

11.4.08

The Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Secretary

I wish to make a submission in regard to the Sexualisation of Children in the Media.

The increasing global violence towards women and children which is reported daily is an alarming phenomenon that can no longer be ignored by individual countries. It is timely that this enquiry, so early in the life of the new Parliament is on the agenda for discussion and hopefully legislation will follow.

The Fashion Industry provides an enormous economic mantle over so many other industries and thus controls how these industries are showcased. The models become the human clothes pegs on which are draped the fabrics that upon which the cotton, wool, oil and vegetable byproducts as well as animal industries rely for sustainability. Their responsibility is enormous and powerful.

However, we cannot allow the fashion czars to dictate; that in order to showcase their garments, shoes, hair products and makeup; they require younger and younger models. The industries involved should not be party to the seduction of young schoolgirls who have been brainwashed to aspire to the glamour (perceived to be inherent) of a modeling career. I would encourage the Committee to view "Faking It" a magazine backed by the WFA that exposes the deception and delusion that is part and parcel of the fashion world. The manufacture of little girl's clothing that mimics women's garments, eg padded bras, brazen slogans on t-shirts, skimpy shorts, and encouraging the little models to showcase the clothing in seductive poses. We truly are a sick society if we allow this sexualisation of young children to continue. It would seem that we are preparing these children to be bait for the pedophiles who unfortunately are in all societies.

Some entrepreneurs have seen a niche market to further seduce girls as young as nine into creating their own "Miss Bimbo" online, brainwashing them that their Bimbo must be waif thin and this mindset is encouraged by promoting the purchase of diet pills in order to create the perfect doll (subliminally programming girls and grooming them into believing this is the perfect way to be seen). They promote the idea that the best Bimbo can buy breast implants to indulge the fantasy of full firm breasts, and facial features can always be altered by plastic surgery.

These sick minds are fixating images of unnatural female development and a false idea that what nature intended is not good enough. The constant obsession with body image - from dissatisfaction with facial shape, hair colour and texture, breast size and leg length, hip width and bum size, sends a message to the developing teen that this is what society wants from her, not her brainpower. The constant media images, the glamour life of the model that is never shown as the nice comely girl next door, lowers a young girl's self esteem and so becomes a catalyst for self hate, with cutting and loathsome thoughts that can in the extreme lead to depression and in some cases, sadly suicide.

"It's Time" the slogan under which Labour came to power in the seventies, needs to again become the catch cry to formulate some guidelines as the French have done to combat anorexia by making it a criminal offence to promote extreme thinness. (The Australian, 11th April 2008). The report goes on to say it is directed at the media and the fashion world but also at websites of the so-called pro ana movement.

Sincerely
Shirley Owen