One of the reasons I've been asked to speak tonight is because they knew I'd bring along a bundle of porn for you to see. I did a similar talk a few months ago (which was far more cosy and no TV cameras etc.) and thought that there's not much point in talking about porn to people who may never have seen any. You can come and look at my books afterwards and I'll pass a few around the audience, so you can all get a close look. I'll be showing slides at the end. This talk is also available in writing if you would like to ask for it.

There's been heavy censorship and a yuppie disinterest in porn over the past 10-15 years. So many twenty year olds have NEVER seen any porn. But 20 years ago everyone had... As soon as Denmark decided to make porno legal (with the resultant drop in sex crimes, I should add) Britain was inundated with bacon lorries, parking down back alleys and off-loading frozen porn, or 'Scraps' as they were called, to the porn merchants. The police were totally corrupt in those days, and were in on the trading, and everyone thought it was jolly good fun. It was rather like the dope situation today because the police didn't think there was anything wrong with porn and were on our side.

Miss goody two shoes here, though, was producing legal stuff and I actually decided to import some old Danish titles which I could sell legally here. Unfortunately, they sent later editions which were stronger and I got haulled up to HM Customs & Excise to discuss my import consignment. This really straight Customs official and I were sitting in an office discussing how erect cocks were in certain photos - if they were erect, they'd be illegal, if not I'd be OK. You can just imagine the scene!

I started off in the industry because I knew a printer who printed sex magazines and I thought they were tame and tacky. 'Five-Boobs Arts' were being mass produced for sale in newsagents. They also pirated American kinky mags such as CORPORAL and BIZARRE and re-printed novels which came out over and over again with new titles. I produced my own range of books such as THE SUMMER HOLIDAY SEX MANUAL and put Obscenity Wrappers round them, which was kind of exploiting the censorship situation. In America, they did even better and brought out an ILLUSTRATED PRESIDENTIAL REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON OBSCENITY AND PORNOGRAPHY - full of pornographic picks and selling like hot cakes.

The early 70s produced the best porn ever - there were lots of enthusiasts like me and SUCK published the Family Issue with the great photo of Germaine Greer in it, this came out in Holland but with international contributors such as Bill Levy, Germaine Greer and Heathcote Williams. I recently showed a bunch of young art college students my porn collection and SUCK was hot and raunchy yet intelligent, produced by men and women for fun and exploration. The Germans produced beautiful books such as LOVE LOVE, SOFT LOVE etc. In the UK, OZ published it's school kids issue with an ad from SUCK containing an article on blow jobs and thus the famous trial.

In America, there was LOVE, and FINGER and Annie Sprinkle started her Salon producing her NEWSLETTER DEVOTED TO PISS ART etc. As well as the good stuff, there were some hysterically crappy things being produced: MASTURBATION IN MARRIAGE is my favorite. But the big boys did produce some quality things too: SEXUAL FREEDOM, and ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF MALE SEX DEVICES. PRIVATE, the Swedish hard-core, reached an excellent quality. It always has two covers: the outer polite and the inner hard-core. Photos essays begin with the girl in her home surroundings - walking through her town or along a local lane. Then she strips and shows her parts and is joined by a man or two, who enter her and finish by coming over her face. The pictures are very sharp, well lit and realistic, the sex very hard. Milton has always written an essay on morals in his magazine which is still going, now produced in Spain, and edited by his son.

As the police corruption was cleaned up here, and the indecent displays act came into play and sex shops suddenly had to be licenced (licenses costing almost £20,000 per year!) we have been seeing less and less porno. The National Campaign Against The Obscene Publications Acts (NCROPA for short - ed.) was set up by David Webb, and continues today to fight against sexual censorship.

You may think that all porn is controlled by men but you'd be wrong. Beate Uhse began an enormous porn empire when she started the first sex supermarkets in Germany and published millions of books and videos. They even took over a big British sex company last year. Mistress Antonette, also a large empire, produces kinky magazines and videos in California, Arabella Melville produced LIBERTINE from Leicester in the 70's and Lily Pond produces YELLOW SILK, a very soft, poetic journal of erotic arts. A few years ago, Leonie, a kind of Dutch equivalent to Fiona Pitt Keighley produced four sex magazines for women called BEV and a group of women in San Francisco decided to produce sex stories and published LADIES' HOME EROTICA. Paula Meadows is a major contributor to FESSE, a British female submissive magazine.

Candida Royale, who is in London this week promoting her sex videos for women, runs her own company, Femme Productions. So, it's all happening, but despite the fact that some of us pornographers take our work seriously, the industry is not given any respect (nor has any consolidated self-respect). We don't have our school kids issue with an ad from SUCK containing an article on blow jobs and thus the famous trial.

The only British University that has been prepared to look seriously at the topic of porno is Reading, and its Professor Christie Davies described Britain as having Double Porn. On the continent, he says, they have good honest porn but we have porn posing as an attack. This is the tabloid press who print "It's our duty to reveal the most disgusting this and that." He calls this Double Porn.

British hypocrisy is part of our lifestyle. You might be shocked to find a copy of TEENAGE RAZOOMAS in a little post office in the Cotswolds, but I know a Somerset postmaster who runs a porn video club. And the petrol station on the main road probably sells soft porn, but only what its owner decides is OK. Mr Patel, WH Smith and John Menzies control what we see. Mind you, I recently spoke to a young man who had spent a few month's working in his dad's newsagents in Stockport and he was amused that the husbands would go out in the morning, stop off to buy a girlie mag and then in the afternoon their wives would come in and complain about the same girlie mags being on the shelves. Smiths and Menzies even have a list of activities that may not be mentioned, the list is anti-gay, anti S/M, forbids erections etc., although many of these things appear in general interest magazines. This month's TATLER
shows pictures of pornographic watches and a recent CITY LIMITS advertised a night club with a hard core image, even though the club isn’t really sexy.

Britain isn’t alone in having censorship problems - sexual freedom is having to be heavily defended in the USA. I read recently in an American article by Carol Queen in SEXUAL SANITY: “We are a nation suffering from sexual schizophrenia.”

Sexual pleasure is the most extreme form of pleasure we have. Love can be painful, bearing children can be painful and tiring but sex is always a delight. You’d have to have something radically wrong with you to not be curious to see a sex book. So why is it so difficult for us to do so? Because religions tell us it’s bad. Who would go to church on Sundays if we could look at sex books instead? David Sullivan got it right bringing out The Sunday Sport! But there’s something you should know about these soft pornographers and Double Pornographers of this world. They want to keep Britain’s censorship laws because then they can carry on teasing and pretending to the public instead of delivering the real stuff, hard core pornography.

I am so used to being censored that I hardly notice. My 8mm films were seized because they bore the director’s name. Lasse Braun, a name the police equated with hard core, even though I’d had them cut to come within British law. My distributors insist that I take out all reference to anal sex and all the squirts in the drawings have to go because they are squeamish about such things! I have printers refusing to print my books - usually religious reasons, or they say “The women in the bindery would be shocked” or “right on” printers accuse my books of being sexist (which they aren’t).

Fortunately, I’ve not suffered as much as colleagues from those antiporn feminists but Peter Webb, author of THE EROTIC ARTS has had coffins sent to him and other horrid tricks and even the magazine CUPIDO, which takes great trouble to feature as many pics of men as women and aims at both genders, is attacked by them. Take care that many feminists who say something is sexist really mean that it’s sexy. They just hate sex.

I can mean only too much censorship. It encourages me to be more creative and search for words such as “dingleberries”. If people really want porno, they will find it. But what really upsets me is when censorship destroys people’s lives. For example, when the denial of information puts people’s lives at risk from HIV. We read about surveys being censored - one was not allowed to ask teen-denial of information puts people’s lives at risk from HIV.

We read about surveys being censored - one was not allowed to ask teens about oral sex. I was disgusted that many feminists who say something is sexist really mean that it’s sexy. They just hate sex.

Many of the pictures come from the beautiful 70s porno books I’ve collected. There are pictures of women watching men masturbate, men alone with sex magazines on a bed, masturbating. Men looking at a vulva, sucking it and exploring it. There’s a photo of cunnilingus which I took myself for one of my picture books and it shows the sex position but no tongue-pussy contact. The next slide in the series shows this contact, demonstrating the difference in value between soft core and hard core. There are stroking, massage, and sensuous photos, breast stimulation and some unusual sex practices such as nipple stimulation with the penis, cleavage stimulation of the penis and girl using a cucumber. There are close-up pictures of fingers which look very sexy, as if they are genitals. Patricia and I produced these slides simply to help people with therapy and any profits go to the Outsiders Club.

MY ANSWERS TO THE STANDARD QUESTIONS:

DOES PORNOGRAPHY LEAD TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN?

There’s been raping and pillaging for centuries but porn has only been available to the masses for the past 30 years. Pornography, the writing of harlots, was originally told by story tellers during rituals that lead up to marriage. Danish research showed that legalising porno lead to less sexual violence.

DO PORNOGRAPHY USERS JUST WANT MORE AND MORE, AND MORE EXTREME STUFF?

In Denmark, everyone wanted to have a peep at everything and then they got bored and it was mostly tourists buying it. Good porno is extreme, as it is fantasy material and there’s nothing wrong with that. Sadly, most porn is drearily the same and punters seem to want to see the same old stuff churned out over and over again.

IS THE PORNO TRADE MALE DOMINATED?

No more than most other industries, but many women run porno companies and magazines and video, e.g. Beate Uhse and Candida Royale. Nearly all porn is aimed at men because mostly men buy it, although most women in the trade usually try to encourage a female clientele.

DO GIRLS GET EXPLOITED?

Most porno stars enjoy their work although they usually find porn gets boring. They do get annoyed when they get booked to do a blue show and discover that the audience is a group of police men having a night of fun - maybe the same police who do porno and club bints.

REFERENCES


SEXUAL SANITY - a new magazine produced by Carol Queen, David Steinberg et al, PO Box 471061, San Francisco CA 94147.

ORGANISATIONS

FEMINISTS AGAINST CENSORSHIP
BM Box 207, London WC1 3XX.

NCROPA
C/o David Webb, 15 Sloane Court West, London SW3 4TD.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST CENSORSHIP
C/o 25 Middleton Close, Fareham, Hants PO14 1QN.

OUTSIDERS PO Box 42B, London W1A 4ZB.

LIBERTARIAN ALLIANCE
25 Chapter Chambers, Esterbrooke Street, London SW1P 4NN.