

# Pornography and the sexualization of society



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Pornography and the Sexualization of Society SOC101 11/27/12 The topic I chose is " Pornography and the Sexualization of Society". I chose this article because I've noticed a drastic changes in the media, in advertising, and marketing that influences society in desensitizing us and our beliefs on what is normal and morally acceptable in terms of exposure to sexual content as well as the mass marketing of items that were once rarely seen in your corner drugstore or advertised in major publications. I can recall growing up as a teenager in the 1990's and how big of a deal it was when a prime time television show featured it's main characters having sex for the first time, or even making reference to explicit sexual acts. In contrast, in the last 20 years, it's common place for teens or very young adults on television and in movies to have sex lives dramatized for entertainment. Additionally, television and print advertisements not only use explicit innuendo for contraception like condoms for example, but they also feature specialty enhancements for these products to make sex " better" for both partners. A visit to a local drugstore and there are sex toys advertised as " personal massagers" , lubricants for " his and her" pleasure and other items that would once have only been found in an adult bookstore. Pornography, not only in print and privately packaged covers can be found at most book stores as well as online websites with almost no age restriction. Soft porn is also readily available on cable television, and not just on premium channels designated adults only. HBO, Cinemax and Starz all have late night content that I would not want my teenage relatives to watch. Movies in theaters do have mandated content warnings, but it seems that even non " R" rated movies show a lot more today than they did 20 years ago. This contributes to what I would consider the Sexualization of our current Society. The question

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for me is whether or not added exposure to sex, especially to teens and young adults contributes to deviant behavior. When applying Functionalist Theory, and the idea that society relies upon its members to have order, stability and an agreement on what values are and how they should be achieved, I can't help but wonder to what extent does the overt sexualization of our culture have an impact on that stability. While our text does not indicate an increase in sex amongst youth in recent years, there is still a notable difference generationally speaking. This difference isn't necessarily in the act of sex itself, but in our pop culture, in our mass communication online, in text messages and face to face conversations. If our society is to continue with overt sexualization as it has been...what will be the outcome? Will more teens have sex, will deviant sexual behavior become more and more prevalent? What mechanism should be employed to prevent the latter from happening? (Anderson/ Taylor 2011). References: Andersen, M. L., and H. F. Taylor. Sociology, the Essentials. 6. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co, 2010. Print