

Porn Corn

By Chris McCubbin Diversions

(Note: The following is based on the author's own research done over the course of several years, mostly when he was in the army, when he didn't have a girlfriend and really had nothing better to do with his time. The writer would like to assure his mother that he did not enjoy doing this research. No, not even a little bit. He would also like to request that his mom read no further in this piece. Thanks, Mom. Sorry.)

The first thing you need to know about dirty magazines is that they come in two distinct sorts. You'll usually find these two sorts referred to as "hardcore" and "softcore," but that's a bit misleading, since both deal with the same thing in about the same amount of detail. I think of them as drugstore porn and dirtymoviehouse porn.

Drugstore porn is the sort of stuff you used to find in free-thinking 7-11s before Women Against Pornography made that chain see the light. In addition to your basic skin mags of the Playboy-through-Hustler sort, drugstore porn falls into three basic categories: porn-star mags, letter mags and Beeline novels.

The letter books are definitely the most entertaining of the bunch. These things are based on the concept of the "Penthouse Forum," where readers write in to tell (anonymously) about their "real-life" sexual adventures. I don't mean to be a skeptic, but most of these stories have all the sweep, grandure and probability of a Sumerian creation myth. I mean larger-than-life figures (much larger than my life, anyway), doing grand, heroic deeds. These letters are really the most imaginative kind of porn, since they're written by the people. Folk art, if you will.

Porn-star mags are a weird devel-

opment of the last couple of years. I got this story from my freshman psych class so it's like, official. There's a psychological tendency among porn fans to become jaded and move on to something a bit more extreme. What happened in the mid-'70s was that pornographers realized that their movies had gotten about as extreme as they were ever legally going to get, so the porn studios introduced a star system, based on the personalities of their stars. Now, the most outstanding feature of your average porn stud or starlet is not usually going to be their personalities; but the system seems to be working. Picture People Magazine where the average interviewee has a police record and about 30 IQ points fewer than Vanna White, and you have an idea about what these things are like.

Finally, there are the ubiquitous Beeline novels. The preferred habitats of Beelines, besides drugstores and liquor stores, are airports, military PXs and tiny mall bookstores. The most interesting thing about Beelines is their tendency to throw a title and a story together at random, so the main character of, say, "High Fashion Action" will be a Georgia farm boy, or "Orgy In Orbit" might be the adventures of a schoolmarm. Beeline back-cover blurbs are also the worst poetry in the known universe.

The only real difference between drugstore porn and dirty-moviehouse porn is that in the one kind they're absolutely, definitely doing what they're probably really doing any-

way in the other kind. Besides such small details, the main difference between the two types of porn is that dirty-moviehouse porn is much more focused. Often an entire book or mag will be devoted exclusively to one act, bodily portion or random detail.

It's the "random-detail" mags that are most interesting. Besides, I can't talk about acts or bodily portions. At Cinema X, 1921 O St., they have the magazines laid out along

the walls neatly by category. You can stand in the middle of the room, slowly turn in place and see for yourself just how silly human sexuality really is.

Let's start over here. Acts. Right. That one, and there's that one, and a long section on that one. Uh-huh. Oh, wow, I'd only read about that one. And that one and that one and that one. OK.

Now we're at bodily portions. All there, head to toe. OK.

Now, here we go. Swingers ads. These are shrink-wrapped, so no telling what's inside. They're some of the most expensive mags in the store, though. Now we get to lingerie. And here's girls who are supposed to look young. A section each for blondes, burnettes and redheads.

Now the ethnic sections. Black women, Oriental women, Polynesian women, Hispanic women, left-handed Latvian women (just kidding).

Ooh, what's this? Fat women? And now lactating women. Oh gross, pregnant women. That's about as bad as it gets, though. Next are the bondage books. Leather, leather, leather. Boring, boring, boring.

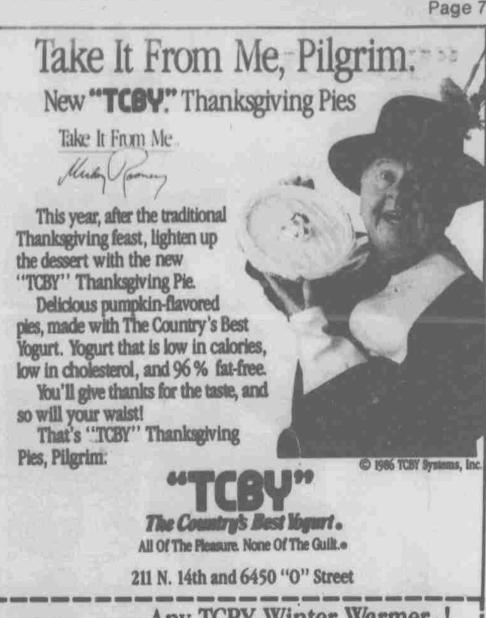
Finally we get to the gay stuff. Pass over it quick because the guy over there by the greeting cards might have his eye on you.

That's it. Not as bad as you thought, is it? Just really, really

Can this stuff turn normal, welladjusted family men into slobberin', ax-wielding maniacs? No.

Is it good, healthy, normal entertainment for adults? No.

In one of his books, C.S. Lewis talks about porn. He asks us to imagine a society of healthy, wellfed people who are entertained by staring obsessively at pictures of food and of people eating. Staring at food doesn't really make them worse people, but you might be safe to assume that these people have something fundamentally wrong with either their diets or their dinner times.





Belgian Waffle, Hot Apple Pecan Crepe and the Hot Fudge Sundae. Good at participating TCBY Yogurt stores. Only one coupon per purchase. Void where prohibited by law. Offer Expires: 12/11/86.

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