

HARMS OF PORNOGRAPHY

Over the past 20 years, a vast global pornography industry has developed online. This commercial behemoth dwarfs its print predecessor in scale, profitability and extremity making old fashioned pornography magazines seem almost quaint by comparison. However, unlike other global industries, online pornography has avoided virtually all regulation, scrutiny and accountability which has allowed it to pursue profit without restraint.

The Pornography Industry at a Glance

Globally, the pornography industry's revenue estimates are as high as \$97 billion. (For comparison, Netflix brings in around \$11.7 billion.)

\$97_B

Pornography sites received more website traffic in 2020 than Twitter, Instagram, Netflix, Zoom, Pinterest, and LinkedIn combined.

↑
2020

In 2019, there were more than 42 billion site visits to Pornhub, and during the pandemic Ofcom reported that Pornhub had a bigger audience than the BBC.

42_B

In 2020, a study by a digital marketing company concluded that Pornhub was the technology company with the third greatest-impact on society in the 21st century.

3_{RD}

Online Pornography

- Mainstream pornography platforms host vast, unknown quantities of heinous filmed crimes. This is illegal content and it includes:
 - Videos of trafficking, rape and other non-consensual sexual violence
 - Image-based sexual abuse (“revenge porn”)
 - Covertly filmed material (“spy-cam porn”) showing footage from cameras hidden in women’s bedrooms, toilets, locker rooms, gynaecology wards, etc.
 - Child sexual abuse material
- Mainstream pornography consists of acutely hardcore content, which although it does not meet the narrow definition of illegal content, is nonetheless extremely harmful. Pornography sites abound with legal videos which feature simulations of:
 - Sexual coercion, abuse and exploitation of vulnerable women and children
 - Intrafamilial rape (“incest porn”)
 - Humiliation, punishment, torture and pain
 - Child sexual abuse

- Analysis of 131,738 titles of videos recommended to first-time users on Pornhub, XVideos, and XHamster, found that:
 - 1 in every 8 titles described sexual activities that constitutes sexual violence as defined by the World Health Organization
 - The word ‘Teen’ was the most frequently occurring word across the entire dataset
 - Sexual activity between family members was the most frequent form of sexual violence i.e. incest
 - The second most common category was that of physical aggression and sexual assault
- Online pornography platforms host vast amounts of videos depicting sexual activity with children, including petite, young-looking performers made to look underage through props such as stuffed toys, lollipops and school uniforms. Although not strictly illegal, this is extremely harmful: it normalises children as objects of sexual desire, and drives the demand for “real” child sexual abuse material.
- Most videos on pornography sites are user-generated and uploaded instantaneously. There are no controls or verification procedures in place to check that those on camera are consenting adults. Therefore there is no way of verifying how much pornography on the internet is consensual.
- Racist narratives are commonplace in pornography. A content analysis of more than 1,700 scenes from two of the most popular pornography sites (XVideos and Pornhub) found that:
 - Black women are more often the target of aggression when compared to white women
 - Black men are more often portrayed as the perpetrators of aggression against women and are depicted as significantly less intimate with their partners in comparison to white men
 - depictions of aggression towards women are highest in scenes featuring black couples compared to all other racial pairings including interracial
- The pornography industry fetishizes race; sorting videos by categories based on race (among other ‘features’), which promote racial stereotypes and overt racism. In 2019, “Ebony” was the 10th most searched for term on Pornhub. Three of the other ten most-searched-for terms were “Korean”, “Asian”, and “Japanese”, the latter topping the list.
- A UK government report, released in 2020, recognised that “there is substantial evidence of an association between the use of pornography and harmful sexual attitudes and behaviours towards women.”

Impact on Children

- The UK government estimates that online pornography is accessed by 1.4 million UK children each and every month.
- A UK survey found that 44% of boys aged between 11 and 16 who regularly viewed pornography reported that it gave them ideas about the type of sex they wanted to try. The UK’s Big Talk Education Report found that, for many boys, pornography is the main source of information about sex and sexual behaviour: “Questions like, ‘Is it ok for me to cum over my girlfriend’s face?’ are not unusual, as is the apparent normalisation of anal sex.”
- A wide range of studies show that children’s viewing of pornography can profoundly impact their psychological, social, emotional, neurological and sexual wellbeing and impede their ability to form healthy intimate relationships.
- Children’s consumption of online pornography has been associated with the dramatic increase in child-on-child sexual abuse, which now constitutes around a third of all child sexual abuse. The consequences for both the perpetrator, who’s often ‘acting out’ what he has seen in porn, and to the victims of this abuse, are serious and far-reaching.
- Research suggests that many young women feel under pressure to play out the ‘scripts’ their male partners learned from pornography and are pressured into having sex in uncomfortable positions, faking sexual pleasure and consenting to perform unpleasant or painful sex acts.
- Studies show a correlation between exposure to sexually-explicit websites and the likelihood of young people engaging in casual, promiscuous and paid-for sex, and in risky sexual behaviour such as anal sex, group sex and sex without a condom. There’s also a link between pornography consumption and criminal adolescent behaviour, including sexual offenses.
- Our CEASE survey, carried out in June 2021, found that 86% of the public supports robust laws to stop children from encountering pornographic content online.

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION VISIT
CEASE.ORG.UK**