

THE INTERNATIONAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN: CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

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PERPETUATING THE SEXUAL VICTIMIZATION OF CHILDREN

In the author's opinion, the most insidious use of child pornography is to perpetuate the sexual victimization of children. . . .

The exhibited pornography may consist exclusively of material which features adults in lewd poses or activities. In other cases, the pornography featuring adults will be shown to the child first, and after arousing the child's interest in the activities depicted, child pornography is introduced to endorse and encourage the participation of the child in similar activities.⁴⁵

In other cases, the pornography will be exhibited under the guise of "sex education." For example, the book *Show Me*⁴⁶ purports to be a sex education text for children and depicts children in various sex acts, including masturbation, oral copulation and vaginal intercourse. This book, writes a medical doctor, "... stresses the pleasure of sex as well as the biology," and according to a church spokesman is intended to "... evoke hours of informative and warm, intimate conversation among children, their parents and teachers [and] communicates the joy of physical closeness, tenderness, mutual appreciation and affection ... of relating to another with a unity of body and spirit."⁴⁷

Not surprisingly, *Show Me* is found with regularity during searches of child exploiters homes, and victims often report that exposure to this book preceded the initial act of molestation.⁴⁸ As a child, how can you doubt your parent, teacher or other trusted person, when a very "attractive"⁴⁹ book is endorsing the behavior sought by the adult exploiter?

The motive is the same, regardless of how the material is exhibited: To lower the victim's inhibitions; to create sexual arousal in the victim; to incite the curiosity of the victims regarding the activities depicted; and to convince the child that, "since it is in a book, it must be okay!"⁵⁰

In this PLAYBOY, September, 1991, article the author, Bill Andriette, debunks the existence of child pornography and criticizes the overly broad child porn statutes which place everyone at risk. He describes public and government concern about "nude" depictions of juveniles as mass "hysteria". What Playboy fails to inform its readers is that Andriette is the editor of the NAMBLA bulletin (North American Man Boy Love Association), an organization which actively advocates for sexual access to children. He is also a board member for PAIDIKA, THE JOURNAL OF PEDOPHILIA.

FORUM

ARE YOU A CHILD PORNOGRAPHER?

the war against nudity comes home

By BILL ANDRIETTE

Can the FBI raid your home on account of the books you own? Can the police shut down a library or museum or research institute because it contains publications the state rules impermissible?

As of November 29, 1990, when George Bush signed the Comprehensive Crime Act, the answer to those questions is yes. Buried in that legislation is a clause making it a felony to knowingly possess three or more books, magazines, videos or other matters that visually depict persons younger than 18 "engaging in sexually explicit conduct . . . real or simulated." The maximum sentence for violators is five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

On the face of it, the bill seems a useful weapon in the crusade against the sexual abuse of children. The logic behind the law is simple: If you can't stop the creation of the image (the actual abuse), penalize the demand (the market for images of the abuse). But since the Government began a concerted campaign in 1977, the already-limited market for child pornography has virtually dried up: About the only people still selling pictures of children and adolescents having sex are Federal law-enforcement agents conducting sting operations. In some cases, the agents succeeded in finding evidence of ongoing sexual abuse—trophy shots of victims—and under the new law, possession of those photographs is as serious a crime as actual abuse.

But in their zeal to discover new child pornographers, the Feds have now also criminalized a range of im-

ages that no one could possibly view as harmful to society or to children. The new law broadens the definition of sexually explicit conduct to include "lascivious exhibitions of the genitals or pubic areas." In other words, it now says that simple child nudity may be illegal. It allows for no distinction between the sweaty collection of a pervert or pederast and the coffee-table art of a responsible parent. If your family album contains pictures of your newborn having his or her diaper

The law tries to establish malicious intent where none may exist. If the local Fotomat turns over your family photos to the FBI, and upon searching your house, agents uncover a bootleg video of Bernardo Bertolucci's *1900* (which includes a scene of a boy masturbating), your interest in Marxist cinema puts you in jeopardy. If further searching uncovers a collection of old *Penthouse* magazines, including the September 1984 issue with then-underage model Traci Lords posing naked, you could go to jail. Under the law, your family photos, *1900*

and an issue of *Penthouse* become the three necessary items for conviction.

Antiporn crusaders in and out of the Government avow zero tolerance of child nudity. (It is noteworthy that the Justice Department tried to make possession of a single image a felony.) Last year, Dennis Barrie, the director of the Cincinnati Contemporary Arts Center, was prosecuted

for showing Robert Mapplethorpe's child nudes, among other works. And in April 1990, internationally known photographer Jock Sturges, who took pictures of families at nude beaches, was victimized by a raid in San Francisco. In both cases, the models came forward and said that the photos depicted innocent behavior. Evidently, artistic value or moral innocence offers no insurance against hysteria.

changed, taking his or her first bath or lying nude on a bearskin rug, you can be sent to jail.

The determination of lascivious conduct, the courts have ruled, depends on such subjective subtleties as the camera angle (does it showcase the genitals?), the position of the legs (are they parted?), the expression on the face (is there a seductive glint in the eye?), the style of attire (is it provocative?) or even the setting (is it a bedroom?). With such vague criteria, prosecutors can—and do—make the case that practically any photo of a naked minor is pornographic.

Bill Andriette is features editor of *The Guide*, a Boston-based gay magazine.



Coffee-table art or a Federal rap for child porn?