

# FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

May 3, 2018

**Almeta Isolda**  
**via the FOI website**

Dear Almeta Isolda,

regarding your Freedom of Information request titled “pornography” we collected the following information:

Pornography (often abbreviated porn) is the portrayal of sexual subject matter for the exclusive purpose of sexual arousal. Pornography may be presented in a variety of media, including books, magazines, postcards, photographs, sculpture, drawing, painting, animation, sound recording, phone calls, writing, film, video, and video games. The term applies to the depiction of the act rather than the act itself, and so does not include live exhibitions like sex shows and striptease. The primary subjects of present-day pornographic depictions are pornographic models, who pose for still photographs, and pornographic actors or porn stars, who perform in pornographic films. If dramatic skills are not involved, a performer in a porn film may also be called a model. Various groups within society have considered depictions of a sexual nature immoral, addictive, and noxious, labeling them pornographic, and attempting to have them suppressed under obscenity and other laws, with varying degrees of success. Such works have also often been subject to censorship and other legal restraints to publication, display, or possession, leading in many cases to their loss. Such grounds, and even the definition of pornography, have differed in various historical, cultural, and national contexts. Social attitudes towards the discussion and presentation of sexuality have become more tolerant in Western countries, and legal definitions of obscenity have become more limited, notably beginning in 1969 with Blue Movie by Andy Warhol, the first adult erotic film depicting explicit sex to receive wide theatrical release in the United States, and the subsequent Golden Age of Porn (1969-1984), leading to an industry for the production and consumption of pornography in the latter half of the 20th century. The introduction of home video and the Internet saw a boom in the worldwide porn industry that generates billions of dollars annually. Commercialized pornography accounts for over US\$2.5 billion in the United States alone, including the production of various media and associated products. In 2006, world pornography revenue was \$9.7 billion. Child pornography is a \$3 billion industry. This industry employs thousands of performers along with support and production staff. It is also followed by dedicated industry publications and trade groups as well as the mainstream press, private organizations (watchdog groups), government agencies, and political organizations. More recently, sites such as Pornhub, RedTube, and YouPorn, in addition to much pirated porn posted by individuals, have served as repositories for home-made or semi-professional pornography, made available free by its creators (who could be called exhibitionists). They present a significant challenge to the commercial pornographic film industry. Irrespective of the legal or social view of pornography, it has been used in a number of contexts. It is used, for example, at fertility clinics to stimulate sperm donors. Some couples use pornography at times for variety and to create

a sexual interest or as part of foreplay. There is also some evidence that pornography can be used to treat voyeurism.

Sincerely,

John Smith  
**FOI Manager**