

**STRICTLY
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11 Harcourt Close,
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26th September, 1990

Mr David Webb.
NCROPA,
15 Sloane Court West,
London. NW3

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Dear David,

If I may address you so familiarly. I guess, from your excellent interview in the Vol.23/10 Edition of Forum, that you don't encourage too much formality.

You may possibly remember my name as a contributor to your organisation many years ago. I sent a cheque in the sum of £1,000 (which I suppose was worth quite a bit in those days!). I asked for my donation to be treated as an anonymous one, and, following a handsome acknowledgement, I'm sure that that is the way it was treated. The reason for my request was not related to what NCROPA stands for, but because I wished to prevent my name being passed on to other people who were looking for money. I now adopt an alternative procedure, namely to ask the 'Director' to assure me, prior to receiving a gift, that my name will not be passed on to other organisations. That procedure will be more appropriate in NCROPA's case, as I realize that it is members who are prepared to stand up and be counted that are needed, as well as money. Thus I would be glad to enrol in NCROPA as well as make a donation.

I certainly agree with your sentiments that the general obscenity situation is bad, and getting worse, in this country. I completely agree that it is iniquitous that the 1984 video recordings act was introduced as a classification procedure, but turned out to be disguised censorship.

I know that NCROPA needs more members, but I, like most people I guess, hate the thought of money just being poured into placing a few advertisements in the hope of enrolling more members. I feel that more good could be done by commissioning a survey. I feel sure that most people would oppose the banning of video recordings just because of sexual content.

P.T.O.

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Many more might like to ban those with gratuitous violence. I would like to support any survey which would clearly establish the facts on this, though obviously one should set about it so as to get maximum publicity.

I have no practical knowledge of costs involved in carrying out surveys (I am a retired airline pilot), but I have been thinking about some aspects. I have been wondering if any contribution I make could be funnelled through charitable organisations; for example "The Rationalist Press Association" (of which I'm a member, making a small annual contribution in excess of membership fees). The sort of figure I have in mind to contribute to NCROPA is £3,600. If this were made to a charitable organisation I would increase it to £4,500 (as I save tax), and the charity, being able to claim back tax could get a total of £6,000. I would have thought that carrying out a survey, and publishing the results, might be within the RPA's charitable objectives. However it would all require discussion and organisation. I don't know how you are placed for time, but myself I am very busy on a project which I am working on (which might itself get a bit of flak from the 'moral' brigade!), and I try to avoid coming up to London if at all possible, so I would not be much help.

The only other practical thought I have, on a survey, is that it could be carried out at FPA clinics in conjunction with a wider survey to find out which contraceptives people have tried, and why they have rejected the ones that they have rejected after trying them. In fact a Fund Donating Charity, that I was a trustee of, gave some money to the FPA and they used £20,000 of it to back a study by Dr Maureen Porter of Aberdeen University. Unfortunately her work was so poor that the FPA don't think it is worth publishing; I quite agree (though I'm still making desultory efforts to get them to rescue something useful out of it). The Fund Donating Charity is wound up, but it is possible that the FPA would feel some obligation to me if I were to press them. Anyhow I might consider a further (relatively small) donation to them if the work could be carried out. I don't want to wind this idea up too much, but this is the quote from Maureen Porter's proposal (which she so signally failed to carry out):

"It is because we do not know what women like and dislike about current methods that we do not know why they choose to continue or discontinue them. We do not know what side effects, health risks or inconvenience they are willing to tolerate or what, if any, alternatives they perceive and how available those alternatives are.

COPYObjectives

The aim of this study would be to see why women choose the methods they do and why they continue or discontinue with those methods. This would mean examining the situation in which those choices are made.... It would be necessary to find out.... the role of partners in the decision to start, continue or discontinue a chosen method.... It may well be that lay conceptions of risks and alternatives differ greatly from those of professionals providing family planning services."

All she actually did was to find out (in great detail) the sort of facilities that were being offered at various locations.

It will doubtless take up a bit of your time to give these thoughts consideration, but when you have done so I will be pleased to hear from you.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew

Andrew Ferguson