

# PORNLAND

## How the Porn Industry Has Hijacked Our Sexuality

Featuring Gail Dines

[Transcript]

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### Introduction

**Gail Dines:** There has always been pornography. However, there has not always been a porn industry.

When we think of pornography, for many people, especially older people and often many women, what comes to your mind? Playboy? Penthouse? Or even Hustler? Well, unfortunately, and I never thought I'd say this. Those were the good old days. Things have changed dramatically now. And if somebody would have told me ten, fifteen years ago that we would be at the place that we are today with pornography I would never have believed it.

So what I am going to do now is explain how the pornography industry works and the images in the industry. And I'm going to do this because a lot of people say, "Isn't porn fantasy? Isn't it fun?" Well, I'm actually going to quote a pornographer who put it really well. "A lot of people get distracted from the business model by the sex. It is just as sophisticated and multi-layered as any other marketplace. We operate just like any other Fortune 500 company."

So this is key. This is an industry. It is not fantasy. Fantasy happens in the head. The industry, the porn industry, happens in the banks of international capital.

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### Understanding the Porn Industry Today

#### **Hugh Hefner [video clip]**

Hello there. Glad you could join us this evening. I'm Hugh Hefner, editor-publisher of Playboy magazine and your host.

**Gail Dines:** The real porn industry began in 1953 with the first edition of Playboy. That was the first time ever pornography circulated through the mainstream channels of American capitalism. However today, we are looking at a much larger industry. And the hallmark of a maturing industry is the monopolization and corporatization of ownership.

Adult Video News, which is one of the trade journals of the industry, wrote: "The corporatization of porn isn't something that will happen or is happening. It is something that has happened. The independent owners, renegade mobsters, and visionary entrepreneurs pushed aside by mega corporations."

So let me explain what this industry looks like now. And to do that, we have to understand that the Internet changed the entire face of the porn industry. The Internet made pornography affordable, anonymous, and accessible, the three key things that drive demand.

Now, these are kind of approximate statistics:

- 36% of the Internet is porn;
- The online porn industry makes over \$3,000 per second;
- There are 40 million regular consumers of porn in America;
- One in four search queries is about porn.

We often think that the Internet drove pornography. That's partly true. But also, pornography drove the Internet. Pornography actually helped accelerate the development of technology such as live chats, anti-fraud security, pop-ups and pop-unders, mobile services, and especially traffic optimization, which I'm going to talk about later.

One of the things they're really putting money into now are improving the screens of the cellphones and the mobile held devices so you can stream your pornography through a mobile held device. So think about the porn industry as putting lots of money into research and development.

Now porn businesses, like all businesses, raise capital, hire managers and accountants, organize trade shows, have PR firms, and, very importantly, they interface with banks, credit card companies, venture capitalists, cable operators, etc. That means that every time somebody spends money on pornography, all of these companies are making money. So think about the vested interest that mainstream corporations have in maintaining the porn industry. Never before have we had that.

So let me give you an example. Let's go to the trade shows.

### **Trade Show Announcer [video clip]**

AVN Expo is officially open.

**Gail Dines:** In 2008, I went to Las Vegas, and I interviewed one of the guys there who runs something called "Real Dolls." So I'm interviewing him, and I said to him, "So tell me, why do you think men buy these dolls?" And he looks at me with a completely serious face and he says, "It helps men develop relationships with women." So I'm writing, "Helps men develop relationships with women." Anyway, so I said to him, "Have you heard of *Lars and the Real Girl?*" Has anyone seen this?

### ***Lars and the Real Girl* [movie trailer]**

**Lars:** Hey. I have a visitor.

**Gus:** Where did you meet this person?

**Lars:** I met her on the Internet.

**Karin:** Yeah, well everybody's doing that now.

**Lars:** You know Bianca's a missionary?

**Gail Dines:** So he said, "Have I heard of it?" He said, "We were the consultants to the movie and the day this movie came out, our website crashed because so many men went on our website." That gives you somewhat of an insight into the way mainstream corporations interface with the porn industry.

### **Porn Performer [video clip]**

Everything that I've ever shot can all be seen for free now.

**Gail Dines:** Now, when I often speak about pornography, the first hand that goes up is, "Isn't the porn industry dying because of free porn?" Well, free porn has had a profound effect on the porn industry. But it is a myth that free porn is destroying the porn industry. The reality is that it is reshaping and redefining the business model. So let me explain.

New York Magazine wrote that "free porn is an intricate, invisible web of revenue sharing and traffic trading and content-licensing at work." What does that mean? To understand what that means, let me introduce you to Fabian Thylmann. This man and his company, MANWIN, has basically come in and vacuumed up almost the entire porn industry.

### **[News clip]**

MindGeek, that innocuous looking company, has quietly become one of the most powerful forces in the industry. It owns at least 6 of the top 10 most popular tube sites in the world. Over 80 million visitors a day. Pornhub alone gets more daily visits than Netflix.

**Gail Dines:** The job of Pornhub is to do what the porn industry calls "monetize traffic." That means you have to drive traffic to paid sites. Another way you monetize, i.e. turn free porn into money, is you have ads for other paid websites. They have ads for penis enlargers, for webcams, and also they sell emails to spammers. So there's many ways that free porn actually makes money.

So what does it do with all this money? Because, remember, when you are an industry, you have the power to shape politics, to shape the law, and to shape culture. And I'm going to give you a quick example here. So, recently in Los Angeles they passed "Measure B."

### **[News clip]**

What's "Measure B"? It requires actors in adult films to wear condom in sex scenes as a way to prevent – obviously you want to prevent the spread of AIDS, other STDs.

**Gail Dines:** Now, there was a huge campaign to try to stop "Measure B."

**[Advertisement]**

A mandatory condom law will not make our workplace any safer. Vote “no” on “Measure B,” and keep the adult business in California.

**Gail Dines:** The single biggest donor to stop “Measure B” was actually MANWIN, who gave over \$250,000 to try and stop the measure that would make it mandatory for porn performers to use condoms.

Now think about this. How many of you ever give blood? Do you notice how everyone when you give blood, even when you go to the dentist, they wear gloves and everything? Just think for a minute what's on a porn site [set]. Semen, feces, urine, saliva, and yet no one has to even wear a condom. So what the AIDS Healthcare Foundation said was, “This is ridiculous! We need to have condoms.” MANWIN came in and fought it. Luckily for porn performers, MANWIN lost.

Another way that the porn industry uses its money to change laws is what happened in 2002 with the Ashcroft vs. Free Speech Coalition. The Free Speech Coalition is actually the lobbying arm of the porn industry. And what they argued to Ashcroft was that the 1996 Child Pornography Protection Law limited the free speech of the pornographers. What did that act say? That act said that women who looked under 18 could not perform in pornography. The Free Speech Coalition said that that actually limited the free speech rights of the porn industry. The court agreed and opened the way for what I call pseudo-child porn. So now you can have women who are 18 but who look much younger. As in this. Or, as in this. “First time with Daddy.” Or as in this, “Daddy's Whore.” This is all perfectly legal, according to Ashcroft. As in, “It's OK, she's my stepdaughter.”

This is the power of the porn industry. This is what industries do. This is what it means to be a corporation. But the other question to ask is: what does it mean to live in a porn culture? What does it mean to grow up in a society where pornography is the major form of sex education?

**[Movie clip]**

You're gonna see sex education.

Porn as Sex Education

**Gail Dines:** So let's explain how the porn industry works. Now, nobody today in the industry talks about softcore or hardcore – those words are gone. Why? Because most of softcore porn has migrated into pop culture. So what we're left with, mainly, in the porn industry online, is pretty much hardcore.

The two big feature studios are Wicked and Vivid. Now, they make feature-length movies, they kind of mimic the Hollywood movie and you have, you know nice background, nice lighting. All, of course, in the service of delivering pretty hardcore sex to the viewer.

What studies have found, and what the industry says, is that this kind of porn, the feature, is couples porn and is often used by men as a way to groom their girlfriends into porn sex.

Now, when men are alone, this is not what they bring out. What they bring out is what the industry calls gonzo – your hardcore, in-your-face, cruel, abusive pornography.

In gonzo porn, there's no such thing as a woman, but there's plenty of "bitches," "whores," "cum dumpsters," "sluts." And it's very important that you do this in pornography because what you have to do is you have to show that man, who is masturbating to that image, that that woman who is being abused is not like other women. Your mother, your daughter, your sister, your girlfriend, she wouldn't stand for this. But this filthy, dirty whore, she's different.

***Back for More [porn clip]***

**Max Hardcore:** Uh oh.

**Porn performer:** I wanna talk to you, mister. You better get your ass down here now.

**Max Hardcore:** Okay, slut.

**Gail Dines:** One of the grandfathers of gonzo is a man called Max Hardcore. When you watch a Max Hardcore movie, you are looking at pure sexual sadism. He says on his website, "I force girls to drink my piss, fist-fuck them, ream their asses and drill their throats until they puke." He did, indeed, invent vomit pornography. This man uses speculums as torture-techniques in women's vaginas and anuses.

Now, when I first started researching this, no one in the porn industry would own Max Hardcore. They wouldn't talk about him. As far as they were concerned he was over there. When I went to Las Vegas in 2008, he had the biggest stall in the middle of the whole convention. He has now become front and center because the pornography that he produces has increasingly become mainstream.

***Max Hardcore [porn clip]***

What can I say? I'm a popular guy.

**Gail Dines:** Now, many people accuse anti-porn feminists like myself of cherry-picking the very worst, that somehow we spend hours on the Internet looking for the most violent images.

The only empirical study that has been done that is peer-reviewed about the content of online pornography was actually published in 'Violence Against Women', the journal, by Ana Bridges and her team. And they found, in the 304 scenes, top-selling movies:

- 88.2% contained physical aggression, principally spanking, gagging, and slapping;
- 48.7% of scenes contained verbal aggression, primarily name-calling;
- Targets of aggression were overwhelmingly female.

I want to make it perfectly clear that the images I am going to show today are the images I got to in about 10-15 seconds. Now, if I get to them in 15 seconds, you can be sure that a 12-year-old boy can get to them in 10 seconds. So this is not looking at the worst. This is mainstream porn.

When you type porn into Google, you come up with so-called free porn sites, the tube sites. This is the gateway to the industry. And when you go into these tube sites, be it pornhub, or whatever, they have sometimes 60-65 categories at the side. Anything from anal porn, teen porn, MILF porn, tiny Asian porn, you name it. And you click on those categories.

Now, the first and most common sex act in all of gonzo pornography is gagging. This is where the penis is so far down the throat of the woman that she gags, to the point sometimes of vomiting. In some cases, they even hold her nose so she can't breathe. Now, they often put a lot of mascara on these women so that you get visual documentation of the tears streaming down her face as she's gagging. The interesting thing here is that as she is gagging and I mean choking, they don't pull their penis out, what they do is they grab her head and they pull it towards the penis so she is really choking and gagging. This is the number one act that you see in mainstream pornography on the Internet.

So let me read you one of the texts on quite a popular site called "Gag Me Then Fuck Me." "Do you know what we say to things like romance and foreplay? We say fuck off! We take gorgeous young bitches and do what every man would REALLY like to do. We make them gag till their makeup starts running and then they get all of their holes sore... Anything brutal involving a cock and an orifice. And then we give them the sticky bath!"

Now, this is extremely clever. And I want you to think about something. The average age of boys' first viewing of Internet pornography like this is 11.5 years of age. Now, when an 11-and-a-half-year-old boy puts "porn" into Google, do you think he thinks he's going to come up with "Gag Me Then Fuck Me"? He thinks he's going to come up with maybe breasts, maybe a naked woman. This is not what he thought. And then, see how they throw out a challenge. What they say is "we take gorgeous young bitches and do what every man would really like to do." Do you see how they're pulling him in? They're telling him, "If you are a real man, we are telling you what you would like to do." "If you are man enough, then you will look at this." And I don't know any 12-year-old boy who's going to say, "No, I'm not man enough." So this is why this is a predatory industry.

Now, let me take you to another very common sex act: anal sex. Now, in pornography, the goal of anal sex is to deliver the message to her just what a dirty, filthy slut she really is. And it is pounding anal sex.

Let me read you something from "Anally Ripped Whores." Now, this is the promotional copy, right? "We at Pure Filth know exactly what you want. And we're giving it to you. Chicks being ass-fucked until their sphincters are pink, puffy and totally blown out. Adult diapers just might be in store for these whores when their work is done."

This is how they promote their material. So they're making it perfectly clear what they think about women, and they're telling men that this is the kind of violence that is going to make you a real man.

Some other acts. DPing, double penetration.

***Hardcore Gangbang [porn clip]***

**Porn Performer:** Doble penetración.

**Gail Dines:** So let me give you the standard porn movie.

***Hardcore Gangbang [porn clip]***

**Interviewer:** You've done double penetration before, correct?

**Porn Performer:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** And you enjoyed it?

**Porn Performer:** Yes. I liked it.

**Interviewer:** It feels good?

**Porn Performer:** Si.

**Interviewer:** Excellent.

**Gail Dines:** The standard porn movie is one woman and anything from three and above men. She often has a penis in her mouth, as she's being choked, one in her anus, one in her vagina. And as they are pounding away, they are spitting in her face and they are calling her "bitch" and "whore" and "cum dumpster." This is standard imagery in the industry.

Now, what that does is show that the more you can debase her, the more you can dehumanize her, then the hotter the sex. And that's what pornography is about. Pornography is about debasement and dehumanization. And the greater her debasement, the hotter the sex for him.

Now, these are real women it's happening to. We know from AIM – the Adult Industry Medical Healthcare Association – which was recently closed but at one point was doing the voluntary healthcare testing, we know that women in pornography suffer from the kinds of ailments and diseases that we have really very rarely heard before except maybe from prostituted women. They suffer from, for example, prolapse anuses, where the anuses drop out of the body because of the rough anal sex. Things like chlamydia of the eye, gonorrhea of the anus. Who gets such things?

The image many men have of women in pornography is somehow one day a woman wondered onto a porn set and said, "People do this? I've been looking for this my entire life!" "Lawyer, doctor, porn performer. I think I'll go for this." That's not how you get into porn. You get into porn because of poverty, because of sexual abuse, because you're being pimped into it. It is very easy to get into porn; it is very difficult to get out.

But what happens in pornography is they have to conceal the real violence because most men who use pornography are not sexual sadists. And if they really understood that they

were masturbating to images of sexual sadism, for many of them it would be almost psychologically intolerable. So the message is, "The bitch, the whore, the cum dumpster, she loves it! She can't get enough."

### **50 to 1 #2 [porn clip]**

**Male:** And you say "yes, sir" and "no, sir" to guys that are older than you.

**Porn Performer:** Yes.

**Male:** Practice right now.

**Porn Performer:** Yes, sir. No, sir.

**Male:** And when guys say, "I'm gonna cum in your mouth," you say?

**Porn Performer:** Yummy.

**Male:** You're a quick learner.

**Gail Dines:** There is no such thing as "no" in pornography. That word has been erased from the world of pornography.

And, of course we have racism in pornography, such as "PimpMyBlackTeen.com." "Long Dong Black Kong." This is from a genre called interracial, which is a very popular genre. Now, interracial is usually a few – one, two, three – black men and a white woman. And it's mainly geared to white men.

So the question one has to ask is: How in a society that has historically been founded on racism - where black men got lynched for just looking at a white woman or even for being told they looked at a white woman - how is it possible that now we have white men spending lots and lots of money to watch black men penetrate white women? And then it got me thinking. And I thought, if pornography is really about the debasement of women, how better way to debase a white woman in the eyes of a white man than to have her penetrated over and over again by that which is the marker of all forms of sexual deviance, i.e. the black body.

Then we have 8th Street Latinas, which is a site which promises women, who are supposed to be undocumented, that if they have sex with these guys they will get them green cards. And then, of course, Asian women. And the message here is that we will traffic in women for your pleasure. This is what pornography does. It will basically mobilize any racist, sexist trope that you can imagine in order to make the sex even hotter.

And what we have to ask is what does it mean that we are bringing up a generation of boys with 24/7 access to this kind of pornography? I want you also to think about this free porn as kind of like giving cigarettes out outside a high school. It's bringing them in. It's introducing them to it. It's defining who they are before they get a chance to define who they really think they are.

You see previously, what happened to boys, hormones raging? You found your father's Playboy, if you were lucky. And then, you had to look through and what did you see? Sexist as it was, you had women with no clothes on smiling in a cornfield with a coy smile on their face. As sexist as that was, it was incomparable to this.



This now is boys being catapulted into a world of sexual violence that if it was being done to any other group would be seen as a form of torture. And it is at the very age that boys are developing what we call their sexual template. So you are shaping who they are sexually through these kinds of images.

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## What's at Stake?

### ***The Price of Pleasure* [documentary clip]**

**Male:** There's only so many ways to have sex. They've all been shot. All you can try to do is make it a little more sensational. But it's been so sensationalized. How many dicks can you stick in a girl at one time?

**Joe Gallant:** I hate to say, but I think the future of American porn is violence.

**Gail Dines:** Now, the future: Where is all this going? This is a porn director called Jules Jordan, who makes particularly hardcore pornography, and he said, "One of the things about today's porn, the extreme market, the gonzo market, is so many fans want to see so much more extreme stuff." Now, the question is, how much more extreme can they get? They do virtually everything they can to women short of killing her. So I actually do not know what they're going to do.

So my question is this: Why are men letting the porn industry define who they are? Why are men buying pornography that tells them that you have no capacity for love, for empathy? The ideal man in porn is a life-support system for an erect penis. He's got no emotions, he's got no connections, nothing.

Now, for women, this is what I say to you. What happens in our culture is that women are split into two. You are either "fuckable" or invisible. The problem we have to live with is that what we want is a life of integrity, respect, safety, equality, good jobs ... but yet we have this juggernaut of an industry saying you know what, "If she's not fuckable, then she's invisible."

And then the real problem is that when you are given this choice between fuckability and invisibility – which is not really a choice, because who wants to be invisible – then somehow you are told that you are exercising your free choice or your agency by dressing in a fuckable way. When in reality real choice would be lots of choices on offer. And should you decide fuckability then that would be a real choice. But when there's no other choice, it makes no sense to call conformity to our culture a choice. In fact, that's what happens now is that increasingly we are forced to conform because of lack of choice.

Let's take the story of Miley Cyrus.

### ***Hannah Montana* [television clip]**

**Miley Cyrus (singing):** You get the best of both worlds...

**Gail Dines:** Here you had squeaky-clean Hannah Montana, the Disney commodity worth God knows how much. But she's aging out of Hannah Montana. So what we need to do now is figure out a way to reinvent Miley Cyrus so that she becomes visible in a world where she has to compete with fuckable Rihanna and Lady Gaga and all of those images. So in steps Annie Leibovitz and Vanity Fair and we have a whole series of images.

Now, did it work? Did we convert squeaky-clean Hannah Montana into fuckable Miley Cyrus? You bet we did.

***Wrecking Ball* [music video clip]**

**Miley Cyrus (singing):** I came in like a wrecking ball. I never hit so hard in love. All I wanted was to break your walls. All you ever did was wreck me.

**Gail Dines:** So what you see is that even if you are a celebrity and you want to stay visible in this world then, really, these are one of the few choices open to you.

***Wrecking Ball* [music video clip]**

**Miley Cyrus (singing):** All you ever did was wreck me. Yeah you, you wreck me. Yeah you. You wreck me.

**[News clip]**

**Barbara Walters:** You have been half-naked almost this whole year, it seems to me. Do you want to be naked?

**Miley Cyrus:** I don't *always* want to be naked. Once I came out on stage, and I came out. I was in a full Marc Jacobs dress, completely covered. And they wrote, "Miley is boring. She doesn't get naked, and she's boring." No matter what I do, I'm either boring or I'm a slut.

**Gail Dines:** But now, it gets even younger as in the French Vogue. And as in this. Now, the question becomes, "What is the effect? What does all of this mean?" And you know who gave me the insight into what was going on? You know who really clarified it for me? It wasn't a Ph.D. in Media Studies. Or Sociology. It was a convicted child molester who I like to call "Dick." And I interviewed him, and then he was talking about grooming his daughter. Now, grooming is what, traditionally, individual perpetrators have done to individual victims.

***The Woodsman* [movie clip]**

**Walter:** A pretty girl like you should have a lot of friends.

**Robin:** I'm not pretty.

**Walter:** Well, not in the common way.

**Robin:** What does that mean?

**Walter:** It means that uncommon beauty is commonly overlooked.

**Gail Dines:** They hone in on them. They tell them how beautiful they are, how wonderful they are, how sexy they are, how hot they are. And this is a way that you kind of make a

connection between you and your future victim, and then by the time you actually rape your victim, your victim somehow feels like they have a connection to you. And he said to me: "The culture did a lot of the grooming for me." And I almost fell off my chair. Because I thought, "That's it. That's exactly right." And the reason it is collectively grooming our young girls is because your generation is going to then date the guys who are being collectively groomed by the porn industry.

If you want to live a life of equality and of dignity you cannot, you simply cannot continue to live in a porn culture. Because the porn culture is saying that you don't matter. That, in fact, all you are is a fuck object. It eroticizes violence against women and when you eroticize violence against women, you render the violence invisible.

There has to be an answer to this. And the answer is not on an individual level. The answer to predatory corporations is always on a collective level. And it just so happens that I have a group for you and it is called "Stop Porn Culture." And we are a group of academics and activists and parents and educators who are working to raise consciousness as to the harms of pornography.

This is not going to be easy. But I am telling you, we do not have a choice here. Because if the pornographers hijack our sexuality, if they hijack our culture, what kind of a world are we going to live in? What kind of a world are we going to have for your children? What kind of a world is it going to be when men and boys brought up on gonzo become the doctors and the lawyers and the educators? What kind of men are they going to make? What kind of partners are they going to make? What kind of fathers are they going to make?

These are crucial questions that we have to ask ourselves. And you and I and all of us, we absolutely deserve a sexuality that is authentically ours, that grows out of who we are, that is life-loving, that is life-affirming and that we ourselves authored, not the pornographers. So I ask you here today, I ask you, help me push this boulder up this hill.

Thank you.

[END]

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