
XXXchurch Founder: Porn Is 'Fantasy, Not Reality'

Porn Face-Off Challenges Common Assumptions, Draws Huge Crowd at Yale

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Like it or hate it, pornography is almost impossible to ignore.

According to one trade publication, the business of porn earns about \$14 billion a year, employs more than 100,000 people and is one of the most popular destinations for Web surfers.

Generally featuring consenting adults and regulated solely for those older than 18, viewing pornography seems to many like a harmless form of entertainment.

But others are not so sure. They suggest that the largest consumers of pornography are young boys between the ages of 12 and 17. They also claim that much of pornography is about degrading men and women and that pornography may harm marriages.

Last week, as part of "Sex Week at Yale" in New Haven, Conn., "Nightline" moderated a debate about porn.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE DEBATE UNFOLD](#), plus watch the story tonight on "Nightline" tonight at 11:35 p.m. ET

Four strong-willed individuals joined ABC News "Nightline" co-anchor Martin Bashir, who moderated the debate.

Arguing against pornography were Craig Gross, who runs an online community for people who feel they've become addicted to pornography, and Donny Pauling, who had a successful career as one of the nation's foremost pornography producers only to find God, ditch porn and speak out against it.

On the pro-porn side, there was Monique Alexander, an actress and model who has a contract with Vivid Entertainment, the world's largest adult-film producer, and Ron Jeremy, a well-educated actor who has appeared in more than 1,900 pornographic movies.

The debate started with a plea from Bashir. Past debates between Jeremy and Gross, who have met on stage more than 25

times, have brought booing, walkouts and even a nude stalker or two.

"I'd like you to display your cleverness and your intellect and all those vast thousands of dollars that your parents have spent on you," Bashir told the rowdy crowd.

The students had been warned not to bring alcohol into the ballroom, but red cups and Red Bull cans peppering the floors after the debate ended indicated they'd done otherwise.

Gross, an evangelist who says believers of Christ have as much of a problem with pornography as unbelievers, spoke first. He responded first to Jeremy's comment that he would "slam-dunk every one of his points."

"At [5 feet 4 inches,] Ron, you won't slam-dunk anything," Gross said to much laughter. Then he jumped right into his argument. "I want to be clear that my ministry, XXXchurch.com, and my belief is not to take away your right to see porn. If you like porn, go ahead and watch it. I'm here to help those that are really having a tough time with this stuff, to help those that want out of porn."

Porn Is 'Fantasy, Not Reality'

"Pornography is not real," said Gross. "It's fantasy, not reality. You're going to be disappointed in your future sex life, because it won't match up to porn."

Gross then turned his argument to Alexander and Jeremy. "Ron has been in this 29 years," he said. "Monique is a contract star for Vivid. Most girls and guys are not in the position that they're in, are not celebrities, are not making millions of dollars."

Finally, he argued that porn seeps into the minds of minors. "The average age that someone sees porn is 11. Just show of hands, how many of you had seen porn before you were 18?"

Hands shot into the air. "You little perverts," joked Jeremy.

"By a show of hands," asked Jeremy, "who's ever seen porn responsibly with a significant other, boyfriend, girlfriend, husband, wife, that's ever seen porn recreationally?" Many hands flew into the air.

People Can See Porn Responsibly

"I'm not saying there's not a problem," continued Jeremy, "but you don't blame an entire industry on a few people that have problems. These are all very brilliant students. So people can see porn responsibly."

Jeremy also took exception to Gross' argument regarding the harsh, fetishlike content in some pornographic movies. "He's talking about a very small section of the adult industry, and it exists. And for those kind of kinky fantasies, fine, but it's not the majority."

"And by the way, as far as children seeing porn, we're not trying to do that," he continued. "We have tons and tons of spy

wares."

"This is called the exterminator porn alert released," he added, holding up a magazine ad. "They have this one here called the guardian office porn detector. So you can avoid your kids from seeing porn. It's not that tough."

'We're Intelligent Human Beings, We're Not Animals'

Pauling, the former porn producer, was next. "Like Craig, even though I'm a Christian, I believe very firmly in freedom of speech," he said. "But just because we can do something, doesn't mean we should. You know, we're intelligent human beings, we're not animals. And when what we're doing is costing someone else and causing pain to someone else, we probably shouldn't be doing it."

Pauling's argument was based on true-life stories of women who had their personal lives damaged because of porn.

"I've had girls model for me in college," he said. "I wasn't dealing with broken people, I was dealing with educated students. And they would come in, they would think porn is harmless because they've bought into the lie that our society has shown them. They'd model for us, spend the money on rent, [but] then that content remains until they're a grandma."

He then read a letter he received from one of his former soft-core models, who was haunted by her past career when she tried to get married. "How long do these pictures circulate?" Pauling read. "I want them off the Internet. I'll pay you money, whatever it takes. This will and is ruining my life."

Alexander: 'I Have No Sympathy for Any of These Girls'

Soon after the letter was read, it was Alexander's turn to speak. "Oh geez, where do I begin after all that," she pondered.

Alexander has a considerable number of credits to her name: "Barely Legal 19," "Dirty Girls," "I Swear, I'm 18" and many that cannot be mentioned in this article.

"When I got into this industry, I was 19 years old," she said. "I've been around for almost seven years, and when I first got in, all I did was girl-girl stuff and soft-core stuff and all of that because I wasn't ready to do boy-girl. And then I took a chance to get to know the industry, get to know the people, get to know what's right and wrong. And then I was lucky enough to get the contract with Vivid."

Alexander said porn actresses without contracts make more money because they get to work 10 times more. "And that's why those girls are in the corner crying, throwing up and doing those things because [they're] working themselves to the bone. Those girls are choosing to do dirty things because they want the money."

Alexander blamed the naivete of girls who don't realize old pictures might come back to haunt them. "It's their own fault," she said. "I have no sympathy for any of these girls. You make a choice in your life. And when you're 18, you're considered an adult."

"You know, with these pictures all over the Internet, when I decided to do boy-girl, I [knew I would] have to live with it for the rest of my life. I want to have a family, I wanna have children someday, and I know this is gonna come up. And I thought, if this is what I'm gonna do, I'm gonna be the best I possibly can and try to be a good person so that people can see that we're not that bad of a people."

Students Debate Porn

When the debate was opened to the floor, students fought to participate.

"What do your parents feel about your professional career?" one student asked Alexander.

"What do you think about amateur pornography that's being uploaded by consenting adults?" another asked Jeremy.

One student asked Pauling about "this regret that you felt, and I just want to know why it took you nine years."

Other questions and answers will be shown tonight on "Nightline." The debate ended civilly and the participants swore they would continue their tradition of going out to eat afterward □ Jeremy foots the bill.

"Great show!" exclaimed one student. Asked who won, another named Deanna said, "I don't know! I think they both did well. I don't know how I feel anymore."

Other students were surprised by the arguments of the porn ministers. "I thought it was very interesting. It really changed my perspective on this whole industry," said one student, who said he was shocked by the "harsh realities behind pornography."

Others, like Diego, didn't have their opinions changed. "It's great to have open discussion, to get people thinking to begin with. Because I feel it's become such a mainstream phenomenon that it's to the point where people do it, and they don't think of repercussions."

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