

C. R. K.

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Letters to the Editor

'Porn is Pain' campaign is not an example of censorship

I write in belated response to your editorial of May 20, captioned "Censorship is Pain".

I am a retired FBI agent of some 28 years service, 18 of which were spent investigating obscenity and child pornography crimes. For the past 15 years I have been nationally active as an obscenity and pornography consultant to police, prosecutors and interested public. I also hold a law degree from Georgetown University, class of 1952. Many more than 1,000 obscenity cases have been personally investigated by me in Florida.

Your editorial states "the notion that adult videos and magazines are the sole cause of sexual violence is ludicrous." Never have I heard anyone of responsibility make such a charge and do not ever expect to hear such. Of course not, there are multiple causes, but legal pornography, child porn and obscenity are among them. On that there is no longer even a valid argument among professionals in the field.

Your fine state has valid, constitutional obscenity as opposed to pornography statutes. Those laws, when broken, constitute crimes. I suspect you have lost sight of crime in this case. Go through the regular judicial process; have a trial or two in your local courts in order to determine if these sexually-oriented videos legally meet the three-part test of obscenity as required by your law. If they do, the guilty parties need to be convicted and held liable. If not, the tapes will be found to be legal pornography, however morally undersirable they may be.

This is not a case of censorship, which is prior restraint of a work of an idea by the government. It is legal censure by your citizens, which is a right protected by our sacred First Amendment. Your agents in Richmond enacted and your governor signed the Virginia obscenity laws. You elected those folks. Such is truly an exercise in democracy.

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