

# CULTURE REFRAMED

SOLVING THE PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS OF THE DIGITAL AGE

**Title:** *Growing up in a Porn Culture: The Social, Emotional, & Cognitive Effects & A Public Health Solution*

**Presenters:** **Dr. Gail Dines, President & CEO & Dr. Mandy Sanchez, Program Coordinator**

## **Description:**

Prior to 2000, most young people, especially boys, would first encounter pornographic images in magazines such as *Playboy* and *Penthouse*. Their access to these (mainly) soft-core images was limited, so it was not a pivotal issue in terms of the sexual health and development of young people, and pornography did not serve as the primary source of sex education. Since 2000, the internet has become the main vehicle for porn, and hardcore porn is just a click away—it is free, violent, and based on the degradation and abuse of women and children. The proliferation of the smartphone, together with the growth of teen-targeted social media sites, has opened up yet more avenues for teens to access hardcore porn. This presentation will explore the most popular social media platforms accessed by young people today, linking the social media and porn industries and the harmful effects of their exposure on young people. Today, online porn has become a primary source of sex education for young people around the world.

Researchers from across disciplines, using a wide range of methodologies, have shown that viewing pornography is associated with:

- increased anxiety and depression;
- poor academic performance;
- risky and problematic sexual behaviors;
- decreased capacity for empathy, connection, & healthy relationships
- lowered empathy for rape victims;
- lowered likelihood of intervening in a sexual assault;
- increase in committing domestic violence
- increased likelihood of engaging in sex at a younger age;
- increased likelihood of contracting STDs.

Focusing on the public health approach, this presentation will highlight how Culture Reframed helps parents and professionals who work with young people to navigate this precarious terrain of hypersexualized social media and pornography. We will discuss our research-driven online courses and resources for parents and professionals, including our NEW Sex Education with a Porn-Critical Lens Curriculum.

### **Outcomes of Presentation**

- Gain a nuanced and research-based understanding of the social, emotional, and cognitive impacts of hypersexualized pop culture and pornography on young people.
- Understand the ways the pornography industry targets youth via social media platforms.
- Develop an awareness of the cultural impact of pornography, and how it impacts family and peer relationships.
- Debunk the most prevalent myths about kids and pornography.
- Understand the public health approach to the porn crisis as the basis for the development of CR's courses and resources.
- Gain practical skills, tips, and strategies to address the harms of pornography.

## Academic Articles Related to Presentations

- Dines, G. (2017). "There is no such thing as It": Toward a Critical Understanding of the Porn Industry. In, Brunskell-Evans, H. (ed.) *Performing Sexual Liberation: The Sexualized Body and the Medical Authority of Pornography*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing: Newcastle
- Fortin, F., & Proulx, J. (2019). Sexual interests of child sexual exploitation material (CSEM) consumers: Four patterns of severity over time. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 63(1), 55-76.
- Johnson, J. A., Ezzell, M. B., Bridges, A. J., & Sun, C. F. (2019). Pornography and heterosexual women's intimate experiences with a partner. *Journal of Women's Health*, 28(9), 1254-1265.
- Steel, C. M., Newman, E., O'Rourke, S., & Quayle, E. (2020). A systematic review of cognitive distortions in online child sexual exploitation material offenders. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 51, 101375.
- Sun, C., Bridges, A., Johnson, J. A., & Ezzell, M. B. (2016). Pornography and the male sexual script: An analysis of consumption and sexual relations. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 45(4), 983-994.
- Willis, M., Bridges, A. J., & Sun, C. (2022). Pornography Use, Gender, and Sexual Objectification: A Multinational study. *Sexuality & Culture*, 1-16.
- Wood, Heather. (2013). Internet pornography and pedophilia. *Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy*, 27(4), 319-338.
- Wright, P. J., Paul, B., & Herbenick, D. (2021). Pornography, impersonal sex, and sexual aggression: A test of the confluence model in a national probability sample of men in the US. *Aggressive Behavior*, 47(5), 593-602.

## Dr. Gail Dines' Bio

Dr. Gail Dines, a Professor Emerita of Sociology, has been researching and writing about the porn industry for well over thirty years. She is a recipient of the Myers Center Award for the Study of Human Rights in North America, and author of numerous books and articles. Her latest book, [\*Pornland: How Porn Has Hijacked Our Sexuality\*](#), has been translated into five languages.

Dr. Dines is the founding president and CEO of the non-profit, Culture Reframed. Working to stop the emotional, behavioral, and sexual harms of pornography on children and youth, Culture Reframed develops cutting-edge educational programs that promote healthy development, relationships, and sexuality.

Dr. Dines has worked with organizations such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, The Centers for Disease Control, The International Institute for Trauma and Addiction Professionals, as well as government bodies in the US, Brazil, UK, Sweden, Iceland, Norway, and Canada. She regularly appears on CNN, NPR, BBC, CBC, and writes for media outlets such as The Guardian, The Washington Post, Newsweek, and The Boston Globe.



## **Dr. Mandy Sanchez's Bio**

Dr. Mandy Sanchez earned her doctorate in Sociology with a concentration in Criminology and Women's Studies. Mandy specializes in domestic and sexual violence; the intersectionality of gender, sexualities, place, and trauma; and justice-involved women and children. Mandy is a trained facilitator and as the Program Coordinator for Culture Reframed, she focuses on expanding, developing, and ensuring high-quality, comprehensive, impactful programming for parents and professionals who are influential in children's and teens' lives.

