

Great porn debate

Indy.com spoke with two young Hoosiers, a sinner and a saint, about the ins and outs of the porn industry

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Great porn debate: The porn star vs. the porn pastor

[Konrad.Marshall](#)

January 21, 2009 by [Konrad.Marshall](#) | Staff

Brandon Piety is an Indianapolis native and Franklin Central High School graduate, now a Las Vegas resident and production manager for XXXChurch.com — a Christian group that tries to help stop people from consuming pornography, and recently initiated efforts to help people get out of the porn industry. Piety, 23, spent three years at Cincinnati Bible College before interning with XXX Church and later taking a leadership position in the group. He is pursuing ordination, and his co-workers call him “the porn pastor in training.”

So tell me a little about XXX Church, and what you're doing in Las Vegas?

We feel like we're supposed to be here and have a presence in the city. For a long time, XXX Church was an online community, and we did touring, but the goal is to expand more of our hands-on stuff. We felt like God wanted us in Vegas. Like, let's put a little more flesh and blood into this thing we're doing.

And what is it you're doing?

We primarily help people stop looking at porn. But we also do ministry to people in the industry. We hand out Bibles with “Jesus Loves Porn Stars” on the front. I'm a youth and college speaker and production manager for XXX Church online. I basically manage the day to day operations — everything from website updates to videos and new projects and ideas. And the porn shows, I've been the lead organizer in the logistics of our efforts there. I've been to 11 porn shows around the world, in England, Australia and Canada.

When were you first exposed to porn?

Actually, like, in the third grade, a young age. I remember it being awkward. I remember telling my mom. Someone had magazines at my house. But then in middle school, the Internet became a mainstream thing. I had

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friends who would say “Check out this site, that site.”

My freshman year of high school was when I looked at porn on a pretty regular basis. In my junior year of high school, I was sick of it. I thought this can't be all there is out there, so I talked to my youth pastor, and he said it wasn't good for you, there's better things out there, but I know it's tough.

The funny thing about it was I had just seen pictures online. But I played football for the team, and I remember sleeping in the gym with two-a-day practices, and the senior football players put on a porn movie in the gym. And I remember thinking, this is not OK. There's something wrong with this. Some guys were cheering. It wasn't disturbing to me, but I just remember it was something deep in my gut and deep in my heart. I don't know why I feel this way, but it came out of that. So I kind of decided to take a stand in my own life by not looking at it. I always thought a lot of Christian stuff was lame, but they were real, because this is an issue. They're creative, funny, crazy, and I love being a part of what they do.

What do you think God thinks of porn?

I think God has better things than porn for us. I think porn is a cheap substitute for the real thing. You look at porn, this girl on the screen, with no emotion, and you remember God created us to enjoy one another in fullness, not in fantasy. I think he just thinks there's better stuff — don't settle.

You mentioned you have tools for breaking free of addiction?

There's free accountability software, X3Watch. It changed my life. It sits on your computer and monitors where you go, and sends a message to your accountability partner if you go on any questionable sites. The idea is person-to-person accountability. And it's tough. We're not going to say for everyone to see what you see online is easy, it's not. But about 600,000 people use the software. It doesn't track the magazines you're looking at, of course, but it's a bridge to being transparent in other parts of your life.

You're also trying to help people break out of the porn business, right?

We've been doing it for about 4 years now, and we've helped about 7 people out of the industry. Some of them want their stories told, others want to remain private. We helped Crissy Lane. She's finding it tough, but she has her faith. We helped a producer, too. He shot for Playboy and Penthouse. He had come into contact with us at the shows, and he'd say we were crazy. His father was a pastor, so he loved to throw that in our faces.

But he couldn't take how the girls were being affected. He'd have girls come to his house at all hours begging to have their pictures taken down from websites, but of course he couldn't because of contracts. It became too much, but he found God. We helped a man get out of gay porn. We have a fund now, where if a girl wants to leave porn then we want to help them get on their feet financially. Everyone wants to believe that every girl and guy in porn is a millionaire, but there's a lot of people who are just getting by. You see the Jenna Jamesons and the Ron Jeremys, but there's a whole sector of people who can't get by.

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Have you heard much about the decline of marriage as a result of porn?

Porn is cited in more divorces as a cause than ever before. There's something innately wrong with a guy sitting in the basement masturbating while his wife and kids are upstairs. It's going to lead you to places and things you never thought you'd do. The connection we often see is that something online ends up offline, whether it's trying to bring techniques into the bedroom, or looking for sexual experiences outside of marriage. Porn is progressive, and it's going to take you places you probably never thought you'd go. Everyday our inboxes are full of people whose lives have been wrecked. The heartbreak is exponential.

I've read that you're sick of the church not talking about issues surrounding pornography. Is it true you get a lot of flak from the Christian community?

We take more flak from the church than the porn industry. There are great churches out there — we've visited over 1,000 — but the fact is so many people are scared of these issues and won't talk about them. But you have to think, half of the kids in this youth group are looking at porn, or half the families in the pews are having an issue with porn. But it's too taboo. We'll talk about marriage and sex, but we'll skip one of the epidemics of our culture.

Now, we have seen some strides. We go to Indiana more than almost any other state. We go to the major churches, but there are some that are afraid. It goes back to the old puritan mindset, where sex is a topic we don't discuss. There a lot of churches – a lot of forward-thinking churches — here. We don't visit the south as much, because honestly, the churches aren't as forward-thinking.

What was the AVN Expo like?

The AVN show is the craziest of all the shows, because it's here in Vegas, the money is behind it, and the awards show is the same week. We did Bibles, stickers, tattoos and we gave out about 300 T-shirts to girls. We're really well-known now. We've been going for 7 years. People from the industry pick up stacks of Bibles. There's no strings attached. I hear people say, 'I haven't had a Bible since I was little kid,' or 'I've never had a Bible,' or 'I'm gonna read this Bible.' We have a booth, and while talking to people we just say we want to remind you that Jesus loves you, and maybe it ends there or maybe we have a conversation.

We get 'You sound cool' and 'You don't sound like a regular church' — we get that a lot. And we have a small group of girls who stand in line for autographs of porn stars throughout the show, and once they get to the front they give them a T-shirt and a Bible and let them know who we are and that Jesus loves them.

Just this weekend one of the girls who walks the floor went out with a girl after the show, and had lunch with her the next day. And she's on the edge — she's not sure she wants to do what she does. We don't want to make that decision for them, but we want to listen. Like it or not, there's no Pornoholics Anonymous, and there's no group to help you financially when you want to get out of porn. We just want to be helpful for people who want help.

What is the biggest misconception about the porn industry, or porn stars, do you think?

I think often, we label these people as those people, as something separate from us. We categorize them. But they're regular people like you and I. You meet people in the industry, and they have kids, they have families and they live in regular neighborhoods. We think they're messed up, that they have to have a messed-up family or upbringing, but sometimes it's the cards they've been dealt and they're doing the best they can with what they got.

Do you get many hard moments working with porn stars, hearing their stories?

They're giving up a whole lot. They're losing friends, people they love, because they decided to make a career change. I think the hard thing for us is that sometimes following Jesus isn't easy. It's tough. All the pieces aren't going to fit perfectly.

The streets aren't going to be paved with gold, with angels singing everywhere. It's a case of 'I'm giving up this, but what do I get?' We say, it's the greatest hope found in all the world, the hope of Christ.

Ron Jeremy is really well known to our ministry — he jokes with us all the time saying, 'If you were successful I'd be out of a job'. But being out of a bank account, out of pals — that can be challenging. We've had a lot of girls bail on us. We've had a lot of guys say 'I want to leave, I want to leave', and then we can't reach them and we know they've gone back. What we hear a lot is, 'I'm not good enough', and we want to remind people that no, actually, you are good enough, no matter what you've been through or what you've done.

One of those who turned back was the Indiana-born porn star Trinity James. I understand she's back in porn and also working at a brothel in Nevada. That must have been hard.

With Trinity, it really came down to the fact that we helped her as best we could, and we tried to help her make ends meet. But she wasn't ready for all of it. She was ready for the quick fix. And we can help, but until you come face to face with what it's going to take to change your life, it won't happen. I think she fell short, but we really wish her the best. I hope she's ready again some day — that's our hope.

Do you think porn is something that can be done in moderation? Do you see it as being like alcohol, where some can manage it but others will have problems?

I think with porn there's no warning on the packet that says, 'Consume porn responsibly'. But yeah, sure it can — just like alcohol, or sex. I think the thing with porn is that sex is so powerful that it can get a hold of you really fast. People say they can get addicted in days, because it strikes at something deep in our core. We're sexual beings. I don't recommend it, we don't recommend it, but it's possible. It's possible to manage, but very risky.

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[marcusbhoward](#), 3 days ago

Her family took it really well! They don't talk about it! Hey, it's a free country and she can do it and people can buy it. But there is little doubt that it's evil. Young people don't realize how bad it warps their brains.

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[Jenny Elig](#), 3 days ago

I'm not sure I would go so far as to say "evil," (of course, we might just have different opinions of "evil"), but I would not hold her up as a role model. I only wish girls got as much attention for being doctors, scientists, mathematicians as they did for being porn stars.

Y'know?

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[Zombieguy](#)

[Zombieguy](#), 2 days ago

Agreed. Although Porn star/scientist would be awesome.

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[marcusbhoward](#), 2 days ago

'evil' would be that it causes men to get all hot and bothered and pursue women for just sex, it causes men in relationships (married) to want to be with other women, which leads to family break-ups, that kind of thing.

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[Batman](#), 2 days ago

I disagree. Porn usage in and of itself doesn't cause break-ups – it's a symptom of a larger problem.

I love it when people blame things (porn, video games, television, movies) for any of society's problems. If some dickhead leaves his wife, it's because he's a loser to begin with.

While I'm not a big fan of porn, that doesn't make me an inherently better person.

[Zombieguy](#) : RE: RE: RE: RE: RE: Great porn debate: The porn star vs. the porn pastor [More..](#)

[Zombieguy](#)

[Zombieguy](#), yesterday at 05:11 PM

Good grief, you're telling me he nicknamed his wang "Scully"?

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[Channing](#), yesterday at 03:21 AM

Apparently Tea Leoni became suspicious after hearing cries of "Scully!" coming from the family's computer room.

[JohnScott](#) : RE: RE: RE: Great porn debate: The porn star vs. the porn pastor [More..](#)

JohnScott

JohnScott, 2 days ago

Surely you agree that anyone that watches a ton of porn runs into issues. That dude from X-files comes to mind. Even though he's married to a Hollywood hottie, he can't lay off the porn. Supposedly he's a human spank machine when he's left alone with a PC and broadband connection.

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