

PORNFREE RADIO

025 The Pornification of Culture: Surprising Advocates

Pornfree Radio, Episode 25.

[Music plays.

Staring at the Stars Passenger

Tobacco stains our yellow teeth
And all our fingers and underneath
Our fingernails that clasp on sheets
And we try desperately to sleep
Hearts are sad and eyes are tired
And all this red bull keeps us wired
It gives us wings
It gives us rings around our eyes

We put three sugars in our tea
Sit to watch day time TV
And laugh at mums who don't know who the father is
And all our girlfriends are long gone
We watch too much internet porn
Who needs love when you've got silicone and strap ons...]

Hey, this is Matt Dobschuetz. You're listening to a clip from *Staring at the Stars* by Passenger. I just thought I'd play that clip just because I love that line about you know "our girlfriends are all long gone because we watch too much Internet porn." Just kind of the state of where our culture is at right now where guys are moving towards loving porn and connecting with porn more than their girlfriends and their wives. Today's topic is the pornification of culture. It's really about finding some surprising advocates out there for what we're doing living porn free.

We hear lots of things in culture about people celebrating pornography or pornographic things. We hear a lot of sort of pro porn statements or pro kind of this is just the way it is. Everyone does it. When I encounter people out there who are likeminded... When people are sort of walking in step with what we're talking about here on Pornfree Radio I just get excited.

I'd like to make one distinction. I am definitely anti-porn but I don't feel called to be an anti-porn activist. I follow a lot of people on Twitter who that's kind of their calling is to expose this seediness of the porn industry to draw attention to anti-trafficking and to kind of talk about human dignity. While I totally support that, my aim on Pornfree Radio is really at recovery and restoration and helping people walk out of porn addiction like I did.

The last few weeks I've been sharing quotes from different spiritual people like Henri Nouwen or C.S. Lewis, A.W. Tozer and I know there's a bunch of guys out there who are Christian who listen to this show which is great, but I also know there's guys who are leaving porn and it's not because of a Christian faith or a Christian calling. It's they've found that porn hasn't served them in their walks. You might be one of those guys.

So I just thought, hey, I'd like to incorporate some other sources from other people talking about porn and talking about the dangers of porn. So I just found, I was really inspired this week when I was listening to a podcast and pornography came up sort of inexplicably. It just sort of came up in the middle of a conversation. I thought I'd play a clip for it.

But before I get there I just wanted to kind of set up something about podcast. I first fell in love with podcasts 'cause I loved just listening to them. I had never thought about being a podcaster. The first podcasts that I really gravitated towards, believe it or not, were not spiritual podcasts or podcasts about self help or recovery. The podcasts I loved were comedian podcasts. One of the first podcasts that I ever started listening to and probably one of the most famous podcasts out there, a top 10 podcast is *WTF with Marc Maron*. If you know anything about Maron, he's sort of neurotic, he talks about himself, and he's funny but he gets good guests on. I don't listen to every show, but when there's a guest that I'm interested in or when there's a topic that maybe he's talking about I kind of tune in.

This past week he had on Dr. Drew Pinsky, from CNN, from Loveline, from the Celebrity Rehab shows on MTV. I think it's MTV or VH1 I don't know which one. [It's VH1.] I don't really watch either. But Dr. Drew. So he has Dr. Drew on and I figured well I'll listen to this show and I figured Marc would start with his own neurosis and get some free therapy from Dr. Drew and there was a little of that. But about an hour in they just took a detour and started talking specifically about porn and I just wanted to play a clip from this show. I might make a few comments about it, but I'm going to play a clip. Just listen to what they had to say.

[Start clip from [WTF with Marc Maron Episode 547 – Dr. Drew Pinsky](#).

Marc Maron: It seems it's profound to me just what's happened culturally, sexually. I didn't plan to talk about this but I mean, since you obviously have opinions on it. The pornification---

Dr. Drew: Oh, yes. It's interesting, right?

Marc Maron: —of culture. Like I talk about it on stage that porn is insidious, it's brain altering,

Dr. Drew: Absolutely.

Marc Maron: —almost permanently if you're not careful.

Dr. Drew: Probably. We don't know.

Marc Maron: I know. I saw porn too young and I've struggling backwards my entire life.

Dr. Drew: We do know that a young exposure can cause sexual compulsions and addictions. It shatters the upper limits of the young brain's ability to manage and regulate stuff that's coming in. It's almost like a trauma.

Marc Maron: It's desensitized. It's f***ing profound, dude.

End clip.]

OK, I got to stop it. My mind's just exploding with all these thoughts. I mean, these two guys, there's just having a normal conversation about all sorts of things and they go in a minute they basically both affirm this idea that porn is harmful. They start even getting into more of a physical thing, you know, just that it possibly harms the brain. Then they, you know, Marc, just in and of itself just says that he saw porn at a young age and it just screwed him up. Dr. Drew sort of says that there could be a physical reaction in the brain and that at least it's just trauma that it's traumatic for a young child to see adult pornography.

Now I just... these are just two sort of popular, regular kind of folks. This isn't... these aren't guys who are pastors or there's not a moral type of thing that they're coming at. There's not even an agenda to talk about porn. It's not part of their podcast. It's not like they said hey, let's do a whole show about the dangers of porn. This is literally coming up in a conversation.

I guess for me, there's a part of me that just really validates my struggle and my experience. Seeing porn at a young age really screwed me up and I've really spent the better part of 30 years recovering from that. Maybe other people have different experiences with it but for me it did have a major effect on the way I connected, the way my brain experienced it, it led to sexual compulsion and

addiction. I was just really excited to hear this. I just found myself going yes! yes! like I was just totally agreeing with these guys. So let me keep playing the clip.

[Resume clip.

Marc Maron: And like, and like, I don't know when it happened. I don't know if the business is that big to where like I mean in the 80s there was a f***ing, granted a right wing commission to sort of harness and assess it, but now it's just sort of like, yeah, porn is porn you can do it, we can, you and I can watch it right now. I mean, there used to be some difficulty in getting it, but and again I'm no Puritan, but it just seems to me that it has the same effect as a drug.

Dr Drew: For sure.

Marc Maron: And that you know, I have a friend, a good friend of mine, my sponsor actually is a... deals with sexual addiction.

Dr. Drew: Yeah.

Marc Maron: And I don't... I think the repercussions of that epidemic we don't even f***ing know.

Dr. Drew: We have no idea. We have no idea yet.

End clip.]

I mean, did you hear? They just called it an epidemic. These are two very secular, just sort of popular guys and they're calling it an epidemic. I mean, it's just amazing.

[Resume clip.

Dr. Drew: I worry about what's going to happen to the next... this current generation that's sort of we don't know and they're living in it. The one thing I've seen is a lot of young males -- you're going to love this. Young males are sort of not interested in relationships.

Marc Maron: Right.

Dr. Drew: Like no, women they're kind of difficult, they're tough.

Marc Maron: Yeah.

Dr. Drew: I've got my porn. I'm fine.

Marc Maron: Yeah.

Dr. Drew: Can you imagine?

Marc Maron: Or I got my hook up. I'm fine.

Dr. Drew: Hook up, porn, whatever some arousing whatever.

Marc Maron: This is interesting because Wilhelm Reich who wrote early on and got pushed out of psychiatry for it—

Dr. Drew: Yeah.

Marc Maron: —said that if we could unleash and demystify and take away the guilt and repression around sexuality

Dr. Drew: Yeah?

Marc Maron: —in this culture and he was going on Freud's idea that repression was why everyone was neurotic

Dr. Drew: Right.

Marc Maron: that we could fix the culture and create an unneurotic populace if people didn't stigmatize sexuality.

Dr. Drew: What do you think?

Marc Maron: Well, we're living in it.

Dr. Drew: Yeah, it's not working out so good. It's concerning.

Marc Maron: If it's a problem.

Dr. Drew: If it's a problem. That's right.

Marc Maron: Maybe kids are less neurotic. And maybe they're more comfortable sexually. But I don't know that by taking away the meaning of intimacy on that level is proactive.

Dr. Drew: No, it problematic because there's biological intimacy associated with it we can't escape. If you're denying it, that has consequences.

Marc Maron: Right.

Dr. Drew: It does. So people need to be respectful of what happens when two people are close like that.

Marc Maron: Oh, I see what you're saying. So there's no free ride.

Dr. Drew: No, their brains are real... oxytocin comes out, we have all kinds of feelings, and we can do it sometimes. But sometimes we cannot. How to identify those times and what the price is for doing it... not worked out.

End clip.]

So I mean, that last part I don't totally agree with but just this idea that there's consequences for taking the intimacy out of sexuality and sort of bonding with images over people. That denying that there's real emotions and feelings and biological things that happen in sexuality that porn denies that. It's just profound and it comes from an unlikely, not unlikely, but surprising advocates. I didn't expect listening to WTF this week that I would find something so powerful in terms of just a clear succinct critique on the pornification of culture and on porn in general. In no uncertain terms, if you listen to that three minutes, they basically said porn is not healthy, porn is creating unsafe... an unsafe environment in our culture, that it's destroying intimacy, that it's having harmful effects on young people. It's just amazing.

So I just share that because when you read articles online and when you read different things, there's all different sorts of things. When I first starting hosting this podcast one of the first articles I read was on *Slate*. I'm not even going to link to it in the show notes 'cause I think it was a piece of garbage.

But the woman who wrote about porn was basically saying, you know kind of what Marc Maron was talking about this idea that if you just destigmatize it that porn is just healthy and it serves hyper sexual people and it even allows them to explore their sexuality. So it kind of made this case that a lot of people who use porn are really struggling with, not struggling, but are working out their sexuality. They might be gay or they might have same sex feelings that they're exploring and it kind of just made this idea that porn is just sort of this way for people to experiment and engage and improve as people, as sexual beings.

You know that kind of popular pop psychology reaction to porn is all around us. I saw this *BuzzFeed* a few... a month ago or so had 4 reasons why porn is good for you. They put out this another piece of garbage video. Even if you know it's the overt things like the *Slate* article or we don't see things like the *BuzzFeed* video, you know, there's just this sort of popular, everyone does it; it's harmless. That's kind of in our culture, that's underlying all guys do this.

You know I was thinking about doing a show, and I don't think I'm going to do this 'cause I don't have the energy. I wanted to do a show called the myth of porn addiction. It wasn't going to be that porn addiction is a myth 'cause I don't think it

is I think it's a reality. I was going to say the real myth of porn addiction is the idea that you can't quit, that guys somehow can't stop doing it.

I saw something from one of the actresses involved in the iCloud hacking scandal wrote that one of the reasons why she took pictures of herself and sent them to her boyfriend was because her feeling was like if I don't send him these pictures he's just going to look at Internet porn. It was sort of her way of connecting with her boyfriend. But underlying that is kind of this idea that basically guys, if they don't connect sexually with their partners that they're just going to look at porn, that that's just inevitable.

So I really think that the more advocates we have in culture who are saying no, this isn't appropriate. No, you don't have to be coming at this from a moral Christian point of view to recognize that this isn't working I just think are powerful. It's powerful to have different voices in this. Because sometimes frankly I feel alone; sometimes like I'm like what am I doing this for? So many people are not jiving with what I'm doing. It's just exciting to hear this. I was just really motivated by it and I was excited to just share this with you.

You know what? It's worth it. It's worth the struggle. It's worth it pushing through. Don't believe the lies that no one can quit. Don't believe the lies that somehow this is good for hypersexual people, that somehow it's helpful. 'Cause you know, sometimes the addict part of us or the part of us that kind of comes alive in porn hears some of those false truths and gets excited and kind of rationalizes porn. So don't give into that. Don't agree with that.

I wanted to finish with something just equally surprising and exciting that I came across on YouTube the last couple of weeks. OK, so as a setup I was watching this on YouTube. This comes from a website called Highly Evolved Human.com. The website's primary focus is sharing stories of young people who are living with cancer. So you're probably asking me, Matt, why is this on Pornfree Radio? I'm just going to save it for this particular story. I'm going to play the clip right here. It's called [The Bus](#) and it's by Nick P. Ross. So listen to this. It's kind of a spoken word it's kind of a story. You'll see the connection.

[Music plays.]

I was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma at age 26. At that age cancer really isn't on anyone's radar. So when it comes up, which is often unavoidable, cancer is one of those diseases that makes you look like a cancer patient, it's often met with a lot of fear and confusion. I remember at a party once this guy came up to me and he was like—
Hey man, you in the Army? I've got a buddy in the Army with a haircut just like that.

And I just looked at him and said—

No, I'm not in the Army. This isn't even a haircut, I'm on chemotherapy.

I've never met someone who's dying. Awesome!

Another time I was at this art gallery and this woman came up to me. I had seen that we had gone to high school together and I hadn't seen her since then and she just looked at me and she said—

Hey, Nick. You look like Powder. Remember that movie Powder, with that albino guy? It's you!

The best one happened on a bus. I was living in New York City when I was diagnosed and I had to move back home to Denver, Colorado to go through treatment and I didn't have a car in Colorado. So when I had to get around, I'd take the bus.

One day, mid-treatment, I was sitting on the bus on one of those center aisle seats, the communal sits so you're like this (rocks from side to side) instead of this (rocks forward and backward). And I notice the guy sitting across from me was just staring. By that point I was used to being the baldy in the room, so I didn't think to engage him. He engaged me.

Hey pal. Hey man.

I ignored him at first because you know, I was on a bus.

Yo, dude. You shave your hair off 'cause you're going bald or what?

I thought about it for a second because it might be the most inappropriate question I've ever been asked. It's basically the guy equivalent of asking a girl if she's pregnant. You just don't do it. But he looked harmless and his friend sitting next to him had this pose like I do not want to be a part of this conversation, so I didn't feel the need to lie. I just told him.

No, I'm on chemotherapy.

And this shocked him. This was not in his rolodex of possible responses. He expected me to be like, yeah man, I'm going bald it's the worst. Oh, it's not that bad, geez. But instead, I turned his world around and I could see him search for the right thing to say. When he found it, his spine straightened, he looked me dead in the eye and he just said—

I'm in AA.

And then his shy friend peeked up from his shy pose—

I'm addicted to porn.

And there we were: cancer patient, formerly anonymous alcoholic, and some porn freak just solving the problems of humanity by relating to each other.

So you guys want to grab a beer or something.

Oh...

Oh, right, coffee?

Yeah, coffee.

Yeah, coffee.

Let's go.

Music plays.]

I just shared that 'cause I just think it says something about guys in general. As porn addicts we can kind of hide our struggle. We can hide our weakness. What I found was interesting here was this guy who's dealing with cancer and just the objective reality of cancer and the obvious conspicuous nature of cancer. He's going through chemotherapy so he's bald. So it's just obvious to people that something's different in him. That he's going through something. That he's in recovery or he's in treatment.

For those of us who are going porn free and working recovery, it's not obvious to people. We can kind of hide it. There's a consequence in hiding because when we start having a hard time no one's there to support us because they don't know anything's... they don't know it's hard for us. They don't know how to support us.

I just found it just exciting to hear, to see this little story unfold where the guy who's conspicuously struggling is just confronted by two other guys. When they find out what's really going on instead of judging him or kind of saying something stupid or digging themselves into some hole, they immediately share their weakness. The one guy says he in AA. The other guy said he was addicted to porn. Immediately it just goes to a deeper level of connection. They get off the bus and they go get coffee.

I just want to challenge you to be real with people in your lives to say that this is an issue. And where appropriate share your weakness because other people are going through things too. Other people are needing support. The more that we can be open on what we're working on, the more we can be a help to others and service to others, but also we can get support for ourselves.

So I just love that. Take a look at that website at [Highly Evolved Human](#). I'll have a link to it on our show notes today. The show notes will be at [pornfreeradio.com/25](#). Thought that was a great piece. Nick P. Ross was the author of that piece and I just thought it was awesome and so true. It's interesting if guys who are struggling with porn had to go through chemotherapy and had to

be more open about stuff I wonder if culture would look at us differently if we would have some more empathy and compassion from other people around us. If they really knew how serious this struggle it was and how hard it was to recover.

So that's about it this week. I love doing this show and I love kind of connecting with you. Thanks to all who took the survey the last couple of weeks, it's really helping me to find some things for future ideas and adding resources and other types of things to Pornfree Radio.

Once again, thanks for all of your ratings and support and reviews on [iTunes](#). They really help get the show out, get the word out. It gets the word out about the show on iTunes. And why is that important? One, I noticed after the survey 80-90 percent of you have found out about this show through iTunes. So people are searching for porn recovery or porn addiction and they're coming across the podcast. So the more ratings and reviews we have the more easily people can find us. So if you haven't done it already, please subscribe in iTunes, leave a rating, and preferably a review. That would really help me out.

So, thanks for listening this week. I cannot wait to connect with you in the future. If you ever want to send me an email, you can reach me at [matt \(at\) pornfreeradio.com](mailto:matt@pornfreeradio.com). All right, have a great week and we'll talk to you soon.