



Some tips on presenting the Stop Porn Culture slide show

The slide show “Who Wants to Be a Porn Star?” is an educational and organizing tool that can be adapted to the needs and comfort levels of both presenter and audience. Each presenter will develop her own particular style over time.

Because we believe that a feminist analysis of how women are objectified and abused in pornography is best presented primarily in a woman’s voice, the script was designed to be read by a woman. When the audience is exclusively female, that’s an obvious requirement. In mixed-gender groups, it can be effective to have a woman as the primary presenter, with a male co-presenter to participate in the question-and-answer period.

Here are some suggestions about presenting the program that you may find helpful.

1. Start slow! You may want to begin by presenting the slideshow to a few friends in your living room, for instance. By practicing several times in friendly, informal spaces, you will become more comfortable. This also gives you a chance to get used to seeing the images, which will help you keep your composure when presenting to other audiences.
2. Remember to request that audience members hold their questions and comments until the end of the presentation.
3. It is important not to come across as overly hostile or aggressive, both while narrating the slides and when answering questions. It’s understandable that we feel angry and sad when we see these images, and it’s OK to let the audience see that. But remember that audience members (especially women) are in a very vulnerable place seeing these images for the first time. They need to feel like you have things under control. Also, by keeping your own emotions in check, you allow them more space to experience their own feelings and reactions.
4. It can be helpful, as you go through the slides, to occasionally point out particular details of the text and images. It breaks things up so that you are not just reading the whole time and also puts some critical distance between the audience and the images, which can help them both analytically and emotionally.
5. We suggest that in mixed-gender groups, the first segment of the question-and-answer period be reserved for women to respond. Men can be quick to fill the conversational space and often crowd out women’s voices. If you follow this suggestion, at the end of the script, as you introduce the question period, explain this policy and assure the audience that everyone will get a chance to speak. If a man insists on ignoring the policy, enlist the support of the women in the audience to shut him down. For example, you can turn to the audience and ask, “Would you like me to allow him to continue to speak?”

6. For the discussion after the slideshow, come into the audience if possible so that you can stand near the questioner, looking the person in the eye and acknowledging them. Listen attentively to each question, even if you've heard it a thousand times.
7. Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know." It's OK to let the audience know that you are relatively new at this and there are things that you are still figuring out, or that you have haven't had a chance to research, or whatever.
8. If you get a hostile questioner, or one who "takes over" and wants to go on and on, you need to shut him or her (usually him) down. *You* are in charge, and you are responsible for ensuring that the discussion remains open and productive. Let the questioner have his say to some reasonable extent, respond as best you can, and then say something like, "We'll have to agree to disagree about this; I'm going to move on now."
9. If you don't know how to respond to a question in a purely factual or "intellectual" way (or sometimes even if you do), it can sometimes be good to draw out and respond to the *feeling* behind the question. Sometimes the person really wants her or his feelings heard and validated, more even than s/he wants an answer per se.
10. Humor is good, if you can manage a bit here and there—it really helps break the ice and open things up!
11. To feel (and be) prepared for these discussions, *read* (and re-read) widely about the issue. The point is not to memorize lots of details, but rather to soak in the relevant literature so that you can easily discuss basic points and ideas. If there are a few particular passages from important books and articles that you find especially clear and helpful, bring them with you for easy reference, or even make them into slides that you add to the show (but remember that the show will be most effective if it doesn't get too long).
12. This isn't for everyone, but it can be helpful to surf some porn sites every now and then to stay up on the pornographers' latest tricks. Reading *Adult Video News* online (avn.com) and other news sites about the industry (xbiz.com) is helpful in understanding pornography.
13. Remember that the *basic* points of this critique are pretty straightforward, and many questions can be brought back around to these basic points pretty easily!

Presenting the slideshow can be challenging, but many also find it very rewarding. By sharing this information, you can change how people see the world, validate many women's feelings about pornography and its role in their lives, and draw more people into a movement for social justice. Good luck!