

Obscenity Local Issue



ADULT BOOK STORE OPENED: The Peep Show is an X-Rated book store on Tarboro Street. [Photo by Bulluck]

If Nudity Offends Do Not Enter!

In recent years pornography in Rocky Mount has grown at an alarming rate. The X's at the Cameo Theater and Tower Drive-In seem to multiply weekly. The number of newsstands selling "Playboy," "Penthouse" and "Oui" has greatly increased in the past three years.

For Rocky Mount a new hitch in the pornography scene has been the arrival of the adult book store on Tarboro Street, The Peep Show. For the prurient enthusiast the front window opens doors to the imagination. The colorful flashing lights remind the public of Eighth Avenue in New York. The front door has such sayings as, "Adults Only; No One Under 18 Allowed; ID Required; If Nudity Offends You, Do Not Enter."

The warnings on the door are partially true. If nudity does offend you, then definitely don't enter. However, The Gryphon has ascertained that the "adults only law" is not strictly enforced. It has been proven that teenagers under 18 have visited and purchased the

individual. The dictionary defines pornography as "obscene writings or pictures." Another definition from a Religious pamphlet *The Little White Book* says that "Pornography is not just a matter of innocent people trying to earn their living by selling some dirty pictures. Pornography is a vast industry. Greedy money makers are behind it."

So now what's your definition?

pornographic books and magazines sold at the Peep Show.

After visiting the Peep Show, one teenager says "The cover of the books sold at the Peep Show makes the centerfold of "Playboy" look like the cover of "Jack and Jill," a magazine for young children.

This pornographic store also consists of a "peep show." The customer pays a quarter and watches a pornographic film or a portion of it. When the film cuts off, another quarter is paid, and the film continues. This is a quick way for the customer to go broke and the owner to get rich.

Who visits this store? Upper and middle class businessmen as well as young people have been seen entering the store. These people buy the cheap books and magazines printed on cheap paper. The prices, however, are not cheap. Magazines cost up to \$35!!

The Supreme Court recently defined pornography as: anything that is obscene to the local community. In contradiction to this, the First Amendment of the Constitution grants the people of America freedom of the press. The Fourth Amendment gives the American citizen the right to keep in his person and house papers and effects against unreasonable seizure.

So where does this leave Rocky Mount and other communities unaccustomed to such openly sold pornographic materials? They are in the middle of a lot of legal red tape while stores such as The Peep Show sell the crudest sex material to Rocky Mount citizens.

Public Comments

"How do you feel about pornography?" This and other related questions were asked to several townspeople.

The Rev. John Kelly, Vicar at Christ Episcopal Church, feels that pornography is wrong. However, he adds "What's pornography to you might not be pornography to someone else. The nude body is not nasty," Rev. Kelly adds, "It's what we make out of it that's dirty."

Mrs. Lynda Holmes, city councilwoman, says of *Playboy* magazine: "I haven't seen a *Playboy* lately but I know it used to have excellent literary materials." The Rev. Kelly feels that "some of the best Christian views I've read have been in *Playboy*." The Rev. Gaylord Lehman of Lakeside Baptist also feels that *Playboy* has some good articles in it. "*Playboy* is the least obnoxious of the bunch," the Rev. Lehman conveys. The Rev. Lehman is bothered by *Hustler* magazine and "its grotesque portrayal of sex." "All these magazines try to give some respectability to what they're doing by having first class interviews," the Rev. Lehman explains.

The Rev. Johnnie Bradley of Calvary Baptist Church states

his case by saying "I'm against it (pornography), and the reason I'm against it is that a man is the sum total of what he feeds into himself. If all he takes in is sex, that's all he's going to think about."

Dr. David Goodman, employed at the Mental Health Center, informs *The Gryphon* that a lot of research has been done on whether pornography is detrimental to the mind or if it helps the mind. Nonetheless he did not know the results.

Dr. Goodman believes pornography should be kept away from children. "I don't see how it could be helpful to young children," Dr. Goodman says. The Rev. Bradley thinks it has an effect on sex crimes. "It causes people to do things they wouldn't ordinarily do." He explains, pornographic materials may trigger a sex maniac. Says Rev. Kelly, "Pornography tends to enlighten some and hurt others. Do your thing as long as it doesn't hurt someone." The Rev. Lehman doesn't see much social

value in X-rated movies. "These things only exploit sex," he declares.

The Rev. Bradley feels pornography should be outlawed because "it harms the weaker people, and they should be protected."

On the other hand Mrs. Holmes, who is opposed to what she considers pornography, is "also very much opposed to censorship of any kind for adults. You can't make laws to control morality," she asserts. She believes if people would stop buying these magazines that the men who run the bookstores would go out of business, but she adds, "I can't tell you that you can't go."

The definition of Pornography and obscenity is very much in doubt. It seems to be up to the

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