



The Phyllis Schlafly Report

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Pornography's Victims

It's a funny thing, when the subject of pornography comes up, it generally seems to be discussed within the framework of two competing rights: the right of the seller and the right of the buyer. That's like discussing drunk driving only in terms of the right of the tavern to sell alcohol and the right of the drinker to buy it.

Unfortunately, there is a third party to the equation: the victim. Just as the rights of victims of drunk drivers need to be considered, so also we must consider pornography's victims.

Identification of this third party was one of the major achievements of the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography. Its 3,000 pages of hearings in 1985-86 for the first time gave pornography's victims the opportunity to present their side of the story.

Unfortunately, no one has yet published the hearings, so few have heard what the victims had to say. The 2,000-page Report of the Commission included a few excerpts, but that \$35 book is not carried by bookstores, is not widely available, and is too formidable for many to tackle.

Anyone who takes the time to read the 3,000 pages of hearings will acquire a view of pornography quite different from that circulated by the American Civil Liberties Union, People for the American Way, and other advocates of the right to sell and buy porn.

The eyewitness testimonies of those who spoke at the Commission hearings prove that pornography is an addictive and corrosive element in our society today. Those who are raped, tortured and killed by pornography's users are only a small percentage of pornography's victims.

It is self evident that the victims of hard drugs are not limited to those who kill and are killed under the influence. Illegal drugs also destroy the lives, health, and relationships of all who use them.

Likewise with pornography. The first-hand testimonies of the witnesses show how pornography starts with playful experimentation, then becomes addictive, then changes men's attitudes toward women and sex, and finally destroys their personal and sexual relationships.

With some men, their addiction leads them from the risqué to the perverted and bizarre. With some men, their addiction leads them into physical abuse of their wives and other women, and into seduction and sexual abuse of children.

With most of pornography's addicts, however, probably the biggest effect is their change of attitudes toward women. Until the 1986 Commission on Pornography, that harm was unseen because the wives were silent, too embarrassed to go public, too hurt to share their grief.

The hard-core and violent porn convinces violence-prone men that violence is part of the normal male-female sexual relations, that women desire and enjoy rape, and that rape is only the exuberance of an oversexed man.

The soft-core erotica convinces nonviolent men that women (and often children, too) are inanimate toys for men to play with and use for their own satisfaction. That's the way women's bodies are presented in the "men's entertainment" magazines.

Through the vivid color pictures of television, video, and slick magazines, pornography teaches the falsehood that women enjoy being sexually used; despite the obvious pain and degradation, there is always that smile on their faces. Logic and reason cannot erase those pictures in the man's consciousness.

The pornography addict loses all personal relationship with his sex partner. The porn pictures have convinced his subconscious that the woman probably enjoys whatever he does, and in any event he doesn't have to be concerned about her response because she's just an object.

The law of obscenity tries to distinguish between hard-core and soft-core pornography, and many people try to distinguish between violent pornography and erotica. But to the wife-victim of the porn addict, that's a distinction without a difference.

Witness after witness told how this change in men's attitudes took place primarily as a result of the magazines easily available at local newsstands and convenience stores, now massively reinforced by television, porn channels on cable, and videos for rent. The \$8 billion pornography industry is now so pervasive that men no longer have to go across town to adult bookstores or movie houses to feed their addiction.

All Americans enjoy a freedom-of-speech right to express racist attitudes, but they are clearly socially unacceptable today. The time has come to recognize that pornography, even when it's not legally prosecutable, is socially UNacceptable because it victimizes women and children.

Hypocrisy About Censorship

If persons in a public place engage in sexual acts, or take off all their clothes, or relieve their bodily functions, they will be arrested — and should be arrested. They may be in violation of several laws; at the very least, they would be a public nuisance.

Those acts may be all legal and proper in private, but we do not permit them to happen in public.

Why, then, is it not likewise against the law to sell a picture of any of the above? Do these acts become socially acceptable in public just because they are presented on paper or film?

Those who answer "yes" to that question invoke the First Amendment to clothe their public nuisance. They cry "censorship" to intimidate anyone who wants to stop their public display of and commercial profiting from these very private acts.

If persons in a public or private place commit rape, assault or battering, they will be arrested — and should be arrested. Rapes, whippings, beatings, and touchings of another's body are against the law, and society will and should punish the offender.

Why, then, is it not likewise against the law to show a picture of these illegal acts? Do these criminal acts become socially acceptable just because they are presented on paper or film?

Those who answer "yes" to that question invoke the First Amendment to clothe their illegal acts. They cry "censorship" to intimidate anyone who wants to stop their public display of and commercial profiting from these illegal acts.

Now add another element to this latter question. Suppose all the persons who are the target of these illegal acts are blacks, or Jews or Native Americans, or children.

The strong arm of the law would move swiftly to prosecute the offenders. The entire array of civil rights legislation and litigation that has been developed in the last 25 years would move into merciless action.

If we were talking about pictures of these acts against blacks, Jews, Native Americans, or children, our prevailing social mores would find such recordings on paper or film to be socially unacceptable. Publishers, periodicals, entertainment houses, and retail establishments would not risk releasing written or filmed presentations which portray violent race discrimination — even if the cry of "censorship" were raised, which it would not be.

Why, then, are these acts not likewise against the law when the group targeted for rape, assault, battering, degradation, humiliation, or other abuse is women? Can these things be socially acceptable just because women are the victims?

Those who answer "yes" to that question invoke the First Amendment to clothe their targeting of women, individually and collectively. They cry "censorship" to intimidate anyone who wants to stop their public display of and commercial profiting from the use of women as specific targets of abuse.

The "civil liberties" of the abusers are ranked higher than the "civil rights" of the abused.

America has been moving relentlessly to clean up the quality of our air and water. No matter how legal or proper or necessary your business, prevailing social mores dictate that you may not pollute the air we breathe or the water we drink.

The polluter is squeezed between legal action on the one

hand and social condemnation on the other. In many cases, notably the pollution that comes from bituminous coal smoke belched by industry and the tobacco smoke emitted by smokers, the social condemnation preceded the legal restrictions.

Why, then, is pollution of our minds and spirits by pictures of violence and perversions not likewise against laws and social mores?

Those who defend such pollution cry "censorship" at the mere suggestion that society may try to protect itself, its families, and its children from mental and moral pollution and destructive anti-social behavior.

Who are those who cry "censorship"? They are the \$8 billion-a-year pornography industry, plus all those who are making money out of any of the acts listed above. This includes the media (especially television networks, cable companies, and metropolitan newspapers that run movie ads), the entertainment industry, the abortion clinics, the organizations financed by donations or fees from pornographers (such as the American Civil Liberties Union), and the immense array of service providers whose careers are advanced by increasing the numbers of persons with broken lives.

The Attorney General's Commission on Pornography, for the first time, gave a platform to the victims of pornography to tell their first-hand accounts of how pornography was used as a tool to abuse them.

But, funny thing, the giant news media closed ranks and did not report these testimonies of pornography's victims.

Some of those who have been the noisiest in hurling epithets about "censorship" even tried to get the courts to stop the Attorney General's Commission from publishing its own report! Fortunately they failed in that act of real censorship, but they have succeeded in making copies so scarce that most of the American people are blissfully unaware of the existence of pornography's victims.

It seems that the people who complain about "censorship" are not really against censorship after all. Indeed those who defend pornography are themselves the most implacable censors of all.

The Porn Industry's High-Priced Ad Campaign

When the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography issued its report in July, 1986, it was greeted by an avalanche of press attacks raising the cry of "censorship," interferences with the First Amendment and our "right to read," "banned books," and other cliches designed to trigger emotional opposition to the report.

Did you think those were reasoned reactions by people who spontaneously responded in righteous indignation? Well, they weren't. They were part of a clever advertising campaign orchestrated by the pornography industry.

We know this because somebody leaked the winning six-page bid prepared for the "Media Coalition" by Gray and Company, the largest public affairs firm in Washington, D.C. "Media Coalition" is the consortium of pornographers who feel threatened by any proposed crackdown on pornography. Indeed, they should feel threatened; even a *Time* magazine poll shows that 72 percent of the American people want aggressive law enforcement against pornography.

The Gray letter spelled out two principal strategies for a gigantic advertising campaign. First was an attempt "to

convince the American people that campaigns to ban certain books, magazines, newspapers, movies, television shows, speeches and performances threaten everyone's freedom." The Gray letter set forth plans to try to "discredit the Commission on Pornography" by using newly-created "front" groups under such deceptive titles as "Americans for the Right to Read" or "The First Amendment Coalition."

Secondly, Gray and Company's advertising strategy called for repeating over and over again, the claim that the opposition to pornography comes only from "a group of religious extremists whose tactics and goals are clearly not representative of mainstream America," and that these religious "extremist pressure groups" are trying to "impose their narrow moral and social agenda on the majority."

To make these two themes the framework of public discussion about pornography, Gray and Company laid out an expensive plan to use a series of news conferences, "advertorials" in major national newspapers and magazines, and spokesmen on television and radio news, public affairs, and talk shows. Anytime you see or hear any of these themes, you can bet that it is, overtly or covertly, a paid political advertisement planted by the profiteering pornographers. The scope of Gray's proposed campaign was not only extensive and expensive, but unpleasantly personal. The Gray game plan was to go after anyone who opposes pornography. "A way must be found," the bid stated, "to discredit the organizations and individuals who have begun to seriously disrupt the legitimate business activities of publishers, distributors and sellers" of pornography.

This strategy would refocus the public debate away from pornography and toward a defense of the First Amendment. The plan was to select people for the front groups who are not currently on the payroll of the porn industry in order to avoid the charge that they have a commercial interest in the subject.

This Gray bid is especially interesting because Bob Gray, the chairman of Gray and Company, is a personal friend of the President and was the chairman of Reagan's 1980 Inauguration. With that in mind, reflect on the deviousness of this sentence in the bid: "Quiet efforts should be undertaken to persuade the Attorney General, the White House and the leaders of both political parties that the forthcoming report of work of the Commission is so flawed, so controversial, so contested and so biased that they should shy away from publicly endorsing the document."

Gray and Company plays both sides of the political street. The bid bragged that the company's Public Relations Division was headed by Frank Mankiewicz, who was press secretary to the late Robert F. Kennedy, and its Government Relations Division was headed by Gary Hymel, former top aide to former House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill.

The Testimonies of Porn Victims

The liberals generally do not admit that there is anything wrong with pornography, but if they do they claim that pornography is a "victimless crime." Anyone who thinks that should read the testimonies of the victims who gave their first-hand stories at the 1986 hearings of the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography. Here are a few.

Sharon met her husband at college where she received her B.S. in education and he his M.D. in dental surgery. After

their marriage, he developed a fixation with pornography in the so-called men's entertainment magazines. He left the magazines around the house and their relationship deteriorated. Everything he said or did became sexually related, and he suggested that she have sex outside of marriage. He abused his daughter and molested ten of his patients. Finally, she fled from and divorced him, but the court has refused to stop the father's visitations with his daughter.

Sara was a runaway forced into prostitution. She described how the pimps used pornography to train and hold the girls, and how she tried to escape. "Pornography and prostitution," she said, "are two sides of the same coin."

Kandy described the pornographic aspect of rock music. The basic philosophy of sex in today's rock, she said, is summed up perfectly in Tina Turner's smash hit "What's Love Got to Do With It? ... It's only physical ... you must try to ignore that it means more than that ... if it feels good, go for it."

Ingrid asserted that, "You cannot have child pornography without child sexual abuse. They are inseparable." She told about how her father abused her and how she wanted to die because the emotional pain was so great.

Diann described how she was coerced into acting out what her husband had learned from pornography. She told that his entire sex life was based on identity with pornography and on fantasies instead of a real relationship.

Evelyn told how pornography destroyed her happy marriage. Her husband became obsessed with *Playboy*, cheap paperbacks, obscene playing cards, and R-rated movies. This robbed their children of time and a loving relationship with their father. Her husband wanted her to perform what he saw in pornography, and even progressed to where he wanted to exchange sex partners and participate in orgies.

Brenda told how she became a Playboy Bunny because her father had *Playboy* magazine around the house, and she thought it was acceptable. She told how she and other Playboy bunnies were depressed and suicidal, and she described the relationship of pornography to suicide, drugs, sex, and VD.

Dr. Frank was the psychiatrist who thoroughly examined a man who committed a brutal rape-murder following 19 to 24 other sexual assaults of women. Dr. Frank described how pornography was an essential part of the criminal's development. He needed pornography to commit sexual assault, and he progressed through every bizarre sex act until the final tragedy.

Susan told how her husband made her perform what he saw in X-rated films, including positions that were painful and caused hemorrhaging. She told how he became sexually abusive after he became a reader of pornography. He told her "it is suppose to hurt."

James described how he became a victim of pornography starting with crude movies at age 12. He said that pornography does not stand still, but it feeds on itself and "the decadent becomes more decadent." Now, at age 48 with four children, he said, "I still struggle daily with the images, the thoughts, the yearnings, the lusts, cultivated during those years of self-indulgence in pornography." He said that the images are "permanently embedded" in his mind because of the "sticking power" of pornography.

Diana did extensive research on convicted rapists. "Pornography must be understood," she said, "as an important factor contributing to an environment that trivializes, neutral-

izes, and ultimately facilitates rape.”

Dan was introduced to pornography at age 9 by a man in his 20s who showed him cartoons with explicit sex acts. He admitted that he has been a “porno addict” for more than 40 years, even though he is now a successful professional man, a management-level employee in a large corporation, married and with a family. He recognizes his problem, has had counseling, but the urge never leaves him because he is “held in bondage to pornography.”

Diane told how her son Troy died from imitating the autoerotic asphyxiation graphically depicted in an article in *Hustler* magazine called “Orgasm of Death.” She found the magazine at her son’s feet; it directly caused his death.

Garrett told how, at age 10, a trusted friend of her family and highly respected lawyer sexually abused her, starting with showing her *Playboy* and *Penthouse*. He robbed her of her childhood, and she attempted suicide. Too scared to tell her parents, she confided in the family doctor, and he used the opportunity to assault and abuse her for two more years.

Another woman told how a local cable television company came into town with its package of programming, and her husband became addicted to porn movies within three months. This completely changed their relationship and destroyed their 30-year marriage. He wanted her to perform the acts he saw in the pornography and, when she wouldn’t, he found a woman who would.

The testimonies of these victims prove that—to borrow a phrase—pornography corrupts and absolutely uncontrolled pornography corrupts absolutely. These testimonies prove that pornography is addictive, and that those who become addicted crave more bizarre and more perverted pornography, and become more callous toward their victims. Pornography changes the perceptions and attitudes of men toward women, individually and collectively, and desensitizes men so that what was once repulsive and unthinkable eventually becomes not only acceptable but desirable. What was once mere fantasy becomes reality. Thus conditioned and stimulated by pornography, the user seeks a victim.

There is much, much more in the 3,000 pages of Commission hearings — depressing but important for those who care about helping the victims of the social evil called pornography.

Victims of the social disease called pornography are crying for help, and concerned citizens with compassion must heed those cries.

In order that the testimonies of pornography’s victims will be available to the public, Phyllis Schlafly has excerpted 32 of these authentic testimonies directly from the hearings record and published them in a book called *Pornography’s Victims*. This book is corroborative and compelling in proving the harm and the hurt of pornography.

Phyllis Schlafly has her B.A. from Washington University, her M.A. from Harvard University, her J.D. from Washington University Law School, and an honorary LL.D. from Niagara University. She is the author of 13 books and over 1,000 network television and radio commentaries. President Reagan appointed her a member of the Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution.

PORNOGRAPHY'S VICTIMS

EXCERPTS FROM

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