

# Does pornography aid the economy? (29:3)

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## THE TEXT (NASB)

**A man who loves wisdom makes his father glad, but he who keeps company with harlots wastes *his* wealth.**

*Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father: but he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth his substance. KJV - Proverbs 29:3*

## INTRODUCTION



Living cleanly, emotionally and physically, nurtures a nation's economy, but pornography castrates wealth.

A pornographic culture brings loveless promiscuity, rampant divorce, child abuse, legalized prostitution, and epidemic abortion. These are all “lose-lose” activities.

Any country, group, or individual that promotes sexual anarchy is financially suicidal, because the family is the only human association that builds permanent wealth.



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## COMMENTARY

Translation: his...*his*



Examine the text carefully: the second use of the word “his” is in italics. The translators of the KJV moved the “he” from “he will waste” and attached it to “wealth,” creating the phrase “his wealth.” A more literal translation would be, “He who keeps company with harlots, he will waste wealth.” Whether the wealth is the son’s or his father’s is irrelevant. Harlotry as an industry wastes wealth. Yes, the prostitute and her pimp (manager) circulate some cash, but it is sterile, an economic sink-hole and social pollution. The text gives a direct message to politicians who’ve legalized, licensed, and promoted prostitutes as “sex-trade workers.” It’s economically suicidal.

## My Experience

Back when I worked for Shell Canada, while I was filling my tank at a company station, I was dismayed to find that they sold pornographic magazines. I wrote to the senior vice president and asked him (in a more professional manner) why we sold smut. He replied that he understood my concern and would look into the matter. He delegated it to a junior vice president.

In meeting with the junior vice-president I was told:

- Some customers want such magazines.
- Soft porn and erotica are not as bad as hardcore porn, which Shell does not sell.
- Our company must display all the products distributed by the magazine supplier.
- If we stop selling porn, where do we draw the line? Do we ban cigarette sales?

In the 1980s, cigarettes were sold in Canadian grocery stores, and smoking was allowed in public places. Yet it seems unlikely that the supplier would refuse to please a customer as large as Shell. Still, no surprise, my efforts to stop the sale of Playboy at our service stations failed.

## Personal Physical Abuse



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In the last generation, smoking was banned in almost all Canadian public places, and the sale of cigarettes from stores and service stations was greatly restricted. It's strange: during World War Two, all our soldiers were issued cigarettes with their army food rations. In those days, the personal dangers of smoking were somewhat known, but simply accepted. I believe the day will come when society will see the even greater dangers of pornography and also restrict its sale.

## Bad Business

Big business is not necessarily good business. The smoking industry is big business, but it was much bigger, before doctors trumpeted the health hazards of smoking. The porn industry now commands a hundred billion dollars of the world economy, and it's burning up all those funds. What's more, it brutally cripples society. The addiction of men to pornographic material is vicious, and much more insidious than nicotine or cocaine, for one simple reason. The chemicals released in a man's brain, viewing porn, are organically generated, and can therefore be triggered anywhere and anytime. Yes, the porn industry is big business, worldwide, but it is bad business. It not only wastes resources, but degrades and damages women and children everywhere.

This proverb also insists that the legalization of prostitution is, not only a degradation of the women involved, but a waste of resources. We'd be far better off, strengthening marriages.

## The Social Cost of Pornography

In 2010, Mary Eberstadt and Mary Anne Layden, from the Witherspoon Institute at Princeton University, released aptly titled "The Social Costs of Pornography." The researchers, from diverse religious and political backgrounds, catalogued the harm caused by pornography under eight distinct headings:

- Unlike any other time in history, pornography is now available and consumed widely in our society, largely due to the internet. No one remains untouched.
- Abundant empirical evidence indicates that pornography today is qualitatively different from the past, in its ubiquity, increasingly realistic streaming images, and hard-core (and therefore violent) content.
- Today's consumption of internet pornography can harm women in particular.



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- Today's consumption of internet pornography can harm children in particular.
- Today's consumption of internet pornography can harm people not immediately connected to consumers of pornography.
- The consumption of internet pornography can harm its consumers.
- Pornography consumption is sociologically and morally problematic.
- The fact that pornography does not harm everyone does not entail that pornography should not be regulated.

The entire paper and its concrete conclusions can be found online. It cannot be summarized here, but Layden, the director of the Sexual Trauma and Psychopathology Program at the University of Pennsylvania, prefaced the paper with this introduction:

Overall, the body of research on pornography reveals a number of negative attitudes and behaviors that are connected with its use. It functions as a teacher, a permission-giver, and a trigger of these negative behaviors and attitudes. The damage is seen in men, women, and children, and to both married and single adults. It involves pathological behaviors, illegal behaviors, and some behaviors that are both illegal and pathological.

Back in 2010, however, Eberstadt and Layden did not have access to the data discovered later in the next decade, reported in *Psychology Today* (26 April 2021) and even in the cover story of a stylish “gentlemen’s” fashion magazine. The data show that pornography is fueling a new epidemic of male impotence. Porn cripples its consumers themselves: proof again that God’s way—faithful marriage—is the healthy way.



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## OUR CREATOR, REDEEMER, AND FRIEND



Jesus did not refuse the company of harlots; in their pain and degradation, they sought Him out.

Jesus' enemies took note (Luke 7:37-39). Why would an upstart rabbi allow immoral women to show Him such personal affection in public? Alas, the religious establishment failed to recognize who Jesus really was and is. They vastly underestimated Jesus' power to heal those women.

Jesus "wasted" himself, so that others—those who love and obey Him—could become incredibly wealthy (2 Corinthians 8:9). Outlandish! Amazing! Indeed—divine!

## APPLICATION

- Memorize the text in your favourite Bible translation and think about it often.
- Train your children to seek wisdom ahead of seeking wealth.
- Avoid all forms of immorality; they destroy financial resources.
- Recognize that we all need God's help to win the war against immorality. Look to the life giving spirit (1 Corinthians 15:45) rather than relying on human will-power or self-discipline.
- Strengthen marriages.

Which of these steps, if any, does Jesus want you to take now? Ask Him.



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## KEY WORDS

immorality, less assets (quantity), lose-lose, pornography, prostitution, purity, waste, wealth, wisdom, bf spending

## ILLUSTRATION

Who is Quick Buck Betty?



Quick Buck Betty wants to make money fast, and is always looking for “hot tips.” Researching and understanding investments takes too long; she just cares about the returns—especially the short-term returns.

It doesn't matter how the money is earned—in fact she'd rather not know at all! Betty is just eager to “make it” or, even better, have someone else make it for her. She has little time for Steady Eddy and Diligent Daniel—their methods take too long.

Betty views the stock and bond markets like the lottery and casino. She doesn't invest; she gambles. She likes to “play” the markets. Day trading is one of her passions.

