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The Ethical Dilemma on Pornography

It wouldn't take an intense or rigorous review of literature relating to pornography to realize how there are divided opinions regarding the act. The topic has become a collective center when scholar from every realm, be it political, legal, religions, traditional, or social, the issue has been under discussion for quite long. Nonetheless, there are no signs that could indicate the end for the discussion. It is inevitable to take side regarding the matter. Polarizes positions has been taken by proponents and opponent to see if the discussion could be put the discussion rest. The debate is solidly founded by question that for long remain unanswered. For instance, is it an act of degrading women? Does it show how women are misused and their dignity taken away? What good does it do to the society? In this essay, I will discuss and justify why pornography is not only unethical but also does greater harm than good to the society in general.

There could not be any better of achieving this goal than dividing the essay into particular sections. I will focus on two theories that give a pathway to understanding more about the concept of pornography. Secondly, I will analyze and asses the different perspectives that are used to view pornography. To conclude the essay, I will give a brief summary of the information covered as well why furthered studies relating to pornography are important.

PORNOGRAPHY AND ETHICAL THEORIES

Facts must be provide in the quest to unravel the morality of pornography based on the consequences or outcomes. The ethical dilemma about the issue would take a completely

different course if the essay was to utilize the no-consequential moral theory as put forward by scholar like Kant. The scope of the essay is not intended to encapsulate the morality or immorality of pornography but rather whether people are being cherished, offended, or misused (Soble 200). Consequently, the essay would shift focus to address whether the sexual activity should be deemed fair or unfair. The essay would also deviate if it were to focus on put to use the natural law position in affirming the assertion. By so doing, it would be seeking to answer the question of how the act fit or does not fit the human nature. Thus, the moral theory will be ideal in determining how enquiries about morality in relation to pornography is posed.

Utilitarian or consequentialist theory.

The theory affirms that any act or practice where the end result are more positive than negative is to be considered morally accepted. Thus, whether the essay was to take a retributive approach, pornographic acts or an individual's decision to view or not view pornography should be judged on a one-to-one basis. In any scenario, it is necessary to remember the individual who loses and the person who gains. It is therefore necessary to understand the form of pain or benefit. Furthermore, in the field of pornography, it is important to determine the psychological, physical and social implications. According to MacKinnon and Fiala (160), most of the negative effects that should be weighed in the appraisal of pornography is the physical and psychological damage experienced by the abusers

Even so, the public's moral view of pornography when considering the consequentialist perspective appears to have some deviations from the course. In a study conducted in 2008, more than 87% of men and 31% of women at some point in their lives use pornographic content. Shockingly, more than 205 of young men use porn each and every day. More so, half of the men who were questioned use porn on weekly basis. When it comes to determining the morality of

watching porn, a shocking percentage of young men and women believe that it is moral to consume pornographic content. However, the statistics are contradictory since the information is obtained from young men who nowadays seem to substitute the right with the wrong and vice versa.

Today, the youths put forward an argument that since porn does not affect them and people close to them in any way, it should be considered acceptable. The sexual content and nudity cannot be condemned by retrieving the external standards of morality which the society deems as acceptable. Furthermore, when using the consequentialist idea, embracing pornography lacks the glaring implications of porn use. Good sexuality, for example, includes psychological, mental, physical and intellectual aspects. Pornography, however, disengages mechanized sexual intercourse elements from actual sexuality. Pornography also contributes to increased violence and diminished empathy towards women. It also contributes to decreased capacity to feel sexual pleasure or to establish committed relationships (Wagley 3). Because the negative effects of pornographic or nude content are more than the advantages, watching pornographic content cannot be considered ethical and moral.

Deontological or Non-consequentialist theory

According to MacKinnon and Fiala (161), non-consequential theorists argue that it is not only morally wrong but unethical to use another person's body for gratification. If the action involve degrading or jeopardizing another person's dignity, it is considered unethical conduct. Thus, when determining whether the act is morally acceptable or not, it is indispensable to listen to both parties and put yourself in the shoes of both.

Many scholars have put forward the argument that obsession to women's beauty has been a constant causative factor for violence against them. Cultural fascination has caused plastic

surgery and an outbreak of eating disorders to create a flawless female body. Naomi Wolf correlates this move with a spike in pornography. Pornography has had a huge effect on young people in terms of their identity. As a consequence, some researchers claim that pornography in itself is a form of violence against women that leads to more violence. Thus, pornography should be deemed as unethical and morally unacceptable because it leads to the use of women's bodies for sexual gratification. Even so, pro-sex feminists the act is a form of empowerment that accords women the platform to determine whether they should engage in sexual activities or not.

POLARIZING PORNOGRAPHY

Discussing various political stances that individuals hold dearly is inevitable in the process of examining pornography adequately and effectively. There are two major political positions, moderates and liberals. Liberal activists and religious movements have also shared their opinions on porn. According to Hult, Schmedes and Johasen (6), these groups include Christians, feminists and victims of violence

Liberals perspectives

According to the liberals, pornography should be considered immoral and unethical only when it is carried out in a manner that is likely to put other people in harm's way. Physical violence, violation of free speech rights, and psychological abuse of consumers and creators, especially during sexual endeavors, are the ways in which pornography can be dangerous. Sexual endeavors can involve violent or rough sexual activity or sexual dominance from a male and female viewpoint (Hult, Schmedes and Johasen 9). Andrew Altman, a liberal advocate, goes on to argue that there should be no censorship of pornography. According to Altman, people should be allowed to exercise sexual autonomy after all pornography does no harm to anyone.

Furthermore, in its definition of the term pornography, there is no mention of harm, violence or woman oppression.

Consequently, Altman uses the example of contraception in order to advocate for the right of people to use pornography in today's culture. Today, while the concept of family control has not been endorsed by many Christian denominations, condoms are deemed to be religiously correct to develop and produce. In his logic, thus, if persons are given the freedom of choice in sexual conduct, family planning and behavior, they should be permitted to choose a sexually explicit content. This is why leftists seek to uphold the anti-censorship of pornography and they agree that people should have the freedom to practice pornography or not (LaFollette 388). For feminists, then, pornography is socially ethical because it does not affect creators and customers at all. In comparison, consumers and manufacturers have the free will to partake in pornography or not to indulge in it.

Conservatives perspectives.

On the other side, conservatives have an opposing view. They claim that pornography destroys the ideals and morals of people. Pornography should, indeed, be eliminated. In addition, the government should create rules and bylaws that would make a significant difference in order to successfully abolish the sexual unethical act. Pornography not only interferes with the rights of a person, but also the liberty of society or the culture, according to many conservative lobbyists.

Ronald Dworkin, a radical right-winger, argues that pornography produces a salacious culture. The expectations of an individual's lifestyle in film, music, clothes, and in certain cases views, in this salacious society, may be reduced into an oversexed culture. Dworkin further claims that pornography repels and, at the same time, draws a culture whose values are already

compromised to a point of serious degradation. Therefore, once society and culture tolerate pornography, cultures will crumble into corruption and sexual deviance, according to Dworkin (Hult, Schmedes and Johasen 13). The definition of deontology is pursued by Dworkin and even other conservatives. They claim that the positive consequences do not matter as much as pornography is about the destruction and exploitation of culture, since pornography is socially immoral.

Anti-pornographic feminists

This group argue that pornography is not only a coercive sexuality but also an act of enslaving the women and exploiting them sexually. As such, it's an act of socialization that perpetuates and results to acts of violence towards the female gender. It is an absolute definition of women depending on how men view them. According to anti-pornographic feminist, such systems and technique assist in defining women even though such things are fantasies and does not occur in reality. They also affirm that pornographic has totally institutionalized the enslavement of women and their subordination and inferiority as they submit to the male gender. Thus is an act that helps in naturalizing the power imbalances specifically against women. Like the conservatives, porn is unethical and is likely to cause more harm than good to women and other members of the society.

Pro-pornographic arguments

Pro-pornographic proponents found their arguments on freedom of will and speech. According to Pierre Bourdieu, there are objective and subjective hidden in the official reality. The implicit rules that everyone feels conformed to are the major determinates of the objective reality. It documents the specific ways through which people can structure ways of life that each and every person can live by. On the other hand, the subjective reality is basically our

constructs. It is the action we tend to portray and which have a certain structure. As such, we don't have to abide by the guideline that are put in place to be followed even though the society expects us to conform to them.

In addition, in the argument of Bourdieu, one's habitus defines each of us on the basis of past experience, social environment and the effect they have on an individual. Thus, habitus is a societal construct that makes it possible for our universality to get indoctrinated. In addition, habits can be learned or acquired. For example, it doesn't matter whether you started watching pornography as a boy after you found a porn magazine hidden by your father, the fact is that it has become a habit (Hult, Schmedes and Johasen 15). Bourdieu asserts that pornographic material should be categorized as immoral based on structuralism, despite this awareness, a habit is harmful as it tends to be difficult to leave. The access should solely be based on the reality that is discrete.

Religious Perspectives

According to Christians, watching porn has dire consequences that include instigating divorce procedures as well as being addictive like cocaine and other hard drugs. It has proved to be causative factor for violence conduct and serious crimes such as rape and murder as well. Since watching pornography increases the desire for fresh, it is considered as sin because the natural law outlines that the devil resides inside the flesh. Sex is considered divine in the bible. Therefore, pornography tarnishes the image of sex and portray it as a sinful act. Sexual activities are pure. Pornography and sex outside the marriage institution are considered acts of sins. In the biblical context, porn is a sin regardless of whether it has advantages or disadvantages because it happens outside the wedlock (Geisler, 388).

Conclusion

After carefully assessing pornography using the consequentialist and non-consequentialist theories, I can confidently attest that despite arguments that pornography could have advantages, it is immoral and unethical. It is an act of sexual gratification of women's bodies. It does more harm to women in general and good. Due to availability of sufficient materials regarding the topic, it can be seen that indeed pornography is a wide topic for discussion. Even though proponents argue that pornography is totally out of free will, that alone does not prove that it is an ethical or moral act that should be gladly accepted in today's society. Nonetheless, there is need for further studies regarding the topic to facilitate a clear understanding of the topic that will help each and every member of society come to a common consensus.

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