

Meijer: Placing blinders over Cosmopolitan



A leading department store chain in the midwest, Meijer, Inc. based in Grand Rapids, MI, has been making good strides in placing blinders over Cosmopolitan magazine.

A recent survey of several stores in the greater Grand Rapids, MI area revealed that various Meijer outlets are placing blinders over Cosmopolitan magazine.

The pictures above provide an example of their efforts. Cosmo is covered very well with blinders.

Several years ago Meijer also made a commitment not to sell Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Edition. Indications are that Meijer continues to hold true to that commitment.

Meijer is a regional American hypermarket that was founded in 1934 and is credited with pioneering the modern supercenter concept in 1962. About half of the company's 179 locations are located in Michigan and others are located across Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Kentucky. Meijer is based in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and was ranked No. 10 on Forbes' 2006 list of "America's Largest Private Companies."

We have skirmished with Meijer a number of times over the years. Though we have at times been very disappointed with them, Meijer has generally been more receptive to public expressions of concern than other similar corporations both large and small.

We have noted that in the sampling of stores that we have visited blinders like that displayed here are being used in a consistent fashion far better than we have seen in the past.

In earlier years, it was observed that in several aisles, the blinders would be utilized while in other aisles Cosmopolitan magazine was left uncovered.

For the last number of months, there seems to be a greater effort exerted to shield the images and verbiage.

On the other hand, too often other magazines displaying similar imagery are also displayed.

Though over the years Cosmopolitan has been the magazine most cited as being the "poster girl" mainly targeted, it doesn't mean that a number of other magazines haven't insulted our moral sensibilities. Magazines such as Glamour, Allure, Redbook, Vogue, - just to name a few.

We have often said "If we can't make a difference for decency at the checkout counter, where can we make a difference?" Consider that most families spend hundreds of dollars on groceries at particular shopping centers. We continue to believe that one individual taking the time to speak to a manager can truly make a difference by (1) taking a magazine or magazines to the manager, and (2) asking them to at the very least cover those magazines. (3) Keep your receipts showing how much money you spend and that as an established shopper you are offended by the insensitivity to time-honored standards of decency.



We encourage you to express appreciation to Meijer.

Contact Meijer at:

Meijer, Inc.
2929 Walker Ave., NW
Grand Rapids MI 49544
Phone: 616-453-6711
Fax: 616-791-2572

Co-Chairman & CEO –
Hendrik (Hank) Meijer

Co-Chairman – Doug Meijer
E-Mail: MeijerD@meijer.com

Sample letter to Meijer:

It is encouraging to see that you are taking steps to shield shoppers from unwanted images and themes that run counter to time-honored standards of human decency. I appreciate the blinders that you are using to block the offensive Cosmopolitan.

I applaud the positive steps you have taken to make Meijer a family-friendly place to shop.



From the desk of Bill Johnson, president

“... a lamentation”

As I send out our daily email alerts with such topics as putting blinders over Cosmopolitan, Victoria’s Secret and their business falterings, a review of Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Edition, etc., I fairly-regularly receive an email response such as: “Please unsubscribe me.” “Please stop sending me your emails!”

Behind each of these there is a story, I’m sure. Perhaps it is that this one or that one loves Victoria’s Secret lingerie. Another one thinks we’re over the top regarding our fanatical obsession with decency. The list goes on.

I can somewhat understand this, but I have little sympathy for it because it remains my strong view that we should not give a free pass to such displays. There’s ample reason; here is one.

We are surrounded by deceivers, liars, seducers, the foolish, the unwise. Some of these are movers and shakers in the wrong way and for the wrong reasons: greed, decadence, perversion, the rationalization of sin, etc..

The fool has said in his heart there is no God. God brings multiple warnings in many places in the Bible. One of those warnings comes from Proverbs which I’ll share momentarily. But first this: God has made us into awesome creatures. We are made in His very image. Yet, at the same time, we are not God. We are fallen creatures since the sin of our forefather Adam. We are sinners in need of a Savior. Being fallen we live as if we are without need of wisdom from above. What arrogance! What foolishness! What sadness! A trail of heartbreak will follow - it’s just a matter of time.

Here is a warning for each of us:

Why should you be intoxicated, my son, with a forbidden woman and embrace the bosom of an adulteress? For a man’s ways are before the eyes of the Lord, and he ponders all his paths. The iniquities of the wicked ensnare him, and he is held fast in the cords of his sin. He dies for lack of discipline, and because of his great folly he is led astray. Proverbs 5:20-23

And also in Proverbs:

And now, O sons, listen to me, and do not depart from the words of my mouth. Keep your way far from her, and do not go near the door of her house, lest you give your honor to others and your years to the merciless, lest strangers take their fill of your strength, and your labors go to the house of a foreigner, and at the end of your life you groan, when your flesh and body are consumed, and you say, “How I hated discipline, and my heart despised reproof! I did not listen to the voice of my teachers or incline my ear to my instructors. I am at the brink of utter ruin in the assembled congregation.” [Proverbs 5:7-14]

There is heartache and heartbreak in warning loved ones when too often they don’t heed it because they don’t believe.

Anyone honest knows how easy it is to get ensnared by satan’s tricks.

Recently, a couple of Olympians modeled for Sports Illustrated Swimsuit. One of them, Hannah Teter, stated: “I’m OK with people being naked. There shouldn’t be a huge deal made about it. People in tribal nations walk around naked, and they don’t have bad things going on sexually, because it’s OK.”

Spoken with such a sense of arrogance. Does she really know about the culture/subculture of tribal nations? Does she really know about the impact that pictures of her own body are having upon others?

Are sexually transmitted diseases, rapes, molestations, incest, premarital sex, lust, adultery just anomalies? Just isolated incidents? Would God have us be silent? Would God have us stop doing what we can to speak up, speak out, educate, encourage, shine light upon that which is dark and



Bill and Jan with grandkids, December 2009

dishonoring to Him? We think the answer is clear. Help us Lord!

A financial update



After reading last month’s financial update a friend stated that I sounded as if I were preparing to retire.

I looked back over what I wrote last month and gathered that it was this quote from that update:

Lastly, as we advance in years Jan and I are looking at how to use whatever resources we have to assist and strengthen others whom we leave behind - including ministries.

By His grace, I desire to continue on in this great calling that God has given to me with ADA. At the same time, I’m earnestly trying to pave the way for others to take more upon themselves so that when something happens it will be just a blip on the screen. This work is far bigger than me!

In our weakness, God provides strength. I believe this with all of my heart. He is mighty in Spirit. He is able.

As God allows, I plan on serving in this ministry for many years to come; yet I also look to establish this work to continue after I’m gone. As a friend of ADA, I also humbly ask you to consider the same - enable this ministry to engage in battle both now and for decades to come by way of gifts of support and/or endowment.

And as we look ahead, we place our trust in the God who has been and will be faithful!

An Olympian who says “I want to stay a strong role model.”

by Bill and Chris Johnson



Recently, a couple of Olympians modeled for SI Swimsuit. Hannah Teter stated: “I’m OK with people being naked. There shouldn’t be a huge deal made about it. People in tribal nations walk around naked, and they don’t have bad things going on sexually, because it’s OK.”

As I stated in my personal note, does she really know about the culture/subculture of tribal nations? **Does she really know about the impact that pictures of her own body are having upon others?**

Are sexually transmitted diseases, rapes, molestations, incest, premarital sex, lust, adultery just anomalies? Just isolated incidents? Would God have us be silent? Would God have us discontinue doing what we can to speak up, speak out, educate, encourage, shine light upon that which is dishonoring to Him. We think the answer is clear.

Thankfully, there still are voices of sanity and responsibility – looking beyond self to recognize that younger ones can be negatively influenced by lewd behavior. Another female Olympic athlete stated this:

“I don’t think I would do that now [referring to posing for SI Swimsuit],” Lindsey Jacobellis, who goes for the gold Tuesday, told PEOPLE in Vancouver. “I get way too many little girls who are crazy about snowboarding coming up to me, asking for autographs and advice, and I want to stay a strong role model for them.”
http://today.msnbc.msn.com/id/35421965/ns/today-today_in_vancouver/from/ET

Here are some thoughts to consider regarding Hannah Teter’s statement: “I’m OK with people being naked. There shouldn’t be a huge deal made about it...”

One of the biggest temptations facing the men of this epoch and culture is the easy accessibility of pornography. According to the National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families, 70% of men, ages 18 – 24, visit a porn sight in a normal month. Datamonitor reports that over half of all internet spending is related to sexual activity. Sexual temptation has always been an issue with men, but never before has it been so convenient and procurable.

Other troubling statistics show the scope of those affected by porn. In the church, one third of men struggle with pornography. And pornography addiction isn’t just a problem for men anymore. One out of three visitors to porn sites are women.

Even more disturbing are the reports of children using pornography. 90% of 8-16 year olds have viewed porn online (most while doing homework) while 80% of 15-17 year olds have had multiple exposures to hardcore pornography. The median age for first time exposure for boys is 11 – 13, and for girls, 12 – 14.

And the internet pornography problem is only getting worse. In 2004, Time Magazine published an article that had this to say: *Fueled by a combination of access, anonymity and affordability, online porn has catapulted overall pornography consumption—bringing in new viewers, encouraging more use from existing fans and escalating consumers from soft-core to harder-core material. Cyberporn is even giving rise to a new form of sexual compulsiveness. According to Alvin Cooper, who conducts seminars on cybersex addiction, 15% of online-porn habitues develop sexual behavior that disrupts their lives. “The Internet is the crack cocaine of sexual addiction,” says Jennifer Schneider, co-author of Cybersex Exposed: Simple Fantasy or Obsession?*

In 2003, at the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, 2 out of 3 of the 350 divorce lawyers present said that of the substantial amount of cases related to

the internet, pornography had accounted for over half.

The same Time article also said this: *“In recent years, a number of psychologists and sociologists have joined the chorus of religious and political opponents in warning about the impact of pervasive pornography. They argue that porn is transforming sexuality and relationships—for the worse. Experts say men who frequently view porn may develop unrealistic expectations of women’s appearance and behavior; have difficulty forming and sustaining relationships and feeling sexually satisfied.”*

It is obvious that pornography is having a crushing effect on relationships and families and thus, on American culture.



Encourage Lindsey Jacobellis for her concern for her young fans and being a good role model for them.

Contact Lindsey Jacobellis
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What Sports are Illustrated?

By Lisa Van Houten

The 2010 Sports Illustrated Swimsuit magazine is in a store near you ready to be picked up and viewed by men and boys everywhere. However, don't be fooled by the name. Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Edition is a misnomer if there ever was one. The magazine has nothing to do with sports and, considering the fact that numbers of the models are topless, has very little to do with swimsuits. What the SI Swimsuit Edition is, though, is blatant pornography.

To say it has "nothing" to do with sports may not be totally accurate. The magazine does feature a number of female athletes – topless. Several female Olympic athletes posed provocatively and sometimes topless, including star downhill skier Lindsay Vonn, as well as Olympic athletes Hannah Teter, Clair Bidez, and Lacy Schnoor. These women who should be role-models, setting an example for young girls to emulate of moral integrity, instead degraded themselves for the pleasure of men. And Sports Illustrated is just as complicit. This sports magazine doesn't showcase the athletic accomplishments of these women, but rather showcases their cleavage, their breasts, their bodies.

Starting with the topless woman on the cover, SI gets to the real purpose of the issue – the pornographic exhibition of women for the pleasure of men. Page after page reveals erotically posed young women sometimes topless, sometimes – at the most – in barely-there bikinis. Each lust-producing display reinforces the message to ogling men and boys that women are nothing more than sexual objects to be used. And wives and young girls, whose husbands or fathers bring home this issue, are given the message that to be loved they must degrade themselves and that their worth is dependent upon their body and bust size.

Sports Illustrated also features a text number for men and boys to contact to receive bonus videos and photos of the models sent directly to their mobile phones – allowing for easy access to these pornographic displays. SI also gives out a twitter address to "watch and share with your Twitter

followers." And as an advertiser in the magazine, Apple, Inc. boasts in their full-page ad of a free download for a SI swimsuit App – called the "World's Sexiest App" – of additional photos and videos of the models.

This outrageous display is little different than a Playboy, yet, to some in America, the name Sports Illustrated seems to give it a semblance of 'acceptability'. Men who would not dream of buying a porn magazine, without a thought have the SI Swimsuit Edition in their home. However, there is nothing acceptable about pornography and that is exactly what the SI Swimsuit issue is – material produced for the purposes of eliciting a sexual response. There is nothing acceptable about the degrading display of women as sex objects. There is nothing acceptable about luring susceptible young boys and men into a pattern of lust and escalating pornography use. And, there is nothing acceptable about looking the other way when local grocery stores, gas stations, or other shopping establishments display this filth in their magazine racks.

Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Edition is a misnomer if there ever was one. ... What the SI Swimsuit Edition is, though, is blatant pornography.



How sad that far too many – even Christians – have come to accept the SI Swimsuit issue and are desensitized to its destructive impact. That this collection of pornographic images is produced in the guise of a 'legitimate' sports magazine should outrage us. The fact that this too-easily accessible magazine has the potential of starting many young boys down the path to a life-destroying addiction to pornography

should anger each of us. These reasons and many others should drive us to speak to store managers at stores that carry this magazine. And the fact that mainline companies choose to support this with their advertising dollars should cause us to exercise our calling to be "salt and light". We urge you to contact the corporations that align their name with pornography.

Especially troubling are corporations who not only endorse this magazine with their advertising dollars, but also stoop to the same level by incorporating bikini-clad models and eroticism into their ads. In some cases there is little difference between the erotic advertisements and the SI photo displays.

Chrysler is the worst culprit with their three-page pullout ad. The first page asks: "How do you get six swimsuit models in your bed?" – implying group sex. Then the pullout photo shows the bikini models in the bed of a Dodge pickup truck.

For a number of years now we have encouraged you to contact the advertisers of this magazine – and we are beginning to see some major American companies shy away from advertising in it! These are corporations that advertise in other venues on television and print media, but have chosen not to align with the 2010 SI swimsuit edition. In recent years the following companies have been yearly advertisers, but this year did not place ads in this magazine – General Motors, Ford, Procter & Gamble, Harley Davidson, Unilever, Budweiser as well as numerous others who had advertised in recent years but didn't this year such as Arby's, Taco Bell, Wrigley's, Nissan, AT&T, Sears, Gillette, Hershey Foods, Kraft, Wrangler jeans, Suzuki.

However, companies such as Chrysler, Apple, Inc. and others need to hear from you!

For a listing of all advertisers who sponsored the SI Swimsuit issue, go to <http://www.americandecency.org/archives/advertisers-for-2010-sports-illustrated-swimsuit-edition/#more-3158>

Superbowl Sunday and the church

By Bill Johnson



We Christians and the church collectively too often lose sight of the Holiness of God. As we either advertently or inadvertently diminish God and elevate ourselves, we have become increasingly decadent, desensitized, dumbed down. The following opinions will agitate. I know that. Yet I believe it needs to be said.

WE ARE CHRISTIANS. IT MUST BE DIFFERENT WITH US.

Superbowl Sundays have become major entertainment events that go far beyond the main draw - the football game itself.

With significant competition among many corporations, advertisers often use sex to sell. In addition, half-time shows are not worthy of the minds, eyes and souls of our youth. Individuals can and do choose to do what they want to do with their time, but as Christian leaders what are we saying to our youth and adults when we allow a football attraction to be the centerpiece for a church youth event or evening worship service - even if it is only one Sunday night a year?

Most of us understand the desire of the church to find ways to reach out into the community and draw unbelievers to the church to hear the Gospel.

For a number of years now, Superbowl Sunday youth gatherings have been used to gather a crowd.

I know that numbers of you are like me. I don't want my young person being exposed to commercials of scantily clad women mud wrestling (as per several years ago). I don't want them to be exposed to half-time lingerie shows and/or other salacious advertisement ploys (like Godaddy.com).

It's a day where the competition between corporations is so great that they do whatever they can to get the attention of millions of Americans who are glued to their television set for this huge festivity.

All of this, too, in the context of Christian leaders inadvertently legitimizing the sexual imagery, materialism, the godlessness foisted upon a watching, unthinking, conforming world.

WE ARE CHRISTIANS. IT MUST BE DIFFERENT WITH US.

I played football in high school. I love football. I was a phys ed major at Michigan State University in my under grad years. My Dad had season tickets for us at Michigan State University games. We also attended many games together at the Big House in Ann Arbor, the University of Michigan.

I've been a football fan all of my life. Do I believe a football game is inherently evil? Of course not.

However, as I already stated, the holiness of God is under attack. Think of the way Isaiah responded when coming face to face with God's holiness in Isaiah 6 and contrast that with the casual way we approach worship of that same God. Would God find Super Bowl parties in place of worship services God-honoring? No matter how nicely done or whether it included a devotional at halftime - obviously, I don't think so. Replacing worship with the Super Bowl may bring people in the doors, it may be fun and entertaining - but is it people-pleasing or God-pleasing?

Would Jesus tell us today 'My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of ... entertainment'? [see Matthew 21:13]

[Here are a few of the many responses that we received as a result of our email alert regarding the Super Bowl and the Church dated February 3, 2010.](#)

Bill,

As a man who has spent 54 years preaching a "no compromise" Gospel I say you hit the mark squarely on the dot.

I John 2:15 tells us. *"Love not the world, neither the things of the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."*

We can rationalize all we want to about the "good" mixed in but the Bible is the only true authority on such matters. As a young Christian I was taught that places of worldly entertainment were to be avoided and somehow my psyche managed to remain intact.

Bill in AZ

Thanks for the stand Bill. Our church has turned the Super Bowl broadcast into a social, entertainment party. It sickens me to the core of my soul.

"Oh, but we're going to have a devotional during halftime," the say. It would be better to just cancel then entire evening service than to make a mockery of it.

R.

Good point, Bill. Why would we support godless advertising displays & vile corporate avarice by bringing such entertainment into our church facilities? Good call.

Pastor L.

You are right on with your comments. We as Christians have become so desensitized that we will use any means to evangelize. Scripture says that broad is the way that leads to destruction and many go in there at while narrow is the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it.

Keep speaking up for holiness and reverence.

Bellingham, WA

Superbowl ads: Another perspective

By Lisa VanHouten



MOTOROLA

Another Super Bowl has come and gone and along with it the momentary buzz about the yearly Super Bowl ads. For the most part, advertisers steered away from the blatant, sexualized ads of previous years. In recent years, commercials such as the Miller Beer sleazy “cat-fight” ad featuring mud-wrestling, bikini clad women and Pizza Hut’s erotic display of Jessica Simpson were becoming the typical degrading device to capture attention.

While this year’s line-up of commercials was certainly not devoid of crudeness and lewdness, most ads were not overtly erotic. Perhaps advertisers are finally learning that women watch the Super Bowl, too!

Of course there were exceptions – most notably GoDaddy.com’s lame ads featuring race car driver Danica Patrick. The basic theme of GoDaddy’s demeaning ads changes very little from year to year. Each SuperBowl the company trots out a similar ad consisting of buxom women tearing off their blouses to reveal cleavage pouring out of a GoDaddy emblazoned tank top and urging viewers to go to their website to see more. With no attempt at creativity, GoDaddy goes for the gutter and takes viewers with it.

Another ad which fell back on the tired theme of using sex to sell was Motorola. Their ad featured a woman in a bubble bath taking nude pictures of herself and “sexting” them across the Internet. Numbers of men are shown receiving and reacting to her pornographic pictures. As the rampant practice of “sexting” among teens is raising great concern among parents and authorities, and as the harmful consequences that result are reported frequently in news stories detailing damaged lives and reputations

and even suicides, Motorola should show greater responsibility in promoting such a vile practice.

Other Super Bowl ads, while not overtly sexualized, resorted to crude humor and fostered sexist stereotypes – both of women and men. Men portrayed as idiots, women portrayed as domineering nags. Nauseating ads with men in underwear was the theme of Levi’s Dockers, Internet search service KGB, and the sophomoric Career Builder ad featuring the unappealing view of men and women dressed only in their underwear at work for “casual Friday”.

What is it about the Super Bowl that makes advertisers think all that Americans will respond to is stupid, slapstick humor and bathroom jokes? A little more creativity and a lot less crudity will go a long way in capturing the respect and loyalty of American consumers.

Contact Motorola and let them know their “sexting” ad is irresponsible and offensive.

Motorola, Inc.
Greg Brown - President, Co-CEO
Sanjay Jha - Co-CEO
1303 E. Algonquin Rd.
Schaumburg, IL 60196
Phone: 847-576-5000
Fax: 847-576-5372
Toll Free: 800-262-8509

Fox News and the streaming of Indecency



We’ve heard the complaint repeatedly: Whenever Fox does a news piece on some topic dealing with indecency, they repeatedly flow erotic images of the concern before the viewer’s eye. Most recently Bill O’Reilly, as he announced this week that the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Edition had hit the newsstand, had a series of erotic photos streaming across the screen.

This has characterized the O’Reilly Factor down through the years, from the erotic Paris Hilton ads for Carl’s Jr. and the Abercrombie & Fitch pornographic displays, to the SI Swimsuit Edition and other related issues dealing with sexual imagery.

Reporting on these concerns is appreciated and newsworthy. However, streaming alluring, addictive images is counterproductive to say the least.

Contact Fox News:

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or email: yourcomments@foxnews.com