



А.З. Непонятых

**ПОСОБИЕ ПО ЛЕЧЕНИЮ ПОЛОВЫХ РАССТРОЙСТВ:
Возьмем дело в свои руки**

A GUIDE FOR THE TREATMENT OF SEXUAL DISORDERS TAKING MATTERS INTO YOUR OWN HANDS

A.Z. Neponyatykh

ARGLETON

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INTRODUCTION

The world we live in is contradictory and often frankly odd. A lot of human activity has something to do with sex. Sexual desire is one of the very few basic human needs; it is right there with the need to have food, water, and sleep. Here comes the odd part though: everything that is connected with this particular sphere of human interest is widely considered “unspeakable” and, in some places, illegal. What we see are never ceasing attempts to regulate and, in the end, limit the freedom of this most basic expression. Unfortunately, these attempts are, by and large, successful.

Ethics doesn't regulate food and water consumption. You can eat and drink to your heart's desire. You can even—gasp!—sleep in the presence of children... But try having sex while they are watching! There are no limits to the kind of pictures of food and drink you can demonstrate in public, but there are numerous regulations that scrupulously detail exactly what type of “sexually explicit” depictions can be called “pornographic.” The law strictly bans production and distribution of pornography. The only exception is, predictably, a medical one: pornography can be used to “treat sexual disorders.”

Yet what is pornography? Traditionally defined as “depiction of sexual behavior aimed at inducing arousal in a viewer,” it nonetheless presents a puzzle. From the definition above, whether or not an image is considered “pornographic” will largely depend on the aims of those who produce and/or distribute it.

Does it make any sense, then, to differentiate between “pornographic” and “erotic” images? The main difference seems to be the lack of artistic value in the former. But in this case whose expertise shall we trust enough to deem the judgment impartial?

Other often cited “porn” criteria include indecency, vulgarity, and even amorality of an image. What exactly, then, should be considered indecent, vulgar or amoral the critics fail to explain. Again, who is there to judge in an objective manner that leaves no room for misinterpretation? Are these notions similar across cultures? Are they clearly, if at all, definable?

Sometimes even images that “don't reflect deep feelings and emotions” are labeled “pornographic.” But how can anybody tell for sure whether the image does convey said emotions and feelings? Following this logic, we may at some point prohibit images depicting people at dinnertime, simply because enthusiastic chewing is not conducive to wearing your heart on your sleeve.

Those in favor of “erotic” art are a different breed altogether. These individuals propose that eroticism introduces the spiritual into the sexual. But if sex is as “spiritual” as they claim, why do we keep shying away from it to the point of making any depictions of sex illegal?

It was not until the 19th century that people first attempted to draw the line between the appropriate (the erotic) and the inappropriate (the pornographic). For thousands of preceding years, however, and to this day, images of sexuality have been a very popular topic of artistic exploration. Eroticism can be found in the Paleolithic art; depictions of sex (including same-sex imagery) are a staple of ancient Greek pottery and frescoes of the ancient Rome. Across continents—in Europe, America and Asia—people were successfully producing both explicit imagery and various tools to satisfy sexual desires. Today these ancient artifacts are an integral part of our shared cultural heritage. Yet present day images and instruments of the same nature are subject to all kinds of restrictions.

In the end of the day, the questions are still there. Are there real differences between the erotic and the pornographic? Are we just falling prey to stereotypes and twisted morality? What is it about sex that makes us set it apart from all other natural needs and desires? Is there any real sense in separating “spiritual” depictions of sex and those designed to please the flesh? Why ban something that can be viewed with the most noble and socially acceptable aims? Who will be tasked with checking if these aims are not abused? Independently of eroticism, does pornography even exist?

Porn is usually an unattributed fare. It is neither decent to author “vulgar” images not to view them for your satisfaction. The artists are thus lurking in the shadows. Along with anything else that can theoretically be considered arousing, the art freely migrates from one porn site to the other. These images litter the websites, largely disregarded; but we think that at least some of them can be re-contextualized and offered to the viewer for artistic appreciation in an absolutely morally approved manner.

All images presented in this volume have been found on pornographic websites and carefully sorted. Since the contents of such resources are usually unmoderated and uncontrolled, some of the “anonymous” images demanded attribution. If it was possible to attribute the pictures to their authors, we took them out of the collection. Having gone through the selection, the images were re-framed and stylized to remind retro Polaroid-style square prints. We thus consider this project to be an act of artistic appropriation and transformation.

None of the images presented in this volume were meant to induce sexual arousal of the viewer.

























