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What's Wrong with this Picture:
Examining the Harms of Viewing Pornography

Rus Ervin Funk

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Mission of MW


Develop and support male leadership to prevent all forms of gender based violence



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Operating Premises

- Sexual exploitation does not happen, it is done
- Sexual exploitation will end when men stop doing it
- Engage men to be part of the solution
- Men need to become
 - more vocal
 - more visible
 - more often




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Addressing the Demand

"Without men's demand for prostituted women, there would be no such women."

Sven-Axel Månsson, Sweden, 2003




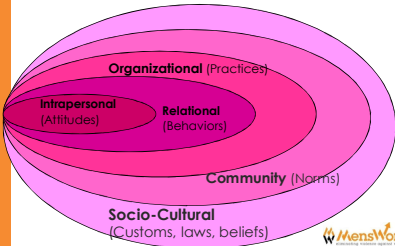
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Moving Upstream

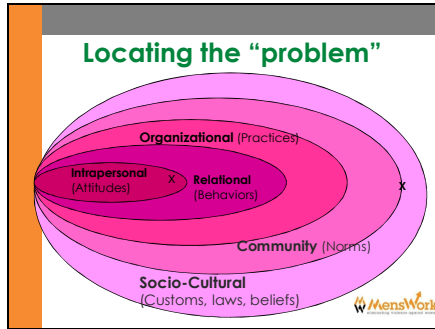


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The Ecological Model



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Implications...

- Where we locate the problem defines and directs our solutions
- Men's use of pornography and other forms of sexual exploitation
- Occurs in context in which men's use is an option/expected
- Therefore, prevention focuses on eliminating pornography use as an option

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Driving the Demand

"...pornography -- like prostitution more generally -- does not ultimately exist because of women's choices. Rather, it exists because men, as a class, demand that there be a sub-class of women (and children and men and transgendered people) who are available for their unconditional sexual service."


(Whisnant & Stark, '04, P.25)

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The Problems of Consumption


- Depicts women as sexual objects
- Reinforces negative views of sex & sexuality
- Hides force/coercion
- Influences how men look at women
- Informs how men flirt and have sex
- Reinforces rape/abuse myths
- Pornography-prostitution-trafficking



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"The harm is also in what pornography says to men, what it says to women, what it says about women (especially women's sexuality) and what it tells men to do to women."


(Funk, 2004)



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The Social Context


- Normalizing men's pornography use
- Broader sexualization of women and girls
- Lack of adequate & realistic sex/sexuality education for men
- What it means to "be a man"
- Implications of hegemonic masculinity on engaging men in conversations
- Dynamics of oppression (sexism, homophobia, and racism)



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What men learn...

- How to flirt & date
- The line between seduction & coercion
- Sex is exclusively physical with the sole purpose of orgasm



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Women as sexual objects

- Women as objects who deserve no emotional attachment (Cook, '06)
- "Women are objects, interchangeable and disposable..." (Hoffer, '97)
- Women as enjoying whatever men do to them
- Women don't know what they want or like until men "teach" them

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Sex and Sexuality


- Sex as...
 - All physical
 - Non-emotional
 - Genital focused
 - Penis-centric
- Dissociation of feelings from sex
- Compartmentalization of sex and sexuality

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Pornography as sex ed


- What pornography teaches about sex
- What pornography teaches about sexuality
- Social norms that are reinforced in pornography
- Physicality of pornography use (which entrenches social norms)
- Men's use of pornography within context of "male male support" (DeKeseredy and Schwartz, 2013)



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Hides force/coercion


- Where's the line between seduction and coercion?
- What's the difference between a grin and a grimace? A groan and a moan?
- What's the difference between dominating and controlling?
- Men know what women want (even if women don't)



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The "pornographers' gaze"


- We look at potential sexual partners differently than we look at women
- How men look at women
- How pornography influences how men look at women
- And how other dynamics reinforce/influence these "gazes"



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Reinforce Rape/Abuse Myths


- Decrease willingness to act as engaged bystander (Faubert, 2011)
- Believing that a woman who dresses provocatively deserves to be raped (Gahyun & Yang, 2012)
- Decreased empathy for rape victims (Faubert, 2011; Flood, 2007)
- Increased interest in coercing partners into unwanted sex acts (Bridges, 2006) (Gahyun & Yang, 2012).



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Pornography-Prostitution-Trafficking


- **What's the difference?**
- Women who are prostituted being photographed
- Use of pornography to inform prostitution
- No "fair trade" in sexual exploitation



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Results for men


- Increased anxiety and lower self esteem (Cook, 2006, Morrison, 2004)
- Increasingly aggressive behavioral tendencies
- Decreased sexual interest in their girlfriends or wives (Gahyun & Yang, 2012)
- 25% of men report trying what they saw in pornography (Bryant, '85)
- Anger at women who flirt but then refuse to have sex (Gahyun & Yang, 2012).



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“Recognizing the Harm”


- What is the impact of my viewing pornography?
- How do I view the women in pornography?
- How do I look at my girlfriend after viewing pornography?
- How do I view sex after viewing pornography?
- How do I feel about myself after watching pornography?
- How would I feel if I was watching pornography and saw my sister, girlfriend, wife, or daughter there?



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Entitlement


- The dynamics of pornography play into a lack of accountability
 - Anonymity
 - Accessibility
 - Affordability
 - Acceptability
 - Arousal
 - Entitlement
- A key attribute of entitlement is lack of accountability



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Examine & Address Male Entitlement


- Male entitlement to sex
- Male entitlement to women's bodies
- Pornography and prostitution re-enforce men's sense of entitlement



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Questions to ponder


- Think about the elements of a healthy relationship – how many of these elements are depicted in pornography?
- Consider flirting with respect – do you see these in pornography?



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Overview of the Project


- Focus is on men 17 – 25 (ish)
- Initiate some education/awareness-raising/empathy
- Create critical dialogue
- Begin engagement (to MW)
- Identify potential leaders/activists



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“WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?”

EXAMINING THE HARMS OF PORNOGRAPHY AND THE LINKS TO SEX TRAFFICKING



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1 what's wrong with this picture is that the women in these pictures are often depicted as sexual objects - a "thing" that a man (or group of men) do sexual things to or on rather than a partner that he/she they do things with. They are often made to look younger - right at the edge of being "segar" and are depicted as wanting whatever it is that men want to do to them.

2 what's wrong with this picture is that it doesn't tell the whole truth - that many if not most of the women who are involved in pornography are experiencing some level of force or pressure to be involved.

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{ be part of the solution:

Join MensWork and become a part of our community of men working to make all of our community a better place for women and girls.

- stop using pornography
- challenge your friends to also stop using pornography
- invite MensWork to come speak to your group or organization
- help us organize an event to raise awareness about the harms of pornography

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Thank You

Rus Ervin Funk
PO Box 4878
Louisville, KY 40204
rus@mensworkinc.com

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