

The Abuse of Sex

Roger Scruton

We are a long way from the days when homosexuality was described as a perversion, pornography as an offence against public morals and masturbation as ‘self-abuse’. The old morality which condemned sex outside marriage, and saw nothing wrong with laws that treat homosexuality as a criminal offence, even if it has a following in the Muslim world, has few adherents in the West. In general we have moved on at such a pace in the last half a century that to many people it appears quaint to talk of sexual morality at all. If there is sexual misconduct, many people think, it is only some special case of the more general sin of forcing, defrauding or manipulating other people into doing something they do not really want to do. If they *do* really want to do it, and the feeling is mutual, then what on earth is wrong?

That is the view that I wish to challenge. What I say may not persuade everyone; indeed, it may not persuade anyone. But I will have achieved half of my purpose if I convince you that the argument is not about consent but about the very nature of the sexual act and the desire expressed in it.

1. Some modern myths.

There are certain ways of describing and (in consequence) experiencing sexual phenomena which I believe to be founded in myths. The myths in question originate some in wishful thinking and some in scientific and pseudo-scientific theories.

The first myth is that sexual desire is desire for a particular kind of pleasure, located in the sexual organs. On this view all sex is like masturbation – a manipulation of the sexual organs for the sake of pleasure. The other person is seen as a stimulus to the desire, but not an object of it. The desire is not for him or her but for a pleasure that could be obtained in other ways.

Why should people believe that? There are two dominant reasons, I think. One is that it simplifies the phenomena of sex in a way that makes them intellectually manageable. Sex becomes like eating and drinking: the desire is for sensory gratification, and is part of the general

pleasure-seeking character of the animal organism. The instinct on which this pleasure depends is aroused by the sight or contact of another person: and that explains the function of sexual pleasure in the life of the human organism, and why it is usually aroused by a member of the opposite sex. This pleasure helps the reproductive process, in just the way that the pleasure of eating helps to keep the organism fed.

The other reason for being drawn to this myth is that it simplifies the phenomena of sex in ways that make it *morally* manageable. If sex is just like eating, then all the fuss about personal relationships, commitment, and the rest can be discounted from the moral point of view. As long as the other person sits down with you voluntarily to enjoy the meal, so to speak, the elementary requirements of morality are satisfied. And maybe, for health reasons, you should be careful about the diet. But all those old hesitations, such as shame, honour, marital duty, and the rest, are as irrational as the Jewish dietary laws and a mere survival from a previous era, in which 'safe sex' was difficult to guarantee.

The second myth is that sexual satisfaction depends upon such factors as the intensity and duration of sensory pleasure, culminating in orgasm, and that 'good sex' is a matter of getting those things right. This is what lovers should aim at, and what ultimately cements the bond between them. Around the myth of 'good sex' has grown an enormous literature, both popular and 'scientific'. Like the previous myth, this one serves to simplify the phenomena of sex, both factually and morally. It reduces to a technique what is more properly described as an art, and represents as a means what is understandable only as an end. In short, it 'instrumentalizes' the sexual act.

The third myth is of a different kind. This is the myth that sexual urges need to be expressed, and that the attempt to 'repress' them is psychologically harmful. The origins of this myth lie in the theories of Freud, who did not, however, endorse the view that repression is harmful. What Freud did do was to introduce the 'hydraulic' imagery with which sexual desire is now so often understood. The urge is welling up inside me, can be kept down – at least for a while – but will seek a channel eventually, and if not allowed to escape through one channel may escape through another. The more it is kept down, the more dangerous might its eruption eventually be, when it finds release in activities which pose a threat to others, such as sadism or child abuse. The great apostle of this view was Wilhelm Reich, who saw orgasm as a kind of release, sex as the technique for securing it, and repression as the path to insanity.

Associated with this third myth is a fourth, which is that sexual desire is the same kind of thing, whatever the nature of the partner who arouses it. The urge that is welling within me might be stimulated by a woman, or a man, or an animal, or simply an imaginary being. There is nothing intrinsic to desire that requires that it to focus on a member of the opposite sex, and there is no difference in the essential nature of the desire, whether it be men, women or dogs that spark it off in you. Of course, convention and decency set proper limits to how a human being should behave in the course of satisfying his sexual urges. But there is nothing in the urge itself that demands any particular kind of partner. Sexual ‘orientation’, as it is now called, is simply an ingrained habit of arousal, trained on a particular kind of object.

This myth goes naturally with the other three, but the motive for adopting it is rather different. For it offers an easy path to the conclusion that there is no such thing as sexual normality, and that homosexuality (for example) is not in itself a perversion. Seeing sexual desire in this way it becomes difficult to argue that homosexual conduct is a *different kind of thing* from heterosexual conduct. On the contrary, the two kinds of sexual conduct are seen as using different *instruments*, but to the same end. And any argument for distinguishing right from wrong applies equally to both kinds of sex. There should be no coercion, no fraud, no trickery; each partner must be open and honest with the other; but the sex of the partner is irrelevant to the morality of the act.

Finally, the fifth and in many ways most important of the modern myths about sex. This tells us that attitudes like shame, guilt and disgust are unhealthy – costs that cannot be outweighed by the benefits of sexual release. Hence we should strive to free ourselves from these hangovers, and learn to engage in sexual activity in full awareness that it is in essence no more guilty an activity than eating or drinking – a psychological benefit that need have no psychological cost. Much modern sex education is designed as a therapy for guilt and shame, a way of getting young people to accept their sexual urges, and to find ways to express them without feeling bad about doing so. What makes people feel bad, it is suggested, is the ‘judgemental’ attitude prevalent in the surrounding culture, which young people interiorize, so that they accuse themselves in the very moment of sexual release. Moral progress means freeing ourselves from this internal judgement, learning to express our sexuality freely, and to overcome the irrational guilt that stems from others and not from our true inner selves.

Now I agree with the view that we must aim to find ways to express our sexual desires without feeling guilt and shame. But I also think that guilt and shame are often justified, and that what they demand of us is not therapy, in order to remove them, but right conduct, in order that they should have no cause to occur.

2. Some consequences of the myths.

Not everyone adheres to those myths, and there are of course more and less subtle ways of upholding them. But they define a pattern of thinking in our society, which impacts on every aspect of the culture. Whenever people write of the ‘recreational’ use of sex; whenever they suggest that there is no basis to sexual morality other than the rule that force and fraud are forbidden; whenever they describe ‘gay’ sex as though it were a mere variation of a routine that exists also in a ‘straight’ variety – they are usually leaning on those myths. And perhaps the greatest evidence of the triumph of these myths is the growing indifference in our society towards the glut of pornography. For if those myths are true then it is impossible to condemn pornography or the practice of those who use it as a sexual stimulant. Indeed, pornography might even be regarded as the best form of sexual recreation, in that it involves nobody apart from the person watching it, and is free from the dangers, medical, psychological and personal, of sex with a partner. As Oscar Wilde said of masturbation: ‘it is cleaner, more efficient, and you meet a better class of person’, by which he meant himself.

Now I am one of those who think of pornography as something that we should avoid ourselves and do everything to forbid to our children. But I find nothing in the modern myths that would justify that attitude, and therefore I must search in my mind for the error which those myths involve, and attempt to put in place of them a rival picture of human sexual desire. This is what I wish to sketch in the remainder of this talk. But first, let me make some disclaimers. The myths that I have set out above might be simply described as involving an ‘instrumentalized’ view of sexual conduct – the view that the sexual act, in whatever form it takes, is being viewed as a *means* to something else, be it sensory pleasure, orgasm or relief from internal pressure. It doesn’t follow from this that it does not have other values. Just as food is a means to gustatory pleasure and also to nourishment, so does eating have other values – and especially eating in

company, which is a form of companionship that brings with it both intimacy and comfort. Companionship is a by-product of eating which is a pleasure in itself and also a value.

In a similar way someone could adhere to the instrumentalized view of sexual desire, and still argue that when we take this pleasure in company there is a social pay-off, in the form of an intimacy and mutual enjoyment that are both pleasant and valuable in themselves. So you could, from this instrumentalized view of sexual conduct, go on to build a picture of ‘good sex’ which reconstructs some of the moral values which we associate with loving relations in general and marriage in particular. But these moral values will not be intrinsic to the sexual act. They will be by-products of the act, and will have no intrinsic bearing on the morality of the act itself, any more than the social value of dinner à deux has any bearing on the rightness or wrongness of eating the particular thing that is eaten (and which may in fact be forbidden by some dietary code).

Furthermore, in opposing those myths, I am not insisting that the only alternative to them is the old morality that regards heterosexual relations within marriage as the only legitimate form of sexual expression, and which dismisses homosexuality, for example, as a perversion. Exactly what moral code is the right one, or whether there is any single right one, is not a matter that concerns me directly in this talk. I am concerned only with the more fundamental question, which is a question of philosophical psychology rather than morality – the question what to put in place of the instrumentalized view of sex. If I go on to draw moral conclusions, they will be tentative, and based in a sense of what is at risk in our sexual encounters.

3. Persons and animals.

The first point to make is that sexual desire belongs to that aspect of the human being which we summarize in the concept of the person. Many of the things that we experience we experience as animals. The pain of a wound is the very same state of mind that a dog might feel if wounded in a similar part. Seeing and hearing, too, we share with animals, and when tired or hungry what we feel does not normally depend upon thought, intention or personality. But there are other states of mind that only persons can experience. For example, while a dog can experience aggression, he cannot experience remorse or shame, cannot wonder about the laws of nature, cannot judge another dog morally, and so on.

There are some states of mind that are rooted in our animal nature, but which are also transformed by our involvement as persons. For example, soldiers in the front line respond to an attack on their comrades by joining with them in the fight, and this response belongs to those general collective reactions that are also exhibited by pack animals. However the soldier who rushes to share the danger of his comrades is not just obeying an instinct. He has risen above that instinct and judged it to be right and honourable to act on it. He has a motive and not just an urge to join the battle, and that motive is honour and duty towards his fellows, and shame at letting them down. Such a motive can prevail over fear and dread only because the soldier also has the virtue that enables him to act on it – the virtue that we know as fortitude or courage. And in acting from this motive of honour the soldier is acting for *others*, and from a conception of *himself*, and of how he looks in others' eyes. In short he acts from a full, free, personal involvement in his predicament, conscious that he is judged for what he does, and aiming at a good which he understands in personal terms.

Exactly similar things should be said of sexual desire. This is rooted in instincts that we share with the other animals, and when one person pursues another this may at times not look so very different from the encounter of horse and mare in a field. However, just as in the case of the soldier, the person who responds to this instinct also stands in judgement upon it. Is it right or wrong to respond? And when he responds it is from a judgement that this is the right person, that in doing this thing he is in her eyes not demeaning himself but gaining acceptance, just as she is in his. There is a reciprocity of glances involved, a gradual accomodation in which consent is, as it were, woven into the very fabric of the desire, so that when they finally give way to it the desire has become an expression of something other than instinct. Of what?

To answer that question we must look a little more closely at the concept of the person. It is a concept that comes to us originally from Roman law, where it means the legal subject – the entity that can appear before a court of law, so as to affirm its rights and acknowledge its duties. Most animals are not persons, and some persons are not animals. We, however, are both. Hence there are features of our mental life which non-personal animals do not share. We have rights and duties; we make judgements, reflect on past and future, on the possible and the impossible; we are self-conscious, distinguishing self and other, and attributing our mental states to ourselves on no basis; we relate to each other not as animals but as persons, through dialogue, judgement, and moral expectations. Indeed, there are arguments for saying that the concept of the person is

essentially tied to interpersonal relations: to explain what a person *is*, we must explain how persons relate to each other. And one vital feature of interpersonal relations is their emotional content. My stance towards self and other is reflected in my emotional life. Emotions like shame, guilt, anger, remorse, gratitude, forgiveness and rejoicing are essentially directed towards persons – whether self or other – and learning to feel these things is part of what it means to grow up, i.e. to pass from the animal to the personal condition.

Fundamental to all those emotions, and to the life of persons generally, are our beliefs about freedom and responsibility. My responsibility is revealed in my shame, and my freedom in my forgiveness. We all know that the concepts of freedom and responsibility are controversial, and that no two philosophers agree as to what they presuppose. But for our present purposes we can leave the philosophical controversies to one side; my sole concern is to examine how we actually envisage ourselves in our lives as persons. In all our conduct towards each other we treat both self and other as free. The belief in freedom and responsibility is presupposed in anger and resentment, just as in gratitude and love. Take that belief away and little would remain of our emotional life and its rewards.

The heart of freedom is the self. Kant suggested, in his lectures on anthropology, that the distinctiveness of the human condition is contained in the fact that human beings can say ‘I’. Self-consciousness brings with it the condition of freedom, and the knowledge of both self and other as responsible. But there is a yet more remarkable fact about the use of ‘I’. By my use of this word I create a new centre of being: I set my body aside, as it were, replace the organism with the self, and present to others another target of their interest and response. To know my mind, and also to change it, they no longer examine my body and its state: they look to my words, my opinions, my thoughts. They enter into dialogue with this thing called ‘I’, and see it as standing, so to speak, in the arena of freedom, both part of the physical world and also situated on its very edge.

The words I am using here are of course figurative, and they demand a lengthy philosophical exposition. But all I wish you to acknowledge is that something like this is assumed in our ordinary human relations. Just think of your response, when your friend betrays your secrets. You don’t think of him as you would of a computer, in which you stored some information which somehow got out. You don’t ask yourself about what hacked into his brain, or how the messages got copied out of it. You go to him and you address him in the second person,

I to I: ‘You promised,’ you say, and your words are addressed to that very centre of being where his ‘I’ resides. And in accusing him you are not trying to provoke some physical reaction. You are expecting a response from that very I – a response from the centre of freedom where he resides, one self-conscious subject among others. You expect him, in other words, to take responsibility for what he did, to say ‘I am sorry’, and maybe to show how he is going to atone for his fault, to make amends, and in this way re-establish your relations in such a way that you will forgive him. There is a process here, and we are all familiar with it. And it is a process in which one ‘I’ faces another, both of them exercising their freedom, taking responsibility for their choices, and in general acting as the sovereign of the human animal.

This does not mean that there are two things here – person and animal. There is one thing, an organism, organised as a person. And that is how we treat each other in all our free relations.

But now for sexual desire. This too is rooted in animal instincts. But in a person desire is re-centered, self-attributed to the I, so as to become part of the inter-personal dialogue. Hence sexual desire, as we know it, is peculiar to human beings. It is an interpersonal emotion, in which subject and object confront each other I to I. In describing sexual desire we are describing *John’s* desire for *Mary*, or *Jane’s* desire for *Bill*. And the people themselves will not merely describe their desires, but also experience them, as *my* desire for *you*. ‘I want you’ is not a figure of speech but the true expression of what I feel. And here the pronouns identify that very centre of free and responsible choice which constitutes the inter-personal reality of each of us. I want you as the free being that you are, and your freedom is wrapped up in the thing I want.

You can easily verify this, as I show in my book *Sexual Desire*, by studying sexual arousal. This is not a state of the body, even though it involves certain bodily changes. It is a process in the soul, a steady awakening of one person to another, through touches, glances and caresses. The exchange of glances is particularly important here, and illustrates a general feature of personal relations. People look *at* each other, as animals do. But they also look *into* each other, and do this in particular when mutually aroused. The look of desire is like a summons, a call to the other self to show itself in the eyes, to weave its own freedom and selfhood into the beam that calls to it. There is a famous description of this phenomenon by John Donne, who writes:

Our eyebeams twisted, and did thred

*Our eyes upon one double string;
So t'entergraft our hands as yet
Was all the means to make us one,
And pictures in our eyes to get
Was all our propagation.*

The experience described by Donne is known to every sighted person who has ever been aroused. Likewise the caress and the touch of desire have an *epistemic* character: they are an exploration, not of a body, but of a free being in his or her embodiment. They too call to the other in his freedom, and are asking him to show himself.

All the phenomena of desire can be understood in that way, as parts of a mutual negotiation between free and responsible beings, who want each other as persons. And this, as I try to show in the book referred to, has an important metaphysical consequence, which in turn has important moral consequences. Persons are individuals, not merely in the weak sense of being substances that can be reidentified, and which undergo change, but in the strong sense of being *identified*, both by themselves and by others, as unique, irreplaceable, *not admitting of substitutes*. This is something that Kant tried to capture in his theory of persons as 'ends in themselves'. Somehow – and again I don't want to explore all the philosophical complexities here – the free being is, in his own eyes and in the eyes of all those who are in a personal relation with him, the being who he is, and never merely an instance of some useful attribute. To treat him merely instrumentally is always in a measure to abuse him; and while I can employ you for a job and in doing so recognize that someone else might have served my purpose just as well, I must, in employing you, respect your individuality, and not treat you merely as a tool or a slave. You are for me, even in this functional relation, the free being who meets me I to I.

It follows from this that, in those relations between persons in which self and other relate as subject and object, each is viewed as unique, without a substitute. As I try to show in my book, this has an immediate impact on sexual desire. John, frustrated in his desire for Mary, cannot be offered Jane as a substitute – someone who says 'Take Jane, she will do just as well' has not understand *what* John wants, in wanting Mary.

Disowning the myths.

What I have said points at every juncture to difficult philosophical issues, concerning the nature of persons, of freedom, of responsibility and self-awareness. And I am consciously refusing to address those issues, because my task is simply to remind you of what you all know and what you have all experienced in moments of desire. Arousal and desire are not bodily states or even states of individual persons: they form one pole of an I to I encounter, and involve a *going out* to the other, in which his or her freedom and responsibility are intimately involved in what is wanted. It is only in this way that we can explain some of our most immovable intuitions about sex.

Consider rape. On the instrumentalized view of sex that I surveyed earlier, rape is a crime of the same order as leaning on a woman without asking her permission. It involves using someone for a purpose that could have been achieved with any other instrument, but without troubling to seek her consent – even ignoring her resistance. At the worst you might consider rape to be like spitting on someone, doing something that disgusts her, without caring what she feels. As we know, however, rape is next in line to murder, by way of an assault. It is a violation of the other person in the very depths of her being. The view that I have offered immediately explains this. The rapist is not merely prepared to use his victim as a means: he steals her most precious possession, the thing that she wishes to offer only as a gift and in a condition of mutual surrender. He does not merely disregard her freedom: he poisons it, removes from it the one thing for which it was made, which is the mutual self-giving of desire. And that is why rape is experienced as an annihilation and not just an abuse.

The account I offered explains another, and related, feature of desire, namely that it is compromising, potentially embarrassing, requiring complex negotiations and – without those negotiations – liable to induce self-disgust. When girls complain of date-rape, it is this kind of thing that they have in mind. It is not that they didn't consent to what happened. Outwardly they did. But inwardly they did not, and didn't realize, until too late, that this was so. Consent has to be prepared by elaborate games and intimacies, in which freedom and responsibility are alertly deployed by both parties to the transaction.

The account explains, also, the disgust at pedophilia, the tabu on incest, and why we regard bestiality and necrophilia as perversions. It explains the role of modesty as an invitation to correct behaviour, and shame as a protection against abuse – a point vividly made by Max Scheler in his long paper on shame. I don't think I need to spell these things out, since I believe

that anyone who recognizes the core of truth in what I have said will be able to spell them out for himself. My purpose now is simply to sweep away the myths that I began by enunciating. All of them, it seems to me, arise from a fundamental mistake about the *intentionality* of sexual arousal and sexual desire. These states of mind are not directed towards pleasure, or orgasm or any similar thing. They are directed towards one free being by another.

That last point is worth lingering over. You might think that the rapist is indifferent to the freedom of his victim. On the contrary, however. It is precisely her freedom that he wishes to seize, to overcome, to force to bow before him. For this reason you cannot rape an animal, even if you can sexually abuse it. The victim of rape is a free being, compelled to accept what she does not consent to.

The myths that I laid out earlier depend upon removing from the picture of sexual activity both the self-conception of the subject, and the other-conception of the object. The other is regarded as a tool with which to induce excitement and pleasure in the subject, who is himself conceived as sensory organism. The myths depend, in other words, on removing from the picture of desire both the person who feels it, and the person towards whom it is felt. They are not a description of desire at all, but a description of something else – something that we might observe in animals or children, or, as Socrates put it (according to Xenophon) in pigs rubbing against a post.

One thing that tempts people to endorse the myths is the very obvious fact that sexual activity involves bodily changes and bodily sensations, leading (though not always) to orgasm. And this has made the caricature of desire believable, in the minds of those who take an accountant's view of human satisfactions. It looks as though you could give a simple enumeration of the benefits of sexual activity, in terms of pleasure, and the costs in terms of the time and energy needed to find the person willing to stimulate you, and proceed, on that basis, to give a utilitarian morality of sexual behaviour. If that sounds ridiculous, do not be deceived. It is ridiculous, so ridiculous that Judge Richard Posner has written a whole book, called *Sex and Reason*, devoted to treating the phenomena in this way.

And there is a downside to such books, and to the myths that they reinforce. Myths can work on reality in such a way that they cease to be myths and become true descriptions instead. Thinking of sex in the instrumentalized way that Judge Posner exemplifies you actually prepare yourself to *experience* it in this way. Henry James had an inkling of this when he wrote, in the

Preface to *The Bostonians*, of ‘the decline in the sentiment of sex’ – meaning the loss of that full-hearted, self-committing form of sexual desire which animates the heroines of Jane Austen, and its replacement by short-lived, titillating forms of seduction. And the more people think of sex as a means to the production of pleasure or a means for obtaining orgasm (as was famously believed by the madman Wilhelm Reich, who even invented a machine to help the orgasm seeker to reach his goal), the more the other drops out of consideration as irrelevant, and the more sex ceases to be a form of inter-personal relation and retreats into narcissistic solitude.

Self-abuse.

In conclusion I want to touch on a highly unfashionable idea, which is that of self-abuse, a term originally applied to all forms of masturbation, in ways that led to much ridicule and scorn of our ancestors and their puritan hang-ups. It is surely obvious from my account that sex, in what I would wish to describe as its normal form, involves a moving out from the self towards the other – an attempt to know and unite with the other in his body. It involves treating the other as a free subject, and enjoying the mutual arousal which is possible only through the reciprocal interest in each other as conscious and free. The self is at risk in this: the other may refuse to cooperate, may turn away in disgust, may act in ways that elicit shame and humiliation. That is why you have to be ready for it, and one reason why it is such an injustice to inflict sexual relations on children. In the face of it people are tempted to retreat from the direct forms of sexual desire, and take refuge in fantasy objects – objects which cannot damage or threaten you, which cannot withhold consent since they cannot give it, which are without the capacity of embarrass or shame the one who watches them.

Such objects are provided by pornography. The people displayed in the pornographic film are not in relation to the viewer, nor are they displayed as being in any other relation to each other than that of each using the other’s body as a *machine à froter*. Of course they are sexually attractive, endowed with all exciting attributes. But it is impossible to know what they are feeling, and in any case their feelings are in no way directed to the person who is using them and at the same time abusing himself. If the viewer is experiencing pleasure it is not the pleasure of desire, since there is no-one that he is desiring. Nor is he really aroused except in the purely physiological sense, since there is no mutual arousal of which he is a party. Everything is cold, bleak, objective, and also cost free and without any personal risk.

Pornography exactly conforms to the myths about desire that I have rejected: it is a *realisation* of those myths, a form of sexual pleasure from which the interpersonal intentionality has been surgically excised. Pornography takes hold of sexual desire and cuts away the desire. There is no real object, but only a fantasy, and no real subject, since there is nothing ventured of the self. To say that this is an abuse of the self is to express a literal truth – so it seems to me.

Like all cost-free forms of pleasure, porn is habit-forming. It short-circuits that round-about route to sexual satisfaction which passes by the streams and valleys of arousal, in which the self is always at risk from the other, and always motivated to give itself freely in desire. The short-circuiting mechanism here is in all probability not different from that researched by Mihaly Csikszentmihaly and Robert Kubey in their studies of gambling addiction and TV addiction. It exhibits in addition, however, a depersonalizing habit – a habit of viewing sex as something external to the human personality, to relationship, and to the arena of free encounters. Sex is reduced to the sexual organs, which are stuck on, in the imagination, like cut-outs in a child's picture. To think that this can be done, and the habit of doing it fully established, without damage to a person's capacity to be a person, or to relate to other persons as one sexual being to others, is to make a large and naïve assumption about the ability of the mind to compartmentalize. Indeed psychologists and psychotherapists are increasingly encountering the damage done by porn, not to marriages and relationships only, but to the very capacity to engage in them. Sex, portrayed in the porno-image, is an affair of attractive people with every technical accomplishment. Most people are not attractive, and with only second-class equipment. Once they are led by their porn addiction to see sex in the instrumentalized way that porn encourages, they begin to lose confidence in their capacity to enjoy sex in any other way than through fantasy. People who lose confidence in their ability to attract soon become unattractive. And then the fear of desire arises, and from that fear the fear of love. This, it seems to me, is the real risk attached to pornography. Those who become addicted to this risk-free form of sex run a risk of another and greater kind. They risk the loss of love, in a world where only love brings happiness.