

How to Organize a Picket of Stores Selling Pornography

One of the most effective means of establishing community standards is picketing. During the past few years, thousands of stores have stopped selling pornography as a result of picketing by local citizens. It does not require a great number to picket effectively. In fact, sometimes two or three people in a well-planned picket can get pornography removed from a store or group of stores.

Remember that picketing helps establish community standards, it says that your community doesn't want pornography, and it lets others know that there are those in your community who stand opposed to pornography which causes sexual abuse of women and children.

In listing the following steps to an effective picket it is assumed that personal visits, letters, telephone calls, or other applicable means have already been employed with no results. AFA urges that the store first be approached and asked to stop selling porn. We have found that it helps if the store manager is given a copy of **Pornography: A Report**. The publication is available at \$2 each, \$1.50 for two-nine copies, \$1 for 10-49 copies, or \$.50 for 50 or more copies. (Order information below.)

An effective picket requires the following responsibilities: (Some may be combined.)

A picket chairperson will coordinate other committees or individuals in organizing the picket. He or she may also function as the media spokesperson.

A media spokesperson should be the only person to speak with the media concerning the picket. He or she will need to be familiar with the basic anti-pornography arguments and cliches.

The sign committee should be responsible for making and transporting appropriate signs to the picket site.

Some cities require a permit for a picket. The proper local authorities and officials need to be contacted concerning a parade/demonstration permit. Proper procedures should be followed and the required forms submitted as required by each municipality. To inquire about the procedures, contact the police department or city clerk's office. For locations outside city limits, contact the sheriff's office or the county clerk's office.

We suggest that the picket be from 11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. In preparing for the picket we suggest that the following preparations be completed well in advance: *Promotion* — begin three weeks prior to picket; *Permit* — two weeks; and *Signs* for picketers — 1 week.

Picketing is the exercise of two constitutional rights: "freedom of speech" and "peaceable assembly." Denial of a permit without a definitive reason should be in writing and carefully considered before accepting. If you feel you have been unjustly denied your right to exercise these privileges, please contact AFA for information in appealing the decision.

In picketing, the following rules should be observed. Picketers must remain on public property at all times. Never impede or block automobile or pedestrian traffic. Refer the media to the media spokesperson. Use only approved signs. Customers should not be debated or engaged in conversation. If the manager or his representative should ask you to leave, do so immediately! Picketers should then wait in the parking area or across the street, etc. while the chairperson calls to request the police to enforce your right to picket. Resume picketing only when the police arrive.

Should you encounter other picketers supporting the business, picket in a peaceful manner if possible, otherwise leave and let the picket chairperson call the police to supervise. It is highly unlikely that two opposing groups would be given permits to demonstrate at the same location at the same time — thus if you have a permit, they will probably not. Always conduct yourself in a Christ-like manner, remembering your testimony in the community.

AFA recommends that literature to be passed out during the picket be carefully selected. AFA has a brochure entitled "Pornography: Problems and Solutions" which is excellent to be given to the public. These are available at \$5 per hundred from AFA. Avoid material that promotes other causes, organizations, etc., so that the focus will remain centered on the immediate issue.

Wording of signs should be brief and general in nature. Never use defamatory wording concerning an individual. Avoid using religious and Scripture quotes as the media tends to distort such use to convey fanaticism, etc. Lettering should be large, clear, and neat to enhance reading from a distance. Examples: *Stop Porn Now*, *Porn Hurts*, *Save Our Children-Stop Porn*, *Porn Destroys*, *Porn and Crime Go Hand in Hand*, *Porn Causes Rape*, *Porn Hurts Our Community*, *Porn is Not Wanted Here*, *Protect Our Children*, and, of course, *Boycott (store name)*. One sign per picketer is ideal.

About four days before the picket, the local media should be contacted and alerted to the picket, and to the fact that your picket is part of a state-wide or nation-wide picket.

Should you desire more information concerning picketing, order **A Guide To What One Person Can Do About Pornography** from AFA. The publication is available at \$2 each, \$1.50 for two-nine copies, \$1 for 10-49 copies and \$.50 for 50 or more copies.

To order AFA publications named above, send check with order to AFA, P. O. Drawer 2440, Tupelo, MS 38803.