

Can Mindgeek explain its collaboration with libelous Twitter account “@BrainOnPorn”?

In April 2019 a new Twitter account appeared. It was called, “Real Your Brain on Porn” and its Twitter handle was “@BrainOnPorn.”

The account claimed to be science-based, but the preponderance of its storm of defamatory and misleading tweets targeted individuals and organizations. It always battered those who dared to document evidence of porn’s harm to users or those porn exploits. And it consistently tweeted support for talking points that favored the sex/porn industry.

After a mind-boggling 18-month reign of terror, the @BrainOnPorn account was finally suspended for violating Twitter’s rules on harassment and publishing its targets’ personal information.

Mindgeek subsidiary Pornhub was the very first account to retweet the initial tweet of @BrainOnPorn. That tweet promoted the account’s original press release. This indicates that the account’s launch was coordinated *with Mindgeek employees.*

Here’s the screenshot of Pornhub’s ARIA Twitter account tweeting out the new account:

Retweeted 18 times ×



Real Your Brain on Porn @BrainOnPorn · 2h

New, free resource!

Real Your Brain on Porn

realyourbrainonporn.com

Science of pornography from actual scientists

realyourbrainonporn.com/research

Clinical status of pornography from therapists who specialize in sexuality

realyourbrainonporn.com/experts

#Pornography #YourBrainOnPorn #RYBOP

pic.twitter.com/TgVvQD0uRL



Pornhub ARIA  @Pornhub

Official Pornhub Twitter. I'm Aria, no I don't do porn. Add me on snapchat:

snapchat.com/add/ph-official

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Who was behind the new account, and what is their connection with Mindgeek, such that PornHub was the first to tweet about it? Was Mindgeek in fact instrumental in the @BrainOnPorn account's creation and operation?

Prime target

I closely observed the Mindgeek-promoted @BrainOnPorn Twitter account because my website was perhaps its prime target. In fact, the name chosen for the new account, "Real Your Brain on Porn," *violates my trademark*. So did its handle, "@BrainOnPorn."

I am the owner of a website named "Your Brain On Porn." For a decade, my site has been a popular clearinghouse for (1) research on the effects of porn, (2) self-reports by those who give it up, (3) critiques of some of the questionable research on porn (often authored by sexology allies of the porn industry), and (4) other items of interest to those seeking to understand and recover from porn's effects.

In addition to hosting www.YourBrainOnPorn.com, I presented the [popular TEDx talk](#) "The Great Porn Experiment" (~14 million views). I am also the author of the [Amazon best seller](#) *Your Brain On Porn: Internet Pornography and the Emerging Science of Addiction*. My evidence-based book is available in [multiple languages](#), and one edition has already been praised as one of the top non-fiction books of the last decade. I am not religious. I am also not any of the things the @BrainOnPorn account endeavored to paint me as during its reign. Its baseless slurs included 'white supremacist', 'racist', 'antisemitic', 'physical stalker of women', 'sender of rape and death threats', 'pseudoscientist', 'fraud', etc.

The @BrainOnPorn Twitter account, which Mindgeek promoted from the start via PornHub, was a key part of a larger coordinated attack. That attack commenced with an attempt to censor my website. At the beginning of 2019, porn ally and sexologist [Nicole R. Prause applied](#) for my site's well established trademarks, including the exclusive legal right to control my actual URL ("YourBrainOnPorn.com"). The trademark grab [failed](#), and the marks were registered in my name in 2020.

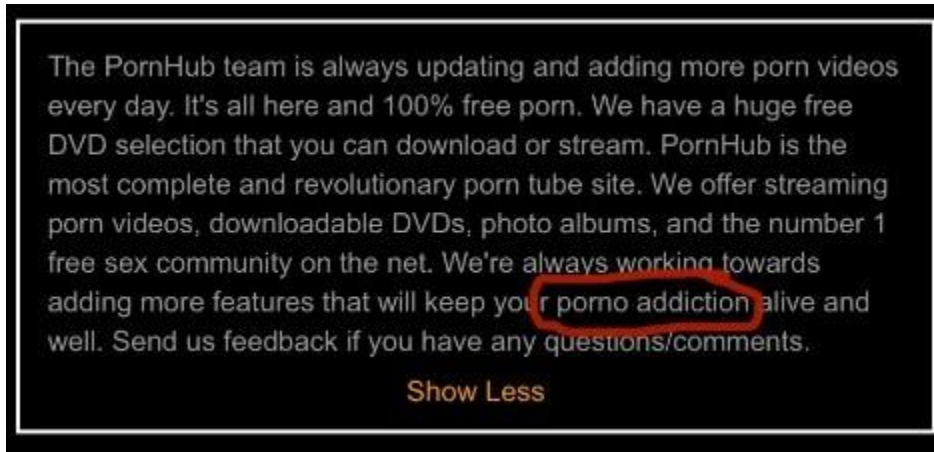
Meanwhile, in March 2019, Prause's confederate and fellow therapist Daniel A. Burgess registered a trademark-infringing domain name "[RealYourBrainOnPorn.com](#)," which engaged in various transparent ploys to divert my YourBrainOnPorn.com traffic to the impostor website. After many attorney hours, in January, 2021 I obtained the RealYourBrainOnPorn.com domain name as settlement of allegations of trademark infringement.

Earlier, in October, 2020, the impostor site's associated Twitter account @BrainOnPorn had been [permanently suspended](#) for violating Twitter's rules. This was the account that Mindgeek initially promoted.

I believe my website was targeted because I consistently post research consistent with the addiction/compulsivity model. In 2019, the World Health Organization adopted a

new diagnosis: “[Compulsive sexual behaviour disorder](#).” CSBD can be used to diagnose those with compulsive porn use. In short, the world experts adopted a position consistent with the position taken on my website: *porn use is risky for some users*. In fact, [80% of those seeking treatment for CSBD](#) report problematic porn use.

The new diagnosis is a formal acknowledgement that the world’s health experts do not agree with Mindgeek and its sexology allies, none of whom take porn addiction seriously. Here’s a screenshot of PornHub ridiculing the concept by offering to help its visitors feed their addictions. Imagine a tobacco or beverage company making this offer.



Chilling debate

Callous disregard of those struggling with problematic porn use is but one issue. I have been even more astounded by the calculated abuse directed at people who dare to speak publicly about porn’s harms. The Mindgeek-promoted @BrainOnPorn Twitter account was a major part of a relentless smear campaign targeting all who raised awareness of porn’s adverse effects either on users or those exploited in its production.

During its existence the @BrainOnPorn Twitter account tweeted up to 165 malicious tweets per day. Its output over its tenure was approximately 3,000 total tweets. It’s difficult to describe adequately the vileness of its lies, many of which were so disturbing to its targets that the targets were, in effect, silenced. Sample tweets [can be found here](#), but these are by no means the most outrageous.

In short, for 18 months the Mindgeek-promoted @BrainOnPorn Twitter account was the crown jewel of the hateful censorship tactics of the porn industry and its sexology allies. Far from enhancing scientific and public debate, it curbed both with its dishonest and reprehensible attacks. This type of *ad hominem* campaign distracts the public from the well-documented risks of porn’s harm to both users and those it exploits.

I believe it is important to get to the bottom of Mindgeek’s involvement in this propaganda effort on Twitter (@BrainOnPorn), and equally important to investigate Mindgeek’s collaborators and their impact on the field of porn research.

There has long been a close relationship between the porn industry and sexology researchers. In fact, for decades [Playboy funded the International Academy of Sex Research](#), which now publishes the most widely read sexology journal, *Archives of Sexual Behavior*. Clearly the health experts at the World Health Organization do not consider the sexologists' pro-porn research definitive, preferring the work of behavioral addiction researchers.

Perhaps the Ethics Committee should consider auditing the field and its potential bias, and not just Mindgeek's involvement in pro-porn propaganda tactics like the @BrainOnPorn Twitter account.

Conclusion

Please insist that Mindgeek executives answer the following questions, and supply written records supporting their answers:

- 1. How did Mindgeek learn of the new @BrainOnPorn account's press release?**
- 2. Was Mindgeek instrumental in the account's creation or operation, whether as principal or support?**
- 3. Who was behind the account, if not solely Mindgeek employees? (Supply name(s) and contact information.)**
- 4. When did the connection between Mindgeek and the operator(s) of the account commence, if the operators did not solely consist of Mindgeek employees?**

Thank you for considering these remarks.

Respectfully submitted,

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