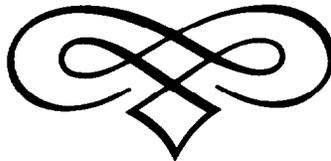


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PREPARED FOR
C. EVERETT KOOP, M.D.
SURGEON GENERAL
U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
AND
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR HEALTH
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



PRESENTED BY THEODORE O. CRON AT THE WHITE HOUSE BRIEFING FOR THE
RELIGIOUS ALLIANCE AGAINST PORNOGRAPHY
WASHINGTON, D.C.
NOVEMBER 13, 1986

(GREETINGS TO HOSTS, GUESTS, ETC.)

IT'S MY PRIVILEGE TODAY TO REPRESENT OUR SURGEON GENERAL, DR. C. EVERETT KOOP, WHO WANTED VERY MUCH TO BE WITH YOU BUT WHO, AT THIS VERY MOMENT, UNFORTUNATELY, IS PREPARING FOR SURGERY. OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS ARE WITH HIM.

DR. KOOP DID, HOWEVER, WANT HIS MESSAGE ON PORNOGRAPHY DELIVERED TO THIS AUDIENCE. AND, AS HIS SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR THE PAST SIX YEARS, I AM HAPPY TO OBLIGE.

MY REMARKS WILL BE FOCUSED ON THE PARTICULAR PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS RAISED BY THE ISSUE OF PORNOGRAPHY. I REALIZE THAT OUR TRAINING AND EXPERIENCES IN PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICINE MAY DIFFER FROM YOURS, YET -- ON CERTAIN MATTERS -- PHYSICIANS, NURSES, PSYCHOLOGISTS, AND THE CLERGY CAN ALL AGREE.

WE SHARE, FOR EXAMPLE, SIMILIAR FEELINGS...

ABOUT THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE...

AND THE NECESSITY TO PRACTICE OUR RESPECTIVE CALLINGS WITH A
STRONG LEAVENING OF DECENCY AND MORALITY...

AND WE SHARE SIMILAR FEELINGS ON WHAT WE ARE OBLIGED TO DO -- ON
OUR OWN AS WELL AS THROUGH OUR INSTITUTIONS -- TO MAKE SURE THAT
THIS WORLD IS A SANER, HEALTHIER PLACE WHEN WE LEAVE, THAN IT WAS
WHEN WE CAME IN.

SUCH A MORAL PERSPECTIVE OUGHT TO BE AN INTEGRAL PART OF ANYONE'S
PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE, REGARDLESS OF HIS OR HER FAITH OR CONFESSIONAL
PREFERENCE.

THIS PERSPECTIVE WAS CERTAINLY INTEGRAL TO THE PRACTICE OF PEDIATRIC SURGERY, WHICH DR. KOOP PURSUED FOR 35 YEARS BEFORE HE WAS CHOSEN BY PRESIDENT REAGAN TO BE THE COUNTRY'S SURGEON GENERAL.

THIS PAST SUMMER, AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY'S CELEBRATION OF ITS 350TH BIRTHDAY, DR. KOOP REMINDED HIS CAMBRIDGE AUDIENCE THAT THE FIRST EUROPEAN SETTLERS NAVIGATED THEIR WAY ACROSS THE ATLANTIC A FULL CENTURY BEFORE THE INVENTION OF THE QUADRANT AND THE SPRING-WOUND CLOCK.

THEY HAD NO TECHNOLOGY TO SAIL WITH. INSTEAD, THEY HAD A HUMANE INTUITION...A COMMITMENT TO THEIR COMMUNITY...AND A STERN, TENACIOUS FAITH. AND DR. KOOP WENT ON TO WONDER IF, TODAY, WE MIGHT HAVE MORE TECHNOLOGY THAN IS GOOD FOR US...BUT LESS OF THE FAITH THAT WE SO DESPERATELY NEED.

FAITH WAS THEIR COMPASS. AND FAITH SHOULD BE OUR COMPASS AS WELL.

AND TODAY, WE ARE CONFRONTING AN ISSUE WHICH IS A TEST OF OUR FAITH...OUR FAITH AS CITIZENS...OUR FAITH AS CLERGY AND PUBLIC HEALTH WORKERS...AND OUR FAITH AS HUMAN BEINGS.

THE ISSUE IS...PORNOGRAPHY.

AT ONE TIME, THE PUBLIC'S CONCERN DEALT ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY WITH BOOK STORES AND MOVIE THEATERS THAT SPECIALIZED IN PORNOGRAPHY. BUT TODAY'S HUCKSTERS OF PORNOGRAPHY HAVE INVADED CABLE TELEVISION, POPULAR MUSIC, TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS, AND THE WHOLE NEW FIELD OF HOME VIDEOS. THROUGH THESE NEW TECHNOLOGIES THEY'VE EXPANDED THEIR MARKETS OF SLEAZE AND TRASH.

DESPITE THIS, WE TEND TO GIVE PORNOGRAPHY LOW PRIORITY IN THE OVERALL SCHEME OF PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS. BUT TO IGNORE THE EVIDENCE ANY LONGER WOULD BE TO MAKE A CONSCIOUS DECISION NOT TO SEE PORNOGRAPHY AS A CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER TO AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH.

AND WE BELIEVE IT IS.

THE DEGREE TO WHICH PORNOGRAPHY HAS BECOME A SERIOUS SOCIAL PROBLEM CAN BE SEEN, OF COURSE, IN THE RECENT REPORT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S COMMISSION ON PORNOGRAPHY.

THAT REPORT CLEARLY INDICATES THAT WE CAN NO LONGER DISMISS PORNOGRAPHY AS HARMLESS AND THEN JUST FORGET ABOUT IT.

THE LAST COMMISSION SAID THAT BACK IN 1970...AND IT WAS WRONG. AND TODAY WE KNOW -- WITH MORE PRECISION -- JUST HOW WRONG IT WAS.

A YEAR AGO, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S COMMISSION DECIDED TO EXPLORE THE SPECIFIC EFFECTS THAT PORNOGRAPHY MIGHT HAVE UPON THE PUBLIC HEALTH. THE COMMISSION INVITED SURGEON GENERAL KOOP TO GIVE TESTIMONY ON THE SUBJECT IN JUNE OF 1985.

AT THAT TIME, DR. KOOP SUGGESTED THAT THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE MIGHT TAKE A LOOK AT THE LINKAGE BETWEEN PORNOGRAPHY AND HEALTH, IF THE COMMISSION MEMBERS THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL. THE MEMBERS AGREED AND EVEN PROVIDED THE SUPPORT FOR A MODEST BUT NEVERTHELESS USEFUL CONTRIBUTION.

IT TOOK THE FORM OF A "SURGEON GENERAL'S WORKSHOP ON PORNOGRAPHY AND PUBLIC HEALTH" THAT WAS HELD THIS PAST JUNE.

FOR THAT OCCASION, DR. KOOP CALLED TOGETHER 20 OF THE BEST PEOPLE HE COULD FIND...RESEARCHERS AND CLINICIANS...PEOPLE WITH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL REPUTATIONS...AND ASKED THEM TO THINK ABOUT SEVERAL QUESTIONS IN THE COURSE OF THAT TWO-DAY WORKSHOP:

FIRST, WHAT DO WE KNOW WITH SOME DEGREE OF CERTAINTY ABOUT THE EFFECTS OF PORNOGRAPHY UPON THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH OF OUR PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY UPON YOUNG CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS?

SECOND, WHAT KINDS OF THINGS DO WE STILL NEED TO KNOW...IN OTHER WORDS, WHAT IS OUR RESEARCH AGENDA FOR THE FUTURE?

AND THIRD, AS PROFESSIONALS IN PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICINE, WHAT DO WE THINK OUGHT TO BE DONE NEXT, EITHER BY OUR COLLEAGUES IN RESEARCH AND CLINICAL PRACTICE OR BY OUR GOVERNMENT?

THE PARTICIPANTS GAVE THOUGHTFUL ANSWERS TO THESE THREE QUESTIONS AND ACQUITTED THEMSELVES VERY WELL.

I WON'T REPEAT ALL THE DISCUSSION THAT OCCURRED, BUT I WILL SHARE WITH YOU THE FIVE STATEMENTS OF CONSENSUS THAT DID EMERGE. THEY'RE NEW...AND THEY'RE IMPORTANT.

FIRST, THE PARTICIPANTS AGREED THAT, QUOTE -- "CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WHO PARTICIPATE IN THE PRODUCTION OF PORNOGRAPHY EXPERIENCE ADVERSE, ENDURING EFFECTS" -- UNQUOTE.

THE PARTICIPANTS REGARDED THIS KIND OF THING AS SEXUAL VICTIMIZATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE, "PURE AND SIMPLE." THEY NOTED THAT THERE WAS A CONNECTION BETWEEN THE INVOLVEMENT OF CHILDREN IN THE PRODUCTION OF PORNOGRAPHIC MATERIALS AND THEIR SUBSEQUENT ENTRAPMENT INTO THE WORLD OF CHILD PROSTITUTION.

DR. MIMI SILBERT OF SAN FRANCISCO REPORTED ON THE MENTAL HEALTH IMPLICATIONS OF THIS. SHE NOTED THAT JUVENILE PROSTITUTES WHO ARE "TRAPPED IN A SELF-DESTRUCTIVE CYCLE, FEEL THEMSELVES TO BE OUT OF CONTROL OF THEIR LIVES. ESSENTIALLY THEY HAVE DEVELOPED A CHRONIC DISORDER AS A RESULT OF THEIR VICTIMIZATION." SHE GOES ON TO SAY THAT THEY ARE UNABLE "TO SEPARATE THEMSELVES FROM THE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION IN ORDER TO RE-ESTABLISH A POSITIVE LIFE."

NEXT, THE PARTICIPANTS AGREED THAT -- QUOTE -- "PROLONGED USE OF PORNOGRAPHY INCREASES BELIEFS THAT LESS COMMON SEXUAL PRACTICES ARE MORE COMMON" -- UNQUOTE.

THIS SHOULD COME AS NO SURPRISE, SINCE THE CONCLUSION IS THE SAME THAT OCCURS WHEN WE TALK ABOUT VIOLENCE AND OTHER ACTS OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR:

REPEATED EXPOSURE TO THEM -- VIA TELEVISION, FOR EXAMPLE, OR MOVIES SUCH AS THE SO-CALLED "SLASHER FILMS" -- TENDS TO BUILD UP THE IMPRESSION THAT PEOPLE ARE DOING SUCH THINGS MORE OFTEN THAN IS ACTUALLY THE CASE.

THE WORK OF DR. DOLF ZILLMAN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF INDIANA IS SIGNIFICANT IN THIS REGARD. HIS WORK CLEARLY INDICATES THAT MASSIVE EXPOSURE TO UNCOMMON AND EVEN BIZARRE HETEROSEXUAL PRACTICES -- INCLUDING SADOMASOCHISM AND EVEN BESTIALTY -- LEADS PERSONS, WHO ARE SO EXPOSED, TO BELIEVE THAT SUCH PRACTICES ARE MUCH MORE COMMON THAN THEY REALLY ARE.

DR. ZILLMAN'S FINDINGS, BY THE WAY, FIT IN WITH WHAT WE'RE LEARNING ELSEWHERE IN THE FIELD OF COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND HOW WE REACH CONCLUSIONS ON THINGS ABOUT WHICH WE'RE A LITTLE UNCERTAIN.

THE THIRD CONSENSUS STATEMENT SAID, QUOTE -- "PORNOGRAPHY THAT PORTRAYS SEXUAL AGGRESSION AS PLEASURABLE FOR THE VICTIM INCREASES THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE USE OF COERCION IN SEXUAL RELATIONS" -- UNQUOTE.

THIS KIND OF PORNOGRAPHY WOULD APPEAR TO BE THE CAUSE FOR MUCH OF THE RAPE THAT OCCURS TODAY. IMPRESSIONABLE MEN -- MANY OF THEM STILL IN ADOLESCENCE -- SEE THIS MATERIAL AND BEGIN TO BELIEVE THAT WOMEN LIKE TO BE HURT...THEY LIKE TO BE HUMILITATED AND FORCED TO DO THINGS THEY DON'T WANT TO DO...OR THEY LIKE TO APPEAR TO BE FORCED TO DO THINGS THEY REALLY DO WANT TO DO.

THIS IS ANOTHER FALSE STEREOTYPE...ANOTHER VICIOUS KIND OF MYTH-
OLOGY. BUT THIS IS A MYTH THAT LEADS TO THE PAIN AND EVEN THE DEATHS
OF VICTIMIZED WOMEN.

PROFESSOR NEIL MALAMUTH OF U.C.L.A. REPORTED THAT HIS MOST RECENT RESEARCH INDICATED THAT MEN WHO SCORE HIGH ON A "LIKELIHOOD-TO-RAPE" SCALE, WHICH HAS BEEN VALIDATED IN OTHER RESEARCH, ARE PRECISELY THE KIND OF MEN WHO ARE MOST AFFECTED BY PORNOGRAPHY THAT DEPICTS A VICTIMIZED WOMAN ENJOYING THE CRIME OF RAPE OR OF ASSAULT THAT'S BEING COMMITTED AGAINST HER.

FOURTH, AND I QUOTE -- "ACCEPTANCE OF COERCIVE SEXUALITY APPEARS TO BE RELATED TO SEXUAL AGGRESSION" -- UNQUOTE.

ALTHOUGH IT WAS VERY CAUTIOUSLY FRAMED, THIS CONSENSUS STATEMENT, ALONG WITH THE PREVIOUS ONE, COMPLETES THE CIRCLE OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE.

WHAT IT MEANS IS THIS: IF A MAN IS EXPOSED TO A STEADY STREAM OF SEXUALLY VIOLENT MATERIAL IN WHICH THE VICTIM SEEMS TO BE ENJOYING THE EXPERIENCE, HE GETS THE IDEA THAT COERCION AND VIOLENCE ARE ACCEPTABLE IN SEXUAL RELATIONS.

AND THEN HE MAY VERY WELL TAKE THE NEXT STEP. HE WILL CONVERT HIS ATTITUDE INTO HIS BEHAVIOR. IN OTHER WORDS, HE WILL BECOME THE PERPETRATOR HE'S BEEN READING ABOUT IN PORNOGRAPHIC MAGAZINES OR WATCHING IN PORNOGRAPHIC FILMS AND VIDEOS.

NATURALLY, THIS RESEARCH IS BASED ALMOST ENTIRELY ON SELF-REPORTED EXPERIENCES BY CONVICTED RAPISTS AND OTHERS. BUT THIS KIND OF CLINICAL EVIDENCE HAS BEEN ACCUMULATING SINCE 1965.

WHILE PORNOGRAPHY HAS THUS FAR NOT BEEN IDENTIFIED AS THE MOST CRITICAL INFLUENCE FOR SUCH BEHAVIOR, THE WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS NEVERTHELESS AGREED THAT PORNOGRAPHY SIGNIFICANTLY CONTRIBUTED TO SUCH BEHAVIOR.

FIFTH AND FINALLY, QUOTE -- "IN LABORATORY STUDIES MEASURING SHORT-TERM EFFECTS, EXPOSURE TO VIOLENT PORNOGRAPHY INCREASES PUNITIVE BEHAVIOR TOWARD WOMEN" -- UNQUOTE.

THIS, ALSO, IS OBVIOUSLY IMPOSSIBLE TO PROVE BY CONTROLLED EXPERIMENTS. IT'S DIFFICULT TO ACCUMULATE HARD RESEARCH DATA ON VIOLENT OUTCOMES OF PORNOGRAPHY BECAUSE OF THE OVER-RIDING ETHIC THAT PREVENTS US FROM DOING HARM TO HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH. NEVERTHELESS, THIS FIFTH CONCLUSION CAN BE SAFELY DRAWN FROM THE FEW ETHICALLY CIRCUMSCRIBED EXPERIMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN DONE.

AMONG THESE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF LABORATORY STUDIES BY DR. EDWARD DONNERSTEIN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA. THOSE STUDIES INDICATE, AS HE EMPHASIZED TO US IN JUNE, THAT MEN EXHIBIT HIGH LEVELS OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR AFTER SEEING, FOR EXAMPLE, A SEXUALLY AGGRESSIVE FILM. THEY WILL, IN EFFECT, "ACT OUT" ANY VIOLENT FANTASIES WHICH WERE STIMULATED BY VIEWING SUCH SEXUALLY VIOLENT PORNOGRAPHY.

THOSE, THEN, ARE THE 5 KEY CONCLUSIONS THAT CAME OUT OF THE "SURGEON GENERAL'S WORKSHOP ON VIOLENCE AND PUBLIC HEALTH."

WE BELIEVE IT'S THEREFORE FAIR TO SAY, BASED ON THESE 5 CONSENSUS STATEMENTS, THAT PORNOGRAPHY DOES STIMULATE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR THAT DO HAVE GRAVELY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FOR SOCIETY. THOSE CONSEQUENCES INCLUDE THE IMPAIRMENT OF THE MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, AND PHYSICAL HEALTH OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS -- THAT'S CLEAR ENOUGH -- AND MAY THUS CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE BURDEN OF ILLNESS AND PREMATURE DEATH IN OUR SOCIETY. AND PORNOGRAPHY ADVERSELY EFFECTS THE HEALTH OF BOTH THE VICITM AND THE VICTIMIZER.

AS A RESULT OF DR. KOOP'S LEADERSHIP AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS BY ALL THE PARTICIPANTS AT THAT WORKSHOP, WE CAN SAY THAT THE RECORD IS NOW MUCH CLEARER AND MUCH LESS AMBIGUOUS, WITH REGARD TO THE EFFECTS UPON AMERICAN LIFE OF PORNOGRAPHY...PARTICULARLY CHILD PORNOGRAPHY AND SEXUALLY VIOLENT PORNOGRAPHY.

I BROUGHT WITH ME TODAY SOME 50 COPIES OF THE REPORT OF THE SURGEON GENERAL'S WORKSHOP FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO MAY BE INTERESTED IN THE COMPLETE DOCUMENT. IF THESE RUN OUT, YOU CAN STILL SECURE A FREE COPY BY WRITING DIRECTLY TO ME, TED CRON...C-R-O-N...IN CARE OF THE OFFICE OF THE SURGEON GENERAL, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201.

AT THIS POINT I MIGHT ADD THAT OUR APPROACH TO PORNOGRAPHY HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH A CITIZEN'S RIGHTS UNDER THE FIRST AMENDMENT. RATHER, WE WERE CONCERNED ONLY WITH THE SCIENTIFIC RECORD REGARDING PUBLIC SPEECH OR WRITING THAT MAY POSSIBLY ENDANGER THE LIFE OR DIMINISH THE WELL-BEING OF ANY CITIZEN. THAT'S THE PUBLIC HEALTH PERSPECTIVE.

AND SUCH A PERSPECTIVE GUIDED THE SURGEON GENERAL THROUGHOUT THIS EFFORT ON BEHALF OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S COMMISSION ON PORNOGRAPHY.

THE CONCLUSIONS OF THAT WORKSHOP POINT IN JUST ONE DIRECTION:

PORNOGRAPHY IS ANTI-HUMAN AND ANTI-FEMININE IN PARTICULAR.

ITS APPEAL IS TO A DARK AND DESTRUCTIVE IMPULSE.

IT IS THE KIND OF THING WE MUST GUARD AGAINST. UNFORTUNATELY, THIS IS NOT A NEW ASSIGNMENT FOR MEN AND WOMEN OF GOOD CONSCIENCE. I'M SURE YOU WILL RECALL THE ADVICE THAT KING SOLOMON OFFERED HIS SONS IN PROVERBS, CHAPTER 6.

HE WARNED OF "THE WICKED MAN" WHO "GOES ABOUT WITH CROOKED SPEECH, WINKS HIS EYES, SCRAPES WITH HIS FEET, POINTS WITH HIS FINGER, (AND) WITH PERVERTED HEART DEVISES EVIL, CONTINUALLY SOWING DISCORD; THEREFORE," SAYS PROVERBS, 6:15, "CALAMITY WILL COME UPON HIM SUDDENLY; IN A MOMENT HE WILL BE BROKEN BEYOND HEALING."

AS PEOPLE CONCERNED WITH LIFE AND HEALTH, WE WISH CALAMITY UPON NO ONE. HOWEVER, I SUSPECT THAT SURGEON GENERAL KOOP AND THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE ITSELF WOULD NOT BE OVERCOME WITH SORROW IF THE PORNOGRAPHY INDUSTRY, IN THE WORDS OF PROVERBS, WERE "IN A MOMENT... BROKEN BEYOND HEALING."

AGAIN, THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO BE HERE ON BEHALF OF A GREAT PUBLIC SERVANT, OUR SURGEON GENERAL, DR. C. EVERETT KOOP.

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