

Secondary Negative Effects of the California Pornography Industry

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The California pornography industry is a destructive, drug infested, abusive and sexually diseased industry which causes severe negative secondary effects on female and male adult industry workers as well as the general public. I am confident of the above because not only was I a stripper, pornographic performer and escort in the California pornography industry from 1986 to 1994, but I have also counseled with or spoken to over 300 female and male workers in the pornography industry as well as those struggling with pornography addiction . I am the founder of the Pink Cross Foundation, a non-profit organization created to reach out to adult industry workers offering education and resources to rebuild their lives as well as help for those struggling with porn addiction. I have been working with adult industry workers since 2002 when I began volunteering as a teacher and counselor at local rescue missions and prisons in the State of California. I have worked at Madera Rescue Mission, Bakersfield Rescue Mission, Central California Women's Facility Prison, and Valley State Prison for Women and have traveled throughout the United States as a speaker and counselor on the negative effects of pornography at various churches, recovery programs and secular organizations.

My team and I currently work with hundreds of people struggling with pornography addiction in the Pink Cross Foundation Help Forums at www.thepinkcross.org

In my daily work of assisting women and men recovering from the pornography industry as well as those struggling with pornography addiction and gathering research over a period of several years, I have learned significant facts to prove that indeed the California pornography industry is causing severe secondary negative effects on adult industry workers as well as the general public who is involuntarily exposed to pornography, especially children whose average age of first Internet exposure to pornography is eleven years old.¹

It is estimated that there are 4.2 million porn Web sites — 12 percent of the total amount of sites — allowing access to 72 million worldwide visitors monthly. One-quarter of total daily search engine requests, or 68 million, are for pornographic material, where 40 million Americans are regular visitors.¹ According to comScore Media Metrix, 71.9 million people visited adult sites in August 2005, reaching 42.7 percent of the Internet audience.²

Chatsworth, California produces 85% of the world's adult content. All of the top female talent agencies are located in or with in the Chatsworth local radius. Female performers are flown or fly to Chatsworth to work in the adult industry. All of the world's top male talents live or travel to Chatsworth California for work. Every major and minor adult DVD Company is in the local Chatsworth radius.³

The United States adult film industry produces 4,000–11,000 films a year and earns an estimated \$9–\$13 billion in gross revenues annually. An estimated 200 production companies employ 1,200–1,500 performers. Performers typically earn \$400–\$1,000 per

shoot and are not compensated based on distribution or sales.⁴ Bill Lyon, a lobbyist, told 60 Minutes that the porn industry employs 12,000 people in California and pays the state \$36 million in taxes per year. When 60 Minutes first spoke to Lyon, he was running the free speech coalition, a trade organization that represents 900 companies in the porn business.⁵

Adult film performers engage in prolonged and repeated sexual acts with multiple sexual partners over short periods of time, creating ideal conditions for transmission of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). All the more concerning, high-risk practices are on the rise. These practices include sex acts that involve simultaneous double penetration (double-anal and vaginal–anal intercourse) and repeated facial ejaculations. At the same time, condom use is reportedly low in heterosexual adult films—approximately 17% for adult performers. In 2004, only two of the 200 adult film companies required the use of condoms for all penile–anal and penile–vaginal penetration. Performers report that they are required to work without condoms to maintain employment.⁴

These practices lead to high transmission rates of STDs and occasionally HIV among performers. After four performers contracted HIV in 1998, Sharon Mitchell, a former adult film performer, founded Adult Industry Medical, a clinic to counsel and screen performers monthly for HIV.⁴

The current practice of periodic HIV and STD testing may detect some disease early, but often fails to prevent transmission. The most recent HIV outbreak occurred when three performers who had been compliant with monthly screening contracted HIV in

April of 2004. At that time, a male performer who had tested HIV negative only three days earlier infected three of 14 female performers.⁴

In statements I have received from females and males working in the pornography industry and those who previously worked in the industry, at least 80% admit to catching an STD while working in the California pornography industry. I personally caught the non-curable disease Genital Herpes in 1994 and was not given any information or help from porn producers or the adult industry. Recently, Jan Meza, former porn actress Elizabeth Rollings who left the pornography industry in October 2007, publicly shared she of late discovered she has Herpes. She is totally devastated she caught a non-curable disease. Belladonna, a well known pornographic performer states, “99% of the porn industry has Herpes.”⁶ One male pornographic performer, Rocco, after 600 films and 3,000 women later says, “Every professional in the porn-world has herpes, male or female.”⁷ Tanya Burlison, formerly known as Jersey Jaxin, caught Chlamydia her first year working. She says while speaking with me, “I don’t believe I worked with one person who didn’t at one time have an STD.” Tanya made over 200 movies in her three year career. She also says, “Performers have to pay for their own testing, their medicine and lose at least eight days of work every time they catch a sexually transmitted disease.”

Sexually transmitted diseases are highly prevalent in the pornography industry. Among 825 porn performers screened in 2000–2001, 7.7% of females and 5.5% of males had Chlamydia and 2% overall had gonorrhea. Dr. Sharon Mitchell, former porn actress and founder of Adult Industry Medical Healthcare Foundation (AIM) confirms the STD prevalence in an interview with Court TV where she states “66% of porn performers have Herpes, 12-28% have sexually transmitted diseases and 7% have HIV.”^{8,9}

Pornographic performers and adult industry workers also engage in prostitution through escort agencies such as Body Miracle, Dreamgirls, and Porno Star Escorts where they not only risk sexually transmitted disease but also HIV and hepatitis C infection.^{4, 10, 11, 12}

Pornographic performers usually prefer escorting because the pay is much higher and sex acts are not as degrading or physically demanding. They receive approximately \$100 an hour for working in pornographic films or \$1500 an hour for escorting. Adult industry workers who are also pornographic performers get paid higher than other adult escorts due to their celebrity status and can book 2-3 hour appointments and make approximately \$3000 a day. Agents also lie to women in the adult industry and lure them into prostitution. Porn Star Erin Moore says, “some agents lie to the girls and tell them they are shooting a scene when instead they set up prostitution acts for them.”

While I was a pornographic performer in 1993-94 I was flown to different parts of the United States by porn companies where consumers of pornography some times paid me thousands of dollars to spend a weekend with them where we engaged in unprotected sex. During one appointment with a man and his wife, we engaged in unprotected sex and I passed the disease onto both of them. Pornographic performers and adult industry workers definitely spread sexually transmitted diseases to the general public.

Other secondary negative effects of the adult industry include exposure to drugs and drug addiction. Porn actress Erin Moore admits, “the drugs we binged on were Ecstasy, Cocaine, Marijuana, Xanax, Valium, Vicodin and alcohol.” Tanya Burleson, formerly known as Jersey Jaxin, says, “Guys are punching you in the face. You get ripped. Your insides can come out of you. It's never ending. You're viewed as an object not as a

human with a spirit. People do drugs because they can't deal with the way they're being treated."¹³

Male Porn Star Christian says on his blog "Christian Sings the Blues" January 28, 2008: "Drugs are a major, major problem in my business. Anyone who says otherwise is lying to you. I can't tell you the number of girls who have disappeared and dropped out of the business because of their drug problems. It is unbelievably sad to think about, and seeing some of them fall into a downward spiral hurts me more than others. But I think we all can agree that a huge majority of drug users will never change unless they get professional help. I have seen all manner of drugs on set, at parties, in cars, everywhere. If I had to guess, I would put marijuana use at 90 percent of ALL people involved in the industry (performers, directors, crew, agents, drivers, owners, office workers, etc.). I have been on a set where a girl has passed out during a sex scene with me (she was abusing oxycontin). Just recently a girl overdosed on GHB (a party drug that is a clear odorless drug that doesn't mix well with alcohol) on set. I have seen a girl win a prestigious AVN Award, not show up to accept the award, and then fall into the throes of drug use that caused her to lose at least 50 pounds and drop off the face of the earth. Why is drug use so prevalent in our business? Well, let's figure that out. First of all, remember that the business is populated largely with girls aged 18-21. And the majority of those girls are uneducated (many haven't graduated high school). Add to that the fact that many come into the business because they have no money, and are working at menial jobs like fast food places. So you have young girls who are uneducated with very little money entering the business.

Once they are in the business, they are now making ten thousand dollars a month and working maybe 5 hours a day 10-15 days a month. There are predators out there that can smell these girls and prey on them like sharks. Young, uneducated girls with lots of money, lots of free time, and very little supervision. This is a really bad equation (unless you are a drug dealer of course).¹⁴

In addition to prevalent drug use, degradation and abuse is rampant in the pornography industry. In one study 100% of the strippers reported some kind of physical or verbal abuse on their jobs. Verbal abuse by customers is extremely common with 91% reporting incidents. They were routinely called degrading names like c--t (52%), w---e (61%), and b---h (85%). Besides the verbal abuse, all endured some type of physical abuse on the job. Despite the fact that it is illegal to touch a stripper, strippers reported that customers grabbed them by the arm (88%), grabbed their breast (73%), or their buttock (91%). Customers at strip clubs often assault the women. Customers pulled their hair (27%), pinched them (58%), slapped them (24%), or bite them (36%). They are often attacked in the strip club in front of bodyguards and other audience members.¹⁵

Former pornographic performer Alex Devine shares her violent experience and writes: "Donkey Punch was the most brutal, depressing, scary scene that I have ever done. I have tried to block it out from my memory due to the severe abuse I received during the filming. The guy, Steve French has a natural hatred towards women in the sense that he has always been known to be more brutal than EVER needed. I agreed to do the scene thinking it was less beating, except the 'punch' in the head. If you noticed, Steve had worn his solid gold ring the entire time, and continued to punch me with it. I actually stopped the scene while it was being filmed because I was in too much pain."¹⁶

There is a very heavy emphasis on rougher, more sadistic sex, with slapping, spitting, violent hair-pulling and scenes of extremely abusive hardcore sex acts. In Animal Trainer 15, Rocco Siffredi engages in rough anal sex with American porn actress Jewel De'Nyle, and forces her head into a toilet during the final scene, a technique that seems to help him achieve climax.¹⁷

In California, every employer is required to ensure that employees have a safe working environment. In 1973, the California Occupational Safety and Health Act was enacted to assure safe and healthful working conditions for all California working men and women by authorizing the enforcement of effective standards, assisting and encouraging employers to maintain safe and healthful working conditions, and by providing for research, information, education, training, and enforcement in the field of occupational safety and health.¹⁸

Employers in the California pornography industry are required to provide a safe and healthful workplace for employees, even pay the costs of a health and safety program and yet this is not the standard in the industry. The accurate standard at present in the California pornography industry is that employers are completely ignoring the laws of the State of California to protect adult industry workers and are causing severe secondary negative effects on workers by subjecting them to physical and emotional abuse, major degradation and violence, illegal drugs, sexually transmitted diseases and entrapment into prostitution. This is the standard of the California pornography industry and any adult industry employer or worker who tells you differently is blatantly lying and does not value human life but destroys it for the gluttonous love of money.

Notes

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