

Reagan's Smutstompers

The folks who pledged to get government off our backs want to control what you watch on your VCR and read in your bedroom.

Filthy literature... is creating criminals faster than jails can be built.

—J. Edgar Hoover, 1970

J Edgar Hoover died in 1972, but his ghost still haunts the Justice Department.

Attorney General Edwin Meese III has resumed the war on civil liberties abandoned after Hoover's death. Not since Hoover's time has an Attorney General denied, as Meese did during an interview with *U.S. News & World Report*, that criminal suspects should be presumed innocent because "if a person is innocent of a crime, then he is not a suspect."

A particularly pernicious part of the Justice Department's war on liberty is its campaign against "pornography"—which term it strategically uses to condemn everything from soft-erotica to violent

S&M flicks. In this assault, the Reagan administration has chosen to undermine the most sacred right of a free people: the right to see and read what we like, unhindered by the whims of obscure regulators.

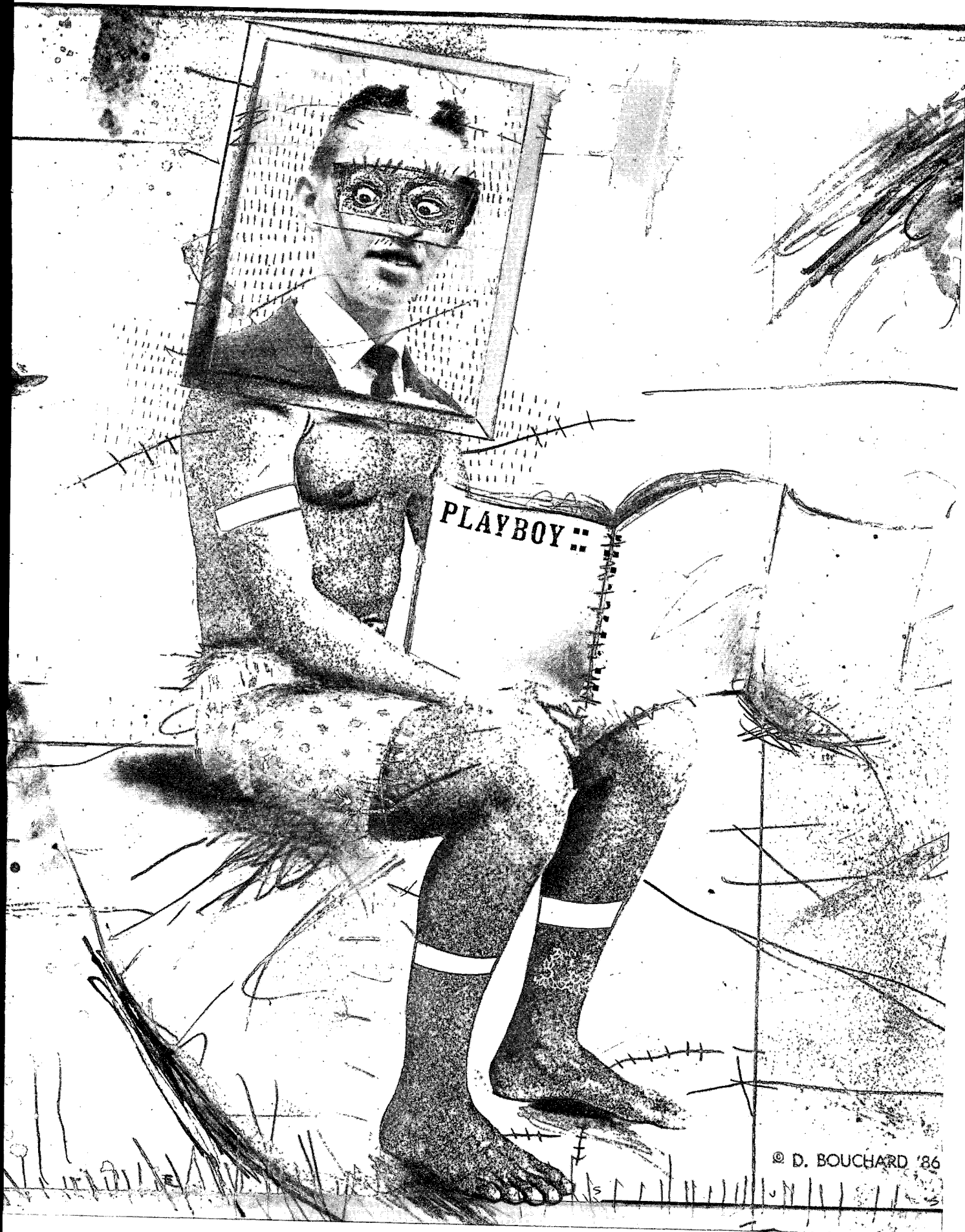
The Reagan administration has chosen a motley bunch as its shock troops against smut. Headed by Alfred Regnery, son of America's leading conservative publisher, Meese's smutstompers include not only seasoned veterans of right-wing trench warfare, but also radical feminists whose views are normally abhorred by the hard right. But though the crew may be motley, they share a common theme: a willingness to despise pornography with your tax dollars.

Even prior to Meese, the order of battle in the government's smut war was already formidable. Between September 1978 and March 1985, the FBI launched 2,484 investigations into pornography,



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resulting in 118 convictions and \$7.1 million in fines and confiscated property. And the Customs Service in 1985 confiscated 3,725 pieces of sexually explicit material.

The national police forces have a huge battle to fight. The three largest erotic magazines—*Playboy*, *Penthouse*, and *Hustler*—were in 1983 the 14th, 17th, and 57th largest magazines in America, with a combined circulation of nearly 9 million. According to Lester Baker, president of the Adult Film Association of America in Las Vegas, Americans rented or purchased X-rated videocassettes 65 million times in 1984 and saw adult films at about 650 theatres. The cable *Playboy Channel* is broadcast to approximately 720,000 homes.

But does all this erotica and pornography cause rapes, child abuse, and the like? That's what Reagan's smutstompers would like to prove—so much so that they are resorting to faulty logic, biased research, and ill-conceived public hearings to manufacture a "scientific" case against pornography. It makes one wonder whether Justice Department bureaucrats are trying to wipe out porn because they believe it causes crime—or if they're trying to prove the porn-crime link because they want to wipe out porn.

The Reagan administration's war against pornography began, like most wars, with a minor incident. On May 23, 1983, the drive-time talk show on WRC radio in Washington, D.C., featured a most unusual guest, one Dr. Judith Reisman, described by talk-show host Patrick J. Buchanan as having broken "one of the greatest scandals in medical history in this country."

Reisman charged that, in the 1940s, pioneer sex researcher Dr. Alfred Kinsey had routinely practiced the "vicious genital torture of hundreds of children." And Kinsey had acquired all of his evidence about child sexuality, she said, from "one old man who was 63 years old who had sex with 800 children."

"But that's... a preposterous absurdity," Buchanan said on the air.

"Of course it's preposterous," Reisman replied. "There was a great deal of covering up going on there [at the Kinsey Institute]."

If Reisman has any evidence against Kinsey, she has never published it. But this hasn't mattered to her supporters in the Justice Department.

That day in 1983, James Wootton listened eagerly to Reisman's radio performance. At the time a consultant to the

Justice Department, Wootton later became deputy administrator of the department's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). He "called the show, talked to the producer, and asked if they had a way to get hold of Ms. Reisman," Wootton was later to state at congressional hearings into OJJDP activities. "They did. I called her, and asked her if she would come down. We talked... At the conclusion of our talk, I took her in to see Al Regnery."

Regnery is Wootton's boss at the OJJDP and the Justice Department's leading smutstomper. It was from this meeting that the war on pornography began.

Pornography research isn't the usual role of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. This branch of the Justice Department has as its primary responsibility investigating the causes of and finding the cures for youth crime. But in Regnery, the office found a champion of porn "research."

Alfred Regnery has what is almost a classic résumé for a right-winger of his generation: chairman of the Wisconsin Young Americans for Freedom, chairman of the Wisconsin Conservative Caucus, and aide to Sen. Paul Laxalt (R-Nev.). Regnery became an associate attorney general in 1981 and assumed his current job in April 1983.

In July 1983, three months after Regnery came to head the OJJDP, his top aide, Robert O. Heck, announced at a planning conference his concern about teenage suicide, adolescent pregnancy, and "infants as young as nine months purported (*sic*) to have been discovered hospitalized, suffering from venereal disease of the throat." All added up to "something seriously wrong psychosexually between today's women and men," Heck declared. "Whatever the problem may be, it is documented as growing and spreading in both virulence and social normalcy."

In short, Heck had discovered a Social Problem. And like all social problems (real or imagined), this one was to suffer the time-honored prescription of the bureaucrat—federal funds. Heck proposed to spend \$5 million over two years to "scientifically identify and define 'pornography' and its variable effects upon adults and juveniles." The Reagan administration's war on porn was off and running.

Of the \$5 million, \$1.6 million is known to have been spent so far. Nearly half of it—\$734,000—went to Judith Reisman, of dirty-old-man-Kinsey fame.

Reisman is not an objective observer. A former producer and writer for *Captain Kangaroo*, her first writings on pornography appeared in the New York University *Review of Law and Social Change* in 1979. Free speech, she charged, is "contemporary folk mythology... Every sponsor... of every page of magazine copy, foot of movie film, inch of videotape, second of recording time, of each billboard, of every ad which uses a female as a sexual object should be required to provide equal time and space for uncensored responses."

Reisman followed this with an interview in the censorship anthology *Take Back the Night* (1980), in which she described the owners of *Playboy*, *Penthouse*, and *Hustler* as a "triumvirate of sexual fascists... who are every bit as dangerous as Hitler, Mussolini, and Hirohito, the political fascist triumvirate of World War II."

Then, after meeting with Wootton and Regnery, Reisman applied for a Justice Department grant. Her confused application proposed all sorts of experiments for her requested \$800,000. Using as documentation such journals as *Women's Day*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, and the UCLA alumni magazine, Reisman said she would establish federal standards for defining pornography. She would also have dozens of experts read hundreds of pornographic magazines to assess "anti-social behavior" and hire actors to produce "approximately twenty visual displays" of "violence" and "sexual explicitness" in order that the numerous experts on retainer could assess the tableaux's "pornological" content. All this, Reisman explained, was necessary to create "scientifically verifiable definitions of sexually explicit media" for judges interested in determining whether a given piece of pornography can be considered obscene.

OJJDP auditor Pamela Swain examined Reisman's grant application. She reported that Reisman's research could be done for \$60,000—8 percent of the requested funds.

Swain was overruled, and Reisman received her grant in December 1983, having been "peer reviewed" by a Michigan state policeman, an FBI agent, a Jacksonville cop, and a retired cop from Los Angeles. Only one person in a similar field of study reviewed Reisman's research—Ann Burgess, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Nursing. And Burgess was hardly an objective observer: she herself had received \$840,000 from Regnery's office to research evidence of pornography be-

ing used by child molesters and serial murderers, and Reisman, in her original grant application, had promised to share her information with Burgess.

In August 1984, after several unflattering reports in the press and continuing congressional pressure from then-Rep. Ike Andrews (D-N.C.) and Sen. Howard Metzenbaum (D-Ohio), the Senate Juvenile Justice subcommittee held hearings to review controversial grants made by Regnery, of which Reisman's was the most prominent. By this time a research (nonteaching) professor at the American University School of Education, Reisman had scaled back her plans in order to concentrate solely on the cartoons in *Playboy*, *Penthouse*, and *Hustler*, in the belief that such cartoons may encourage sex crimes. "The cartoon scenario is the common setting in erotica/pornography within which the breaking of sexual taboos first appears," Reisman told the subcommittee.

When Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Penna.) asked James Wootton why Regnery's office had awarded Reisman's lavish grant without having solicited bids from other researchers, Wootton had a simple answer: "Senator, you know that when you go to get a lawyer, you do not always pick the cheapest lawyer.... You pick the lawyer that you want."

"When I go to pick a lawyer," Sen. Specter replied, "I am a private citizen, and I can choose anybody I want, because I am spending my own money. You are not. You are spending the government's money." As a result of the Reisman affair, Congress passed a law in 1985 that the OJJDP be required to make all grants competitive and subject to prior peer review. Yet Reisman's research has continued, even after Sen. Metzenbaum discovered that \$153,083 of the grant was used to "revise design of the study and respond to numerous requests from the press."

Regnery has not funded any more pornography "research" on the scale of Reisman's or Burgess's, but his smutstompers have begun to use their dubious conclusions. And Reisman has gone on to cement ties with New Right groups fighting sex education. For example, the National Council for Better Education in Arlington, Virginia, has been busily collecting sex-education curricula it considers offensive and passing the results directly to Reisman. "We've got some really sick stuff, things you can't print in your magazine," NCBE associate director Beverly Eakman

Fact or Fabrication?

ONE of the major attacks on pornography cited by porn foes these days is Pornography: Its Effects on the Family, Community, and Culture. Written by David Alexander Scott and released in April 1985 by the Child and Family Protection Institute (an affiliate of right-winger Paul Weyrich's Free Congress Research and Education Foundation), the report has already played a major role in the pornography debate.

At a press conference launching the report, Sens. William Armstrong (R-Colo.) and Edward Zorinsky (D-Nebr.) issued a joint statement calling it "the only comprehensive overview of the research available on this topic. As a result of this study, much that was argued from belief or common sense, can now be argued from the data."

But there is a problem with Scott's data—in some cases, it doesn't exist.

For example, here is a passage attributed jointly to researchers Neil Malamuth, Edward Donnerstein, and Dolf Zillmann—who have never published a paper together—and published by Scott in quotation marks: "Pornography desensitizes. Exposure to these materials, whether violent or nonviolent, coercive or noncoercive, experimentally increases male aggressive behavior against women."

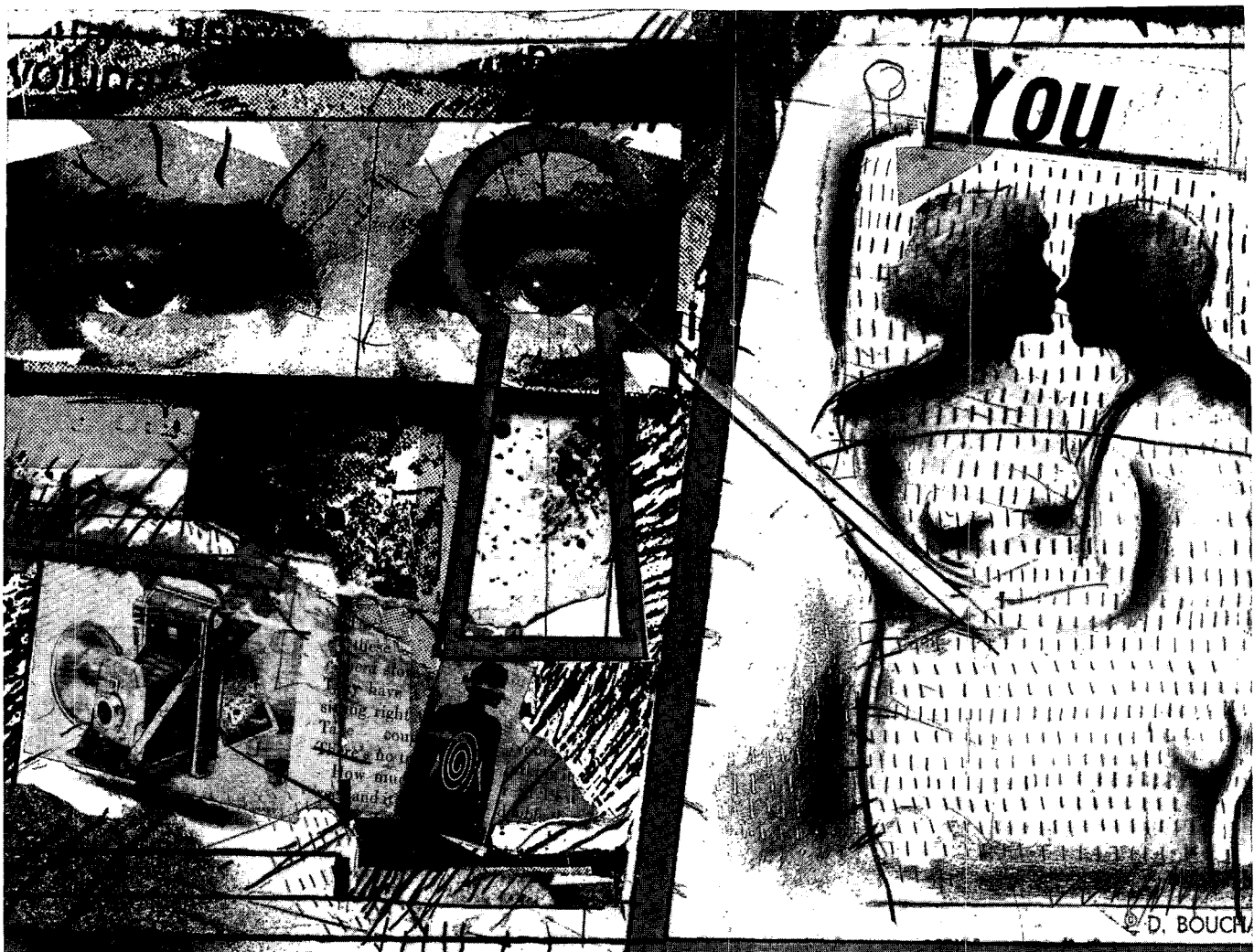
While Zillmann could not be reached for comment, both Donnerstein and Malamuth said in interviews with me that this passage did not appear anywhere in their work and that Scott seriously distorted their views. Malamuth says Scott's summary of his research is "absolutely false. He certainly misquoted me. I could sue him, but I don't think it's worth it."

Donnerstein says he has received letters from as far away as Australia citing Scott's study and that Scott "has footnotes in his work indicating research by me that doesn't exist." For example, according to Scott, Donnerstein and a colleague, Dan Linz, claim that "unpublished research findings" showed that aggressive men who watched two pornographic movies exhibited "less interest in love and affection as a motivation for sex." But Donnerstein says, "We've never done that research. We'd like to know who did."

Scott, an expatriate American psychotherapist currently running for the Toronto City Council in Canada, says he sent out his work for review, but he would not tell this reporter any names of scientists who reviewed his work. (Malamuth and Donnerstein say they never saw a copy before publication, although Scott says he sent them copies.) When I confronted Scott with Donnerstein's and Malamuth's criticisms, he denied there are any inaccuracies in his study.

Donald Mosher, a professor of psychology at the University of Connecticut who was a consultant to the federal government's earlier pornography commission in 1970 and testified before the present one, has prepared a 20-page critique of Scott's work. Mosher believes that Scott's study is "misinformation, an alloy of scant evidence with ideological bias." Mosher wrote: "To view pornography as dangerous is to equate exposure to expression as tantamount to license or causal impulsion to action—see evil, do evil. Such a logic would suggest that you should never see or hear or read images of the Nazi evil or you would become an evil Nazi."

—M.M.W.



recently told me. "The Justice Department"—Reisman, that is—"is particularly interested in material that describes sex to children."

It is clear that Regnery intends to fund Reisman—and other pornography researchers—for some time. An unpublished hearing report currently buried in the files of the Senate Juvenile Justice subcommittee reveals Regnery's dedication to the cause. Sen. Specter asked Regnery, "You are looking for a causative connection between the presence of that magazine [*Playboy*] and some assaultive conduct, some sexual molestation, are you not?"

"Ultimately that is subsequent research that will have to be done," Regnery said.

"Beyond the scope of the \$734,000 [for Reisman]?"

"That would certainly be the concept of anything that would be called subsequent," Reisman replied for herself.

And the result of all these studies? "All [Reisman's] research [on cartoons] tells us is that there are images out there," a prominent sexual-violence researcher who asked not to be identified said. "I could do a content analysis for \$250."

One member of the commission recently urged Scottsdale residents to take photographs of people entering the city's X-rated movie house.

What, in fact, *does* research tell us about any connection between pornography and violent crime such as rape and child abuse? It's little wonder that the issue has generated more heat than light, given all the rhetoric that circulates as fact. Feminist censorship advocate Andrea Dworkin, for example, has declared that "*Playboy*, both in text and pictures, promotes rape. Its cartoons promote both rape and sexual abuse."

If this was true, we'd expect a strong correlation between areas with high rape rates and those with wide availability of

pornography. But a recent comparison of states, based on those criteria, found no such correlation.

Moreover, if the porn-crime link were true, we'd also expect rapes to increase as pornography increased in general circulation. Yet research done by Richard Green, a professor of psychiatry at the State University of New York at Stony Brook and editor of the *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, has shown that this is not the case.

Green analyzed sexual-assault statistics in several European countries. He discovered that after antipornography laws were repealed in Denmark in 1967, rape rates remained constant even as nonsexual assaults were increasing dramatically. In West Germany, rape rates remained constant for seven years after pornography was legalized in 1973, while nonsexual violent crimes increased 127 percent.

In the United States, Green found that from 1970 (when hard-core pornography first became available) to 1978, aggravated assaults rose at a higher rate than did reported rapes. Moreover, Green adds: "If through the raising of women's consciousness during that same

period, a higher percentage of actual rapes were reported, the rape rate may have declined."

Paul Abramson, a professor of psychology at the University of California at Los Angeles, has done extensive research into Japanese pornography. The most prevalent form of Japanese erotica is much more violent than American equivalents. "One of the best ways to ensure the success of a Japanese film is to include the bondage and rape of a young woman," Abramson and his colleague, Haruo Hayashi, note.

Yet Japanese rape rates are much lower than in America; the Japanese committed 2.4 rapes per 100,000 in 1983 compared to 34.5 rapes per 100,000 in the United States that year. Abramson and Hayashi figure it's because prostitution has been widely accessible in Japan since the 10th century. "It is our opinion that sexual availability, void of public condemnation, has contributed to the low incidence of rape," Abramson and Hayashi conclude.

One piece of experimental research that is widely cited by porn foes is a study conducted by Profs. Dolf Zillmann of Indiana University and Jennings Bryant of the University of Houston. Their results were published in 1982 in a highly controversial article in the *Journal of Communication*.

Zillmann and Bryant had 80 male and 80 female students view 36 films of varying erotic content over a six-week period and then asked the students to recommend a sentence for a first-time rapist. Students who had not seen the films recommended an average sentence of just under 10 years; students who had "massive exposure" to porn movies thought a more appropriate sentence was just over four years. This, the authors concluded, showed that exposure to pornography leads to the "trivialization" of rape.

Porn foes typically use the Zillmann-Bryant study as a counterweight to the experimental research of Edward Donnerstein, a professor of communication arts at the University of Wisconsin. Donnerstein's studies, published in a series of articles in the *Journal of Research in Personality*, are widely considered the most extensive experimental research in the field.

He had a series of test subjects alternately view X-rated nonviolent material (*Insatiable*), X-rated violent material, and R-rated "slasher" films such as *I Spit on Your Grave*. He then investigated the subjects' attitudes about rape and sexual violence and their feelings about sex.

In six studies conducted during the 1978-80 period, trial after trial showed

the same results: after being exposed to violent films, male viewers were more prone to say they would commit violent acts against women. However, when subjects viewed X-rated *nonviolent* material, Donnerstein told the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography last year, "if you look strictly at the data in which subjects saw only the sexual nature of the material, there were no increases in aggressive behavior and there were no increases in callous attitudes."

More-recent research tends to support Donnerstein's findings. According to Prof. Joseph Scott of Ohio State University, a three-month study found that the content of X-rated films is "the least violent of any type of movie."

Zillmann and Bryant, like Donnerstein, had used college students as their "guinea pigs." Yet while Donnerstein performed his experiment six times, Zillmann and Bryant did their research *once*. When they attempted to check their results by using a survey of adults, they faced a refusal rate of over 60 percent. "Because the refusal to serve as a subject is likely to be affected by the topic of the study," Zillmann admits, "we cannot assume that the sample really represents the population."

And as Prof. Larry Gross of the University of Pennsylvania pointed out in a stinging response to Zillmann and Bryant's original paper, a four-year sentence is "not exactly trivial, and probably quite close to the actual sentence a rapist might serve."

Zillmann and Bryant's conclusion about pornography and the trivialization of rape has been widely used by foes of porn. Yet the researchers' conclusion doesn't follow from their evidence, but instead from "extrapolations" from their data. In other words, when Zillmann and Bryant claim, for instance, that pornography "might not only victimize women, but—through the erosion of love—harm men as well," they are not summarizing their research but stating their opinions. Yet such opinions become principal sources of "scientific evidence" that pornography leads to a breakdown in morality or to violent crimes.

The only firm conclusion that we can draw from sexual research is that we can't say one way or the other whether exposure to pornography causes people to "act out" violent sexual behavior. Science tells us that the verdict on pornography is "not proven" rather than "not guilty."

"There is absolutely no evidence of a causal relationship between pornography and sexual acting out," Sol Gordon, professor of child and family studies at Syracuse University and director of the Institute for Family Research and Education, said at a panel discussion on pornography last year. "I haven't seen it in sexual molestation or in rape. You can always get an incidence. The newspapers will always help. You may find one rapist, and they found pornography in his room. And that means that pornography caused it. They also found milk in his refrigerator!" Conversely, of course, erotic magazines and videos could be found in the homes of millions of men and women who have never committed rape or sexual abuse.

If there is no scientific case for linking pornography and crime, then smutstompers in the Justice Department had one path to take. As Gordon Raley, former director of a House subcommittee that investigated Justice Department smutstomping from 1982 to 1985, said of the alleged porn-crime link in an interview: "They didn't have any evidence. So they had to invent it." Which explains Regnery's research grants to people like Judith Reisman.

The Justice Department opened a second front in its war on pornography in June 1984, when President Reagan ordered the creation of a new national commission to study pornography. In 1970, a previous commission had concluded that there was no evidence that "exposure to sexually explicit materials [causes] delinquent or criminal behavior among youth or adults. . . . If a case is to be made against 'pornography' in 1970, it will have to be made on grounds other than demonstrated effects of a damaging personal or social nature." But in 1984 Reagan reopened the issue, declaring: "It's time to stop pretending that extreme pornography is a victimless crime."

The 11 commissioners appointed by Meese are of three types. Three of them—Judith Becker of Columbia University, Park Dietz of the University of Virginia, and Ellen Levine of *Women's Day*—are regarded by seasoned observers as liberals. Three others—Edward Garcia, Harold "Tex" Lezar, and Deanne Tilton—are conservative Republicans of the type usually awarded seats on commissions as a reward for long-time service in the Republican Party. It's a good guess that this block will vote with the smutstompers, but thus far the



group has no record on the issue.

The remaining five commissioners, proven and voluble smutstompers, include:

- **Henry Hudson**, chairman of the commission. Commonwealth's Attorney (county prosecutor) of Arlington County, Virginia, Hudson is known by local politicians as "Hangin' Hank" for his forthright advocacy of the death penalty. Hudson's efforts to remove pornography from Arlington County—closing massage parlors, arresting sellers of pornographic magazines and videocassettes—won him a personal commendation from President Reagan several years ago.

"The people of Arlington County do not like those types of publications here," Hudson told the *Washington Post*. (Why did porn stores stay in business if "the people" didn't want to purchase their goods?)

In a debate at the Cato Institute in Washington, D.C., last July, Hudson said that the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography was "more interested in the commercial market than what someone does in the privacy of his own residence." But as Barry Lynn, legislative counsel of the American Civil Liberties Union, pointed out during the

The Reagan administration's smutstompers share a common theme: a willingness to despise pornography with your tax dollars.

same debate, "If [Hudson isn't] interested in what's going on in the privacy of someone's home, [he] ought to take absolutely no interest in the fact that video stores are renting out little black and brown boxes with the tape inside that have no visible image unless you happen to have a VCR hooked up to your television."

- **Rev. Bruce Ritter**. Director of Covenant House, a home for runaways in New York, Ritter has received \$2.25 million from Alfred Regnery's OJDP since 1982, and \$1.25 million of this was given by Regnery on August 15 last

year—two months after the Pornography Commission began its hearings.

Ritter refused to return my phone calls to ask whether it was a conflict of interest to accept Justice Department grants while serving on a Justice Department commission, especially since smutstompers on the commission repeatedly have asked censorship opponents testifying before the commission—including Donnerstein and Barry Lynn—if they had accepted any money from *Playboy* or *Penthouse* for their work. (Donnerstein had, but the small grant he received was more than outmatched by the \$250,000 he received from the National Science Foundation.)

In a fundraising letter, Ritter explains that his job is to rescue children from "the predators of the sex-for-sale and pornography 'industry.'" Gregory Loken, director of the Covenant House's lobbying arm, the Institute for Youth Advocacy, calls for allowing children to sue purveyors of child pornography and for federal monitoring of cable-TV shows, "dial-a-porn" services, and magazine display cases that might be seen by minors.

- **Frederick Schauer**. A professor of law

at the University of Michigan, Schauer has been a long-time advocate of restricting pornography. In his book *Free Speech: A Philosophical Inquiry* (1982), Schauer argues that visual pornography is not "speech" and can therefore be controlled by communities without violating the First Amendment. "Failing to impose sanctions on regulable pornography," he says, "weakens the assumed public interest in regulating pornography."

• **James Dobson.** A fundamentalist pediatrician from Southern California, Dobson is the most forthright smutstomper now serving on the commission. "I have a personal dislike for pornography and all that it implies," Dobson told the *Washington Post*.

In his book *Dr. Dobson Answers Your Questions* (1982), Dobson expanded on these views. "The indiscriminate release of sexual energy outside the boundaries of the family is potentially catastrophic," Dobson wrote. "The very force which binds a people together then becomes the agent for its own destruction. . . . When that atom and its neighbors are split in nuclear fission (as in an atomic bomb) the energy which had provided the internal stability is then released with unbelievable power and destruction. There is ample reason to believe that this comparison between the nucleus of an atom and the nuclear family is more than incidental."

• **Diane Cusack.** A member of the city council in Scottsdale, Arizona, Cusack recently urged Scottsdale residents to take photographs of people entering the Kiva Theater, the city's X-rated-movie house, and copy down license-plate numbers of cars in the theater's parking lot. (Scottsdale Mayor Herb Drinkwater then suggested that citizens turn this "evidence" over to the police.) According to the *Scottsdale Progress*, Cusack also stated that citizens should lobby judges to urge further restrictions on pornography. Smutstompers "are strapped by the law and the judicial interpretation of the law," Cusack said. "Until we can get the U.S. Supreme Court to give us a better interpretation of what is pornography, and until we get the judicial community [to understand] that we don't want this [pornography], you can't shut down the Kiva."

porn. Only Barry Lynn and Isabelle Pinzler of the ACLU and Townsend Hoopes of the Association of American Publishers argued against further restrictions.

Six senators—five Republicans and Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.)—testified about their proposed bills to restrict pornography. The proposed legislation ranges from a bill by Sen. Jeremiah Denton (R-Ala.) to ban "dial-a-porn" services to that of Sen. Paul Trible (R-Va.), which for the first time would allow the FBI to tap into computer "bulletin boards" to search for pedophiles—or anyone else—who might exchange information on sex with minors.

Eight members of various national police forces—four postal inspectors, two customs inspectors, one FBI agent, and FBI director William Webster—testified about their porn-fighting efforts. Three ministers and two members of Women Against Pornography stepped from the pulpit to give homilies against porn. And Surgeon General C. Everett Koop declared that the Public Health Service would be ready to jump into the war on pornography "with the same degree of serious study that we have given to every other manifestation of major social stress and disorder."

Perhaps most disturbing were the anonymous witnesses. Nine witnesses at the Washington hearings, for example, told horror stories about how their marriages and lives had been destroyed by pornography. No one testified that pornography is fun, pleasurable, or beneficial.

Hudson told the *Washington Post* that he could not find any "alleged beneficiaries" from porn. "If you know of one, would you let us know?" Hudson said.

Similar proportions of smutstompers, police agents, and anonymous witnesses testified at Pornography Commission hearings in Los Angeles and Chicago. Only in Houston, in a hearing devoted to research on pornography, were the pro- and anti-porn sides balanced.

But objective, balanced inquiry isn't what the government's porn inquisitors are after. Rather, they're out to prove a thesis: pornography "causes" violent crime and degeneracy. Lois Lee, director of Children of the Night, a group helping teenage runaways and prostitutes in Hollywood, explains that commission investigators had come to her office with their minds already made up. "Ed Chapman [a commission investigator] came to me and asked to see teenagers who started turning tricks after their fathers showed them *Playboy* and *Penthouse*. I told him, 'Look, none of our kids got

started turning tricks because their fathers started using pornography. None. They may have run away from home because their fathers beat them, or because their fathers were drunk, but not because of pornography. Even if you got rid of all the pornography in the world, you wouldn't get rid of abusive or drunk fathers.'"

According to an official of the American Society of Journalists and Authors who asked not to be identified, the Porn Commission "certainly didn't encourage us" to testify at its Los Angeles hearings. The official, an anti-censorship advocate, relates that "when we first asked to testify, we were told to submit a curriculum vitae and a copy of our testimony. They said they'd examine it and give us an answer" whether a representative of the group would be accepted as a witness. The organization protested that such a requirement was like an "audition," and the Porn Commission relented.

For the most part, then, the commission is hearing only testimony from agents of the state seeking to expand their own bureaucracies and from anonymous witnesses. The bias of the national police forces is, of course, self-evident; they wish to expand their power just as any bureaucrat does.

As for the anonymous witnesses, Richard Green of the State University of New York reminded the commission in Houston that the anecdotal method of collecting information that the commission is using is simply bad science. One cannot leap from specific cases of pornography abuse to a general condemnation of pornography, Green explains. "A major obstacle in weighing the significance of anecdotal reports is that the population on the other side of the balance is invisible."

It is that invisible majority—the Americans who rented or viewed pornographic videocassettes 65 million times last year, or who bought 9 million copies of *Playboy*, *Penthouse*, or *Hustler* last month—who will not be heard or observed by the commission. The people who use pornography without harm, as a pleasurable and normal part of everyday life, never catch the notice of taxpayer-funded smutstompers. Indeed, one doubts that balance will ever be brought to the commission's proceedings. More likely, the commission's report, due this June, will only be the latest shot in a long and mindless war on freedom. □

Martin Morse Wooster is Washington editor of Harper's magazine. This article is a project of the Reason Foundation Investigative Journalism Fund.

Of the 45 witnesses called by the Porn Commission to testify at its first hearings last June, 42 either called for further restrictions on pornography or testified to some harmful aspect of

God and Woman at Yale

Confessions of an ideological misfit

Economics 111b, Elementary Economics: Theories of income determination, economic growth, and international trade applied to problems of fiscal and monetary policy of developed countries and to economic problems facing developing countries.

Sounds pretty innocuous, doesn't it? This blurb describing an introductory economics class at Yale leads many unwary Bulldogs to believe that they will learn, with at least some semblance of objectivity, the fundamentals of economics. But this class, and many others at Yale, largely serve as pulpits from which liberal academics preach their politics. Political bias has a stronger grip on Yale than does the ivy on its walls.

Consider Mansfield's *Principles of Macroeconomics*, a typical introductory textbook required for Econ 111b. Mansfield informs the student that "no one believes that the price system, left to its own devices, can be trusted to solve our society's basic economic problems." Endless government spending certainly doesn't worry Mansfield, since he knows "it is not true that [government debt] somehow transmits a serious burden to future generations or that it may lead to bankruptcy." He proudly announces in his preface that "the Keynesian-monetarist controversy now occupies an

entire chapter." One chapter—then back to the "real" thing.

Biased books like this are assigned by biased teachers in biased classes—which would be fine, *if* the teachers recognized and acknowledged that it's personal politics they preach, and *if* students had a variety of political sermons to choose from. At Yale, I found, neither is true.

It's not hard for professors to quietly slip their own politics into their classes—especially in introductory or survey courses, where students have little or no background in the subject. Professors pose the "right" questions and encourage the "right" answers; they exalt the "strong" theories (those that support their political beliefs) and ridicule the "weak" theories (all the rest); and they assign books that say the same things *they* say (which is easy—many assign books *they* wrote). Disputes rarely arise in these classes, since nothing is presented as disputable. Intellectually, students are given nothing to chew on—they are unwittingly (or, perhaps, not so unwittingly) spoon-fed the same bland, liberal mush in class after class.

In many upper-level courses, professors don't even bother trying to disguise their editorializing. Everyone on campus knows what lessons are being taught in courses like "Labor History," "Protest Movements," and "Women

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