

Protecting the Community

Without zoning and law enforcement, pornography stores will locate and operate to the detriment of neighborhoods and business communities

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WORD

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Recent events have raised the question of unlicensed adult bookstores selling extreme hardcore pornography in parts of the community not zoned for such activity. Charges were brought against the operators of two stores, on East Colonial Drive, who for years advertised and sold pornography in violation of Orange County zoning and licensing requirements.

During the investigation, additional charges related to operating a criminal enterprise selling obscenity were brought based on the discovery of new hardcore pornographic materials that were extremely shocking and graphic beyond anything ever previously evaluated by local judges or juries.

Is pornography the highest priority for law enforcement? Of course, not. The truth is that more than 99.9% of law enforcement is assigned to other responsibilities and even in the *Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation (MBI)*, nearly all agents are assigned fulltime to narcotics investigations. The MBI vice unit represents less than .002% of all local law enforcement.

That small vice unit's mission is to improve the quality of life in Central Florida by reducing illegal vice operations in the community – which plays an important part in Central Florida's worldwide reputation as a clean, family oriented, tourist friendly destination. Part of that mission is to keep unlicensed porn businesses from moving in near your business or residential property, and locating near schools, playgrounds, and churches.

The need for such zoning protection became obvious in the 1970's, when we saw the effects on the reputation and property values surrounding the Orange Blossom Trail that resulted from allowing such businesses to operate wherever, and however, they chose.

This problem is further compounded when such unlicensed businesses also sell extremely hardcore pornographic materials. Some would suggest that the police simply turn their head, and not enforce all the laws. But most people, including the Supreme Court, agree that there is a line that can be crossed

by porn distributors that makes it appropriate for the community to apply its standards and say, "enough." Otherwise, only the porn distributors, and their most extreme clientele, not the community, decide the community standard for Orange County and "anything goes," if someone will buy it.

When many of us think of porn, we imagine films shown on hotel pay-per-view or cable and satellite television – but those films are tame compared to graphic materials that are so extreme that they cannot be described in detail in a family newspaper. Such pornography is virtually devoid of plot, often without any words, and focused completely on degrading females with tools, devices, hoses, and the drinking of the mixed bodily fluids of dozens of men, in images that almost defy humanity.

The law enforcement investigators, prosecutors, and judges that reviewed such graphic material have all concluded that there was sufficient evidence to charge these distributors for violating the state's obscenity laws. (Note – the law and charges are focused on the profiteers and distributors who sell extreme and vile obscene materials – not at persons who may possess or watch such obscenity.)

While such charges proceed, other porn stores in Orange County may choose to re-evaluate their most extreme stock of pornography. Their own adult porn industry trade magazines have warned that, during the last 10 years, the new extreme of graphic pornography risks government intervention if they don't self-regulate. That was probably good advice.

In the meantime, the primary focus of MBI has been, and continues to be, to remove illegal narcotics and vice organizations from Central Florida in order to help maintain a great community of which we can all be proud.

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