Twitter Thread by josh grubbs



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Very excited to share this one with you all!

It was both a shock & an honor to get an email from the editors at Current Directions asking for a paper on this topic, and I'm glad to see it out in print.

Feel free to share/RT widely (please!)

Obviously, as I'm sure you all know, internet pornography use is incredibly common.

Yet, despite how common pornography use is, the premiere outlets for psychological science have all-but-ignored the topic for 30th years.

Now, it wasn't always this way. In the 1960s-1980s, there were actually quite a few excellent (though early) papers in JPSP and even American Psychologist about the use of "erotica," but since about 1985, there's just nothing.

Now, I suppose that this would be reasonable if nothing significant had changed about use in the past three decades, but, as I'm sure you are all aware, there have been some major technological changes that have affected use.

I also suppose that it would be reasonable for such an absence of research if these journals had also ignored other major technological trends, yet we all know this isn't the case. There are dozens of papers on video games, screen time, social media, and even virtual reality...

Honestly, I'm not sure why there's been less of an emphasis on pornography use. Perhaps it's because of the taboo nature of the topic. Perhaps it's because there are just less researchers interested in sex science, but in any case, we think it's time for this to change

In the paper, we lay out three domains we think that there should be a natural interest in this behavior: 1) Relationship science, 2) developmental science (especially among those who study sexual development), and 3) Clinical science

We go into more detail in the paper, but there's clear evidence already in the literature about why these fields should be interested in pornography use as a key behavior of interest, but in short, it seems likely that pornography is not always a neutral behavior

That is, there are times that use may cause problems that are worth studying, and there are also likely times that it may be a net positive in people's lives. But, until we have more rigorous scientific approaches to this topic, we won't know what the full range of possibilities

Ultimately, we favor an approach to this science that takes into account the full spectrum possibilities

And, of key importance, this type of research is not going to happen without investment, and it's beyond time for funding agencies to take this science seriously.

A behavior that over half the U.S. population regularly engages in is probably worth spending money on.