

# Press Objectification

## Why It Has To Stop

**Research, Human Rights, Government Policy and more .. Why Press Objectification has to stop**

**Submitted to IMPRESS by Not Buying It 2017**

'Page 3 tabloid press often failed to show consistent respect for the dignity and equality of women generally, and that there was a tendency to sexualise and demean women'

Lord Leveson

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# 1 The Harm of Press Objectification

It is wrong to objectify. It is wrong to stereotype. It is wrong to do this to any group of people. It is wrong to do this to women. It is wrong not because of issues of 'poor taste' or 'offence'. It is wrong because it is harmful. And it is harmful because of the damaging attitudes it condones and promotes. And this is particularly harmful in a society where attitudes towards women are already so poor that vast numbers of women and girls experience harassment, discrimination and abuse - every day.

We outline here how press objectification is harmful but for a more comprehensive view we would refer IMPRESS to three seminal works which clearly and simply catalogue how the press portrays women and the evidence for harm, alongside recommendations for change:

**'Joining Up The Dots' by Object <sup>1</sup>**

**'Just The Women' a joint submission to Leveson <sup>2</sup>**

**'The Sexualisation of Young People Review' by Dr Linda Papadopoulos <sup>3</sup>**

## Why Attitudes Matter

1 in 3 girls sexually harassed at schools      50% Girls considering Plastic Surgery

1 in 3 people blame the victim for being raped      1 in 5 Women Stalked

1 in 4 women sexually assaulted      40% London Women Harassed in Streets every year

1 in 3 women in the UK experience male violence – sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking. That is 10 million women in the UK. Millions more experience discrimination and harassment. Often on a daily basis. Why? Put simply, men are physically stronger than women. And if you are stronger than someone you can hurt them. The only thing that stops a man, and often a boy, from hurting a woman or a girl **ARE HIS ATTITUDES**. THAT is why the attitudes of man and boys are so important. That is why it is urgently necessary for men and boys to have appropriate attitudes about what it means to be a man, appropriate attitudes towards women, appropriate

<sup>1</sup> Object 'Joining Up The Dots': [www.notbuyingit.org.uk/Dots](http://www.notbuyingit.org.uk/Dots)

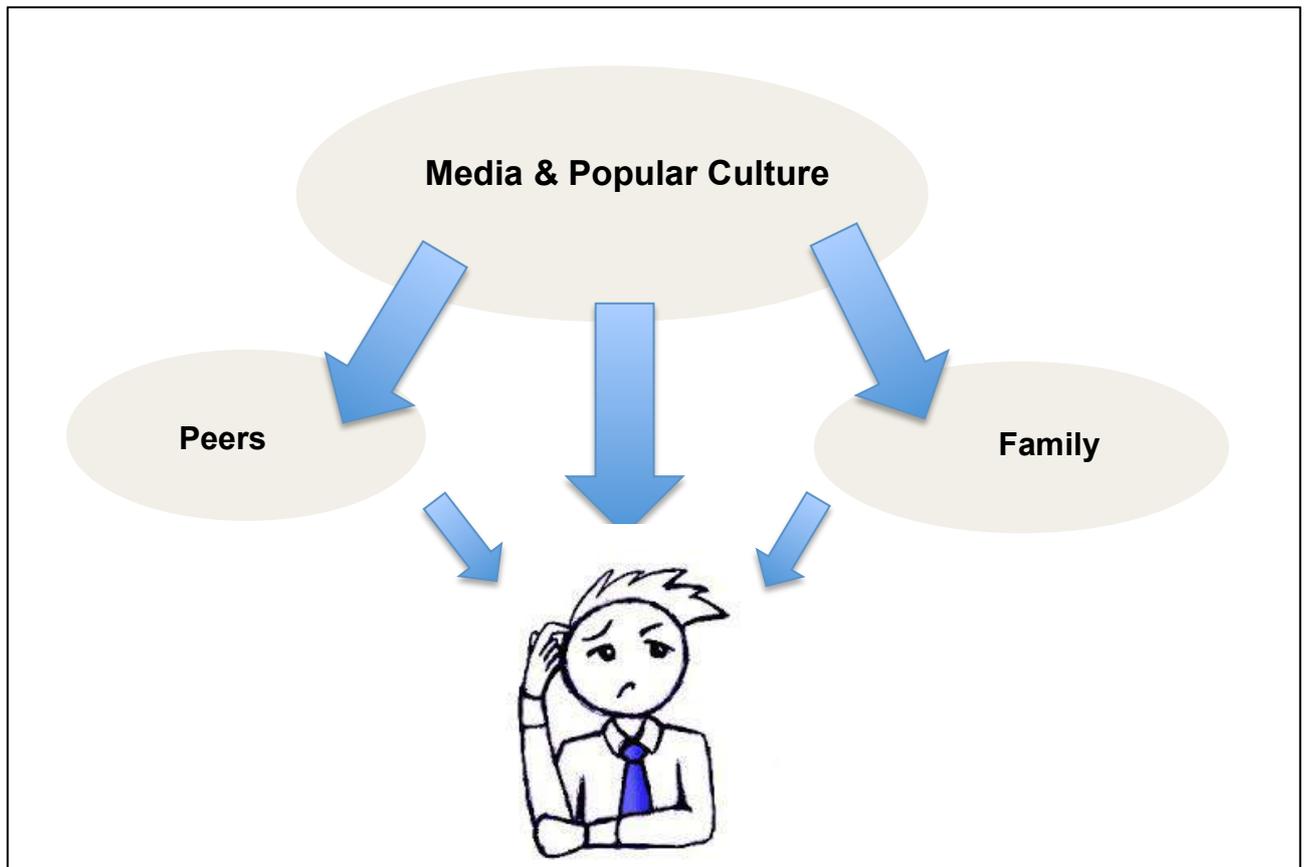
<sup>2</sup> 'Just The Women': <http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/resources/51/Just-the-Women-Nov-2012.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Papadopoulos 'Sexualisation of young People Review': <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/sexualisation-of-young-people.pdf>

attitudes about sex or what a relationship is supposed to be.

Given this endemic of harm, surely anything that can possibly contribute to harmful attitudes needs to be addressed. Indeed we already take this stance with stereotyping for every other group, but when it comes to stereotyping of women we suddenly seem willing to excuse it as 'harmless fun' or 'freedom of the press'.

### What's the Media Got To Do with It?



An absolutely key influencer of our attitudes is the media and popular culture. This does not just influence any given individual, but their peers and family who in turn then influence them in a self-perpetuating spiral. ***That is why it is so important that the media promotes socially responsible attitudes.*** Until it does we will never see an end to violence and discrimination. In fact it needs to go further than that. The media, including the press, needs to do a U-Turn. It needs to become part of the solution, not part of the problem. It needs to start promoting healthy attitudes towards women, about manhood, about sex and relationships.

The fact that the media plays a pivotal role in shaping attitudes is a matter of pure common sense – one which almost any person in the street would state as self-evident. However this self-evident truth is backed by extensive research, countless experts, international documents and Government and other related policy and practices

## How Does the Press Portray Women ?



**Covers of the most popular Tabloids**

The media and popular culture constantly and needlessly objectify and sexualise women and girls – particularly through imagery. And the old adage is true – a picture really does speak a thousand words. In the press, this includes ‘Page 3’, the entire contents of The Sport ‘newspaper’<sup>4</sup>, constant gratuitous and wholly unnecessary cleavage, bikini and similar shots on covers, inside or online particularly in tabloids like The Sun, Star and Daily Mail. This has nothing to do with ‘news’. This has nothing to do with ‘free expression’. This has everything to do with selling copy using the hackneyed old cliché that ‘(female) sex sells’. We would suggest that evidence that this is how the media, including the press, routinely portrays women is not needed as it absolutely self apparent but if an analysis is needed, excellent overviews can be found in the reports mentioned above<sup>1,2,3</sup>.

### **Evidence that Objectification Promotes Harmful Attitudes**

It is surely self-evident that constantly stereotyping one group of people, particularly visually, has an immeasurable effect on attitudes – both on the group being stereotyped (females) and, far more importantly, on those who are *not* (ie males). If any other group were stereotyped in this manner evidence of harm would not be needed, it would be taken as read that this *was* harmful and unacceptable and so be stopped.

However there is a considerable body of evidence demonstrating the harm of such objectification.

We have outlined just some of this below, however we urge IMPRESS to read the excellent reports highlighted above<sup>1,2,3</sup> that bring together the evidence that the press does objectify women and the harm of this portrayal alongside practical recommendations for change.

<sup>4</sup> The Sport ‘newspaper’ has naked young women in pornographic poses on essentially every page alongside countless graphic ads for the porn and sex industry and yet is sold as and marketed as a newspaper. An analysis can be found here: [www.notbuyingit.org.uk/SundaySport](http://www.notbuyingit.org.uk/SundaySport) Warning: Offensive. Warning: Inappropriate to view in the work place

## Effect on Women and Girls

Poor Body Image   Eating Disorders   Poor Physical Health   Low self esteem  
Plastic surgery   Poor mental health   Limited Aspirations   Harmful Life Choices  
Reduced ability to develop healthy sexual relationships   Depression

Stereotyping of women and girls has a profound effect on women's and girls' view of themselves – impacting on all the areas highlighted above.

A society in which a dominant message is that female worth comes primarily from physical appearance and 'sexiness' is one in which female aspirations are obviously going to reflect this. Surveys in the UK at the height of the strip joint boom (when such venues were licensed like cafes) and lad's mags culture (when these soft porn magazines were sold to children on the bottom shelf) found that a high proportion of young women aspired to work as 'glamour models' or lap dancers <sup>1</sup>. The American Psychological Association clearly links the sexualisation of women in media and popular culture to such aspirations <sup>1</sup>.

At the individual level sexualisation has extensive negative effects and undermines body self-esteem and confidence in both women and girls. Numerous studies have linked the increased sexualisation of women to the ever-rising incidences of eating disorders, depression and poor mental health <sup>1,3</sup>. And these issues are manifesting at a younger and younger age in young women and girls.

It seems to be generally accepted that the portrayal of women and girls by the media and popular culture effects and harms the attitudes of women and girls about themselves. How much more so then will this portrayal of women effect the attitudes of *men* towards women? There is no 'self defence' protection mechanism that might kick in to stop males being affected by these messages, as there might well be for females because of the huge level of 'self harm' that this promotes...

## Effect on Attitudes of Men and Boys

Increased Aggressive Behaviour	Sexist Attitudes	Disrespect
Increased Acceptance of Violence	Child Abuse	Entitlement
Hypermachismo	Sexual Violence	Superiority
		'Victim Blaming'

### ***The Media & Popular Culture influences attitudes:***

Even in 2003 (long before the all-encompassing invasiveness of the internet) research from the Institute of Education showed that young people stated that the media was *their primary source of sex education*. In other words the media influences young people's attitudes <sup>1</sup>. The result? The media is "reinforcing the views of many young men that women are always available for sex".

### ***Sexual Objectification Influences Attitudes:***

There is a large body of evidence linking stereotyping, particularly objectification, to sexist beliefs and aggressive behaviour <sup>1,3</sup>.

Exposure to sexually objectifying material of women affects people's perceptions or judgements of *other* women – in ways which again reinforce sexist attitudes.

Sexually objectifying content is connected to acceptance of gender role stereotypes.

Frequent and regular exposure to material which sexually objectifies women and girls is linked to the development of sexist attitudes and the acceptance of traditional, archaic views including the objectification of women.

The American Psychological Association review of the literature concludes that "exposure to sexualised depictions of women may lead to *global* thoughts that women are seductive and frivolous sex objects... and foster an overall climate that *does not value* girls' and women's voices or contributions to society"

### ***Objectification is Linked to Abuse***

A significant body of research demonstrates the links between violence towards women and the sexualisation of women and girls and the mainstreaming of pornography.

Sexually objectifying content is connected to acceptance of attitudes of male entitlement in sexual relationships <sup>1,3</sup> .

Adults exposed to sexually objectifying images of women from mainstream media are significantly more accepting of rape myths, sexual harassment, gender role stereotypes and inter-personal violence than those in control conditions.

The Independent Advisory Group on Sexual Health and HIV (IAGSHH) has identified that the sexualisation of toys and advertising directly influences young people's sexual behavior and attitudes <sup>1</sup>.

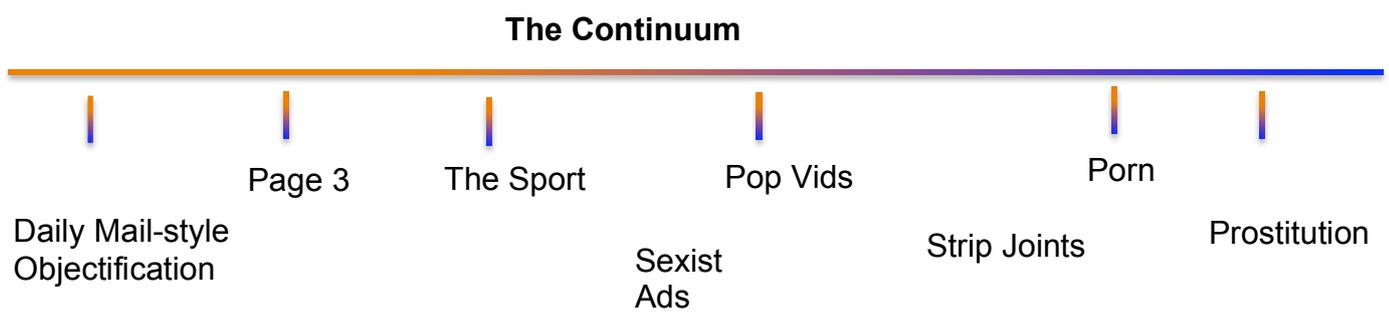
The American Psychological Association has long been concerned about the effect of both the sexualisation *of* girls and the sexualisation of women *as* girls on the incidence of child sexual abuse<sup>1</sup>.

The increased media sexualizing of women also goes hand in hand with increased and normalised harassment and abuse of women and girls at a younger and younger age.

Unlike press objectification of women, this has been acted on with the Government working with retailers to reduce sexualisation of toys (and clothing) and with the ASA to reduce sexualisation in advertising

The sexualisation of women and ‘pornification’ of culture also harms boys and men who are pressurised to act out a version of ‘being a man’ in which power over women is normal. The effect is demonstrated by the fact that only 8% of rapes are stranger rapes ie rape is essentially carried out by women's current or former partners. This means that it is ‘ordinary’ boys and men who are committing sexually violent crimes. Why? Men and boys are under intense pressure to feel that they ‘need sex all the time’; that they are supposed to dominate even with violence; that they are, and must always be, superior to half the world’s population; that they have in effect a dysfunctional, abusive relationship with the women they are closest to (their own partners); that they are not supposed to talk or communicate; that it is unmanly to possess emotions. All this has a devastating effect on men and boy’s view of themselves as well as their attitudes towards women. No wonder the male suicide rate is so high.

### ***Porn influences attitudes***



Objectification is a continuum of harmful images and messages with the porn and sex trade sitting at one end. Again a huge body of research exposes the self-evident truth that porn influences men and boy's views of women, 'manhood' and sex. We are not outlining this evidence here of as outside the scope of this report (ie to specifically look at the objectification and stereotyping found in the press). **However an excellent summary can be found in the briefing by the End Violence Against Women coalition of women's groups<sup>5</sup> alongside the Object<sup>1</sup> and Sexualisation Reviews<sup>3</sup> already cited.**

The government is so concerned by the harm of pornography that it has curbed not only children's access to it but adult access to violent and degrading pornography.

Again we would argue that since the harm of pornography is clearly recognised and being acted upon, it cannot possibly be reasonable to take no action whatsoever to curb the *normalising* of pornography (through The Sport or sex industry ads in the press for instance). It is also non-sensical to do nothing to address the objectification of women in a newspaper – of which pornography is simply an extension. This is particularly the case when some argue that the objectification end of the spectrum (Daily Mail-style cleavage shots and constant referral to women's appearance) is in many ways even more harmful than pornography. This 'soft end' of the spectrum is normalised, so much so that it is even present in a newspaper, making it acceptable, part of the very fabric of our daily lives, spoon fed to our children and influencing generations from the youngest age imaginable.

Government has made it illegal to possess or distribute degrading pornography. So why is pornographic content and advertising or sexual objectification of women acceptable in a newspaper?

### **An Issue of Child Protection**



- **37% 8-9 year olds Read Newspapers**
- **48% of older children read newspapers**
- **70 % Kids say they have access to a newspaper**
- **50 % Boys say Newspapers their *preferred* Reading Material**
- **Children encouraged to read newspapers by educationalists**

The press is non-age restricted, mainstream and readily child-accessible. Indeed, given the large

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<sup>5</sup> EVAW: Briefing on Pornography and Violence Against Women and Girls:  
<http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/resources/65/EVAW-Briefing-on-Porn-and-VAWG.pdf>

proportion of children who read papers <sup>6</sup>, particularly the tabloids that carry such imagery it could be argued that, intentionally or otherwise, children are being targeted with such images.

This clearly brings in the additional issue of **CHILD PROTECTION**.

If an individual showed pornographic imagery to a child or 'promoted prostitution to a child' (eg via the sex ads seen in many newspapers) it could be seen as a crime under the Serious Crime Act. How then is it appropriate for the press to promote exactly such images and messages to children?

Indeed surely the contents of a newspaper both in print and online should essentially strive to be 'child-friendly', particularly with its visual content – which has the greatest impact on a child.

Unlike pornographic imagery or advertising in the press, the ability of children to access porn has been acted on with the Government striving to make it increasingly inaccessible to underage children, and now ultimately working to make all porn age-restricted

### **Double Standards - Stereotyping for Anyone Else**

If *any other group of people* – gay men or black people - were constantly stereotyped (eg shown visually in the same way as the tabloid press does women) it would be immediately condemned and stopped as outright homophobia or racism. **No evidence** that this promoted harmful racist/homophobic attitudes or damaged gay or ethnic minorities sense of self required! It would be seen as self-evident and wholly unacceptable. Full stop. Yet when women are portrayed in this manner it is 'free speech' or 'the media's right to offend'. How can such double standards be applied?

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<sup>6</sup> The Great British Press – Fit for our Kids? [www.notbuyingit.org.uk/Newspapers4Kids](http://www.notbuyingit.org.uk/Newspapers4Kids)

## 2 Press out of Touch with Government Policy

The harm of sexualised and stereotyping media portrayal has been recognised for some time by decision makers who are proactively take steps to counter this.

Successive Governments have been deeply concerned by violence against women and girls and the sexualisation of young people. So much so that they have commissioned a number of reports into these issues and implemented many of the recommendations from them, including the role of the media in contributing to these major social problems.

**These include : Two Byron Reviews, the Papadopoulos Review, the Bailey Review & numerous Violence Against Women and Girls Strategies** <sup>7,8,9</sup>:

‘The **communications** we see around us on a daily basis can **reinforce negative messages** on the role of women and contribute to the excessive commercialisation and **premature sexualisation** of children’.

‘Everyone has a role to play in prevention. This is not just about government activity, but is also about .. **the media**’

In 2011 the Government even held inter-ministerial meetings with representatives from the **media** industry, regulators and media bodies to discuss how **images and messages** could **perpetuate gender stereotypes and promote an acceptance of VAWG** <sup>6</sup>

It also committed to work with the National Union of Journalists to produce guidance for journalists reporting on violence against women and girls to encourage responsible reporting that does not perpetuate the myths and beliefs that fuel such violence.

Ofsted too clearly recognises the powerful influence of the media and pornography on young people with a recent Ofsted review of PSHE stating that schools did not adequately focus on the influence of pornography on students’ understanding of healthy relationships (May 2013).

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<sup>7</sup> Her Majesties Government ‘A Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls’:  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/97905/vawg-paper.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97905/vawg-paper.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> A Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls – Taking Action the Next Chapter:  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/97901/action-plan-new-chapter.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97901/action-plan-new-chapter.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> A Call to end Violence Against Women and Girls – Action Plan:  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/118153/vawg-action-plan.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118153/vawg-action-plan.pdf)

The Government has for some time has also been proactively seeking to end the sexualisation of children <sup>10</sup> :

‘take action to protect children from premature sexualisation... We will crack down on irresponsible **advertising and marketing**, especially to children. We will also take steps to tackle the commercialisation and **sexualisation** of childhood.’

Government policy has increased in a step-wise manner to end children’s exposure to pornography. This has culminated in pending legislation (under the Digital Communications Bill) to make all internet porn age restricted. The continued advertising of porn and prostitution in a newspaper is totally out of synch with this policy. The continued sexual objectification of women by Page 3 and similar press imagery at the ‘soft end’ of the porn spectrum is also totally at odds with this policy.

### 3 Press out of Touch with Other UK Regulators



The Sport – sold and marketed as a newspaper

The Press is a non-age restricted, mainstream media accessed by large numbers of underage children. Surely its codes should at very least be in line with other UK media regulators?

#### **ASA - Advertising (both broadcast and non broadcast)**

ASA codes include ‘the need for social responsibility’. They also have clear guidelines over advertising to children. The Government has previously advised publication of stricter

<sup>10</sup> Bailey Review ‘Letting Children be Children’  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/175418/Bailey\\_Review.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175418/Bailey_Review.pdf)

guidelines by the Advertising Standards Authority for example over sexual images in outdoor advertising, particularly near schools. The ASA has already banned a number of advertisements using these new guidelines.

### **TfL - Advertising**

Transport for London (TfL) has taken this one step further in recognition of the widely accessible, multi-cultural, child-friendly, women-welcoming, equal and inclusive environment it seeks to promote. Its latest codes on billboard ads ban sexual advertising, ads for the porn and sex industry in all its guises and even ads that can promote poor body image.

### **Tfl - Porn Watching**

TfL has recently warned men against public viewing of pornography on London Transport. (Whether a successful prosecution can be brought against viewing this material in public is irrelevant.) TfL have taken a clear stand and sent out a clear message. How then can any press regulator deem the pornographic images in some newspapers are suitable in the general public domain? How can it approve their often graphic ads for pornography and prostitution?

### **TV - The Watershed**

The imagery of the Star and the Sport in particular would never be allowed pre-Watershed. Nor would sex chat lines or ads for pornography and prostitution. The Bailey Review on the Sexualisation of Young People <sup>9</sup> called for Government action to ensure the Watershed was not eroded (a call backed by the 1,000 parents consulted in this review). How is the clearly 'non watershed' material of elements of the press (The Sport, Page 3 and 'Sex Chat' ads) in keeping with this?

### **Social Media**

Mainstream, child-accessible platforms, such as facebook and twitter, have a no nudity/no sexual imagery policy.

### **Internet Pornography**

In 2018 new legislation will make it illegal for children to access internet pornography.

## 4 Press out of Touch with Human Rights

The issue of sexualisation is raised in numerous international human rights documents:

- **CEDAW** (the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women)
- **BPfA** (the UN's Beijing Platform for Action)
- **The Istanbul Convention**

### **CEDAW**

CEDAW is a *legally binding* document to which the UK is signatory and calls for decisive action to tackle the objectification of women and girls.

Article 5 requires that measures are put in place to **modify the social and cultural patterns** of men and women with a view to eliminating prejudices and practices based on the idea of the **inferiority or superiority of either sex and/or on stereotyped roles** for men and women. CEDAW also states that the **sexual objectification of women plays a role in maintaining inequality** between the sexes, and has repeatedly identified links between the **portrayal of women as sex objects by the media** and the sex industry and attitudes that underpin violence and discrimination against women.

### **BPfA**

Strategic Objective J2 of the Beijing Platform for Action calls for all states to tackle unbalanced portrayals and **negative and degrading images of women in the media**.

### **Istanbul Convention**

Article 17 – Participation of the private sector and the media

'Parties shall encourage the private sector, the information and communication technology sector and the media, with due respect for freedom of expression and their independence, to participate in the elaboration and implementation of policies and to set guidelines and self-regulatory standards to **prevent violence against women and to enhance respect for their dignity**.'

## 5 Press out of Touch with Legislation

Current press portrayal of women is also out of synch with other areas of relevant legislation. Although the press is not bound by this, the huge discrepancy between what is deemed acceptable by the press and what is deemed legally acceptable in wider society is surely unacceptable?

### **Sexual Harassment at Work**

Page 3 and the entire content of The Sport would be (and indeed has been) judged a form of sexual harassment in the work place. Viewing the online imagery of these newspapers would also constitute sexual harassment in the workplace. How can it possibly be acceptable that newspapers carry imagery every single day that is deemed inappropriate in the work environment as a matter of law?

### **The Public Sector Equality Duty**

Any press regulator is legally bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty, PSED<sup>11</sup>. Yet current press portrayal of women and, sadly, IMPRESS codes seem to be a mile away from satisfying the PSED.

Under the PSED, Public bodies must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful **discrimination, harassment and victimisation**
- Advance **equality of opportunity**
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic (eg women) and those who do not (eg men), including **tackling prejudice**

### **Child Protection – Serious Crime Act**

Substantial numbers of children (approx. 40-50%) read newspapers<sup>6</sup>, particularly the kind of tabloids that most frequently objectify women, include sexual images of naked young women and graphic ads for the porn and sex trade.

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<sup>11</sup> The Public Sector Equality Duty, PSED: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty#h2>



However under the Serious Crime Act if such imagery or ads were offered to a child by an individual it could be seen as an offence<sup>12</sup>. How can the press be so out of synch with legally accepted norms of behaviour?

Serious Crime Act. Section 15A: It is an offence to communicate sexual material to a child to offer or provide sexual services to a child for the purposes of grooming

## 6 Press out of Touch with Public Opinion

There has always been overwhelming public support to end the objectification of women – any regulator that acts on this would not only finally be actually ‘representing the public interest’ but be seen to be doing so. Furthermore, tackling this most overt form of press irresponsibility would instantly show a regulator who meant business, who actually was going to make a difference. This, above all else, would restore public faith in the ability of the press to finally be sensibly regulated.

### Page 3

When Clare Short, MP, first tried to end Page 3 in the 1980’s she received 5,000 letters in support<sup>13</sup>. This was long before the internet existed or facebook, twitter and email. People had to actually go to the trouble to type or hand write letters and send them to Westminster. And they did. As such, perhaps the largest body of evidence in existence of public opposition to Page 3 and the effect of press objectification on both adults and children was catalogued in 1988 and has been ignored for the last 30 years. (The vitriolic attacks the MP then received at the hands of the press highlights yet another unacceptable face of the press that our society has likewise

<sup>12</sup> Serious Crime Act and the Press: [www.notbuyingit.org.uk/SeriousCrimeAct](http://www.notbuyingit.org.uk/SeriousCrimeAct)

<sup>13</sup> The letters Clare Short received have been compiled into a book, ‘Dear Clare, this is what women feel about Page 3’: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/d/cka/Dear-Clare-This-What-Women-Feel-About/0091749158>

failed to address).

More recently, the pressure group, No More Page 3 had more than ½ million supporters. Within 3 years this campaign ensured an end to Page 3 in the Sun.

### **Exposing Children to Sexualised Imagery**

The Bailey Review <sup>9</sup> on the Sexualisation of Children, with input from over 1,000 parents, found overwhelming support for ending children's exposure to inappropriate sexual imagery – from newspaper covers to clothing, from pop music videos to billboard ads. Many stated that the media needed to be far more proactive in preventing this, that media regulation was too limited and, even where it existed, was often not abided by.

### **Advertising**

The ASA routinely finds that the sexualised portrayal of women is the second most complained about issue they deal with (topped only by the sexualised portrayal of children). Indeed the ASA is so concerned about sexism in advertising that it recently set up a Gender Project Team which is due to report back to the ASA this Spring over sexual stereotyping in advertising.

### **What Girls Think**

A major study by the Girl Guides of over 1,500 girls and young women showed that the majority (70-80%) of young females feel that the media far too often portrays them as sex objects and that this directly contributes to sexism and poor body image <sup>14</sup>

### **Restrict Access to Pornography in Papers**

Our own poll has shown that 97% of the public (with over 150 respondents) think newspapers should *not* be advertise pornography and prostitution <sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Girl Guides: 'Girl's Attitudes Survey' <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/globalassets/docs-and-resources/research-and-campaigns/girls-attitudes-survey-2016.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> Not Buying It online Poll: [www.notbuyingit.org.uk/Vote](http://www.notbuyingit.org.uk/Vote)

## 7 Press out of Touch with the Experts

We have already made brief recommendations to IMPRESS <sup>16</sup> specifically over ending objectification in the press. However several women's groups have previously made much more in-depth, highly achievable recommendations for press change over a broad range of issues (including to Leveson <sup>2</sup>). It is disappointing that, half a decade on, none of these recommendations appear to have been implemented.

In particular we would like to refer IMPRESS to two seminal works:

**'Just The Women' a joint submission to Leveson <sup>2</sup>**

**Zero Tolerance 'Responsible Media Reporting of Rape' <sup>17</sup>**

But surely the final word should be given to Lord Leveson himself, who even recalled the Sun's editor specifically to question him over Page 3. Leveson concluded that the British Tabloids demean women and a new press regulator should have the power to intervene in cases of allegedly discriminatory reporting and reflect the spirit of equalities legislation <sup>18</sup>. All we are asking of IMPRESS is to do just this.

**'Page 3 tabloid press often failed to show consistent respect for the dignity and equality of women generally, and that there was a tendency to sexualise and demean women'**

**Lord Justice Leveson**

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<sup>16</sup> Not Buying It: 'Dear Impress sorry but we are not impressed' [www.notbuyingit.org.uk/ImpressSubmission](http://www.notbuyingit.org.uk/ImpressSubmission)

<sup>17</sup> Zero Tolerance – Responsible Media Reporting on Rape:

[http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/ZT\\_Handle\\_With\\_Care\\_Media\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/ZT_Handle_With_Care_Media_Guide.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> Lord Leveson on the Tabloids <http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/news/63/leveson-report-says-tabloids-demean-women-womens-groups-welcome-report>