I often wonder who the people are who are subjecting themselves to violent porn.
108. I would be contributing to the overall good of society if I stopped using pornography.
109. If there were no buyers/users of pornography porn would not be as pervasive in our society.
110. I think positively of the women/men I view when I use pornography.
111. Sex trafficking is linked to pornography.
112. My pornography use does not affect or contribute to sex trafficking.