



OUT OF THE SHADOWS

Addressing the Sexual Exploitation of Boys & Men

RESEARCH SUMMARY



Prepared by the

NATIONAL CENTER ON SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

EndSexualExploitation.org

INTRODUCTION

Often overlooked, the sexual abuse and exploitation of boys and men is a long-neglected, festering national problem. Yet, every day males are sexually objectified; sexually abused as children; sexually assaulted as adults; used in the production of and harmed by the use of pornography; exploited in prostitution; and sexually trafficked to feed the global supply chain of sexual exploitation (i.e., the global sex industry).

Because society frequently views sexual abuse and exploitation as phenomena exclusively affecting females, male victims of sexual trauma go unidentified, their pain and suffering unattended, their victimization unrecognized by the world around them. This must stop. Sexual abuse and exploitation are unacceptable violations of human dignity irrespective of one's sex.

For this reason the National Center on Sexual Exploitation is working to bring issues related to the sexual abuse and exploitation of men and boys out of the shadows. As a part of this effort we have begun compiling research findings documenting the harms experienced by boys and men across the expansive web of sexual abuse and exploitation. The information assembled here marks the beginning of what will be our ongoing effort to shine a much needed spotlight on and elevate the discourse about the sexual abuse and exploitation of males. Please check our webpage endsexualexploitation.org/boysandmen periodically for updates to this document.



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Sexual Objectification

“To objectify is to make or treat something that is not an object as an object, which can be used, manipulated, controlled, and known strictly by its physical properties.”¹ When applied to persons, attitudes and behaviors specific to objectification have been shown to fall into seven categories:

- Instrumentality: treatment of others as a tool for one’s own purposes;
- Denial of autonomy: treatment of another as lacking self-determination;
- Inertness: treatment of another as lacking agency and activity;
- Fungibility: treatment of another as interchangeable with others;
- Violability: treatment of another as permissible to break/break into;
- Ownership: treatment of another as something that is owned; and,
- Denial of subjectivity: treatment of another as something whose feelings and experience do not need to be considered.²

Objectification is typically manifested through either interpersonal encounters or the media, and “sexual objectification” results in the fragmentation of a person so that they exist as a collection of sexual parts/functions, rather than as whole person possessing a unique personality, attributes, and feelings.³ Sexual objectification has been shown to especially target women more often than men, and “objectification theory” has emerged as a field of study that examines cultural practices that sexually objectify women.⁴ Nonetheless, as the research summarized here suggests, the same splintering of persons into a mere collection of sexual components is also experienced by males.

¹ R.M. Calogero, “Objectification Theory, Self-Objectification, and Body Image,” *Encyclopedia of Body Image and Human Appearance*, 2012, 574-80, doi:10.1016/b978-0-12-384925-0.00091-2.

² Martha Nussbaum, “Objectification,” *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, (1995): 249–291.

³ Calogero, *ibid*.

⁴ Calogero, *ibid*; Barbara L. Fredrickson and Tomi-Ann Roberts, “Objectification Theory: Toward Understanding Women’s Lived Experiences and Mental Health Risk,” *Psychology Women Quarterly* 21, (1997): 173–206; Bonnie Moradi and Yu-Ping Huang, “Objectification Theory and Psychology of Women: A Decade of Advances and Future Direction,” *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 32, (2008): 377–398.



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As America transitions from a print-based to an image-based culture, both women and men are being conditioned to prioritize and idealize hegemonic archetypes of physical, and particularly, sexual appeal. Internalizing these ideals, more individuals are engaging in “self-objectification”—that is “the adoption of a third-person perspective on the self as opposed to a first-person perspective” such that individuals place greater value on how they look to others rather than on how they feel or what they can do.⁵ Self-objectification has been associated with such symptoms as eating disorders, lower task performance outcomes, higher rates of smoking, and depressive symptoms.⁶ One measurement of self-objectification is self-surveillance, or a form of self-consciousness characterized habitual monitoring of body’s outward appearance.⁷

Boys

Self-Objectification and Appearance Ideals: A study of 911 adolescent boys from Belgium (mean age 15.24) showed that boy’s exposure to sexualizing primetime television and pornographic websites enhanced both direct and indirect relationships between the internalization of appearance ideals, self-objectification, and body surveillance. The researchers report that, “. . . if the current prevalence of sexualizing male bodies in both traditional and new media persists, male media users may become equally at risk for sexualization as female media users.”⁸

Men

Rising Dissatisfaction: In a survey of 4000 adults (548 men, 3,452 women), spearheaded by *Psychology Today* in 1997, researchers found that 43% of American men were dissatisfied with their appearance in 1997, compared 34% in 1985 and 15% in 1972. Dissatisfaction with weight and muscle tone also increased; a significant proportion of

⁵ Calogero, *ibid.*

⁶ Moradi and Huang, *ibid.*

⁷ Calogero, *ibid.*

⁸ Laura Vandenbosch and Steven Eggermont, “Sexualization of Adolescent Boys: Media Exposure and Boys’ Internalization of Appearance Ideals, Self-Objectification, and Body Surveillance,” *Men and Masculinities* 16, no. 3 (2013): 283–306, doi: 10.1177/1097184x13477866.



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dissatisfied men expressed that they wanted to add body mass, not lose it. When asked, “How many years of your life would you trade to achieve your weight goals?” 11% of men said they would sacrifice more than five years of their lives. Additionally, 30% of men reported they smoked and 4% induced vomiting in order to control their weight.⁹

Self-Objectification and Body Surveillance: In a two-wave panel study of 226 undergraduate students (34.1% men; 65.9% women,) from the U.S., researchers explored the effects of exposure to sexually objectifying television on self-objectification (referred to by researchers as “trait SO”) and body surveillance. Trait SO was determined by ranking appearance-based physical traits (e.g., physical attractiveness, weight, sex appeal, measurements, and muscle tone) and competence-based physical traits (e.g., muscular strength, physical coordination, stamina, health, and physical fitness). Body surveillance was defined as a cognitive (e.g., thinking and worrying about appearance) and behavioral (e.g., primping) outcome of trait SO. Body surveillance was measured by asking scale questions such as, “During the day, I think about how I look many times.” The study measured participants’ frequency of viewing 77 popular and current television shows and 61 popular and current magazines. Shows and magazines were rated for how often sexual objectification occurred.¹⁰

Results found that participants with exposure to sexually objectifying television shows were more likely to define themselves in terms of external physical traits (i.e., how the body appears) versus their internal traits (i.e., what their bodies can do). Further, exposure to sexually objectifying television predicted an increase in body surveillance for men only. The authors observed that there is gender equity in the media’s ability to cultivate self-objectification, stating that “the media’s ability to cultivate self-objectification, which has been traditionally viewed as exerting harmful influences on women, also impacts men.”¹¹

⁹ David M Garner, “The 1997 Body Image Survey Results” *Psychology Today* (January/February 1997).

¹⁰ Jennifer Stevens Aubrey, “Effects of Sexually Objectifying Media on Self-Objectification and Body Surveillance in Undergraduates: Results of a 2-Year Panel Study,” *Journal of Communication* 56, no. 2 (2006): 366–86, doi:10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00024.x.

¹¹ Ibid.



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Eating Disorders and Depression: In study of 286 undergraduate students (115 men; 171 women) aged 17-45 from Australia, men who habitually monitored their external appearance, like women, were more likely to experience increased body shame and appearance anxiety, resulting in disordered eating and depressed mood.¹²

Reduced Task Performance: An experimental study of 400 racially diverse (93 African Americans, 130 Caucasian, 88 Hispanic, and 89 Asian) undergraduate students (44% male; 56% female,) revealed that when placed in an induced state of self-objectification (e.g., wearing a one-piece Speedo bathing suit) versus a control situation (e.g., wearing a sweater), men and women of every diversity experienced decrements in performance on a math test. This suggests that regardless of sex or ethnicity, individuals' performance suffers when subjected to a state of self-objectification. Importantly, the researchers explain that their finding generalize the theory of self-objectification across gender and ethnicity.¹³

Child Sexual Abuse

Boys

Prevalence: A systematic review and meta-analysis of 55 empirical studies from 24 countries, reporting on data collected from the year 2000 onward, found child sexual abuse (CSA) prevalence estimates ranged from 3–17% for boys (8–31% for girls). Sexual abuse was segmented into the following four categories: *non-contact abuse* (i.e., inappropriate sexual solicitation, indecent exposure), *contact abuse* (touching/fondling, kissing), *forced intercourse* (oral, vaginal, anal, attempted) and *mixed sexual abuse* (when different types of abuse had been part of the study inquiry but only one prevalence rate was reported or the type of abuse not specified). Specifically the study found that 3% of men have suffered

¹² Marika Tiggemann and Julia K. Kuring, "The Role of Body Objectification in Disordered Eating and Depressed Mood," *British Journal of Clinical Psychology* 43, no. 3 (2004): 299–311, doi:10.1348/0144665031752925.

¹³ Michelle R. Hebl, Eden B. King, and Jean Lin, "The Swimsuit Becomes Us All: Ethnicity, Gender, and Vulnerability to Self-Objectification" *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 30, no. 10 (2004): 1322–1331. Doi: 10.1177/0146167204264052.



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forced intercourse, 6% contact abuse, 8% mixed sexual abuse, and 17% non-contact abuse.¹⁴

The authors suggest that methodological reasons may account, in part, for the difference in estimates between males and females. Specifically they explain that male-specific factors like fear of being labeled weak or homosexual may contribute to an under estimation of prevalence among males.¹⁵

Poor Emotional Regulation: Emotion regulation is defined as “the extrinsic and intrinsic processes responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and modifying emotional reactions to accomplish one’s goals,”¹⁶ and during the preschool period of childhood is a primary developmental task.¹⁷ Impairment in emotion behavioral regulation development may impair subsequent adjustment (e.g., interpersonal relationship, behavioral regulation). Further, emotional regulation deficits/dysfunctions are closely related to psychopathology in all ages, and are involved in several mental health problems (i.e., anxiety disorders, substance abuse, posttraumatic stress).¹⁸

In a French study of 127 pre-school children (24 boys, 103 girls; 62 sexually abused, 65 non-sexually abused), results revealed a significant association between sexual abuse and emotion regulation difficulties (i.e., deficits in positive engagement with others, emotion expression, and empathy), with a stronger association among sexually abused boys than for girls. Additionally, sexually abused boys were found to have lower expressive language abilities, were more likely to live in a single-parent and low income family, and have mothers with lower educational levels than non-abused boys.¹⁹

¹⁴ J. Barth, L. Bermetz, E. Heim, S. Trelle, and T. Tonia, “The Current Prevalence of Child Sexual Abuse Worldwide: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis,” *International Journal of Public Health* 58, no. 3 (2013): 469–83, doi: 10.1007/s00038-012-0426-1. The analysis included only studies in which the participants were below 18 years old and in which the country was known.

¹⁵ Barth, Bermetz, Heim, Trelle, and Tonia, *ibid.*

¹⁶ Ross A. Thompson, “Emotion Regulation: A Theme in Search of Definition,” *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development* 59, no. 2-3 (1994): 25–52.

¹⁷ Rachel Langevin, Louise Cossette, and Martine Hébert, “Emotion Regulation in Sexually Abused Pre-schoolers,” *Child Psychiatry & Human Development* 47, no. 1 (2016): 1–12, doi: 10.1007/s10578-015-0538-y.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*



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Distorted Motives for Sex: In a longitudinal study of sexually active 297 adolescents (42.4% male; 57.6% female,) aged 14-17 from Canada, males who had experienced child sexual abuse (CSA) demonstrated stronger negative motives for having sex such as managing distress (e.g., to feel better when feeling low), peer approval (e.g., because friends as having sex), and partner approval (e.g., partner angry if I don't have sex), as compared to non-CSA males and females with CSA. Males with no CSA had stronger sexual motives for enhancement (e.g., feeling pleasure). This research also demonstrated that CSA is associated with sexual risk taking for both girls and boys, with CSA males showing a greater likelihood for engaging in sex with alcohol and drugs, as well as sex with multiple partners than non-CSA males.²⁰

Disbelief and Discrimination: A study of four Brazilian boys (ages 6–10) who had experienced sexual abuse, as well as of interviews with psychologists involved in the treatment of sexually abused boys, found that boy victims of child sexual abuse (CSA) face barriers to receiving help. Boys' reports are met with more distrust than girls similar situations; that mothers may be more inclined to administer physical punishment to boys than girls following a disclosure, because they hold the child responsible believing that the boy "should not have let that happen;" social attitudes that discredit boys' reports of sexual abuse (e.g., "*... a boy being a victim, nobody really buys that*"; and demands for "visible proof"). All practitioners perceived the protective services system as flawed and unprepared to handle cases involving sexually abused boys. The authors' report, "These findings underscore the social invisibility of sexual violence against boys, due to the low number of referrals as well as the disbelief and discrimination, which permeates the management of these cases."²¹

²⁰ Christine Wekerle, Abby L. Goldstein, Masako Tanaka, and Lil Tonmyr, "Childhood Sexual Abuse, Sexual Motives, and Adolescent Sexual Risk-Taking among Males and Females Receiving Child Welfare Services," *Child Abuse & Neglect* 66 (2017): 101-11, doi:10.1016/j.chiabu.2017.01.013. Of particular importance, the authors of the study observed that studies of male victims of child sexual abuse during childhood are rare, with most studies of male victims of CSA taking place in adulthood. Thus, this study is important for its examination of the impacts of CSA on boys still childhood and nearer the time of their abuse.

²¹ Jean Von Hohendorff, Luísa Fernanda Habigzang, and Silvia Helena Koller, "'A Boy, Being a Victim, Nobody Really Buys That, You Know?': Dynamics of Sexual Violence against Boys," *Child Abuse & Neglect* 70 (2017): 53-64, dx.doi.org:10.1016/j.chiabu.2017.05.008.



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Men

Prevalence, Risk Factors, and Psychiatric Disorders: In a nationally representative sample of more than 34,000 U.S. adults aged 18 and older, researchers found a prevalence rate of child sexual abuse of 10.14% (male 24.8%; female 75.2%). Among both men and women, child sexual abuse often was often concurrent with child neglect, emotional and physical abuse, and parental psychopathology. Individuals with child sexual abuse (CSA) were significantly more likely than those without to have significantly lower levels of perceived family support and to have a psychiatric disorder sometime in their lifetime (e.g., bipolar disorder, panic disorder, psychotic disorder, specific phobia, PTSD, and suicide attempts, etc.). CSA was mostly strongly associated with PTSD and suicide attempts. The frequency of abuse was also strongly associated with the odds of having a psychiatric disorder.²²

The researchers noted that the true sex distribution of CSA may be obscured by underdetection and underreporting among males. They explained: “Boys may be reluctant to disclose sexual abuse because of fear of punishment, stigma against homosexuality, and loss of self-esteem; and they may consequently be drawn into the criminal justice or substance abuse treatment systems, contributing to underrepresentation among males with CSA in clinical and community epidemiological studies.”²³

HIV-Related Behaviors and Experiences: Researchers report that numerous studies have linked men who have sex with men (MSM) with high prevalence of CSA history (e.g., 15.1% China; 39.7% U.S.; 42% Latin America), and that MSM were more often victims of CSA compared to the general population.²⁴

In this study, a multivariable analysis of 11,788 men in India, overall prevalence of child sexual abuse among MSM was 22.4%. The rate of *recent* HIV-related behaviors (e.g.,

²² Gabriela Pérez-Fuentes, Mark Olfson, Laura Villegas, Carmen Morcillo, Shuai Wang, and Carlos Blanco, “Prevalence and Correlates of Child Sexual Abuse: A National Study,” *Comprehensive Psychiatry* 54, no. 1 (2013): 16–27, [dx.doi.org: 10.1016/j.comppsy.2012.05.010](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.comppsy.2012.05.010).

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Cecilia Tomori, Allison M. McFall, Aylur K. Srikrishnan, Shruti H. Mehta, Nymisha Nimmagadda, Santhanam Anand, Canjeevaram K. Vasudevan, et al., “The Prevalence and Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse on HIV-Risk Behaviors among Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM) in India,” *BMC Public Health* 16, (2016), [doi:10.1186/s12889-016-3446-6](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-016-3446-6)



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unprotected anal intercourse, high number of male and female sexual partners, alcohol use, drug use, and engaging in prostitution in the prior 6 months) was 21% higher among MSM with CSA, compared to those who did not report CSA. After adjustment for age and sexual identity, those with CSA were also found to be 2.0 times more likely to have *lifetime* HIV-related behaviors and experiences (e.g., high number of lifetime male and female sexual partners, early sexual debut, injection drug use, prostitution, and intimate partner violence). Prevalence of HIV was 10.6% among CSA MSM, compared to 6.0% among those who did not report CSA.²⁵

Sexual Assault

Campus Sexual Abuse: For the period of 1995–2013, a review of data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics' National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) found that college-aged male victims accounted for 17% of rape and sexual assault victimizations against students and 4% against nonstudents. Rape and sexual assault were defined by the NCVS as completed or attempted rape, completed and attempted sexual assault, and threats of rape or sexual assault.²⁶

In a separate study, researchers conducted an analysis of more than 5,000 incidents of campus sexual assault that were reported to police from across the United States using data from the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) from 1993-2014. They found that, 6% of incidents of campus sexual assault involved a male victim; within incidents involving males, 64% of offenses were of forcible fondling, 25% forcible sodomy, 8% forcible rape, and 4% forcible sexual assault with an object. Additionally, while 1% of campus sexual assault perpetrators offending against female victims were themselves female, 17% of perpetrators offending against male victims were female. Incidents involving male victims were also more likely to involve older offenders (average age 29

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Sofi Sinozich and Lynn Langton, "Rape and Sexual Assault Victimization among College-Age Females, 1995–2013," Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, (December 2014).



years old) and multiple offenders, and less likely to involve a stranger or Black perpetrators, than offenses against females.²⁷

Pornography

Boys

Negative Gender Attitudes, Sexting, and Sexual Coercion: In a survey of 4,564 young people aged 14–17 in five European countries (i.e. Bulgaria, Cyprus, England, Italy, and Norway), regular viewing of pornography was reported by 39% (England) to 59% of boys (Cyprus). Rates of having experienced sexual coercion and abuse were higher for boys than girls in Italy, Bulgaria, and Cyprus; and half of male sexual victims in Bulgaria (54%) and Cyprus (51%) and nearly three quarters in Italy (70%) also reported using sexual violence against a partner. Both regular watching of pornography and sending or receiving sexual images were associated with the increased probability of perpetrating sexual coercion. In addition, boys who regularly watched online pornography were significantly more likely to hold negative gender attitudes. The researchers especially noted that “pornography is both underpinned by and perpetuates gender inequality. Preventive interventions in interpersonal violence and abuse (IPVA) need to address this potent relationship between pornography, gender attitudes, and abusive behavior in boys.”²⁸

Risky Behaviors and Other Harms: For males, increased pornography use is correlated with more sex partners, more alcohol use, more binge drinking, greater acceptance of sex outside of marriage for married individuals, greater acceptance of sex before marriage, and less child centeredness during marriage.²⁹

²⁷ Kristen M. Budd, Michael Rocque, and David M. Bierie, “Deconstructing Incidents of Campus Sexual Assault: Comparing Male and Female Victimizations,” *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment* (2017): 1–22. doi:10.1177/1079063217706708.

²⁸ Nicky Stanley, Christine Barter, Marsha Wood, Nadia Aghtaie, Cath Larkins, Alba Lanau, and Carolina Överlien, “Pornography, Sexual Coercion and Abuse and Sexting in Young People’s Intimate Relationships: A European Study,” *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, (2016): 1–26. doi:10.1177/0886260516633204.

²⁹ Jason S. Carroll, Stephanie D. Madsen, Carolyn McNamara Barry, Chad D. Olson, Larry J. Olson, and Laura L. Padilla-Walker, “Generation XXX: Pornography Acceptance and Use Among Emerging Adults,”



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Learning Sexual Behaviors: A recent UK survey of 994 adolescents (52% male; 47% female; 1% identified as other) found that 56% of boys and 40% of girls had been exposed to Internet pornography. Of those who had seen pornography 53% of boys agreed that pornography is realistic compared to 39% of girls. Additionally, 44% of males aged 11–16 who viewed pornography reported that online pornography gave them ideas about the type of sex they wanted to try. Researchers also observed a desensitizing effect, noting that rates of curiosity, shock, and confusion dropped with repeated viewing.³⁰

A separate study of 4,026 high school seniors (47% boys; 53% girls) in Sweden found that the 97.8% of boys had at some time during their childhood viewed pornographic material. Among males, 29.6% consumed pornography some time each month, 28.6% sometime each week, and 10.5% more or less daily. Frequent users of pornography were defined as daily users. Nearly 70% of those who frequently used pornography reported that pornography made them want to try out what they had seen compared to 42% of boys in a reference group.³¹ Frequent users of pornography viewed all forms of pornography more often, especially advanced or more deviant forms of pornography including violence and sexual abuse of children and animals.³²

Increased Likelihood of Selling and Buying Sex: The aforementioned study also found that frequent users of pornography were significantly more likely to have sold (7.0% vs. 1.2%) and bought sex (7.7% vs. 1.5%) than other males of the same age.³³

Sexual Satisfaction: In a longitudinal study of 1,052 Dutch adolescents aged 13–20, research revealed that exposure to sexually explicit Internet material consistently reduced

Journal of Adolescent Research 23, no. 1 (2008): 6–30. doi:10.1177/0743558407306348; Carl Göran Svedin, Ingrid Åkerman, and Gisela Priebe, "Frequent Users of Pornography. A Population Based Epidemiological Study of Swedish Male Adolescents," *Journal of Adolescence* 34, no. 4 (2011): 779–788.

³⁰ Elena Martellozzo et al., "I Wasn't Sure It Was Normal To Watch It . . ." A Quantitative and Qualitative Examination of the Impact of Online Pornography on the Values, Attitudes, Beliefs and Behaviours of Children and Young People," London, UK: Middlesex University (2016), https://www.mdx.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf.file/0021/223266/MDX-NSPCC-OCC-pornography-report.pdf

³¹ Svedin, et al., *ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*



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adolescents' satisfaction with their sexual lives. The negative influence of sexually explicit Internet material was equally strong among both males and females.³⁴

Men

Pornography and STI's: Pornography use among adult males in America is associated with increased engagement in sexual behaviors that increase the risk of STIs. Internet pornography consumption has been positively associated with having sex with multiple partners, engaging in paid sex, and having had extramarital sex.³⁵

Sexual Performance, Body Image, and Sexual Satisfaction: In a cross-sectional study of 487 college men (aged 18–29 years) in the United States, results showed the more pornography a man watches, the more likely he was to view it during sex, request pornographic sex acts of his partner, deliberately conjure images of pornography during sex to maintain arousal, and have concerns over his own sexual performance and body image. Further, higher pornography use was negatively associated with enjoying sexually intimate behaviors with a partner.³⁶

Interpersonal Satisfaction: In a meta-analysis of fifty studies encompassing cross-sectional and longitudinal surveys, as well as experimental research methods, pornography consumption was associated with lower interpersonal outcomes. The meta-analysis, which collectively included more than 50,000 participants from 10 countries, revealed a significant negative association between pornography consumption and interpersonal

³⁴ Jochen Peter and Patti M. Valkenburg, "Adolescents' Exposure to Sexually Explicit Internet Material and Sexual Satisfaction: A Longitudinal Study" *Communications Research* 35, no. 5 (2009): 171–194. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2958.2009.01343.x.

³⁵ Paul J. Wright and Ashley K. Randall, "Internet Pornography Exposure and Risky Sexual Behavior among Adult Males in the United States," *Computers in Human Behavior* 28 (2012): 1410–1416. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2012.03.003.

³⁶ Chyng Sun, Ana Bridges, Jennifer A. Johnson, and Matthew B. Ezzell, "Pornography and the Male Sexual Script: An Analysis of Consumption and Sexual Relations," *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 45, no. 4 (2016): 995, doi:10.1007/s10508-016-0744-0.



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satisfaction. Specifically, male viewers of pornography reported significantly lower sexual and relational satisfaction.³⁷

Types of Pornographic Content, Lower Sexual Satisfaction, and Sexual Dysfunction: A 2016 study of online sexual activities among males (434) found that while “traditional” content (e.g., vaginal intercourse, oral and anal sex, amateur videos) searches were common, other material that is considered “unusual” or “deviant” was also frequently searched: teen, 67.7%; group sex/gangbang, 43.2%; spanking 22.2 %; bukkake, 18.2%; and bondage, 15.9%. The researchers also found that 20.3% of men reported that “one motive for their porn use was to maintain arousal with their partner.” Additionally, pornography use was linked to higher sexual desire, but lower overall sexual satisfaction, and lower erectile function.³⁸

Pornography Induced Erectile Dysfunction: Historically, erectile dysfunction (ED) has been viewed as an age-dependent problem, with rates in men ages 18–59 as low as 2–5%.³⁹ In the early 2000s, the Global Study of Sexual Attitudes and Behavior (GSSAB) reported that the ED rate among men aged 40–80 was approximately 13%.⁴⁰ In 2011, among males aged 18–40 the GSSAB found ED rates of 14–28%.⁴¹ This dramatic increase in ED rates among young men coincides with the sharp increase in the availability and accessibility of Internet pornography tube sites.

³⁷ Paul J. Wright, Robert S. Tokunaga, Ashley Kraus, and Elyssa Klannm, “Pornography Consumption and Satisfaction: A Meta-Analysis,” *Human Communication Research*, 2017, doi:10.1111/hcre.12108.

³⁸ Wéry, *ibid.*

³⁹ Brian Y. Park et al., “Is Internet Pornography Causing Sexual Dysfunctions? A Review with Clinical Reports,” *Behavioral Sciences* 6, no. 17 (2016): 1–25. doi: 10.3390/bs6030017.

⁴⁰ Alfredo Nicolosi et al., “Sexual Behavior and Sexual Dysfunctions after Age 40: The Global Study of Sexual Attitudes and Behaviors,” *Urology* 64, (2004): 991–997. doi:10.1016/j.urology.2004.06.055.

⁴¹ Ivan Landripet and Aleksandar Štulhofer, “Is Pornography Use Associated with Sexual Difficulties and Dysfunctions among Younger Heterosexual Men?” *The Journal of Sexual Medicine* 12 (2015): 1136–1139. doi:10.1111/jsm.12853.



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A 2-year longitudinal study of sexually active young males aged 16–21 published in 2016, found: low sexual satisfaction, 47.9%; low desire, 46.2%; and, problems in erectile function, 45.3%.⁴²

Another study reported that one in four patients seeking medical help for new onset ED were under 40, with severe ED rates being 10% higher than those in men over 40.⁴³

A study on men (mean age 36) seeking help for excessive sexual behavior—frequent use of pornography and masturbation—found that ED combined with low desire for partnered sex is a common observation in clinical practice.⁴⁴

An investigation examining subgroups of men struggling with sexual compulsivity, found that among those who reported seven or more hours of pornography viewing (or seven episodes of masturbation) per week, 71% reported sexual dysfunctions, and 33% reported delayed ejaculation.⁴⁵

A Cambridge University study that was evenly divided between men with compulsive sexual behavior (CSB) and those without, found that 60% of those with CSB experienced diminished libido or erectile function in physical relationships with women.⁴⁶

In a study of gay men recruited from bathhouses, bars, and STI clinics, 50% of the men (average age 29) reported erectile dysfunction with video pornography. The men spent considerable amounts of time in environments where pornography was omnipresent and

⁴² Lucia F. O'Sullivan, Lori Brotto, Sandra Byers, Jo Ann Majerovich, and Judith Wuest, "Prevalence and Characteristics of Sexual Functioning among Sexually Experienced Middle to Late Adolescents," *The Journal of Sexual Medicine* 11 (2014): 630–641. doi: 10.1111/jsm.12419.

⁴³ Paolo Capogrosso, et al., "One Patient Out of Four with Newly Diagnosed Erectile Dysfunction Is a Young Man—Worrisome Picture from the Everyday Clinical Practice," *The Journal of Sexual Medicine* 10 (2013): 1833–1841. doi:10.1111/jsm.12179.

⁴⁴ Verena Klein, Tanja Jurin, Peer Briken, and Aleksandar Štulhofer, "Erectile Dysfunction, Boredom, and Hypersexuality among Couple Men from Two European Countries," *The Journal of Sexual Medicine* 12, no. 11 (2015): 2160–2167. doi:10.1111/jsm.13019.

⁴⁵ Katherine S. Sutton, James M. Cantor, Nathan J. Kolla, Jennifer Pytyck, and Natalie Stratton, "Patient Characteristics by Type of Hypersexuality Referral: A Quantitative Chart Review of 115 Consecutive Male Cases," *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy* 41, no. 6 (2015): 563–580. doi:10.1080/0092623x.2014.935539.

⁴⁶ Valerie Voon et al., "Neural Correlates of Sexual Cue Reactivity in Individuals with and without Compulsive Sexual Behaviors," *PLOS ONE* 9, no. 7 (2014): 1–10. doi:10.3410/f.718488487.793497490.



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continuously playing. The men explained that high exposure to sexually explicit media resulted in a lower responsiveness to “vanilla sex” media and an increased need for novelty and variation. This is evidence of tolerance, a key indicator of addiction. Researchers revised the experiment allowing the men to choose many more varieties of pornography. In the new experiment, 25% of men still could not become aroused to the pornography of their choice.⁴⁷

In a clinical study of 35 men with erectile dysfunction or anorgasmia, a French psychiatrist found that addictive masturbation is often associated with cyber-pornography. Most of the men viewed pornography, and some were addicted to it, with the study pointing to it as a key player in these problems. With treatment, which included the removal of pornography, participants saw a reduction of symptoms and were able to enjoy satisfactory sexual activity.⁴⁸

Psychological Symptoms: An online survey of 71 homosexual males showed strong correlations between cybersex addiction symptoms and indicators of coping by sexual behaviors and psychological symptoms. These psychological symptoms included emotional avoidance, loss of control/time management, and social problems.⁴⁹

Working Memory Performance: In a study of 28 healthy, heterosexual men, researchers found that viewing pornographic pictures significantly negatively affected working memory (WM) performance. WM performance was not significantly impacted by neutral pictures (e.g. unmoved faces, people at work, walking in a street), negative pictures (e.g. a mugging, a person with a weapon, harassment), nor positive pictures (e.g. laughing people, a bride, sport awards). WM is responsible for the short-term holding, processing, and manipulation of information. It is essential for understanding, reasoning, problem solving, learning and development of speech, and decision making.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Erick Janssen. *The Psychophysiology of Sex*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007.

⁴⁸ R. Porto, “Habitudes Masturbatoires et Dysfonctions Sexuelles Masculines,” *Sexologies* 25, no. 4 (August 17, 2016): 160-65, doi:10.1016/j.sexol.2016.03.004.

⁴⁹ Christian Laier, Jaro Pekal, and Matthias Brand, “Sexual Excitability and Dysfunctional Coping Determine Cybersex Addiction in Homosexual Males,” *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking* 18, no. 10 (2015): 575-80, doi:10.1089/cyber.2015.0152.

⁵⁰ Christian Laier, Frank P. Schulte, and Matthias Brand, “Pornographic Picture Processing Interferes with Working Memory Performance,” *Journal of Sex Research* 50, no. 7 (2013): 642-52, doi:10.1080/



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Intent to Rape: Fraternity men who consumed *mainstream* pornography expressed a greater intent to commit rape if they knew they would not be caught than those who did not consume pornography. Those who consumed *sadomasochistic* pornography expressed significantly less willingness to intervene in situations of sexual violence, greater belief in rape myths, and greater intent to commit rape. Among those who consumed *rape-themed* pornography, the researchers described “serious effects” including less bystander willingness to intervene, greater belief in rape myth, and greater intent to commit rape. In other words, there was *no* type of pornography that did not result in a greater intent to commit rape by a user if they knew they would not be caught.⁵¹

Commercial Sexual Exploitation

Boys

Drug Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Mental Health, and Suicide: In a study of 620 self-identified homeless youth, 153 (32% male, 68% female) were involved in prostitution. Thirty-two percent of those involved in prostitution were boys. More than 74% of youth involved in prostitution reported abusing drugs or alcohol; they were also 3 times more likely to have been raped and 3.4 times more likely to have disclosed sexual abuse than youth not exploited in prostitution. The study also found that youth involved in prostitution are twice as likely to have a serious mental health problem (e.g., thought disorder, personality disorder), and almost twice as likely to be actively suicidal or to have previously attempted suicide.⁵²

Sexual Victimization: In a study conducted in Seattle of 372 homeless adolescents (54.5% male; 45.4% female) aged 13-21, a total of 11% of males reported being sexually victimized on at least one occasion since being on the street. The perpetrators of sexual victimization

00224499.2012.716873.

⁵¹ John D. Foubert, Matthew W. Brosi, and R. Sean Bannon, “Effects of Fraternity Men’s Pornography Use on Bystander Intervention, Rape Myth Acceptance and Behavioral Intent to Commit Sexual Assault,” *Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity: The Journal of Treatment & Prevention* 18, no. 4 (2011): 212–231.

⁵² Gary L. Yates, Richard G. Mackenzie, Julia Pennbridge, and Avon Swofford, “A Risk Profile Comparison of Homeless Youth Involved in Prostitution and Homeless Youth Not Involved,” *Journal of Adolescent Health* 12, no. 7 (1991): 545–48, doi:10.1016/0197-0070(91)90085-z.



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against males were strangers (56%), acquaintances (32%), and friends (12%); and while the majority of perpetrators were other males, 29% of victimizers were female.⁵³

Since being on the street, 9% of males reported trading sex at least once. Males who traded sex were more than 6 times as likely to have been sexually victimized by a stranger, than males who had not traded sex. Those young men who self-identified as gay or bisexual were more than 5 times as likely to have been sexually victimized by a friend or acquaintance. Researchers hypothesized that being on the street and recruiting potential sex buyers makes homeless males highly visible and easily accessible to potential offenders. Sexual victimization included being forced to do something sexual (e.g., kissing, touching, exhibiting private parts, sex acts, etc.).⁵⁴

Age of Entry/Desire to Exit: In a respondent driven sample study of 249 (male 45%; females 48%; transgender 7%) youth (aged 18 and below) in New York City, the average age of entry into prostitution for males was 15.28, but 19% were involved at the age of 13 or younger. For boys, entry into prostitution was facilitated by friends 44% of the time (46% girls; 68% transgender), 32% were approached by sex buyers (16% girls; 10.5% transgender); 1% were recruited by pimps/"boyfriends" (16% girls, 0% transgender); and only 1.6% of all youth involved in prostitution indicated that a family member was responsible for their prostitution activity. Among male youth in prostitution 9% reported having a pimp or "market facilitators." When asked if they wanted to leave "the life," 85% of males answered "yes" (87.2% female; 94.7% transgender).⁵⁵

Sex Trafficking: In 2013, a sample from 2,598 state, county, and local law enforcement agencies and plus one federal agency were surveyed regarding their arrests or detentions of juveniles (less than 18 years old) involved in sex trafficking in 2005. Responding

⁵³ Kimberly A. Tyler, Les B. Whitbeck, Dan R. Hoyt, and Ana Mari Cauce, "Risk Factors for Sexual Victimization among Male and Female Homeless and Runaway Youth," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 19, no. 5 (2004): 503–20, doi:10.1177/0886260504262961.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ric Curtis, Karen Terry, Meredith Dank, Kirk Dombrowski, and Bilal Khan, *The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in New York City, Volume 1. The CSEC Population in New York City: Size, Characteristics, and Needs*, New York, NY: John Jay College of Criminal Justice (September 2008).



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agencies reported 877 cases involving minor victims. A follow-up review of 132 of these cases revealed that 10% of juvenile victims were male.⁵⁶

The researchers proposed a taxonomy of minor sex trafficking cases that included: 1) third-party exploiter cases, 2) “solo” juvenile cases,⁵⁷ and 2) child sexual abuse cases involving payment. In cases defined as “solo” police found no evidence of a third-party exploiter, although the presence of such persons could not be ruled out. Among boys, nearly 70% of cases were “solo” juvenile cases, and no cases connected boys with third-party exploiters. Male victims were more likely to be viewed as “delinquents” by law enforcement officials, rather than to be categorized as victims.

Men

Prevalence: An estimated 7% of persons in prostitution in Europe are male, although the percentage varies significantly from country to country. In countries such as Austria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, and Lithuania, most persons in prostitution are female, while in Poland 15% of those in prostitution are male. Transgendered persons are estimated to comprise 6% of all prostituting persons in Europe.⁵⁸

Invisibility: In an analysis of 166 scholarly articles published between January 2002 and March 2007 on topics related to prostitution, a researcher found that most failed to acknowledge the existence of men in prostitution at all. When males were discussed, they were assigned more agency than females in prostitution, the primary risk assigned to them was HIV rather than violence, and the question of their sexual orientation was always addressed, while females were assumed to be heterosexual.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Kimberly J. Mitchell, David Finkelhor, & Janis Wolak, *Sex Trafficking Cases Involving Minors*, (Durham, New Hampshire: University of New Hampshire, Crimes Against Children Research Center, November 2013).

⁵⁷ Importantly, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) includes “patronizing and soliciting” as part of the predicate acts that may constitute sex trafficking. Additionally, in cases involving persons under 18 years old, the elements of force, fraud, coercion are not required for establishing a “severe form of trafficking in persons.” Thus, “solo” cases of juveniles in prostitution-related activities constitute sex trafficking.

⁵⁸ TAMPEP, *Sex Work in Europe: A Mapping of the Prostitution Scene in 25 European Countries*. (Amsterdam, Netherlands: 2009), <http://tampep.eu/documents/TAMPEP%202009%20European%20Mapping%20Report.pdf> (accessed September 6, 2017).

⁵⁹ Jeffrey Dennis, “Women are Victims, Men Make Choices: The Invisibility of Men and Boys in the Global Sex Trade,” *Gender Issues* 25, (2008): 11–25. doi: 10.1007/s12147-008-9051-y.



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Economic Exploitation: A study of 106 men engaging in prostitution activities in Nigeria reported that *all* respondents entered prostitution out of economic necessity: many came from low-income neighborhoods and slums, others were trying to support elderly parents, and some were orphans who had no support from anyone. This economic vulnerability was exploited by sex buyers who frequently used economic pressure—as well as violence—to obtain condomless sex.⁶⁰

Health Risks: In an ethnographic study of migrant males involved in street-based prostitution in Germany, a researcher conducted 46 semi-structured interviews with physicians, social workers, health department staff, and migrant males from Romania and Bulgaria in street-based prostitution. The researcher explained that while unverified by collection of statistics on ethnicity, it is generally understood that most migrant males in prostitution in Germany are of Roma ethnicity.⁶¹

These men were described as facing a range of potential health problems and illnesses including: respiratory, dermatological, urological, back pain, toothaches, headaches, and injuries. Dental problems, as well as lice and bedbug bites, were common problems. The risk for HIV and STIs was reported as high due to: 1) lack of job options, language barriers, and insecure housing which pushes these men to prostitute in riskier settings, 2) these factors leading to dependency, as well as greater competition among prostituting males, that may result in riskier sex practices, and 3) lack of formal education, little knowledge of STIs, inexperience in the sex trade.⁶²

The researcher reported that, “Men and boys in the global sex trade are almost completely ignored by social service agencies, administrative bodies, the media, and in scholarship.”⁶³

⁶⁰ Kehinde Okanlawon, Ayo Stephen Adebawale, and Ayotunde Titilayo, “Sexual Hazards, Life Experiences and Social Circumstances among Male Sex Workers in Nigeria,” *Culture, Health & Sexuality* 15, no. S1, (2013): S22–S33. Doi: [dx.doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2012.754053](https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2012.754053)

⁶¹ Heide Castañeda, “Structural Vulnerability and Access to Medical Care among Migrant Street-Based Male Sex Workers in Germany,” *Social Science & Medicine* 84, (2013): 94–101. [dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2013.02.010](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2013.02.010).

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.



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Mental Health Impacts of Human Trafficking: A UK study of 150 human trafficking survivors (52 male; 98 female) reported that among males, 86.5% were trafficked for labor exploitation (e.g. agriculture, construction, and car washing), 9.6% for domestic servitude, and 1.9% for sexual exploitation. Forty-two percent of trafficked males experienced physical violence; 3.9% sexual violence. Forty percent of males experienced depression, anxiety, or PTSD as a result of their trafficking experience, 13% suicidal ideation, and 33% engaged in high-risk drinking.⁶⁴

Lack of Residential Programs for Male Victims: Nationally, 33 residential programs exclusive to victims of sex trafficking in the U.S. were found to be currently operational. Of the surveyed programs, there were fewer than 28 beds for male victims of sex trafficking.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Siân Oram, Melanie Abas, Debra Bick, Adrian Boyle, Rebecca French, et al, "Human Trafficking and Health: A Survey of Male and Female Survivors in England," *American Journal of Public Health* 106, (2016): 1073–1078. Doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2016.303095.

⁶⁵ Jessica Reichert and Amy Sylwestrzak, *National Survey of Residential Programs for Victims of Sex Trafficking*, (Chicago, IL: The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, 2013).



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