

PORNOGRAPHY: ANYTHING GOES IN DENMARK

DEC 1975.

IMPORT FORWARDING CO.

7471 Melrose Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90046.

In June of 1967 the Danish Parliament voted 159 to 13 to erase

all laws and restrictions on the sale or possession of written pornography. Two years later, the Parliament repealed all laws that would prohibit making or selling pornographic films and pictures, and at the same time removed cinema censorship except below the age of 16. The result of this sweeping new legislation is that anyone, even an entire family may now attend a theatre in Denmark and watch sexual intercourse performed on the screen in wide-screen color and sound.

To be sure, this unprecedented situation has occurred not without a measure of public criticism and concern, but beneath the outcry of the conservative reaction there has been much to confirm the decision of the Danish Government.

One of the main reasons for the ban on censorship was the report of the Danish Medical-Legal Council which said in substance that the direction of sexual desire is not altered or affected by reading or viewing pornographic material, and recommended that laws dealing with censorship should be abandoned. Their findings seem to have been borne out by new surveys taken in Scandinavia to assess the results of legalized pornography. Accordingly, they have established five major arguments to back up their claims.

First, and in answer to the most vehement of all public denunciations, there has been no increase of sex crimes during the past two years since the tests were begun. A psychiatrist in the Sankt Hans Hospital, the largest Mental Facility in Denmark, Dr. Anders Groth says, "We find there has been a steady decline of sex crimes since the beginning of the '60's, and between the years 1966 and 1967 there was a decline of at least 25% in Copenhagen." In more recent findings he has noted even a sharper decline. This seems to destroy the myth that pornoaraphic material stimulates certain individuals to acts of violence. Indeed, if

this were the case, the rates of this type of crime would increase, not decline. Furthermore, he points out that while sex crimes have been occurring with less frequency, other forms of crime are definitely on the rise. He summarily points out that pornography appears to abate passion rather than inflame it. It should be stressed that this singular bit of evidence is exactly opposite to what public hearsay and folklore would have us believe, and rather convincingly disposes of the so-called moralists unscientific warnings. Their teachings were conceived in an era of scientific ignorance, and like many false doctrines of past centuries, wilts in the light of modern evidence based on reason.

The second argument states that far from being a study in runaway degredation, sales of pornographic books are rather steady, and in some cases actually declining. It appears that once the restrictions on this material are lifted much of the forbidden stature collapses and it takes on the appeal of a commonplace item. This situation already exists in the book segment of the industry, and producers of visual pornography are concerned that public apathy will overtake them.

Jens Theander, co-owner of Rodox Trading, the most successful producer of pornographic pictures agrees with this prognosis. He feels that the Danes are becoming satiated with pornography now that the curious have had their fill. He has some interesting comments on his customers. For instance one of his magazines, "COLOR CLIMAX" sells for \$3.00 and has a circulation of 30,000, although only a third of that stays in Denmark. Of that portion which reaches the United States, Baltimore seems to be involved in the largest traffic.

Theander says that to keep the buying public buying, the material must be strong, show everything in close-up graphic detail, it has to have good looking girls and be in color. The trend now is toward group sex.

The Americans apparently prefer large breasts and the Germans like nice rear ends. The average customer seems to be in the middle and upper middle class, and most are at least 35 years old, and the audience is virtually all male.

The third point says that when the restrictions against pornography are lifted, and the public at large accepts its existence, the quality of the material will most certainly improve. It is now believed that pornography will give a new art form to the public, once the curious have digested all they can. The old hard-core pornography was cold and impersonal, but with freedom from being told what not to produce, the competition between those who produce it, the pornography industry could rise to the status of a universally acknowledged avenue for creative endeavor.

The fourth point, but certainly second only to crime as an argument against legalized pornography, is its effect upon children. The Medical-Legal Council feels that by far, the most important influence on children is the parents and the home atmosphere and not an exposure to erotic material. The most damaging attitude to youngsters is their parent's attitude that sex is dirty. They are far more likely to respond to their parents inhibitions than the portrayal of a sex act by two or more complete strangers. In fact, when looked at in the light of reason it seems grossly illogical that our society condemns the act of love and physical gratification while condoning violence and sadism in all media. It is quite possible that the mature segment of society is sick and the youngsters, with their healthy curiosity about sex and pleasure are far more well adjusted than the rest.

In addition it is felt that bringing the matter of sexual relations out of the locker rooms and into the area of general knowledge, will prevent the young from falling prey to the countless myths that exist on the subject. This action will undoubtedly better prepare young people to enjoy sex more openly, with fewer inhibitions and will ultimately produce a generation with the psychological equipment to live happily in this shrinking world. We have certainly produced wonderful means to increase our enjoyment of pleasure oriented activities, and this ability should include all fields of stimulation.

The fifth and final argument in the case for legalized pornography is that in some cases it may actually serve a good and positive function. Most neurotic individuals who have been convicted of sexual deviation have, through interrogation, revealed that their homes were generally devoid of the mention

of sex. The point here is that far from reacting to an overabundance of pornography, these people seem to be prisoners of ignorance.

Psychologists now tend to speak very frankly about the people to whom pornography serves a necessary function. Lonely people without partners, shy people, the forgotten people who pass unnoticed by the majority of society who have a genuine physical need, as does anyone, but are unable to satisfy it for a variety of worthless reasons imposed on them by the very society that refuses to acknowledge their existence. Pornography gives them an outlet through masturbation. Perhaps many will object to this line of reasoning, but in the state of the world today, where else can they turn.

Finally, pornography can benefit the so called established middle class. Everyone has his own small problems, elements of frigidity, impotence and lethargy to name a few. Pornography can inspire couples who have become a little bored with themselves, when after viewing a film or reading a book they become stimulated and take to themselves with a new-found vigor, with satisfying results for all concerned.

Pornography, a word that originally came from the Greek meaning to "write about prostitutes", has at the hands of self-righteous moralists, suffered well out of proportion to its function of depiction of pleasure. Possibly, the liberal and far-thinking Danes have initiated a program that will benefit all of mankind, particularly the United States which has wallowed in the stagnant foundations of puritanical beliefs for centuries. We may be entering a new age of enlightenment in sexual matters as we have so successfully in others. For, at the heart of the matter is one's assertion of himself as an individual, capable of and willing to determine his own way. It's working in Scandinavia and will soon be commonplace in other parts of the world, so if America is really governed by its people, and its people no longer wish to be told what to read or see, then it is certainly within their grasp to legalize pornography or anything else which is proven to be of no harm. It is absurd that a man can buy a weapon with enough ammunition to annihilate a city, and yet not be able to purchase a film showing people enjoying the God-given feeling of sexual gratification. This bold step by the Danes, bringing sex out of its trough of mysticism, may well herald a new dawn in the society of man.