

# As Sex Education, Men's Magazines are Foul Play, Boys! Say NO to Exploitation

NOTE: This publication contains material that may be offensive. All visuals are drawn from *Playboy* magazine. The purpose of this publication is educational. Research in the field of sexual media indicates that the actual use of the material is far more effective than just text in relaying the covert messages and harmful implications of pornography. We have used the least explicit yet still representative examples.

Definitions of pornography range from primarily sexually explicit material intended to arouse to "material that combines sex and/or genital exposure with abuse or degradation in a manner that appears to endorse, condone, or encourage such behavior." \*

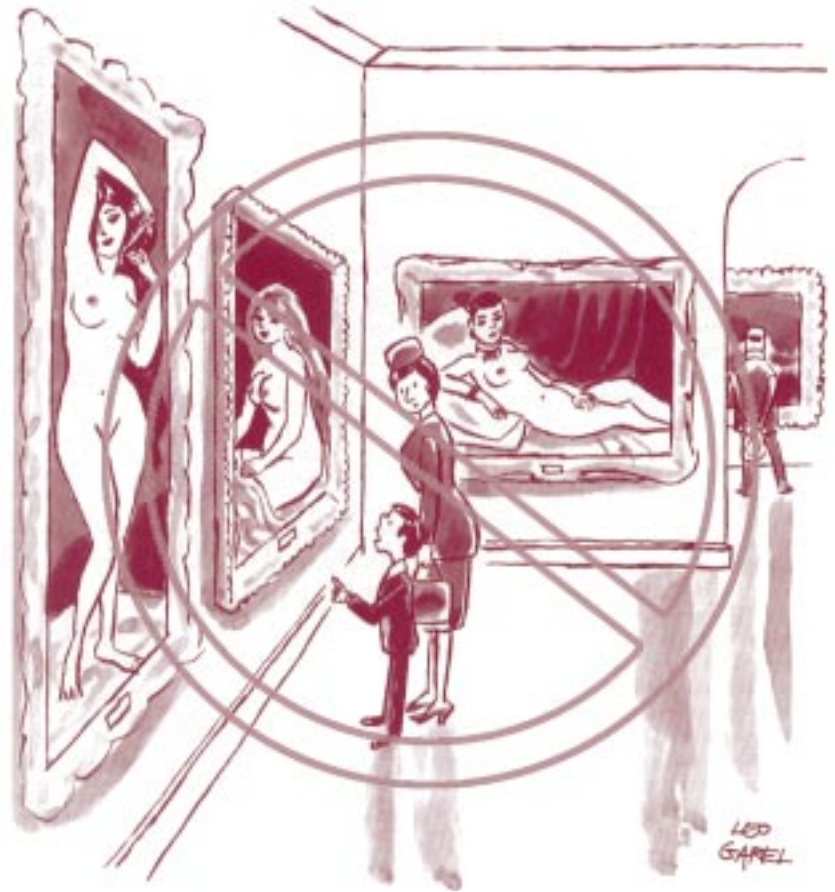
These broader definitions can encompass varied media including the so-called soft porn "men's" magazines as well as the XXX-rated adult bookstore material more commonly considered pornography.

# PLAYing with BOYs' Fantasies... Is Not a Game

PLAYBOY 3/94

“Although the law prohibits the sale of pornography to minors, **most young men say that long before their parents spoke with them about sex, they got their real education on the curb with other nine- and ten-year-olds, or in a back room with a dog-eared copy of Playboy.** What are the effects of this early exposure to pornography?...An important subject missing in the research on pornography is how it affects children. Not those who are depicted in pornography, but those who are consumers of pornography. People who sell and distribute pornography call it ‘adults-only’ material...It turns out, however, that **pornography is not ‘adults only’**...a survey of eleven hundred children...found that about 39 percent of the children in the survey said that they watched pornography at least once a month...I conducted the survey again, with an even clearer questionnaire...nine out of ten boys (90 percent), and six out of ten girls (60 percent) had seen at least one pornographic movie. One-third of the boys, but only 2 percent of the girls, watched pornography at least once a month. Our data suggest the girls watched once because a boyfriend or somebody wanted them to, or because they were curious, and then didn’t want to watch again. . . very few girls consume regularly.”

—James Check, “Teenage Training: The Effects of Pornography on Adolescent Males,” in *The Price We Pay: The Case Against Racist Speech, Hate Propaganda, and Pornography*, eds. Laura J. Lederer and Richard Delgado (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995), 89-91.



“You mean all of these are pre-PLAYBOY?”

PLAYBOY 1/94



“We can’t make him take it down.  
She’s his grandmother.”

- 100% of all high school age males surveyed reported having read or looked at Playboy or similar “men’s entertainment” magazines
- the average age when viewing first issue is 11 years old
- 16.1 issues is the average number seen by male high-schoolers
- 92% of males in junior high report exposure to Playboy or similar magazines
- 12.8 years is the average age of exposure to first R-rated film
- a larger portion of high school students had viewed X-rated films than any other age group

—J. Bryant, testimony to the Attorney General’s Commission on Pornography Hearings, Houston, Tex; 1985, transcript. 128-57.

“For the first time in history, children are growing up whose earliest sexual imprinting derives not from a living human being, or fantasies of their own ...[but from] mass-produced, deliberately dehumanizing and inhuman [images].”

—Michelle J. Anderson, “Silencing Women’s Speech,” in *The Price We Pay*, 122.

“Studies show that children under 17 report more frequent exposure to pornography than other age groups.” 1

“...most are introduced to the opposite sex between the pages of a magazine. A 1986 York University study showed that teens 12 to 17 are, in fact, the largest consumers of pornographic materials. While girls are reading YM and Teen articles about relationships and feelings, boys are studying the Penthouse forum and the Playboy centerfold. Magazines function as the main text in a boy’s sex education; they are the two-dimensional equivalent of a young man’s first prostitute who leads him confidently and sensitively down the road to adult sensuality. She puts out and is easily controlled. Jennings Bryant, director of the University of Alabama’s Communications Research, has studied the effects of pornography for many years and says boys use porn to feel a mastery over sex. However, **as sexual education, pornography is tantamount to a big lie, Bryant says. ‘You get a false expectation of realities.’** Much pornography makes it seem everyone else is having sex, in all different ways—that women are hungry, and men can go all night. He says, ‘Boys learn that women are willing to do anything and are hot to trot.’

**Our research shows that the people who have early and prolonged exposure to porn tend to have a callousness and uncertainty and are much less open to another person—thinking this is someone I’m out to take advantage of.”**

—“Sons and Lovers,” *Toronto Life/Fashion*, Sept. 1993, 118.

“Boys often make their first precious glimpses of female nakedness in magazine pictures a bonding or celebratory activity, by passing the pictures around as part of a group consumption. They try to impress each other with their reaction, with their hooting, grunting, and sharing of primal excitement. Various verbal expressions are learned — ‘Look at those hooters!’ ‘What a pair o melons on that babe!’ ‘Baby, you can pull my train anytime’ — and so forth.”

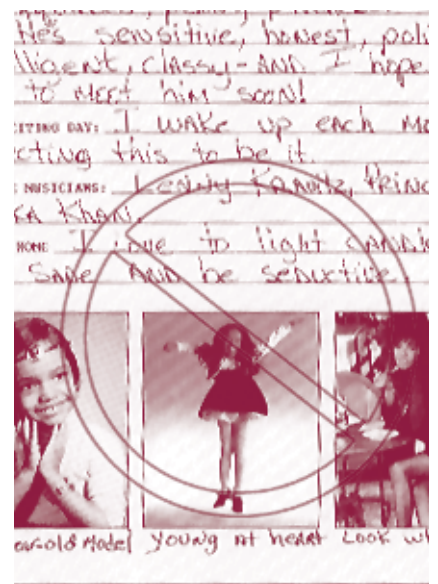
—Gary R. Brooks, Ph.D., *The Centerfold Syndrome* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995), 116.

PLAYBOY 6/94



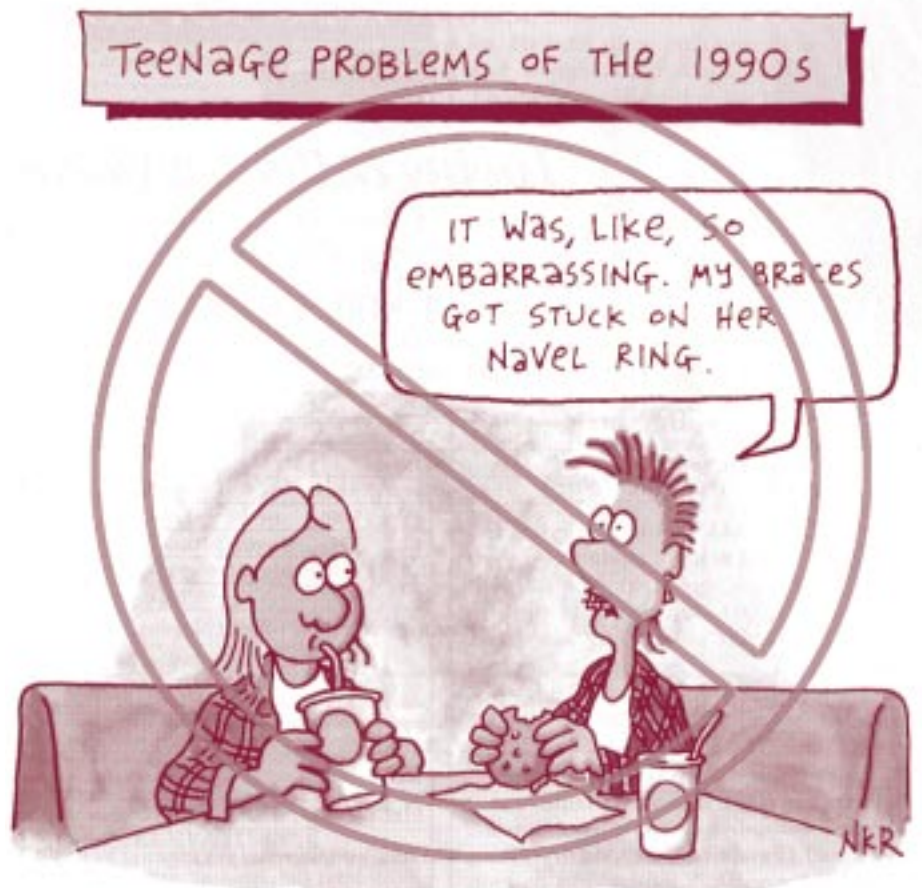
“Miss June” Centerfold

PLAYBOY 6/94



Data Sheet “Miss June” As a Child

PLAYBOY 6/95



“...Bryant’s telephone interviews show that very large numbers of children now have access to both hard-core and soft-core materials: The average age at which male respondents saw their first issue of *Playboy* or a similar magazine was 11 years. All of the high school age males surveyed reported having read or looked at *Playboy*, *Playgirl*, or some other soft-core magazine.” 2

# Child Magnets Help Attract a Young Audience

*Playboy* shatters belief systems. The same Spider-man comic book hero used in public school personal safety brochures is twisted by *Playboy* into a confusing predator.

**PLAYBOY 12/92**



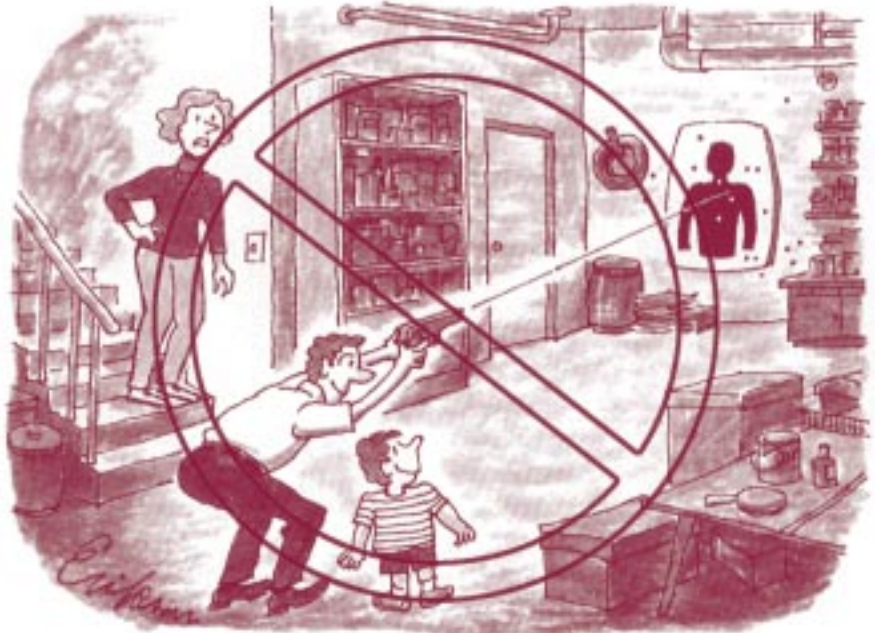
“Holy gee, Spidey! You’ve sideswiped Santa!”

**PLAYBOY 2/94**



“You’re fun, Spider-Man—but you tickle!”

**PLAYBOY 8/95**



“Where’s the ping-pong table?”

**PLAYBOY 1/90**



“It’s a shame we can’t get away with this more than one night a year!”

“An unforeseen finding may be the estimated 27 percent of *Playboy*, 33 percent of *Penthouse* and 47 percent of *Hustler* cartoons and illustrations identified as ‘Child Magnets.’ Briefly, Child Magnets are features which are generally unique to the children’s world of entertainment (e.g., books and television) and known to attract child readers/viewers... Since evidence confirms the large juvenile readership of these magazines, the

unique quality of Child Magnets may be viewed as a technique both catering to, and attracting a juvenile audience. Therefore the depictions presented in ‘Child Magnets’ may be presumed to be of special public interest and concern.”

—Judith A. Reisman, Ph.D., “Executive Summary,” *Images of Children, Crime and Violence in Playboy, Penthouse and Hustler Magazines*, 1985.

“I suggest that it has a much greater effect on children than it does on adults. Fourteen-year-olds are exploring sexuality, desperate for information, and pornography provides what they think is useful information about sex.” 3

# Targeting Children is Big Bu\$iness

PLAYBOY 8/95



“Never mind what your mother told you. What did your father tell you?”

“Child Magnets may be viewed as a technique both catering to, and attracting a juvenile audience.”

“Pornography is often the first exposure children have to sexually explicit subject matter, so it can set the standard for normal or appropriate sexual behavior. Teenage boys are the biggest consumers of pornography. Teenagers don’t just look; they learn from pornography. Twenty-nine percent of boys rated pornography over parents, teachers, books, school, and peers, as their source for the most useful information about sex. And what do they learn? Forty-three percent of boys and 16 percent of girls think it is okay or are not sure if it is okay for a boy to hold down a girl and force her to have sex if she sexually excites him.”

—Anderson, in *The Price We Pay*, 126

“Although the term for women may differ in the magazines—‘Playmate’ in *Playboy*, ‘Pet’ in *Penthouse*, ‘Beaver’ in *Hustler*, ‘Whore’ in *Whores on Parade*—the relations of domination remain the same. In *Playboy*, as in all other pornographic magazines, women exist for male use. The ‘brilliance’ of *Playboy* was that it **combined the commodification of sex with the sexualization of commodities.**”

—Gail Dines, and Jean M. Humez, eds., *Gender, Race and Class in Media*, (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1995), 261.

**“Sex Addiction: Distress about a pattern of repeated sexual conquests... involving a succession of people who exist as things to be used.”**

—DSM-III-R. American Psychiatric Association, 1987, 286.

“I have concluded that a man cannot use pornography without having his interactions with women be mediated by his use. Although it must not be forgotten that many men use pornography because of what it says about women, **many men are influenced at such a young age that they never had a chance to experience anything different...have come of age in a world saturated with pornography and who may not have a sexuality outside of that constructed by pornography.**”

—Daryl Spears, “The Influence of Pornography on Male Sexuality,” *Whisper 7* (Spring 1993): 6.

3/92



“I see you decided not to go to Fort Lauderdale.”

“...insidious mainstreaming of commercial sex...gives the message that this flagrantly sexist and dehumanizing treatment of women is All-American and A-OK. It tells young readers that sex is disconnected and exploitative, and women are for sale to any and all consumers.” 4

# Soft Core's Hard Sell of Phony Sex and Real Propaganda



“Are you sure you still love me, Henry?”

**“Voyeurism and objectification are closely related.** Just as the **Centerfold Syndrome** calls for men to become observers, it also calls for women to be the *observed*. **Women become objects as men become objectifiers. As the culture has granted men the right and privilege of looking at women, women have been expected to accept the role of stimulators of men’s visual interest, with their bodies becoming objects that can be lined up, compared, and rated. The process is distinctly one-way,** with women’s bodies highlighted and male observers remaining in the shadows or anonymous in a crowd. Objective physical aspects are critical: size, shape, and harmony of body parts are more important than a woman’s human qualities. **The women objectified by the media remain relatively anonymous, often without names, except for pseudonyms such as Miss May, Miss Nevada, or Miss Rotary Camshaft.** Despite the occasional pretense of connection through shallow interviews or background

sketches, centerfold women are left devoid of real personalities, portrayed as superficial cartoon characters. Men talk of their attraction to women in dehumanizing terms based on the body part of their obsession.—‘I’m a leg man,’ or ‘I’m an ass man.’

What’s more, one fantasy woman is never enough, since images that initially can be enormously novel and exciting can quickly lose their zip. Objectifying observers soon find one naked woman boring and routine, and look for new and different images to provoke their fascination—‘variety is the spice of life.’ At times, the confirmed objectifier becomes so attached to the thrill of the new and different visual experience, he resorts to the kinky and the offbeat, becoming preoccupied with visual fetishes. Bizarre magazines featuring only ‘Big-Breasted Mamas’, ‘Black Beauties’, ‘Oriental Cuties’, or ‘Biker Babes’ are in part **a pathetic effort to override the boredom inherent in such superficial sexuality.**”

—Brooks, *The Centerfold Syndrome*, 3-4.

PLAYBOY 7/95



“I’m properly warmed up. How about you?”

“Further, men in huge numbers pay several dollars an issue to gawk at glossy, two-dimensional replications of naked female strangers. Are these women real living things to the men who whip through the pages? Is it possible to stare at women’s breasts or other body parts and not be treating them as objects? It is no secret that a great many men ‘have sex’ with these ‘impersonations’ of women—that is, they use the pictures as masturbatory stimuli. Despite the arguments of apologists and profiteers, **these glossy pictures (nonliving objects) are not ‘sex aides.’** Men do not use them to help themselves ‘get into’ the relationships with their loved ones, but use them instead of their loved ones. Some use these pictures to masturbate instead of having sex with their loved ones; some have sex with the fantasized women during sex with their loved one. **A deeply disturbing picture is beginning to emerge: the difference between the sexual fetishist and the mainstream American man may not be as extreme as we have wanted to think. American boys, adolescents, and men are being taught, classically conditioned,** if you will, to become sexually obsessed with constant, intense, sexually arousing fantasies, and **to make their sexual arousal more dependent upon use of nonliving objects than on real women with whom they are in relationships.**”

—Brooks, *The Centerfold Syndrome*, 113-114.

“...In pornography, men masturbate to women being exposed, humiliated, violated, degraded...It is the experience of sexual access and power that the materials provide.” 5

# “Hitting” and Sex with a Scorecard are but Two of the Many Destructive Messages in Pornography

“The game confuses sexual megalomania with manhood...he needed sexual conquests to confirm his masculinity...”

“Women’s bodies...are objectified and treated as potential trophies—living testaments to a man’s prowess as a financial success, skillful sexual performer, or fearless warrior. **This male competition for access to women’s bodies begins in adolescence when boys compete to be the first to score, to achieve the most sexual conquests, to make it with the sexiest teenage girl.** The women’s-bodies-as-trophies mentality, damaging enough in adolescence, becomes even more destructive in adulthood...”

—Brooks, *The Centerfold Syndrome*, 7-8.

“Power, masculinity, and sexual performance provide the building blocks of the masculine persona in the dating game...The game confuses sexual megalomania with manhood...he needed sexual conquests to confirm his masculinity...he adopted the practice of setting quotas for himself... [as one male explains the sexual mentality,] ‘hitting [is] a game where the goal is to score with as many women as possible. Women are just dolls in this game, they have no kind of brain, no kind of decision, and we have all the power. We’re up at bat and we’re scoring. Women are like the playing field and men are the players’...

[an educator] sees as his job to **try and open new ways of thinking...to unshackle them from the chains of the ‘17-dude’ mentality, where a guy’s got to have seventeen girls to feel any self-worth.**”

—Peggy Reeves Sanday, “Naming and Studying Acquaintance Rape,” in *A Woman Scorned: Acquaintance Rape on Trial* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 200, 271, 272.

“When men view women as sex objects, they are also objectifying themselves, a point not often appreciated... Pornography promotes our insecurities by picturing sex as a field of combat and conquest...Emotional needs are denied altogether or telescoped mercilessly into the search to obtain exclusively genital satisfaction. **Although what most men want is physical affection from another human being, what they end up thinking they want is to be laid by a Playboy bunny.**”

—Harry Brod, “Eros Thanatized: Pornography and Male Sexuality,” in *Men Confront Pornography*, ed. Michael S. Kimmel (New York: Meridian, 1990), 199.

“I strongly believe that **the Centerfold Syndrome is a product of the way sex has been presented and taught to men. These lessons have been supported by the idea that men should keep women in their place and simultaneously establish their own place in the eyes of other men by using women’s bodies.** They have also been perpetuated by an irresponsible system of teaching young men about sexuality. They are the tragic result of a culture that profits from manipulating images of women and grossly impairing men’s capacity to develop deeply intimate relationships with women.”

—Brooks, *The Centerfold Syndrome*, 124-125.

PLAYBOY 10/92



“ab•stain \əb-stan\ vi to refrain deliberately...’ Holy shit!”

“We are trained from childhood to believe that real men get sex from women, that if we do not get sex from women we are not men.” 6

# Child Magnets, the Pseudo-Child, the Children Themselves ... Is There Anything about Children NOT for Sale?

PLAYBOY 6/92



“Today, we’ll start the first lesson of chamber music.”

Playboy glamorizes a compulsive quest for illusions of power and control by the relentless conquest of smaller, younger, and subjugated sexual objects.

“...the type of sexuality defined by magazines like *Playboy* represents a definition of sexuality which makes it virtually impossible for men and women to establish intimate, equal relations. It is for this reason that I maintain that pornography does harm not only to women but men as well, and discourages them from developing an alternative view of sexuality which would do justice to their own emotional, intellectual and spiritual complexity.”

—David Mura, “Bad Entertainment for Men,” *Law & Politics*, February 1991.

PLAYBOY 10/92



“Thank you, Milton...thank you, Keats...thank you, Shelley.”

PLAYBOY 7/88



“I thank Thee, O Lord, before partaking of the bountiful blessings Thou hast spread before me...”

“‘the use of sexual media is clearly associated with sexually aggressive behavior’. ... Some believe that it can cause addiction or compulsive sexual behavior, and almost all believe that it facilitates, maintains, or reinforces it... This is particularly true (a) if the pornography is arousing; (b) if it is coupled with masturbation and subsequent orgasm; (c) when alternative nondeviant fantasies are unavailable; (d) if the pornographic stimuli occurs during puberty and the 10 to 24 months afterwards (the crucial period for the development of enduring sexual propensities...); (e) if the child (at the onset of adolescence) has little or no previous sexual experience to draw on...”

—M. Douglas Reed, “Pornography Addiction,” in *Media, Children, and the Family*, 263-264.

**If men are brought up to believe that success in sex depends on the domination and conquest of a submissive partner, or even that sexuality is linked with power over another, then portrayals of children may help turn them into acceptable sexual targets. The children’s dependence and lack of power are effective stimuli for insecure adults. For many people, and not just pedophiles, these images serve as powerful rationalization for their sexual interest in or actual misuse of children.**

“...Buchman (1988) found that repeated exposure to pornography [adult, nonviolent] promoted callous perceptions of the extent of suffering experienced by child victims of sexual abuse and trivialized the sexual abuse of females, whether adults or children, as a criminal transgression.”

—James B. Weaver, III, “Pornography and Sexual Callousness: The Perceptual and Behavioral Consequences of Exposure to Pornography,” in *Media, Children, and the Family—Social Scientific, Psychodynamic, and Clinical Perspectives*, eds. Dolf Zillmann, Jennings Bryant, and Aletha C. Huston (Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1994), 219.

“...findings of two (Canadian) national surveys—population and police—indicate that, for a number of persons, pornography had served as a stimulus to committing sexual assaults against children.”<sup>7</sup>



# Youth Public Health Unzipped

PLAYBOY 3/96



**Use of the pseudo-child technique—adults dressing and acting like children—is standard-fare pornography.**

“Pornographers also fashion clever programs to support their campaign of female subordination. Perhaps the most famous is Playboy magazine’s Playboy Interview, which has featured presidents, legislators, athletes, authors, artists, major sports figures, psychiatrists, Hollywood stars, scholars, and many other luminaries, whose presence legitimizes the rest of the magazine’s content.”

—Laura J. Lederer, “Pornography and Racist Spech as Hate Propaganda,” in *The Price We Pay*, 139.

**“...consumers of pornography do ‘develop a calloused and manipulative orientation toward women.’”**

—James B. Weaver, III, “Pornography and Sexual Callousness: The Perceptual and Behavioral Consequences of Exposure to Pornography,” in *Media, Children, and the Family*, 215-225.

“Today we hear much discussion of teenage pregnancy as a top priority social problem. While young girls are becoming mothers, recent research has shown a majority (60%) of babies born to unwed teenage mothers in the U.S. are fathered by adult males, many of whom do not support or parent their children. In one state, the average age of the males impregnating 12- to 17-year-old girls was 24 years old. Two-thirds of the girls had been previously sexually assaulted.

The Alan Gutmacher Institute researched teens and sexual behavior, and concluded that a girl who has sexual experience at a young age is more likely to have had involuntary sex. ‘74% of women who had intercourse before age 14 and 60% of those who had sex before age 15 report having had sex involuntarily.’ State task forces are being formed to study statutory rape laws and prosecution practices as well as other strategies to protect children and to make adult males accountable. This renewed concern about the sexual pressure, coercion and exploitation in ‘relationships of power imbalance of age and gender’ is long overdue.

While society is looking at ways to draw the line and say clearly that adolescent girls are not ‘fair game’ **we see on Playboy’s March 1996 cover, a knock-kneed adolescent in a parochial school uniform depicted as the ‘stripper next door’ ever ready to symbolically sexually service all male viewers.**

*Playboy* continues its practice of sexualizing extreme youth, innocence, vulnerability, and submission. *Playboy* is flagrantly glamorizing the adolescent student as a sexual target and perpetuating the propaganda of pedophiles that children solicit sex from adults. Catholic schoolgirls as a genre of criminal child pornography and pseudochild adult bookstore porn is standard fare. Recycling these images in a more legitimized commercial sex format only multiplies the harm.

A New York judge commented that, ‘...A society that loses its sense of outrage is doomed to extinction.’ Where is the outrage of child advocates, parents, all citizens? A society cannot continue to abandon its responsibility to its children for humanitarian reasons as well as its own future.”

—Linnea Smith, “Playboy: R & R for Pedophiles,” in *Action Agenda: Challenging Sexist and Violent Media Through Education and Action*, 2(Winter 1996): 11.

PLAYBOY 9/92



“When I leave this enchanted forest, I’ll forget about what, little man?”

“...memories of experiences that occurred at times of emotional arousal (which could include sexual arousal) get locked into the brain by an adrenal gland hormone, epinephrine, and are difficult to erase. This may partly explain pornography’s addicting effect.”

—Victor Cline., Ph.D., “Pornography Effects,” in *Media, Children, and the Family*, 237.

PLAYBOY 2/91



“Are you sure it’s ninety-nine percent safe with a diagram, Eddie?...Suppose it’s the wrong diagram...Is it the right way up?”

“The fact that exposure to pornography can activate sexually callous perceptions of women and promote manipulative and, in some instances, aggressive behaviors is highlighted clearly by the research evidence.” 8

# A Picture's Worth a Thousand Sexist Words

“Although the magazines (*Playboy*, *Penthouse*, *Hustler*) editorially suggested they fulfilled a need for sex education, marriage was modeled as repugnant while wives (fat-ugly) were commonly cartooned as copulating with the family dog or other beast—in all three publications.

Moreover, sexual harassment in the workplace, out-of-wedlock pregnancy and rape of women and children were uniformly cartooned as humorous. Whereas child sex with same-age and older children was rare in the magazines...when compared to sex with adults...venereal disease...AIDS, herpes, syphilis, gonorrhea scenes were entirely negligible.”

—Judith A. Reisman, Ph.D., “Child Pornography in Erotic Magazines,” in *Media, Children, and the Family*, 315.

“It is because of pornography and the entrenchment of men in a value system that requires her to be low so he can be high; makes her subordinate so he can be a real man; sexualizes her inequality so he can get off. **Pornography has become the sexuality of oppression**, which lies at the heart of male sexual identity, and which has become central to the maintenance of male supremacy. **I implore all men regarding this to stop using pornography and to encourage other men to do the same.**”

—Spears, in *Whisper*, 7.

## PLAYBOY 2/93



“I don't believe in paying for it. That's why I'll never get married.”

“Hefner, Guccione and Flynt are supposed to be such ‘liberators’...What a joke! They merely built empires on men's envy and hatred of women, building up these feelings for added profits. They would never dare admit that the Average Playboy Reader spends his evenings choking the chicken, giving up on a love life. Their sexual scenarios pick up on the guilt and envy, offering violence and cynicism as solutions...I really believe that **porn turns men into fetishists hooked on overpriced media, with knee-jerk reactions to any woman.**”

—Dufresne, in *Making Violence Sexy*, 108.

## PLAYBOY 4/95



“I was just wondering, Mr. Parker, when you planned to come by and pick up Mrs. Parker?”

## PLAYBOY 1/88



“He made some wisecrack about an eternity here not being half as bad as a day with his ex-wife. So, naturally, we looked her up.”

“...(these kinds of messages) can create an atmosphere of socially sanctioned contempt for women.” 9