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Pornography Viewing among Fraternity Men: Effects on Bystander Intervention, Rape Myth Acceptance and Behavioral Intent to Commit Sexual Assault

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College men's exposure to pornography is nearly universal, with growing viewing rates nationwide. Substantial research documents the harmful effects of mainstream, sadomasochistic, and rape pornography on men's attitudes and behavior related to sexual assault. The present study surveyed 62% of the fraternity population at a Midwestern public university on their pornography viewing habits, bystander efficacy, and bystander willingness to help in potential rape situations. Results showed that men who view pornography are significantly less likely to intervene as a bystander, report an increased behavioral intent to rape, and are more likely to believe rape myths.

Pornography viewing is expanding at a geometric rate through the United States and indeed worldwide (Dines, 2007). The adult entertainment industry has experienced dramatic growth since 2001, growing from a \$3.9 billion to a nearly \$13 billion business just in the United States (Richtel, 2007). With the growth in technology, pornography has expanded its reach concurrently such that every new device has been capitalized upon by the multi-billion dollar pornography industry as another way to sell its products (Dines, 2007). While companies such as Playboy and Hustler remain highly visible distributors of pornographic materials, the revenues generated by both pale in comparison to many traditional Wall Street powers termed "Porn-Wallers" (Egan, 2000), who earn millions annually and include respected corporations such as AT&T, MCI, Time-Warner, Comcast, Echo Star Communications, GM, Hilton, Marriott, Sheraton, Radisson, VISA, MasterCard, and American Express (Egan, 2000).

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With this growth in the pornography industry, the demand for fresh merchandise has outstripped the supply, leading pornographers to turn to sex trafficking in order to have an ample supply of women and girls for their online and video materials (MacKinnon, 2007; Malarek, 2009). Furthermore, as the pornography industry seeks to satisfy its growing customer base, it has continuously innovated its products toward more violent, “edgy,” material, often featuring underage or nearly underage actors and scenes depicting a variety of dehumanizing behaviors not heretofore seen (Eberstadt & Layden, 2010; Jensen, 2007a, 2007b; Manning, 2006).

The unmitigated growth of pornography on the Internet is especially relevant to digital natives, who were born during or after the advent of the Internet and the subsequent technology boom (Prensky, 2001; Wolak, Mitchell, & Finkelhor, 2007). Currently, the first generations with constant access to the Internet have begun a transition into young adulthood, and offer the opportunity to assess the effect of increased availability of Internet pornography.

Multiple studies have shown that pornography viewing is most prevalent among men who are 18–25 years old (Boies, 2002; Buzzell, 2005; Carrol et al., 2008). Research finds that between 76 and 87% of college men view pornography every year; 48% view it weekly (Boies, 2002; Carrol et al., 2008). As for college women, one third now view pornography annually with one in six describing a level of pornography use that rises to a level of an addiction (Carroll et al., 2008; Yoder, Thomas & Amin, 2005).

Today’s pornography is described by researchers as far more shocking and extreme than ten or twenty years ago (Eberstadt & Layden, 2010; Jensen, 2007a, 2007b; Malarek, 2009). Researchers assessing the most popular pornography videos today found that 88% of the scenes included physical aggression toward women such as spanking, open-hand slapping, hair pulling, choking, and bondage. Among the most recent trends in 41% of the most popular mainstream pornography movies today are scenes in which a man puts his penis in a woman’s anus followed immediately by placing it in her mouth so that she can taste her own excrement, known as ass to mouth or ATM (Bridges, Wosnitzer, Scharrer, Sun, & Liberman, 2010). Another tactic of increasing popularity involves scenes of shoving a penis so forcefully down a woman’s throat that it causes gagging and vomiting (Malarek, 2009). Does watching this level of violence in pornography have any effect on men’s attitudes or behavior?

The Impact of Pornography

The research suggests that the answer is yes. It is difficult to find a methodologically sound study that shows a lack of some kind of harm when men

view pornography. One study of Australian men found no relationship between men's frequency of viewing pornography and their attitudes toward women (McKee, 2007). Instead of choosing established and available measures of the attitudes toward women construct, the researcher used a self designed survey where only 7% of respondents replied by mail. The definition of attitudes toward women used related to many political issues that may not be relevant to what are commonly conceptualized in the literature as attitudes toward women (McKee, 2007).

Early nonexperimental studies suggested that there might not be an association between pornography and rape supportive attitudes. For example two meta-analyses (Allen, D'Alessio, & Brezgel, 1995; Allen, Emmers, Gebhardt, & Giery, 1995) yielded findings of no association between pornography and rape supportive attitudes. However, these findings were conclusively reversed by a recent meta analysis that clarified that there is, in fact, a strong link between these variables when one takes into account the manner in which pornography is defined and moderating variables are taken into consideration (Hald, Malamuth, & Yuen, 2010). In addition, the same study found that pornography consumption was particularly inducing of violence for men who showed risk for committing sexual aggression. The recent highlighting of moderator variables emphasizes that pornography may not impact every viewer in the same way; rather, some men may experience greater impacts than others (Kingston, Malamuth, Fedoroff, & Marshall, 2009).

The preponderance of research suggests significant, negative impacts of pornography on men in the aggregate (Hald et al., 2010; Malamuth, Addison, & Koss, 2000; Oddone-Paolucci, Genius, & Violato, 2000). Recent meta-analyses and literature reviews have revealed in both correlational and experimental studies that pornography use, acceptance of aggression, and violence towards women are linked (Flood & Hamilton, 2003; Malamuth et al., 2000; Vega & Malamuth, 2007). The strongest correlations with these violence related variables are with the more violent types of pornography; though an association with mainstream pornography is both reliable and consistent (Malamuth et al., 2000; Vega & Malamuth, 2007). Though prior research has explored the differential effects of violent and nonviolent pornography, to date, research has not differentiated the effects of different types of violent pornography (for example sadomasochistic pornography and rape pornography).

In multiple studies, men have exhibited a strengthening of beliefs and attitudes regarding sexual aggression, sexual assault, and rape in association with increased pornography use (Bergen & Bogle, 2000; Flood, 2009). In one of the most thorough attempts to understand the association between pornography and sexual aggression, Malamuth, Addison, and Koss (2000) found that men who frequently view pornography report a stronger behavioral intent to rape. Research also suggests increased exposure is significantly

correlated with behavioral aggression, trivialization of rape, greater acceptance of rape myths, and a decrease in empathy and compassion towards victims of sexual assault (Oddone-Paolucci et al., 2000). Furthermore, men who view pornographic magazines, Web sites, videos, or who go to strip clubs are more likely to commit sexual violence than those who do not (Carr & VanDeusen, 2004).

Furthermore, a meta-analysis of those known to have committed sexual assault has shown that compared to those who have not committed sexual assault, the impact of pornography is greater. Specifically, men who have committed sexual assault have been shown to be influenced by pornography, and often view it prior to engaging in sexual behavior (Allen, D'Alessio, & Emmers-Sommer, 1999).

The research on the connection between pornography and sexual violence includes a limited number of studies including female participants. For example, women who view violent pornography, with its coupling of intercourse and aggression, have distorted views about rape including increased victim blame, and decreased assignment of responsibility to male sexual assault perpetrators (Davis, Norris, George, Martell, & Heiman, 2006; Norris, Davis, George, Martell, & Heiman, 2004). Such exposure to pornography is associated with some women's beliefs that they should accept sexual victimization (Norris et al., 2004). Thus, the ties between women viewing pornography and experiencing sexual assault are potentially dangerous.

Pornography's Impact on Marriage and Relationships

Research has shown that men's use of pornography poses a particular threat to women who are either married to or are in committed relationships with men. For women who seek relationships with men that are respectful, honest, monogamous, and based in romantic love, research on Internet pornography shows that what is depicted is the opposite: lack of respect, abuse, multiple partners, and sexual contact without emotional attachment (Eberstadt & Layden, 2010). Married individuals who report seeing a pornographic movie in the last year are significantly more likely to divorce, to have an affair, and to be less satisfied with their marriage and with life in general (Eberstadt & Layden).

Men's pornography viewing has been shown to be associated with unhealthy, less stable relationships. The bulk of these effects center around disconnecting intimacy and intercourse, whereby emotional attachment is separated from sexual behavior. For example, viewing pornography has been associated with (a) a decrease of interest in relational sexual intimacy (Bergner & Bridges, 2002; Schneider, 2000); (b) an increase in egocentric sexual practices aimed at personal pleasure and with little regard to the

pleasure of the engaging partner (Manning, 2006; Schneider, 2000; Tyden, Olsson, & Haggstrom-Nordin, 2001); (c) an increase in the belief that sexual satisfaction can be obtained without affection or emotional attachment (Manning, 2006); (d) an increase in the belief that relationships are sexually confining (Zillman, 2000); and, (e) a decrease of interest in monogamy and child rearing (Schneider, 2000). Furthermore, men who frequently view pornography express a greater dissatisfaction with their partner's physical appearance, sexual performance, and sexual curiosity (Manning, 2006), which manifests in greater attention towards excitatory variables of sexual behavior and greater number of requests for sexual practices that partners often find objectionable or demeaning (Schneider, 2000; Tyden et al., 2001).

When women discover that they are in a relationship with a man who views pornography, they often report feelings of emotional infidelity, perceptions of their partner as a liar, pervert, sex addict, or selfish, and in marriages they often consider or file for divorce (Bergen & Bridges, 2002; Manning, 2006; Whitty, 2003). Women report sexual inadequacy, insecurity about their appearance, worthlessness, loss, depression, and betrayal (Manning, 2006; Schneider, 2000).

One reason why women may report such detrimental effects on their relationships with men who view pornography is the addictive and compulsive use of pornography by some men. Sussman (2007) reports that close to 100% of men who classify as sex addicts start their addiction with pornography. One recommended treatment includes stimulus control strategies such as throwing away all pornography one has access to or owns. For those addicted to pornography, they often experience such high reinforcement from the Internet that it interferes with their personal relationships (Young, 2008). A national random sample of Internet users found that 10% of adults in the US believe that the time they spend online for sex is a problem, 9% admit that their online sexual behavior is beyond their control, and 14% report that someone has confronted them about their sexual behavior on the Internet (Cooper, Delmonico, Griffin-Shelley, & Mathy, 2004). In addition, researchers who study brain activity note the highly addictive nature of pornography, comparing its effects to cocaine and methamphetamine and note that its use leads people to stop activities necessary for basic survival (Hilton & Watts, 2011).

Many harms of pornography are evident from the literature. An area that is yet unexplored is whether men who view various kinds of pornography are any more or less likely to intervene in a situation that could turn into a sexual assault. Such bystander behavior has been the topic of much research in the area of sexual assault prevention during the last decade (Banyard, Moynihan, & Plante, 2007; Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2004). Researchers who study bystander intervention explore the factors that lead people to intervene to help others who are in distress, rather than stand by and ignore and/or otherwise not act (Banyard et al., 2004). Several

factors increase the likelihood that people will intervene as bystanders. These include being aware of a situation in which someone is being victimized, making a prior commitment to help, having a sense of partial responsibility for helping, believing that the victim has not caused the situation to occur, having a sense of self efficacy in possessing the skills to do something, and to have seen others modeling such pro-social behavior (Banyard et al., 2004).

Notably, research has shown that when women in popular mainstream pornographic movies experience physical aggression by a male, 95% of the time they respond with either a response of pleasure or no response at all. Thus, today's mainstream pornography reinforces the notion that violence against women in sexual situations is acceptable, and women enjoy it (Bridges et al., 2010). Given that the content of pornography reinforces the script that women do not resist when hit during a sexual encounter (Bridges et al., 2010), it stands to reason that exposure to pornography would not only be associated with increased perpetration but would also make men less likely to intervene to prevent it. After all, if men continue to receive messages that women enjoy violence or lie unresponsive to it, why should they intervene if they hear a woman say no?

College fraternity men are often studied on issues related to sexual violence, given that they are three times more likely to commit sexual assault than other college men (Boeringer, 1999; Foubert, Newberry, & Tatum, 2007; Loh, Gidycz, Lobo, & Luthra, 2005). Fraternity men have also been found to have more pornographic pictures hanging in their rooms than other college men (Bleeker & Murnen, 2005). In addition, compared to their peers, fraternity men are more likely to believe that women enjoy being physically "roughed up," that women pretend not to want sex but want to be forced into sex, that men should be controllers of relationships, that sexually liberated women are promiscuous and will probably have sex with anyone, and that women secretly desire to be raped (Boeringer, 1999). Thus, studying fraternity men as a population seemed appropriate.

For the sake of this study, the definition of pornography was "media used or intended to be used to increase sexual arousal" (Carroll et al., 2008, p. 8). It can include media termed sexually explicit, erotica, and that which is defined as online sexual activity.

The research question for this study was: what impact would exposure to mainstream pornography, sadomasochistic pornography, and rape pornography have on fraternity men's likelihood of raping, likelihood of committing sexual assault, rape myth acceptance, bystander willingness to help, and bystander efficacy? Based on the research on the effects of pornography, we hypothesized that men who viewed it would report significantly higher levels of self-reported likelihood of raping and likelihood of committing sexual assault, higher rape myth acceptance, a lower bystander willingness to help and lower bystander efficacy.

METHOD

Participants

Participants in the present study were men who were members of fraternities at a large public university in the Midwest. Out of the population of 787 fraternity men on the campus involved, 489 (62%) completed usable surveys. Men in the sample were 90% Caucasian, 5% Native American, with the remaining participants being African American, Asian, Latino and mixed race. The mean age of participants was 20.3 ($SD = 1.3$); 99% of participants were between 18 and 23 years old. Given that data were collected from members and not pledges of fraternities and data collection took place in the fall, there were no students in this study who were in their first semester of college. However, some identified as “freshmen,” presumably given that their academic standing was not yet at a sophomore level. Participants included 5% freshmen, 36% sophomores, 34% juniors, and 25% seniors.

Materials

BYSTANDER EFFICACY SCALE

Willingness to intervene as a bystander was measured by the bystander efficacy scale developed by Banyard, Plante and Moynihan (2005). This measure asks participants to indicate whether they believe that they could do each of 18 bystanding behaviors and if so to indicate their level of confidence in performing this bystander behavior. Participants rate items on a scale of 1 to 100 percent, indicating their percent confidence that they personally believe that they know how to intervene in the given scenario described. This scale yielded an alpha reliability of .93 in the current sample.

BYSTANDER WILLINGNESS TO HELP SCALE

The Willingness to Help Scale was developed by Banyard et al. (2005) and measures participants' degree of likelihood of engaging in 12 bystanding behaviors on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*not at all willing to intervene*) to 7 (*very willing to intervene*). Items came from research literature and from discussions with advocates and professionals working in the field of sexual violence. The alpha reliability for these 12-items was .87 in the present sample.

ILLINOIS RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE SCALE

Participant's attitudes toward sexual assault were measured using the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999). Payne

et al. (1999) developed this scale through six studies including a factor analysis for construct definition and item pool selection, a complete-link cluster analysis to determine the structure and dimensions of the scale, item pool selection based on fit to a hierarchical model, and a construct validity study correlating the IRMA to seven similar measures ($r =$ between .50 and .74, $p < .001$). They also conducted a study where groups known to differ in rape myth acceptance scored differently as predicted on the IRMA ($p < .001$) and a validity study correlating IRMA scores with a content analysis of open ended scenarios written by participants that were analyzed for rape myth content ($r = .32$, $p < .05$). The alpha reliability in the present sample for this variable was .93.

LIKELIHOOD OF RAPING AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

Likelihood of raping and likelihood of committing sexual assault was assessed by items from Malamuth's Attraction to Sexual Aggression Scale. This scale includes two primary questions "If you could be assured of not being caught or punished, how likely would you be to rape?" and "If you could be assured of not being caught or punished, how likely would you be to force a female to do something sexual that she did not want to do?" Participants answer these questions on a 1 (*not at all likely*) to 7 (*very likely*) scale. Evidence for the measure's validity includes the finding that men who score higher also report higher levels of anger ($r = .32$, $p < .05$), aggression ($r = .32$, $p < .05$), and a desire to hurt women ($r = .37$, $p < .05$) (Malamuth, 1981). Malamuth also reports that men who report higher scores are significantly more likely to believe that rape is a sexual act that women enjoy. It is important to note that these items measure self reported behavioral intent to commit rape and sexual assault and are not measures of behavior.

OTHER VARIABLES

Several other variables were measured in the present study including participants' race, age, and class year. In addition, participants were asked to report whether they viewed different types of pornography during the last year. Specifically, participants were asked whether during the past 12 months they saw "media consisting of graphic sex acts (including penetration) being shown or described in videos, movies, magazines, books, or online," (mainstream pornography), whether they saw "media consisting of sado-masochistic portrayals of bondage, whipping and spanking but without an explicit lack of consent in video, movies, magazines, books or online" (sado-masochistic pornography), or whether they saw "media consisting of sexually explicit rape depictions in which force is used with explicit lack of consent

TABLE 1 Intercorrelations among Variables

	Correlations							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Likelihood of Raping	1	.797**	-.090	.173**	.192**	.215**	.124**	-.094*
2. Likelihood Sex Assault		1	.129**	.187**	.212**	.323**	-.157**	-.147**
3. Seen Pornography			1	.215**	.084	.014	-.010	-.066
4. Seen S&M Porn				1	.527**	.156**	.116*	.091
5. Seen Rape Porn					1	.161**	.061	.118*
6. Rape Myth Acceptance						1	-.205**	-.205**
7. Bystander Efficacy							1	.624**
8. Bystander Willingness								1

in videos, movies, magazines, books, or online" (rape pornography) (Carroll et al., 2008).

Design and Procedure

Research protocols were submitted to and approved by our institutional review board for human subjects. One of the experimenters attended a meeting of the Interfraternity Council to discuss the study and request the volunteer participation from each chapter. Chapters were told that if 75% of the active members of their chapter completed the surveys for this study that their national office would be sent a check for \$50 to help defray the cost of their chapter's insurance bill. There were 14 out of 18 fraternities that agreed to participate with 62% of the total fraternity membership on campus represented.

Graduate students visited each chapter house up to three times to distribute and collect surveys for this study. After receiving a briefing about the nature of the study and an informed consent document, surveys were distributed at either chapter meetings or chapter dinners. Participants completed surveys anonymously and returned their survey in a common return envelope with no identifying information. Survey results were entered into SPSS version 17.

RESULTS

During the last 12 months, 83% of participants reported seeing mainstream pornography. Tables 1 and 2 show the intercorrelations and means for all variables, respectively.

As shown in Table 3, an independent samples t-test showed that men who saw mainstream pornography scored significantly higher on self-reported likelihood of raping ($p < .01$) and likelihood of committing sexual

TABLE 2 Overall Means and Standard Deviations for Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Likelihood of Raping	1.15	.76
Likelihood of Sexual Assault	1.28	.93
Seen Pornography	1.83	.38
Seen S&M Pornography	1.27	.45
Seen Rape Pornography	1.19	.40
Rape Myth Acceptance	2.64	.83
Bystander Efficacy	78.64	16.73
Bystander Willingness	3.89	.69

TABLE 3 Mean on Outcome Variables by Type of Pornography Viewed

Dependent Variable		N	Mean	SD	t	df	Cohen's <i>d</i>
Likelihood of Raping							
Mainstream Porn	Yes	378	1.19	.84	4.35**	377	.45
	No	79	1.00	.00			
S&M Porn	Yes	120	1.38	1.22	2.70*	133	.47
	No	337	1.07	.50			
Rape Porn	Yes	84	1.48	1.38	2.58*	88	.55
	No	372	1.08	.52			
Likelihood of Sexual Assault							
Mainstream	Yes	378	1.34	1.01	5.76**	453	.54
	No	79	1.01	.20			
S&M	Yes	120	1.58	1.37	3.13**	141	.53
	No	337	1.18	.69			
Rape	Yes	84	1.71	1.49	3.16**	92	.66
	No	372	1.19	.72			
Rape Myth Acceptance							
Mainstream	Yes	375	2.66	.84	.475		
	No	78	2.61	.80			
S&M	Yes	118	2.88	.92	3.65**	451	.34
	No	335	2.56	.78			
Rape	Yes	82	2.96	.99	3.29**	104	.65
	No	370	2.58	.78			
Bystander Efficacy							
Mainstream	Yes	378	78.65	16.85	-.145		
	No	78	78.95	16.42			
S&M	Yes	120	75.45	20.02	-2.16*	171	.33
	No	337	79.78	15.32			
Rape	Yes	82	76.54	20.23	-1.06		
	No	374	79.02	15.93			
Bystander Willingness							
Mainstream	Yes	380	3.87	.68	-1.44		
	No	76	4.00	.73			
S&M	Yes	120	3.78	.72	-2.01		
	No	336	3.92	.68			
Rape	Yes	83	3.71	.74	-2.64*	453	.25
	No	372	3.93	.68			

Note. *Significant at the .05 level with a Bonferoni correction.

**Significant at the .01 level with a Bonferoni correction.

assault ($p < .01$) than men who did not see mainstream pornography during the last 12 months. Both of these are measures (likelihood of raping and likelihood of committing sexual assault) of behavioral intent in hypothetical scenarios and should, of course, be interpreted as such. Sadomasochistic pornography viewing during the last 12 months was reported by 27% of participants. An independent t-test revealed that viewers of sadomasochistic pornography scored significantly higher on likelihood of raping ($p < .05$), likelihood of committing sexual assault ($p < .01$), rape myth acceptance ($p < .01$), and significantly lower on bystander efficacy ($p < .05$). During the past 12 months, 19% of participants had viewed rape pornography. An independent t-test showed that men who viewed rape pornography scored significantly higher on likelihood of raping ($p < .05$), likelihood of committing sexual assault ($p < .01$), and rape myth acceptance ($p < .01$), and significantly lower on bystander willingness to intervene ($p < .05$).

DISCUSSION

Results of this study showed many effects of fraternity men's exposure to pornography, with increasingly more deleterious effects as the level of violence depicted within it increased. This confirmed numerous prior studies (Flood & Hamilton, 2003; Hald et al., 2010; Malamuth et al., 2000; Vega & Malamuth, 2007). Also in line with previous research (Hald et al., 2010; Malamuth et al., 2000), the present study found that mainstream pornography has serious consequences on its viewers. With men's viewing of mainstream pornography during the last 12 months, which 83% of participants reported, such men indicated a greater behavioral intent to rape as shown by their answers to questions about their likelihood of committing rape and likelihood of committing sexual assault if they could be assured of not being caught or punished than men who chose not to view pornography. The result that 83% of the sample in this study reported viewing pornography is concerning given its connection to sexual violence. Though this does not mean that all men who view pornography will commit rape, it does raise concern about the increased risk that viewing mainstream pornography has for men's intent to commit sexual violence. Whether this connection exists has been the subject of debate (Allen et al., 1995; Hald et al., 2010). The results of the present study helps establish the pornography and sexual assault connection more decisively, particularly with the type of pornography discussed below. This finding helps move the debate closer to not whether but why the connection exists.

When men reported viewing sadomasochistic pornography, the effects on measures assessed in this study were severe. Among the 27% of men using sadomasochistic pornography during the past 12 months, men who viewed sadomasochistic pornography reported significantly less bystander

efficacy to intervene in a rape situation, greater belief in rape myths, and a greater behavioral intent to commit rape as measured by questions asking about their likelihood of committing sexual assault and likelihood of committing rape if they could be assured of not being caught or punished. In addition, such men reported less willingness to intervene in a rape related situation, although this difference was not statistically significant. Thus, it appears that the three quarters of men who chose not to view depictions of women being tied up, beaten, and otherwise physically abused as part of a sexual encounter also reported attitudes that are more consistent with healthy relationships with women—lower rape myth acceptance, less intent to sexually assault a woman, less intent to rape, a greater understanding of how to intervene in situations that could turn into rape. Thus, viewing pornography was associated with a wide variety of attitudes and intent to behave in ways that are violent toward women.

When men reported viewing rape pornography, effects were serious. Compared to the 81% of men who did not view rape pornography, those exposed during the past 12 months reported significantly less bystander willingness to intervene in a rape related situation, greater belief in rape myths, and a greater behavioral intent to rape through questions assessing likelihood of committing sexual assault and likelihood of committing rape. Such men reported lower efficacy for intervening in a rape situation, although this difference was not significant.

Classic studies in the field of social psychology show that intervening as a bystander involves a five-step process (Latane & Darley, 1968). One must notice an event, interpret it as an emergency, decide it is one's responsibility to act, know what to do, and then act. Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan (2004) developed two measures to assess the third and fourth steps of this model related to sexual assault situations, respectively. The first of these measures assesses a participant's willingness to help in a sexual assault situation, thus assessing the third level of the five stage process. The fourth stage of Latane and Darley's (1968) model that leads to a decision to act is assessed by a measure of bystander efficacy. This measure taps into the construct of whether participants believe that they know what to do in a given situation where intervention is possible (Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan).

In the present study, participants who saw rape pornography reported a lower level of willingness to intervene as a bystander than their peers. This represents the third level necessary in the bystander model, just before a sense of personal efficacy. Thus, there may be something about exposure to rape pornography that inhibits men's willingness to intervene in a situation where they could help stop a potential rape from happening. It should come as no surprise that men who view graphic depictions of women being forced to submit to sex would fail to see the need to intervene in a real life situation where a woman might experience rape. This particular finding supports the assertion that many have contended for years; that watching violent media

has a direct connection to lack of pro-social behavior (Huesmann, 2007). An underlying question in both men's willingness to intervene as a bystander and their efficacy is whether their exposure to different kinds of pornography deadens their sense that rape is problematic or wrong, thus why would one need to intervene?

Participants who saw sadomasochistic pornography reported a lower level of bystander efficacy than their peers. This level of efficacy, or knowing what to do, represents the fourth stage necessary immediately before the fifth and final stage of acting to intervene. It appears that there is something about men's viewing sadomasochistic pornography that inhibits men's ability to believe that they know what to do to intervene in a sexual assault situation more than their peers who do not view sadomasochistic pornography. Though these pornography viewers do not have as much of a struggle in being willing to intervene, they do stumble more over what to do and how to do it. This could be because the pornography that they are viewing increases their uncertainty about the coercive nature of a sexually violent encounter. After all, why intervene in a situation involving sex and violence when they are viewing images that combine sex and violence where the actors display pleasure?

Men who view both sadomasochistic and rape pornography during the last 12 months had significant effects on their attitudes as measured by the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale. This scale measures false or stereotyped beliefs about rape, rape victims and rapists. Thus, viewing sadomasochistic or rape pornography among men differentiates men who have significantly more false beliefs about rape from men who do not. There was not a difference in rape myth acceptance when comparing the 83% of men who saw some type of mainstream pornography and those who did not. Thus, it appears that the attitudinal variable of rape myth acceptance is a type of attitude that has a relationship only to the types of pornography where violence is more directly inherent and not necessarily to the broader spectrum of pornography. This result should be interpreted with caution due to the lack of specificity in our measure of pornography in that it did not assess for frequency of pornography viewing. Future research should use much more sensitive measures of pornography viewing to elicit more robust results.

Measures of behavioral intent help researchers measure an attitude that approximates behavior without measuring the behavior itself. It is important to understand that behavior itself is not being measured. In the present study, the behavioral intent measures used were likelihood of raping and likelihood of committing sexual assault. Participants were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 7 whether they would force a woman to do something sexual that she did not want to do, if they themselves could be assured that they would not be caught or punished. This has been used in many studies as a measure of behavioral intent to commit sexual assault (Abrams,

Viki, Masser, & Bohner, 2003; Murnen, Wright, & Kaluzny, 2002; Stephens & George, 2009). Men in the present study who viewed pornography, no matter what type (mainstream, rape, and sadomasochistic) all were significantly more likely to indicate a willingness to commit sexual assault than men who chose not to view pornography. For the more restrictive question of men's likelihood of "raping a female" if they could be assured of not being caught or punished, men who viewed rape pornography or sadomasochistic pornography were significantly more likely to report a likelihood of raping than men who reported a low or no likelihood of raping.

It is noteworthy that men who viewed mainstream pornography reported, to a significant degree, a higher likelihood of committing sexual assault and rape. Scholars who content analyze pornography note its impersonal, objectifying nature (Jensen, 2007a). Similarly, when men commit sexual violence against women, they often objectify the women and don't consider them as people who feel pain (Becker-Blease & Freyd, 2007). Thus, it stands to reason that as men gain increased exposure to pornography, they become attached to the impersonal and instant gratification aspect of the medium and less focused on the aspects of intercourse that involve intimacy. It is not surprising then that such men would be more likely to do something sexual with a woman who is unwilling if they have been habituated to a medium where the scripts reinforce that the desire of the woman is not important, that women are there to service men's needs at all times, and the women are merely objects to be penetrated (Jensen, 2007b).

Men who watch rape pornography and sadomasochistic pornography were significantly more likely to indicate willingness to rape women if they could be assured of not being caught or punished. When men watch and often achieve sexual gratification from movies where women are forced to have oral, anal, and vaginal intercourse against their will and where women are subjected to various types of physical and verbal aggression, it comes as no surprise that such men would report a higher likelihood than other men of acting out violent behavior toward women—in this case, rape.

Implications

This study showed that men who viewed pornography, particularly rape and sadomasochistic pornography, report a greater likelihood of raping, committing sexual assault, higher rape myth acceptance, lower willingness to intervene in a sexual assault situation, and lower efficacy to intervene in a sexual assault situation. A potential next step in this research line could include a discriminant function analysis assessing the impact of whether men have viewed a wide array of types of pornography and their frequency of their viewing habits along with a measure of whether or not they have

committed sexual assault. It would be interesting to see whether pornography viewing, or different types of pornography exposure, could be used to discriminate between men who commit rape and men who do not. Alternatively, it would be interesting to see whether a regression could be used to predict rape behavior using a number of pornography use variables, perhaps combined with other known risk factors for committing rape. A path analysis might also be used to predict rape by assessing the complex relationship between empathy toward rape survivors, rape myth acceptance, likelihood of raping, bystander efficacy and willingness, and viewing different types of pornography. It could be that there is a complex relationship with selected moderating effects among a combination of these and other variables that could help researchers better understand how a man makes a decision to rape a woman.

It would also be interesting to conduct focus group interviews with men who identify as being likely to rape or likely to commit sexual assault and ask them to talk about their viewing habits and opinions about pornography. If such a group could be identified from a larger sample population, researchers could begin to understand a particularly high risk group, and perhaps begin to identify some of the dynamics that function within the minds of men who indicate a willingness to commit violence against women under some circumstances and how they believe that their pornography viewing effects these decisions.

Further research exploring the relationship between pornography viewing and bystander behavior is in order. Both quantitative and qualitative inquiry could prove fruitful in this arena. For example, would using a more sensitive measure of pornography viewing elicit a significant difference between men who view mainstream pornography and those who don't on bystander variables? In the present study, there was no difference. This study was limited by the choice of a measure that did not differentiate one exposure per year from multiple times per day. A more sensitive measure could very well have provided a much clearer picture of the relationship between these two variables. A qualitative study could interview men who consume various types of pornography and delve into the issue of whether they would intervene in different types of situations where someone needs their assistance. Such a study could get into the details of the process whereby such men make decisions, not just the outcome of what those decisions might be. Understanding this process could help prevention programmers target areas for education.

Limitations

This study is limited by the fact that only men were surveyed, all of whom were fraternity men. On the one hand, fraternity men are an important

population to understand in the context of the variables examined (Bleeker & Murnen, 2005; Foubert et al., 2007). Still, more research needs to look at the impact of pornography on women. The measure of pornography consumption used in this study was limited to the men's exposure to a particular type of pornography during the past 12 months, and did not assess the frequency of that contact. Future research should assess the content of pornography viewed, the frequency with which it was viewed, and the medium through which it was viewed (online, movie, magazine, etc.).

Another limitation of this study is the imperfect nature of using self report measures and the fact that we did not include a scale of social desirability. Given the highly sensitive nature of the variables measured, it could have been valuable to measure the degree to which participants were answering truthfully.

CONCLUSION

A question that this research raises is why some men would choose to watch pornography in the first place, particularly given its connection to sexual assault. Jensen (2007b) suggests that these men "don't see the cruelty because they have a direct stake in not seeing it. When men watch pornography, they typically are watching for the purpose of achieving an orgasm through masturbation. That physical process dulls the capacity to evaluate political and moral questions. When focusing only on an orgasm, it is more difficult to see the ideology in the images." (p. 78). Not seeing the potential harms and highly addictive nature of viewing pornography can lead some men on a path to compulsive use and addiction (Hilton & Watts, 2011; Sussman, 2008). With 9% of U.S. citizens admitting that their online sexual behavior is out of control and 14% admitting that they have been confronted about their Internet sexual behavior, this issue may be more common than once thought (Cooper et al., 2004).

Ultimately, this study showed the strong link between men's viewing pornography and behavioral intent to commit sexual assault. Furthermore, when men view sadomasochistic and rape pornography, their danger to females increases concurrently. Using these two types of pornography makes men significantly more likely to report intent to rape, stronger beliefs in rape myths, a decreased willingness to intervene in a potential sexual assault, and a lower sense of efficacy about intervening in a potential sexual assault situation. For men who seek a life course focused on attitudes that reflect accurate information about rape, not committing sexual assault, increased willingness to help others in difficult situations, and greater understanding of how to do so, staying away from pornography is an obvious choice.

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