



**NATIONAL
CENTER ON
SEXUAL
EXPLOITATION**

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January 31, 2018

Mr. Jeffrey Bezos
Chairman, President, and CEO
Amazon.com., Inc.
410 Terry Avenue N. Seattle, WA 98109

Dear Messrs. Bezos, Jassy, Sycz, Lefton, Scharf:

We are writing regarding several ways Amazon is facilitating sexual exploitation. As a leader, your influence has at times led the way in prioritizing social responsibility. We welcome minor changes to policies, such as your decision to remove many of the childlike sex dolls from your website globally in 2018, but we request that Amazon do more to refrain from normalizing sexual violence, abuse and exploitation. We write to inform you that Amazon will remain on the annual Dirty Dozen List, which names 12 leading mainstream contributors to sexual exploitation and abuse in America.

The National Center on Sexual Exploitation—a non-partisan nonprofit in Washington DC dedicated to addressing the full spectrum of sexual exploitation—recognizes the cultural influence of Amazon through its media production and online market place. We invite you to become a leader against sexual exploitation, by addressing these issues below.

Sex Dolls on Amazon.com

Amazon.com still sells hundreds of sex dolls, many of which are fashioned to look like young girls or potentially children. Some of these dolls are dressed in school girl and cheerleader attire to further underscore the young age the dolls are meant to depict.

Below are two screenshots from Amazon.com taken on November 27, 2018.

Full Entity Simulation Inflatable Dolls Male Doll Silicone Doll 148CM by #016

Be the first to review this item



About the product

- Made of PVE, PVC environmentally friendly materials, easy to operate, durable and not easily damaged
- Suitable for special nights, very soft and seductive, attracting the attention of lovers, wearing hat and fur, essential items
- This product is designed for men's learning skills and exercise endurance. This is a special white skin color that gives a sacred feeling. Under the touch of the hand, it is soft, delicate, elastic and feels better than leather.
- Easy to clean, can store well in man body in air, hands and feet feel soft. Each design is more reasonable and



Men's Inflatable Doll semi-Solid Silicone Material Height: 165-170cm, Full of Passion in The Pronunciation Made

by Tom-John

Be the first to review this item

Material: 100% medical grade gel, soft height: 165-170cm, volume: 88-120-110cm, weight: 14.5, Weight: 100% confidential delivery. It is important for men not to know what is inside!

1. Suitable for special nights, wife and seductive, attracting the attention of lovers, wearing hat and fur, essential items

2. This product is designed for men's learning skills and exercise endurance. This is a special white complexion that gives a sacred feeling. Under the touch of the hand, it is soft, delicate, elastic and feels better than leather.

3. This product is made of imported high-quality materials, soft and elastic, and feels better than leather. It is easy to clean, can store well in man body in air, hands and feet feel soft. Each design is more reasonable and

4. Easy to clean, can store well in man body in air, hands and feet feel soft. Each design is more reasonable and



Clearly, these dolls are portraying women as literal sex objects, which contributes to coarsened social respect for women or values of consent. As Dr. Maras and Dr. Shapiro note in the Journal of Internet Law:

The reality is that the creation of anatomically correct life-like dolls and robots serve one purpose—to be sex objects for their owners... One-sided relations distort reality when faced with humans who could never meet the standards set by these owners for a potential partner (who is always young, beautiful, never talks back or says negative things, etc.). Owners also will habituate to sexual acts on child [or adult] dolls ... deluding them into believing it is the norm. Therefore, sex dolls ... have the potential of altering individuals' views and perceptions of relationships, ultimately, having them interact with humans as they would with the dolls and robots.¹

Amazon has a heavy hand in normalizing and promoting the use of sex dolls in America by selling them on its platform. We request that Amazon remove these items immediately.

Jock Sturges, Sally Mann, and David Hamilton Eroticized Child Nudity Photo Books

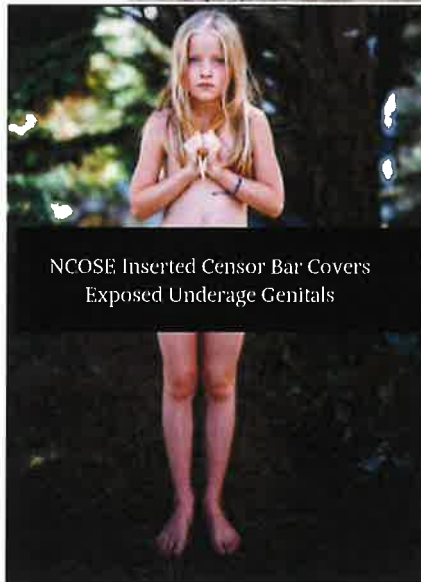
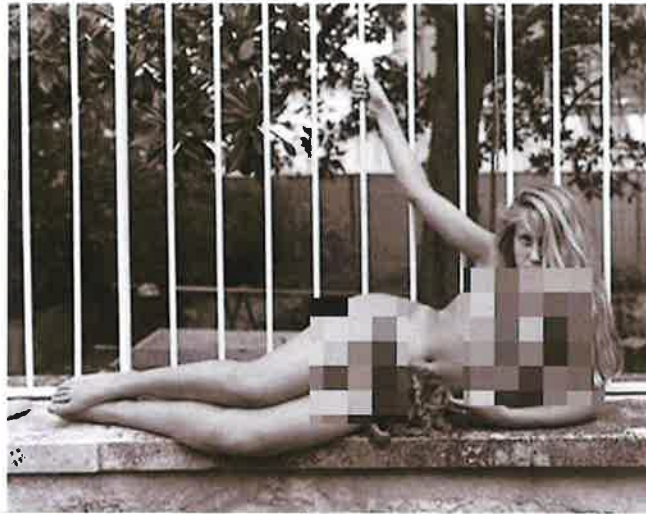
We are appalled that Amazon.com is still selling books featuring collections of Jock Sturges, Sally Mann, and David Hamilton photography.² These publications contain numerous images that many, including experts on child sexual exploitation, consider akin to child pornography, or at minimum, content that eroticizes children. These same publications are replete with pictures of nude prepubescent and adolescent children—many of which display their pubic areas or genitals. These are not images reminiscent of a family photo album of children at bath time, but are haunting displays of provocative child nudity.

Law enforcement has told us that these books are frequently found in possession of child sexual abuse image (i.e. child pornography) collectors.

For example, below are several images found within books by Jock Sturges (which are for sale on Amazon.com) which so graphically depicts child full-frontal genital nudity that we had to place a censor bar over it.

¹Maras, Marie-Helen & Shapiro, Lauren. (2017). Child Sex Dolls and Robots: More Than Just an Uncanny Valley. Journal of Internet Law.

²Hamilton's "works" also include filmography.



Soft focus, skillful framing, and beautiful backdrops do not negate the fact that Sturgis' and Hamilton's photographs appeal to prurient interests and are sexually evocative.

While these publications (and films) are widely available and have been in circulation for many years, such material is unfit for sale by any reputable retailer. Retailers like Amazon should strive to prevent the dissemination of material that gratifies perverse sexual interest in children, instead of catering to it.

In 2017, Walmart.com was also selling Jock Sturges publications, but upon receiving a letter on the matter from us, took swift action and removed his books from their online store within 24 hours. We ask that Amazon act responsibly and do the same.

Material Promoting Sex Trafficking of Women

We also discovered books such as *Pimpology* and *The Pimp's Bible: The Sweet Science of Sin* available on Amazon.com. Despite prevailing stereotypes in popular culture which portray pimping as hip and cool, in fact pimps are violent, serial, sexual predators. The federal Trafficking Victims

Protection Act (TVPA) defines severe forms of trafficking in persons as the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provisioning, obtaining, patronizing, and soliciting, by means of force, fraud, and coercion, persons for exploitation in the commercial sex trade. This is the quintessence of what pimps do. *By definition, pimps are sex traffickers.* Thus, by selling books such as those named above, Amazon is selling sex trafficking “how-to” manuals.

In the book *Pimpology*, Ken Ivy (a.k.a. Pimpin’ Ken) promulgates “the 48 laws of the game.” He explains that he utilizes “psychological warfare or *Pimpology*” to get what he wants, and that this pimpology is “more treacherous than physical abuse.”³

We doubt that Amazon would sell books that explicitly give instructions on how to commit rape, yet by selling books on how to sexually traffic females, Amazon is doing just that, as victims of sex trafficking are victims of serial rape. Is it compatible with Amazon’s values and business model to offer its assistance to pimps and sex traffickers in their efforts to sexually exploit women and children?

Therefore, we again ask that Amazon swiftly remove these and other titles that normalize the sexual assault and exploitation of women and children via pimping/sex trafficking.

Pornography and Other Sexually Exploitive Merchandise

Amazon may be among biggest “non-porn-site,” online sellers of pornography and sadomasochistic paraphernalia in the country.

A sample found on January 2, 2019 of Kindle e-book titles (many of which are free with “Kindle Unlimited”) includes:

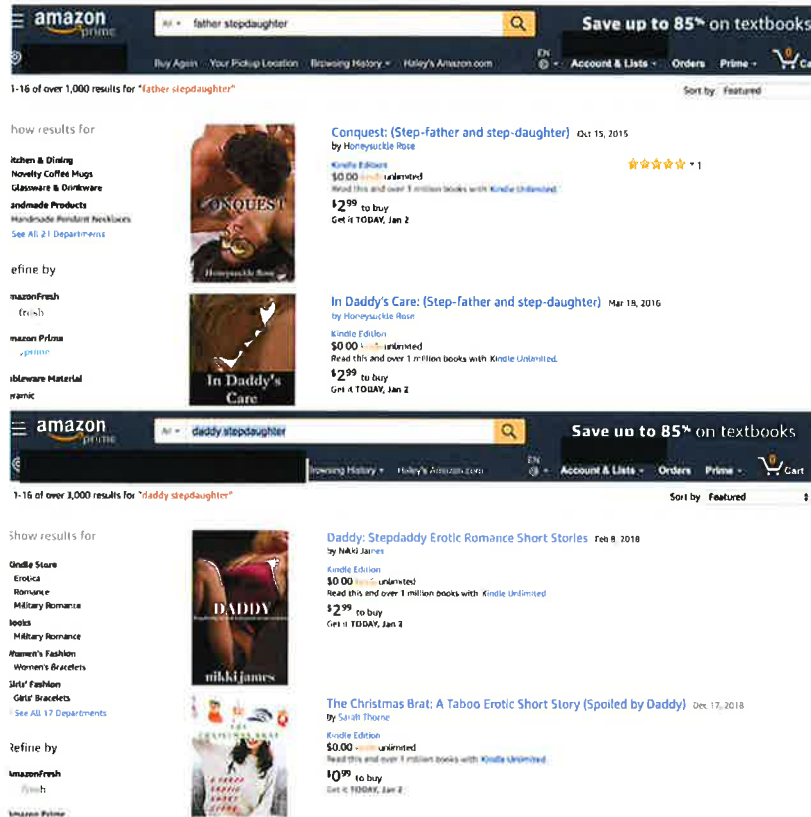
- *Punishing the Babysitter: A Naughty 18-year-old Gets Caught on Camera (Young Slut Stories Book 8),*
- *Humiliating the Schoolgirl (Anna's Education Book 1),*
- *Girls Forcing Girls: The Complete Book,*
- *Daddy Plays Doctor: Examining Becky (Medical Age Play Taboo Older Man Younger Woman First Time)*
- *TABOO: The Bond Between Us: Taboo Time with My Stepbrother (Stepbrother Romance, Stepsister Erotica, Menage, Threesome, Contemporary)*

Moreover, if one does an innocent search of “daddy stepdaughter” or “father stepdaughter” they are confronted on multiple pages with incest themed books—not academic accounts of the harms of parental or guardian sexual abuse of children—but fictional tales normalizing and romanticizing parental/relative sexual abuse.⁴

Below are two screenshots taken January 2, 2019:

³ Pimpin’ Ken [Ken Ivy] and Karen Hunter, *Pimpology: The 48 Laws of the Game* (New York: Simon Spotlight Entertainment, 2007).

⁴ On some occasions a search result of “daddy daughter” yielded pornographic search results on page 1. On other searches these pornographic stories have appeared beginning on page 2.



Movie titles include the likes of hardcore standards like *Debbie Does Dallas*, *Deep Throat*, *Taboo*, *Long Jeanne Silver*, *Behind the Green Door*, *Barbara Broadcast*, and *The Devil in Miss Jones*.

The terms of Amazon’s “Policies and Agreements” for sellers includes a list of “restricted products.” Prohibited items include “products that portray nudity in a gratuitous or graphic manner, such as: amateur pornography, pornography, X-rated movies, hard-core material including magazines.” If this is Amazon’s “policy” it is abundantly clear that no one is bothering to enforce it, which leads us to conclude that the policy exists in name only. We also note that Amazon’s current policy allows “unrated erotic videos and DVDs,” yet many of these unrated films are hardcore pornography.⁵

Thus, we urge Amazon to revise and strengthen its “restricted products” policy with respect to softcore and hardcore pornographic materials, and to institute a vigorous system by which the strengthened policy is enforced.

Amazon Prime TV and Movie Content

Further, Amazon often produces original programming portraying gratuitous nudity, graphic sexual acts, and even graphic depictions of sexual assault. Many of Amazon’s most popular and most heavily-advertised original shows are rated TV-MA (mature audiences only) frequently containing graphic sex scenes, nudity, and violence. Amazon contributes to

⁵ For instance, these hardcore films are rated as follows: *Debbie Does Dallas* – NC-17; *Deep Throat* – NR; *Taboo* – Not Rated; *Barbara Broadcast*, no rating information provided by first three sellers.

a culture of toxic sexual pressure in the media industry by producing content that requires actors to do nude scenes.

Given the highly competitive nature of the media industry, and the fact that many young actors have minimal economic security, the choice to "turn down" a job can end an actors career before it even began. Therefore, by producing such a high volume of content requiring nudity, Amazon adds to the industry pressure for young actors to accept parts requiring nudity, until they have enough industry capital to negotiate their own contracts. In the age of #MeToo, and heightened awareness about the imbalance of power Hollywood producers can exercise over actors, it is a thin and porous line between script-required nudity and the "requirement" to grant "sexual favors" on the producer's casting couch. No person should be required to remove their clothes in order to get a job.

Our researchers analyzed 6 of Amazon Prime's most popular shows and found regular gratuitous nudity and sexually degrading content. Nudity and sex acts are found ubiquitously in Amazon Prime content, from the show *Transparent* (TV-MA) and *Mozart in the Jungle* (TV-MA) , to *Red Oaks* (TV-MA), *Sneaky Pete* (TV-MA) and more.

The show *Sneaky Pete* is rated by Common Sense for audiences 15 years old and up, and given 3 out of 5 stars for "overall quality and learning potential".

However, in one review, a concerned parent writes:

"This pilot episode is rated TV-14, but the series as a whole is rated TV-MA. In episode 2 there is a scene showing a woman's bare backside and breast. I feel the TV-14 pilot was intentionally deceptive, and it obviously influenced how CommonSenseMedia rated the show."

The series *Patriot* (TV-MA) is a highly rated original Prime series. On Common Sense, the show is rated 16 years old and up, with only a 2 out of 5 score for sex on the parent guide.

However, one parent review says, **"The review fails to mention that there is sexual content in the final episode.** At 36:10 (in episode 10 of season 1) a character is briefly seen watching pornography. Some brief rear female nudity is seen. Later on in that same episode a character provides a distraction by walking into the police station completely naked. Full frontal male nudity is seen".

Despite the varying plots and genres, all of these popular Prime series include sexual material. Some even normalize risky sexual behaviors and all objectified women onscreen. To resolve this, Amazon Prime needs to create higher standards for how its original content portrays matters of sexuality. **We ask that Amazon Prime dialogue with us concerning the draft "Industry Standard for Freedom from Sexual Exploitation in Entertainment" as seen on page 4.**

Proposed Entertainment Industry Standard on the Depiction of Sexual Exploitation

Whereas cultural values of equity and sexual consent are often shaped by the creative storytelling community, film studios must hold themselves to a high standard in order to depict issues regarding gender inequality and sexual exploitation in a socially responsible manner. The momentum generated by #MeToo and Time's Up Now movements, must extend beyond addressing sexual harassment and assault perpetrated against those within the industry. The entertainment industry must recognize its collective role in creating media that inculcate the very attitudes and behaviors that foster sexual harassment, assault, and sexual exploitation. It must take firm steps to intentionally protect and promote the welfare of not only its members, but society at-large by portraying sex and its surrounding visual narratives in ethical and responsible ways. It can take a positive step in this direction by adopting and implementing "The Standard for Freedom from Sexual Exploitation in Entertainment."

Accordingly, we commit to the following:

- Refraining from gratuitous portrayals of sexual harassment, coercion, or violence against women, men, or children by not displaying prolonged or eroticized scenes with such content;
- Combating the normalization of behaviors associated with sexual entitlement, harassment, and violence by minimizing nudity, particularly female nudity which is more common than male nudity;⁶
- Thoughtfully eschewing the glamorization or normalization of the sexual commodification of another person, such as through the irresponsible portrayals of the sexually exploitive institutions of prostitution, strip clubs, and pornography;
- Never producing any promotional materials or developing content that sexualizes children (persons aged-17 or below) or adult actors portraying children.

While the National Center on Sexual Exploitation is placing Amazon on the 2019 Dirty Dozen List, we hope to engage in a future dialogue around these concerns with your executive team, so that Amazon can become a corporate leader against sexual exploitation. Please feel free to reach out to us at 202-393-7245 to set up a meeting or conference call on these concerns.

Respectfully,



Patrick Trueman, Esq.
President & CEO



Dawn Hawkins
Sr. Vice President and Executive Director

CC:

Mr. Andrew R. Jassy, CEO, Amazon Web Services

Mr. Arek Sycz, Senior Corporate Counsel

Mr. Ryan Lefton, Head of Strategic Partnerships

Mr. Dan Scharf, Senior Business Affairs Executive, Amazon Studios

⁶Stacy L. Smith, Marc Choueiti, and Katherine Peiper, "Inequality in 900 Popular Films: Examining Portrayals of Gender, Race/Ethnicity, LGBT, and Disability from 2007-2016," (USC Annenberg: Media, Diversity, & Social Change Initiative, 2017).