

Could Porn Be Good For Society?

10 March 2010, by Miranda Marquit



Image source: cambridge.gov.uk

(PhysOrg.com) -- The arguments against pornography are many, ranging from insistence that porn degrades women and is morally reprehensible to the assertion that pornography viewing is the cause of sex crimes. However, over the years, there have been numerous studies done on this subject. And, reports *The Scientist*, it appears that there are links between sex crimes and pornography. Just not the sort of links many of us might have expected. Instead of causing sex crimes, porn might actually contribute to reducing their incidence.

Here is what [The Scientist](#) reports on the matter:

Over the years, many scientists have investigated the link between pornography (considered legal under the First Amendment in the United States unless judged "obscene") and sex crimes and attitudes towards women. And in every region investigated, researchers have found that as pornography has increased in availability, sex crimes have either decreased or not increased.

While that is far from a ringing endorsement, it does at least seem to indicate that pornography isn't contributing to sex crimes. While some naysayers may point out that most offenders in prison have been exposed to porn, the fact of the matter is that nearly every male -- and a good

number of females -- is exposed to pornography at some point. It stands to reason that most offenders have viewed porn. But other studies found that being punished for porn use might contribute to someone becoming a rapist, and not the porn use itself. Indeed, continues *The Scientist*, a repressive religious upbringing might be more of a factor in rape than porn:

Looking closer, Michael Goldstein and Harold Kant found that rapists were more likely than nonrapists in the prison population to have been punished for looking at pornography while a youngster, while other research has shown that incarcerated nonrapists had seen more pornography, and seen it at an earlier age, than rapists. What does correlate highly with sex offense is a strict, repressive religious upbringing. Richard Green too has reported that both rapists and child molesters use less pornography than a control group of "normal" males.

This sort of assertion is bound to raise a few eyebrows and even cause a little controversy. Especially when taken alongside studies that seem to indicate that porn doesn't result in feelings of misogyny. Additionally, while there is anecdotal evidence that porn users are abusive toward their female partners, there is no evidence that pornography use is the cause of these actions. Perhaps there are other factors, such as alcoholism or violent tendencies, that are bigger influences.

In any case, while such studies do not prove that porn is actively good for society, they do seem to imply that [pornography](#) isn't actively bad for us.

More information: Milton Diamond, "Porn: Good for us?", *The Scientist*. Available [online](#).

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