

Final Portfolio

English 101 [REDACTED]

Written by [REDACTED]

Contents:

Reflection Letter (3 pages)
Autobiographical Paper (4 pages)
Research Paper (9 pages)

Accounting:

Autobiography Draft: 5 pages
Autobiography Final: 4 pages
Research Paper Draft: 7 pages
Research Paper Final: 9 pages

Total: 25 Pages

Reflection Letter

June 14, 2005

To Whom It May Concern:

I must begin by addressing what I expected from this course and how I was pleasantly disappointed. First, I expected this course to be a menial, tedious and unproductive. Second, I expected that the course material, specifically the reading, would be focused in a manner where I would be forced to lull through information that was never applied in class. Finally, I expected that this class would in no way help me with my major. Thankfully, I was wrong in all three assumptions. I believe the reason why I came in to the class with a negative attitude was that I had previously enrolled in English 101 during my Spring Semester and was completely turned off by my Professor and the length of every assignment which was not conducive to my loaded schedule. Frankly, I did not have the time to throw away on fourth and fifth drafts of an assignment or an unstable schedule. Logically, the six weeks summer course was fitting if it was going to be the same experience.

What I did not expect was the relevance and the malleability of the course to my own interests, the open dialogue between the students and the professor, plus my own interest growing within the assignments. When I realized that the work and time I would put into the class would be worthwhile, I adjusted my goals to get as much out of the six weeks as possible. My first goal was a better understanding of MLA source citation. My second goals were

to practice and improve upon my academic writing through peer reviews and feedback from my Professor. Finally, I felt as though I could learn more about grammar, proper sentence structure and other basic mechanics of writing which were not necessarily solidified in my previous education. Each goal that I had set for myself was achieved in one form or another. I have a better grasp on using MLA in text and in the Works Cited page. I have had several questions answered about mechanical errors and solutions, which will help me in with future writing.

One of the most challenging assignments for me was the Autobiography. Frankly, I hated every minute of it until I saw the finished product. I realized that there was a distinct difference in the voice of the paper. There was a powerful tone to a personal story I was not initially comfortable writing about. This is an excerpt from that piece:

“We knew the tobacco would kill her; it had already stolen the vibrant look in her eyes and the rhythm in her beautiful voice. I could never describe what that call did to me, my idealistic disposition; because I always thought she defied the nature. She was invincible. I honestly thought she was going to live forever, but it looks like she will not make my graduation.”

The difference was that previously, I have been writing from an objective, reserved position rather than a first person account of how a particular event had impacted me, *personally*. This second sample is from the final research paper, which tone is more impersonal:

“Patriarchal institutions governing social communication like the media, construct women's sexuality through the words and images portrayed in those institutions. After such construction, men commercialize women's sexuality and market it back in the form of pornography. In other words, through porn, man defines woman sexually.”

Essentially, I began to feel more comfortable including first person language into my writing. The lesson was to go outside the comfort zone to be a better writer. Therefore, I am including my Autobiographical essay in my portfolio because in my view, it is my best work although it was the most tasking assignment in the class.

I believe I have much more to learn in terms of my writing. Although I am confident in my research skills, I am not as confident in my analysis of the information found. I can envision a broad and specific scope to almost every topic, but I lack the ability to bring cohesive arguments without making brash assumptions. My experience with research has been honed by four years of competitive debate in high school. Therefore, researching has always been a particular joy to me. I think that through this class I have learned the other half to research, however, and that is applying the research in concise, poignant analysis. Rather than supporting the research, I use the research to support my position. That has made an enormous difference in how I approach a topic.

Finally, my future requires that I spend more time and effort on developing my writing skills. My immediate goals are to have an admirable

junior writing portfolio and then later use my academic writing in applying for graduate school. I know I will need to work diligently in graduate school for my thesis and I want the product of all of my years working on it fit for publishing. I will have many opportunities to learn to be a better writer, and after a full year of struggling through writing assignments, I feel confident that I have a better understanding of this form of expression. I put as much into this class as I expected out of it, and I am pleased that I have grown this much in a relatively short amount of time. As a final point, Professor [REDACTED] repeated several times during the course that “writing takes practice and time.” I am willing to spend that time to be a better writer and storyteller.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

English 101 Sec 2
May 22, 2005

Women and the Tobacco Industry

I have been a smoker for over four years. I quit two months ago when I received a phone call that literally changed my life. My grandmother told me, through long strained pauses, a teary voice and shallow gulps of air, that her doctor told her that there was nothing left they could do for her and she was going to die. My grandmother turned seventy years old last fall and was diagnosed with emphysema a decade earlier. My family knew long before then that she was sick. Between each long drag of a cigarette, she would cough up mucus from her lungs. She shook uncontrollably and had terrible headaches. It had been hard to get oxygen to her brain and the rest of her body. We knew the tobacco would kill her; it had already stolen the vibrant look in her eyes and the rhythm in her beautiful voice. I could never describe what that call did to me, my idealistic disposition, because I always thought she defied nature. She was invincible. I honestly thought she was going to live forever, but it looks like she will not make my graduation.

I resolved immediately after our conversation that I would not make the same decision. I felt panicked, just as if I had been given my death notice. What do you do when you have less than a year to live? You gather around your loved ones, you pray to live another day, and you remember what choices in your life defined where you are at this very moment. I asked her why she first picked up a cigarette and she said because she had always been around it.

All her girlfriends smoked as well as her family members. Some of her idols in the movies reinforced the ideas that it was practically second-nature and smoking a cigarette was just like applying lip gloss. She was fourteen years old. I look back four and a half years ago, when I was fourteen, and I see many parallels. Numerous family members, friends and coworkers smoke. It is a facet of almost every social interaction I have. However, a big difference between my grandma and I was most certainly that I made a conscious choice, with a plethora of available information, to ignore my health. Millions of Americans make that choice every time they light up. Why do we continue to subject ourselves to the most addictive drug in the world, and do it with incredible investment of our health and finances? Moreover, why do women, who suffer gender-specific health risks from tobacco like irreversible harm to their reproductive organs, choose to smoke? In my opinion, it has to do with our collective social agenda, as well as the institutions that reinforce the agenda: the media and the corporations.

The U.S. Surgeon General's Report on Women and Smoking, issued March 27, 2001, and documents the tobacco industry's long history of targeting of women and girls in its advertising and promotions, with devastating consequences for women's health (Surgeon General, i-ii). For many decades, tobacco companies have attempted to lure new female customers by associating smoking with a woman's independence and sophistication. Advertising campaigns such as Virginia Slims' "You've come a long way, baby" and the new "It's a woman thing" have presented smoking as signs of freedom

and individuality (Women and Smoking). With one of the newest ads, ads featured in the packet distributed in class, is the “Find Your Voice” campaign targeting different ethnic groups nationally and internationally. The image is telling women you can become acculturated, but can maintain that part of your heritage. Conventionally it’s not okay for Asian American women to smoke, but in this ad, they’re telling you that you can retain ‘traditional’ elements of your heritage even though you smoke. For African American women who are searching for that identity and link with their heritage, the message ‘Find Your Voice’ is seen next to a beautiful African woman - that’s powerful.

Although cigarettes kill more women per year than heart disease, breast cancer, crime and accidents put together, the cigarette trend is still on the rise for young women. Two media theories can be applied here for both ends of the media-consumer communication spectrum. First, Agenda Setting is formulated by the entertainment industry, advertisements and other forms of media who are largely influenced by big donors like the tobacco industries to feature their product in a positive light. Agenda Setting is described as the “media is enforcing upon people what news is ‘important’ and what news is ‘non important’” (Collins, Agenda). To take this a step further, the produces an image that is favorable to the consumption of the product and does not advertise the negative image of the product because it would be counter-intuitive for their financial aspirations. It tells the target audience, women, that it is sexy, slimming and empowering to use their product. They do not advertise women with cancer, missing larynx and attached to an oxygen machine. They

do not advertise babies who have serious birth defects or premature deaths.

The second theory, the Social Learning Theory, which simply states that we learn by observing others (Collins, Social Learning), can be used to illustrate the social institutions that are in place that reinforce the smoking culture. If an individual observes someone else, especially someone of significance to the individual, practicing an activity they seem to enjoy, the individual would attempt reproduce this action. If a certain behavior is constantly reinforced by their observations, it makes it more acceptable to participate in that behavior. Presumably, this is how the dangerous health risks are negated by the individual. In terms of tobacco products, it is idolized in the movies, on television and exists in everyday interactions.

Women as a whole are harmed by the “smoking culture” and the media images that back the industry. In my life, one of the most important role models that helped shape who I am today will be stripped of her life because of lack of information, a irresponsible corporation and an addiction no one told her would kill her until it was too late. In the face of the powerful pressures of society and in the media, I wonder if it is possible for the stories of individuals who have lost loved ones to tobacco related illnesses to change the trends away from the smoking culture.

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English 101 Section 2
June 4, 2005

The Female Identity and the Porn Industry

In the United States, there are multiple complex social institutions, beliefs and practices that undermine women's independence and contribute to gender-based discrimination. There are dominant social ideologies that are responsible for the subjugation of women in terms of identity, sexuality and social relationships at the very core of our collective social institution. Patriarchal institutions governing social communication like the media construct women's sexuality through the words and images portrayed in those institutions. After such construction, men commercialize women's sexuality and market it back in the form of pornography. In other words, through porn, man defines woman sexually. It is a definition that determines every aspect of her role in society.

The prevalence of pornographic images in everyday life can be seen when flipping on the television, scanning through a popular magazine and browsing the Internet. Often, the images are of partially or fully nude women with commonly understood sexual innuendo. In our capitalist society, sex is the biggest commodity to buy, sell and bargain with. Therefore it is no surprise that a multimillion dollar business exists that concentrates primarily on sex; the porn industry. This industry includes a wide array of media outlets from film to literature and is widely heterosexual plus furthers gender stereotypes of a dominant male and a submissive female sexual relationship. For further

clarification of the issue, there are substantial differences between pornography and erotica. Women's Studies theorist and author Joy Magezis, states, "although there isn't even an agreed definition, pornography can be defined as images or words which describe sexual behaviour that is degrading or abusive to children or adults, especially females, in a way that endorses their negative position. This can be different than erotica which can be defined as words or images about nondegrading, mutually pleasurable sexual behaviour between people who have the power to be there by choice" (102). She also notes that Gloria Steinem, states pornography is about power and using sex as a weapon, which erotica is about sexuality (Magezis 102). However, many proponents and "pro-sex" feminists do not agree with this definition and believe that the distinctions between the two are not so distinctive nor is pornography destructive to the sexual and social interactions between the sexes.

Wendy McElroy is a prominent "pro-sex" feminist who argues that pornography does not harm women or men, but benefits everyone personally and politically. McElroy outlines three general arguments in defense of contemporary pornography. She contends that, "it gives a panoramic view of the world's sexual possibilities and it allows women to 'safely' experience sexual alternatives and satisfy a healthy sexual curiosity," plus "it offers the emotional information that comes only from experiencing something either directly or vicariously" (McElroy). There is idealistic validity to her arguments, but they are not realistically sound. First, because of the male market that pornography caters to, as well as the overall reality that men dominate sexual

communication, it portrays a male view of what a female's desire should be. That same logic fails to show where a woman can educate herself about her own wants and desires, as well as the sexual dynamics between her and her lover, because the images shown are skewed to a male's fantasy. Finally, using modern pornography and other forms of popular media as an authority on how the woman should feel emotionally along side of normal or pleasurable sexual behavior is only detrimental to her, as well as women as a whole.

Many liberal feminists are stuck in between the battle for freedom of speech and expression, which pornography falls under, and the radical changes that need to manifest in the language of sex. There is also a struggle for equal representation in the dominant social institutions that define our culture. The analysis continues to break down traditional social institutions to discover why there is an emergence of a "rape culture," sexual violence towards women, the continuation of sexual and inevitably social subordination. When that focus is turned to the breaking down the images and messages in media, it is apparent that there are certain ideologies reinforced by the media and mimicked in the culture. Specifically, one media theory that can be used to analyze the effect of the porn industry is the Social Learning Theory, and theory simply states that we learn by observing others can be used to illustrate the social institutions that are in place that emphasize the viewing, application and the mimicking of pornography in everyday life (Collins). If an individual observes someone else participating an activity he or she seems to enjoy, like men and women in a pornographic video, the individual would be compelled

reproduce this action in their sexual interactions. If a certain behavior is constantly reinforced by their observations, it makes it more acceptable to participate in that behavior. Presumably, this is how some gender role socialization is continued, even if the message of language is negative for one group or another, or all.

Another important factor in discussing the theories, language and perspectives concerning the fascination with pornography and the mirror in one's sexual interactions is best illustrated through Michel Foucault's analysis in *Discipline and Punish*. Foucault's examination of the power structure in social interactions states essentially that society uses sex as an instrument on which to express power and status (Foucault 405). He argues that the way social institutions have attempted to conceptualize and restrict sex in marriage, heterosexual only relationships and a part of social classification attribute to the abuse that comes with defying these institutions (Foucault 406-407). He also argues that we are conditioned not to talk or educate ourselves about sex, but still use it as an object of empowerment. Therefore, if this power relationship is integrated into our basic understanding of the social institutions, it is obvious that there will be resistance. It is difficult to change the institutions that have used sex as a tool to subordinate and objectify women.

Commercialization of sex in terms of pornography is yet another expression of the power relationship discussed by Foucault. Alan Soble writes, "when sexual feelings and sexual activity become commodified, they are governed by the same principles that control commodities in capitalism: the

desire for sexual experiences is manipulated and encouraged, their availability is restricted to create scarcity, the cost of high quality or esoteric activities increases inversely with supply, and the whole process is passed off as the inevitable result of natural law” (557). Soble theorizes that the “Victorian element” which is an underlying component in sexual relationships and where the female sexuality is regulated, creates the demand of sexually explicit material in a market where the male interest is the dominant power (577-8). As long as the female interest and mind is subordinate in the capitalist market, this power mechanism and gender socialization will continue with little change.

To expand on this commercialization of sexual role stereotypes, Sandra Lipstiz Bem argues that there is a problem in American culture that “eroticizes sexual inequality” (Lipstiz Bem 40). She points out that the sexual brutalization is a result of a larger and accepted societal condition of male dominance and female submission (Lipstiz Bem 41). Pornography, mainstream entertainment and other media show women are expected to satisfy men’s desires and the woman’s desires should be fulfilled when she completes her duty to a man (Read 289). Idealizing women in terms of toys, playthings or servants for men takes away the right of women to be seen as a human (Read 289). Therefore, if women are seen as objects or submissive to the will of a man, as the popular plot to pornographic movies where a woman become the possession of man, rape and violence are not viewed as a criminal and immoral act against another human being. According to Robert Jensen, this common depiction of sex roles in pornography is defined as “sex in patriarchy” (536). He elaborates on this

concept of patriarchy as the “kind of heterosexual, and heterosexist, intercourse as male-dominate-female-sobordinant-copulation-whose-completion-and-purpose-is-the-male’s-ejaculation” (Jensen 536). This type of sexual interaction is the leading ideology in mass media’s depiction of women which her primary function is to fulfill the needs of man. Furthermore, Susan Brownmiller argues against the pro-pornography feminists that this media form is healthy and educational in her book *Against Our Will*. She states that, “but does one need scientific methodology in order to conclude that the anti-female propaganda that permeates our nations cultural output promotes a climate which acts of sexual hostility directed against women are not only tolerated but ideologically encouraged” (Brownmiller 359). The female identity is at the mercy of this expression of power through pornography and the ideology behind its production and will be passed on to the next generation of men and women.

In addition to the mainstream concept of a woman’s identity, there is also a predicament with how young men and women are conditioned to believe that pornography is an authority on sexual relationships (May 74). Since violent sex scenarios and domination of women are a reoccurring theme in pornography, it becomes relatively clear why some young men believe rape is acceptable (May 68). For women, pornography is just as detrimental to their concept of identity, since a woman is portrayed as submissive to the desires of a man in order to have a sexually satisfying relationship with him (May 74). There is a large distinction between how women are portrayed as subjects in

most erotica, and objects in pornography, and the latter is more pervasive in American culture. Magezis states that, "being the subject inside her own body means woman tries to meet her own needs for pleasure, as she has a sense of what those needs are. She defines herself from the inside and has a feeling of being a whole person" (103). A huge contrast to the role of women portrayed in popular media and pornography where, "being the object outside herself means a woman mainly thinks of her body as existing for the pleasure of others. Although she probably cares about how other women see her, she is doing this mainly for men and she may see herself as a collection of body parts on display" (Magezis 103). Modern day depiction of women is essentially of "body parts on display," objects for a man's sexual pleasure rather than a mutual pleasure between two whole people. When women are so easily dehumanized to the points of possessions and property, then there is little room for a woman to view herself beyond that in her sexual interactions.

In many respects, men are also victims in this skewed vision of women and heterosexual sex, although it is hardly discussed. One perspective about why this is true comes from Susan Brownmiller, who asserts that "pornography, like rape, is a male invention, designed to dehumanize women, to reduce the female to an object of sexual access, not to free sensuality from moralistic or parental inhibition" (394). However, it is irresponsible to assume that all men are active participants in the continuation of destructive power relationships depicted in pornography. But in many ways, the consumption of pornography, whether passive or active in his personal sexual interactions, is

tacit consent even if it is harmful to the consumer. The male sexuality has been stripped down to basic functions while ignoring central components in long-term, fulfilling sexual interactions. Since pornography is directed to male interests, it has also produced a stifled sense of the male body by restricting sexual arousal strictly to visual cues. Alan Soble writes, "in limiting the erotic range of smell, taste, touch, the desensitization of the male body makes the visual component of male sexuality a central source...of pleasure" (558). Also, if boys and men rely upon pornography to construct their view of sexuality, the dominating male who takes control of the submissive female, he is limited in the possible alternatives in his intimate sexual relationships with women. Pornography gives men a shallow, "one dimensional view" of sex and if this form is repeated continually (Magezis 103), this view becomes ordained as an absolute with little or no variation. Moreover, when women are depicted as body parts rather than a whole human being, the translation to the male psyche is that women are constructed within the confines of the limited fantasy for sexual purposes alone. Therefore, instead of the popular view that pornography is only the defilement of women, it becomes evident that both women and men are harmed as a collective.

Finally, it must be argued that although currently the porn industry does not influence the female identity or body in a positive light, it has the potential to revolutionize the sexual and social interactions in the future. Many women agree with Magezis' distinction between pornography and erotica as an accurate reflection of the status quo, at least for the time being. Critics like

McElroy and Nadine Strossen to name a few, contend that men and women are liberated with the rise of modern pornographic materials, but this fantasy does not ring true when the material is limited in its scope of “education” and gives men and women, boys and girls, a incomplete view of their own sexuality. If this type of communication is healthy and educational, then are the critics arguing that the status quo is acceptable? If yes, it nullifies any attempt at changing sexual and social interactions to be more conducive, respectful and helpful to both women and men. It should not be censored, but transformed in function. Because the porn industry is such a multidimensional market, it has the potential to break cultural and social stereotypes so that a woman can interpret sex for herself outside the constructs of the limited “male” market. Although still a minority, female directors, script writers and producers are making small waves in the porn industry. The potential to tap into the young adult female market, which is by far the largest consumer market of all the age groups, as well as the desire for reeducation for both men and women about sexual interactions are quite frankly ground-breaking. Pornography does not need to be the stigmatizing factor in men and women’s sexual communication and behavior, but can be used to appeal to a new sense of sexual freedom and expression that many women are looking for.

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English 101 Section 2

June 4, 2005

The Female Identity and the Porn Industry

In the United States, there are multiple complex social institutions, beliefs and practices that undermine women's independence and contribute to gender-based discrimination. There are dominant social ideologies that are responsible for the subjugation of women in terms of identity, sexuality and social relationships at the very core of our collective social institution. Patriarchal institutions governing social communication like the media, (don't need a comma here) construct women's sexuality through the words and images portrayed in those institutions. After such construction, men commercialize women's sexuality and market it back in the form of pornography. In other words, through porn, man defines woman sexually. It is a definition that determines every aspect of her role in society.

The prevalence of pornographic images in everyday life can be seen when flipping on the television, scanning through a popular magazine and browsing the Internet. Often, the images are of partially or fully nude women with commonly understood sexual innuendo. In our capitalist society, sex is the biggest commodity to buy, sell and bargain with. Therefore it is no surprise that a multimillion dollar business exists that concentrates primarily on sex; the porn industry. This industry includes a wide array of media outlets from film to literature and is widely heterosexual plus furthers gender stereotypes of a dominant male and a submissive female sexual relationship. For further clarification of the issue, there are substantial differences between pornography and erotica. Women's Studies theorist and author Joy Magezis, states, "although there isn't even an agreed definition, pornography can be defined as images or words which describe sexual behaviour that is degrading or abusive to children or adults, especially females,

in a way that endorses their negative position. This can be different than erotica which can be defined as words or images about nondegrading, mutually pleasurable sexual behaviour between people who have the power to be there by choice” (102). She also notes that Gloria Steinem, another feminist theorist, states pornography is about power and using sex as a weapon, which erotica is about sexuality (Magezis 102). (This is a very fine point, but Gloria Steinem is so popular and well known, that I would recommend either giving her no introduction or saying something more dramatic to introduce her.) However, many proponents and “pro-sex” feminists do not agree with this definition and believe that the distinctions between the two are not so distinctive nor is pornography destructive to the sexual and social interactions between the sexes.

Wendy McElroy is a prominent “pro-sex” feminist who argues that pornography does not harm women or men, but benefits everyone personally and politically. McElroy outlines three general arguments in defense of contemporary pornography. She contends that, “it gives a panoramic view of the world's sexual possibilities and it allows women to ‘safely’ experience sexual alternatives and satisfy a healthy sexual curiosity,” plus “it offers the emotional information that comes only from experiencing something either directly or vicariously” (McElroy). There is idealistic validity to her arguments, but they are not realistically sound. First, because of the male market that pornography caters to, as well as the overall reality that men dominate sexual communication, it portrays a male view of what a female’s desire should be. That same logic fails to show where women (a woman) can educate themselves about her own wants and desires, as well as the sexual dynamics between her and her lover, because the images shown are skewed to a male’s fantasy. Finally, using modern pornography and other forms of popular media as an authority on how the woman should feel emotionally along side of normal or pleasurable sexual behavior is only detrimental to her, as well as women as a whole.

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Another important factor in discussing the theories, language and perspectives concerning the fascination with pornography and the mirror in one’s sexual interactions is best illustrated through Michel Foucault’s analysis in *Domain*. Foucault’s examination of the power structure in social interactions states essentially that society uses sex as an instrument on which to express power and status (Foucault 405). He argues that the way social institutions have

attempted to conceptualize and restrict sex in marriage, heterosexual only relationships and a part of social classification attribute to the abuse that comes with defying these institutions (Foucault 406-407). He also argues that we are conditioned not to talk or educate ourselves about sex, but still use it as an object of empowerment. Therefore, if this power relationship is integrated into our basic understanding of the social institutions, it is obvious that there will be resistance. It is difficult to change the institutions that have used sex as a tool to subordinate and objectify women.

Commercialization of sex in terms of pornography is yet another expression of the power relationship discussed by Foucault. Alan Soble writes, “when sexual feelings and sexual activity become commodified, they are governed by the same principles that control commodities in capitalism: the desire for sexual experiences is manipulated and encouraged, their availability is restricted to create scarcity, the cost of high quality or esoteric activities increases inversely with supply, and the whole process is passed off as the inevitable result of natural law” (557). Soble theorizes that the “Victorian element” which is an underlying component in sexual relationships and where the female sexuality is regulated, creates the demand of sexually explicit material in a market where the male interest is the dominant power (577-8). As long as the female interest and mind is subordinate in the capitalist market, this power mechanism and gender socialization will continue with little change.

To expand on this commercialization of sexual role stereotypes, Sandra Lipstiz Bem argues that there is a problem in American culture that “eroticizes sexual inequality” (Lipstiz Bem 40). She points out that the sexual brutalization is a result of a larger and accepted societal condition of male dominance and female submission (Lipstiz Bem 41). Pornography, mainstream entertainment and other media show women are expected to satisfy men’s desires

and the woman's desires should be fulfilled when she completes her duty to a man (Read 289). Idealizing women in terms of toys, playthings or servants for men takes away the right of women to be seen as a human (Read 289). Therefore, if women are seen as objects or submissive to the will of a man, as the popular plot to pornographic movies where a woman become the possession of man, rape and violence are not viewed as a criminal and immoral act against another human being. According to Robert Jensen, this common depiction of sex roles in pornography is defined as "sex in patriarchy" (536). He elaborates on this concept of patriarchy as the "kind of heterosexual, and heterosexist, intercourse as male-dominate-female-sobordinant-copulation-whose-completion-and-purpose-is-the-male's-ejaculation" (Jensen 536). This type of sexual interaction is the leading ideology in mass media's depiction of women which her primary function is to fulfill the needs of man. Furthermore, Susan Brownmiller argues against the pro-pornography feminists that this media form is healthy and educational in her book *Against Our Will*. She states that, "but does one need scientific methodology in order to conclude that the anti-female propaganda that permeates our nations cultural output promotes a climate which acts of sexual hostility directed against women are not only tolerated but ideologically encouraged" (Brownmiller 359). The female identity is at the mercy of this expression of power through pornography and the ideology behind its production and will be passed on to the next generation of men and women.

In addition to the mainstream concept of a woman's identity, there is also a predicament with how young men and women are conditioned to believe that pornography is an authority on sexual relationships (May 74). Since violent sex scenarios and domination of women are a reoccurring theme in pornography, it becomes relatively clear why some young men believe rape is acceptable (May 68). For women, pornography is just as detrimental to their concept of

identity, since a woman is portrayed as submissive to the desires of a man in order to have a sexually satisfying relationship with him (May 74). There is a large distinction between how women are portrayed as subjects in most erotica, and objects in pornography, and the latter is more pervasive in American culture. Magezis states that, “being the subject inside her own body means woman tries to meet her own needs for pleasure, as she has a sense of what those needs are. She defines herself from the inside and has a feeling of being a whole person” (103). A huge contrast to the role of women portrayed in popular media and pornography where, “being the object outside herself means a woman mainly thinks of her body as existing for the pleasure of others. Although she probably cares about how other women see her, she is doing this mainly for men and she may see herself as a collection of body parts on display” (Magezis 103). Modern day depiction of women is essentially of “body parts on display,” objects for a man’s sexual pleasure rather than a mutual pleasure between two whole people. When women are so easily dehumanized to the points of possessions and property, then there is little room for a woman to view herself beyond that in her sexual interactions.

In many respects, men are also victims in this skewed vision of women and heterosexual sex, although it is hardly discussed. One perspective about why this is true comes from Susan Brownmiller, where she asserts that (who asserts that) “pornography, like rape, is a male invention, designed to dehumanize women, to reduce the female to an object of sexual access, not to free sensuality from moralistic or parental inhibition” (394). However, it is irresponsible to assume that all men are active participants in the continuation of destructive power relationships depicted in pornography. But in many ways, the consumption of pornography, whether passive or active in his personal sexual interactions, is tacit consent even if it is harmful to the consumer. The male sexuality has been stripped down to basic functions while ignoring central components

in long- term, fulfilling sexual interactions. Since pornography is directed to male interests, it has also produced a stifled sense of the male body by restricting sexual arousal strictly to visual cues. Alan Soble writes, “in limiting the erotic range of smell, taste, touch, the desensitization of the male body makes the visual component of male sexuality a central source...of pleasure” (558). Also, if boys and men rely upon pornography to construct their view of sexuality, the dominating male who takes control of the submissive female, he is limited in the possible alternatives in his intimate sexual relationships with women. Pornography gives men a shallow, one dimensional view of sex (,) and if this form is repeated continually, this view becomes ordained as an absolute with little or no variation. Moreover, when women are depicted as body parts rather than a whole human being, the translation to the male psyche is that women are constructed within the confines of the limited fantasy for sexual purposes alone. Therefore, instead of the popular view that pornography is only the defilement of women, it becomes evident that both women and men are harmed as a collective.

Finally, it must be argued that although currently the porn industry does not influence the female identity or body in a positive light, it has the potential to revolutionize the sexual and social interactions in the future. Many women agree with Magezis’ distinction between pornography and erotica as an accurate reflection of the status quo, at least for the time being. Critics like McElroy and Nadine Strossen to name a few, contend that men and women are liberated with the rise of modern pornographic materials, but this fantasy does not ring true when the material is limited in its scope of “education” and gives men and women, boys and girls, a incomplete view of their own sexuality. If this type of communication is healthy and educational, then are the critics arguing that the status quo is acceptable? If yes, it nullifies any attempt at changing sexual and social interactions to be more conducive, respectful and helpful to both

women and men. It should not be censored, but transformed in function. Because the porn industry is such a multidimensional market, it has the potential to break cultural and social stereotypes so that a woman can interpret sex for herself outside the constructs of the limited “male” market. Although still a minority, female directors, script writers and producers are making small waves in the porn industry. The potential to tap into the young adult female market, which is by far the largest consumer market of all the age groups, as well as the desire for reeducation for both men and women about sexual interactions are quite frankly groundbreaking. Pornography does not need to be the stigmatizing factor in men and women’s sexual communication and behavior, but can be used to appeal to a new sense of sexual freedom and expression that many women are looking for.

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This is an amazing paper! You really don't have to do anything to the paper to make it ready for the portfolio workshop, but I marked some things anyway, because I know that you are using this as a writing sample. Your content is wonderful, your writing scholarly and theoretically sound. I found some very minor, mostly mechanical, points which I highlighted in your paper. I also made some mechanical comments about MLA in your works cited. Mostly, the works cited works for this class, but I'm pointing out finer points that I didn't expect the class to know. I don't know if you will be required to use MLA when you turn in your writing sample, or if they prefer for you to use another citation style. I know all the citation styles, and I'm happy to help you with whichever you need to use.

This is really a masterfully done paper, ██████████. I'm sure that it will make an excellent writing sample for grad. school.

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