Press Release: 06 October 2015
This House Believes Pornography is Inherently Oppressive

“An industry of this magnitude...is a fierce, active, oppress force in our society”

Proposition: Professor Rae Langton
Porn presents one world’s view, that of men. Enforecement of porn world on real world men and women is oppression and leads to oppressive treatment of people, especially women. It sets norms that “this is okay...this is what women really want”. It is subtle and structural. Pornography is oppressive specifically for women. Ted Talk cited where the speaker said that “It’s not about erotica, it’s about the male domination of women.”

Opposition: Jerry Barnett
The anti-porn feminism that came after the 1960s/1970s originates from social conservatism. Evidence was cited that porn stars actually have high levels of happiness and lead good lives. On the positively correlated link between pornography and rape, there’s a wealth of evidence that points in the opposite direction. When Denmark legalised porn, researchers looked for the correlation between porn and sexual violence and found a decline in counts of rape when porn had been made widely available

Proposition: Teresa Baron
“Nothing happens in a vacuum” – which is why we know Hollywood represents unrealistic beauty standards, so “why are we unwilling to look at porn and the way that it influences our expectations?” It is oppressive to women in the industry as well as women outside of the industry. “Porn exists because people feel entitled to use other people's bodies for their own gratification”.

Opposition: Miles Kekwirk
Japanese government censoring porn industry leads to the strangeness that is Japanese tentacle porn. Kekwirk went on to argue that ISIS treatment of women is appalling and that you cannot argue that this is a result of pornography. Pornography is a liberating force and demystifies the female body. Sexual education was hardly ever talked about once upon a time and therefore the suggestion of a positively correlating link between internet pornography and rape lends an unfair criticism of young people today.

Proposition: Dr Ann Olivarius
Many people have been harmed by revenge pornography. Revenge pornography is a considered act – “at its heart is a function to oppress”. There are also issues of forced early retirement, sometimes caused by injuries “on the job”. The performers that she speaks in her law practice note that the industry does not protect them – there is no job security, holidays nor long careers. She notes many diseases that her clients have confronted as a result of their performances. “An industry of this magnitude...is a fierce, active, oppress force in our society”. One-third of Cambridge female students have reported cases of sexual assault.

Opposition: Cindy Gallop
The problems in porn are business issues that need business solutions. Every bank that refuses to bank an honest company, every business entity that does not work with a “decent adult company” is therefore responsible for all the bad things that happen in the adult company. Forcing that industry into the
underground, you make it much easier for bad things to happen. Gallop ends by asking the members of the Union to “help turn the British porn industry into an export we can be proud of”

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For footage of the event go to https://www.youtube.com/user/cambridgeunionsoc