

The Pornography Party Line: Sexualizing Inequality, Teaching Contempt

“...new social science research is demonstrating the traumatic impact of hate speech. For example, a study by the Prejudice Institute in North Carolina shows that **hate speech causes serious psychological and physiological damage to people who have been the targets.** Similarly, **new research proves the negative social and psychological consequences of pornography.** These include the **desensitization of men to women’s pain, higher willingness to rape, and more sexist attitudes toward women and girls.**”

Laura J. Lederer is a research fellow at the University of Minnesota Law School where she directs the Center on Speech, Equality and Harm.”

—Laura J. Lederer, “Freedom of hate speech too costly,” *Star Tribune*, 31 May 1995.

“Listen up men: *Playboy* is not the good clean fun the Hefners would have us believe, but sexist propaganda that hurts us in more ways than we know.”

—Mura, in *Law and Politics*.

PLAYBOY 8/92



“I’m certainly glad I brought the news of your winning the lottery in person, Miss Fisk. It’s been a distinct pleasure being caught up in your celebratory mood.”

“Research indicates that exposure to pornography increases male subjects’ acceptance of violence against women, significantly increases men’s sexual callousness, decreases their compassion for women as rape victims, increases their propensity to trivialize rape, and increases their aggression against women.”

—Anderson, in *The Price We Pay*, 129.

PLAYBOY 1/92



“For God’s sake...at least you could have told me you were shedding!”

“Although soft-core pornography is not graphic or violent, it is often degrading, depicting scenes in which a person (almost always a woman) is consenting but in a clearly submissive role, apparently sexually insatiable and usually subjected to some form of humiliating behaviour. All pornography portrays sex in an impersonal or dehumanizing manner, depicting women purely as objects in a nonaffectionate context.”

—W.L. Marshal and Sylvia Barrett, “The Link to Pornography,” in *Criminal Neglect: Why Sex Offenders Go Free* (Toronto: Seal Books, 1990), 158.

PLAYBOY 1/94



The Granny cartoon series represents Playboy’s sexism and ageism.

“Taken together, the research evidence highlights the fact that exposure to commonly available sexually explicit materials can foster and reinforce negative perceptions of women in both sexual and nonsexual contexts.”¹⁰

The Sexual Subordination of Women Puts Females at Greater Risk for Harassment, Manipulation, and Harm

“Pornography is frequently used to sexually harass women at work...Displaying pornography in the workplace is a graphic and effective way for male workers to let their female colleagues know they are not welcome and are considered inferior.”

—Anderson, in *The Price We Pay*, 127.

“Two studies asked female respondents, **‘Have you ever been upset by someone trying to get you to do something which they had seen in pornographic magazines, movies, or books?’** Ten percent of women responded yes in a random sample study in San Francisco, and 24 percent said yes in a survey of college undergraduates. Sometimes these interchanges are not simply requests. Three percent of women in one survey and 8.5 percent in another said that they had been physically coerced into sex by someone inspired by pornography.”

—Anderson, in *The Price We Pay*, 128.

“Dating violence then, comes down to at least two things: sexism and secrecy. Sexism is another word for **entitlement. A male feels entitled to a female’s body...the secret is called something else: ‘normal.’**”

—Gary Pettus, “Dating Violence a Dark Secret Among Youth,” *The Clarion-Ledger*, 4 February 1996.

PLAYBOY 7/92



“Oh, sure you could. All it takes is a little practice.”

PLAYBOY 2/95



“It will pay for itself a thousandfold. It’s called Sexual Harassment.”

“...[a club for girls was started] after hearing that 16-year-old girls...faced explicit sexual harassment daily at school. And that they fully expected it. **‘The boys who are 10-years-old are reading Playboy with all the nudes,’** wrote one girl in a journal. **‘Then they want to grab us girls in the privates to see if we’re the same. That’s where it all starts.’**”

—Marilyn Linton, “Respect Yourself,” *Toronto Sun*, 24 April 1994, p. 5b.

“A man’s need to ‘score’ and to push women into sexual acts that earn masculinity credits objectifies women. ‘Scoring’ is enhanced by getting women to perform sex acts that the men consider demeaning... Still other practices involve sexual humiliation of women.”

—Chris O’Sullivan, “Fraternities and the Rape Culture,” in *Transforming A Rape Culture*, eds. Emilie Buchwald, Pamela R. Fletcher, and Martha Roth (Minneapolis: Milkweed, 1993), 27.

“Many common practices of fraternity men after pledging can promote sexual aggression. These include videotaping, photographing, or merely observing through peepholes or windows a brother having sex with a woman.”

“Many common practices of fraternity men after pledging can promote sexual aggression. These include videotaping, photographing, or merely observing through peepholes or windows a brother having sex with a woman. Most fraternity houses have collections of pornographic magazines and videos. Sexual contests are common among fraternity men. At the most benign, the contest may simply be ‘notch’ contests over who has sex with the greatest number of women. A step up in victimizing and objectifying women, as well as alienating men from their own sexuality, are ‘pig contests,’ also called ‘hog contests,’ in which a man wins by having sex with the woman the group considers most unattractive.”
—O’Sullivan, in *Transforming a Rape Culture*, 29.

“Like other men in the sex offender group, David was reluctant to place blame for his actions on anything or anyone, but he described pornography as ‘the primary stepping-stone that I took to sexually acting out.’ He used the concept of boundary violations in his life.

‘... **pornography was a way to begin violating people’s boundaries.** And it kind of went from there. Where, like when you look at somebody engaging in sex, I think it’s a violation of boundaries. That is something that should be private. So, it’s like I gave myself permission to voyeur on them. And the more I did that, the more liberties I took to actually act that stuff out...it’s like pornography and I (slapping his hands together), we got bound somehow. And I ended up taking permission over a long period of time to violate boundaries, and I think pornography was the beginning of that violation.’”

—Robert Jensen, “Pornographic Lives,” *Violence Against Women*. 1.1(March 1995): 50.

PLAYBOY 11/95



“I’ll never forget our first night either, Darlene. I have it on videotape.”

“But the viewing of soft-core pornography was connected to coercive verbal behavior. It was also associated with the hypothetical likelihood to use sexual force. This conclusion was gauged by answers to a question asking whether the respondent would force sexual behavior if he were certain no one would find out and he would not be punished. Researcher Scot B. Boeringer...concluded that...even **soft-core pornography was found to be associated with nonviolent coercion and the hypothetical likelihood of using sexual force.**”

—“Sexual aggression and pornography,” *The Menninger Letter*, February 1995, p. 2.

“... the contest may simply be ‘notch’ contests over who has sex with the greatest number of women.”

“...sexually explicit mass media messages may be... a potent catalyst for sexually abusive behaviors such as rape. Exposure to pornography, remember, results in both a ‘loss-of-respect’ for female sexual autonomy and the disinhibition of men in the expression of aggression against women.” 12

Readers are Sexually Shortsheeted by Messages Devaluing Relationship, Intimacy and Partnership

“As well as turning women into two-dimensional objects, pornography also drums home lessons that place great pressures on men in anatomical proportions and in expectations of sexual prowess’ he (David Gutterman, coordinator, Men Acting for Change) said.”

—David Folkenflik, “Sexuality images discussed. Duke group tells TV’s 20/20 of porn’s effects,” *The Herald Sun*, January, 1993.

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PLAYBOY 7/87



“I’ve often had sex with strangers, but never with a perfect stranger...”

“To bring themselves into relationship with an objectified female body, males must objectify their own bodies as well. The necessary corollary to pornography’s myth of female instant availability is its **myth of male perpetual readiness**. Just as the former is an important source of misogyny, creating anger as real women fail to live up to the expectations of pornographic fantasies, so is the latter **an important source of male insecurity, as men fail to live up to pornographic standards of sexual acrobatics performed by oversized organs.**”

—Brod, in *Men Confront Pornography*, 198.

“In a 1988 study of 114 undergraduate men, 91.3 percent admitted they ‘liked’ to dominate a woman; 86.1 percent said they ‘enjoyed’ the conquest part of sex; 83.5 percent agreed that ‘some women look like they’re just asking to be raped’; 63.5 percent said they ‘get excited when a woman struggles over sex’; and 61.7 percent decided that ‘it would be exciting to use force to subdue a woman.’ In a 1988 survey of young teenage males, 25 percent deemed rape justified if a boy spent ten to fifteen dollars on a girl and two-thirds of them deemed rape justified if he dated her for more than six months.”

—Anderson, in *The Price We Pay*, 123.

“In another important study, Mary Koss conducted a large national survey of over 6,000 college students selected by a probability sample of institutions of higher education. She found that **college men who reported behavior that meets common legal definitions of rape were significantly more likely than college men who denied such behavior to be frequent readers of at least one of the following magazines: Playboy, Penthouse, Chic, Club, Forum, Gallery, Genesis, Oui, or Hustler** (Koss & Dinero, 1989).”

—Russell, in *Making Violence Sexy*, 147-148.

“...many young boys indicated that they learned from pornography to connect the use of force during sex with excitement, with feeling stimulated. They also learned that force was justified if the female was at all active, i.e. if she took the initiative.” 13

“...The silencing pornography does is inextricably tied to what social science has documented are pornography’s ‘nonspeech’ harms: its contribution to sexist attitudes, its encouragement of rape myths, its sexualization of dominance, and its reduction of men’s inhibitions to rape.”

—Anderson, in *The Price We Pay*, 123.

“Data on how pornography affects women’s relationships with men demonstrate that women feel: emotionally distant, 15 percent; sexually distant, 14 percent; as if they are being negatively compared to other women, 42 percent; bad about their bodies, 33 percent; sexually inadequate, 19 percent; pressured to perform, 22 percent; as if sex were a performance, 24 percent; and pressured to try sex acts, 15 percent.”

—Wendy Stock, “The Effects of Pornography on Women,” in *The Price We Pay*, 87.

“...a number of studies reveal a causal relationship between men’s exposure to pornography and their insensitivity to women’s speech. One study by two Canadian psychologists attempted to gauge the impact of viewing nonviolent pornography upon males’ cognitive and behavioral sexism toward women in a professional setting...The subjects who viewed the pornography displayed an inattentiveness to the woman’s speech and an overattentiveness to her body...After viewing pornography only 4 percent of this group was able to recall what the female speaker had said.

The results for the other participants were quite different—24 percent...in a professional setting, **men hear less of what women have to say after viewing pornography.** Other studies confirm that **pornography has the ability to de-legitimize women.** [they]...view women as significantly less than equal and...display less sympathy with statements about sexual equality than they had before. Exposure to aggressive pornography also inclines men to disbelieve survivors’ allegations of rape, and to believe instead rape myths, including the myth that women tend to lie about sexual assault.”

—Anderson, in *The Price We Pay*, 125-26.

PLAYBOY 5/88



“This is intimacy? A close relationship with good communication is intimacy? I thought intimacy was something physical.”

PLAYBOY 6/88



“It’s our responsibility to preserve the best of the sexual revolution. Not the conflict, not the rhetoric, not the extremes. What we must preserve is the sex.”

“...young men learn to be sexual in environments that are not particularly conducive to intimacy and empathy. The result is...unconnected lust and nonrelational sexuality, and what I call fear of intimacy.” 14

Soft Core is Costly “Speech” for a Free Society

PLAYBOY 2/93



“Well, I’m sorry. It’s just that your video was so dirty, I expected a little more.”

Playboy has long touted a philosophy of tolerance—claiming to embrace diversity, support differing opinions and welcome varied viewpoints. And yet at the first hint of diverse opinion that doesn’t toe their questionable content line they resort to the narrow-minded and archaic double standards of intolerance, screaming “first amendment rights.” The slightest criticism draws slanderous and vitriolic attacks. Viewpoints that vary from theirs incite retaliation in the form of eighth grade trash talk, with columnists and editors regressing to the super-juiced hormonal chest-bumping of 14-year-olds. Really quite surprising behavior from a group of businessmen whose platform is built upon so-called liberating tolerance.

[Playboy viciously attacks male student critics]...“The guys generally look like wet-behind-the-scrotum college kids whose only social skill is the one they acquired when they discovered the combustibility of flatulence. Maybe they think that they can make themselves attractive to women by reciting the catechism according to anti-porn feminist Catharine MacKinnon. They are masturbation amateurs, easily shamed.”
—James R. Peterson, “Tale of Two Studies,” *Playboy*, March 1994, 44, 47.

“Pornography...depends on stereotyping...Women who object to pornography are also stereotyped: as prudes with unhappy childhoods, as rape victims, or Nazis looking to force everyone into some rigid sexual order. Recently, *Playboy* referred to major feminist researchers as moral majority types with ‘a pathological fear of anything that causes arousal.’”
—Lederer, in *The Price We Pay*, 136.

“Young sexually inexperienced viewers are less likely to recognize the difference between sex in the real world and the false message of pornography, i.e. that women enjoy rape.’ Besides colouring their views of women, pornography can also affect boys’ self-concept. According to Jennings Bryant, ‘Boys find themselves not fitting into the mould...at this age, they’re so uncertain about themselves they don’t realize what’s real.’ **Bryant suggests that porn may make boys feel even more insecure and inadequate.**”

—“Sons and Lovers,” *Toronto Life/Fashion*, Sept. 1993, 120.

[Commenting on a cartoon from *Penthouse*] “The caption reads: ‘I can’t come unless you pretend to be unconscious.’ The joke could as well have taken any number of variations: ‘I can’t get hard unless—I can’t f—k unless—I can’t get turned on unless—I can’t feel anything sexual unless—’ Then fill in the blanks: ‘Unless I am possessing you. Unless I am superior to you. Unless I am in control of you. Unless I am humiliating you. Unless I am hurting you. Unless I have broken your will...autonomic nervous system surges at the thought and/or the action of forced sex, bullying sex, violent sex, injurious sex, humiliating sex, hostile sex, murderous sex. **The kind of sex that puts the other person in their place. The kind of sex that keeps the other person other.**”

—John Stoltenberg, “Pornography and Freedom,” in *Men Confront Pornography*, 63.

“...those boys who said that it is okay to hold a girl down and force her to have intercourse. Our study demonstrates that overwhelmingly they are the male teenagers who are reading and watching pornography. . .it is a statistical link between the amount of pornography male teenagers watch and the belief that it may be okay to use force with sex. This is very important.”
—Check, in *The Price We Pay*, 91.

“Women are presented strictly as sexual objects, stripped and sexually accessible at any and all times.” 15

“The current data suggests that child-focused sexual thought and fantasies are not uncommon among male university students, and that such interests are related to attitudes supporting sexual dominance, masturbation to pornography, frequent sexual contacts, potential sexual aggression against adult women, and negative early sexual experiences”

—John Briere, Ph.D., and M. Runtz, M.A., “University Males Sexual Interest in Children: Predicting Potential Indices of ‘Pedophilia’ in a Nonforensic Sample,” *Child Abuse and Neglect* 13 (1989): 73.

“The age at the time of assault of forcible rape victims surveyed:

- 17 or younger—61%
- younger than 11—29%

Rape in America is a tragedy of youth.”

—“Rape in America,” in *The National Women’s Study*, (Crime Victims Research & Treatment Center, 1992).

“...Those who’ve been habituated to sexual activity from an early age can become fixated on sex: their social, emotional and cognitive development are profoundly altered by sexual activity they’re not equipped to handle. Lacking personal boundaries, they may have no understanding of, or respect for, another individual’s right to an inviolable self...In child sexual abuse, there’s total dominance, and that’s the kick, the opportunity to do anything they want to another human being. **They get into their addictive behaviour, pull out the porn, get excited, start hunting victims, over and over.**’ (According to Meyers)...He’s like a lot of the adult sex offenders I’ve dealt with. They just don’t get it, they don’t see that they’re hurting kids—because they were hurt as kids. They’ve cut off the part of themselves that was victimized. They can’t feel anything apart from the sexual addiction.’ And as they got older, **they find their predilections reinforced by mainstream culture, movies and rock videos that glorify violent males who dominate younger, weaker sex objects.**”

—Judy Steed, *Our Little Secret: Confronting Child Sexual Abuse in Canada* (Toronto: Random House of Canada, 1994), 138.

“In a report based on the largest survey ever of state prison inmates: Two-thirds of sex offenders in state prisons attacked children, and a third of these victims were offspring or stepchildren of their attackers, the Justice Department reported...state prisons held 43,552 inmates in 1991 who raped or sexually assaulted children under 18. That represents 65.5 percent of the estimated 66,482 state inmates convicted of raping or sexually assaulting victims of all ages...The majority of sex crimes are committed against children because they are more helpless, easier targets and easier to intimidate into silence...more than half the child victims of rape or sexual assault were age 12 or younger.”

—Michael J. Sniffen, “Most Sex Offenders in Prison Attacked Children,” *Durham Herald Sun*, 4 March 1996.

“...how pornography can (a) be an important factor in shaping a male-dominant view of sexuality, (b) contribute to a user’s difficulty in separating sexual fantasy and reality, (c) be used to initiate victims and break down their resistance to sexual activity, and (d) provide a training manual for abusers.”

—Jensen, in *Violence Against Women*, 1:1, 33.

“Sexual assault and family violence are taking a devastating toll on America’s physical and emotional well-being...More than 700,000 women in the United States are sexually assaulted each year, one every 45 seconds. It is the most rapidly growing violent crime in the country. [Each year] 1.7 million child abuse reports are filed; 61% of female rape victims are under age 18.”

—Thomas Witcom, “AMA Calls Sexual Assault ‘Epidemic,’” *The News and Observer*, 7 November 1995.

“...offenders reported substantially greater use of sexually explicit materials...such use was significantly related to the chronicity of sexual offenders’ assaults. Other investigations highlight the apparent pivotal impact of exposure to sexually explicit material in the development of deviant sexual interests.”

—Weaver, III, in *Media, Children, and the Family*, 222.

“Among sexually addicted offender populations, pornography plays a contributing role in the ritualized sexual patterns that accompany any assaultiveness’... Pornography to addicted sex offenders is as dangerous as matches and gasoline to an arsonist.”

—Reed, in *Media, Children, and the Family*, 265.

“Marshall found that child molesters and rapists frequently used sexually explicit materials incitefully both immediately prior to and during sexual assaults.” 16

“I Read *Playboy* for the Articles...” But Do You Get the Message?



The largest child-pornography ring in the United States is run by the Government. It is possible that without Uncle Sam, there would be no child-porn business.

Lawrence Stanley, “The Child Pornography Myth,” in *Playboy*, September 1988.

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Porn straitjackets the truth about sexual victimization in articles questioning not only the validity of the charges and honesty of those harmed, but also the very existence of abuse itself.

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Playboy, in September 1988, published the feature article entitled “The Child-Pornography Myth” by Lawrence Stanley. The article was originally published in *Paidika, The Journal of Paedophilia*. Mr. Stanley is on the editorial board of *Paidika* as well as affiliated with *Uncommon Desires*, a publication pandering to those with a sexual interest in young girls. *Playboy* censored this background information from its readers.

A leader in journalism ethics expressed concern about Stanley’s child pornography “exposé” because of the author’s “advocacy” and his “special interest in the outcome of the investigation.”

Undaunted by these concerns, *Playboy* published a letter from Stanley in its March 1992 issue in which he alarms readers about the possible consequences of the decision in *U.S. vs. Stephen A. Knox*. He gives misleading information about the material in question in this child pornography case.

One of the content experts in “Presumed Guilty” (*Playboy*, June 1992) is called to task...Dr Ralph Underwager until recently was on the advisory board of the False Memory Syndrome Foundation. A major newspaper columnist states the following: “There is no such scientific category as ‘false memory syndrome’; it’s an impressive-sounding label, without medical validity, that was dreamed up by the foundation. Its roster of ‘professional advisers’ isn’t always what it seems. Some are respected researchers; others are hired-gun expert witnesses who travel the continent testifying for a fee on behalf of accused child molesters. One such vociferous member, Ralph Underwager, only recently—and hastily—resigned from the board, after an interview with him appeared in a Dutch pedophile magazine. Underwager had described pedophilia as ‘a responsible choice’ and urged pedophiles to boldly ‘make the claim that pedophilia is an acceptable expression of God’s will for love and unity.’”

—Michele Landsberg, “False memory label invented by lobby group,” in *Toronto Star*, 13 Nov. 1993.

The *Playboy Advisor* is a regular feature of the magazine, identified in at least one survey as a popular sex education resource. This monthly feature answers the questions of the juvenile and adult readers allegedly writing in about sexual behaviors as well as social issues, fashion, and the selection of wines, electronic sound and video equipment and other commodities. In a response to an inquiry about decreasing the risk of AIDS, the *Playboy Advisor* **alarmingly** advises its readers that ‘safe sex’ with “...virgins or very young lovers...cut down your chances of being exposed to the virus.”

—*Playboy*, May 1987, 46.

“The Centerfold Syndrome represents one of the most malignant forces in contemporary relationships between men and women”, impairing male sexuality and sabotaging intimacy. 17

The article “Cry Incest” in *Playboy*, October 1992, tells readers that while incest may occur in our society, the current information from therapists who treat incest survivors is exaggerated. The author interviews one professor, who has written about fantasy and memory—not incest or child abuse—who contends that women may only claim to be incest survivors because as feminists they’ve “drawn on the concept of goodness in women, and they don’t know what to do with psychic material that expresses aggression.” The article does not examine what is known about perpetrators of incest.

The bulk of the article describes a retreat for incest survivors. By depicting those who attended the retreat as confused, overly emotional, and “in competition” to see whose abuse was the most severe, the author encourages the reader not to see the problem of incest as serious.



“Cry Incest,” *Playboy*, Oct. 1992.

***Playboy* is phony journalism at its worst. And most dangerous. The code of good journalism is to reveal the bias of your content expert. But *Playboy* seems to consider itself “above” the ethical mandate of its profession. The magazine used defenders of, and members in, pedophile organizations to write articles and commentary and serve as content experts, and didn’t let you, the reading public, know.**



“Serial Murder and Sexual Repression,” *Playboy*, Aug. 1993.

In a September 1991 *Playboy* article, the author, Bill Andriette debunks the existence of child pornography and criticizes the overly broad child porn statutes...He describes public and government concern about ‘nude’ depictions of juveniles as mass ‘hysteria’. What *Playboy* fails to inform its readers is that Andriette is the editor of the NAMBLA bulletin (North American Man Boy Love Association), an organization which actively advocates for sexual access to children. He is also a board member for *Paidika*, *The Journal of Paedophilia*.

“...pornography has usurped most other socialization agents to become a primary institution of sexual indoctrination in many societies...many young people in North America become consumers of sexually explicit materials during preadolescence...Clearly, in light of the research findings, the desirability of pornography as a rudimentary ‘educator’ about sex must be contemplated.”

—Weaver, III, in *Media, Children, and the Family*, 224-225.

“Pornography injures the women and children (and some men) who are used to manufacture it, who are sexually abused as a result of its consumption, and who are hurt by the civil inequality it engenders.” 18

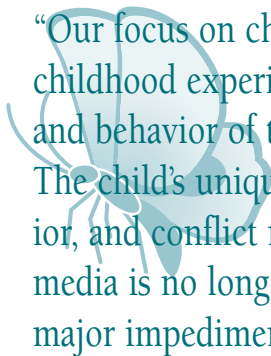
We All Need to Take A Closer Look

“Finally, you’ve had to avoid being duped by those who try to perpetuate the Centerfold Syndrome by aligning it with the cause of sexual freedom. For many years there’s been a school of thought that holds that any challenge to soft-core pornography is automatically antisex. Those who profit from objectification and sexual exploitation of women claim that their products are sex aides, that they help men be sexual. They do. But they help men be sexual in the old-fashioned way that harms women and debases men’s sexuality. These magazines continue to teach the values of the Centerfold Syndrome. **The cause of sexual freedom will be served when men choose to reject soft-core pornography and seek intimate sexuality with real women.**”

—Brooks, *The Centerfold Syndrome*, 177.

“The changes we are working toward will produce not one ounce of lost pleasure. What will be lost is a very large measure of anxiety, guilt, insecurity, alienation, and profound estrangement between women and men brought on by the current construction of male sexuality. What will be lost is sex between people who don’t know or don’t care about each other; sex between persons and objects; sex based on revenge, proving oneself, or showing off; and sex that’s part of a masquerade.”

—Brooks, *The Centerfold Syndrome*, 178.



“Our focus on children must serve to build a deep respect for the fact that all early childhood experiences have profound significance for the development of the character and behavior of the adult. We must define how behaviors of domination are learned. The child’s unique susceptibility to media messages about human nature, gender behavior, and conflict resolution must be made explicit so that children’s current experience of media is no longer trivialized and is instead understood as having the potential to be a major impediment to their healthy development.”

—Sandra Campbell, “Creating Redemptive Imagery: A Challenge of Resistance and Creativity,” in *Transforming a Rape Culture*, 148.

“**Dating violence among teenagers is rising so alarmingly, schools should adopt preventive programs as soon as possible**, researchers said...scientists found 59 percent of the girls were assaulted verbally, 30.5 percent sexually and 28 percent physically by their steady boyfriends. ...Another 41 percent said they suffered verbal or emotional mistreatment from boys they were dating casually...Nearly 30 percent of the boys said their steady girlfriends verbally or emotionally mistreated them...**they implemented a violence prevention program in the schools that included a dramatic presentation about dating violence and healthy dating and workshops on date rape, male issues, anger control, assertiveness training, media violence, effects of pornography and violence in intimate relationships.**”

—“Date Violence on the Rise,” United Press International, 21 Aug. 1993.

“...Most preadolescents are interested in nudity because their own bodies are changing and they want to know what to expect...‘They can be looking at these magazines as a way to gather information.’ But there is a danger here... ‘If you don’t interpret what they are seeing, they believe this is the way every body is supposed to look, and then they’re disappointed in their own body, or disappointed in the bodies of their partners...It’s not a bad strategy to start by acknowledging that the bodies are, indeed, beautiful, even sexy...From there: ‘You know, these photos have been airbrushed to make them look better. No one looks like this is real life.’ To: ‘People who get hooked on the message these magazines give about bodies can miss out on a lot of wonderful people in life, because they are so focused on the body.’ To: ‘Pictures like this really disturb me. I don’t like to see women admired only for their bodies. That’s sexist.’”

—Barbara F. Meltz, “Nudity and Children: When is it Healthy, When Not?” *The Boston Globe*, 4 February 1996.

“First, you’ll need to do what you can to minimize the hypnotic pull produced by the culture’s classical conditioning of your sexual arousal. Your conditioned arousal to sexual objects (such as leopard panties and black spike heels) and women’s body parts (swelling breasts, shapely legs, curvaceous derrieres) cannot just be wished away; but you can lessen their power over you, and you can develop new, more functional habits. **Instead of using sexualized objects in pornography to stimulate arousal for masturbation, you can substitute more relational and emotionally meaningful fantasies.** For example, instead of imagining a naked stripper or bikini-clad stranger, imagine yourself in an intimate, loving, and sensual setting with someone you care deeply about. Learn to focus your attention on your physical responses and pleasure, instead of on the gyrations of a sexualized object. You can also change the way you’ve learned to visually work over women.”

—Brooks, *The Centerfold Syndrome*, 183.



Stand Up! Speak Out!



And Work Together for Social Justice

“...as that articulated in Canada in February 1992 (in a Canadian Supreme Court ruling in the case of Donald J. Butler). This decision states: ‘Depictions of degrading and dehumanizing sex and sex with violence harm society by poisoning attitudes towards women.’ To curtail this poisoning of attitudes towards women, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously that ‘the undue exploitation of sex or depictions of sex involving violence, degradation, dehumanization [of women] and [sex involving] children is illegal and a justifiable infringement of freedom of expression guaranteed in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.’

To whom do we speak? At the beginning, it is important to focus on the sympathetic, those in our immediate circle of family, friends, colleagues, and neighbors who do not necessarily need convincing but need a language to name the problem and explore solutions.”

—Campbell, in *Transforming a Rape Culture*, 149.

“...We’ve got to make some serious changes, and we’ve got to get busy and act. If we sit around and don’t do anything, then we become the ones who are keeping things the way they are...If we don’t take seriously the fact that pornography is a radical political issue and an issue about us, and if we don’t make serious progress in the direction of what we’re going to do about it, then we’ve just gone over to the wrong side of the fight—the morally wrong, historically wrong side of a struggle that is a groundswell, a grassroots people’s movement against sexual injustice.”

—John Stoltenberg, “Pornography and Freedom,” in *Making Violence Sexy*, 75-76.

“Purveyors of the Centerfold Syndrome have taken a similar position, that objectification and sexualized imagery of women is really consumer-driven—that is, ‘they want it and we provide it for them.’ I couldn’t be more contemptuous of the arrogance and ethical irresponsibility implicit in this outrageous denial that advertisers, television programmers, video game distributors, rock video producers, and men’s magazine publishers are major shapers of male sexual attitudes and behaviors. I acknowledge, however, that they are accurate in one respect. **If men and women were to join together to speak out against the Centerfold Syndrome, matters would change very quickly and very markedly.**”

—Brooks, *The Centerfold Syndrome*, 201.

“It requires a critical mass of support—not a majority, but a sizable, informed, and politicized minority. Further research from more quarters on the effects of pornography in women’s lives, and the return of that information to women, will enable this critical mass to form.”

—Lederer, in *The Price We Pay*, 88.

“Chrysler Corp has **decided to stop running ads in Playboy magazine** after the automaker received complaints...Harris said the company acted because ‘we don’t advertise to upset a large segment of the population. Obviously, advertising in *Playboy* did...some people don’t think *Playboy* stands for the things they like it to.”

—Paul Farhi, “Chrysler To Halt Ads In *Playboy*,” *The Washington Post*, 22 February 1991.

An adult survivor of severe child abuse, later turned activist, inspires us all to act for change.

“I’ve gained immense respect for what heroes we were as children. We had no resources and we faced life-threatening situations with no support and found incredible ways to survive. As adults we may never again need to rise to the levels of heroism we rose to daily as children—but we can do it if we have to; that courage is not lost to us. That bravery is going to change the world. That’s why it’s so important to go back and find these heroic children and integrate them with our adult selves, absorb their courage and go out and make the world a safe place for everyone.”

—Steed, *Our Little Secret*, 176-177.



Each One, Reach One



People Take Action: What YOU Can Do

1. Don't accept ALL sexual expression as educational or liberating. Some is. Porn isn't.



2. Learn more so that you know the difference between what IS educational and liberating and what is dehumanizing and exploitive. Like *Playboy* and similar publications.



3. Talk with your friends and colleagues. Encourage others to identify, analyze, and resist false and desensitizing images and the underlying messages in pornography and porn-influenced material.



4. Teach your children to respect children of the opposite gender. Talk to them about sexuality. Give them the information they need to make smart, caring, responsible decisions.



5. Ask leaders at your neighborhood schools if they have a sexual harassment policy, if they have a program on media literacy, if they discuss pornography in sex education classes. If not, volunteer to serve on a committee to develop needed programs.

6. Help raise public awareness by suggesting and supporting school, civic group and church programs and workshops on dehumanizing and degrading sexually explicit media.



7. Support media activist groups who promote more balanced, realistic, and diverse portrayals of girls and boys and men and women, in media.



8. Encourage your professional association and local child advocacy organizations to develop position statements on the commodifying of subordinating sex and the inappropriate sexualization of children.



9. Take seriously and use responsibly your power as a consumer. Don't help finance the widespread sex mis-education represented in so-called "men's" magazines. Cancel your subscriptions, choose other gifts for the men in your life. And above all else, don't consider it a young boy's rite of passage to learn from these magazines that sex is all about degrading women and children.

10. Write the advertisers of men's magazines. Make a difference by giving them important feedback on the material (and messages) their advertising dollars finance.



11. Express your concern to your local radio and TV stations about programs that legitimize and glamorize girls and young women as centerfolds, strippers, bunnies, pets, and playmates. And glorifies boys as Don Juans, predators, sexual gladiators, and users.



12. Contact your elected officials and ask about legal strategies for counteracting the harm of pornography. Things like: raising the age of models to 21 for porn-posing, affixing warning labels on men's magazines, and earmarking porn product tax dollars for treatment programs for sex offenders and porn addicts.



13. Be techno-savvy. Technology expands the challenge. Be aware of the Playboy Channel and similar television programs. Pornography is pandered on the Internet...and NOT just to adult consumers. Establish clear online guidelines for your children.



People Take Action: What YOU Can Do

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“It is in all these ways that each of us, informed by our heads and hearts, can use our voices as primary instruments and can become the agents for transforming our culture by creating images that foster hope for ourselves and our future. Each of these activities has the potential to be significant in and of itself; when combined, they will enable us to realize what may seem at this time almost unimaginable, a new lexicon of imagery that will lead the way to transforming our rape culture and healing centuries of violence.”

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—Campbell, in *Transforming A Rape Culture*, 151.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that can.”

—Margaret Mead

“Even the most hard-nosed physicists admit that the flap of a butterfly’s wing here can change the weather hundreds of miles away.”

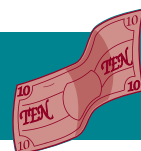
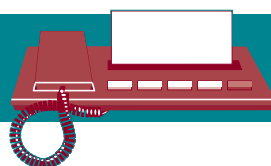
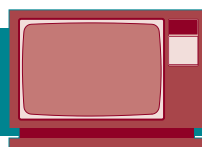
—Gloria Steinem

“Snowflakes are one of nature’s most fragile things, but just look what they can do when they stick together.”

—Verna M. Kelly

“Hope is like the sun, which as we journey toward it, casts the shadow of our burden behind us.”

—S. Smiles



“Beyond the cost of pornography in terms of its relationship to violence against women and the reinforcement of calloused attitudes, if we equate what is in pornography with sexuality, we have done sexuality a great disservice. We have taken the beauty, the humanity, the self expression, the opportunity for human beings to be as one, and to experience and communicate their deepest and strongest emotions and equated this to what people do with their genitals. Pornography insults both men and women. Considering that sexuality is one of the only social behaviors that we do not learn through modeling, except through pornography, pornography gives people, especially young people, a very limited vision of their own and others’ sexuality.”

—Gloria Cowan, “Degrading/Dehumanizing Pornography: The Costs of Denial,” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sex, San Diego, Calif., 1992.

BARS ENDNOTES

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