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Illegally Blonde

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There was a young lady in Sweden
Who dreamed she was sinning in Eden
She awoke from the dream
with a terrible scream
For there was no sinning
Or Eden, just Sweden.¹

This essay focuses on the development of the notion of “Swedish sin” and its connection to the pornography issue from the late 1950s to the early 1970s, both in film and in print. The chapter also follows how Swedish politicians handled this imagination of Sweden as a sexual paradise (or possibly Gomorrah) and how these circulating images touched upon anxieties in both Sweden and the U.S. about gender and sexuality.² Additionally, a closer study of one of the Swedish pornographic magazines produced for an international audience—Private—in order to see how Swedish sin was used and interpreted in pornographic production, is offered here. We have chosen to focus on the period beginning with the influential article “Sin & Sweden” in Time 1955 and ending with the legalization of pornography in Sweden in 1971. During this period, the idea of Swedish sin was proliferating internationally, not the least in the U.S. With the legal amendment, the perceived problems with pornography—proliferation to foreigners by mail and “pornography tourists” window-shopping in Swedish towns—were legally solved by combining the prohibition of pornographic display and mail-proliferation with the legalization of the production, thus serving as a natural ending point for this text.

The essay is divided into two empirical sections, where the first is built on parliamentary documents, official reports and press material from the debates in the U.S. and in Sweden.³ The second section follows more closely the development of the 10 first issues of Private (1965–1968) and how this publication used the notions of “promiscuous” female Swedishness commercially.⁴
Gender, Nationality and Pornography

Inspired by Benedict Anderson's suggestion to see nations as “imagined communities,” we will analyze how the Swedish community has been imagined in terms of gender and sexuality both domestically and from abroad, here focusing on the U.S. Being an industrialized and small country, Sweden has been heavily dependent on export trade, and its public opinion has been very sensitive to other countries’ perceptions of it. In the Cold War tensions between East and West, the U.S. became the most important nation to (often critically) relate to culturally and politically. During the 1930s, Sweden was looked upon favorably by many in the U.S. as a “middle way” between capitalism and socialism. During the 1950s and 1960s, however, this view changed and Sweden’s “socialistic” welfare state was increasingly used as a warning example by U.S. conservatives. Moreover, in the U.S., Sweden was also looked upon as a small but outspoken country when for example Prime Minister Olof Palme criticized U.S. aerial bombing of Hanoi in 1972. If the U.S. often was disparagingly viewed as a kind of “world police” in the 1970s, Sweden was sometimes depicted as the “world’s conscience.”

The Swedish sense of national identity is tightly connected to the social security and gender equality of the welfare state. As the Social Democrats gained power in the early 1930s (which they retained until the mid–1970s), the usage of the term *folkhemmet*, “the people’s home,” would in the post-war era evolve into a concrete manifestation of community. The Social Democratic welfare state should resemble the proverbial good home, where everyone got what they needed and no one was left behind. The notion of a people’s home was, however, clearly based on gendered norms and implicit heterosexuality. Women’s relation to the nation has historically been of a complex nature—in Sweden and elsewhere. Women have been seen as both biological and cultural reproducers of the ethnic and national collective. In this kind of motherhood, women have often become symbols of nations. Women’s sexual behavior has thus symbolically become central for the “honor” of the people and the narrative of the nation.

In pornography, nationality and ethnicities have often been represented in stereotypical and exaggerated ways. In many of the examples discussed here, pornography becomes a kind of distorting mirror of the national narrative. In relation to the close association between the control of women’s decency and the reproduction of the nation, pornographers can either be seen as national betrayers when sexualizing the nation’s “own” women for export, or as symbolic attackers when sexualizing for consumption women of foreign nationality.

Swedish Sin in the U.S. Press

The modern critique of Sweden as a somehow inherently sinful country began with an article in *Time* in 1955 by journalist Joe David Brown. Brown claimed that in modern Sweden “sociology has become a religion in itself, and birth control, abortion and promiscuity—especially among the young—are recognized as inalienable rights.” The church was said to be more or less under the control of the state, and unwed mothers were “practically heroines” in secular Sweden. Educators supposedly encouraged sex before marriage
as long as love was involved and the article ended with a quote by a young boy claiming that he would never give up his freedom by marrying a girl just because he had made her pregnant.18 In a reply published in Time, The Swedish Ambassador to the U.S., Erik Boheman, regretted that a respectable magazine published such a “vicious” article. He rejected most of Brown’s statements as exaggerated, misleading, or outright false.19 Brown’s article nevertheless caused Western press to describe Sweden as a land of sexual liberties and lax moral standards.

The article in Time was published at a turning point when the admiration for the pragmatic “middle way” changed and the “Swedish model” was increasingly seen (especially in the U.S.) as built upon a socialistic and overly rationalistic view of human beings.20 To escape the monotonous life in a state that allegedly took care of everything, the only release was through alcohol, sex, or ultimately suicide, several foreign journalists argued. This view sometimes led to tensions, when for example U.S. president Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1960 described Sweden as a “fairly friendly Socialist governed country in Europe where suicides and drunkenness reigns.”21

Later in that fall, the New York Times’ correspondent in Stockholm, Werner Wiskari, wrote a “Rejoinder to Sweden’s Critics” where he rejected most statements of Sweden as a country of “sin, suicides, socialism, and smorgasbord.” Swedes talked frankly about sexuality without embarrassment, something that might appear shocking to Americans, Wiskari wrote. Premarital sex was accepted if love was involved and if the couple could take responsibility for the possible outcome. According to Wiskari, Sweden was culturally Western but also proud of its position in-between East and West.22

A few years later, in 1966, Swedish economist and government advisor Gunnar Myrdal also wrote in defense of the Swedish welfare state in New York Times:

There is a popular theory that the Swedes have been mentally and morally damaged by having too much welfare and security. In a society organized to eliminate the risks in life there must be such a lack of adventure and drama that people become frustrated and unhappy. So runs the theory of the malaise in the welfare state. Frankly, I believe it is bunk.23

Myrdal claimed that the external critique of Sweden often built on envy of it being the richest country in Europe at the time. Due to the system of wealth distribution, the average Swede was probably better off than the average American, he argued: “Sweden’s opulence gives an emotional motive to fault-finding.” Myrdal described a consensus in Sweden about welfare; political parties of all colors competed in proposing reforms to make it even more perfect.24 With lesser social problems, the causes for political struggle and rebellious radicalism diminished according to Myrdal, obviously unaware of the criticism that was growing among the New Left.25

From the start, the focus on Sweden in the U.S. press was mainly on sexual behavior, divorce rates, children born out of wedlock, alcohol problems, and suicide rates. In the latter half of the 1960s, however, the focus shifted to legal matters in the field of sexuality, such as legislations concerning abortions, divorces, and—most importantly—pornography. This shift was also followed by an increasing fascination with Denmark, where pornography was decriminalized in 1969.26 Denmark also became an important country of reference in U.S. policy-making, since Danish Professor of Criminology Berl Kutchinsky did a (later contested) study there for the President’s Commission on Pornography and Obscenity regarding the effect of decriminalization on, for example, sex crimes.27
Swedish Sin and Swedish Films

The international press debates paralleled Swedish film productions from the early 1950s onwards, placing “Swedish” sexuality in summer landscapes with nude swimming and premarital love and sex. When Ingmar Bergman’s *The Silence* had its U.S. premiere in 1964, the promotion emphasized the sexually explicit and titillating qualities of the film. One ad, for example, read “The Silence—pornography or masterpiece?” with an additional statement from the Swedish board of censors arguing that some of the scenes could be considered pornographic if put together as a short film. Taken as a whole, however, one must see the film’s artistic value, the ad noted, thus cleverly fusing artistic and pornographic selling points.

In a similar advertising move, the trailer for the film *Sweden: Heaven and Hell* (Luigi Scattini, 1968), released in the U.S. in 1969, sought to concoct a powerful mix of Nordic exoticism, libertine radicalism, and traditional voyeurism, as expressed by a voice-over in the trailer of the film:

This is Sweden: land of enchantment, land of freedom, where you are about to see things, which you just don’t see at home. In America, you don’t see beautiful girls bouncing boldly out of the sauna into the snow. In America, you don’t see public pornography shops where erotic books are displayed—for both sexes … with government approval.

The admixture of diverse elements of life provided a kind of sexualized kaleidoscope, where “everything, and anything, goes,” if we are to trust the marketing of the film:

See the sex capital of the world, where topless bands beat out the throbbing rhythms of a turned on generation. See the swap-shop, where married couples get a one-night trade-in on the turn of a card, and get to know each other by the flicker-
The film was made by an Italian, Luigi Scattini, in the sensationalist pseudo-documentary style of the so-called *mondo* films. The film was originally in Italian but was also released with English voice-over for the American market. The film is a good example of the myth of Swedish sin and how it was conceptualized in the 1960s Western European and U.S. discourse.

When seeing the actual film, it is also clear that the freedom of sex in Sweden was imagined as a threat to traditional gender roles possibly blurred by the secular welfare state. The films from the 1950s were certainly quite daring for their time, but with Vilgot Sjöman’s *I Am Curious (Yellow)* (1967) and *I Am Curious (Blue)* (1968), the mixing of artistic and political expressions with sexual content clearly became a part of the counterculture of the late 1960s. This could be seen also in other artistic works, such as in Carl Johan De Geer’s poster “Skända flaggan” (Desecrate the flag), where a burning Swedish flag was pictured with the word “cock” written on it along with a call to “desecrate the flag, refuse weapons, betray the motherland, be unpatriotic.” In both Sjöman’s and De Geer’s work, the questioning of the nation was central. The critique from intellectuals and the New Left provided a pervasive problem for the ruling Social Democratic party, which had previously largely managed to ally itself with such groups. But when radical left-wing artists increasingly made use of sexual images in their artistic works, it also became more difficult to maintain the obscenity legislation directed towards explicitly commercial pornography.

The Swedish films further promoted the imagination of Swedish sin to the U.S. and sometimes challenged American obscenity legislation. *I Am Curious (Yellow)*, for example, turned out to be one of the best-selling Swedish films ever, although it was banned in eighteen U.S. states. The 1969 Swedish sex education film, *Language of Love*, was not considered obscene in the U.S. even though it included explicit sex scenes, since it also contained material considered of social value to married couples. These films were explicitly marketed as being Swedish, thereby implicitly promising sexual content. In the U.S. press, for example, *Language of Love* was advertised with the slogan: “Everything you’ve always wanted to learn about the ‘language of love’ (but couldn’t afford a trip to Sweden to find out).”

**Turning Swedish Sin into Gender Equality**

Instead of defending the welfare state by stressing the exaggerations and the contrived connections between social policies and sexual morals—as for example Gunnar Myrdal had done in 1966—Swedish politicians, public intellectuals, and health professionals soon began to reframe Swedish sin as a matter of gender equality and of Swedish frankness in sexual matters in contrast to the U.S. alleged “double standard.” In an interview with the *New York Times*, Swedish Minister of Justice, Herman Kling, related that both he and the Swedish King had received protest letters from worried parents in the U.S. about the sale of Swedish pornography there. Kling responded that the average Swede was more tolerant towards pornography than Americans: “If people want to buy...
pornography—why should they not have the possibility? Why should I be the one to decide what they are permitted to have?” Kling also expressed that “with the liberty existing between boys and girls in Sweden, they have no need for pornography. They look upon sex as a natural thing.” Consequently, Kling stressed, pornography was in Sweden mostly sold to older people.38

When British journalist David Frost interviewed Olof Palme in 1969—just before Palme was elected new Social Democratic leader and Prime Minister—Palme presented similar arguments. In a long segment of the interview, Frost asked him about the connections between sex, eroticism, and Sweden. Palme answered that it had to do with certain films and images that could be produced and spread abroad because of Sweden's less strict censorship regulations. Palme explained that he did not believe in trying to keep high morals by prohibiting things. Just like Kling, Palme stressed that Swedish youth had a very “natural and normal” attitude towards sex. Accusations of a sexualized Sweden were primarily used as a tool to criticize Swedish politics, he argued.39

U.S. criticism of Swedish loose morals and lack of censorship could be used to turn the tables back on the Americans.40 In the interview, Palme took the opportunity to stress that Swedish censorship primarily turned against violence and sadistic elements, prevalent even in Disney films.41 Thereby, Palme repeatedly contrasted the Swedish relaxed view on sexuality with the acceptance of violence in U.S. cultural productions. Yet, Palme admitted that there was a vulgar element in modern pornography that he personally strongly disliked and which he surmised would probably generate a backlash. But if pornography was made with good taste, Palme saw no reason to stop it, adding that there were probably people who needed it.42

If pornography was made with good taste, Palme saw no reason to stop it. David Frost and Olof Palme, on BBC, 1969. Jan Collsiöö / TT.
This kind of cautious semi-official endorsement by Palme and Kling indicate the extent to which sexual liberalism had at that point become both accepted and influential in Swedish politics and society. More importantly, however, sexual liberalism did not only result in profound changes in sexual ethics in the 1960s and 1970s, but also led to several radical legal amendments. These changes were not, however, put into practice without resistance. There was a strong conservative and mainly religious resistance against what was seen as moral decay and commercialization around sexuality in Sweden. The Pentecostal Maranata movement, for example, enacted direct actions against pornography shops and movie theatres.43 These dramatic actions were well covered by mass media, and U.S. television and Italian film teams were said to have come to record the attacks, further cementing the international view of Sweden as a sexually charged place.44 However, this resistance was not only isolated to a media-friendly fringe movement. It also found relatively strong support in the parliament. Here, the anxieties of tourists having their prejudices confirmed in Swedish pornography shops were certainly taken seriously. This dual concern with both conservatives championing domestic morality and progressives concerned with Sweden’s reputation abroad fused in the preparatory work undertaken by a government commission appointed in 1965 to investigate whether the regulation on pornography should be relaxed or even abolished altogether.45 In its proposals, the commission addressed the problems with tourists gathering outside pornography shops and the mail advertising of Swedish pornography abroad by suggesting a ban on pornographic displays and unsolicited dissemination. The commission also suggested a legal possibility for authorities to intervene in case decriminalization would result in the proliferation of violent content or child pornography. In the final bill, however, this possibility was removed and pornography became completely legalized (albeit with restrictions on display and dissemination) in 1971.46

Private and the “Swedification” of Pornography

Swedish, as well as Danish, pornography was being illegally imported to the U.S. through various means of smuggling in the 1960s. Here, Swedish producers of pornography were likely at a certain advantage, since Denmark was a signatory of the 1910 Agreement for the Suppression of the Circulation of Obscene Publications, amended in 1949, while Sweden was not.47

The above-mentioned American Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography stated in 1970 that the under-the-counter pornographic magazines on the U.S. market primarily came from Scandinavia or were domestic copies of such publications. Imports from Scandinavia were increasing, according to the Commission, but retail sales were still less than five million dollars per year. This import was described as a “flooding” of raw pornography by the U.S. press where it was claimed to be a multi-billion-dollar industry, the Commission stated.48

Regardless of the actual size of U.S. imports of Scandinavian pornography, the growing American interest undoubtedly followed from the emergence of a new genre of sexually explicit picture magazines that started to appear in both Denmark and Sweden during the latter half of the 1960s. This new genre was mainly directed at an international (heterosexual and male) audience, with additional texts in English and German. The new magazines profited on the image of a sexually liberated Scandinavia.49
The change in terms of representation of nationality and ethnicity and the connections between these identities and sexuality is striking: During the 1950s the Swedish magazines were often referring to a foreign mystique picturing oriental settings or constructing the sexual as French.\textsuperscript{50} In the 1960s, however, pornography publishers began to use the concept of Swedish sin as a marketing strategy for foreign audiences. During the late 1960s and 1970s, the magazines also became more clearly defined in relation to target groups, as the male nudes disappeared from straight publications and reappeared in gay porn magazines.\textsuperscript{51}

One of these heterosexually oriented magazines was \textit{Private}, which has been described as setting the standard for the international pornographic print genre.\textsuperscript{52} The first issue was published in 1965 with the slogan “Svenska modeller i färg—Swedish models in color—Schwedische Modelle in Farben.” One of the spreads pictured a woman named Britt, with the caption, “Britt, 18. A blonde incarnation of all that is typical for the Swedish woman. Emancipated—honest yet sweet like no other women-type wherever you search the globe.”\textsuperscript{53}

Like Britt, the Swedish women in \textit{Private} were often blonde, described as emancipated and having a frank view of their own sexuality. The texts spoke directly to the reader, as if he were a foreigner visiting Sweden. The girls were presented with their names and their age: “Ulla, 19,” “Ingrid, 23.” Most of them were described as ordinary Swedish girls, crazy for sex and in search of a \textit{real} man. The sexualization of Swedish women was paralleled by the sexualization of Sweden as a location, as emphasized by photos taken outdoors, on the streets of Stockholm, outside the royal castle, or in the countryside, where nature served as a prop to underline the supposed “Swedishness” of the sexuality on display.\textsuperscript{54}

One of the girls, Anita, was pictured naked in the water and the description of her stated that she was a typical Swedish woman, not only because of her appearance (blonde and pale) but also because of her “openness, frankness and earnestness,” implying the construction of a specifically natural, Nordic and exotic sexuality which rejects the connection between sexuality and sin.\textsuperscript{55} In another story entitled “The Mona-Lisa of the North,” blondness was constructed alongside other signifiers such as cleanliness and freshness, sexual eagerness and youth. Waking up from the ecstasy of sex, the “goddess of the North” in this story asked her lover casually “by the way, what is your name?” as her thighs were “catching the rays of the North’s never sleeping sun.”\textsuperscript{56}

When the Swedish obscenity legislation was first more liberally practiced and then finally abolished in 1971, Swedish pornographers such as Berth Milton (Senior), owner of \textit{Private}, held an advantage on the international market. When other countries relaxed their legislations in the 1970s, Swedish pornographers could naturally expand their markets. But they also experienced increased international competition from foreign publishers copying Milton’s pornographic concept.\textsuperscript{57}

Nevertheless, \textit{Private} does in fact seem to have maintained its leading position at least in Europe, with a circulation of over 100,000 copies per issue in the late 1980s.\textsuperscript{58} Although legally and economically a Swedish publication, \textit{Private} was one of the first international pornographic magazines providing parallel editorial material in several languages. The descriptions of the (Swedish) girls in the magazines manifested a kind of sexual radicalism. An English-language ad for the magazine read:

\begin{quote}
In PRIVATE you will find a sincere presentation of the Swedish freed moral-comprehension, which has been spoken of and discussed all over the world. The unique picture-material, articles and reports declare
\end{quote}
in an absolutely extraordinary way the emancipation and honesty towards her sex, which the Swedish woman represents.\textsuperscript{59}

The “Morals by Milton” editorials often stressed that there were no “right,” “wrong,” or “normal” sexuality, and that all sexual behaviors were permissible if no one was hurt. Milton advocated sex education in schools and took a stand against the Catholic Church on the issue of birth control.\textsuperscript{60} In Sweden, Milton emphasized, all women over fourteen years of age had the right to contraceptives such as the pill: “We don't feel that this way of thinking as regards the respect for a woman, her integrity or capacity to bear children, will do any harm. On the contrary.”\textsuperscript{61} Here, Milton's views paralleled those of earlier Swedish sexual liberals who had exercised some influence over the reforms in sexual policy during the 1960s.\textsuperscript{62}

This discursive reframing of pornography—from something sinful and dangerous to something liberating and radical—was actively promoted by the producers of pornography, both through their own magazines and by their direct participation in mass media debates. The relative acceptance extended to pornographers by the regular media had as a result that they were held openly accountable for their products, but also that they could share publicly their own opinions on sexuality and pornography. For example, the most influential Milton editorial from \textit{Private} was a spread with four photos: two bloody pictures from the Vietnam War, one of bank robber Clyde Barrow’s dead body, and one explicit picture of a man and a woman having sexual intercourse. The caption read:

Murders and throat-cuttings are obviously matters within the limits of decency. Why is it then, that [in] so many parts of the world realism in love-making and sexual intercourse between human beings are not allowed to be shown? There is only one picture in this spread showing normal human behavior. Without violence, without bestiality, without hatred, without revenge. Is it not a proof of the Swedish “sin,” just normal good sense and honesty?\textsuperscript{63}

By contrasting love and sexuality to murder and bestiality, Milton criticized regulations of pornography, both in Sweden and elsewhere, akin to what Palme argued when interviewed by Frost the same year. When explicitly using the notion of Swedish sin, Milton connected it to both pornography and his own morality, arguing that feelings of shame surrounding sexuality should be eliminated.\textsuperscript{64} The example with the four pictures was used as an important argument for the deregulation of pornography.\textsuperscript{65} In 1969, for example, lawyer Leif Silbersky used this particular example in his argumentation for abolishing the censorship of pornographic pictures.\textsuperscript{66}

However, this notion of sexual liberty and emancipated women clearly did not deconstruct gender divisions. As Carrie Pitzulo has observed, radicalism in pornography and men’s magazines in the 1960s and 1970s halted when it came to gender diversity, even if the depicted women were typically presented as emancipated, as in the examples above.\textsuperscript{67} In spite of their radical and sexual agency, women were still presented as sexual objects for the readers of \textit{Private}. “Eva, 18” was, for example, described as requesting the same rights as men. “Yet,” the magazine noted, she was modest and respectable: “A wonderful mixture of innocence and playful nymphomania.”\textsuperscript{68}

\textbf{Conclusion}

The imaginations of Swedish sin and pornography were, in Sweden as well as in the U.S. and in both official documents and in pornographic production, constructed along
gendered and sexualized understandings of nationality. The imagination of a Swedish community was built upon an understanding of young women’s role in a modern secular society where the traditional connection between reproduction and femininity was partly broken.

The imagination of Swedish sin was from the start constructed mainly from the outside in the context of the Cold War. The Cold War was not only a contestation between different political economical systems. It also embodied a conflict with regard to freedom of thought and freedom of religion, as well as tensions between rational modernism and traditional values. Notions of religiosity and morality were more important in this global contestation than is often recognized in contemporary scholarly literature. The logic of connecting Sweden with sin and sexuality here followed from what Melvin Tumin at the time called the “Eisenhower-hypothesis” on the welfare state, e.g., that Social Democratic policies would not only lead to social security but also to secularism and thus moral decline, eventually turning people onto alcohol, drugs, sex, and ultimately suicide as a way out of boredom.69

From the start, Swedish officials tried to confront these misrepresentations and protect the image of Sweden as a “decent” country. Nevertheless, the image of a sinful Sweden was hard to get rid of and Swedish politicians tried to turn it into something positive, linking free sexual morals to women-friendly legislation, progressiveness in social matters, and a free view of culture and pornography.70 This was also put in contrast to an imagined U.S. double standard and moral acceptance of violence, another sin according to Christian beliefs, not only by official Swedish representatives but also, as we have seen, by Swedish pornographers.

The shift from a discussion of the welfare state to a more clear focus on pornography itself can partly be seen as a reaction to changes in the pornography market where Swedish production could expand due to a lax application of the law—and a certain element of ingenuity by some producers in evading it—resulting both in exports of magazines and in growing pornography tourism. New pornographic publishers such as Milton took advantage of the image of the Swedish girl as sexually liberated and made it a part of their marketing strategy. Sexual liberal discourse also opened an understanding of pornography as a substitute of real love, as when for example Kling claimed that young gender-equal Swedes involved in real-life amorous relations did not need pornography. However, there was a prevailing anxiety over the pornographic dissemination connected to the image of the nation, resulting in the prohibition of pornographic display and mail proliferation when pornography was otherwise decriminalized in 1971.

As religious rationales lost influence in public discourse during the radical 1960s and 1970s, and while the feminist movement primarily focused until the 1970s on economic and social justice, this possibly unlikely window of opportunity provided for a temporary mutual affinity—if not acceptance of—with the commercial pornographic industry by sexual liberals and radicals. Later, however, it became more difficult to claim that the resistance against pornography was a generational issue that would soon dissipate, as a more vocal opposition within the young feminist movement began to protest commercialized appropriation and sexual objectification of women. This widening rift probably made it more difficult for Swedish pornographers to market Swedish pornography by way of linking it to progressive Swedish female emancipation.

Coincidentally, however, both pornographers and politicians found a temporary common ground in claiming that pornography just responded to a “natural” need for
sexual stimulation. This view, in its turn, followed from a new, de-dramatized view on sex, which commercial as well as counter-cultural actors could share. However, even if women and their sexuality were central in the debates, Swedish women’s own voices are very hard to come by in the sources—other than in the probably staged interviews in the pornographic magazines.

Tellingly, pornography was also framed as a problem mostly in terms of how it affected the viewers and their morality. Even if women’s lack of interest in pornographic consumption was debated, pornography was seldom problematized during the late 1960s as a product mainly for male consumption. Importantly, the working conditions for those involved in production were not discussed during the time period.71 While the social security and gender equality of the welfare state have prevailed in the Swedish imagination of the nation, manifested in later reforms such as free contraceptives, liberal abortion rights, and paid parental leave, its history as a pioneer in pornographic commercial production has this far often been left out.

NOTES

3. The press material from the U.S. is mainly collected from New York Times, Time and Washington Post. The Swedish press material consists of press-clippings collected by Pressbyrån (the distributor of magazines in Sweden at the time) and by the Swedish Attorney General.
4. Although the Freedom of the Press Act stipulated that the year of printing should appear on all publications, the issues of Private lack such information. However, from other sources, we know that the two first issues were published in 1965, that issue number four and five were published in 1967 and that issue number nine and ten were published in 1968. See, Swedish National Archive, Attorney General Archive, Acts on common cases no. 315, 1967; Leif Silbersky and Carlösten Nordmark, Såra tukt och sedlighet: En debattbok om pornografin (Stockholm: Prisma, 1969); Private special edition 30th anniversary 1995; Carl Abrahamsson and Jan Axelsson, “Private Magazine: Sweden’s Berth of Hardcore,” in The History of Men’s Magazines, vol. 6: 1970s Under the Counter, ed. Dian Hanson (Cologne: Taschen, 2005), 19–41.
11. Bo Stråth, Folkhemmet mot Europa: Ett historiskt perspektiv på 90-talet (Stockholm: Tiden,
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19. “Letters to the editor,” *Time*, May 9, 1955. See also, in the same section, the letter from Swedish sex education activist Elise Ottesen-Jensen where she opposes that Brown quoted her from a private conversation at a party. Also the Swedish press attached wrote an answer in “Letters to the editor,” *Time*, May 9, 1955.


30. “Trailer for *Sweden: Heaven and Hell*.”


34. See for example “High court frees film held obscene,” *New York Times*, May 18, 1971; “Court


54. See for example *Private*, 5 (unknown year), 10.

55. Marklund, “Hot Love and Cold People.”


60. *Private*, 6 (unknown year), 2.


62. Lennerhed, ed., *Riv alla murar!*


65. See for example Swedish National Archive, Attorney General Archive, Acts on common cases, Supplement to no. 390, 1968.

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68. Private, 7 (unknown year), 3. Original in English.
69. Tumin, “Velferdsstat og moral.”
70. Glover and Marklund, “Arabian Nights in the Midnight Sun?”
71. Arnberg, Motsättningarnas marknad.

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