

# 'Playboy athletes' should not participate in 'Playboy' athletics

Most of the means to sort out and resolve the problems that plague collegiate athletics have come in the form of task forces or investigating committees. But one of equal import and vision is by way of a packet of letters and studies.

It's from Dr. Linnea Smith, a Chapel Hill psychiatrist and the wife of UNC head basketball coach Dean Smith. Armed with a compilation of studies and letters presenting her argument, she's campaigning to end both college and pro athletes' associations with Playboy, which already has its problems — up to its cute little bunny ears, in fact — with circulation drops and the Attorney

**Randy Farmer**  
Managing Editor

General's Commission on Pornography. The compilation has been sent to coaches and is available to the general public.

Dr. Smith's packet is full of evidence associating Playboy with, among other things, promotions of recreational drug use, depictions of children as appropriate sex partners and advocacy of recreational sex.

Perhaps the strongest case Dr. Smith makes against Playboy is the magazine's drive to loosen existing

drug laws and, in some cases, funding organizations to do so. She hammered home her argument by citing Playboy's financial support of NORML, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, which seeks to de-criminalize marijuana laws.

Her concern is a legitimate one: athletes are visible and powerful role models for the nation's youth. Given that, they have a responsibility, as role models, to seriously consider the context in which they appear.

Playboy has already felt the effects of Dr. Smith's stand. Kenny Smith, UNC's All-American point guard, last month turned down an invitation from Playboy to be photo-

graphed on its All-America team because, in part, he disagreed with the magazine's position on drugs. David Rivers, Notre Dame's point guard, also said, "No, thanks." Mark Price, Georgia Tech's guard, did the same thing last year.

But Dr. Smith has not always been against coaches and athletes being photographed in Playboy. In the late 1970s, Dr. Smith accompanied her husband to Chicago for a photography session as Playboy pre-season coach of the year. In fact, Dr. Smith says: "Until recently, perhaps like many of you, I was a part of a large number of people who accepted (Playboy) uncritically as merely an intellectually adventurous

magazine which also portrays pretty young women in the nude. In this era of 'sexual liberation,' as it is presented in the pervasive commercial media, we may have been influenced to not risk being labelled prudish or repressed."

Fortunately, Dr. Smith is not waging the war alone. She has joined forces with Dr. Judith Reisman, a professor at American University who conducted a U.S. Justice Department study on the images of children, crime and violence in several magazines. Reisman assisted Dr. Smith in producing the packet.

But support for the doctors has not been widespread, although included in the packet is a letter from

Tom Landry, head coach of the Dallas Cowboys, who says: "I am supporting Reisman, Smith and others who are working hard to equip national leadership with the necessary information to address this critical issue. . . . As athletes, we are aware of the leadership role we play for our nation's youth."

Despite her noble effort, Dr. Smith, I think, won't find too many immediate converts in the athletic community. That's unfortunate because the stories of drug dealers and drug-related deaths in collegiate athletics still dominate today's sports pages. And so far, they show no signs of going away.



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