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It started by way of messengers and scribes, evolved through the presentation of newspapers and radio, brought us together with television, and now serves us world-wide by the ever-popular Internet.

It is the mass media, and even from the beginning it has contributed greatly in ways that both enlighten and enrich society, and ways that deteriorate and corrupt it. It is not a surprise to learn, then, that the mass media is the most powerful source of information we have, and nothing else in today's world influences public perception quite as heavily. Unfortunately, most of what is broadcast in the news today is something that society as a whole sees as negative or damaging. But the news on television is not the only type of media taking the criticism of society.

Other forms of mass media, specifically movies and television programs containing pornography and violence have been heavily criticized. The question here is; are these images of pornography resulting in increased violence against women. There is no concrete evidence supporting this theory. Research by Baron (1990) shows that gender equality is greater where pornography is more prevalent, answering the question for us. The key here is that the mass media does not cause undesirable social behavior and in actuality, the media people should not be labeled as the bad guys.

They simply use their power in the most constructive ways possible in order to promote their ratings and popularity. One way to do that is to concentrate on what sells: sex, violence and disaster. Having said this, why is it then, that many in society still believe otherwise? Why do they continue to believe that pornography is evil and is a major cause for violence against women,

specifically rape? There are many reasons for this misinterpretation and through the following few points, an attempt will be made to show that pornography has very little to almost no connections to violence against women. In order to demonstrate this, it must be made evident that pornography is not evil and does not cause undesirable social behavior by displaying nude women in sexually explicit circumstances. Thus, it is important to indicate that women are not treated only as sexual objects through the media. This is done in an attempt to quash any traces of evil in pornography. For thousands of years, sex itself has been considered evil and revolting. This is exactly why the concealment of the sex organs and teaching feelings of shame toward human sexuality is so common worldwide (Christensen 1990: 4).

These same feelings of shame are the chief reasons that sex is considered a personal and private matter. Contrary to the beliefs of many, the mass media did not create these settings; society creates this image. In some societies, women have no reservations with regard to living their entire lives completely naked, while in other societies, females cover themselves from head to toe, only revealing their eyes. The sex industry is easily topping \$20 billion per year. Because of this, the media has been bombarded with criticism, overwhelmingly from the female community, pertaining to the amount of sexually explicit material that is published in magazines and that appears on television.

A common argument against pornography is that the media portrays women as being nothing more than sexual playthings and objects to satisfy male sexual desires. The media once again, is not to be held responsible for <https://assignbuster.com/it-todays-world-influences-public-perception-quite-as/>

creating this image. These views are products of society. It would be crazy to assume that women in this society are treated as sexual objects only because the media releases or broadcasts pornographic material. To say that pictures featuring nudity, etc. are making objects out of women is foolish. One should consider females who pin-up posters of male rock stars or children who collect hockey or baseball cards.

Society, however, does not say that objects are being made out of these rock stars and sports heroes; pictures of clothed people are no less objects than pictures of naked people. It is also said that the media reduces women to a collection of body parts through pornography (Christensen 1990: 74). But why then are there no complaints of advertisements in magazines displaying only