

Korean Men's Interest in Gonzo Pornography and Use of Condoms

Chyng Sun

Abstract—This brief report examines correlations between Korean men's interest in gonzo pornography, perceptions of pornography's functional value, and use of condoms. The report found that, neither a higher interest in gonzo or the perception that pornography is a source of sexual information was directly related to condom utilization. However, interest in gonzo pornography interacted with pornography perceptions to predict condomless sex. The findings suggest that Korean men who 1) had higher interest in viewing gonzo pornography, and 2) had a tendency to view pornography as a source of sexual information, are more likely to have sex without condoms. That is, when viewers consider pornography to be a form of sexual education, they are more likely to use the learned pornographic script to inform their sexual behavior.

Keywords—Korean, male, pornography, sexuality.

I. INTRODUCTION

THE hypothesis that sexually explicit entertainment media (i.e., "pornography") have a socializing effect on at least some persons has been increasingly posed by social and behavioral scientists in recent years. One area in which additional research has been requested is the use of pornography as it relates to health-risk behavior. Using data from a sample of sexually experienced Korean men who view pornography, this brief report examines associations between interest in gonzo pornography (a popular genre of pornography that rarely shows condoms), perceptions of pornography as an important source of information about sex, and condom use consistency.

A. Background

As with most media, pornographic content is delivered in many forms (e.g., textual, pictorial). In the popular genre of pornographic video, the predominant formats are features and gonzo [1], [2]. Features are long form productions containing plot and character development. The gonzo genre, alternatively, places its emphasis on highly explicit, near-continuous sex; narrative features such as a storyline and character study are nonexistent or tangential [1], [2]. Although features are still produced, "the dominant design of the porn industry is gonzo," due in part to its higher usage rate among heterosexual men, the industry's primary audience [3, p.514].

Because of its depiction of aggressive acts such as gagging, slapping, hair-pulling, and name-calling, as well as its stereotypically gendered portrayals of male-female sex roles, media and sexuality scholars have wondered whether gonzo pornography (hereafter referred to as "gonzo") could have a

detrimental impact on men's notions of aggression, dominance and submission, and masculinity [1]–[5]. One potentially undesirable effect that has not yet been considered, however, is the internalization of the message that condomless sex is more normative and rewarding than sex with condoms.

Scholarly observations of gonzo indicate that condoms would impede what has become the expected finale of each sexual interaction: men ejaculating on the faces or bodies of women. Dines [3, p.514], for example, notes that "ejaculation into the mouth and eyes, and on the breasts," has become the typical ending in gonzo scenes. Jensen [2, p.57] likewise observes that "the 'cum shot' or 'money shot'—the man ejaculating onto the woman's body or into her mouth"—has become the norm in gonzo.

Large-scale, quantitative content analyses of condom usage in popular pornographic videos with titles (e.g., MILF – 'Mother I'd like to F**k') and behavioral patterns (e.g., spanking, gagging, slapping, name-calling) indicative of gonzo are consistent with the notion that condoms are infrequently used in this genre. Reference [6] studied 122 scenes from 44 popular videos. Condoms were used in less than 7% of scenes. Reference [7] studied 304 scenes from 50 popular videos. Condoms were used in 11% of scenes. Reference [8] studied 45 videos from popular websites hosting free pornography. Only one of the videos showed a condom being used. Reference [9] studied 100 videos from popular free pornography websites. Only two videos showed a condom being used.

Findings such as these would suggest that consumers of the gonzo genre may develop a preference for condomless sex. However, to paraphrase the title of a previous study of pornography's potential impact on sexual behavior, "viewing is not necessarily doing" [10]. According to the sexual script acquisition, activation, application model of mediated sexual socialization (3AM), the effects of sexual media on consumers' sexual scripts will be stronger when consumers perceive sexual media as having functional value and weaker when consumers do not perceive sexual media as having functional value [11]. Accordingly, in research on male pornography consumers' use of condoms, it may be important to measure not only their interest in the gonzo genre, but also the degree to which they perceive pornography as an important source of sexual information.

To conclude, the present study adds to the pornography and health-risk behavior literature by focusing on gonzo pornography and men's condom behavior and by testing a central tenet of a frequently referenced theoretical model of sexual media effects, the 3AM. Its overarching research

Chyng Sun is with the New York University, United States (e-mail: cfs1@nyu.edu).

questions may be stated as follows:

- RQ1: Is using condoms less frequently associated with interest in gonzo and perceptions of pornography as sexual information?
- RQ2: Does gonzo interest only predict using condoms less frequently when pornography is perceived as a source of sexual information?

II. METHOD

A. Procedure and Participants

Data were collected via an online survey of heterosexual men living in South Korea (Authors, Year – citation masked for anonymity). Heterosexual men were studied because the survey was undertaken in response to the results of content analyses of pornography targeting heterosexuals (e.g., [6], [7]). Requisite protocol for institutional review and informed consent were followed. Participants were solicited over the course of a year through online posts on Twitter, blogs, and Facebook; posted campus flyers; introductory courses; and departmental and college-wide e-mail announcements.

Participants for this analysis were sexually experienced pornography consumers ($N = 414$). Sexual experience was defined broadly, including having had either oral sex or intercourse. Pornography consumption was defined as being a viewer of erotic, sexually explicit media content. The majority reported that their first exposure to pornography was online (64.20%) and that their current sources of pornography were primarily websites (70.00%). Participants were 25.54 years of age, on average ($SD = 4.47$). College students comprised 78.30% of participants. Nonstudents comprised 21.70% of participants. Approximately 60% of participants were in a relationship, while the other 40% were not. Religious faith was important to 29.60% of participants and unimportant to 70.40% of participants.

B. Measures

Interest in gonzo pornography was assessed by asking participants about their interest in four gonzo movies identified as popular by the Adult Video Network (AVN) [7]. The AVN is a central trade publication for the adult film industry. Visitors to the AVN website can stream movies directly at avn.com/movies. Each movie title was accompanied by a synopsis taken from a movie review or DVD cover. The movie titles and synopses were: 65 Guy Cream Pie: (“Bear witness as adventurous Ariana Jollee gets her colon and pussy reamed by 65 gigantic cocks”); No Cum Dodging Allowed: (“These lovely ladies do ass-to-mouth, anal, and swallow over 50 loads”); Bet Your Ass (“Five adventurous, anal-loving women who live for the action, begging for 100% anal fun”); Cum Buckets 3 (“Featuring over 100 of the sloppiest cum shots from the company’s illustrious history. Sexy cum-drenched beauties”). Interest in each movie was assessed using a nine-point scale (1 = not interested, 9 = very interested). Principal components analysis using the Kaiser’s eigenvalue > 1 criterion for extraction indicated a one factor solution (eigenvalue = 2.34; variance accounted for: 58.58%;

Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.76$). The four items were averaged to form an index of interest in gonzo pornography ($M = 4.55$, $SD = 1.96$). Higher scores indicated a higher level of interest.

Perceptions of pornography’s functional value were assessed by asking participants if they thought pornography was a primary source of information about sex (1 = *strongly disagree*, 6 = *strongly agree*; $M = 3.35$, $SD = 1.28$). Higher scores indicated a stronger belief that pornography is an important source of sexual information. Participants were asked how regularly either they or their partners use condoms during sex (1 = *never*, 5 = *always*; $M = 3.76$, $SD = 1.39$) to assess condom use. Higher scores indicated more consistent condom use.

III. RESULTS

A. Analytic Approach

Gonzo interest, perceptions of pornography as sexual information, and condom use were subjected to a zero-order Pearson r correlation analysis to address research question one (RQ1). A hierarchical regression analysis was carried out including gonzo interest as the predictor, perceptions of pornography as sexual information as the moderator, and condom use as the criterion, to address research question two (RQ2).

B. Findings

RQ1 asked if gonzo interest and perceptions of pornography as sexual information would be correlated with condom use at the bivariate level. Analyses indicated that neither gonzo interest ($r = -.03$, $p = .50$) or perceptions of pornography ($r = -.003$, $p = 0.59$) were able, on their own, to differentiate men who used condoms more or less frequently.

RQ2 asked if gonzo interest and pornography perceptions would work in tandem to predict condom use. Analysis indicated an affirmative answer to this question, as gonzo interest and pornography perceptions interacted to predict condom use ($b = -0.05$, R^2 change = 0.01, $p = 0.04$).

Simple-slope tests indicated that there was no association between gonzo interest and condom use when men expressed any disagreement that pornography was a source of sexual information. Conversely, as agreement increased, the association began to trend negatively, reaching significance when men “agreed” that pornography was an important source of sexual information ($b = -0.09$, $p = 0.05$) and becoming more pronounced when they “strongly agreed” that pornography was an important source of sexual information ($b = -0.15$, $p = 0.03$). Fig. 1 presents a visual aid to facilitate interpretation of the interaction.

IV. DISCUSSION

The report’s findings suggest reasons for both concern and prudence in terms of the impact of gonzo specifically and pornography generally on men’s likelihood of having condomless sex. Regarding the latter (i.e., prudence), it is encouraging that neither gonzo interest nor perceiving pornography as sexual information were correlated with condom use at the main effect, or bivariate, level. Regarding

the former (i.e., concern), it is troubling that when pornography was perceived as an important source of sexual information, a heightened interest in gonzo was associated with a decreased likelihood of using condoms consistently. This finding supports the hypothesis that consumers will reference pornographic scripts to inform their own sexual behavior when they perceive pornography as a form of sexual pedagogy. It also supports calls for increased efforts at pornography literacy education [12].

As the present study appears to be the first to look at condomless sex in relation to gonzo pornography specifically, a number of suggestions for future research can be offered. First, the participants for the present study were young, educated men. Younger, more sexually sophisticated men may be less susceptible to condomless sex depictions in pornography than older, less educated men [13], [14]. Accordingly, replications with a more demographically diverse range of participants should be conducted. Second, the present study took place in a single Asian country. It is important that these specific analyses are carried out in other countries. Although not in the area of gonzo pornography and condomless sex, cultural variations in the content of

pornography have been suggested between Asian, American, and European depictions, and it is important that these particular analyses are replicated in other cultural milieus [15]. Third, the data were collected using a cross-sectional survey, making them susceptible to the internal validity threats inherent in this design. Panel surveys exploring prospective associations between earlier gonzo pornography use and later condom behavior are needed, as are experimental studies investigating whether exposure to condomless sex in gonzo videos decreases perceptions of condom normativeness and sexual pleasure, as well as an increased interest in behaviors that require condomless sex (e.g., facial ejaculation). Finally, to assess the possible influence of gonzo pornography on condom use, the present study identified pornography-consuming males and then assessed their interest in the gonzo genre using actual titles and descriptions of gonzo videos. While this tactic had high ecological validity, it could have reduced internal validity by not assessing directly how frequently men consume gonzo. An alternative approach would be to define the gonzo genre for participants in a more general way and then ask them how regularly they view such content.

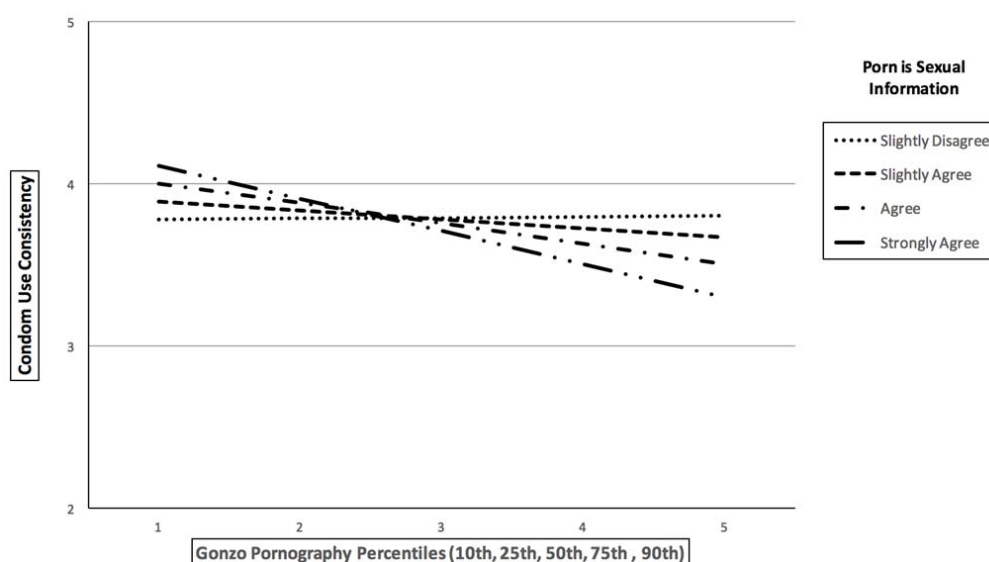


Fig. 1 Interaction between gonzo pornography and perceiving pornography as sexual information on condom use

REFERENCES

- [1] Dines, G. "The new Lolita: Pornography and the sexualization of childhood," in *Big Porn Inc.*, M. T. Reist & A. Bray, Eds. North Melbourne, Australia: Pinefex, 2011, pp. 29–32.
- [2] Jensen, R., *Getting Off: Pornography and the End of Masculinity*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2007.
- [3] Dines, G. (2012). "A feminist response to Weitzer," *Violence Against Women*, vol. 18, 2012, pp. 512–517. doi: 10.1177/1077801212452550
- [4] Boyle, K. "Producing abuse: Selling the harms of pornography," *Women's Studies International Forum*, vol. 34, 2011, pp. 593–602. doi: 10.1016/j.wsif.2011.09.002
- [5] Sun, C., M. Ezzell, and O. Kendall, "Naked aggression: The meaning and practice of ejaculation on a woman's face," *Violence Against Women*, published online, October 22, 2016. doi: 10.1177/1077801216666723
- [6] Sun, C., A. Bridges, R. Wosnitzer, E. Scharrer, and R. Liberman (2008). A comparison of male and female directors in popular pornography: What happens when women are at the helm?" *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, vol. 32, 2008, pp. 312–325. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-6402.2008.00439.x
- [7] Bridges, A. J., R. Wosnitzer, E. Scharrer, C. Sun, and R. Liberman, "Aggression and sexual behavior in best-selling pornography videos," *Violence Against Women*, vol. 16, 2010, pp. 1065–1085. doi: 10.1177/1077801210382866
- [8] Gorman, S., E. Monk-Turner, and J. N. Fish. "Free Adult Internet websites," *Gender Issues*, vol. 27, 2010, pp. 131–145. doi: 10.1007/s12147-010-9095-7
- [9] Vannier, S. A., A. B. Currie, and L. F. O'Sullivan, "Schoolgirls and soccer moms: A content analysis of free "Teen" and "MILF" online pornography," *Journal of Sex Research*, vol. 51, 2014, pp. 253–264. doi: 10.1080/00224499.2013.829795
- [10] Hald, G. M., L. Kuyper, P. C. Adam, and J. B. Wit, "Does viewing explain doing? Assessing the association between sexually explicit

- materials use and sexual behaviors in a large sample of Dutch adolescents and young adults,” *Journal of Sexual Medicine*, vol. 10, 2013, pp. 2986–2995. doi: 10.1111/jsm.12157
- [11] Wright, P. J., “Mass media effects on youth sexual behavior,” *Annals of the International Communication Association*, vol. 35, 2011, pp. 343–386. doi: 10.1080/23808985.2011.11679121
- [12] Rothman, E. F., A. Adhia, T. T. Christensen, J. Paruk, J. Alder, and N. Daley, “A pornography literacy class for youth: Results of a feasibility and efficacy pilot study,” *American Journal of Sexuality Education*, vol. 13, 2018, pp. 1–17. doi: 10.1080/15546128.2018.1437100
- [13] Peter, J., and Valkenberg, P. M. “The influence of sexually explicit internet material on sexual risk behavior: A comparison of adolescents and adults,” *Journal of Health Communication*, vol. 16, April 2011. doi: 10.1080/10810730.2011.551996
- [14] Vandenbosch, L., and J. M. van Oosten, “The relationship between online pornography and the sexual objectification of women: The attenuating role of porn literacy education,” *Journal of Communication*, vol. 67, 2017, pp. 1015–1036. doi: 10.1111/jcom.12341
- [15] Arakawa, D. R., C. Flanders, and E. Hatfield, “Are variations in gender equality evident in pornography? A cross-cultural study,” *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol. 36, 2012, pp. 279–285. doi: 10.1016/j.ijintrel.2011.08.006.