

Spirituality has always felt to me as private as sexuality. We don't go waving our wieners all over the place and we shouldn't wave our gods around either.

*Michael Ian Black*

meetville.com

Our partner's sexuality does not belong to us. It isn't just for and about us, and we should not assume that it rightfully falls within our jurisdiction.

*Esther Perel*

meetville.com

# **Pornography, Erotica and the development of adolescent male sexuality and spirituality**

[www.findingtruthmatters.org](http://www.findingtruthmatters.org)



It is a myth  
that the Song of Solomon  
extols marital erotica

by Dr. Andrew Corbett

# John's story



“Have  
your  
say”

*In your experience, how prevalent is the use of pornography among teenage boys (your own personal awareness)?*

*What would be your initial reaction to John's 'confession'?*

*How do you think different parents/other staff within your school would have responded?*

*When I say 'Christian spirituality', what is the first phrase that comes to mind?*

**Sexuality and spirituality are two sides  
of the same coin. (Richard Rohr)**

**“Lutheranism could espouse an  
attitude to the body that sought  
not to transcend physicality but  
to embrace it, in all its aspects”  
(Rittgers, 2012, p. 207).**

**Pornography, Erotica**

**and the development  
of adolescent male  
sexuality and  
spirituality**

“Have  
your  
say”

*In your opinion, in what way is the human body closely connected to Christian spirituality?*

**Shame “is a complex emotional response that all humans acquire during early development” (Vanscoy, 2006)**

**“Shame is highly correlated with addiction, depression, violence, aggression, bullying, suicide, (and) eating disorders” (Brown, 2012)**

**Pornography, Erotica  
and the development  
of adolescent male  
sexuality and  
spirituality**

- 1. pornography and erotica, with a particular overview of a biblical perspective.**
- 2. pornography and erotica and its influence and impact on the developing teenager.**
- 3. provide a brief framework**

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**a Satanic “sexual attack against the mind of humanity”  
(Murphy, 1996, p. 122)**

**a “demonic evil that traffics in human sex”  
(Thomas Nelson, 2001)**

**an assault on “the senses and sensibilities of the Christian”  
(Nelson, Thomas, 1995)**

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**16th and 17th century literature  
“produced visual and written erotic  
imagery to nourish and excite sexual  
fantasy” (Hawkes, p. 88)**



**Pornography, Erotica  
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*porneúō*    *its changing meaning*

**unfaithfulness**

**Amos 2:7**

**Jeremiah 5:7**

**Hosea 1-3**

*porneúō* its changing meaning

**unfaithfulness**

**fornication**

**adultery**

**Amos 2:7**

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**incest**

**sodomy**

**unlawful marriage**

**sexual intercourse**

**subjugation**

**aggression**

**degradation**

**abuse**

**coercion**

**violence**

**dominance**

**control**

**sadism**

**rape**

*grápho*

**Carve**

**Engrave**

**‘Porn kind of stays in a boy’s head’. Jacob, 17  
(Hamilton, 2010)**

**Pornography has a tendency to dehumanize people.**

**“sexually explicit materials that purvey and survey a feminized subject who becomes the object of a domineering and possessive phallic presence and gaze”  
(Caputi, 2003)**

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*eros* is the most accurate rendition of the Hebrew *ahab*

It's failure to be used in the Greek bible created "the problematic rupture between eros and agape in the Christian theology of love". (Wood, 2010)

**“[E]roticism is first and foremost a thirst for otherness” and that it is essentially about desire... “a shot fired in the direction of the world beyond”. (Burrows 1998)**

**Spirituality has to do with sexuality (and in this context eroticism – as an energy that drives humanity toward life), and pornography has to do with ‘genitality’ (Richard Rohr).**

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**“Both erotic and pornographic material can be sexually stimulating; however, pornography is used to degrade others, while erotica celebrates human sexual experience”  
(Balswick & Balswick, 2008)**

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**“Those who deny their bodies and their feelings, thinking that the real self is the mental subject, are never wholly available. Some part, the vital, spontaneous part, is always under constraint. Touch is always feared” (Timmerman, 1992)**

**“the knowing that comes from eros strives to form a union, to be part of, in proximity to the other, while cognitive knowledge, attempting to divorce itself from eros, focuses on the control of the other known and its usefulness” (Black, 2003)**

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“Have  
your  
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*How readily do you find teenagers (in general) and teenage boys (in particular) talk about issues of sexuality?*

*What do you think are the stumbling blocks?*

**The ancient Hebrews, in understanding themselves as being created in the image of God, saw that that included**

**“bodies, minds, and spirits, genitals and all” (Ellens, 2009)**

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**Shame “relays the message that one has not just done something wrong, but deep inside, the person is flawed at the core and therefore can never measure up”  
(Ellens)**

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**“about a third described the porn habit as a form of betrayal or infidelity. But the majority were neutral or even positively disposed to their lover’s taste for smut”  
(Douthat, 2008)**

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**“39% of male church members accessed internet pornography more than 25 times. And, among lower age group men, 19 to 22 and 23 to 29 year olds, the percentages were 60 percent and 59 percent respectively” (White & Kimball, 2009)**

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“Have  
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*What are your current practices of negotiating the sexuality mine field within your school? In what departments is sexuality most discussed?*

*In what departments should it be discussed?*

http://www.fightthenewdrug.org/

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FIGHT THE NEW DRUG GET THE FACTS + DONATE MEDIA + GET HELP GET INVOLVED STORE ABOUT BLOG

watch porn have a higher tendency to view women as objects to use and act upon. #PornKillsLove Fight for love. @FightTheNewDrug http://t.co/1lr4XQsiCr When you get so many shares (1 million)

## DROPPING KNOWLEDGE ON THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF PORN

AS FEATURED IN:

abc NIGHTLINE ALJAZEERA THE HUFFINGTON POST CNN npr Psychology Today TheDailyDot LAZEE The Washington Post

### VIDEO: THE MOST SUCCESSFUL MALE PORN STAR OF ALL TIME SPEAKS OUT ON PORN

© June 18, 2015

### TRUE STORY: WHAT PORN TAUGHT ME ABOUT BEING GAY

© June 26, 2015

Link to Resources:  
<http://1drv.ms/1NGPFQI>



## PORN IS LIKE A DRUG

*On the surface, cocaine and porn don't seem to have a lot in common but studies are showing that viewing pornography tricks your brain into releasing the same pleasure chemicals that drugs do. What's more is your brain actually begins to rewire itself because of this artificial stimulation. It may sound crazy, but it's true.*

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- To your brain, porn has the same effects as drugs.
- Porn hijacks the reward pathway in the brain.
- Just like drugs, you build up a tolerance so you need more porn for the same effects.
- Withdrawal symptoms can occur when you try and walk away.

On the surface, cocaine and porn don't seem to have a lot in common. One is purchased in seedy alleyways; the other is free to download. One habit can get expensive pretty fast, while the other is about the price of a high-speed Internet connection. Besides, Hugh Hefner doesn't exactly conjure up images of a cartel drug lord.

So where's the similarity? Inside the brain.

In case you're not a neurosurgeon, here's a crash course in how the brain works. Deep inside your brain, there's something called a "reward pathway." You've got one. Your cat's got one. For mammals, it comes standard. The reward pathway's job is to help keep you alive by doing exactly what its name promises: rewards you, or more specifically, rewards you when you do something that promotes life, such as eating food or achieving something you've worked hard for. And the way it rewards you is by releasing chemicals in your brain—mainly one called dopamine, but also others like oxytocin [See page 15 *Porn Is a Lie*].

Normally, these chemicals are really handy. They help us feel pleasure and bond with other people, and they motivate us to come back to important activities that make us happy. The problem is, the reward pathway can be hijacked.

The way substances like cocaine and opioids make users feel high is by triggering the reward pathway to release unnaturally high levels of dopamine without making the user do any of the work to earn it. Want to guess what else does that? Porn.

And that surge of dopamine is causing more than just feelings. As it goes pulsing through the brain, dopamine helps to create new brain pathways that essentially lead the user back to the behavior that triggered the chemical release.

The more a drug user hits up or a porn user looks at porn, the more those pathways get wired into the brain, making it easier and easier for the person to turn back to using, whether they want to or not.

Over time, the constant overload of chemicals causes other brain changes as well. Just like a junkie will eventually require more and more of a drug to get a buzz or even just feel normal, porn users can quickly build up a tolerance as their brains adapt to the high levels of dopamine that porn releases. In other words, even though porn is still releasing dopamine into the brain, the user can't feel its effects as much.

That's because the brain is trying to protect itself from the overload of dopamine by getting rid of some of its chemical receptors, which act like tiny catcher's mitts that receive the dopamine released. With fewer receptors, the brain thinks less dopamine is there and the user doesn't feel as strong a reaction. As a result, they have to find more porn, find it more often, or find a more extreme version—or all three—to generate even more dopamine to feel excited.

And once a porn user becomes accustomed to a brain pulsing with these chemicals, trying to cut back on the habit can lead to withdrawal symptoms, just like with drugs. While people often think of porn as something that's been around forever, today's version of porn is a whole new ball game. Thanks to the Internet, porn now mixes the most powerful natural dopamine release the body can produce with a cocktail of other elements—endless novelty, shock, and surprise—all of which increase the dopamine surge. And because Internet porn offers an endless stream of variety, users can flip to a new image every time their high starts to fade, keeping dopamine levels elevated for hours.

Describing porn's effect to a U.S. Senate committee, Dr. Jeffrey Satinover of Princeton University said, "It is as though we have devised a form of heroin 100 times more powerful than before, usable in the privacy of one's own home and injected directly to the brain through the eyes."

**“15-25 year old males primarily viewed pornography to get aroused or masturbate (48.8%), out of curiosity (39.5%) and because it’s ‘cool’ (28.5%)” and that there appears to be a correlation between exposure and “the biological and cognitive cycles that modulate sexual interest, desire and risk taking”. (Bryant, 2009)**

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**“protecting children from sexual harm does not mean protecting children from sexuality. Indeed, maintaining children’s sexual ignorance fosters sexual abuse and poor sexual and emotional health.” (Flood, 2009)**

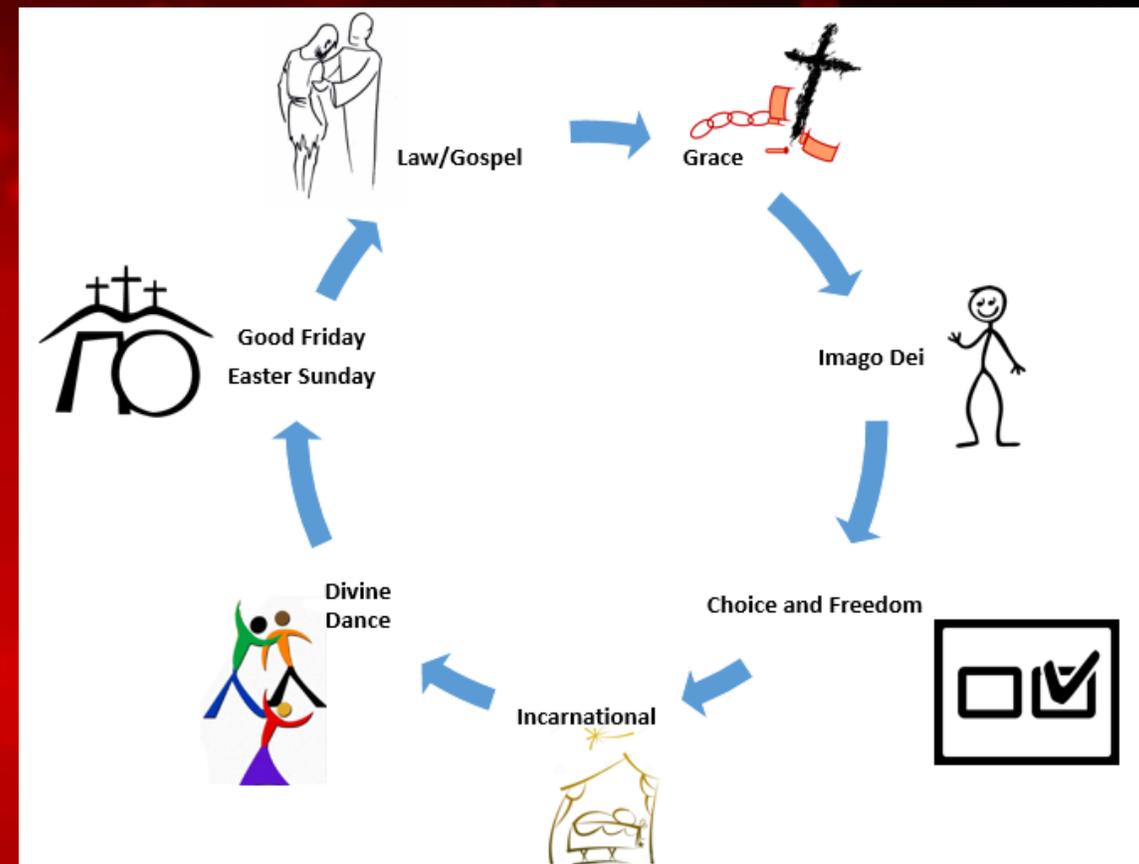
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“Have  
your  
say”

*Getting back to John... how would you deal with his struggles? If he is overtly Christian? If he is not?*

*Normalise – understand your worldview*



# Normalise – understand your worldview Educate



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*Normalise – understand your  
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*Educate*

*Risk*

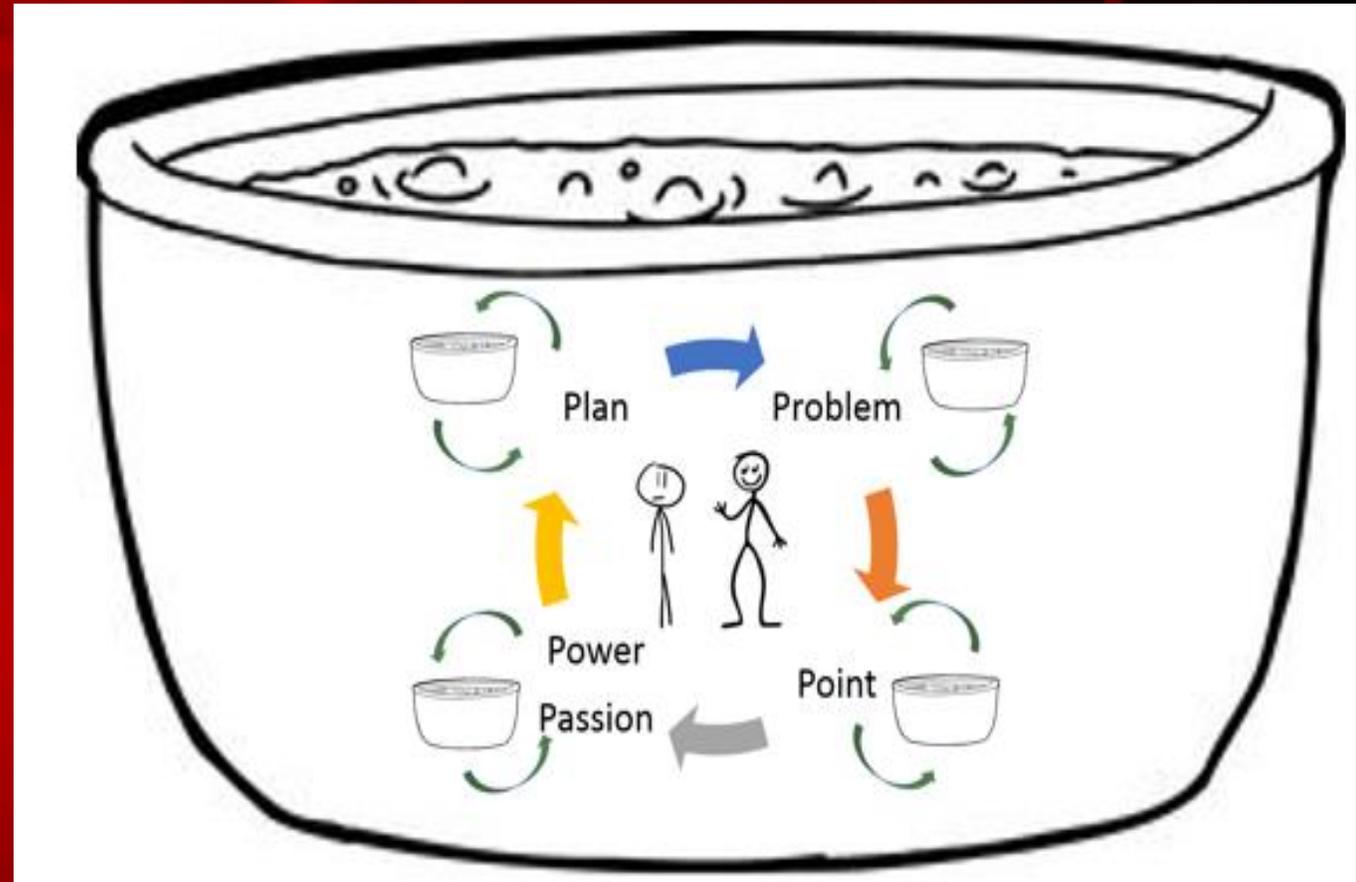


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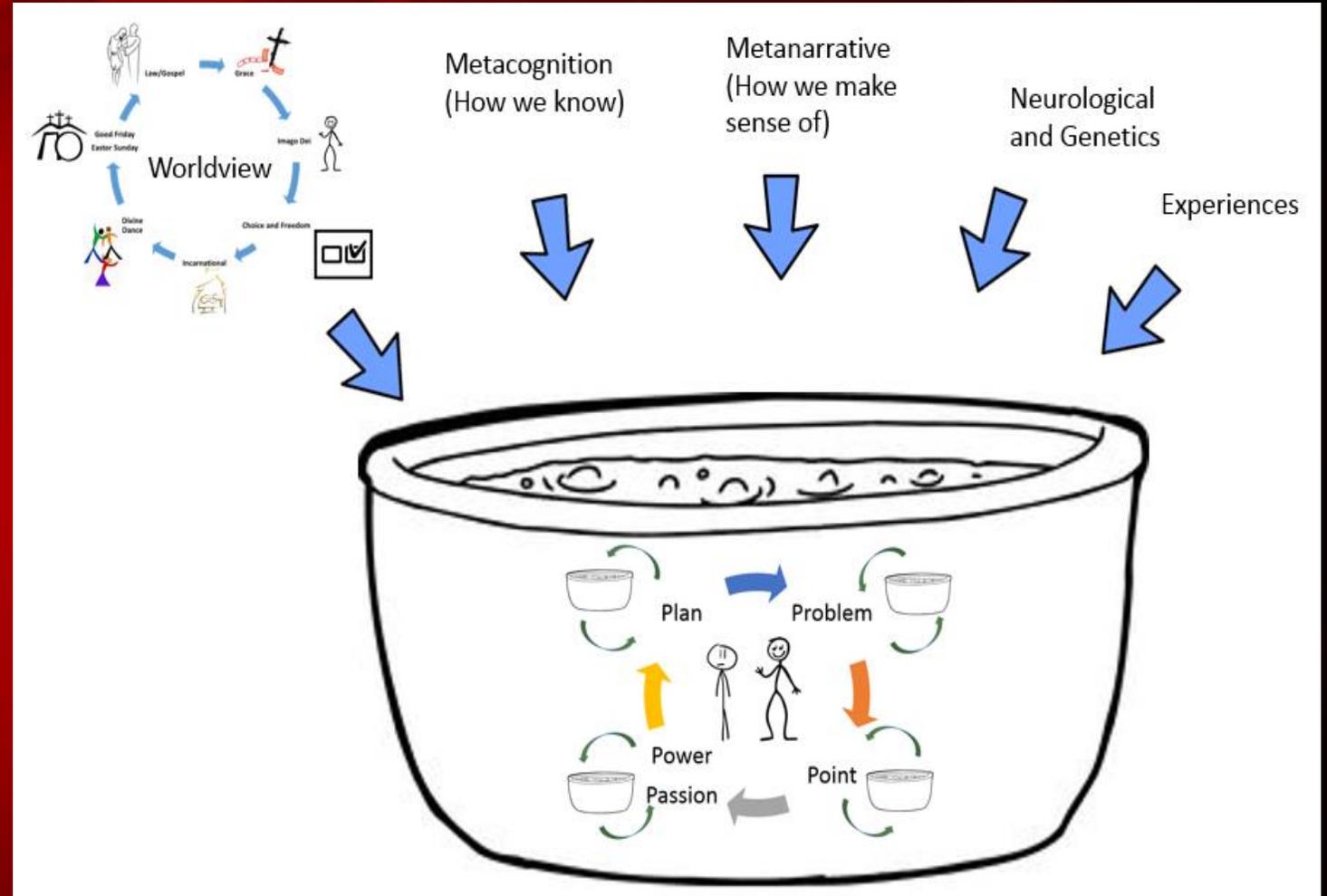
*Normalise – understand your  
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*Influence*

*Resources*



I have  
found  
the one  
whom my  
soul  
loves.

Song of Solomon 3:4