

NOT PUBLISHED.

Gerald Fowler,
 Dr. Christine Pickard, E.A.C. Goodman, LL.B., Pamela Manson.

NO/DAW/DP

30th June, 1979.

The Editor,
 "The Guardian",
 119 Farringdon Road,
 London, EC1R 3ER.

Dear Sir,

The assertion of defending counsel that "Porn 'led to rape'", in the case reported in "The Guardian" on 29th June, is as unwarranted as it is dishonest. The Motivation for rape, in the majority of cases, is nothing more than sexual gratification. The cause is the tragic, if common one of lack of self-control or self-discipline, something fortunately acquired by most of us in thorough upbringing, in our early, formative years, but not, alas, by all.

To suggest that the cause is anything besides, like the arousal of sexual desire by reading 'pornographic' magazines, is simply to display an inability to determine between cause and effect. That a rapist is unable to control his lustful desires is, of course, a matter of serious concern and, as the legal profession well knows, it is never an easy task to find anything to put forward in mitigation in such cases which would impress a jury. Faced with such a dilemma, it is a common ploy of defending lawyers to cite exposure to 'pornography' as the cause triggering off their clients' crimes. A great deal was made of this in the trial of the "Cambridge Rapist" but surprisingly little that the defendant was a former Broadmoor inmate and had a long history of mental illness.

Supposing, however, that 'pornography' does incite criminal sexual behaviour in a tiny minority of cases? Should we not consider how many cases

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of rape have been averted by the ~~availability~~ and use of 'pornography' as a "safety-valve" in relieving, albeit vicariously, the sexual desires and frustrations of inadequate, unfortunate, deprived - or simply unlucky, people?

Yours sincerely,

David Webb,
Organiser,
National Campaign for the Reform of the Obscene Publications Acts.