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FOURTH ANNUAL Northwest Perspectives Essay Contest Awards

AWARDS AND BOOK SIGNING
Gerlinger Hall, University of Oregon
Thursday, June 5 • 7:30 p.m. • Free

Hosted by this year's contest judge, Karen Karbo –
Correspondent for "Outside" magazine and celebrated author of
"Gen-Ex: Tales from the Second Wives Club" and "Motherhood Made
a Man Out of Me." Karbo will be joined at the podium by this year's
three contest winners, Kristina Johnson, Bonnie Dodge, and Susi
Klare who will read their winning selections.



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
BOOKSTORE

Presented by Oregon Quarterly with support from the University of Oregon Bookstore

BOOKS BY BOBBIE WILLIS

Straight to Video

Pornography and the male psyche.

WATCHING SEX: How Men Really Respond to Pornography by David Loftus. Thunder's Mouth Press, 2002. Paperback, \$17.95.

Pornography has moved so quickly from magazines hidden in sock drawers to graphic e-mail and web sites even your children can easily access that it's timely for Northwest author David Loftus to explore the motivation and response that men have for the genre.

In *Watching Sex*, Loftus lets 150 men say what they think about pornography, a perspective that hasn't been explored much, given the reams of anti-pornography study that's been done. Loftus points out that much feminist writing against porn unfairly judges the male perspective and experience without finding out what that perspective and experience actually are.

Loftus tells us right up front: "This is not a scientific survey. It will not introduce you to 'the average American male' or tell you what he thinks and does. The men in this book chose in advance to participate in the project — they 'self-selected' as the social scientists put it — so they do not constitute a random sample."

So, you can't really look to this as a definitive study on men and pornography. But you can see it as a resource that explores what men think about pornography and how the material makes them feel. The book's greatest strength lies in giving voice to the one perspective we haven't heard.

However, when Loftus and the interviewees try to connect anecdotal, emotional responses to a larger sociological landscape, the book loses its steam. A chapter on sex and violence feels hesitant. The violence is abstracted and isn't dealt with head-on.

Interviewees express sentiments from, "No, there really isn't violence in porn" to "Violence doesn't really turn me on," and yet some anecdotes support the opposite position.

This chapter makes it clear that this is not a fair cross-section of men who use porn, a wrinkle that farther reveals itself in an interesting chapter titled, "The Public Debate: What Did Everyone Get Wrong About Men Who Use Pornography?" Again, it's difficult to determine what the public is getting wrong based on information from a self-selected group of interviewees.

In spite of the study's loose structure in places, the book as whole is compelling. It opens up the discussion to include an important and previously unheard group of voices.

Interestingly, Loftus has had trouble getting his own voice heard to promote *Watching Sex*. There was controversy as to whether a bookstore in Eugene — Loftus was born here — would allow him to do a reading. In an April 10 news installment on his website (www.david-loftus.com), he writes that he finally landed a Eugene appearance: "It's been a puzzling and frustrating process trying to find someone who would host me, because Eugene has such a reputation as a liberal, even radical, college town ... A string of bookstores turned me down because they were afraid of offending their clients, whether mainstream or orthodox feminist, while one bookstore's events coordinator said the book was 'not controversial enough — you'd just be preaching to the choir here.' That one certainly left me nonplused."

In any case, you will be able to hear Loftus read and speak at 7 pm June 19 at Barnes & Noble Bookstore. **ew**

Book Notes (May 29 - June 26) Congratulations to the Eugene recipients of 2003 Oregon Literary Fellowships: **Michael McGriff** and **Myrna Pena-Reyes** for poetry; **Bobbie Willis** for literary nonfiction; and publishers, **Canary River Press**. ...Retired UO physicist **Amit Goswami** reads at 7 pm May 29 in UO Bookstore from his latest book, *Physics of the Soul: The Quantum book of Living, Dying, Reincarnation and Immortality*. ... **Jeanne Manning**, author of *A Time To Speak*, personal testimonies from veterans and civilians of WWII, reads at 7 pm May 29 in Barnes and Noble. ...Traveling poets **Derrick Brown** and **Joel Chmara** perform at 8 pm May 29 at Foolsap Books; donation \$2-\$4. ...**David Robinson** launches his new book, *The Spiritual Emerson: Essential Writings* (Beacon Press) at 7 pm May 29 in Borders' Corvallis store and at 7 pm May 30 in the rotunda, OSU Valley Library. ... San Francisco spoken word artist **Polly Moller** reads at 8 pm May 31 in Foolsap Books, \$3-\$10 sliding scale. ...**Tom Franklin** (*Poachers*) will read from his new book, *Hell at the Breech* (William Morrow/Harper Collins) at 7:30 pm June 2 at Powell's Bookstore, Portland. ...**Susi Klare**, **Bonnie Dodge** and **Kristina Johnson**, winners of Northwest Perspectives Essay Contest, read at 7:30 pm June 5 in Gerlinger Hall Alumni Lounge. ...Ornithologists and editors **David Marshall**, **Matthew Hunter** and **Alan Contreras** will sign copies of the 768-page *Birds of Oregon: A General Reference* at 7 pm June 6 in the Museum of Natural History. ... *Road's End*, a new play by local playwright **Gregory Foote**, will have a free public reading at 8 pm June 10 at Lord Leebrick Theatre. ...**Nikki de Carteret** will speak and sign her new book, *Soul Power*, at 5:30 June 9 at Tsunami Books. ...**Melissa Hart** (*Long Way Home*) will read from her memoir at 7 pm June 12 at Barnes and Noble. ...**David Loftus**, author of *Watching Sex*, will read at 7 pm June 19 at Barnes and Noble. ... **Karen X. Tulchinsky** will read and sign from her second novel about the Rabinovitch family, *Love and Other Ruins* (Raincoast Books), at 7 pm June 23 in Mother Kali's.

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