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STORY



What's the big deal about PORN?

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By Corey Spring

Craig Gross is not your daddy's pastor. Sure, he studied at the seminary and prays to God regularly, but Craig Gross wants to talk about something that many people would rather leave behind closed doors. On Sunday, Gross and porn star Ron Jeremy will come to Ohio State to talk about an otherwise taboo subject: pornography.

Gross is the founder of the anti-porn ministry XXXChurch.com, a group that works to help people who are addicted to pornography, as well as to help those in the pornography industry who wish to get out. Gross uses unconventional

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techniques to get his message out, including his much publicized “Jesus Loves Porn Stars” campaign where Gross and members from his church attend adult video conventions and hand out Bibles with the aforementioned slogan on them to attendees. Due to his unusual and candid approach, Gross has earned plenty of critics even in the Christian community, who would rather he weren’t so vocal about such a private topic.

Ron Jeremy is, well, Ron Jeremy. The VH1 reality star and star of over 1,800 porn films, Ron Jeremy also holds a master’s degree from Queens College and worked as a high school special education teacher before making his adult film debut in the late ‘70s. Together, Gross and Jeremy travel the country debating each other on pornography and its \$97 billion world-wide business — its pros, its cons, why we should or shouldn’t watch it, and everything in between. The event is so oddly appealing that the students at other colleges where the debates have been held often line up hours ahead of time to ensure their seat, as some are turned away because of the full audience.

“I think there’s two sides to every story,” Gross tells UWeekly. “For everyone that says ‘Oh, it’s consenting adults for consenting adults,’ I would say that the average age someone sees porn now is eleven years old.”

For college students, Gross says porn has a lasting impact that might not be readily evident.

“Porn for this college generation has become their sex-ed, and their real sex lives will never live up to those porn videos,” says Gross. “I think the real damage is not that they’re going to turn into these wild animals or beasts, but that it’s going to damage their future sex lives. It sounds crazy, but it’ll come to a point

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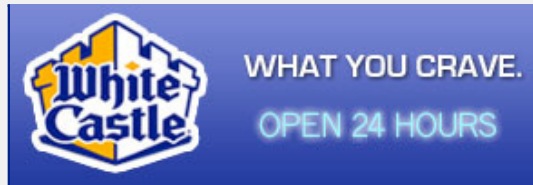
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How have you been preparing for exams this quarter?

- Injecting crystal meth into my eyes.
- Sending daily fruit baskets to E. Gordon Gee.
- Renting the movie Slackers.
- Cramming a quarter's worth of biology into my brain 12 hours before the exam.
- With my usual strategy - I'm not.

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where they'd rather be with the porn than in a real relationship because it's easier and anything you want it to be; it's all about you — when you want it, how you want it, you want two girls, you want anal? You can be as selective as you want, but when you get into a real sexual relationship with another person that has needs, feelings and emotions... 'Ah, man, it's easier to have my video.'”

Of course, Ron Jeremy doesn't seem to believe the pornography “problem” is as widespread as Gross does.


“People who say porn ruins their life have a problem with it and I tell them, don't watch!” Jeremy said earlier this month before a similar debate at Central Washington University.

Despite their obviously different stances on pornography, the porn star and the porn pastor have reportedly become friends despite the circumstances of their relationship.

“Hopefully when people see that when Ron and I go to dinner together after the debate they'll see we have a mutual respect for each other,” Gross says. “That you can have a different view on a topic from someone else but still have a relationship with that person.”

“A Debate on Pornography with Ron Jeremy and Craig Gross” will be held this Sunday at 8 p.m. in the Mershon Auditorium. The event, which is brought to you by OUAB and free to OSU students, will be filmed by ABC News for an upcoming special.

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