

Internet Pornography: An occasion of sin for our time—Part I

Sister Marysia Weber, R.S.M., D.O.
Sacred Heart Mercy Health Care Center
Religious Sisters of Mercy of Alma, Michigan

“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weakness, but one who was tempted in every way that we are, yet never sinned.” (Hebrews 4:15)

What is *Internet pornography*?

- ❖ *Internet pornography* specifically refers to sexually explicit material available to consumers on the *Internet* accessed for the purpose of arousal
- ❖ *Cybersex* refers to a consensual sexual discussion on-line for the purpose of achieving arousal or an orgasm

Internet Pornography Statistics, accessed January, 2010

(unless otherwise indicated, the statistics were accessed from: Jerry Ropelato, Internet Pornography Statistics; available from Top Ten Reviews, <http://internet-review.toptenreviews.com/internet-pornography-statistics.html>.)

- ❖ Sex is the number one search topic on the Internet
- ❖ 372 million pornographic websites are currently available (in 2003 the number was 1.3 million)
- ❖ 100,000 websites offer illegal child pornography
- ❖ 2.5 billion e-mails per day are pornographic (*Pornography Statistics*, Family Safe Media, 2003)
- ❖ More than 100 million individuals accessed a pornographic website in 2008 (23 million in 2003)
 - 72% were men
 - 28% were women
- ❖ 70% of Internet pornography traffic occurs between 9 am and 5 pm (Retzlaff, Eric, *Pornography’s Grip tightens by Way of Internet*, National Catholic Register, June 13-19, 1999)

- ❖ The most common ways people accidentally reached pornographic content on the Web are pop-up windows (55%), misrepresented links (52%), misspelled URLs (48%) and auto links within e-mails (23%) (*Fifty Percent of Workers Spend Nine Days a Year on Personal Surfing at Work*, Cerberian Inc. and SonicWALL, July 20, 2004)
- ❖ More than 70% of men from 18-34 visit pornographic sites in a typical month (ComScore media Metrix)
- ❖ 48% of families said pornography is a problem in their home (Focus on the Family Poll, October 1, 2003)
- ❖ The Internet was a significant factor in 2 out of 3 divorces (Am. Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers in 2003—divorcewizards.com)
- ❖ Average age of first Internet exposure to pornography is 8 years old
- ❖ Boys ages 12-17 are one of the largest consumers of pornography
 - Pornographers target them for that reason
 - 90% of them view on-line porn while doing their homework
- ❖ 1 in 25 youth who use the Internet have been sexually solicited where the solicitor tried to make contact offline (phone, mail or meeting in person) (Covenant Eyes, 2009)
- ❖ 29% of 7-17 year olds would freely give out home address
- ❖ 2 in 5 abductions of children ages 15-17 are due to Internet contact (San Diego Police Dept., 2005)
- ❖ Rape statistics are proportionately higher in those states with higher pornography sales and lower in those states with lower pornography sales
- ❖ 13,585 hard-core pornographic video/DVD titles were released in the United States, up from 1,300 titles in 1988 (*Sex on TV 4*, Kaiser Family Foundation, Menlo Park, CA., 2005)
- ❖ Half of all hotel guests order pornographic movies. These films compromise 80% of in-room entertainment revenue and 70% of total in-room revenues (Nick Madigan, New York Times, August 24, 2004)

- ❖ Worldwide sex industry sales for 2006 are reported to be \$97 billion, more revenue than Microsoft, Google, Amazon, eBay, Yahoo!, Apple, Netflix, and Earthlink combined.
- ❖ Every second \$3,076 is being spent on pornography
- ❖ Every second 28,250 Internet users are viewing pornography
- ❖ Every 39 minutes a new pornographic video is being created in the United States