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SOCIAL AND PERSONAL IMPACT OF  
PORNOGRAPHY

FINAL REPORT

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Social and Personal Impact of Pornography

- Final Report

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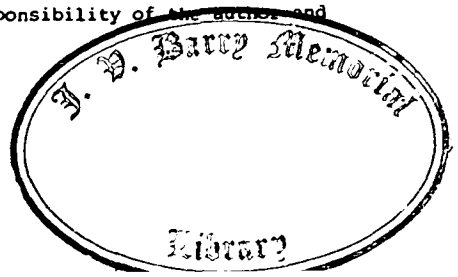
This report describes an attempt to obtain evidence from individuals convicted of sex offences regarding their prior involvement with pornography. The pitfalls and problems involved are described in the context of previous research reports which have tried to do the same.

As background to this planned study, evidence was accumulated, and described here, of well publicised examples of links between exposure to powerful media experiences and subsequent involvement in sex-related offences. Difficulties in drawing conclusions from such sources are noted.

Finally, the body of research evidence which has been accumulating on the linkage between sex and aggression is summarised and the integrative approach recently advanced by Feshbach and Malamuth favoured for its resolution of some of the earlier conflicts in the evidence. Further lines of study which arise from this work are noted.

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## Introduction

It has been a matter of debate for some years whether increased availability of explicit erotic materials would have adverse or beneficial social consequences. Advocates of a liberal approach to censorship have argued for reduced prohibitions for sexual materials while at the same time adopting a more cautious approach to presentations of violence. On the other hand, the conservative lobby has argued for a retention of controls over the presentation of sexual themes believing that removal of restraints would lead to anti-social sexual acts and a decline in standards of sexual morality.

The liberal view received strong encouragement from the findings of the American Presidential Commission Report on Obscenity and Pornography in 1970. The majority recommendation of that Commission was that federal state and local legislation prohibiting the sale, exhibition or distribution of sexual materials to consenting adults should be repealed.

A more conservative view was expressed by a minority of that Commission, as well as by the British Longford Commission in 1972 which under the chairmanship of Lord Longford, proposed tighter legal definitions of the term obscene to incorporate that which would "outrage contemporary standards of decency or humanity accepted by the public at large."<sup>(2)</sup>

Both Commissions were established following public concern about the increasing quantity and more open display of pornography in the late sixties in the respective countries. In their enquiries, both Commissions

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1 Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography. N.Y.: Bantam Books, 1970, p.57.

2 Longford, Lord. Pornography: The Longford Report. London: Coronet Books, 1972, pp.427-8.

were influenced by the evidence from Denmark which appeared to show certain benefits from the adoption of a liberal policy with pornography. In particular, the studies of Kutchinsky<sup>(3)</sup> and Ben-Veniste<sup>(4)</sup> pointed to a reduction in sex crimes in Denmark and the American Report concluded that

"statistical studies of the relationship between availability of erotic materials and the rates of sex crimes in Denmark indicate that the increased availability of explicit sexual materials has been accompanied by a decrease in the incidence of sexual crime."<sup>(5)</sup>

The question was naturally raised whether the same trend could be identified in the United States. At that time, it was found

"during the period in which there had been a marked increase in the availability of erotic materials, some specific rates of arrest for sex crimes have increased (e.g. forcible rape) and others have declined (e.g. overall juvenile rates) ... The conclusion is that, for America, the relationship between the availability of erotica and changes in sex crime rates neither proves nor disproves the possibility that availability of erotica leads to crime, but the massive overall increases in sex crimes that have been alleged do not seem to have occurred."<sup>(6)</sup>

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3 Kutchinsky, B. Studies on pornography and sex crimes in Denmark. New Social Science Monographs, 1970.

4 Ben-Veniste, R. Pornography and sex-crime: The Danish experience. Technical Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography, Volume VII, Washington, D.C., U.S. Govt. Printing Office, pp.245-261.

5 Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography, op.cit., p.31.

6 Op.cit., p.31.

Since that time a number of changes have occurred. The evidence from Denmark has been questioned, and the apparent benefits reported in 1970 have been shown to have procedural flaws.<sup>(7,8)</sup> The most recent evidence I have obtained from the Copenhagen police relating to rape reports for the city and the whole country is contained in Table 1.<sup>(9)</sup>

			1960	61	62	63	64	65	73	74	75	76
RAPE AND ATTEMPTED RAPE	COPENHAGEN	No.	56	62	68	48	61	47	87	94	97	101
		Rate	7.76	8.70	9.66	6.90	8.88	6.93	14.60	16.32	17.25	18.52
	DENMARK	No.	200	185	189	173	259	162	269	287	252	284
		Rate	4.36	4.01	4.06	3.69	5.49	3.40	5.36	5.69	4.98	5.61

Table 1. Reports to the police of rape and attempted rape, for Denmark and Copenhagen, in raw numbers and rate per 100,000 population.

I have shown in other reports that while a steep increase in sex crimes was not evident when the American Commission was published, there have been striking increases in reports since that time in both the serious area of rape and attempted rape, and with lesser sex offences.<sup>(10)</sup>

Over the years since 1970, a similar upward trend in reports of rape has occurred in Australia, occurring concurrently with changes in federal policies dealing with the control of pornography.

7 Bachy, V. Danish 'Permissiveness' revisited. Journal of Communication 1976, 26, 1, 40-43.

8 Court, J.H. Pornography and Sex-Crimes: A re-evaluation in the light of recent trends around the world. International Journal of Criminology and Penology, 1977, 5, 129-157.

9 Data based on personal correspondence with the Statistics Branch of the Copenhagen Police Force.

10 Court, J.H. Pornography - an unfulfilled dream. Report to Criminology Research Council, No. 35/76/6, 1978.

It follows that, if there is indeed a positive association between the dissemination of pornography on the one hand, and the incidence of sex crimes on the other, there should exist specific examples of individuals whose personal experience demonstrates this link. While it does not follow that an easy cause-effect relationship will necessarily be found, some linkages should emerge at an individual level and some theoretical explanations for the association need to be advanced.

#### The Present Study

This study was initiated in the hope of tracing individuals who had been found guilty of a sexual offence and then investigating whether, and in what ways, pornography might have played some part in the offence. At the same time a control group with similar demographic characteristics was to be investigated to determine whether any positive linkages found among the sex-crime group were statistically different from those found in the control group.

A research instrument suitable for this investigation had already been developed by Goldstein and Kant<sup>(11)</sup> for their research into a rather similar question. Their findings had been largely negative, and considerable emphasis has been given to their evidence that the sex criminals they studied had not been notably influenced by pornography. However, their results cannot be accepted at this time unquestioningly.

Their study found no difference between sex offenders and non-sex offenders regarding exposure to erotica. However, the study is of limited relevance to current issues because:

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<sup>11</sup> Goldstein, M.J. and Kant, H.S. Pornography and Sexual Deviance. Berkeley: University of California, pp.165-182.

- (a) it was a retrospective study of 60 male subjects contained in a hospital for the criminally insane. Aged between 20 and 40, they cannot be considered representative of the sex offender population generally.
- (b) of the 60 subjects, only 19 were aggressive sexual offenders, so comparison with rapists is limited. Differences between different types of sex offenders are important.
- (c) the authors acknowledge that their enquiries were directed to exposure to erotica rather than pornography.

As originally presented to the U.S. Commission,<sup>(12)</sup> this study has been interpreted as showing that the sex offenders actually had less experience with pornography in adolescence than the controls. However, the selection of the sample, its size, and the bias in selection have all been criticized by Cline<sup>(13)</sup> and by Eysenck and Nias<sup>(14)</sup> who note that while offenders rarely acted out pornographic fantasies precisely there was nonetheless a majority of subjects who claimed to have tried out what they had seen depicted.

In the more extended report, published in 1972, Goldstein and Kant acknowledge, inter alia, that

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- 12 Goldstein, M.J., Kant, H.S., Judd, L.L., Rice, C.J. and Green, R. Exposure to pornography and sexual behavior in deviant and normal groups. Technical Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography Vol. VII, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Govt. Printing Office, 1971.
  - 13 Cline, V.B. (Ed.). Where do you draw the line? Provo, Utah. Brigham Young U.P., 1974.
  - 14 Eysenck, H.J. and Nias, D.B. Sex, Violence and the Media, Adelaide, Mary Martin Books, 1978.

"the rapists developed a stronger interest in erotica, at least of a specific type, than any other groups."<sup>(15)</sup>

They also note the linkage between sex and aggression in provoking a response based on a prior disposition

"... so we must consider that sex offenders are highly receptive to suggestions of sexual behavior congruent with their previously formed desires and will interpret the material at hand to fit their needs. It is true, however, that while few, if any, sex offenders suggest that erotica played a role in the commission of sex crimes, stimuli expressing brutality, with or without concomitant sexual behavior, were often mentioned as disturbing, by rapists in particular."<sup>(16)</sup>

There had also been an earlier study by Gebhard et al<sup>(17)</sup> which had reached the conclusion that sex offenders were no different from non-sex offenders in relation to their possession of, or response to, pornography.

Again the findings cannot be readily extrapolated to the situation existing in the seventies. Their extensive study of 1356 sex offenders, while published in 1965, was based on data collection principally "between 1941 and 1945 ... and between 1953 and 1955". The subjects were typically born in the 1920s, so that their exposure to "pornography" cannot be compared with present circumstances. This study too has been critiqued by Eysenck and Nias, who comment on numerous limitations in its findings and remark

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15 Goldstein, M.J. and Kant, H.S. Op.cit., p.78.

16 Op.cit., p.109.

17 Gebhard, P.H., Gagnon, J.H., Pomeroy, W.B. and Christenson, C.V.  
Sex Offenders: An analysis of types. London: Heinemann, 1965.



"The failure to find enhanced interest in pornography for the average sex offender is often stressed as the main outcome of this study. But such a failure is hardly surprising...." (18)

A very much smaller study reported to the American Commission by Thornberry and Silverman<sup>(19)</sup> also found no association between the use of pornography, and the sex crimes for which juvenile offenders were charged.

Their study followed the lead given by some professionals in the field who expressed a conviction of a link between offences and the use of pornography. They sifted retrospectively through the files of referrals to the Neuropsychiatric Division of a large urban municipal court in Philadelphia. After examining 436 records they concluded that

"there was absolutely no mention of pornography or erotica in any of the materials contained in the case records of any of these 436 juveniles. It is clear that the neuropsychiatric staff did not systematically enquire into this area..." (20)

This study suffers not only from the well-known hazard of seeking specific information retrospectively from case-records, when, as the authors note, the matter under investigation was not routinely explored. It also suffers in that, while there were 436 reports altogether 92% "were classified as having no sex implication." Only 4% (17) were "classified as sex specific offenses". This can scarcely be taken as a serious contribution to the evidence on the matter.

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18 Op.cit., p.114.

19 Thornberry, T.P. and Silverman, R.A. Exposure to pornography and juvenile delinquency: The relationship as indicated by juvenile court records. Technical Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography, Vol. I, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Govt. Printing Office, 1957.

20 Op.cit., p.178.

Also presented to the U.S. Commission were the findings of Johnson, Kupperstein and Peters on 47 white male sex offenders, who were on probation and receiving psychotherapy from one of the authors. They are themselves appropriately cautious about their failure to find differences between sex-offender and non-offender groups. They summarise their report by saying that their report had

"important limitations. Perhaps the most important of these is the size of the sex offender sample (N = 47). As such, statistical tests were not performed and particular findings were not interpreted as resolving the critical questions in this area."<sup>(21)</sup>

By contrast with such reassuring results, a series of research papers have appeared in recent years which have increased the theoretical basis for supposing that a positive link might be found in some individuals. (This evidence will be summarised below).

For the present study it was therefore deemed necessary to have

- (a) an objective and established questionnaire designed to investigate the specific areas of exposure to pornography, and concomitant behaviour. The Goldstein and Kant questionnaire was selected as suitable.
- (b) an interviewer able to administer the questionnaire to subjects and controls in such a way that experimenter bias could be eliminated. A psychology graduate was available for this purpose.

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21 Johnson, W.T., Kupperstein, L.R. and Peters, J.J. Sex offenders experience with erotica. Technical Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography, Vol. VII, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Govt. Printing Office, 1971.

- (c) sufficient subjects to obtain both an experimental and control group. In order to offset the limitations of earlier studies, the aim was to obtain recent offenders of an age such that their teenage development had occurred in the period during which pornography was becoming available in Australia - hence, an age range of 17-25 was considered ideal.
- (d) preliminary information from relevant authorities on who might have corroborative evidence of the involvement of pornography in reported offences.
- (e) documented evidence of specific cases where particular crimes were linked directly to access to pornographic materials of some kind.

#### Outcome

The planned investigation as originally conceived had to be abandoned. The requirements of (a) and (b) above were met, but many difficulties were encountered in relation to (c). These problems can best be described together with comment about initial enquiries from relevant authorities, i.e. item (d).

An initial approach was made to the S.A. Police Force in view of their first-hand involvement with sex offenders sometimes at the scene of the offence and in questioning. In addition, the recent appointment to the police of research staff indicates the current interest which exists in pursuing research there.

Police to whom I spoke were helpful and expressed an interest in what I was seeking to explore. As an anecdotal source of information, experienced members of the Vice Squad could recall individual instances when sex offenders were found to have pornography in their possession.

Scientifically, however, such information is useless since there is no indication from this what if any relationship exists, and whether

such possession is simply something that would be found with any random sample from the same population. There is a danger of obtaining a false positive, or Type I, error.

I had hoped it might be possible to sift retrospectively through police files to see if there was mention of pornography in the circumstances surrounding offences, as recorded by investigating officers. This was the approach used by Thornberry and Silverman noted above. However, I was advised this approach would be abortive, since only that evidence which is relevant to prosecution is sought by the police. Since the presence of pornography would be deemed irrelevant, it would only be fortuitous if any record were turned up in files. Clearly this is unsatisfactory for scientific purposes, generating a false negative, or Type II, error.

I turned my attention to the Department of Correctional Services. In the light of many reports of sex offenders, and evidence of a substantial number of convictions, a population resident within the prisons of the State seemed worth studying.

My discussions with one of the psychiatrists of the Correctional Services indicated two problems, especially if one was wishing to major on offenders convicted of rape. Firstly, I was advised that the actual number of offenders available for study was so limited that a sample and control group sufficient for statistical analysis would not be forthcoming. Secondly, an important observation was that those offenders currently serving a sentence for rape are not at all representative of the run of rapists brought before the courts. Typically they are older, recidivists and with a highly atypical view both of sexuality and sexual stimuli. They represent the 'hard-core' of rapists for whom, I was assured, pornography would have played little part in their offences. This group then is in contrast to the more typical younger, first offender for whom pornography may play a role in disinhibition.

These comments were, in my view, well-placed. It is very likely that the same could have been said of the incarcerated older offenders who formed the subjects of the studies by Gebhard et al. and Goldstein and Kant, referred to above. My colleague suggested that to get nearer to the problem group it would be wise to contact the Department of Community Welfare.

I submitted a detailed research proposal to the research committee of the Department of Community Welfare and personally discussed the proposal with the committee. Following a number of procedural and ethical questions, the submission was resubmitted for further consideration. Eventually after several months, the proposal was turned down. Firstly, it was stated that the Department has insufficient offenders in care for me to be able to obtain a satisfactory sample in the age-range specified. Secondly, there were ethical doubts about the possible impact on inmates of being asked questions about sexuality and pornography.

This difficulty over obtaining access to a sufficient number of subjects came as a surprise in view of the numbers of offenders coming before the courts, both adult and juvenile. It arises from current policies which are resulting in a greatly reduced residential population. So, for example, the S.A. Police Commissioner's Report for the year 1975-76 records that 97 juvenile sex offenders, all males, were dealt with by the police of whom only 6 subsequently came under government control (5 for rape and 1 for indecent assault). Even if this group were numerically large, it clearly represents a biased sample of those apprehended, and hence makes study unrepresentative.

#### Anecdotal Evidence

The above abortive study was planned in the context of a parallel attempt to collect specific examples of reports where sex crimes had been thought related in some way to relevant stimulus material, sexual or

aggressive. Particular attention was to be devoted to obtaining Australian examples. It was hoped that common themes might emerge to suggest explanatory hypotheses, and that fuller statements than the superficiality of Press reports might be forthcoming.

Neither hope has been fulfilled. In the meantime, however, theoretical and experimental work has been appearing in the professional literature which makes it less necessary to establish that a positive association exists. In the light of the evidence to be summarised below, the question now deserving study is not "is there a link?" but "what is the nature of the relationship?"

The following represents an account of some of the clearer leads, indicating a link between sex-crimes and the use of stimulating materials.

#### The United States

A proposal was made to the U.S. Presidential Commission to investigate the "relationship of obscenity to crime and other antisocial behavior". This proposal, put forward by Commissioner C.H. Keating Jr. included the fullest record currently available in the literature of examples based on U.S. police files of links between pornography and sex-crimes. Some 60 specific cases are documented<sup>(22)</sup> together with many indications from law enforcement officers that they were aware of many more such cases.

Since that time many other examples have been reported, including links with major films on regular circuits such as "The Exorcist" and "A Clockwork Orange".

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22 Keating, C.H. Exhibit "C" in U.S. Commission on Obscenity and Pornography, op.cit., pp.632-654.

A recent book cites a case from Cleveland, Ohio:

"Suspect in Court denies killing girl -

John Albert Johnson, 24, stood emotionless yesterday as municipal Judge Richard F. Matia read charges of rape, kidnapping and murder against him in the death of 8 year old Melissa Desiree Hinke. Judge Matia read each charge, explaining each time Johnson's constitutional rights. Three times Johnson said, "Not guilty". He had been in custody since Friday night, about 12 hours before a 16 year old boy found Melissa's battered corpse in a wooded ravine in Cleveland Metroparks Rocky River Reservation. Deputy Coroner Lester Adelson said yesterday he could not isolate the exact cause of the child's death. She had been beaten, stabbed repeatedly, choked and raped before she died, he said. The coroner's office is trying to determine the time of death. During a lie-detector test Saturday, Johnson reportedly told police he had been in a Lorain Ave. adult bookstore earlier Thursday. Police said he had magazines portraying nude children in his possession."<sup>(23)</sup>

The same book refers to cases in Minnesota:

"Police in Duluth, Minnesota, discovered two cases, one involving the sexual assault of a baby-sitter by a man obsessed after seeing an X-rated movie which included a rape scene, the other involving the attempted rape of three girl hitchhikers by a man who admitted to being goaded by pornography viewed in an 'adult' bookstore. They also reported an increase in juvenile sex crimes in which

pornography served as a model. A 12 year old boy was caught experimenting sexually with two 6 year old girls with the pages of a porno magazine (belonging to the girls' father) opened to color photos depicting sexual activities among adults." (24)

Also in 1977, Dr. Judianne Densen-Gerber attracted international attention to the growing market in child pornography. As president of Odyssey House, New York, she has campaigned against this exploitation for some years. When she was visiting Rockingham County, New Hampshire, the local sherriff (Ira H. Cook) said that he knew of at least 27 cases of incest in which pornography had been the instigating factor. (25)

#### Canada

Public concern has developed in Canada later than the U.S., but it was strongly focussed by the crimes of Robert Poulin of Ottawa in 1977: "Ottawa's Robert Poulin torture-murder-rape case provided a classic example of a young 16 year old boy, who first sampled soft-core porn. As many do, he moved on to hard-core, sadistic, perverted materials, becoming addicted to porn. Reading hundreds of his sadistic porno magazines, lead him to terrible fantasies of rape and perversions. His Inquest diaries revealed that eventually these fantasies controlled him, until, as other porno addicts have done, he was compelled to translate them into terrifying reality. Luring a 17 year old girl to his home, and using his bondage materials, and his torture magazines as a guide, he tortured, stabbed and raped her. At the Inquest, the Coroner said, 'I hope she died early in the day so she did not have to endure the atrocities'." (26)

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24 Op.cit., p.24

25 Quoted in Morality in Media, 1977, 16, 7, 3.

26 Personal communication from a Canadian journalist (B. Eagles), 1977.



The Women's Movement in Canada has begun to voice its objections to the messages of pornography and the attacks which follow.

"Since pornography is basically sexual aggression toward women, it seems inevitable that the logical consequence of it would be rape, and it is reasonable to expect rape sometimes to end in death. Gang assaults tend to be particularly vicious. In sexual crimes against women pornographic fantasies become reality. Winston Mosely, the New York murderer of Kitty Genovese, raped her while she lay dying of the stab wounds inflicted by him because, as he later told the police, he liked his women quiet. Like the women in porno pictures. Here in British Columbia, the body of a 9 year old girl was found last year tied to a tree in a forest near Mission. She had been sexually molested and strangled by a 34 year old man. It is a mistake to dismiss men like Mosely and the Mission girl's killer as deviant and mentally disturbed. Mentally disturbed they may be, but not deviant. The expression of one's disturbance is to a large extent determined by one's culture, and these men are very much in tune with our culture. There is a connection between these killers and Roger Vadim who made the film Charlotte in which a woman is strangled by a man during sexual intercourse. One is a creator or producer in celluloid of a fantasy that the others act out in reality. Our fantasies define us as much as our acts and each aspect of us can be seen in the other."<sup>(27)</sup>

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27 From Kinesis, (Vancouver Status of Women magazine), 1977, 6, 6, 14.

England

As long ago as 1973, the Daily Telegraph carried the headline "Boy killer's mind was affected by pornography" referring to a 16 year old youth who killed a 43 year old mother. (28)

Public horror was focussed in England by the case of the "Cambridge Rapist" which received extensive newspaper coverage. The essence of the case is contained in this excerpt:

"British Rapist Blames Porn for Aberration (AP) -  
Norwich, England - Sentenced to life imprisonment Friday, the hooded rapist of Cambridge said pornographic films drove him to commit the crimes. 'It was like living in hell; in other words, I just had to do something.' Peter Samuel Cook was given seven concurrent sentences of life imprisonment at Norwich Crown Court. Cook, 47, a truck driver who is 5 feet, 4 inches tall, admitted raping six girls and committing sodomy against a seventh in the university city of Cambridge. He was arrested June 8 while bicycling disguised in women's clothing. A bag he carried contained a hood with the word 'rapist' stitched on it, skeleton keys to enter homes and rooms, wigs and various disguises, and a knife." (29)

It is sometimes argued that, in such cases, the accused relates his offences to pornography in order to mitigate the sentence. That suggestion does not apply in the more recent case of 3 youths of whom the presiding judge said:

"To describe your conduct as having behaved as animals would be an insult to animals."

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28 Daily Telegraph. London, 18.5.73.

29 See Gallagher, op.cit., pp.24-25.

In a commentary on this case, David Holbrook wrote that:  
"Three youths this week were sentenced to long periods of detention for the most appalling act of rape against a 14 year old schoolgirl. The court was told that pornographic material was found in the room of one of them, showing the kind of acts they inflicted on their victim." (30)

In the same account he referred to evidence presented to the Williams Committee on Obscenity and Film Censorship:

"I have been sending the Williams Committee some material as 'evidence'. There are a number of important psychological studies which indicate the dangers of pornography. One is the case history of a butcher's boy in Germany who shot at a prostitute. He used to inflame himself with pornography before he went out on his escapades. His therapists tried to get him to read good books, to rescue him from his terrible fantasies. Of course, he was deeply disturbed, and his real problems had to do with fear of death. But his is a clear case of someone who could well be triggered off by pornography to commit rape and sexual murder. And there are many like him. Then I have a large file of press cuttings. Time after time in court, lawyers report that a boy's mind has been affected by pornography or that pornography has led to sexual crime. People answering sex contact advertisements have been hurt and tortured, men coming out of films like *The Exorcist* have assaulted little girls, boys coming out of other films have dressed up like the characters and have committed criminal acts."

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30. Holbrook, D. — Can anyone still say porn does no harm? Daily Mail, London, 18.7.77.

Only a month before that trial, a report from Yorkshire indicated a rather similar influence:

"A boy who raped a 12 year old girl was warned by a judge this week to stop reading dirty books. Mr. Justice Jupp told the 15 year old youth 'Take my advice ... never look at a pornographic book again in your life. It leads to crime. Again and again I've heard cases where that has been the excuse.' The boy, of Yorkshire, was ordered to be detained for three years 'at a place the Home Secretary thought fit.' Bishop admitted grabbing and raping the girl as she was on her way to school. He said he had been excited by pornographic magazines. Mr. Sidney Levine, defending, said: 'The boy said he found the magazines, which contained principally photographs and some reading matter, a week before the rape'. "(31)

During the time when the Williams Committee was meeting in London, Dr. A. Hyatt Williams was among those who gave evidence. He was reported in a medical journal:

"Serious crimes have been committed as a result of exposure to pornography, assures Dr. A. Hyatt Williams, consultant psychiatrist at the Adolescent Department, Tavistock Clinic, in a public statement. In his clinical work, Dr. Williams reports, he has encountered a number of instances in which exposure to pornographic pressure has unbalanced a flimsy psychological adjustment. In a small number of those cases, he adds, serious crimes have been committed after exposure to pornographic pictures and other material ... The question, thus, is whether a ban on pornography would be a reasonable social restriction onall for the protection of the vulnerable and immature." (32)

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31 The News, Adelaide, 26.6.77.

32 Report in Doctor, 13.1.77.

Most reports emphasise the use of pornography and sex-crimes committed by men. An unusual and bizarre exception was the case of Joyce McKinney, a 27 year old woman, who kidnapped a Mormon missionary with whom she was infatuated.

She appeared in the Epsom Magistrates Court, Surrey, and the case was reported fully in Australia:

"When British detectives first questioned Joyce over allegations that she had chained Kirk Anderson to a bed and had given him oral sex, they saw only a weeping, lovelorn girl. But investigations in America have revealed her strange lifestyle in Hollywood - where she says she fled to escape the Mormons after her affair with Kirk ended. The detectives learnt with growing disbelief of her massive collection of pornographic books, of her visits to 'skin flick' movies - and even live sex shows. It was Hollywood with its larger than life characters which undoubtedly inspired Joyce's incredible plan to 'cure Kirk of his sexual hangups'. Her aim was to give Kirk a sexual experience he would never forget. 'She started building up a collection of porno books and I had to take her to porno movies because she wanted to examine sex techniques. I refused to go to private clubs where there was live sex on stage so Joyce would go by herself. She bought specialised books on bondage and oral sex - our apartment was littered with them'." (33)

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33 Sunday Mail, Adelaide, 18.5.78.

### Australia

In the period since the administration of censorship was liberalised (mid 1970) a number of events similar to those overseas have received coverage in the press. They have done so not because they are representative but because of their news value. As with police records, it is likely that many serious crimes have been in some way linked with pornography but no mention has been made of the association, either because it was deemed irrelevant, or because it was unknown.

Hence these examples serve only as illustrations that a positive link can and does occur. They are as unrepresentative from a scientific viewpoint as the data obtained from surveys of highly selected populations of criminals.

One of the clearest examples of an offence with strong imitative characteristics was associated with the film 'A Clockwork Orange' screening in Victoria in 1973. In March of that year an offence was committed in East Kew which led to a court case in Melbourne in July. The judge commented about links with the film:

"Melbourne - A judge said yesterday it was difficult to sentence a young rapist on a community which allowed crime to be portrayed as pleasurable. And he released the youth concerned on a \$1,000, seven-year good behaviour bond. Judge Arthur Adams was told in the County Court the rapist has been influenced by characters in the film 'Clockwork Orange'. He said 'This picture has been described by judges all over the English-speaking world as a cause triggering young men to violence. But the community accepts it. This community is prepared to let pictures depicting violence, rape, sex and all the rest of it poison the minds of the young. Then it expects judges to forget that the community is so free-thinking and restless of censorship.' Judge Adams was sentencing Anthony

Mavronitis, 17, storeman, of Hawthorn, who pleaded guilty of having raped a 16 year old girl at East Kew on March 23. Mr. A. Graham, for Mavronitis, said the youth had worn his hair in the style of the 'Droogs' in Clockwork Orange. Judge Adams said 'This is a shocking case and the reference to Clockwork Orange does not help the matter much. I have the unpleasant task of trying to equate the crime in a community which allows crime to be portrayed as something pleasurable and entertaining'." (34)

This case may have had some impact on a further case in the same area in which the imitative characteristics were still more convincing. Publicity to the above case recurred in July 1973. It was early August when the police were searching for a youth thought to be in his early twenties who had made three attacks in the Melbourne suburbs of Murrumbeena, Elsternwick and Brighton.

"Police are searching for a sex attacker who has imitated a rapist from the movie, A Clockwork Orange. He attacked three 16 year old girls in their homes, bound and gagged them, and cut their clothes off with a pair of scissors. Then he indecently assaulted them. A judge, sentencing a 17 year old youth for rape, last week criticised A Clockwork Orange. Judge Arthur Adams said in Melbourne County Court: 'This picture has been described by judges all over the English speaking world as a cause triggering young men to violence.' In a Clockwork Orange, a group of youths truss a girl, cut off her clothes then rape her." (35)

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34 Daily Telegraph, London, 17.7.73.

35 Melbourne Truth, 4.8.73.

The triggering influence of specific films was also suggested in a case heard before Mr. Justice Slattery in Sydney in 1974:

"A man who raped an 18 year old mother after seeing two sex films earlier in the day was jailed for eight years in Sydney yesterday. George Franciscos, 29, laborer, of Marrickville, Sydney, pleaded guilty in Central Criminal Court to raping the woman on July 10 and to indecently assaulting her. Mr. Justice Slattery sentenced him to eight years for rape and a year, to be served concurrently, for indecent assault. He set a non-parole period to expire on May 1 1977. On the day of the rape Franciscos had seen the films *Massage Parlor* and *Snow White and the Seven Perverts*, the judge said. Franciscos had known the woman and her husband for more than four years. Later that evening he drove to her house where he told her her husband had been injured in an accident with a semi-trailer and was in hospital at Casula. When Franciscos halted his car in a lonely spot the woman, who had her baby daughter with her, became suspicious. She tried to run away but he chased her and threatened to kill the baby if she would not go with him. He took her to a lonely area and raped her. Mr. Justice Slattery said that according to the psychiatric report Franciscos' conduct was completely inexplicable. In a callous and disgusting manner he had kept the woman virtually subject to his control for nearly eight hours." (36)



Such attacks, which clearly involve a cognitive factor and planning raise the question whether such offences should be assumed to be "crimes of passion". If indeed, a style of assault is developing which involves rational planning (as seen also in the Ingham 'train' rapes in Queensland<sup>(37)</sup>), then the question of sentencing procedures is also raised. It is commonly argued that heavy sentences will not deter crimes of passion.<sup>(38)</sup> The current increase in reported offences possibly includes many in which sudden impulse is not the major factor.

On the same day Judge Slattery was hearing the above case, another one involving pornographic literature read by a young Aborigine was being heard in an adjacent court and then reported in the same paper:

"A young Aboriginal's actions in committing rape had been triggered by pornographic literature, a judge said yesterday. Mr. Justice O'Brien made the comment in Central Criminal Court when sentencing Eric James Murray, 27, laborer, of no fixed address, to seven years jail for raping a 12 year old girl near Casino on the N.S.W. north coast on August 13. The judge referred to evidence of two psychiatrists who said Murray's actions had been influenced by pornographic literature. One of the books found in the possession of Murray after his arrest was Fanny Hill. Mr. Justice O'Brien also quoted a Crown prosecutor, Mr. V.R. Wallace, as having said: 'Despite what psychiatrists and other people say, the danger of pornographic material becomes more apparent to those of us who deal with these crimes.' The judge said he completely agreed with this statement. He said that the change in Murray's life from that

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37 See The National Times, November 29 - December 4, 1976, pp.10-14, and June 20-25, 1977, pp.5-9.

38 See e.g. Chief Justice Bray of the S.A. Court reported in The News, Adelaide, 19.1.78.

of 'a lonely hitchhiker to a rapist was probably triggered by sexual excitement aroused by this literature'. Earlier the senior psychiatrist at Long Bay Jail, Dr. E. Fischer, in answer to Mr. E. Miles, solicitor for Murray, said the reading of pornographic literature could have emotionally precipitated Murray's course of behavior. Another psychiatrist, Dr. I.A. Listwan, also considered the pornographic literature was the triggering factor in Murray's behavior.<sup>(39)</sup>

The impact of widely screened films gains public attention perhaps because others can more readily recognise the links with offences than those occurring with literature unknown to most people. Hence the press have given extensive coverage to events like the 'Qantas hoax' case of extortion in Sydney inspired by the film 'Doomsday Flight' and the kidnap of a teacher and six children from a Victorian school following the screening of the psychopathic killer sequence in 'Dirty Harry'.

Reports of such events were not uncommon for two or three years after 'R' films were introduced in Australia. In Brisbane a rapist said he saw three 'R' films ('Perfumed Garden', 'Bedroom Mazurka' and 'Ideal Marriage') before going out and committing rape. In this case the response does not have the closely imitative properties of the 'Clockwork Orange' cases, and may be more a function of sexual arousal and generalised disinhibition postulated by Malamuth et. al.<sup>(40)</sup>

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39 The Australian, 30.11.74.

40 Malamuth, N.M., Feshbach, S., and Jaffe, Y. Sexual arousal and aggression: Recent experiments and theoretical issues. Journal of Social Issues, 1977, 33, 2, 110-113.

The possibility that the change of policies on censorship in Australia had an initial powerful impact on marginally adjusted people is suggested by the case of a lecturer from Melbourne who began acting out his fantasies from 1972 after previously containing them:

"Melbourne - A university lecturer who admitted to raping a girl student, had a sexual fantasy about tying up women and raping them, the County Court was told yesterday.

Brian Alla Elkner, 33, of Hampton, a Melbourne suburb, was sentenced to a total of 10 years' jail on charges involving attacks on girls and young women in their homes between April, 1972, and last May. Elkner, a senior lecturer in Melbourne University arts faculty, had pleaded guilty to one charge of rape, one charge of assault with intent to rape, three counts of indecent assault and one of common assault. Mr. John Phillips, defending, told the court all the victims were tied up and several were also gagged, in each incident, a knife was involved. A psychiatrist, Dr. L. Marinovich, who saw Elkner after he had been arrested, told the court Elkner had described a fantasy life toward sexual activity. 'He gets sexual arousal at the prospect of tying a girl up and raping her', he said. 'He has had this sexual fantasy about tying up women and raping them since his late teens, but only in the last couple of years has he carried them out'." (41)

A more specific accumulative effect appears to have occurred in another case involving "The Exorcist" where an extraordinary recurrent exposure to the film was described:

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41 Daily Telegraph, London, 19.10.74.

"A young man's seeing the film, The Exorcist, 15 times might help understanding of the murder of his girlfriend, a police prosecutor said today. The court was told that the girl, Lynette Louise Corbett, 22, had her arms slashed 26 times. At Parramatta Court of Petty Sessions today, John Nunn, 19, a storeman, was charged with murdering her at Harris Park on February 19 last year. Nunn's counsel, Mr. Greg Cusack had objected to the film-going reference. He said it was irrelevant. But Mr. G. McLennan, SM, allowed the evidence, which was part of an alleged record of interview with Nunn conducted by Sgt. Alan Riley, of Parramatta. Questioned by Police Prosecutor, Sgt. Colin Spalding, Sgt. Riley said Nunn had told him his interests were movies, and that he had seen The Exorcist 15 times."<sup>(42)</sup>

In the more recent past there have been very few cases of such links reported in the Australian press. It might be tempting to conclude that, after the first impact, the effect has been dissipated and the danger past.

The evidence here is far too scattered and incomplete to support that conclusion, or for that matter any other. It is possible, since the press thrives on novelty, that such cases simply fail to attract attention as they did. It is also conceivable that constant exposure to many experiences of pornography, violence and sexual explicitness, have made it unlikely that specific triggers will often manifest themselves. The effects may become cumulative and merely be observed as a quantum shift upwards in the level of attacks being reported.

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42 The Sun, Sydney, 19.7.77.

In South Australia there has been a notable increase in reports of rape and other serious sexual offences, and yet press publicity has made little reference to possible involvement with pornographic literature and films. A number of cases coming before the courts read as if they have been stimulated by exposure to pornography and in general terms the changing nature of sexual attacks was noted by Superintendent McAulay of the Police Crime Intelligence Unit in South Australia. He noted that while 44% of convicted rapists were under 21 in 1969-70, this had risen to 62% by 1975-76. He added:

"Furthermore, rapes are becoming more violent. The offenders are using more force. And we have noticed rapists are subjecting women to indecent acts far more than before."<sup>(43)</sup>

Shortly before that, in response to public concern over the increase of rape reports, an Adelaide psychologist, Mr. A.E. Whitford, was quoted in the same paper:

"The wide availability of books and magazines about sex must be one of the causes of the increasing incidence of rape in S.A., says an Adelaide psychologist. 'As far as I can see, there are three main causes of the increase in rapes, and the availability of information about sex is one', said Mr. A.E. Whitford. 'There is a good side to this - as restrictions on sexual information break down, ignorance about sex disappears. Unfortunately, there is a fringe element of people who indulge in abnormal activities such as rape, and the books and magazines must have some effect on them'."

Cases reported in the press have involved circumstances in which the involvement of pornography is a strong assumption without being confirmed. A Sydney example is of this type:

"The prisoner admits that his purpose in bringing the girl to Sydney and detaining her in horrible and degrading conditions was the purpose of sexual gratification' Mr. Justice Cross said. Waters had detained the girl by putting handcuffs on her wrists and chains around her legs. He had also put a type of harness over the girl's head and placed a rubber ball in her mouth. The offences would have been outrageous if the girl were adult and normal, but the girl, 15, was mentally retarded with a mental age of between six and 10. The girl had been subjected to sexual indignities of a shocking kind and had received serious internal injuries." (44)

In South Australia, most coverage of the subject has been given by the evening paper, *The News*, and the Sunday paper, *The Sunday Mail*. Apart from one major feature, the *Advertiser* has largely avoided the involvement of pornography apart from its letters column. One may raise the question of editorial policy in this regard in the light of the fact that the *Advertiser* group also includes *The Griffin Press*, which has been a major producer of cheap pornographic novels in recent years.

My own professional involvement with a case of rape and attempted murder revealed a very close link between the offences and the offender's preoccupation with a highly specific type of sadistic pornography, which generated a high level of arousal in him. Although my report to the court mentioned this relationship, no public attention was given to it.

More recently, another case came to my attention informally and I was granted permission to quote the following facts by the Director of the Offenders Aid and Rehabilitation Services (Mr. R.J. Kidney), sent to me in May 1978.

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44 The Advertiser, Adelaide, 5.10.78.

"I wish to submit the following facts concerning an offender (a young man in his early twenties) who was recently resident in one of our Post Release Hostels:-

This young man was cared for in a private home for some weeks prior to admission to the Hostel which gave us access to his behaviour during that period of time. The report on his behaviour pattern is as follows:-

This person had an unusual pre-occupation with sexual literature, films and tapes. Pornographic magazines were found in his room from time to time and women's under-clothing was found in his room after he left the house.

Whilst he was resident in the Post Release Hostel he was approached by Welfare Staff on two occasions concerning pornographic material in his room. He was asked to destroy it but he failed to do so.

This person was recently charged with an offence of rape on a woman much older than himself: he is now awaiting sentence."

Since that time (in November, 1978), I have also become aware of a man arrested for incest against his 9 year old daughter. On arresting him, police found over 200 pornographic magazines at his home, many of them featuring child pornography. This case has yet to be reported publicly as it has not yet come to trial.

#### Recent theories based on research

The evidence since 1970 on the effects of erotica and pornography, while still not extensive, is accumulating to give a very different picture from the earlier benign interpretation of the Presidential Commission. Several series of experimental studies have been reported which, while including areas of difference, generally converge on the view that sexual arousal and aggression can often be closely and positively linked.

As experiments have repeatedly shown a positive association between exposure to erotic stimuli and the tendency to express aggression against others, at least five theoretical explanations have been advanced over the decade. The differences have been in their complexity of explanation of paradoxical results, as well as arising from the diversity of experimental situations used.

Firstly, a simple arousal theory was advanced in the context of an experimental situation in which male volunteer subjects were given the opportunity to administer shocks to someone who had provoked them. For example, Meyer<sup>(45)</sup> found that those who saw an erotic film after provocation were willing to administer stronger shocks than those who viewed a neutral film.

A series of studies by Zillman and his colleagues has led to a modification of that theory in favor of a two-factor excitation-transfer theory.<sup>(46,47)</sup> This model offers an explanation of increased aggression following sexual arousal by people who have been previously angered experimentally. This model has been more recently found

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45 Meyer, T.P. The effects of sexually arousing and violent films on aggressive behavior. The Journal of Sex Research, 1972, 8, 324-331.

46 Tannenbaum, P.J. and Zillmann, D. Emotional arousal in the facilitation of aggression through communication. In Berkowitz (Ed.), Advances in Experimental Social Psychology (Vol. 8), N.Y.: Academic Press, 1975.

47 Zillman, D., Hoyt, J.L. and Day, K.D. Strength and duration of the effect of aggressive, violent and erotic communications on subsequent aggressive behavior. Communication Research, 1974, 1, 286-306.



applicable to women who when erotically aroused were willing to deliver noxious stimuli to other women.<sup>(48)</sup> It was found that erotic stimuli were more likely to generate noxious responses than the aggressive stimuli used, though this may be because the choice to aggressive stimulus material was not altogether appropriate for women.

A further consideration in the nature of the erotic stimuli is raised by the studies by Baron.<sup>(49)</sup> His evidence led to the view that mildly erotic stimulation may lead to a reduced likelihood of expressing aggression, while more sexually arousing material could facilitate aggression. That is, the lesser levels of erotic stimulation might be associated with positive responses of tenderness and affection (incompatible with aggression) with more intensely erotic materials removing inhibitions and leading to the expression of aggression. This relationship has been explored further<sup>(50)</sup> to determine whether there might be a still further increment with exposure to still more erotic materials.

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- 48 Cantor, J.R., Zillmann, D. and Einsiedel, E.F. Remale responses to provocation after exposure to aggressive and erotic films. Communication Research, 1978, 5, 4, 395-411.
- 49 Baron, R.A. The aggression inhibiting influence of heightened sexual arousal. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1974, 30, 318-322.
- 50 Baron, R.A. and Bell, P.A. Sexual arousal and aggression by males: Effects of type of erotic stimuli and prior provocation. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1977, 35, 2, 79-87.

Baron and Bell did not find this increase, but acknowledge this is probably because they did not use materials of a more pornographic kind, whereas the expected increment was found when such materials were used by Jaffe et al. (51) This model, then, uses the magnitude of sexual arousal as the determinant of sexual aggression and this is proposed regardless of subjects being previously made angry or not. Hence the earlier simple arousal theory is found to be inadequate to explain results where subjects are not first provoked.

A fourth model, a variant of that suggested by Baron's studies, is related to work by Donnerstein. Still invoking the concept of arousal, Donnerstein, Donnerstein and Evans (52) have suggested that mildly erotic stimuli may serve as distractors away from aggressive responses while more strongly arousing stimuli generate a higher degree of arousal with physiological properties similar to those experienced in states of anger and thereby facilitating aggression. In line with this view, Donnerstein presented a paper to the American Psychological Association Conference in 1978, reporting increased aggression in subjects exposed to films including sex and violence.

In reviewing such studies and seeking a coherent explanation for diverse findings, Eysenck and Nias in 1978 have commented that:

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- 51 Jaffe, Y., Malamuth, N., Feingold, J. and Feshbach, S. Sexual arousal and behavioral aggression. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1974, 30, 759-764.
- 52 Donnerstein, E., Donnerstein, M., and Evans, R. Erotic stimuli and aggression: Facilitation or inhibition. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1975, 32, 237-244.

"it appears that mild forms of erotica have tended to inhibit aggression while more explicit or hard-core material has acted to facilitate it. This makes sense in terms of the different mood states generated by the two types of material. Mild erotica involving aesthetically pleasing poses, or tender and affectionate lovemaking, might be expected to give rise to pleasurable feelings which would appear to be incompatible with the expression of aggression. Explicit or 'hard-core' material, on the other hand, might be expected to induce unpleasant feelings along with arousal which would be compatible with aggression."<sup>(53)</sup>

Since that review, a further model has been proposed by Feshbach and Malamuth<sup>(54)</sup> seeking to integrate the evidence of the previously mentioned work together with their own work. They propose a 'shared taboo' theory which takes account of the interaction between sex and aggression of a biological kind and the learned links which are even more important at least in western culture.

Their research has largely been conducted on university students, both male and female, often using the well-established paradigm of confederates who are ostensibly given shocks as punishment, either before or after the subject is exposed to erotic or aggressive stimulation. They have emphasised a distinction between hostile aggression (which is commonly incompatible with sexual arousal) and self-assertive aggression which brings about a reduction of inhibition and facilitates sexual expression.<sup>(55)</sup> They also make important

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53 Eysenck, H.J. and Nias, D.K. Op.cit., p.174.

54 Feshbach, S. and Malamuth, N. Sex and Aggression: Proving the Link. Psychology Today, 1978, 12, 6, 111-122.

55 Malamuth, N.M., Feshbach, S. and Jaffe, Y. Sexual arousal and aggression: Recent experiments and theoretical issues. Journal of Social Issues, 1977, 33, 2, 110-133.

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SOCIAL AND PERSONAL IMPACT OF  
PORNOGRAPHY

FINAL REPORT

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sity of South  
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Social and Personal Impact of Pornography

- Final Report

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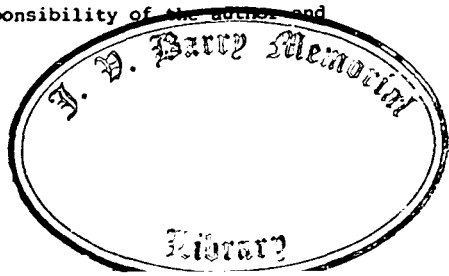
This report describes an attempt to obtain evidence from individuals convicted of sex offences regarding their prior involvement with pornography. The pitfalls and problems involved are described in the context of previous research reports which have tried to do the same.

As background to this planned study, evidence was accumulated, and described here, of well publicised examples of links between exposure to powerful media experiences and subsequent involvement in sex-related offences. Difficulties in drawing conclusions from such sources are noted.

Finally, the body of research evidence which has been accumulating on the linkage between sex and aggression is summarised and the integrative approach recently advanced by Feshbach and Malamuth favoured for its resolution of some of the earlier conflicts in the evidence. Further lines of study which arise from this work are noted.

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## Introduction

It has been a matter of debate for some years whether increased availability of explicit erotic materials would have adverse or beneficial social consequences. Advocates of a liberal approach to censorship have argued for reduced prohibitions for sexual materials while at the same time adopting a more cautious approach to presentations of violence. On the other hand, the conservative lobby has argued for a retention of controls over the presentation of sexual themes believing that removal of restraints would lead to anti-social sexual acts and a decline in standards of sexual morality.

The liberal view received strong encouragement from the findings of the American Presidential Commission Report on Obscenity and Pornography in 1970. The majority recommendation of that Commission was that federal and local legislation prohibiting the sale, exhibition or distribution of sexual materials to consenting adults should be repealed.

A more conservative view was expressed by a minority of that Commission, as well as by the British Longford Commission in 1972 which under the chairmanship of Lord Longford, proposed tighter legal definitions of the term obscene to incorporate that which would "outrage contemporary standards of decency or humanity accepted by the public at large."<sup>(2)</sup>

Both Commissions were established following public concern about the increasing quantity and more open display of pornography in the late sixties in the respective countries. In their enquiries, both Commissions

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1 Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography. N.Y.: Bantam Books, 1970, p.57.

2 Longford, Lord. Pornography: The Longford Report. London: Coronet Books, 1972, pp.427-8.

were influenced by the evidence from Denmark which appeared to show certain benefits from the adoption of a liberal policy with pornography. In particular, the studies of Rutchinsky<sup>(3)</sup> and Ben-Veniste<sup>(4)</sup> pointed to a reduction in sex crimes in Denmark and the American Report concluded that

"statistical studies of the relationship between availability of erotic materials and the rates of sex crimes in Denmark indicate that the increased availability of explicit sexual materials has been accompanied by a decrease in the incidence of sexual crime."<sup>(5)</sup>

The question was naturally raised whether the same trend could be identified in the United States. At that time, it was found

"during the period in which there had been a marked increase in the availability of erotic materials, some specific rates of arrest for sex crimes have increased (e.g. forcible rape) and others have declined (e.g. overall juvenile rates) ... The conclusion is that, for America, the relationship between the availability of erotica and changes in sex crime rates neither proves nor disproves the possibility that availability of erotica leads to crime, but the massive overall increases in sex crimes that have been alleged do not seem to have occurred."<sup>(6)</sup>

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3 Rutchinsky, B. Studies on pornography and sex crimes in Denmark. New Social Science Monographs, 1970.

4 Ben-Veniste, R. Pornography and sex-crime: The Danish experience. Technical Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography, Volume VII, Washington, D.C., U.S. Govt. Printing Office, pp.245-261.

5 Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography, op.cit., p.31.

6 Op.cit., p.31.

Since that time a number of changes have occurred. The evidence from Denmark has been questioned, and the apparent benefits reported in 1970 have been shown to have procedural flaws. (7,8) The most recent evidence I have obtained from the Copenhagen police relating to rape reports for the city and the whole country is contained in Table 1. (9)

			1960	61	62	63	64	65	73	74	75	76
RAPE AND ATTEMPTED RAPE	COPENHAGEN	No.	56	62	68	48	61	47	87	94	97	101
		Rate	7.76	8.70	9.66	6.90	8.88	6.93	14.60	16.32	17.25	18.52
	DENMARK	No.	200	185	189	173	259	162	269	287	252	284
		Rate	4.36	4.01	4.06	3.69	5.49	3.40	5.36	5.69	4.98	5.61

Table 1. Reports to the police of rape and attempted rape, for Denmark and Copenhagen, in raw numbers and rate per 100,000 population.

I have shown in other reports that while a steep increase in sex crimes was not evident when the American Commission was published, there have been striking increases in reports since that time in both the serious area of rape and attempted rape, and with lesser sex offences. (10)

Over the years since 1970, a similar upward trend in reports of rape has occurred in Australia, occurring concurrently with changes in federal policies dealing with the control of pornography.

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- 7 Bachy, V. Danish 'Permissiveness' revisited. Journal of Communication 1976, 26, 1, 40-43.
- 8 Court, J.H. Pornography and Sex-Crimes: A re-evaluation in the light of recent trends around the world. International Journal of Criminology and Penology, 1977, 5, 129-157.
- 9 Data based on personal correspondence with the Statistics Branch of the Copenhagen Police Force.
- 10 Court, J.H. Pornography - an unfulfilled dream. Report to Criminology Research Council, No. 35/76/6, 1978.



It follows that, if there is indeed a positive association between the dissemination of pornography on the one hand, and the incidence of sex crimes on the other, there should exist specific examples of individuals whose personal experience demonstrates this link. While it does not follow that an easy cause-effect relationship will necessarily be found, some linkages should emerge at an individual level and some theoretical explanations for the association need to be advanced.

#### The Present Study

This study was initiated in the hope of tracing individuals who had been found guilty of a sexual offence and then investigating whether, and in what ways, pornography might have played some part in the offence. At the same time a control group with similar demographic characteristics was to be investigated to determine whether any positive linkages found among the sex-crime group were statistically different from those found in the control group.

A research instrument suitable for this investigation had already been developed by Goldstein and Kant<sup>(11)</sup> for their research into a rather similar question. Their findings had been largely negative, and considerable emphasis has been given to their evidence that the sex criminals they studied had not been notably influenced by pornography. However, their results cannot be accepted at this time unquestioningly.

Their study found no difference between sex offenders and non-sex offenders regarding exposure to erotica. However, the study is of limited relevance to current issues because:

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11 Goldstein, M.J. and Kant, H.S. Pornography and Sexual Deviance. Berkeley: University of California, pp.165-182.

- (a) it was a retrospective study of 60 male subjects contained in a hospital for the criminally insane. Aged between 20 and 40, they cannot be considered representative of the sex offender population generally.
- (b) of the 60 subjects, only 19 were aggressive sexual offenders, so comparison with rapists is limited. Differences between different types of sex offenders are important.
- (c) the authors acknowledge that their enquiries were directed to exposure to erotica rather than pornography.

As originally presented to the U.S. Commission, <sup>(12)</sup> this study has been interpreted as showing that the sex offenders actually had less experience with pornography in adolescence than the controls. However, the selection of the sample, its size, and the bias in selection have all been criticized by Cline <sup>(13)</sup> and by Eysenck and Nias <sup>(14)</sup> who note that while offenders rarely acted out pornographic fantasies precisely there was nonetheless a majority of subjects who claimed to have tried out what they had seen depicted.

In the more extended report, published in 1972, Goldstein and Kant acknowledge, inter alia, that

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- 12 Goldstein, M.J., Kant, H.S., Judd, L.L., Rice, C.J. and Green, R. Exposure to pornography and sexual behavior in deviant and normal groups. Technical Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography Vol. VII, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Govt. Printing Office, 1971.
  - 13 Cline, V.B. (Ed.). Where do you draw the line? Provo, Utah. Brigham Young U.P., 1974.
  - 14 Eysenck, H.J. and Nias, D.B. Sex, Violence and the Media, Adelaide, Mary Martin Books, 1978.

"the rapists developed a stronger interest in erotica, at least of a specific type, than any other groups."<sup>(15)</sup>

They also note the linkage between sex and aggression in provoking a response based on a prior disposition

"... so we must consider that sex offenders are highly receptive to suggestions of sexual behavior congruent with their previously formed desires and will interpret the material at hand to fit their needs. It is true, however, that while few, if any, sex offenders suggest that erotica played a role in the commission of sex crimes, stimuli expressing brutality, with or without concomitant sexual behavior, were often mentioned as disturbing, by rapists in particular."<sup>(16)</sup>

There had also been an earlier study by Gebhard et al<sup>(17)</sup> which had reached the conclusion that sex offenders were no different from non-sex offenders in relation to their possession of, or response to, pornography.

Again the findings cannot be readily extrapolated to the situation existing in the seventies. Their extensive study of 1356 sex offenders, while published in 1965, was based on data collection principally "between 1941 and 1945 ... and between 1953 and 1955". The subjects were typically born in the 1920s, so that their exposure to "pornography" cannot be compared with present circumstances. This study too has been critiqued by Eysenck and Nias, who comment on numerous limitations in its findings and remark

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15 Goldstein, M.J. and Kant, H.S. Op.cit., p.78.

16 Op.cit., p.109.

17 Gebhard, P.H., Gagnon, J.H., Pomeroy, W.B. and Christenson, C.V.  
Sex Offenders: An analysis of types. London: Heinemann, 1965.

"The failure to find enhanced interest in pornography for the average sex offender is often stressed as the main outcome of this study. But such a failure is hardly surprising...." (18)

A very much smaller study reported to the American Commission by Thornberry and Silverman (19) also found no association between the use of pornography, and the sex crimes for which juvenile offenders were charged.

Their study followed the lead given by some professionals in the field who expressed a conviction of a link between offences and the use of pornography. They sifted retrospectively through the files of referrals to the Neuropsychiatric Division of a large urban municipal court in Philadelphia. After examining 436 records they concluded that

"there was absolutely no mention of pornography or erotica in any of the materials contained in the case records of any of these 436 juveniles. It is clear that the neuropsychiatric staff did not systematically enquire into this area..." (20)

This study suffers not only from the well-known hazard of seeking specific information retrospectively from case-records, when, as the authors note, the matter under investigation was not routinely explored. It also suffers in that, while there were 436 reports altogether 92% "were classified as having no sex implication." Only 4% (17) were "classified as sex specific offenses". This can scarcely be taken as a serious contribution to the evidence on the matter.

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18 Op.cit., p.114.

19 Thornberry, T.P. and Silverman, R.A. Exposure to pornography and juvenile delinquency: The relationship as indicated by juvenile court records. Technical Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography, Vol. I, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Govt. Printing Office, 1957.

20 Op.cit., p.178.

Also presented to the U.S. Commission were the findings of Johnson, Kupperstein and Peters on 47 white male sex offenders, who were on probation and receiving psychotherapy from one of the authors. They are themselves appropriately cautious about their failure to find differences between sex-offender and non-offender groups. They summarise their report by saying that their report had

"important limitations. Perhaps the most important of these is the size of the sex offender sample (N = 47). As such, statistical tests were not performed and particular findings were not interpreted as resolving the critical questions in this area."<sup>(21)</sup>

By contrast with such reassuring results, a series of research papers have appeared in recent years which have increased the theoretical basis for supposing that a positive link might be found in some individuals. (This evidence will be summarised below).

For the present study it was therefore deemed necessary to have

- (a) an objective and established questionnaire designed to investigate the specific areas of exposure to pornography, and concomitant behaviour. The Goldstein and Kant questionnaire was selected as suitable.
- (b) an interviewer able to administer the questionnaire to subjects and controls in such a way that experimenter bias could be eliminated. A psychology graduate was available for this purpose.

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21 Johnson, W.T., Kupperstein, L.R. and Peters, J.J. Sex offenders experience with erotica. Technical Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography, Vol. VII, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Govt. Printing Office, 1971.

- (c) sufficient subjects to obtain both an experimental and control group. In order to offset the limitations of earlier studies, the aim was to obtain recent offenders of an age such that their teenage development had occurred in the period during which pornography was becoming available in Australia - hence, an age range of 17-25 was considered ideal.
- (d) preliminary information from relevant authorities on who might have corroborative evidence of the involvement of pornography in reported offences.
- (e) documented evidence of specific cases where particular crimes were linked directly to access to pornographic materials of some kind.

#### Outcome

The planned investigation as originally conceived had to be abandoned. The requirements of (a) and (b) above were met, but many difficulties were encountered in relation to (c). These problems can best be described together with comment about initial enquiries from relevant authorities, i.e. item (d).

An initial approach was made to the S.A. Police Force in view of their first-hand involvement with sex offenders sometimes at the scene of the offence and in questioning. In addition, the recent appointment to the police of research staff indicates the current interest which exists in pursuing research there.

Police to whom I spoke were helpful and expressed an interest in what I was seeking to explore. As an anecdotal source of information, experienced members of the Vice Squad could recall individual instances when sex offenders were found to have pornography in their possession.

Scientifically, however, such information is useless since there is no indication from this what if any relationship exists, and whether

such possession is simply something that would be found with any random sample from the same population. There is a danger of obtaining a false positive, or Type I, error.

I had hoped it might be possible to sift retrospectively through police files to see if there was mention of pornography in the circumstances surrounding offences, as recorded by investigating officers. This was the approach used by Thornberry and Silverman noted above. However, I was advised this approach would be abortive, since only that evidence which is relevant to prosecution is sought by the police. Since the presence of pornography would be deemed irrelevant, it would only be fortuitous if any record were turned up in files. Clearly this is unsatisfactory for scientific purposes, generating a false negative, or Type II, error.

I turned my attention to the Department of Correctional Services. In the light of many reports of sex offenders, and evidence of a substantial number of convictions, a population resident within the prisons of the State seemed worth studying.

My discussions with one of the psychiatrists of the Correctional Services indicated two problems, especially if one was wishing to major on offenders convicted of rape. Firstly, I was advised that the actual number of offenders available for study was so limited that a sample and control group sufficient for statistical analysis would not be forthcoming. Secondly, an important observation was that those offenders currently serving a sentence for rape are not at all representative of the run of rapists brought before the courts. Typically they are older, recidivists and with a highly atypical view both of sexuality and sexual stimuli. They represent the 'hard-core' of rapists for whom, I was assured, pornography would have played little part in their offences. This group then is in contrast to the more typical younger, first offender for whom pornography may play a role in disinhibition.

These comments were, in my view, well-placed. It is very likely that the same could have been said of the incarcerated older offenders who formed the subjects of the studies by Gebhard et al. and Goldstein and Kant, referred to above. My colleague suggested that to get nearer to the problem group it would be wise to contact the Department of Community Welfare.

I submitted a detailed research proposal to the research committee of the Department of Community Welfare and personally discussed the proposal with the committee. Following a number of procedural and ethical questions, the submission was resubmitted for further consideration. Eventually after several months, the proposal was turned down. Firstly, it was stated that the Department has insufficient offenders in care for me to be able to obtain a satisfactory sample in the age-range specified. Secondly, there were ethical doubts about the possible impact on inmates of being asked questions about sexuality and pornography.

This difficulty over obtaining access to a sufficient number of subjects came as a surprise in view of the numbers of offenders coming before the courts, both adult and juvenile. It arises from current policies which are resulting in a greatly reduced residential population. So, for example, the S.A. Police Commissioner's Report for the year 1975-76 records that 97 juvenile sex offenders, all males, were dealt with by the police of whom only 6 subsequently came under government control (5 for rape and 1 for indecent assault). Even if this group were numerically large, it clearly represents a biased sample of those apprehended, and hence makes study unrepresentative.

#### Anecdotal Evidence

The above abortive study was planned in the context of a parallel attempt to collect specific examples of reports where sex crimes had been thought related in some way to relevant stimulus material, sexual or



aggressive. Particular attention was to be devoted to obtaining Australian examples. It was hoped that common themes might emerge to suggest explanatory hypotheses, and that fuller statements than the superficiality of Press reports might be forthcoming.

Neither hope has been fulfilled. In the meantime, however, theoretical and experimental work has been appearing in the professional literature which makes it less necessary to establish that a positive association exists. In the light of the evidence to be summarised below, the question now deserving study is not "is there a link?" but "what is the nature of the relationship?"

The following represents an account of some of the clearer leads, indicating a link between sex-crimes and the use of stimulating materials.

#### The United States

A proposal was made to the U.S. Presidential Commission to investigate the "relationship of obscenity to crime and other antisocial behavior". This proposal, put forward by Commissioner C.H. Keating Jr. included the fullest record currently available in the literature of examples based on U.S. police files of links between pornography and sex-crimes. Some 60 specific cases are documented<sup>(22)</sup> together with many indications from law enforcement officers that they were aware of many more such cases.

Since that time many other examples have been reported, including links with major films on regular circuits such as "The Exorcist" and "A Clockwork Orange".

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22 Keating, C.H. Exhibit "C" in U.S. Commission on Obscenity and Pornography, op.cit., pp.632-654.

A recent book cites a case from Cleveland, Ohio:

"Suspect in Court denies killing girl -

John Albert Johnson, 24, stood emotionless yesterday as municipal Judge Richard F. Matia read charges of rape, kidnapping and murder against him in the death of 8 year old Melissa Desiree Hinke. Judge Matia read each charge, explaining each time Johnson's constitutional rights. Three times Johnson said, "Not guilty". He had been in custody since Friday night, about 12 hours before a 16 year old boy found Melissa's battered corpse in a wooded ravine in Cleveland Metroparks Rocky River Reservation. Deputy Coroner Lester Adelson said yesterday he could not isolate the exact cause of the child's death. She had been beaten, stabbed repeatedly, choked and raped before she died, he said. The coroner's office is trying to determine the time of death. During a lie-detector test Saturday, Johnson reportedly told police he had been in a Lorain Ave. adult bookstore earlier Thursday. Police said he had magazines portraying nude children in his possession."<sup>(23)</sup>

The same book refers to cases in Minnesota:

"Police in Duluth, Minnesota, discovered two cases, one involving the sexual assault of a baby-sitter by a man obsessed after seeing an X-rated movie which included a rape scene, the other involving the attempted rape of three girl hitchhikers by a man who admitted to being goaded by pornography viewed in an 'adult' bookstore. They also reported an increase in juvenile sex crimes in which

pornography served as a model. A 12 year old boy was caught experimenting sexually with two 6 year old girls with the pages of a porno magazine (belonging to the girls' father) opened to color photos depicting sexual activities among adults." (24)

Also in 1977, Dr. Judianne Densen-Gerber attracted international attention to the growing market in child pornography. As president of Odyssey House, New York, she has campaigned against this exploitation for some years. When she was visiting Rockingham County, New Hampshire, the local sherriff (Ira B. Cook) said that he knew of at least 27 cases of incest in which pornography had been the instigating factor. (25)

#### Canada

Public concern has developed in Canada later than the U.S., but it was strongly focussed by the crimes of Robert Poulin of Ottawa in 1977: "Ottawa's Robert Poulin torture-murder-rape case provided a classic example of a young 16 year old boy, who first sampled soft-core porn. As many do, he moved on to hard-core, sadistic, perverted materials, becoming addicted to porn. Reading hundreds of his sadistic porno magazines, lead him to terrible fantasies of rape and perversions. His Inquest diaries revealed that eventually these fantasies controlled him, until, as other porno addicts have done, he was compelled to translate them into terrifying reality. Luring a 17 year old girl to his home, and using his bondage materials, and his torture magazines as a guide, he tortured, stabbed and raped her. At the Inquest, the Coroner said, 'I hope she died early in the day so she did not have to endure the atrocities'." (26)

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24 Op.cit., p.24

25 Quoted in Morality in Media, 1977, 16, 7, 3.

26 Personal communication from a Canadian journalist (B. Eagles), 1977.

The Women's Movement in Canada has begun to voice its objections to the messages of pornography and the attacks which follow.

"Since pornography is basically sexual aggression toward women, it seems inevitable that the logical consequence of it would be rape, and it is reasonable to expect rape sometimes to end in death. Gang assaults tend to be particularly vicious. In sexual crimes against women pornographic fantasies become reality. Winston Mosely, the New York murderer of Kitty Genovese, raped her while she lay dying of the stab wounds inflicted by him because, as he later told the police, he liked his women quiet. Like the women in porno pictures. Here in British Columbia, the body of a 9 year old girl was found last year tied to a tree in a forest near Mission. She had been sexually molested and strangled by a 34 year old man. It is a mistake to dismiss men like Mosely and the Mission girl's killer as deviant and mentally disturbed. Mentally disturbed they may be, but not deviant. The expression of one's disturbance is to a large extent determined by one's culture, and these men are very much in tune with our culture. There is a connection between these killers and Roger Vadim who made the film Charlotte in which a woman is strangled by a man during sexual intercourse. One is a creator or producer in celluloid of a fantasy that the others act out in reality. Our fantasies define us as much as our acts and each aspect of us can be seen in the other." (27)

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27 From Kinesis, (Vancouver Status of Women magazine), 1977, 6, 6, 14.

England

As long ago as 1973, the Daily Telegraph carried the headline "Boy killer's mind was affected by pornography" referring to a 16 year old youth who killed a 43 year old mother. (28)

Public horror was focussed in England by the case of the "Cambridge Rapist" which received extensive newspaper coverage. The essence of the case is contained in this excerpt:

"British Rapist Blames Porn for Aberration (AP) -

Norwich, England - Sentenced to life imprisonment Friday, the hooded rapist of Cambridge said pornographic films drove him to commit the crimes. 'It was like living in hell; in other words, I just had to do something.' Peter Samuel Cook was given seven concurrent sentences of life imprisonment at Norwich Crown Court. Cook, 47, a truck driver who is 5 feet, 4 inches tall, admitted raping six girls and committing sodomy against a seventh in the university city of Cambridge. He was arrested June 8 while bicycling disguised in women's clothing. A bag he carried contained a hood with the word 'rapist' stitched on it, skeleton keys to enter homes and rooms, wigs and various disguises, and a knife." (29)

It is sometimes argued that, in such cases, the accused relates his offences to pornography in order to mitigate the sentence. That suggestion does not apply in the more recent case of 3 youths of whom the presiding judge said:

"To describe your conduct as having behaved as animals would be an insult to animals."

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28 Daily Telegraph. London, 18.5.73.

29 See Gallagher, op.cit., pp.24-25.

In a commentary on this case, David Holbrook wrote that:  
"Three youths this week were sentenced to long periods of detention for the most appalling act of rape against a 14 year old schoolgirl. The court was told that pornographic material was found in the room of one of them, showing the kind of acts they inflicted on their victim."<sup>(30)</sup>

In the same account he referred to evidence presented to the Williams Committee on Obscenity and Film Censorship:

"I have been sending the Williams Committee some material as 'evidence'. There are a number of important psychological studies which indicate the dangers of pornography. One is the case history of a butcher's boy in Germany who shot at a prostitute. He used to inflame himself with pornography before he went out on his escapades. His therapists tried to get him to read good books, to rescue him from his terrible fantasies. Of course, he was deeply disturbed, and his real problems had to do with fear of death. But his is a clear case of someone who could well be triggered off by pornography to commit rape and sexual murder. And there are many like him. Then I have a large file of press cuttings. Time after time in court, lawyers report that a boy's mind has been affected by pornography or that pornography has led to sexual crime. People answering sex contact advertisements have been hurt and tortured, men coming out of films like *The Exorcist* have assaulted little girls, boys coming out of other films have dressed up like the characters and have committed criminal acts."

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<sup>30</sup> Holbrook, D. Can anyone still say porn does no harm? Daily Mail, London, 18.7.77.

Only a month before that trial, a report from Yorkshire indicated a rather similar influence:

"A boy who raped a 12 year old girl was warned by a judge this week to stop reading dirty books. Mr. Justice Jupp told the 15 year old youth 'Take my advice ... never look at a pornographic book again in your life. It leads to crime. Again and again I've heard cases where that has been the excuse.' The boy, of Yorkshire, was ordered to be detained for three years 'at a place the Home Secretary thought fit.' Bishop admitted grabbing and raping the girl as she was on her way to school. He said he had been excited by pornographic magazines. Mr. Sidney Levine, defending, said: 'The boy said he found the magazines, which contained principally photographs and some reading matter, a week before the rape'. "(31)

During the time when the Williams Committee was meeting in London, Dr. A. Hyatt Williams was among those who gave evidence. He was reported in a medical journal:

"Serious crimes have been committed as a result of exposure to pornography, assures Dr. A. Hyatt Williams, consultant psychiatrist at the Adolescent Department, Tavistock Clinic, in a public statement. In his clinical work, Dr. Williams reports, he has encountered a number of instances in which exposure to pornographic pressure has unbalanced a flimsy psychological adjustment. In a small number of those cases, he adds, serious crimes have been committed after exposure to pornographic pictures and other material ... The question, thus, is whether a ban on pornography would be a reasonable social restriction onall for the protection of the vulnerable and immature." (32)

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31 The News, Adelaide, 26.6.77.

32 Report in Doctor, 13.1.77.

Most reports emphasise the use of pornography and sex-crimes committed by men. An unusual and bizarre exception was the case of Joyce McKinney, a 27 year old woman, who kidnapped a Mormon missionary with whom she was infatuated.

She appeared in the Epsom Magistrates Court, Surrey, and the case was reported fully in Australia:

"When British detectives first questioned Joyce over allegations that she had chained Kirk Anderson to a bed and had given him oral sex, they saw only a weeping, lovelorn girl. But investigations in America have revealed her strange lifestyle in Hollywood - where she says she fled to escape the Mormons after her affair with Kirk ended. The detectives learnt with growing disbelief of her massive collection of pornographic books, of her visits to 'skin flick' movies - and even live sex shows. It was Hollywood with its larger than life characters which undoubtedly inspired Joyce's incredible plan to 'cure Kirk of his sexual hangups'. Her aim was to give Kirk a sexual experience he would never forget. 'She started building up a collection of porno books and I had to take her to porno movies because she wanted to examine sex techniques. I refused to go to private clubs where there was live sex on stage so Joyce would go by herself. She bought specialised books on bondage and oral sex - our apartment was littered with them'." (33)

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33 Sunday Mail, Adelaide, 18.5.78.



### Australia

In the period since the administration of censorship was liberalised (mid 1970) a number of events similar to those overseas have received coverage in the press. They have done so not because they are representative but because of their news value. As with police records, it is likely that many serious crimes have been in some way linked with pornography but no mention has been made of the association, either because it was deemed irrelevant, or because it was unknown.

Hence these examples serve only as illustrations that a positive link can and does occur. They are as unrepresentative from a scientific viewpoint as the data obtained from surveys of highly selected populations of criminals.

One of the clearest examples of an offence with strong imitative characteristics was associated with the film 'A Clockwork Orange' screening in Victoria in 1973. In March of that year an offence was committed in East Kew which led to a court case in Melbourne in July. The judge commented about links with the film:

"Melbourne - A judge said yesterday it was difficult to sentence a young rapist on a community which allowed crime to be portrayed as pleasurable. And he released the youth concerned on a \$1,000, seven-year good behaviour bond. Judge Arthur Adams was told in the County Court the rapist has been influenced by characters in the film 'Clockwork Orange'. He said 'This picture has been described by judges all over the English-speaking world as a cause triggering young men to violence. But the community accepts it. This community is prepared to let pictures depicting violence, rape, sex and all the rest of it poison the minds of the young. Then it expects judges to forget that the community is so free-thinking and restless of censorship.' Judge Adams was sentencing Anthony

Mavronitis, 17, storeman, of Hawthorn, who pleaded guilty of having raped a 16 year old girl at East Kew on March 23. Mr. A. Graham, for Mavronitis, said the youth had worn his hair in the style of the 'Droogs' in Clockwork Orange. Judge Adams said 'This is a shocking case and the reference to Clockwork Orange does not help the matter much. I have the unpleasant task of trying to equate the crime in a community which allows crime to be portrayed as something pleasurable and entertaining'." (34)

This case may have had some impact on a further case in the same area in which the imitative characteristics were still more convincing. Publicity to the above case recurred in July 1973. It was early August when the police were searching for a youth thought to be in his early twenties who had made three attacks in the Melbourne suburbs of Murrumbeena, Elsternwick and Brighton.

"Police are searching for a sex attacker who has imitated a rapist from the movie, A Clockwork Orange. He attacked three 16 year old girls in their homes, bound and gagged them, and cut their clothes off with a pair of scissors. Then he indecently assaulted them. A judge, sentencing a 17 year old youth for rape, last week criticised A Clockwork Orange. Judge Arthur Adams said in Melbourne County Court: 'This picture has been described by judges all over the English speaking world as a cause triggering young men to violence.'" In a Clockwork Orange, a group of youths truss a girl, cut off her clothes then rape her." (35)

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34 Daily Telegraph, London, 17.7.73.

35 Melbourne Truth, 4.8.73.

The triggering influence of specific films was also suggested in a case heard before Mr. Justice Slattery in Sydney in 1974:

"A man who raped an 18 year old mother after seeing two sex films earlier in the day was jailed for eight years in Sydney yesterday. George Franciscos, 29, laborer, of Marrickville, Sydney, pleaded guilty in Central Criminal Court to raping the woman on July 10 and to indecently assaulting her. Mr. Justice Slattery sentenced him to eight years for rape and a year, to be served concurrently, for indecent assault. He set a non-parole period to expire on May 1 1977. On the day of the rape Franciscos had seen the films *Massage Parlor* and *Snow White and the Seven Perverts*, the judge said. Franciscos had known the woman and her husband for more than four years. Later that evening he drove to her house where he told her her husband had been injured in an accident with a semi-trailer and was in hospital at Casula. When Franciscos halted his car in a lonely spot the woman, who had her baby daughter with her, became suspicious. She tried to run away but he chased her and threatened to kill the baby if she would not go with him. He took her to a lonely area and raped her. Mr. Justice Slattery said that according to the psychiatric report Franciscos' conduct was completely inexplicable. In a callous and disgusting manner he had kept the woman virtually subject to his control for nearly eight hours." (36)

Such attacks, which clearly involve a cognitive factor and planning raise the question whether such offences should be assumed to be "crimes of passion". If indeed, a style of assault is developing which involves rational planning (as seen also in the Ingham 'train' rapes in Queensland<sup>(37)</sup>), then the question of sentencing procedures is also raised. It is commonly argued that heavy sentences will not deter crimes of passion.<sup>(38)</sup> The current increase in reported offences possibly includes many in which sudden impulse is not the major factor.

On the same day Judge Slattery was hearing the above case, another one involving pornographic literature read by a young Aborigine was being heard in an adjacent court and then reported in the same paper:

"A young Aboriginal's actions in committing rape had been triggered by pornographic literature, a judge said yesterday. Mr. Justice O'Brien made the comment in Central Criminal Court when sentencing Eric James Murray, 27, laborer, of no fixed address, to seven years jail for raping a 12 year old girl near Casino on the N.S.W. north coast on August 13. The judge referred to evidence of two psychiatrists who said Murray's actions had been influenced by pornographic literature. One of the books found in the possession of Murray after his arrest was Fanny Hill. Mr. Justice O'Brien also quoted a Crown prosecutor, Mr. V.R. Wallace, as having said: 'Despite what psychiatrists and other people say, the danger of pornographic material becomes more apparent to those of us who deal with these crimes.' The judge said he completely agreed with this statement. He said that the change in Murray's life from that

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37 See The National Times, November 29 - December 4, 1976, pp.10-14, and June 20-25, 1977, pp.5-9.

38 See e.g. Chief Justice Bray of the S.A. Court reported in The News, Adelaide, 19.1.78.

of 'a lonely hitchhiker to a rapist was probably triggered by sexual excitement aroused by this literature'. Earlier the senior psychiatrist at Long Bay Jail, Dr. E. Fischer, in answer to Mr. E. Miles, solicitor for Murray, said the reading of pornographic literature could have emotionally precipitated Murray's course of behavior. Another psychiatrist, Dr. I.A. Listwan, also considered the pornographic literature was the triggering factor in Murray's behavior."<sup>(39)</sup>

The impact of widely screened films gains public attention perhaps because others can more readily recognise the links with offences than those occurring with literature unknown to most people. Hence the press have given extensive coverage to events like the 'Qantas hoax' case of extortion in Sydney inspired by the film 'Doomsday Flight' and the kidnap of a teacher and six children from a Victorian school following the screening of the psychopathic killer sequence in 'Dirty Harry'.

Reports of such events were not uncommon for two or three years after 'R' films were introduced in Australia. In Brisbane a rapist said he saw three 'R' films ('Perfumed Garden', 'Bedroom Mazurka' and 'Ideal Marriage') before going out and committing rape. In this case the response does not have the closely imitative properties of the 'Clockwork Orange' cases, and may be more a function of sexual arousal and generalised disinhibition postulated by Malamuth et. al.<sup>(40)</sup>

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39 The Australian, 30.11.74.

40 Malamuth, N.M., Feshbach, S., and Jaffe, Y. Sexual arousal and aggression: Recent experiments and theoretical issues. Journal of Social Issues, 1977, 33, 2, 110-113.

The possibility that the change of policies on censorship in Australia had an initial powerful impact on marginally adjusted people is suggested by the case of a lecturer from Melbourne who began acting out his fantasies from 1972 after previously containing them:

"Melbourne - A university lecturer who admitted to raping a girl student, had a sexual fantasy about tying up women and raping them, the County Court was told yesterday. Brian Alla Elkner, 33, of Hampton, a Melbourne suburb, was sentenced to a total of 10 years' jail on charges involving attacks on girls and young women in their homes between April, 1972, and last May. Elkner, a senior lecturer in Melbourne University arts faculty, had pleaded guilty to one charge of rape, one charge of assault with intent to rape, three counts of indecent assault and one of common assault. Mr. John Phillips, defending, told the court all the victims were tied up and several were also gagged, in each incident, a knife was involved. A psychiatrist, Dr. L. Marinovich, who saw Elkner after he had been arrested, told the court Elkner had described a fantasy life toward sexual activity. 'He gets sexual arousal at the prospect of tying a girl up and raping her', he said. 'He has had this sexual fantasy about tying up women and raping them since his late teens, but only in the last couple of years has he carried them out'." (41)

A more specific accumulative effect appears to have occurred in another case involving "The Exorcist" where an extraordinary recurrent exposure to the film was described:

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41 Daily Telegraph, London, 19.10.74.

"A young man's seeing the film, *The Exorcist*, 15 times might help understanding of the murder of his girlfriend, a police prosecutor said today. The court was told that the girl, Lynette Louise Corbett, 22, had her arms slashed 26 times. At Parramatta Court of Petty Sessions today, John Nunn, 19, a storeman, was charged with murdering her at Harris Park on February 19 last year. Nunn's counsel, Mr. Greg Cusack had objected to the film-going reference. He said it was irrelevant. But Mr. G. McLennan, SM, allowed the evidence, which was part of an alleged record of interview with Nunn conducted by Sgt. Alan Riley, of Parramatta. Questioned by Police Prosecutor, Sgt. Colin Spalding, Sgt. Riley said Nunn had told him his interests were movies, and that he had seen *The Exorcist* 15 times."<sup>(42)</sup>

In the more recent past there have been very few cases of such links reported in the Australian press. It might be tempting to conclude that, after the first impact, the effect has been dissipated and the danger past.

The evidence here is far too scattered and incomplete to support that conclusion, or for that matter any other. It is possible, since the press thrives on novelty, that such cases simply fail to attract attention as they did. It is also conceivable that constant exposure to many experiences of pornography, violence and sexual explicitness, have made it unlikely that specific triggers will often manifest themselves. The effects may become cumulative and merely be observed as a quantum shift upwards in the level of attacks being reported.

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42 The Sun, Sydney, 19.7.77.

In South Australia there has been a notable increase in reports of rape and other serious sexual offences, and yet press publicity has made little reference to possible involvement with pornographic literature and films. A number of cases coming before the courts read as if they have been stimulated by exposure to pornography and in general terms the changing nature of sexual attacks was noted by Superintendent McAulay of the Police Crime Intelligence Unit in South Australia. He noted that while 44% of convicted rapists were under 21 in 1969-70, this had risen to 62% by 1975-76. He added:

"Furthermore, rapes are becoming more violent. The offenders are using more force. And we have noticed rapists are subjecting women to indecent acts far more than before."<sup>(43)</sup>

Shortly before that, in response to public concern over the increase of rape reports, an Adelaide psychologist, Mr. A.E. Whitford, was quoted in the same paper:

"The wide availability of books and magazines about sex must be one of the causes of the increasing incidence of rape in S.A., says an Adelaide psychologist. 'As far as I can see, there are three main causes of the increase in rapes, and the availability of information about sex is one', said Mr. A.E. Whitford. 'There is a good side to this - as restrictions on sexual information break down, ignorance about sex disappears. Unfortunately, there is a fringe element of people who indulge in abnormal activities such as rape, and the books and magazines must have some effect on them'."

Cases reported in the press have involved circumstances in which the involvement of pornography is a strong assumption without being confirmed. A Sydney example is of this type:

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43 The News, Adelaide, July 1977.



"The prisoner admits that his purpose in bringing the girl to Sydney and detaining her in horrible and degrading conditions was the purpose of sexual gratification' Mr. Justice Cross said. Waters had detained the girl by putting handcuffs on her wrists and chains around her legs. He had also put a type of harness over the girl's head and placed a rubber ball in her mouth. The offences would have been outrageous if the girl were adult and normal, but the girl, 15, was mentally retarded with a mental age of between six and 10. The girl had been subjected to sexual indignities of a shocking kind and had received serious internal injuries." (44)

In South Australia, most coverage of the subject has been given by the evening paper, *The News*, and the Sunday paper, *The Sunday Mail*. Apart from one major feature, the *Advertiser* has largely avoided the involvement of pornography apart from its letters column. One may raise the question of editorial policy in this regard in the light of the fact that the *Advertiser* group also includes *The Griffin Press*, which has been a major producer of cheap pornographic novels in recent years.

My own professional involvement with a case of rape and attempted murder revealed a very close link between the offences and the offender's preoccupation with a highly specific type of sadistic pornography, which generated a high level of arousal in him. Although my report to the court mentioned this relationship, no public attention was given to it.

More recently, another case came to my attention informally and I was granted permission to quote the following facts by the Director of the Offenders Aid and Rehabilitation Services (Mr. R.J. Kidney), sent to me in May 1978.

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44 The Advertiser, Adelaide, 5.10.78.

"I wish to submit the following facts concerning an offender (a young man in his early twenties) who was recently resident in one of our Post Release Hostels:-

This young man was cared for in a private home for some weeks prior to admission to the Hostel which gave us access to his behaviour during that period of time. The report on his behaviour pattern is as follows:-

This person had an unusual pre-occupation with sexual literature, films and tapes. Pornographic magazines were found in his room from time to time and women's under-clothing was found in his room after he left the house. Whilst he was resident in the Post Release Hostel he was approached by Welfare Staff on two occasions concerning pornographic material in his room. He was asked to destroy it but he failed to do so.

This person was recently charged with an offence of rape on a woman much older than himself: he is now awaiting sentence."

Since that time (in November, 1978), I have also become aware of a man arrested for incest against his 9 year old daughter. On arresting him, police found over 200 pornographic magazines at his home, many of them featuring child pornography. This case has yet to be reported publicly as it has not yet come to trial.

#### Recent theories based on research

The evidence since 1970 on the effects of erotica and pornography, while still not extensive, is accumulating to give a very different picture from the earlier benign interpretation of the Presidential Commission. Several series of experimental studies have been reported which, while including areas of difference, generally converge on the view that sexual arousal and aggression can often be closely and positively linked.

As experiments have repeatedly shown a positive association between exposure to erotic stimuli and the tendency to express aggression against others, at least five theoretical explanations have been advanced over the decade. The differences have been in their complexity of explanation of paradoxical results, as well as arising from the diversity of experimental situations used.

Firstly, a simple arousal theory was advanced in the context of an experimental situation in which male volunteer subjects were given the opportunity to administer shocks to someone who had provoked them. For example, Meyer<sup>(45)</sup> found that those who saw an erotic film after provocation were willing to administer stronger shocks than those who viewed a neutral film.

A series of studies by Zillman and his colleagues has led to a modification of that theory in favor of a two-factor excitation-transfer theory.<sup>(46,47)</sup> This model offers an explanation of increased aggression following sexual arousal by people who have been previously angered experimentally. This model has been more recently found

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45 Meyer, T.P. The effects of sexually arousing and violent films on aggressive behavior. The Journal of Sex Research, 1972, 8, 324-331.

46 Tannenbaum, P.J. and Zillmann, D. Emotional arousal in the facilitation of aggression through communication. In Berkowitz (Ed.), Advances in Experimental Social Psychology (Vol. 8), N.Y.: Academic Press, 1975.

47 Zillman, D., Hoyt, J.L. and Day, K.D. Strength and duration of the effect of aggressive, violent and erotic communications on subsequent aggressive behavior. Communication Research, 1974, 1, 286-306.

applicable to women who when erotically aroused were willing to deliver noxious stimuli to other women.<sup>(48)</sup> It was found that erotic stimuli were more likely to generate noxious responses than the aggressive stimuli used, though this may be because the choice to aggressive stimulus material was not altogether appropriate for women.

A further consideration in the nature of the erotic stimuli is raised by the studies by Baron.<sup>(49)</sup> His evidence led to the view that mildly erotic stimulation may lead to a reduced likelihood of expressing aggression, while more sexually arousing material could facilitate aggression. That is, the lesser levels of erotic stimulation might be associated with positive responses of tenderness and affection (incompatible with aggression) with more intensely erotic materials removing inhibitions and leading to the expression of aggression. This relationship has been explored further<sup>(50)</sup> to determine whether there might be a still further increment with exposure to still more erotic materials.

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48 Cantor, J.R., Zillmann, D. and Einsiedel, E.F. Remale responses to provocation after exposure to aggressive and erotic films. Communication Research, 1978, 5, 4, 395-411.

49 Baron, R.A. The aggression inhibiting influence of heightened sexual arousal. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1974, 30, 318-322.

50 Baron, R.A. and Bell, P.A. Sexual arousal and aggression by males: Effects of type of erotic stimuli and prior provocation. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1977, 35, 2, 79-87.

Baron and Bell did not find this increase, but acknowledge this is probably because they did not use materials of a more pornographic kind, whereas the expected increment was found when such materials were used by Jaffe et al. (51) This model, then, uses the magnitude of sexual arousal as the determinant of sexual aggression and this is proposed regardless of subjects being previously made angry or not. Hence the earlier simple arousal theory is found to be inadequate to explain results where subjects are not first provoked.

A fourth model, a variant of that suggested by Baron's studies, is related to work by Donnerstein. Still invoking the concept of arousal, Donnerstein, Donnerstein and Evans (52) have suggested that mildly erotic stimuli may serve as distractors away from aggressive responses while more strongly arousing stimuli generate a higher degree of arousal with physiological properties similar to those experienced in states of anger and thereby facilitating aggression. In line with this view, Donnerstein presented a paper to the American Psychological Association Conference in 1978, reporting increased aggression in subjects exposed to films including sex and violence.

In reviewing such studies and seeking a coherent explanation for diverse findings, Eysenck and Nias in 1978 have commented that:

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51 Jaffe, Y., Malamuth, N., Feingold, J. and Feshbach, S. Sexual arousal and behavioral aggression. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1974, 30, 759-764.

52 Donnerstein, E., Donnerstein, M., and Evans, R. Erotic stimuli and aggression: Facilitation or inhibition. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1975, 32, 237-244.

"it appears that mild forms of erotica have tended to inhibit aggression while more explicit or hard-core material has acted to facilitate it. This makes sense in terms of the different mood states generated by the two types of material. Mild erotica involving aesthetically pleasing poses, or tender and affectionate lovemaking, might be expected to give rise to pleasurable feelings which would appear to be incompatible with the expression of aggression. Explicit or 'hard-core' material, on the other hand, might be expected to induce unpleasant feelings along with arousal which would be compatible with aggression."<sup>(53)</sup>

Since that review, a further model has been proposed by Feshbach and Malamuth<sup>(54)</sup> seeking to integrate the evidence of the previously mentioned work together with their own work. They propose a 'shared taboo' theory which takes account of the interaction between sex and aggression of a biological kind and the learned links which are even more important at least in western culture.

Their research has largely been conducted on university students, both male and female, often using the well-established paradigm of confederates who are ostensibly given shocks as punishment, either before or after the subject is exposed to erotic or aggressive stimulation. They have emphasised a distinction between hostile aggression (which is commonly incompatible with sexual arousal) and self-assertive aggression which brings about a reduction of inhibition and facilitates sexual expression.<sup>(55)</sup> They also make important

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53 Eysenck, H.J. and Nias, D.K. Op.cit., p.174.

54 Feshbach, S. and Malamuth, N. Sex and Aggression: Proving the Link. Psychology Today, 1978, 12, 6, 111-122.

55 Malamuth, N.M., Feshbach, S. and Jaffe, Y. Sexual arousal and aggression: Recent experiments and theoretical issues. Journal of Social Issues, 1977, 33, 2, 110-133.

distinctions between the responses of men and women leading to speculation about the psychology of rape.

The essence of their model is that sex and aggression, in addition to having common biological aspects, are subject to shared taboos. The presentation of either a sexual or an aggressive theme in such a manner as to suggest the conventional taboos no longer apply will lower the threshold for expression in both areas through generalisation.

In their own words:

"Learning factors may link sexual and varied aggressive manifestations by virtue of the fact that both are taboo responses, strongly restricted by societal prohibitions. Discriminative stimuli which provide information concerning the acceptability or unacceptability of a particular taboo behavior may have corresponding effects in generalising to other responses similarly labeled." (56)

Malamuth et al go further in analysing these relationships to show that the relationship between exposure to aggressive cues and subsequent sexual behavior is also relevant. From their experiments they conclude that with normal subjects, aggressive cues do not turn people on to sexual feeling. Rather they "turn off" inhibition and as a consequence sexual arousal is facilitated.

In the same report, they also go beyond their studies of undergraduates and report on a study of male sex shop patrons in Bollywood which confirmed their view. Given either an aggressive or a non-aggressive version of an erotic story, those men who read the more aggressive version reported feeling more sexually sensuous than those who had read the less aggressive version. (57)

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56 Malamuth et al. Op.cit., p.121.

57 Malamuth et al. Op.cit., p.126.

This model provides a valuable advance in the integration of recent work. It would suggest that the differences found between the effects of mild and extreme erotica on aggression arise not simply due to arousal level, but from the breaking of taboos in the latter case but not in the former. A specific test of the arousal theory was carried out by Jaffe,<sup>(58)</sup> with evidence showing that greater aggression was associated with delayed rather than an immediate response. This result favors the taboo hypothesis rather than an arousal hypothesis. Since the displacement hypothesis of Donnerstein also hinges on differences between mild and more extreme stimuli, again the taboo theory may apply.

A move from undergraduate populations into the world of real sexual violence raised further issues. Feshbach and Malamuth say:

"we are concerned by the possible impact of pornography in which sex and violence are fused - as in sado-masochistic encounters. For one of the most troubling results of our research suggests that men who view such materials tend to be more stimulated than others by the idea of rape and less sympathetic to the victims."<sup>(59)</sup>

They show that portrayals representing women apparently enjoying the infliction of pain are more sexually arousing to their male subjects than when such enjoyment is not suggested. This is of course the common implication in pornographic stories of a violent kind. The impact on their subjects (college students) was sufficient to comment that:

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58 Jaffe, Y. Quoted in Malamuth et al. Op.cit., p.116.

59 Feshbach, S. and Malamuth, N. Op.cit., p.117.



"we see, then, how one exposure to violence in pornography can significantly influence erotic reactions to the portrayal of rape ... we share the belief that the depiction of violence in erotica and pornography could be harmful ... The message that pain and humiliation can be 'fun' encourages the relaxation of inhibitions against rape." (60)

In general, I find this most recent model a satisfying one in bringing together most of the available evidence in a way that enables earlier conflicts of evidence to be resolved. If this concept of generalisation of taboos does have validity it has serious social implications. It can no longer be argued that the open display of sexuality will be harmless, and only the glorification of violence is to be restrained. The interactions between these two taboo areas are too close. We can argue about what the effect would be if the taboos had never existed, or could be totally eliminated in the future but neither of these issues should distract us from the need for humane social policies in the world as it is.

There are two further extensions to this shared taboo theory which deserve further study. Firstly, within this area of shared taboo there are specific taboos which could be involved but have not yet received investigation. The taboo involving violence against women is clearly threatened, so we may then predict a similar breakdown in the taboo against sexual activities with children. The same generalisation principle which seems to allow a reduction of inhibitions against anti-social sex and violence will surely lead to an increasing incidence of incest and child molesting. Similarly as the taboos

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60 Feshbach, S. and Malamuth, N. Op.cit., p.116.

against homosexual acts with adults and children are challenged publicly and in pornographic films and literature, this taboo may be similarly influenced.

Secondly, this shared taboo theory needs more extensive analysis in relation to the responses of sexually disturbed people. Feshbach and Malamuth have advanced their theory largely on the basis of studies of undergraduates and in the context of relationships existing between sex and aggression among normal subjects. Similarly, as noted above, Eysenck and Nias express the 'commonsense' view that "mild erotica ... might be expected to give rise to pleasurable feelings which would appear to be incompatible with the expression of aggression." (61) Yet we must not assume that because aggression and sexual expression are mutually incompatible in most people this is always the case. It is at this point that Malamuth et al recognise a conflict with Stoller who argues that hostility is a common element in all sexual excitement. (62) While Stoller is perhaps too general, he writes as a psychoanalyst with sensitivity to the pathological. For the sexually disturbed individual the distinction between instrumental assertiveness and hostile aggression may be blurred. In which case the presentation of a wider range of aggressive stimuli would be arousing to the potential rapist, where the normal male would not find such material

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61 Eysenck, J.H. and Nias, D.K. Op.cit., p.174.

62 Stoller, R.S. Sexual excitement. Archives of General Psychiatry, 1976, 33, 899-909.

disinhibiting. Such a distinction can be inferred from the positive responses to rape themes by rapists reported by Abel et al. (63)

This distinction between outcomes for 'normal' and 'disturbed' subjects must be pressed, because it is not the normal educated college student who is the primary threat to others when questions of anti-social acts are considered. It is the male deprived of early experiences of love, trust and opportunity, who communicates poorly and lacks social skills. While the experiments considered above have carefully manipulated levels of anger and aggression in relation to sexual stimuli, the potential sex offender can be seen as one with a pre-existing condition far outweighing such manipulation. Whether we think of a high level of arousal, or a low level of inhibition against anti-social acts, or a breakdown of taboos, these things already exist in the potential offender. We cannot therefore rely entirely on the rationality of the average man as a basis for determining what to do about pornography.

### Discussion

The present state of the evidence is that several important themes are emerging which could lead to greater scientific clarity, and

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63 Abel, G.G., Barlow, D.H., Blanchard, E.B. and Guild, D. The components of rapists' sexual arousal. Archives of General Psychiatry, 1977, 34, 895-903.

hopefully less emotionalism, about the impact of various types of media on personal and social behaviour.

Firstly, a distinction between the effects of erotica and the effects of pornography is made with increasing frequency. This does not mean that clear definitions have emerged to differentiate the two unequivocally, but in behavioural terms the evidence is that many subjects respond differently. If the Feshbach and Malamuth shared taboo theory becomes established by further research as a viable way of understanding these differences, then it would suggest that the boundary-line between erotica and pornography is a changing one. If pornography is that material which contravenes a society's taboos, while erotica arouses approved responses, it is possible that a widespread dissemination of pornography will lead to a shift in thresholds of acceptance. Indeed those charged with the task of classifying publications appear to operate on the assumption that levels of community acceptance are constantly changing in that way.

It might then be argued that when ultimately all the taboos have been broken, the malevolent influences of pornography will fade away in favour of a general attitude of acceptance of sexuality without inhibitions.

This not unattractive prediction must be matched by another. If the constant portrayal of themes which we currently describe as pornographic become the accepted expression of eroticism, then we must anticipate also that the corresponding behaviours which until now have been taboo will also press for acceptance. Sexual molestation of children, abuse of women in various ways, including sadism and rape,

currently feature in pornographic works. These would presumably become part of the accepted norm of society from which behavioural taboos or sanctions would be removed. Such freedom is consistent with the philosophy of the Marquis de Sade, but is unlikely to promote a truly healthy approach either to sexuality or to relationships.

The second major development is that linkage of sexuality and aggression which runs through the experimental work reviewed above. It no longer appears valid to behave as if censorship of violence can be undertaken together with removal of restraints on sexual themes. In our culture both are surrounded by similar taboos, closely linked to such basic human rights as privacy and dignity. Both have biological components in common such that important interactions, facilitatory or inhibitory, occur. Some of the experimental work has specifically sought to isolate these two components by using non-aggressive sexual themes. Other work has been with that genre of material which deliberately exploits themes of aggressive sexuality. While the latter is more obviously dangerous, the former is important if it acts as a disinhibitor with generalising effects.

The third major theme emerging is of differential responses between men and women. Prior to the U.S. Commission Report of 1970, little was known of such effects, the general assumption being that erotica was essentially a male phenomenon. This belief has been shown to be false but at the same time, important sex-differences in response are emerging. Since in many cases these involve qualitatively different attitudes and emotions, it is important that decisions about pornography should not be made only by men. The special insights, as well as needs, of women must be fully represented in the decision-making processes of Parliament and other bodies such as literature boards.

Finally, two themes which have not yet been adequately explored deserve mention.

Firstly, most of the available research not open to serious scientific objections has been conducted on normal subject populations. Young male students are easily obtained, being willing volunteers for studies on erotica or pornography, but there are real difficulties in generalising from their responses. It is the pathological response of the emotionally disturbed individual which is most likely to be anti-social. It is the person whose inhibitory threshold is already low (whether through upbringing, stress or alcohol) who is likely to respond to pornography in such a way that he intrudes on the freedom of others. To investigate the impact of pornography on normal subjects is rather like trying to understand the reaction to a drug of cancer-cells by administering it to healthy subjects. One can learn some things, and describe the response of a healthy organism, but what really matters is the response under pathological conditions.

Secondly, the rather controversial but under-researched area of sub-liminal stimulation needs to be incorporated into this area of research. Two books in recent years published by Key<sup>(64, 65)</sup> have set out to document some likely effects of subliminal stimuli projected through the mass media of films and especially various forms of advertising. He presents many examples of explicit and symbolic cues intended to arouse powerful emotions, including evidence on this approach in the film "The Exorcist".

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64 Key, W.B. Subliminal Seduction. New York: New American Library, 1972.

65 Key, W.B. Media Sexploitation. New York: New American Library, 1976.

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There is, however, considerable doubt among psychologists whether such subliminal cues achieve the results claimed for them. Certainly the advertising agencies have exploited the idea on the assumption that subliminal cues will circumvent defences and achieve an increased response. They may be right.

The recent experiments of the type described by Malamuth et al could be readily adapted to investigate this area. Since differential behavioural effects have been obtained with sexual materials incorporating aggressive content when compared with non-aggressive versions of the same, it would be instructive to follow the same approach, but incorporating the aggressive content subliminally. If indeed there is a mutually facilitating effect of sexual and aggressive themes, the results should be detectable using the shock paradigm employed by Malamuth, Baron, Donnerstein and others.

In view of the reported deliberate exploitation of subliminal cues in "The Exorcist", and the quite dramatic responses which were recorded when these components were included in the film, such an approach may well be used in other 'R' certificate films as a means of adding impact. Film censors would be unaware of these influences and might inadvertently release potentially dangerous material. This is a possibility from which we currently have no protection.