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Introduction

Battling Pornography

The American Feminist Anti-Pornography Movement, 1976–1986

Beginning with Betty Friedan's 1963 analysis of the role that women's magazines and advertising played in normalizing female subordination within patriarchy and consumer capitalism, media representation provided a significant source of concern for the women's movement. Media constructions offered women limited roles, typically the happy housewife and mother, or the sexual object whose primary function was that of male plaything. Feminist scholars throughout the 1970s paid serious attention to advertising and found that women were rarely depicted in professional working roles or shown without the presence of a male escort in public. Women were primarily featured in ads for cleaning products, clothing, and home appliances, whereas men were shown in advertisements for cars, travel, and banks. Building on this body of image studies, activists and academic researchers including Lucy Komisar, Midge Kovacs, Jean Kilbourne, Gaye Tuchman, and Erving Goffman argued that this visual environment created and maintained conditions of gender inequality.[1]

By the mid-1970s, the "limited roles" critique of sexist media representation expanded to include insights derived from the radical feminist critique of heterosexuality. Feminists looked with new understanding at images that conflated female sexuality and violence, and claimed that they functioned

[1] For a thorough and compelling overview of feminist concern with mass media representation in the early 1970s, see Patricia Bradley, *Mass Media and the Shaping of American Feminism, 1963–1975* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2005). See also Katharina Lindner, "Images of Women in General Interest and Fashion Magazine Advertisements from 1955 to 2002," *Sex Roles* 51, no. 7/8 (October 2004): 409–421. Some of the influential early studies of advertising representation include: Alice Courtney and Sarah Lockeretz, "A Woman's Place: An Analysis of the Roles Portrayed by Women in Magazine Advertisements," *Journal of Marketing Research* 8 (February 1971): 92–95; Ahmed Belkaoui and Janice M. Belkaoui, "A Comparative Analysis of the Roles Portrayed by Women in Print Advertisements: 1958, 1970, 1972," *Journal of Marketing Research* 13 (May 1976): 168–172; and Lucy Komisar, "The Image of Woman in Advertising," in *Woman in Sexist Society: Studies in Power and Powerlessness*, eds. Vivian Gornick and Barbara K. Moran (New York: Basic Books, 1971), 207–217.

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like training manuals for young men growing up in a patriarchal society organized around the domination and oppression of women. Sexually violent media images encouraged the pervasive culture of male violence, contributing to the epidemic of rape and battering newly discovered within the consciousness raising groups popularized by radical feminism. Organizing in grassroots groups around the country, women protested the use of sexually violent images for entertainment and to sell products, arguing that this commercial exploitation fueled an appalling social problem.

These activists connected their insights about real-world media effects to a new body of radical feminist theory that revealed heterosexuality as an institution and ideology that created and maintained male supremacy. The gender stereotypes commonly found in popular media presented women as innately passive, childlike, and vulnerable. Men, by contrast, were aggressive, brutal, and lacked the capacity for restraint, qualities that seemed to encourage rape and other forms of sexual violence. Turning a critical eye to advertising, television, magazines, popular music, and films, feminist activists interpreted mediated violence against women as a powerful tool of patriarchal control. By glorifying sexual violence, mass media taught men to view women as subhuman, as sex objects designed for use and abuse. They also taught women that their primary obligation was to serve men's domestic and sexual needs, excusing violent behavior as a normal aspect of male sexual drive. By connecting sexually oppressive media images to concrete acts of sexual violence, like rape and battering, these feminists laid the groundwork for the rise of an American feminist anti-pornography movement.

This book chronicles the formation and development of an American feminist anti-pornography movement from 1976 to 1986, emphasizing the internal movement dynamics and external structural factors that supported a progression from a campaign against images of sexual violence in mainstream media, especially advertising, to a focus on pornography, including nonviolent, sexually explicit expression. The vast majority of scholarship on the anti-pornography movement concentrates on the latter part of this campaign, specifically the mid-1980s efforts of the legal scholar Catharine MacKinnon and the radical feminist author Andrea Dworkin to introduce anti-pornography ordinances that treated pornography as a form of sex discrimination that violated women's civil rights. This book has a different emphasis. It focuses on the earlier years, tracing the emergence and development of the three most influential feminist media reform groups that led the movement in the 1970s and early 1980s: Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW) (Los Angeles, 1976); Women Against Violence in Pornography and Media (WAVPM) (San Francisco, 1976); and Women Against Pornography (WAP) (New York, 1979).[2]

[2] There were a number of other grassroots feminist organizations that helped comprise the anti-pornography movement, and each organization defined the problem of pornography – and the preferred solutions – differently. Some of these other groups included Women Against Sexist Violence in Pornography and Media (WASVP/M) in Pittsburgh, Feminists Against

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In restoring the history of these groups, this book locates the origins of the feminist anti-pornography movement in grassroots campaigns against sexually violent and sexist mainstream media content. WAVAW, WAVPM, and WAP took issue with the presentation of women in American advertising and pressured corporations to withdraw campaigns that celebrated sexual violence. WAVAW protested a 1976 advertising campaign for the Rolling Stones' album *Black and Blue*, which portrayed a beaten and bruised woman straddling a photograph of Mick Jagger and the other band members, her eyes closed and mouth hanging open in an expression of intense sexual arousal. WAVPM urged Max Factor to cancel an ad for its *Self-Defense* brand of moisturizing cream that warned women of the need to protect themselves from dirt, grime, and other elements that would "attack" and spoil their beauty. The campaign mocked women's fears of rape and other forms of sexual assault. WAVPM and WAP led a joint protest against the 1981 advertising campaign for the Hanes brand of pantyhose, whose slogan boldly proclaimed that "Gentlemen Prefer Hanes." Feminists criticized the parent corporation for reinforcing what the radical feminist Adrienne Rich termed "compulsory heterosexuality," namely the heterosexist idea that every woman needed to be tied to a man sexually and emotionally. This ad perpetuated the idea that a woman's primary function was to please a man, reduced a woman to her body parts – "'sexy legs' for men to leer at" – and provided daily ideological support for male supremacy and an oppressive patriarchal order.[3]

WAVAW, WAVPM, and WAP tried to disrupt and subsequently improve mainstream media images. They opposed a proliferation of commercial images that glorified violence and reinforced gender stereotypes about women and men that fostered sexist attitudes and behavior. They shared the goal of ending rape, battering, sexual harassment, and other forms of sexual violence. Each organization sought to improve the material conditions of women's lives by calling for reform of a visual environment polluted by sexist and sexually violent messages. Using national consumer action and public education techniques, as well as performance art, feminist conferences, marches, and demonstrations, these organizations led a creative and innovative battle to improve the media, reduce violence against women, and pave the way for true liberation.

At the same time that advertising and other mainstream media captured these groups' attention, the question of pornography – sexually explicit material – always hung in the air. WAVAW, WAVPM, and WAP crafted different approaches to the issue. Members of WAVAW were always careful to describe themselves as anti-media violence, and not as anti-pornography, although the group had initially organized in 1976 to block distribution of

Pornography in Washington, DC, Citizens for Media Responsibility Without Law in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and People Against Pornography in Chicago. These groups generally had less influence on the movement as a whole, and thus this history focuses on the three main groups.

[3] Alexandra Matusinka, "Hanes' Double Exploitation of Women," *WAP NewsReport* (Spring/Summer 1983), 8.

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an X-rated film called *Snuff* that purported to show the on-screen rape, murder, and evisceration of a young woman. As in the case of the Rolling Stones' *Black and Blue*, the organization feared that depictions of violence conflated with sexual enjoyment created dangerous gender stereotypes and lent credibility to the myth that women were sexually aroused by brutal treatment. *Snuff* was an appropriate target for action in WAVAW's view because it featured overt images of physical violence against women, not because it was sexually explicit. Although many organization members resented the increased sexualization of American culture in the 1970s, and the public presentation of women's bodies as sexual objects, they did not consider pornography per se to be a target for action. Organization leaders feared that an all-out war against pornography would lead to sexual repression and censorship, and would distract attention from the intended focus on mainstream media portrayals of violent behavior that showed women as willing victims and men as natural brutes.

In December 1976, San Francisco-area feminists founded WAVPM, identifying pornography from the outset as an important component of their anti-violence agenda. The members of this organization shared WAVAW's commitment to fighting depictions of violence in advertising and other mainstream media, but also believed that pornography was central to women's oppression. WAVPM expanded the movement's definition of media violence and advanced some of the first analyses of the covert, psychological violence against women that sexually explicit images, such as *Playboy* centerfolds, were thought to contain. Within weeks of its founding, WAVPM was leading protest marches through San Francisco's commercial sex districts, arguing that XXX films and adult bookstores created a hostile climate that taught men to view women as sexual playthings. In the words of Andrea Dworkin, one of the anti-pornography movement's most important theorists, pornography "conditions, trains, educates, and inspires men to despise women, to use women, to hurt women."[4] Pornography reinforced the idea that sexual access to women's bodies – whether freely given or taken by force – was every man's right. The radical feminist activist Robin Morgan summed this up in a pithy phrase oft-repeated in the movement: "Pornography is the theory, and rape the practice."[5]

In 1979, the feminist anti-pornography movement seemed to take a decisive turn away from its broad-based set of concerns about media violence with the founding of WAP. Prominent New York radical feminists, including Susan Brownmiller, Gloria Steinem and Robin Morgan launched this organization. These women believed that emphasizing a hot-button issue like pornography, as opposed to media violence, would generate extensive news coverage and

[4] Andrea Dworkin, "Pornography and Grief," in *Take Back the Night: Women on Pornography*, ed. Laura Lederer (New York: William Morrow, 1980), 289.
[5] Robin Morgan, "Theory and Practice: Pornography and Rape," in *Take Back the Night: Women on Pornography*, ed. Laura Lederer (New York: William Morrow, 1980), 139.

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community support. The strategic rhetorical shift, coupled with high-profile leaders and generous financial backing from the Mayor's office and business groups who endorsed Times Square gentrification efforts, ensured that WAP would move to the forefront of the feminist anti-pornography movement.

Like their sisters in WAVAW and WAVPM, members of WAP believed that mainstream media images were powerful agents of socialization; they taught men and women about their respective worth in society and communicated insidious gender stereotypes. WAP participated in a range of protests against abusive advertising campaigns, popular films, television programs, and magazines that suggested that women deserved to be exploited and humiliated. But the calculated reorientation to pornography meant that the organization had less time and fewer resources to devote to these broad-based, grassroots media reform efforts, a reality that changed the nature of the movement as a whole. In 1983, WAP leaders endorsed government action and legal strategies to ban violent pornography, concluding that state-supported suppression of this material was the best means of addressing women's second-class status. The organization mobilized on behalf of the MacKinnon-Dworkin anti-pornography ordinances that treated pornography as a violation of women's civil rights. WAP also provided witnesses who gave testimony about the destructive influence of pornography to Attorney General Edwin Meese's 1985 Commission on Pornography. This political body was stacked with religious conservatives and was widely interpreted as a sop to right-wing groups who had helped Ronald Reagan win the presidency, and demanded action on family values issues in return.

Although there was a great deal of heterogeneity among WAVAW, WAVPM, and WAP with respect to their ideas, beliefs, strategies, and tactics, the feminist anti-pornography movement is often described as a monolith, a one-issue movement unified behind a drive for legislative action. The dominant popular view holds that the anti-pornography movement consisted of groups who drummed up widespread national feminist support for the ordinances drafted by MacKinnon and Dworkin, who "somehow became virtually the sole recognized figures for all radical feminism in the 1980s," as Lynn S. Chancer has observed.[6]

In reality, anti-pornography was a complex and multifaceted movement made up of diverse and overlapping feminist groups who articulated their own sets of ideas and goals. These groups never reached consensus on the best way to fight sexualized media violence and they did not simply fall in line behind MacKinnon and Dworkin. Some of the groups, including WAVAW, rejected the focus on pornography altogether, concerned that this approach constituted a threat to individual speech rights and sexual freedom while letting mainstream media, such as advertising and popular films, off the hook. Yet at the same time that these groups exhibited significant differences, it was

[6] Lynn S. Chancer, *Reconcilable Differences: Confronting Beauty, Pornography and the Future of Feminism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 20.

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clear that they shared theoretical linkages, structural similarities, intellectual origins in the radical feminist critique of heterosexuality, and a sincere desire among members to reform the media landscape in ways that would increase women's rights. WAVAW, WAVPM, and WAP acknowledged one another as "sister organizations" that were part of the same movement, namely "the struggle against commercial and cultural exploitation of violence against women."[7] In opposing sexualized depictions of women that contributed to their oppression, each group played a role in the evolution of a full-fledged feminist anti-pornography movement.

Two distinct purposes guide the account of the feminist anti-pornography movement set forth in this book. First, as a media scholar, I wanted to make sense of the explosive set of social and cultural conditions affecting American women's lives in the mid-1970s that encouraged sexually violent media images to emerge as a key concern. What were the environmental triggers that motivated groups of women at this point in time to train their attention on a subset of media images and identify them as a major cause of female oppression? In a related question, I wondered why a grassroots consumer action and public education campaign against sexual violence in mainstream media, especially advertising, transformed over time into an anti-pornography effort that included nonviolent, sexually explicit expression as a primary target for action. Why did pornography eclipse more mainstream forms of sexualized media violence as the movement progressed, and how did this rhetorical and tactical shift affect each of the groups under study, as well as the direction of the larger movement?

To answer these questions about movement origins and the focus on media images, I examined key social and political developments that affected American women in the years just prior to the formation of WAVAW, WAVPM, and WAP. I found that the groups were populated by individuals who shared common interpretations of a series of conditions during the late 1960s and early 1970s. These included the failed promise of the sexual revolution, the growth of awareness of male violence against women, the development of a radical feminist political critique of heterosexuality, and concern over the commercialization of sex.

As the first few chapters of this book reveal, ideological changes in the Women's Liberation movement in the years prior to the emergence of anti-pornography combined explosively with feminist outrage at the disappointments of the sexual revolution and the discovery of an epidemic of male sexual violence. Although the sexual revolution did enlarge women's right to engage more freely in sexual behavior, it provided little support for women to define their sexuality free of male standards and expectations. Many women felt exploited by a revolution that privileged male desire and enlarged the male right of access. New knowledge about the prevalence of sexual violence, particularly rape, exacerbated women's anger at the oppressive aspects of

[7] "On Porn," *WAVAW Newsletter*, no. 8 (1980): 1, 4.

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sexuality. Feminists analyzed female vulnerability to sexual pressure and sexual coercion as part of the system of power that men used to maintain and reinforce women's subordination. This mix of conditions supported a feminist consensus opposing depictions of male violence against women as glorifying a symbol and agent of female oppression.

Widespread dissatisfaction with the sexual revolution had many women convinced that the current heterosexual order left women at a significant disadvantage. By the mid-1970s, years of consciousness raising (CR) within the radical feminist wing of the Women's Liberation movement had exposed the callous disregard many men reserved for their female sexual partners, the social pressures that led women to capitulate to unwanted sex, the health risks associated with birth control pills, the devastating effects of venereal disease, and the terror of unwanted pregnancy, which was particularly acute in the pre-*Roe* years when women had no right to safe, legal abortion. Some of this knowledge was channeled into the articulation of political lesbianism, the theory that every committed feminist should oppose patriarchy by withdrawing sexual and social support from men. For a greater number of individuals, however, the disappointments of the sexual revolution hardened into general resentment of men's greater sexual rights and planted seeds of discontent that would support the emergence of anti-pornography sentiment.

Within the CR groups popularized by the Women's Liberation movement, sex provided much fodder for conversation. These intimate discussions not only helped many women realize that the sexual revolution had resulted in fewer favorable outcomes for women than men, but also revealed the pervasive problem of male sexual violence. The discussion of sexual experiences inevitably led women to share painful incidents of coercion, and the prevalence of rape, battering, and incest became known for the first time. Feminists recognized that male violence was part of the fabric of every woman's life through firsthand experience or chronic fear. In the early 1970s, they initiated national campaigns to publicize the problem, provide shelters and counseling for victims, and rewrite sexist laws that exploited women's vulnerabilities. Feminist theorists analyzed violence in revolutionary ways as a patriarchal political tool that benefited all men, because it kept women fearful, timid, and dependent on male protection.[8]

The combination by the mid-1970s of an expansive radical feminist critique of heterosexuality as an institution and an ideology that maintained and reinforced male supremacy, coupled with rage about the sexual oppression of women and the ubiquity of male violence, created a volatile mix of conditions that supported the growth of the anti-pornography analysis. Leading radical

[8] Influential writings incorporating this analysis of violence include: Susan Griffin, "Rape: The All-American Crime," *Ramparts* 10 (1971): 26–35; Andra Medea and Kathleen Thompson, *Against Rape* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1974); Robin Morgan, "Theory and Practice: Pornography and Rape," in *Take Back the Night: Women on Pornography*, ed. L. Lederer (New York: William Morrow, 1980); Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1975).

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feminists began to question where men might *learn* the destructive male values that perpetuated a misogynist culture. Where were men *learning* that it was a male right to abuse, humiliate, and terrorize women? These theorists advanced a social constructionist view of male behavior which held that men learned through media exposure and firsthand observation that it was natural and appropriate for them to dominate women. Mass media images that showed women as domestic servants, or as glorified sexual objects, or worse, as victims of sexual violence, were cultural texts that perpetuated female oppression. These were revolutionary ideas. For women seeking to understand the prevalence of abuse and the male desensitization to violence revealed through radical feminist consciousness raising, the idea that mainstream media and pornography played a role was nothing short of a breakthrough. Susan Brownmiller stated this flatly in her landmark study of rape, *Against Our Will*, when she wrote: "Pornography is the undiluted essence of antifemale propaganda."[9] Pornography reified a hegemonic, aggressive masculinity and taught men to treat women as sex objects, as less than fully human.

The issue of pornography galvanized significant segments of the women's movement in the late 1970s, and appeared to many feminists to be a unifying campaign that might rally all comers. The condemnation of sexually explicit, male-oriented material conformed to the prevailing radical feminist critique of heterosexuality as an institution and an ideology that maintained and reinforced male supremacy, and it resonated with women's anger about greater male sexual license and fear of sexual crime. Pornography was filled with dangerous images of violence against women and was increasingly visible in the public sphere after a series of liberal Supreme Court rulings on obscenity. It was distasteful and horrifying to many women who saw it as a key player in creating and maintaining structural inequalities that deprived women of their civil rights. An anti-pornography campaign would focus on a universal issue that seemed to affect all women because all women were victimized by images that might inspire male brutality. Fighting pornography was a way of launching an all-out war against *male sexual violence*, capturing with one target three areas of tremendous feminist discontent.

My second purpose in writing this book emerged as I studied the early phase of movement history to make sense of the gradual transition to anti-pornography. As I pored over the organizations' manuscript collections to reconstruct their work against media violence, it became clear that the reform accomplished in the first years of the movement, particularly by WAVAW and WAVPM prior to the founding of WAP, had received little critical attention. The successful campaigns that these groups waged against such establishment media conglomerates as Warner Communications were rendered almost invisible in historical scholarship and popular accounts, creating a significant gap in media history and the history of second-wave feminist organizing. By way of comparison, the MacKinnon-Dworkin period of anti-pornography activity

[9] Brownmiller, *Against Our Will*, 394.

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has received extensive popular and academic analysis, resulting in a massive body of literature that examines both their theories of pornography's harms and the drive to pass ordinances in Minneapolis, Indianapolis, and several other American cities. This literature originates from every conceivable theoretical perspective, including radical feminist, civil libertarian, third-wave feminist, liberal feminist, socialist feminist, First Amendment, neoconservative, postmodernist, sex radical, religious conservative, and empirical social scientific, among others.[10]

[10] For just a few of the literally thousands of texts, see these examples. For the **liberal/First Amendment** position: Donald Alexander Downs, *The New Politics of Pornography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989); Nadine Strossen, *Defending Pornography: Free Speech, Sex, and the Fight for Women's Rights* (New York: Scribner, 1995); ACLU Arts Censorship Project, *Above the Law: The Justice Department's War Against the First Amendment* (Medford, NY: American Civil Liberties Union, 1991); Ronald Dworkin, "Women and Pornography" in *Prostitution and Pornography: Philosophical Debate about the Sex Industry*, ed. Jessica Spector (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006), 296–309; **feminist anti-censorship**: Varda Burstyn, ed., *Women Against Censorship* (Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1985); Carole S. Vance, "Negotiating Sex and Gender in the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography," in *The Gender and Sexuality Reader: Culture, History, Political Economy*, eds. Roger N. Lancaster and Micaela di Leonardo (New York: Routledge, 1997), 440–452; Symposium: The Sex Panic: Women, Censorship and 'Pornography,' *New York Law School Law Review* 37, no. 1–4 (1993); Marcia Pally, *Sense and Censorship: The Vanity of Bonfires* (Americans for Constitutional Freedom, 1991); **radical feminist**: Catharine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin, *Pornography and Civil Rights: A New Day for Women's Equality* (Minneapolis, MN: Organizing Against Pornography, 1988); Dorchen Leidholdt and Janice Raymond, *The Sexual Liberals and the Attack on Feminism* (New York: Pergamon, 1990); Catherine Itzin, ed., *Pornography: Women, Violence and Civil Liberties* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); **pro-sex/sex radical/sexual libertarian**: Alison Assiter and Avedon Carol, *Bad Girls & Dirty Pictures: The Challenge to Reclaim Feminism* (Boulder, CO: Pluto Press, 1993); Brenda Cossman, Shannon Bell, Lise Gotell, and Becki Ross, *Bad Attitude/s on Trial: Pornography, Feminism, and the Butler Decision* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); Pamela Church Gibson and Roma Gibson, eds. *Dirty Looks: Women, Pornography, Power* (London: British Film Institute, 1993); **liberal feminist**: Martha Nussbaum, *Sex & Social Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Zillah Eisenstein, *The Female Body and the Law* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); Jeanne L. Schroeder, "The Taming of the Shrew: The Liberal Attempt to Mainstream Radical Feminist Theory," *Yale Journal of Law and Feminism* 123, no. 5 (1992): 135–162; **postmodern**: Mary Jo Frug, *Postmodern Legal Feminism* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 145–153; Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (New York: Routledge, 1997); **third wave**: Rene Denfeld, *The New Victorians: A Young Woman's Challenge to the Old Feminist Order* (New York: Warner Books, 1995); Katie Roiphe, *The Morning After: Sex, Fear and Feminism on Campus* (New York: Little, Brown, 1993); **right-wing conservative**: Whitney Strub, *Perversion for Profit: The Politics of Pornography and the Rise of the New Right* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011); Janice M. Irvine, *Talk About Sex: The Battles Over Sex Education in the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Louis A. Zurcher Jr. and R. George Kirkpatrick, *Citizens for Decency: Anti-Pornography Crusades as Status Defense* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1976); **empirical social science**: Edward Donnerstein, Daniel Linz, and Steven Penrod, *The Question of Pornography: Research Findings and Policy Implications* (New York: The Free Press, 1987); Thelma McCormack, "Making Sense of the Research on Pornography," in *Women Against Censorship*, ed. Varda Burstyn (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1985).

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One result of the dearth of scholarship on the first phase of the movement is that the accomplishments of the earlier groups are often overlooked. Another, more serious result is that the intent of the anti-pornography movement as a whole is frequently mischaracterized. Three examples from recent, widely read books may help illustrate these points. David Allyn, in his history of the sexual revolution *Make Love, Not War*, correctly establishes WAVAW as a predecessor to WAP, but writes that the organization fell apart in 1978. In reality, WAVAW was at the height of its national influence at that point, and would win major concessions from Warner Communications in December 1979 after carrying out a three-year national boycott of its record labels. Allyn also indicates that WAP "borrowed many tactics from the [anti-abortion] right, including the use of a slide show," when in fact the WAP slide show was a modified version of the ones created by WAVAW and WAVPM in 1976–1977.[11] Members of Los Angeles WAVAW had drawn inspiration for this tactic directly from Hollywood films, and the project benefited from the technical expertise of members who worked in the entertainment industry. If Allyn intended to draw a parallel to the widely distributed anti-abortion video, *The Silent Scream*, it should be noted that this video appeared in 1984, almost a decade after WAVAW members began presenting their slide show to community groups.

These are minor factual discrepancies, and I point to them only as a means of illustrating the incomplete historical record that exists with regard to the initial years of feminist anti-pornography organizing. The more serious and common errors date the beginning of anti-pornography to the formation of WAP, write WAVAW and WAVPM out of the picture entirely, and attribute support for anti-sexual ideas and censorship tactics to all movement actors. Journalist Ariel Levy writes in her 2005 book, *Female Chauvinist Pigs*, that a "splinter group of activists" including Steinem and Brownmiller discovered the pornography problem in 1979.[12] Brownmiller, of course, had been railing against pornography since at least 1975, when she pointed out its dangers to a national audience in *Against Our Will*. Steinem had been struggling to define the difference between pornography and erotica in the pages of *Ms.* for at least two years prior to the founding of WAP. Truncating the chronology of anti-pornography in this way erases a significant prior body of feminist activism and obscures the reality that most participants were interested

This is an incomplete list, and I am making rough distinctions here for the sole purpose of making a point about the sheer volume of writing on the MacKinnon-Dworkin and Meese Commission anti-pornography efforts. Some of the works listed here easily fit in two or more categories, and some of the most influential anthologies did not make it onto this list because they include a range of essays exploring anti-pornography efforts from many different ideological positions, for example, Drucilla Cornell, ed. *Feminism & Pornography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[11] David Allyn, *Make Love, Not War: The Sexual Revolution: An Unfettered History* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 281, 289.

[12] Ariel Levy, *Female Chauvinist Pigs: Women and the Rise of Raunch Culture* (New York: Free Press, 2005), 60.

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