

In February, we got Cinema "X", reportedly the first hard-core film theatre in Montreal! Receiving widespread publicity, the theatre promised much; in anticipation of changes in Quebec censorship laws, it hoped to show an array of X-rated films. Then amidst much pressure from anti-pornography groups, the laws were not changed and Cinema "X" delivered little. Interestingly enough, elsewhere in the city, Bonnie Sherr Klein's anti-pornography film, *Not A Love Story* was also enjoying vast media coverage. The film is an important study which elicits provocative discussion of the problems pornography poses for society. Women, unfortunately, are the pawns in the porno controversy.

Pornography means megabucks! Whether it be Cinema "X" or boxes on

supermarket shelves, Sex Sells! Advertisements continuously use sex symbolism to sell their products - so much so, that consumers in our culture have subliminally equated buying power with being sexually desirable.

Adding to the porno debate is the apparent success of the video home recorder and its alliance with pornographic film. It is rapidly gaining popularity as new home entertainment for an upwardly mobile segment of the population. How is the VHR going to affect the sexual mores of our culture? The jury is still out on this question, but one disturbing observation is not only the fact that porno films are brought into the home via the VHR, but the kinds of porno films now mainstreaming into everyday culture. There are fantastic

selections of sado/masochistic films stressing brutality of every dimension and exploiting women at every opportunity. (One can find ads for these films in "adult magazines" to illustrate this point.) Cinema "X" may bring a new notoriety to Papineau and Beaubien, but the "true-blue" theatre fans are, in a certain sense, a lonely minority. The VHR is bringing it all back home!

Pornography has become insidious, permeating almost all aspects of everyday life. Problems spawned by the industry - film censorship, the disputed association between pornography and crime, are all controversial issues encountered by society. How are some Montreal women reacting to this burgeoning porno market? How do they feel about all this sexual hype and its effect on

today's culture?

Eight Montreal women, (seven of whom were married, one was divorced), were interviewed and shown several samples of pornographic images to prompt a discussion on pornography and its imprint on their lifestyle. Their responses proved to be interesting reflections on the middle-class sensibility in confrontation with this phenomenon.

Pornography affected the women in various ways. Some found it to be a strictly political issue, others were concerned that pornography placed a great deal of emphasis on cosmetic distortion. The women thought pornography was not only exploitive, but echoed the feeling expressed by Kate Millet in *Not A Love Story*, "... it's so unsexy." All expressed a certain degree of anger toward

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by Gayle Cohen

8 women speak out

Questions

The questions asked elicited a perspective on sexuality, pornography, and the media - film being the predominant issue. Twenty-nine questions comprised the original text, ten of which are listed here.

Oral sex has come to be a staple of pornographic literature and film. This motif has been most sensationalized and exploited in the pornographic film *Deep Throat*. This film, therefore, was singled out for the interviews for it is one of the most notorious of its genre.

Susan Griffin, author of "Pornography and Silence" says:

"Pornography is like a film that's projected on a blank screen and that blank screen is silence."

Here are eight women talking back!

Did you ever see a porno film? What was your reaction?

"Yes. I saw one as early as 1940 (with my husband), it was not a commercial film. I was nauseated - I walked away. I object to pornography when it becomes exploitive - women in chains, in Nazi uniforms, etc."

Belle L.,
university undergraduate,
age 70

"Yes. It was a turn-off, ridiculous, no art form, no eroticism in it."

Miriam S.,
Housewife,
age 35, B.Sc.

"All the time. It does not hurt to have a couple give more attention and concentration to the area of sexuality. Erotic films provide an outlet. Sometimes I suggest going to one - I think they're fun! The Story of "O" is one of the more superior ones. Porno films are by and large, rotten. The Devil in Miss Jones was stupid, dumb, and boring. The Naughty Victorians was not too bad, but it could have been a lot better."

Phyllis Y.,
Secretary, age 40,
high school graduate

"Yes. *Deep Throat*. I was 25 at the time and a lot more hung up. I saw it at someone's house with a mixed group of friends including my husband. I was embarrassed - I didn't know half the guys. I also saw porno films in Europe, the priest-with-the-little-girl type thing."

Phyllis K.,
teacher, group dynamics,
age 31, B.A.

"Sure - in a theatre in Denmark was the first time I saw one. It was a film plus a live sex show - it was pure embarrassment. Now when I see one, I become bored."

Maxine B.,
sex counsellor,
age 38, B.A.

"I have seen some porno films - real hard-core porno. Hard-core films don't appeal to my sense of aesthetic tastes or lifestyle. *Voyage En Douce* was a soft-

core film of a subtle lesbian relationship between two women. This was a film I liked."

Carol D.,
auctioneer's assistant,
age 43, B.A.

"Yes. It was ridiculous, hysterical, and boring. There was no acting, no plot, no direction - just people on the screen fornicating!"

Roslyn L.,
graduate student,
age 38, B.A.

"I have never seen a porno film in a theatre, only on television."

Linda C.,
housewife, age 35,
high school graduate

Do you feel that the media in general, and pornography in particular, victimize women?

"Victimization exists, but I find men are being exploited too. I think it is an area which feminists use as their platform for political purposes. Porno films include both men and women. I am not opposed to sensual items, for too long we have hidden our sexuality."

Phyllis Y.

"I always feel personally attacked when I see a "nudie" magazine staring back at me. On television and billboards you are constantly bombarded with an ass sticking out at you, as well as a nude upper torso! Calvin Klein jeans make me sick and other jean ads as well!"

Linda

"Pornography dehumanizes people. It makes me sick the message that we are getting. I deal with teen-agers a great

deal in my profession. I feel what they are getting at home and what they are getting from the media is a double-bind situation. This upsets me. It leaves the kids in a real state of confusion. 'You're just not cool if you don't fuck!' the media tells them. Yet, at home, they get, 'don't fuck - it's immoral, it's not allowed! The media, however, tells them, to be in you have to wear tight clothes, have big tits, and fuck like crazy. I feel the media bombardment of sexuality and its desirability is in direct contradiction to the adults who say don't. There is a major discrepancy between biological and cultural demand."

Phyllis K.

"No, I don't feel pornography victimizes women because I always feel there are dynamics that happen between two people - it is hard to tell which is the victim."

"I do feel, however, the myth in media is that if you buy the product you will become beautiful and handsome, and you will live happily ever after. The only reason magazines are put out is to make money. They make money through advertising. You cannot blame the magazines, the blame should be placed on the consumer - they are buying this "shit." Once again it is a question of giving the public what it wants, a lot of these magazines are successful. Women do not seem to mind or protest their image."

Carol

"Definitely! The accepted cliché of a woman's personality and function is portrayed in a false manner, e.g. commercials, magazines as well. The average housewife is depicted as the sensual

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the media - television in general, and the advertising field in particular.

Perhaps the most interesting observation was the manner in which the women "digested" the images at the end of each interview. A few of them were somewhat shocked at some of the illustrations and their comments were either severely curt, or extremely humorous. In some cases, however, embarrassment masqueraded as humour. When confronted with the actual pornographic detail, their gut feelings were revealed. The pictures, thus, proved to be a more succinct evaluation than the questions themselves.

All the women opted for freedom of choice, speech, and thought. The very same freedom enjoyed in our society fosters a liberal attitude toward pornography and its effects on society. This may be the "Catch 22." Some people feel this liberal attitude and the freedom we all cherish makes it difficult for a culture to distinguish works of art from garbage.

The women welcomed the opportunity to discuss their thoughts on the subject. The interviews prove the need

for films like *Not A Love Story*, a film that raises our consciousness about this timely issue.

In society we realize pornography presents many definite problems; unfortunately, there are no clear-cut solutions. Pornography is many things to many people; it is stimulation, compul-

sion, domination, obsession, and victimization. Pornography is also the perverse end of the economic scale that exploits women for maximum profit and marketability.



beauty - making cookies, washing floors - all carefully made up! All this to make her husband more potent! When I see the young women on Dallas, I want to puke! Their tits are sticking out, the jeans are tight to the girl's ass - the girl is a young adolescent! What kind of images are we creating? Is all this sexual hype fact or fantasy?

Belle

"When you see a woman abused in a porno film or in a magazine, I feel it victimizes her. I feel, however, it is more the women that are at fault. I feel it is the same as prostitution - it's their choice to go into it for the money. I cannot feel sympathy for them. Some women make themselves out to be scapegoats."

Miriam

"Pornography exploits women, women are portrayed as meat. I think the media in general sets up women to see them-

selves in these unrealistic ways and images. Women are constantly striving to mimic these images. This causes more unhappiness and frustration and produces, unfortunately, billions of dollars in sales. Women are hooked into this male image of female perfection!"

Maxine

"On one level it does. Magazines like Playboy and Hustler, etc. use women for commercial purposes, but these women earn good money. It becomes almost a status - The Pet of the Year. There is an ambivalence to the victimization. On the other hand, after seeing Not A Love Story, I really was overcome with a sense of certain women being totally victimized and manipulated by males for males. Women are posed or dressed in a certain way - in perfume, jeans, cigarette ads - making you feel if your lips are not pouting, your mouth is not open, you're not a woman!"

"On another slant, I can't stand those nauseating commercials on TV which present the woman on another level - a sexless, sloppy drudge. It victimizes the women by intimating, in order to fulfill the epitome of womanhood, you have to be a good housekeeper with an excellent knowledge of washing floors and cleaning toilets!"

Roslyn

Can you define "female eroticism"?

"Old films, forties films, are at times more erotic than the films of today, they have a sensitivity."

Phyllis Y.

"I think most films are made by men to make money. I don't think they care what they are doing - the ultimate dollar is the only denominator."

"I can't really distinguish "female eroticism" from any other eroticism. My own interpretation would be a dynamic interaction between two people. I really can't pinpoint to a physical thing."

Carol

"A sexual tension is erotic, a lot of innuendo. Body Heat, for example, the first love scene was very erotic, the tension was extremely heavy. Eroticism is a gradual build-up of emotion and desire, building up to a climax."

Linda

"Alice Munro in her short stories could capture an erotic scene here or there, or capture a woman's sexuality. Eroticism for me would be a sensitivity between the man and the woman, a certain amount of sex appeal in the man. The two films which have erotic content and are extremely successful in showing a female point of view are Coming Home and Body Heat.* Jon Voight was quite sexy in Coming Home and emanated a sexuality from the screen. I like to see love play - touching, feeling, naked bodies, and of course, sensitivity."

Roslyn

"Old Charles Boyer films, e.g. Casablanca. A romantic film, a film that takes a person from a meeting to a relationship. Also, how well the art of the film is done - photography, acting, story, etc."

Belle

"Sex with feeling is a turn-on. The kinds of things I like to see and make me want to be with my husband - films that show a loving couple in an attractive setting, the woods for example. A film I saw showed two young men in a loving relationship; the beauty and the closeness between them was a turn-on. This, to me, was erotic, rather than pornographic. Another film on massage was very

erotic for me, it would be a turn-on if someone massaged me that way."

Maxine

"The idea of two women together I find erotic. I like women's bodies, they are nicer than men's bodies, though I like men's bodies as well."

"In a film lots of things could be erotic. Lots of things about men are erotic - the sort of sexual teasing that goes on. The "zipless fuck" quoted by Erica Jong in Fear of Flying would be terrific and erotic to see. Seeing a woman making it with a priest or a homosexual would be erotic because it would be a challenge to a woman."

Phyllis K.

* **Body Heat** was a film mentioned by two women as being characteristic of portraying "female eroticism." This is quite interesting due to the fact, Lawrence Kasdan, director of **Body Heat** specifically chose a woman editor, Carol Littleton, to edit the film in order to give the film a female perspective of eroticism.

Have you seen Deep Throat? If not, have you heard about the film?

"No, I have heard about it; about a woman's clitoris being in her throat - the only way she can achieve an orgasm is by fellating a male partner. I think it is hysterical! A very funny idea!"

Carol

"No. I shy away from films that are based only on sex and have no other content."

Roslyn

"Yes. I thought it was stupid. I am not a prude when it comes to erotic films, but I prefer the dramatic ones. The comedy tends to be handled foolishly - it may be just the American ones I have viewed. The Story of "O" had a mystique about it, a mood."

Phyllis Y.

"Yes - boring."

Maxine

"No, I don't think I would want to. I have read articles about it. Strangely enough, sexual practices I was taught to believe are wicked are now acceptable to me, e.g. lesbianism, homosexuality, fellatio, and cunnilingus."

"Many sexual acts connotated as sexual deviations are arousing. The arousal is more important than the act. I feel partners, circumstances, tenderness are most important."

Belle

Would you protest the showing of porno films in your neighbourhood? Why or why not?

"I can't get terribly upset about it. I don't think exposure causes experimentation."

Maxine

"No. I believe the demand creates the atmosphere for porno films and theatres. Society will find its own level. The marketplace knows where and when to distribute these films."

Carol

"I wouldn't want them, but I have ambivalent feelings. I don't think we should censor them, people should have freedom of speech. Another reason why I would not want them is that it might incite sexual or violent aggression."

Miriam

"I don't care! It's my privilege to see what I want and vice-versa. I'm not going to stop you from seeing pornographic films. Porno films don't cause rape, violence, etc. If you want to live at the Beaver cinema, it is your privilege!"

Belle

"To tell you the truth, pornography is not on my list to make a fuss about because it really doesn't touch my life at all. That is a naive view, however. After seeing Not A Love Story, I must admit I was emotionally taken by the whole world of pornography and I would probably take a stand against it, if given the opportunity."

"I would protest it in my neighbourhood primarily because I feel it is totally uncalled for. On the other hand, I think it is totally unnecessary on The Main - or downtown. I don't buy the fact men have to see porno films in order to repress violent sexual urges."

Roslyn

"I wouldn't like to see porno films in my neighbourhood. I don't think it is necessary. In the same way I am opposed to pinball machine places. They create hang-outs which are not healthy for kids. They should have certain areas where these films should be shown."

Phyllis Y.

"I would be upset, but I would not protest it - that's the way I am. With all the home video equipment everything is available now for viewing - from "X" rated to Bambi!"

Linda

Do you feel porno films have increased violence, prostitution, etc.?

"No. I feel these conditions have existed for thousands of years. The Roman Empire was very decadent without the help of the contemporary media."

Maxine

"No, it's backwards. I believe prostitution increased violence, drug abuse, pornography, etc. I also believe literature and pornography show what is happening, they are reflections of a culture. They are expressions of society, rather than pornography leading up to violence and abuse, it is an expression of the world today."

Carol

"I doubt it, (laughing), I don't see a connection - how live sex shows would increase prostitution! My students went to New York and saw live sex shows but they didn't end up taking drugs. What message did they get from these sex shows, porno films, etc.? They were fascinated by what they saw, intrigued, but also turned off."

Phyllis K.

"It is a question of which came first - the chicken or the egg, one feeds on the other. I don't think if they eliminated pornography the other abuses would subside - the state of the world is too complex."

Roslyn

Do you believe in censorship? Are you in agreement with the rating system?

"I do not believe in censorship as a blanket word. I think child pornography is base. I find that terribly offensive, but I find censorship offensive as well. I don't think the censor has a role. Censorship is too biased - the word censor means bias, you cannot define whose bias is the right one."

"I'm still wondering how they rate films, what criteria they use. As a guide it works - like anything else, there is no perfection in this method."

Maxine

"I don't believe in censorship. Censorship doesn't ban pornographic films from being made, only viewed."

"I think films should be rated, but I do not think they are rated well. I don't feel they are rated to what is informative or a

reality geared to a child's or teenager's taste. e.g. The French Lieutenant's Woman is rated for all, yet I would not take my children to see it. There may not be foul language in it, but I don't think the subject matter would interest them. Subject matter has as much to do with the rating as sex or language."

Linda

"I think the whole censorship issue is a political one. The role of the censor is to try to control the mores of a society into a specific direction. Censors are picked by the government, so therefore the government is trying to keep up the status quo. I go along with it - let's just say the system works for me."

Carol

"In general, censorship goes against my grain - it smacks of fascism. A censor is completely irrelevant in today's lifestyle. In essence I agree with the rating system. In reality, however, it becomes silly - a film becomes restricted because of one or two explicit sex scenes and not because it may be violent."

Roslyn

"No. An important aspect is that it is completely ineffectual. It is controlled by economics. How can we control economics?"

"I don't think the rating system works; maybe there is a purpose to it. I do not think there is any way of forbidding a child or adolescent to buy, to read, to see a thing that you do not approve of. You cannot start to guide a child or adolescent at the age of twelve, it is too late."

Belle

"No, I don't like someone telling an adult what they can or cannot see. I think the rating system, however, is fine - it acts as a guide to the parent. It is the kind of control I agree with - the censorship should be in the home."

Phyllis Y.

"Not at all. It presents a somewhat different view when kids are involved. As for adult censorship, you end up getting these silly, uptight people doing the censoring. It takes away from my freedom of speech - I find this repulsive. Censors are trying to 'protect' us while getting their rocks off at the same time! If you don't like the films - don't sit through them!"

"Yes, I agree with the rating system, it gives you a clue."

Phyllis K.

Pornography causes distortion. Comment on this statement.

"Pornography does not cause distortion. Pornography is a view of something that happens, it emphasizes one part of life. Only the individual could decide whether it would be a distortion or not."

Carol

"The way pornography is slanted to present a kind of Aphrodite figure. A woman has to be odourless and hairless; yet odourlessness and hairlessness are not sexually attractive to many men. Women have to be submissive/permissive and constantly available."

Belle

"It depends on how it is done. If porn is handled well: sado/masochism exists in The Story of "O". I do not believe that viewed by adults it would cause distortion, viewed by children, it would."

Phyllis Y.

"It distorts the perception of reality. Expectations are distorted, expectations as a lover are distorted. Men's expectations of performance, fat women wanting to look like Vogue models. Anything

that deflates a person's self-worth or self-esteem because they do not measure up. If you don't perform like a porno queen, look like a fashion model, fit a tight pair of jeans, you are not successful. It dehumanizes a person's self-worth."

Maxine

"Definitely. It presents a distorted picture - what people do with that in their minds, I don't know. Whether it causes a distortion I don't think so. Most people who went to see porno films found them boring. They went to see the films, but they did not incorporate them into their lifestyle."

Phyllis K.

"Yes. It is perverse distortion and perverse fantasy. It is certainly not a real concept. I guess there are people who want it to be real. Then again, reality, to some may even be a distortion."

Roslyn

In The Gazette, Montreal, Oct. 2/81, Al Goldstein, publisher of Screw, was quoted as telling The New York Times, (regarding home video cassette recorders), "... but the point of a porno film is to turn you on, and a theater isn't the best place for that. The ideal context is the home." Comment on this statement.

"I don't know that it makes a difference. I don't think 'Middle America' has the sophisticated equipment like the video home recorder - thus we are talking about a select group. I feel it is more exciting to go to a theatre, be turned on, have a long anticipatory drive home, building up a sexual tension."

Phyllis K.

"I think Al Goldstein is trying to sell his home video cassettes; that's all the comment has to do with it!"

Carol

"I agree with Mr. Goldstein, especially when dealing with porno films. I would watch them with my husband, but not with other couples, never in mixed company!"

Linda

"I don't know if I could be turned on at home by a porno film. I know couples who watch porno films at home - if it turns them on, it may add a dimension to their marriage. I carry a lot of baggage around with these films, so I react negatively to them. I also never had the experience of watching them alone with my husband."

Maxine

"Pornography would not turn me on at home or in a theatre. Objectively, I would imagine that watching a porno film in the confines of a bedroom would be convenient to acting on the emotional urges projected by the film."

Roslyn

"I would agree. My husband is interested in pornography, it turns him on. The bedroom is where sex belongs between two consenting adults, not in a crowd."

Belle

Are men retaliating against the feminist movement by depicting women in more abusive ways in the media?

"I am not an admirer of Margaret Atwood. All her men 'have teeth and bite'. In a sense, all feminists are over-reacting when they start to blame men for all the evils of society. On the other hand, some men may feel threatened by the movement. I feel there is too much aggression in the movement, but then, in order to make anything viable, you have to be an activist. Women are portrayed a bit too aggressive. Men are reacting by portray-

ing women in awful ways in pornography."

Belle

"No, pornography has existed for centuries. I do not think it is a reaction against the feminist movement. Certain kinds of pornography is a violent reaction against women, but not, necessarily against the women's movement."

Roslyn

"Unconsciously it may be so. It may or may not be a deliberate revenge. Men don't know how angry they are. It is almost a way not to deal with women (pornography). If you distance women and turn them into sex objects, you don't have to deal in relationships."

Phyllis K.

Images

The following are descriptions of four pornographic images from advertisements and over-the-counter "skin mags." These images were chosen because they are characteristic of the victimization women endure in pornographic content. The women were shown the pictures at the end of each interview and were asked to comment on them.

Two of the illustrations were ads - one was a lipstick advertisement from a fashion lay-out geared specifically to women. The other was for a pornographic inflatable "doll" that could be purchased through the mail. The figure in this ad, directed to male readers, was childlike in appearance, (pigtails and knee socks) and graphically posed. She was billed as "Suzie, The Snapping Pussy Doll - with a vagina that's ready to go night after night, time after time." She "never had a headache" and she possessed "lips that open to accept up to six inches of manflesh in deep throat fashion."

The other two pictures were a "typical" Playboy centerfold and a cartoon from Hustler magazine. The cartoon was quite nasty in its depiction of an "ugly," hirsute, woman-model. The woman, seated in a grotesque manner on a pedestal cum toilet, poses in front of a male artist, who is seen vomiting all over canvases strewn on the floor around the room. She was the inspiration for his "art" - a canvas full of vomit.

Lipstick

"This picture is blatant in its sexual overtones. The eyes are closed, the tube in the mouth. I don't find it offensive, but it's not going to sell me that lipstick. When I buy make-up, I know why I'm buying it. I know I'm not turning into a sex object. I never lose sight of who I am."

Maxine

"It sure ain't the real thing! I always buy lipstick but not because of the advertising. It's useless!"

Linda

"The ad is offensive. I think it is stupid as well. It is also funny, blatant - the phallic symbol sticking out of her mouth telling you to buy Chanel. Funny!"

Carol

"It's kind of neat - whoever thought that one up. I wouldn't buy the lipstick anyway."

Phyllis K.

"This is a perfect example of soft-core pornography. It looks like a penis in her

mouth. It is typical of the advertising media. A lipstick in the mouth seems natural. On the other hand, there is an overt connotation of oral sex."

Roslyn

"It is pornographic, it is actually a penis in her mouth. It is commonplace though. The symbol of a penis and a woman's mouth is constantly being used in pornography."

"I am more offended by showing children how to put on lipstick as a play toy. I feel it develops a negative set of values in very young children. The values instilled are, in order to be a complete and attractive woman you have to put on a false image. Adult women, though, can put anything in their mouths as far as I care!"

Belle

"It is striking because it is unusual. At first viewing it is not erotic. I guess one could say that it is."

Phyllis Y.

"I think it is interesting. It is not offensive, it doesn't make me angry. I think the photography is good. I think it is sensual. Done with good taste, people may not associate it with hard-core sex."

Miriam

Doll

"I think it's a riot! Really sick! What kind of man would hump into a vinyl doll? I love it! If I had an extra \$34.95 I'd buy one for a friend - he's very inverted! Snapping Pussy Doll - sounds like a tropical fish! It's a great big Barbie Doll! I wonder who actually buys these things. I can see buying it for a joke, I really wonder if people buy it to fuck it. It would make masturbation a lot easier!"

Phyllis K.

"What I find most offensive is the child role model. Sick. The advertisement is completely sickening."

Maxine

"It is not the ad that is offensive, it is the fact that somebody is actually going to send away for it! A reflection on our society. It is done to make money, if he's got consumers, he's got business!"

Carol

"The sad thing is that some poor man will pay \$34.95 for an imitation of what he thought he was going to get in the mail - the doll will never live up to the illustration! It is a sad comment on our society when men and women are encouraged to interact with dummies!"

Roslyn

"I feel it is ridiculous, funny. How many people actually buy these? Has it ever been documented how many people buy them? Someone once asked Guccione, (publisher of Penthouse), what is the difference between him and a pimp? He had trouble defending himself. The magazine is sort of acting like a pimp in selling the doll."

Belle

"Who would want it? Someone who wants to make money and contrives this up, I understand; but who would want to buy it - this I do not understand. Unfortunately we live in a society where the dollar is very important, so you can see how someone would develop something like this. We also live in a society that is getting more individualized and segregated. The doll becomes a substitute for a woman, a sexual relationship. This lack of interaction is quite pronounced in our society today."

Miriam

"Disgusting! This type of thing shown

in Penthouse all the time. I don't like seeing that part of the anatomy."

Phyllis Y.

(Phyllis was extremely put-off and uncomfortable with the photo in front of her. She also had difficulty saying the word, vagina)

Cartoon

"I don't like slapstick - it reminds me of that type of humour. There is nothing creative or intelligent about this cartoon - I don't respect it. Just gross!"

Miriam

"Disgusting!"

Phyllis Y.

"Offensive and silly."

Maxine

"I don't get it! I don't think it's funny. She is not too attractive. Mind you, he's no prize either! I guess I wonder why she is letting him do this to her - it is not very pleasant."

Phyllis K.

"The cartoon is not offensive to me. It's humour and humour is a caricature - I can't take it all that seriously. I think it is clever. It is not only a comment on a woman's sexuality, it is also a comment on art!"

Roslyn

"Disgusting isn't it? The female is unattractive. She has all the attributes that a "Venus" is not supposed to have, hair on her ass and legs. A very, very unattractive body and face."

Belle

Centerfold

"Pretty girl - does nothing for me intellectually."

Maxine

"Erotic, men would find it erotic. Beautiful woman. I do not like films or pictures that show that part of the anatomy in that way."

Phyllis Y.

"I don't know about the picture or what to make of it. They are obviously trying to portray an erotic woman - trees in background, flowers in her hair, shadowed opening between her legs. I find it 'nothing.' I wish her other breast would show, she looks distorted. The ribbon bothers me - it must mean something. I think the ribbon is in the picture to prove a point, either she's tied up like a little present - or all wrapped up!"

Carol

"There is something about her I don't like. I don't think women sit around like that. She's not gross, she has beautiful legs. A real turn-on for men is watching women masturbate. The magazines show you all these female bodies, people don't actually look like this - bodies must be air-brushed."

Phyllis K.

"I am immediately prejudiced against this picture; I know it came from Playboy. There is no erotic vibration for me. The whole thing is very sterile, even her so-called look of ecstasy."

Roslyn

"This type of pose is becoming commonplace. A man looks at Playboy and gets a message. This picture tells him, this is what I should be getting. The man has been married for 30 years and his wife looks like the picture we saw in the cartoon. So therefore, pornography does distort - how can they say pornography is not a distortion!"

Belle