



The Importance of the Child Online Protection Act

by [Judith Reisman](#)

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BBC Online recently reported a "National Children's Homes" study that "[c]hild porn *crimes* have risen by 1,500% since 1988." But "Why" we ask? And why are "over one in three [users] involved in hands-on abuse"? Is it because the human brain is designed--rigged--to *believe* that any image it sees is real, so that millions of sexually aroused viewers act out on children the "sex" they've seen? If yes, would that *fact* stain the "Free Speech" defense of pornography? This is the question we will briefly explore here.

[C]hild abuse sculpts the brain to exhibit various antisocial behaviors violence and abuse. This suggests that much more effort must be made to *prevent childhood abuse* and neglect. (Harvard neurobiologist Martin Teicher in "Scars that won't heal"). (Emphasis added.)

The *prevention* of "child porn crimes" leads us directly to the "Child Online Protection Act" (COPA). COPA, scheduled for debate before the US Supreme Court in March, would criminalize commercial Web sites (1) that regularly engage in the business of selling, and (2) then knowingly make available to minors, the kind of pornography that meets the legal standard of obscene or obscene for minors. The National Law Center for Children and Families wrote the "COPA Brief of Members of Congress." The brief made legal history by unveiling recent data on how pornographic pictures re-form the human brain:

Sophisticated medical diagnostic techniques confirm that images override text for brain dominance and research indicates that a pornographic environment "colonizes" a viewer's brain, *producing structural changes* in the brain that are *involuntary* and can last for years. (Emphasis added.)

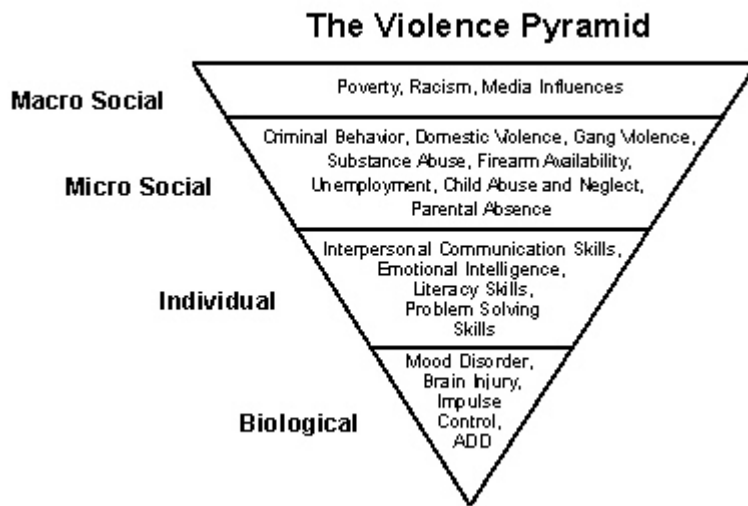
Pornographic pictures can cause permanent brain change. These disinhibiting images can be reawakened at any time, like it or not.

Neurologists question which of the brain's hemisphere will gain control of shared functions and dominate overt behavior, in light of the fact that every second millions of messages bombard the brain and carry information from the body's senses. Inhibitory transmitters help to shape the neural networks that underlie all behavior and control negative behavioral responses. There is evidence that the inhibitory health function of a minor's nervous system can be critically stressed by pornographic imagery.

Are children's minds being negatively sexualized? Are children's natural inhibitions being eroded? If so, we would expect sharp increases--post 1950--in *children's* mental, physical and sexual disorders. The COPA NLCCF Brief continues:

[H]ealth statistics indicate that a significant percentage of minors may be highly vulnerable to the toxic effect of pornographic stimuli. Researchers claim that 25 percent of the population of the United States is under age 18, and at least 12 percent of these minors have a diagnosable mental illness. Current Department of Justice data indicate that 67 percent of all sex abuse victims are minors, and of these, 34 percent are under age 11, and 14 percent are under age 5. According to an Australian study, exposure to online pornography is a "key factor" *in the increase of incidents involving young children committing sexual offenses, including "oral sex and forced intercourse," against other children.* (Emphasis added.)

This is a predictable outcome of massive sociosexual disinhibition. [The Violence and Brain Injury Institute](#) now cites



"Media Influences" as a "Macro Social" cause of crime and violence (see "[The Violence Pyramid](#)" above from [The Violence and Brain Injury Institute](#)). Modern brain-scans provide ample evidence of how media reshapes brain, mind and memory. Sexual or violent *images* will dominate *any* text (speech). Says pioneering neurologist A.R. Luria: "The waking cortex obey[s] a law of strength, according to

which every strong (or *biologically significant*) stimulus evokes a strong response, while every weak stimulus evokes a weak response."

To respond to the written word we must be able to read! Children cannot commonly *read* sex manuals (left hemisphere speech) but they can and do mimic sex pictures. They are taught how to molest babies and toddlers by repeating their own abuse and/or by repeating what they see--commonly in erotic pictures (right hemisphere arousal). The civilizing task of the "Free Speech" amendment is subverted when emotional right hemisphere pornography overrides the weaker left hemisphere speech tasks of logic and analysis. "Strong responses" defines our brain's neurochemistry in action. Pornography isn't *like* a drug, it *is* a polydrug. For example, psychologist M. Douglas Reed cites just a few of many endogenously produced neurochemicals triggered by viewing pornography.

Arousal dependence may be compared to biochemical alterations related to excessive amphetamine use. Fantasy behaviors can be related to such neurotransmitters as dopamine, norepinephrine, or serotonin, all of which are chemically similar to the main psychedelic drugs such as LSD.

Very "harmful to minors" are the spam or split-second "teaser" sex images that trigger an endogenous drug "high." Says neurologist Gary Lynch:

"[A]n event which lasts half a second within five to ten minutes has produced a structural change that is in some ways as profound as the structural changes one sees in [brain] damage. [and] can leave a trace that will last for years."

Neurologist Richard Restak (*The Brain*) notes, "inhibition rather than excitation is the hallmark of the healthy brain." *Science* magazine reports, "too much neuronal activity can be as bad as too little." No wonder a Government Accounting Office report on 550 sex offender clinics--1977 to 1996-- found none had cured sex offenders. Predators re-experience an endogenous drug "high" when seeing pictures of naked or "provocative" women and/or children. Plainly, the media cannot be blamed for all sexual wrongdoing.

Yet the media must be held legally and socially accountable for its harmful, lying pictures about women and children's sexuality and their alleged lust for indiscriminate or sadistic sex. Does such brainwashing explain judicial decisions legitimizing even "virtual child pornography?" For the brain processes "virtual" child pornography as *real* "sexy children." Lynch and others documented the rigorous scientific experiments that finally established that *the brain processes what it sees as true!*

When nature gave man the prefrontal neocortex andâ€¦connected it with his cortical areas, she failed to provide a radar antenna and viewing screen. â€¦ [A dummy animal decoy in the field] is sometimes sufficient to trigger the entire copulatory act.

Until recently most neurologists doubted the affect of media upon the national mind. Naturally we would expect a lag time until legislators and judges also understand a causal connection. The scientifically fraudulent idea that erotic images are harmless speech and children are naturally sexual has led to mass child victimization. An uninformed judiciary has subjected millions of children and youths to toxic images that now dominate their brains, minds, memories and conduct. The First Amendment was designed to protect words- discourse, not pictures-arousal. Pornographic images neurochemically blitz our brains--overriding *legitimate* informed consent. Enlightened lawmakers will have to bring our laws up-to-speed with the power of media to shape our brains, minds, memories and our civility. COPA is a beginning.

Dr. Reisman is a former principal investigator for the U.S. Department of Justice, Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Her last book was Kinsey: Crimes and Consequences—The Red Queen and the Grand Scheme. She runs drjudithreisman.com.