Dirty Books, Dirty Films, and Dirty Data
Pauline B. Bart and Margaret Jozsa

“When I came to the Medical School of the University of Illinois,” says Dr. Pauline Bart, “medical students, almost all of whom were male, were shown pornographic movies as part of their sex education training. These films were to ‘desensitize’ the students so that they would not express shock, horror, disgust, and disbelief when their patients brought them sexual problems. (This was before sex education complete with audiovisual aids became big business.) The psychiatrist teaching the class apologized to the male students for the large size of the actor’s penis, and assured them that the actors were chosen for this reason and that men were perfectly normal if their penises were not as large as those on the screen. There was no apology for the way females were treated in the film.

“In 1977 at a conference on rape, Dr. Diana Russell showed me some ‘comic’ books depicting incest, rape, and woman-torturing. In the first two instances, the girl and woman were portrayed as enjoying the violence, of course. In the latter case, caustic substances were shown being poured into the vagina of a woman tied into the lithotomy (gynecological) position.

“Finally, on my last trip to the Bay Area, City Lights Bookstore (which I have always associated with revolutionary beat poets) had a comic-book version of The Story of O on its counter so everyone walking in would see it. I had read the book years ago, but the impact of the comic-strip form was much different—I felt as if I were being successively slapped in the face.”

These recollections about pornography formed the basis for further research and thought by Dr. Bart, and in 1978 at the Feminist Perspectives on Pornography conference, she presented this paper (written in collaboration with Margaret Jozsa), which reviews the research on pornography in the last decade.

It is difficult to demonstrate the real-world effect of pornography (or even that of violence in pornography) through research because we do not know the relationship among any of the following: what people believe and what they tell researchers they believe; what
kinds of things they think they will do and what they actually will do and under what circumstances they will do it; e.g., if they do it in an experimental laboratory situation in a psychology department, will they do it in the outside world and, conversely, if they do it outside, will they do it for the psychologist? And material that is not pornographic in one context may be in another. These factors are important to keep in mind as we examine the research that men have gathered on the effect of pornography on society.

In addition, we need to keep in mind the climate in which the research was conducted. The intellectual and social climate of the sixties and seventies brought us the "sexual revolution." To most liberal and radical men, the sexual revolution meant that all women were put on earth for their sexual gratification, that "good girls" were no longer off limits (in fact, they were labeled "neurotic"), and that any kind of sex between consenting adults was not only permissible but desirable.

Women such as Joan Baez urged us to use our bodies for the "Cause" (against the Vietnam War) with the famous slogan "Girls say yes to boys who say no." Not being sexually available was the equivalent of original sin, and guilt was a taboo feeling, much as sex and aggression (particularly for women) used to be taboo. A "liberated" woman contaminated her body with the Pill, and if she got pregnant she obtained an abortion—no fuss, no muss, no responsibility for the men. The concept of a "consenting adult" was broadly defined, since power differentials between men and women were not addressed and women saying no were not taken seriously. This world view is epitomized in the famous Fritz Perls prayer "I do my thing, and you do your thing. I am not in this world to live up to your expectations. And you are not in this world to live up to mine."

This climate was ideal for the proliferation of pornography: How could women object? They would be uncool, unhip, neurotic, frigid, or whatever pejorative was popular. With knowledge of this climate, we will examine some of the research on pornography in the last two decades in order to expose the inadequacies and the inherent biases, and to comment on how this research pertains to women.

There are two working models which researchers have traditionally used to study pornography and aggression: the catharsis model and the imitation model. The catharsis model, when applied to pornography, assumes that the more you see the less you do. In contrast, the imitation model states that the more you see the more you do. In her recent work, "Machismo in Media Research: A Critical Re-
view of Research on Violence and Pornography," Thelma McCormack discusses both models.\(^1\) The catharsis model, derived from psychoanalytic theory, is primarily used in pornography research; the imitation model, grounded in learning theory, is primarily used in aggression research. Depending upon the researcher and the type of experiment, one or the other model is used in the research we will be reviewing in this paper. So it is important to have a basic knowledge of how each model works.

The catharsis model states that art, literature, religion, and other symbolic systems serve as "safety valves," reducing the tension created by sublimating "antisocial" forces in the psyche.\(^2\) It assumes that fantasy, dreams, and jokes reveal our tabooed wishes and are based on instincts which are sublimated for the sake of peace and social order. This model also assumes that "antisocial behavior" has its origin in human nature, and that the reduction of one's drives is socially desirable. Moreover, it supposes that men have a different sexual nature from women; that sex and aggression are linked for men and that they have more difficulty than women in controlling such behavior.\(^3\) Indeed, Freud believed "the sexuality of most men shows an admixture of aggression, of a desire to subdue. . . ."

This model predicts pornographic movies and books serve society by allowing men to release, in a harmless way, their sexual aggressions against women by viewing pornography. Much research on pornography has been conducted using this model. Most of it purportedly demonstrated the lack of harm—and, in some cases, the benefits—that flowed from pornography, and has been widely cited in defense of pornography.

According to McCormack, most researchers have been content to use the catharsis model for research on pornography. But recent researchers are questioning the assumptions underlying this model, particularly the sexist premises of the model. McCormack points out that biases include the "use of (mainly) male subjects, a logic dictated by a notion that for any theory of aggression or sexuality, men are the active group, men have the responsibility, and men confront the consequences of their own behaviors."\(^4\)

It is this research, based on the cathartic model, which we will examine in the first part of our paper. We will discuss each article and point out the difficulties, biases, and inadequacies inherent in the experiments, surveys, and research.

The imitation model differs from the catharsis model because it suggests that people learn patterns of violence from role models. Anger, frustrations, and aggression are behaviors which are acquired
like any other social habits—from the examples around us. Thus, aggressive behavior is learned; therefore, it is cultural rather than instinctive. Some recent researchers have used this model to suggest that the rapist, so pervasive in recent pornography, functions as a role model for male readers and viewers. Toward the end of this paper, we will summarize their findings, which we believe point to the conclusion that violent pornography is harmful.

We begin by critiquing the research that was reported in *The Journal of Social Issues* "Pornography: Attitudes, Use and Effects." (Volume 29, No. 3, 1973). This journal is a standard reference on pornography (together with *The Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography*). In fact, many of the experiments reported in the journal were conducted by independent researchers under the auspices of the commission, which funded the work and donated staff members for the research.

**Experience with and Attitudes Toward Explicit Sexual Materials**

*(W. Cody Wilson and Herbert I. Abelson)*

According to W. Cody Wilson and Herbert I. Abelson, an overwhelming majority of adults report having been exposed at some time to "explicit sexual materials." This conclusion is based on data derived from 2,486 face-to-face interviews of adults in the United States. The survey was presented as an "opinion survey on current social issues." The researchers designed the questionnaire so that it approached the subject in what they felt was a "natural and non-threatening way." It asked general questions on books and magazines, then questions on involvement in social issues, next questions on "sex education," and finally, "explicit questions regarding sexual depictions." The creators of the survey sought to avoid biases and distortions by eliminating words and phrases like "pornography" (substituting "sexual materials") and "oral-genital activity" (using "mouth-sex contact" instead). However, there is no community consensus on what are "sexual materials." In much of the research done to date, the terms "pornography," "erotica," and "explicit sexual materials" are used interchangeably. This is an important variable, as a film showing two people making love is much different from one portraying the rape and murder of women for male sexual stimulation. Distinctions between these terms must be at the basis of any valid work in pornography research.
In a survey of 1,083 adults which attempted to determine a “single standard” for evaluating “erotic pictures,” Douglas H. Wallace considered only what he termed “pictorial erotica.” The images ranged from “fully clothed male and female models to coital activities to oral-genital relations.” However, he omitted the themes of sadomasochism, bondage, and fetishism because of what he calls “their relatively low frequency in adult magazine stores.” But new research has shown that the barriers have been pushed back each time former taboos became acceptable. Today we are faced with sadomasochism, incest, and violence in pornography rather than “mere” objectification such as is found in much of the milder pornography of the late sixties and early seventies (see Malamuth and Spinner below). Research on pornography must deal with both forms of the material.

The Effect of Easy Availability of Pornography on the Incidence of Sex Crimes: The Danish Experience
(Berl Kutchinsky)

In his widely cited review of the “Danish Experience,” Berl Kutchinsky found that with the increased availability of pornography in Denmark there were marked decreases in the number of “sex offenses” committed there. He believes that making pornography readily available gave the public a safety outlet for their psyches (i.e., the catharsis model). However, rape was not one of the sex offenses that decreased in Denmark following the liberalization of pornography laws. A close look shows that Kutchinsky lumped rape with flashers, Peeping Toms, and other milder “sex offenses” when he drew his conclusions.

In addition to this serious shortcoming in his research, there is also the fact that some sex offenses (such as voyeurism) were decriminalized in Denmark in the interim between the liberalization of pornography laws and the study by Kutchinsky. This would account for some of the “marked decrease” in sex offenses he reports.

Furthermore, Kutchinsky himself states that after the laws were liberalized, there were “changes in attitudes” toward sex offenses. Thus he states that fewer young women tended to report sex crimes. He attributes this factor to the development of a more “tolerant view of minor sexual interferences” on the part of the young women,
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and states that the “new generation (is) . . . less concerned about these things than the old generation.”

It does not seem to occur to Kutchinsky that young females may be unwilling or unable to report such sex crimes anymore because of the changing societal attitudes. Although he remarks that the police may have a “reduced tendency to register reports” on certain kinds of sexual offenses, he does not deal with the fact that this would undoubtedly affect young females’ attitudes about reporting such offenses to the authorities.

**Sex Differences, Sex Experiences, Sex Guilt and Explicitly Sexual Films**

*(Donald L. Mosher)*

In his study of 377 individuals, Donald L. Mosher showed two pornography films which portrayed “face-to-face intercourse and oral-genital sex” to 194 single males and 183 single females. This experiment attempted to answer a number of questions: (1) How sexually arousing is the viewing of explicitly sexual films? (2) What sort of affective states accompany the viewing of such films? (3) Are there changes in sexual behavior in the twenty-four hours following viewing? (4) Are there changes in emotions in the twenty-four hours following or changes in opinions in the two weeks following the viewing of the films? (5) Are there different reactions to the films? And, finally, (6) what sort of differences in reactions exist between the sexes?

He used as a test film a “better-than-average” pornographic film because, as he himself stated, it showed more affection and fewer genital close-ups. Thus, it would “have appeal to sexually uninhibited, experienced adults of both sexes” more than most pornography, which is “kinky” and “oriented toward a male audience.”

He concluded that the study “provides no evidence that explicit sexual films had untoward consequences on those who viewed them.” He stated that the subjects “remained calm” and that none had any “visible negative reactions at the time.” In addition, he found that women “can indeed be responsive to explicitly sexual stimuli,” but that they were “more disgusted” by oral-genital sex than the “more sexually experienced, less guilty men,” and he suggested that women may have a “personality disposition of sex guilt” which explains this reaction to pornography.

Mosher does wonder in passing, “What is the nature of disgust and its relation to female personality?” but there is no effort in this
experiment to look at the treatment of women in pornographic films and books. Their objectification is so taken for granted that the issue is not even discussed. Mosher's data is often cited as evidence for a pro-pornography position, but it tells us little about women's responses to pornography.

One of Mosher's recommendations is that a massive sex education effort take place. A noble statement, but one that does not follow from his data unless he is referring to the fact that people who scored high on "sex guilt" and low on "sexual experience," particularly females, were less likely than the others to enjoy pornography. Presumably the benefit to be obtained by increased sex education is enabling women to enjoy pornography.

Is Pornography a Problem?

(James L. Howard, Myron B. Liptzin, and Clifford B. Reifler)

In their research conclusions, James L. Howard, Myron B. Liptzin, and Clifford B. Reifler restate the cliché based on the catharsis model: that continued "exposure to pornography leads to a steadily decreasing interest" in the material; but they quickly admit that many questions still need answering.

They exposed twenty-three subjects to pornographic materials for ninety minutes per day for fifteen days. The behavior and attitudes of the subjects were tested extensively before and after exposure to the materials. The researchers concluded that exposure to pornography had no "detrimental effect on the subjects." But they noted that their experiment was not "representative of the general population," as it used only twenty-one to twenty-three-year-old subjects, all of whom were white and male, with some college background. Further, the subjects were all from families with above-average incomes, they were all judged "psychologically stable," and they were all volunteers. These are the only researchers represented in *The Journal of Social Issues* who recognize that perhaps one should study the effect of pornography on women. Thus, their title could be changed from "Is Pornography a Problem?" to "For Whom Is Pornography a Problem?"

Exposure to Pornography, Character, and Sexual Deviance: A Retrospective Survey

(Keith E. Davis and G. Nicholas Braucht)

In a study of 365 subjects from different social groups (jail inmates, college students, people of three ethnic backgrounds, and
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members of Catholic and Protestant organizations) Keith E. Davis and G. Nicholas Braucht showed that there is a possibility that early exposure to pornography may have some impact on later-life deviance (or, conversely, that exposure to pornography is a product of a sexually deviant life-style), a finding in the tradition of the imitation model. They found that there was a positive relationship between "sexual deviance" and exposure to pornography at all age levels. They felt more study was needed to show a concrete causal relationship between deviant sexual behavior and pornography, but they also felt that they could not reject the view that exposure to pornography at early ages plays a role in the development of sexually deviant life-styles.

In this retrospective study on exposure to pornography, the terms "character" and "sexual deviance" are so value-laden as to be almost useless. The authors list homosexuality and "sex without love" in the same deviant category as rape, prostitution, exhibitionism, and transvestism. They then find a relationship between each kind of behavior and the reading of pornography.

Their conclusion attempts to minimize their findings. They state that "a key to the reasoning that pornography could have a causal impact on sexual deviance is a judgment about the content and message of the materials," and assert that a better view looks at the individual's "attitude toward the body, toward sexual relations, and toward persons." In other words, they prefer to assume the neutrality of pornographic material and to blame any negative effect instead on the untoward character of the individual reader. It obviously did not cross their minds that sadomasochistic pornography contributes to the development of an individual's "attitude toward the body, toward sexual relations, and toward persons."

Exposure to Erotic Stimuli and Sexual Deviance

(Michael J. Goldstein)

Michael J. Goldstein studied convicted male rapists, homosexuals, transsexuals, pedophiles, and heavy pornography users (the latter were obtained from flyers left in "adult book stores"), and a control group from the community. Generally he found that the institutionalized sex offenders, homosexuals, transsexuals, and heavy users of pornography had less frequent exposure to pornography during adolescence than did the control group. This is not necessarily surprising if one is aware that the sex offenders are not much different from the general male population and therefore not much different
from the control group. Goldstein also states: "Rapists had no greater likelihood of encountering material combining sexuality and aggression (sadomasochistic theme) than the controls, so that the idea for the aggressive sexual act does not appear to derive from pornography."  

The assumption that the control group does not contain rapists is untenable given the data that the majority of women do not report rape to the police, particularly if the victim knows the rapist. A 1978 study found that of 635 rape complaints received only ten men were found guilty of rape and ten of other offenses, and we do not know how many of these actually served time in prison.

**Pornography, Sexuality, and Social Psychology**

*(Paula Johnson and Jacqueline D. Goodchilds)*

In a section entitled "Comment" in *The Journal of Social Issues*, researchers Paula Johnson and Jacqueline D. Goodchilds point out that the nature of pornography is changing. "The last 10 years have seen a change from pulp books describing foreplay in great detail and from "beaver" films with an emphasis on static display to very explicit depictions of sexual acts in both books and film format."  

We can now add: "to very violent sexual acts of aggression" (see Smith, 1976; Feshbach and Malamuth, 1978).

It is clear that many researchers set out to prove that sex is not obscene, and therefore pornography/erotica (and the distinction was not made) should not be censored. We would agree that sex per se is not obscene, but the objectification of women is part of our oppression. More important, these research findings, though universally quoted on the subject, do not apply to the kind of explicit, visually depicted sadomasochistic pornography available on newsstands everywhere.

Also it is very important to recognize that all the researchers in *The Journal of Social Issues* are male and the subjects are mainly male. One study did use married women looking at pornographic films in the presence of their husbands, but the obvious bias that entailed was not addressed. The English common-law precept that the husband and wife are one, and that one is the husband, seemed to have been assumed. Nor did the study take into account any conflict of interest between those with structural power—i.e., husbands—and those without—i.e., wives. One can only guess, as McCormack states, what the results would have been if experiments had
been conducted by females (ideally, feminists using female subjects) not in the presence of males.\textsuperscript{19}

Johnson and Goodchilds state:

We think that a feminist would ask questions and form hypotheses based on a sensitivity to sex roles and an interest and concern for female as well as male sexuality. The anthropologists’ caveat against a majority dominant group’s studying its own culture suggests, too, that the female researcher’s involvement in the study of the “male problem,” pornography, might have unexpected but significant benefits.\textsuperscript{20}

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Robin Morgan has written that “Pornography is the theory and rape the practice.”\textsuperscript{21} In research experiments by Smith and by Feshbach and Malamuth, this relationship is explored, demonstrating that currently some males are engaging in pornography research that is useful to women.

Don Smith, in his work “Sexual Aggression in American Pornography: The Stereotype of Rape” (1976), studied 428 “adults only” paperbacks that were published between 1968 and 1974 and readily available in stores other than “adults only stores.”\textsuperscript{22} He found in these books 4,588 sex episodes, of which one fifth involve an act of rape. Some of his more important findings are:

1. Ninety-one percent portray rape of a female by a male, mainly of one female by one male.
2. Eighty-six percent of the rapists depicted are known to the victim, and no brutality is used (e.g., choking, kicking).
3. Twenty-one percent involve raping a virgin; e.g., more commonly, the plot involves “innocents” performing or being forced to perform an act or acts which they never have before. Married housewives also are frequently depicted, since their rape represents not only dominance over the woman but also over her husband.
4. The average number of acts in books depicting rape have increased from two in 1968 to three in 1970–1973 to four in 1974. The ratio of explicit sexual content to other content has increased from about one third to about two thirds. This finding is particularly important, given the research we will describe later in this paper.
5. In virtually all cases the female’s terror of what she knows
is about to happen to her (particularly when she sees the large size of the attacker's genitals) is described in great detail, and considerable attention is given to her physical resistance and pleas for mercy. Yet, before the act is over her sexual desires will have been stirred to the point that she is physically cooperating—filled, at the same time, with shame and humiliation at the "betrayal of her mind by her body." Much is made during the act of reducing the female to begging the male verbally (in words she's never uttered before) for sex from him.

a. A prominent theme is that the victim really wants to be subjugated—wants to be forced to submit.

b. Shamed by her own physical gratification and her recognition that she actually liked what was done to her, the victim reports the act (to the authorities, her husband, or anyone else) in less than 3 percent of the episodes.

c. Less than 3 percent of the attackers meet with any negative consequences in the plot of the books; indeed, the attacker is usually rewarded with the sexual devotion of the victim (except in the case of unknown assailants). Neither the victim nor the attacker is portrayed as having any reason for regrets, and the victim usually goes on to a richer, fuller sex life as a result of her now-awakened sex potential.

Smith notes that rape is presented in pornography as being a part of normal female-male sexual relations—with benefits for both victim and attacker—that rape is a pact of sexual mastery in addition to being a crime of power (e.g., the victim enjoys the act), and states that his research findings support much of what Brownmiller says. He concludes that "the world depicted in these rape acts is one of machismo, an anti-female world—with a contempt, not just for females, but for other males as well." 23

Neal M. Malamuth and Barry Spinner's longitudinal content analysis of sexual violence in the pictorials and cartoons of Playboy and Penthouse magazines from 1973–1977 supports Smith's contention that the amount of violence in pornography is increasing. While they found that amount relatively small, it increased significantly over the time span analyzed, primarily as a result of a sharp increase in the frequency of sexually violent pictorials, particularly in Penthouse. They are concerned because the coupling of sex and violence may so condition readers that violent acts become associated with
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sexual pleasure. In addition, readers may believe that women in general, like the women depicted in these magazines, are basically masochistic and in need of male domination.24

Research conducted by Seymour Feshbach and Neal M. Malamuth in “Sex and Aggression: Proving the Link” used an imitation or learning model.25 They found that college men who viewed pornography that fused sex and violence tended to be more sexually aroused by the idea of rape and less sympathetic to the victims than a control group.

In a further study, college students read two versions of a mildly sadomasochistic story from Penthouse. One group read the original, and another group read a similar but nonviolent version. After completing a questionnaire assessing their level of sexual arousal, the students were given a story about rape to read in which pain cues were moderate and the “terrified victim, compelled to yield at knife point, was not portrayed as sexually excited.” A second questionnaire demonstrated that males who read the violent story were more sexually aroused by the account of rape than the others who read the nonviolent version. It was as if the men who had read about a woman’s pleasure at being mistreated had then interpreted the victim’s pain in the rape scene as a “sign of sexual excitement,” and the greater their judgment of the victim’s pain, the greater their sexual excitement. By contrast, in the case of the males who had read the nonviolent version, the greater their perception of the victim’s pain, “the lower their sexual response.”

Thus, Feshbach and Malamuth state that “one exposure to violence in pornography can significantly influence erotic reactions to the portrayal of rape.” 26

In addition, both groups of men not only identified with the rapist, but 51 percent said that they might commit rape if they were assured they would not be caught. Because this finding might seem startling to those not familiar with the feminist analysis of rape, we wrote Malamuth asking for further information. Malamuth replied that indeed 51 percent of the men did so answer the question “How likely are you to behave as this man did if you could be assured of not being caught and punished?” 27 Moreover, he referred to similar results obtained by T. Tieger of Stanford University, and to replications of the above findings reported by Malamuth and his colleagues at the meetings of the Canadian Psychological Association 28 and the American Psychological Association.29

The authors conclude that erotic violence has indeed become the theme in pornographic literature. “The juxtaposition of violence with sexual excitement and satisfaction provides an unusual opportunity
for conditioning of violent responses to erotic stimuli.” The message that pain and humiliation can be fun encourages the relaxation of inhibitions against rape. They believe that psychologists should therefore support “community efforts to restrict violence in erotica to adults who are fully cognizant of the nature of the material and choose knowingly to buy it” — an inadequate policy recommendation, given their findings. They are opposed to the fad of sadomasochistic fashion ads (such as those in *Vogue*) as well as “the practice of some therapists who try to help their patients overcome sexual inhibitions by showing them films of rape or by encouraging them to indulge in rape fantasies. . . . Psychologists . . . ought not to support, implicitly or explicitly, the use and dissemination of violent erotic materials.” They suggest that we sharply discriminate between sexual and aggressive feelings by accepting children’s sexual interests while discouraging “violent or habitually aggressive behavior.” And, having found differences between female and male responses to the same stimuli (i.e., pornography) as well as having discovered that more than half the latter’s self-reports bear a “striking similarity to the callous attitudes often held by convicted rapists,” they call for further empirical research to analyze the reactions to sexually violent stimuli and effects of these exposures on beliefs, as well as for additional research on portrayals of sexual violence that will inhibit or disinhibit the sexual responsiveness of “normal subjects.” Similarly, social psychologist Edward Donnerstein, using a learning-theory approach, found that “films of both an erotic and aggressive nature can be a mediator of aggression toward women.”

**Conclusion**

Much of the current research on pornography is inadequate. The terms “erotica,” “pornography,” and “explicit sexual materials” are used interchangeably. Most of the research on pornography was done before violence pervaded pornography. Most researchers were male, as were most subjects. The effect of pornography on women has not been sufficiently studied; particularly not on women in society, since experimental groups are not the same as the real world. We suggest that there is an elective affinity or compatibility between the “do-your-own-thing” (male) ethic reflected in the so-called sexual revolution, which pervaded the sixties and seventies, and the increasing presence of and blatant content of pornography.

We have demonstrated that the catharsis model is inadequate; i.e., the model that says pornography drains off tensions so that men do
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less if they read or see more. If this model were correct, then as the amount of pornography increased, the rate of rape should have decreased. In fact, both have been increasing. The imitation model provides us (in the more recent research) with data demonstrating the pervasiveness and distorted view of rape in pornography (i.e., the woman enjoys it; this makes men more sympathetic to the rapist and less so to the victim. He interprets her pain as pleasure and reports he is more likely to engage in rape). However, the imitation model is also inadequate. It assumes that people are made of unimprinted wax and stamped with whatever messages role models present. If that were true, we would all have turned out exactly like our parents.

We need an alternative feminist model—a conflict model, which would assume that men’s interests and women’s interests are not always the same and, in fact, may be largely in conflict. The speedy dissemination and incorporation into textbooks and other publications of the findings of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography—findings which have been shown to be patently biased and based on shockingly sloppy research (and certainly not relevant to the violent pornography of today, although it is referred to to allay our concern about such pornography)—should warn us to examine carefully what is presented as “scientific truth.” The history of science demonstrates that science is not value-free. Neither are scientists. The accepted paradigms frequently serve the interest of the status quo. In this case, sexism is the status quo, and pornography is one of the factors maintaining and reinforcing a sexist society. The conflict model suggested by McCormack and the authors of this paper does not assume that men and women have the same interests: Pornography is not in the interest of women.