

ENGLISH 312 AUDIENCE STATEMENT AND ENTHYMEME COVER SHEET

Audience Statement

My audience is PRO Pornography

Who is your audience? Why do they find your claim initially unacceptable?

- Who: Couples in a serious committed relationship
- Why: They feel that porn either can enhance a relationship or has no effect on it

What does your audience value the most?

- Freedom, Pleasure, Successful relationships, happiness of partner, being desired by partner, trust, sex life

What does your audience fear the most?

- Dishonesty in relationships, Breakup/divorce, Unhappy partner, Unhappy themselves in relationship, Loneliness, Loss of sexual satisfaction, their partner not wanting them/being attracted to them.

Audience Counterarguments:

- But porn can enhance relationships/give them variety
- Porn prevents me/my partner from cheating with a real person
- If I can't stop my partner from viewing porn, I should just accept it.

Enthymeme

What Are the Consequences of pornography on healthy, happy and successful relationships?

Claim: Pornography compromises healthy, happy and successful relationships.

Because frequent consumption of pornography distorts relationship expectations

Implicit Assumption (Whatever V2 C also V1 B): Whatever distorts relationship expectations, compromises healthy, happy and successful relationships.

Contract Question: What effect, if any, does pornography have on our ability to have healthy, happy and successful relationships?

Student Name

Instructor Name

English 312

Date

All You Need is Love

In 2014, *Playboy*, the corporation that many would agree is the father of modern pornography celebrated its 60th anniversary (“*Playboy History*”). In those 60 years, porn has come a long way – from photos of scantily clad women in the centerfolds of men’s magazines to the multi-billion-dollar industry of internet pornography (qtd. Barna Group in CovenantEyes 4). In the same year as *Playboy*’s diamond anniversary, 79 and 76 percent of men and women respectively reported regular viewing of pornography; for married men and women, those numbers decreased to 55 and 25 percent (qtd. Barna Group in CovenantEyes 8). So it is clear that people in relationships rely on porn less than single individuals, but it is nonetheless still prevalent.

Also in 2014, *Pornhub*, one of the largest online porn companies put up a billboard in Times Square that said “All You Need is Hand” with a picture of two hands forming a heart (Dicker). This play on words of the popular Beatles song, “All You Need is Love,” suggests that porn will meet our intimate needs (The Beatles); however, it does not need to be argued that our needs and interests extend far beyond porn. We value our serious relationships. We want sexual satisfaction for ourselves and for our partner. Ultimately, we want successful relationships rich with love, trust, fidelity, and happiness. In regards to the effect of porn on these relationships, some would argue that porn damages them while others would contend that it actually enhances them. Others yet may say that unlike love, porn is fake and therefore has no effect on our

relationships with those whom we truly love. So in this regard, what role does porn play, if any, in our relationships with those we love?

It is not uncommon for couples in a relationship to view porn together, in fact nearly 50% of couples have reported doing so (Maddox, Rhoads, and Markman 441). This practice suggests that porn has the ability to enhance our relationships in some form or another and who wouldn't want that? We want the most out of our relationships – fidelity, trust, a feeling of closeness with our partner and sexual satisfaction. So does porn in fact have an enhancing effect on our relationships? While research does suggest that couples who watch porn together find more relationship satisfaction than couples in which one or both partners view porn alone, porn itself does not enhance relationship satisfaction (Maddox, Rhoads, and Markman 445-446). One of the most significant studies on this topic was performed by Dr. Dolf Zillmann and Dr. Bryant Jennings in which men and women were exposed to either none or varying levels of pornographic media (Zillmann and Jennings 442). The results of the study found that porn consumption is directly and inversely associated with an individual's satisfaction with their partner (Zillmann and Jennings 447). This cause and effect relationship can partially be explained by a simple and widely accepted behavioral theory called the Social Cognitive Theory (Sharma and Romas 176). This theory assumes that all individuals have a "Vicarious Capability," in which they learn how to act based on how they see others act (Sharma and Romas 177). Therefore, as individuals view porn, they gain a false expectation of sex and then find disappointment in the reality of sex. Even minimal viewing of softcore porn, leads to decreased affection for one's partner, decreased attraction towards one's partner, and decreased sexual satisfaction with one's partner (Zillmann and Jennings 447). Clearly, these effects do not line up with our ideal of an intimate sex life or a happy and successful relationship.

Although viewing porn as a couple is not uncommon, the majority of porn consumption happens alone (Maddox, Rhoads, and Markman 445-446) and this has negative effects on both members of the relationship. As an individual's perception of their partner's porn consumption increases, so does that individual's level of psychosocial distress and distrust in their partner regardless of actual intent to deceive (Szymanski, Feltmann, and Dunn 196). One study found that a husband's use of pornography causes an "intense, psychologically and emotionally disruptive, and disturbing experience for wives" and a belief that husbands are less able to fulfill marital expectations (Zitzman and Butler 220). This is important to understand, because when we truly care about someone, the last thing that we want is to hurt them. We want them to feel supported and know that we are fully committed to them.

Even if porn is not necessarily the best thing for a relationship, one may still argue that accepting porn in a relationship is choosing the lesser of two evils, asserting that porn can act as an outlet for relationship problems and prevents an individual from cheating on their partner with a real person. In a world where lasting relationships are seeming less and less common, we want to do everything we can to hold on to the relationships that we have and those we love; however, accepting porn will accomplish no such thing. In fact, as exposure to pornography increases, the value a person places on marriage and the need for fidelity in relationships decreases (Zillmann and Jennings 447). Furthermore, porn consumption increases a person's acceptance of adultery (Zillmann and Jennings 447).

Alternatively, many people feel that they just need to accept their partner's porn use having developed the ideology that "that's just how things are" and a relationship with porn is better than no relationship at all; however, the truth is that a relationship with porn will likely lead to no relationship at all. Statistics have proven that more than half of all divorce cases

involve one partner's obsession with porn (qtd. American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers in CovenantEyes 12). So if this is the case, what do we do?

The negative consequences of porn consumption in a relationship cause so much anxiety, emotional and physical detachment, distrust, infidelity, and loss in sexual satisfaction that it compromises our ideal of a happy and successful relationship. Don't give up on the relationship; give up on porn. It may not be easy, but successful relationships are never easy and are worth the sacrifice. Get help if needed: see a counselor, attend recovery groups, learn how to overcome desires to look at porn, and set rules and goals with your partner. So who got it right – *Pornhub* or The Beatles? I think we can all agree that we want more than just our own personal satisfaction. We want our partner to be satisfied and we want true intimacy. We want trust, fidelity, and happiness. Love is what we need. Porn has no place in love and therefore, it must go.

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