

The images, such as they are, do have an effect on us
By Cait McKinney and Hazel Meyer

Folder "Censorship" - Access Edition

This document describes the contents of a standard, letter-sized paper folder in order, flipping through pages from left to right.

[Page One]

A legal size, manila envelope, laid flat on a white surface. In the top-right corner, a selection of Canadian postage stamps from the 1980s. The recipient's address is written in the centre of the envelope in block printing, using black sharpie. It reads: VIVO Media Arts Centre, 2625 Kaslo Street, Vancouver BC, V5M 3G9. In the bottom left corner of the envelope, the word "ARCHIVE!" is stamped in red ink, in a hand-written font.

[Page Two]

The same manila envelope is now open, against the same white surface, and a lighter-coloured manila folder containing some papers is pulled partially out of the envelope. A white, plastic, archival-quality paper-clip is clipped to the edge of the folder.

[Page Three]

Just the folder is pictured against the same white surface. The "name" field on the folder's filing tab is labeled with a white filing sticker that reads "Censorship," which has been stuck over-top of the word "porn" written directly on the folder. "Porn" is discernible through the white "Porn" label. The "No." field on the filing tab is stamped in red ink with "01."

[Page Four]

The folder is opened, from left-to-right, like a book, to reveal the inside front cover and the first page of folder contents.

Under the white paper clip, clipped to the top-left of the inside front cover is a 3 by 3 inch colour photograph of a manila coloured cardboard storage box for a 35mm slide carousel. It is labelled in the top-right corner with an address label for Women in Focus. The address is hard to make out but it is in Vancouver, B.C. The same address label also appears in the bottom left corner, and is stuck over a red stamp, that is obscured, possibly an older address. This same red stamp appears upside down in the top left corner of the box, but is smudged and mostly indiscernible. In the top center of the box is a circular sticker that reads "inspected Sept. 18 85." The box is tattered along the edges and shows many signs of wear and use.

Stapled to the inside front cover, next to the photograph is a plastic sleeve designed to hold 4 35mm slides. Only the bottom two slots contain slides, but the contents of the slides are not visible. Each slide is marked in the bottom left corner with a red dot.

On the right side of the folder there is an 8.5 by 11 inch document, turned vertically but printed horizontally, so it is hard to read (see description on next page). Clipped to the front of that document using a red, plastic, archival-quality paper clip, is another 3 by 3 inch colour photograph. This one is of a 35 mm slide carousel, fully loaded and shot from above, against a grass green background.

[Page Five]

The document introduced on the previous page has been turned horizontally and is laid across both sides of the folder. It's an interior spread from the Women in Focus Video/Film Catalogue. The top-right quadrant of the page is still obscured by the photograph of the slide carousel. The document is a colour photocopy of the original catalog, which was printed in Indigo-coloured ink. In the bottom left quadrant of the spread, there is a photograph of two women with long hair wearing 1970s fashion, sitting at a video editing bay, working. The text that is visible follows:

“WOMEN IN FOCUS VIDEO/FILM CATALOGUE

WOMEN IN FOCUS began in September of 1974 when a group of women started to produce much needed video tapes/films on the topic of women's problems and experience of their lives. These tapes were produced, directed and created by women.

As women artists, it has become clear to us that images of women and women's lives have always been made and defined from a male perspective. Women have been consistently discriminated against in the media/visual arts, grossly misrepresented in its images, and withheld from the opportunity of obtaining the skills, knowledge and distribution necessary to effectively influence others with their own images and analyses.

Because so few women do gain the recognition they deserve WOMEN IN FOCUS believes it is essential to continue to expand our distribution library with the works of other feminist women artists, as well as our own productions. By doing this work, we will contribute towards the ideas, beliefs and knowledge that make up the dominant ideology of our time.

The WOMEN IN FOCUS centre is open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on weekdays where we organize workshops, seminars, presentations, and work on productions and distribution.

We will also give presentations/workshops in the community upon request. Please contact the office (872-2250) for information regarding fees, etc.

WOMEN IN FOCUS

#6 - 45 Kingsway
Vancouver, B.C.
Canada V5T 3H7
(604) 872-2250 (10 a.m.-4 p.m.)

SLIDE/SOUND

RECLAIMING OURSELVES: A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE OF PORNOGRAPHY 1979

Produced by Women Against Violence Against Women. Vancouver 30 min.

This presentation examines the connections that exist between the objectification of women as shown in sexist advertising, magazines and movies through to its logical conclusion - the glorification of rape, mutilation and death of women for male titillation. It advocates women speaking out and acting against this form of oppression.

ref. 57.35.C slide/sound - available for 3 systems:

- a) Audible chime on tape, with Kodak Carousel slide projector
- b) Wollensak inaudible beep on tape, with Kodak Carousel slide projector
- c) Inaudible whistle on tape for Electrosonic lapse dissolve unit and two Kodak Carousel slide projectors

Rental: \$ 25.00

Workshop: \$150.00

Purchase: \$230.00”

[Page Six]

The page has been turned and The Women in Focus catalog is now placed on the right side of the folder, oriented vertically again. It has been turned over to reveal the front and back cover of the catalog, spread open. Two copper staples are visible down the centre "spine." The back cover of the catalog is designed to be the front of a mailing, for when the catalog was sent by post. It has Women in Focus' address as the return address, and blank fields with the headings "To," "Name," and "Address." The front cover of the catalog features an art-deco style drawing of a bourgeois-looking white woman with long hair, worn in an up-do, wearing flowing clothes. She is operating a medium or large-format film camera on a tripod. The camera is from the late 19th century and has accordion-style bellows. Underneath the drawing, written in a large, stylized, modern-looking font is "Women in Focus." Beneath that the subheading: "Production & Distribution Centre, Catalogue 1979." Stamped at the bottom of the cover in red ink is "Plus Update!"

On the right side of the folder is a black and white photocopy of an advertisement for a nipple poster (described in detail on page eight). Covering part of this advertisement is a 3 by 4 inch lined, cream-coloured index card that is clipped to the poster using a green, plastic, archival-quality paper clip. Taped to the front of the index card is a quote, printed on plain computer paper that has been cut-out to fit the index card. Because the index card is printed horizontally, but oriented vertically, it is hard to read in this image but is described more on the next page.

[Page Seven]

The nipple poster and index card have been turned 90 degrees clockwise so that the index card is right-side up. The text on the card reads: "My gut reaction to picture of women in nipple presses (devices which encircle the nipple and force it erect; pressure can be increased by means of strings or laces at the will of the 'operator')...is nausea and disgust." - Jillian Ridington and Barb Findlay, *Pornography and Prostitution, Vancouver Status of Women*, 1981.

[Page Eight]

The nipple poster ad has been turned right-side up again, and the index card has been detached and moved aside. The poster shows a grid of 64 different close-up photographs of nipples in its center. Above the grid is the text: "Special offer – Zeus combo. The three Zeus books listed above BK-ZCOMB \$24.00, S&H included." Below the nipple grid is the text: "Nipple Poster. An array of 64 nipples in life size photographs on a 22 by 24 inch sheet of heavy stock. Striking, sexy, yet innocuous enough to hang in a very public place. Frame it and put it on your wall. MS-TP \$8.50 (\$1.50)." Behind the nipple poster, some other similar documents are visible in the folder, but are mostly obscured by the poster.

[Page Nine]

A clipping from a larger black and white photocopy is laid across both sides of the folder. It's about 5 by 7 inches. It is a listing of books; part of the nipple poster ad is visible on the right side of the clipping, implying that this book list appeared next to the nipple poster ad in a publication. The list of books reads:

"Foreskin by Bud Berkely and Joe Tiffenback. Everything you always wanted to know about this endangered bit of male anatomy as well as many photogs and drawings of all varieties of adorned and unadorned cocks. 208pp. BK-FSK \$13.95 (\$1.55). Leatherman's Handbook II by

Larry Townsend. A totally rewritten and updated version of this classic work. Reviewed in DM 18. 333p. BK-LHB \$4.95 (\$1.55). Coming to Power, Writings (fiction and non-fiction) and graphics on Lesbian S/M edited by members of SAMOIS, a lesbian-feminist S/M organization. A news expanded edition published by Alyson Publications. 239pp. BK-CTP \$7.95 (\$1.05). The Butch Manual by Clark Henley. A wonderfully witty book that is a must for all who would be butch of think they are. 120pp. See the review in DM 18. CK-TBM \$6.95 (\$1.05). Franny, the Queen of Provincetown by John Preston. No S&M, but this is the first published novel by the author of "Me. Benson". 89pp. Reviewed in DM 21. CK-KQP \$3.95 (\$.80)."

[Page Ten]

A folded-over clipping from the front page of the Vancouver sun. Part of the masthead is visible, part of a photograph of a burned-out building can be seen, below a partially obscured headline "Three videotape...attacked by 'wim..."

[Page Eleven]

The Vancouver sun clipping has been unfolded and spread out across the right side of the folder. It reads:

"The Vancouver Sun, Vancouver British Columbia, Monday November 22, 1982. 25 cents, 40 cents minimum outside the Lower Mainland. Tomorrow's Weather: Mainly Sunny, details page c1.

Three videotape chain stores attacked by "wimmin's" group
4 Surrey businesses destroyed

Photograph [Image Description: A firefighter inspecting the remnants of a completely burned down shell of a building] Caption: Burned out shops...fireman works in debris of four Surrey stores which burned out in arson attack today.

Three Red Hot Video outlets in the Lower Mainland were attacked by arsonists early today and one, in Surrey, was destroyed along with three neighboring stores.

A second outlet in North Vancouver suffered minor damage while police found incendiary devices inside a third store in Port Coquitlam and removed them before they could be ignited.

The police investigation is being coordinated by E division of the RCMP.

The attacks came as The Vancouver Sun, Canadian Press and United Press Canada received letters and telephone calls from a group calling itself the "Wimmin's Fire Brigade" claiming responsibility for all three attacks.

The word "wimmin," is commonly used by a variety of women's activist groups in North America. It is used because, unlike the word "women," it does not contain the word "men." Groups also use words such as "herstory" to remove the "his" from "history."

At the chain's main outlet in Vancouver, an employee who would identify himself only as "Joe" said: "If it's about the events of the night, we have no comment until we study it further."

He refused to name the owner or owners of the chain.

The letter called the action "another step towards the destruction of a business that promotes and profits from violence against women and children."

The letter was delivered at 1:40a.m. to the CP bureau, which immediately alerted police. A copy of the same letter was located later in the mailbox of the Vancouver Sun.

The warnings, however, came too late—the North Vancouver fire was noted at 1:31am, the Surry blaze at 2a.m. and the incendiaries were discovered in Port Coquitlam at 2:50 a.m.

The worst damage was in Surrey where the Red Hot Video outlet, a specialty shoe store and two empty stores in a small shopping entre at 9400 Scott Road were destroyed.

"We suspect gasoline was used. There was also a tremendous electrical fire with hot

wires going off like fireworks," said RCMP Sgt. Larry Boan.

In North Vancouver, the rear of the store in the 1000-block Marine was damaged and a bathroom destroyed. The store's contents were untouched.

In Port Coquitlam, a patrolling police car found a homemade torch – a stick wrapped with cloth material soaked in gasoline or similar liquid – outside the store in the 2100-block Coquitlam.

Inside, police found a number of "incendiary devices."

S.-Sgt. Bill Wazney said these included various glass containers with tapes hanging from them apparently waiting to be touched off.

The letter received by The Sun says: "Red Hot Video sells tapes that show women and children being tortured, raped and humiliated. We are not the property of men to be used and abused.

"Red Hot Video is part of a multibillion-dollar pornography industry that teaches men to equate sexuality with violence. Although these tapes violate the Criminal Code of Canada and the B.C. guidelines on pornography all lawful attempts to shut down Red Hot Video have failed because the justice system was created and is controlled by rich men to protect their profits and property.

"As a result, we are left no viable alternative but to change the situation ourselves through illegal means. This is an act of self-defence against hate propaganda. We will continue to defend ourselves."

Red Hot Video has two outlets in Vancouver but there were no reports of attacks on them.

The outlet at 3223 Main was attacked Oct. 15 when a firebomb was thrown through a window but failed to ignite.

Women's groups have been demanding police and government action against the chain because of the nature of some of the tapes it sells.

In October, a number of videotapes were seized from the Port Coquitlam store and are still being studied by prosecutors to see if they violate either the obscenity provisions of the Criminal Code or the provincial guidelines.

Paul McKinnon of West Vancouver United Church, spokesman for a number of citizens groups which banded together to attack "all that Red Hot Video stands for" said, "I would have to withdraw my support from any organization that resorted to such violence."

On the right side of the folder is another clipping from the front page of a different issue of the Vancouver Sun.

"FINAL ***** The Vancouver Sun, Vancouver British Columbia, Tuesday November 23, 1982. 25 cents, 40 cents minimum outside the Lower Mainland.

Special Report: Porn as easy to buy as groceries by Tim Padmore and Douglas Sagi

To "Jimmy" of Jimmy's Mart on Victoria Drive, the dirty magazines he sells are what make him different from his chief competitor, the shiny 7-Eleven store across the street.

The 7-Eleven has sandwiches and a bigger display area of food but Jimmy's market has the dirty book business.

"Best selection in South Vancouver," Jimmy said Monday. "It is a good business. Business is good, but we don't sell to kids. Adults only."

Still, the 50 titles on the top four shelves of his magazine rack are easily reached by youngsters, just one row above the comic books and general magazines. Pornography of the type not much different than the material so violently objected to by the people who launched arson attacks on three Red Hot Video shops Monday is as casually available as milk and

cigarettes in many Vancouver stores.

According to the producers of Not a Love Story, the film that investigates Canadian pornography, the industry is worth \$550 million in this country each year. There were fewer than 10 pornographic magazines generally available in 1980. Now there are 32 titles published in Canada. (Canadian stores, however, are not limited to just Canadian magazines.)

Jimmy's, and dozens of other corner stores throughout the city offer such titles as The Bitch Goddess and Cocktails (a magazine for gay men); Adult Cinema (with 32 pages of full colored, red-hot photos).

Some are expensive, more than \$10 a copy. All are explicit.

Granville street is dotted with adult book shops. International Books and Novelties tempts customers with a new sign in the window announcing "Vidio Casetes" (sic). They have Deep Throat and newer vintages such as Neon Nights, which includes scenes of satanist sex, and Bath House Bust, helpfully labelled "gay."

Prices are a cut-rate \$29.95.

But most of the store is devoted to plastic-wrapped books and magazines. "Big Bosoms" and "Lusty Ladies." For \$4.50, there is a pocket novel called Whip Cult, with a cover picture of a blonde woman, naked except for leather boots, chained and with her head clamped by metal bands. It tells the story of a woman member of an anti-pornography group who finds sexual fulfilment when she is tied, whipped and quasi-raped.

University of B.C. psychologist Don Dutton says this kind of pornography is dangerous because it supports the myth that women enjoy being physically abused during sex. There is very little contemporary pornography that shows sex in loving atmospheres between loving couples, he says.

Dutton counsels husbands who are trying to stop abusing their families. He says he has found instances where the depiction of violence in pornographic films and printed material has resulted in men learning to become sexually aroused through violent acts against women.

In her new book, Women and Children First, Toronto author Michele Landsberg mentions the child murders that have occurred throughout North America, including the Clif... [Continued] "Dirty" A10"

[Page Twelve]

A white, standard size #10 envelope is laid horizontally across both pages of the folder. A white label, 1 by 2 inches with the words "Wimmin's Fire Brigade" printed on it in a 1980s computer font is stuck in the center of the envelope. Stamped in red ink in the bottom left quadrant of the envelope is the word "URGENT!" A piece of tri-folded 8.5 by 11 inch white paper is pulled partially out of the envelope, but the text is not yet visible.

[Page Thirteen]

The page from inside the envelope has been unfolded to reveal a type-written letter, that has been laid on top of the envelope. The letter is undated and unsigned. The letter reads:

"We, the Wimmin's Fire Brigade, claim responsibility for the fire-bombing of three Red Hot Video outlets in the Lower Mainland of B.C. on November 22, 1982. This action is another step towards the destruction of a business that promotes and profits from violence against wimmin and children.

Red Hot Video sells tapes that show wimmin and children being tortured, raped and humiliated. We are not the property of men to be used and abused.

Red Hot Video is part of a multi-billion dollar pornography industry that teaches men to equate sexuality with violence. Although these tapes violate the Criminal Code of Canada

and the B.C. guidelines on pornography, all lawful attempts to shut down Red Hot Video have failed because the justice system was created, and is controlled, by rich men to protect their profits and property.

As a result, we are left no viable alternative but to change the situation ourselves through illegal means. This is an act of self-defense against hate propaganda. We will continue to defend ourselves!”

[Page Fourteen]

On the right side of the folder an 8.5 by 11 inch printout on white computer paper shows a black and white photocopy of a pre-filed page from an Orlando Magic notebook, featuring the team’s logo and a basketball graphic at the top, and a small NBA logo in the bottom left corner. Written on the notebook page, in the same handwritten font that appears throughout the folder is: “We did not participate in the fire bombings of November 22 [1982] in the Lower Mainland, we are in agreement with the frustration and anger of the women who did. We noted and appreciated their efforts to see that no one got hurt. - Federation of Women’s Communications”

The page is clipped to other pages behind, that are not yet visible, in the top-right corner, using a plain metal paper-clip that has left rust stains on the page.

[Page Fifteen]

The rusty paper clip has been removed and placed on the white surface, just above the folder. The page has been turned to show another 8.5 by 11 inch printout on white computer paper. This one is a photocopy of a page from a desk calendar showing the number “8” in a very large font, above many pre-printed blank lines. On the page, in the same handwriting: “Pat Fiendel, Women step-up anti-porn action, *Kinesis*, November 1982. Recent protests target the *Red Hot Video Special Handbook*, a glossy colour illustrated pamphlet which lists tapes by subject category, including "rape and gangbang," "incest," "young girls," and "first sex experience." There are no titles, just film numbers and general descriptive comments about each category.”

[Page Sixteen]

The page has been turned. On the right side of the folder, an 8.5 by 11 inch printout on white computer paper shows a black and white photocopy of a pre-filed “Things to do today!” page, from a note-pad. Scrawled across the note-pad page, without following the lines of the pre-printed list.: “Criminal Code of Canada, 1982 159.8 For the purpose of this Act, any publication a dominant characteristic of which is the undue exploitation of sex, or of sex and any one or more of the following subjects, namely, crime, horror, cruelty and violence, shall be deemed to be obscene.”

[Page Seventeen]

The page has been turned to show another 8.5 by 11 inch printout on white computer paper, showing a black and white photocopy of a smaller piece of lined foolscap, that has been torn in half. Scrawled across the foolscap, against the grain of the lines: “Esther Shannon, "Women, art, sex and fear," letter to the editor, *Kinesis* Feb 1986, pg. 26 "If, in Vancouver, we are going to take on our own serious reconstruction of our feminist thought on sex in all its dimensions, then we need an open conference. And if women think they can't go there and be safe, then maybe they should got here and be unsafe. And maybe when we leave, after we have survived, we will really have something to think about.”

[Page Eighteen]

The page has been turned to show a magenta-coloured, transparent plastic sleeve, on the right side of the folder. This kind of sleeve is normally used in a rolodex to hold a business card. Inside the sleeve is a small piece of paper stamped with “(a stick wrapped with cloth material soaked in gasoline or similar liquid)” a scrap of torn white fabric, about 6 inches long, has been threaded through the magenta sleeve, behind the stamped paper. The sleeve is clipped together with a pink, plastic, archival-quality paper clip.

[Page Nineteen]

The plastic sleeve has been moved the right side of the folder and flipped over. On the left side of the folder, a blank, folded-up piece of white paper is visible.

[Page Twenty]

The folded-up piece of paper has been opened to show a black-and-white printout of a map showing driving directions generated by Google Maps. Three addresses and the route between them are highlighted: 965 Marine Drive in North Vancouver; 9400 Scott Road in Surrey; 2215 Coquitlam Avenue in Port Coquitlam. The street addresses have been highlighted in yellow. A small, Google street view image of each address has been placed next to the respective map markers. The map is slightly smaller than 11 by 17, and is spread out across the whole folder.

[Page Twenty-One]

The map has been folded up again and moved to the left side of the folder. On the right side of the folder is an 8.5 by 11 piece of white paper, showing an ink and brush drawing of three VHS tapes in a stack. Each tape is labelled with the white, sticky, paper labels that come with blank VHS tapes. The drawing is oriented vertically, so the titles on the tape labels are difficult to read (see next page).

[Page Twenty-Two]

The drawing of the VHS tapes has been turned horizontally and laid across both sides of the folder. The titles on the tapes can now be read easily and they are “Never a Tender Moment,” “Flesh Gordon,” and “Garage Girls.” The labels are written in the same handwritten font that has appeared throughout the folder. Each label includes other pre-filled elements that have been hand-drawn, including the brand name “FUJI.”

[Page Twenty-Three]

The page has been turned to show the inside back cover of the folder on the right, and the blank back of the VHS drawing on the left.