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NEW REPORT ON PORNOGRAPHY

At last, a study on pornography has been published demolishing the pornography report published 15 years ago which was dishonest, defective and, in addition, is now badly overtaken by events. No longer can the $4 billion smut-peddling racket pretend that the 1970 report provides a Magna Carta to flood our nation with deviant, depraved, sexually-violent, and sadistic materials.

Lyndon Johnson appointed and staffed a Presidential Commission on Obscenity and Pornography. Its 1970 report was so outrageous, so contrary to fact and common sense that the U.S. Senate overwhelmingly rejected it.

Hindsight provides an interesting historical footnote. On a roll-call vote, only five Senators supported the Commission's report, two of whom subsequently became Presidential nominees: George McGovern and Walter Mondale.

The Commission's conclusions, which were so unacceptable, were that pornography (a) was harmless and might even have "cathartic" value, (b) was not a social problem, and (c) should be free from regulation or control. Those theories were scientifically unfounded and contradicted even by the Commission's own data.

Those conclusions were also contradicted by both the 1969 report of the prestigious National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Crime (chaired by the late Milton Eisenhower) and the subsequent prestigious 1972 Surgeon General's Report on Television Violence and Social Behavior.

In fairness to the LBJ Commission report, those who wrote it probably never saw some of the horrendous pornography that is so widely available today. Pornography has become progressively more obscene since the Commission report gave it carte blanche and the media echoed and re-echoed its false conclusions as though they were law.

Current research shows that exposure to pornography desensitizes and addicts the viewer. This is true whether the pornography is "hard-core" depiction of graphic sexual violence, or "soft-core" depiction of consensual sex, or "neutral" sex-education

materials.

Dangerous offenders, such as child molesters, incest fathers, killers and rapists, develop a fondness for deviant material and use it in their preparatory stimulation before seeking out a victim. It is the literature of the sex offender. Rapists report a preference for soft-core, consenting-sex depictions in order to assist their fantasies that the female victim will resist.

Research shows that soft-core as well as hard-core pornography leads to callousness toward women and to the trivialization of rape as a criminal offense. It shows that significant desensitization can follow exposure to as few as two violent movies containing fewer than 25 acts of violence and lasting only three hours.

Research shows that pornography affects the normal person and interferes with the interpersonal relationship of everyone who uses it, not only the potential criminal. Normal, as well as disturbed people, not only become desensitized but develop a fondness for more and more deviant materials. They incorporate them into their sexual practices and fantasize about them, requiring increasingly deviant and bizarre images. They begin to accept the use of force in sexual relations.

Research shows the adverse effects of pornography on marriage. Users of pornography frequently lose faith in the viability of marriage, especially because (like many other drugs) they do not believe pornography is having any effect. They become dissatisfied with normal sexual relations, begin to view non-monogamous relationships as normal, and then seek a variety of sexual partners.

This 1985 report on pornography which summarizes and documents all this new research was written by David A. Scott, a Toronto psychotherapist whose practice has specialized in victims of the Holocaust and their children. He approaches the subject from a perspective very different from past studies: the harm to victims of pornography as shown by recent research findings.

This study of pornography is a major contribution to our general knowledge of this unpleasant subject and about why it causes physical and emotional abuse of women and children. The study provides a mountain of documentation for why obscenity never was, is not now, and should never be protected by the First Amendment. (Published by the Free Congress Foundation, 721 Second St., NE, Washington, DC 20002).