

Melinda Tankard Reist

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Melinda Tankard Reist is an author, speaker, media commentator, blogger and advocate for women and girls.

She is author/editor of four books including *Getting Real: Challenging the Sexualisation of Girls* (Spinifex Press, 2009, now in its seventh printing, the biggest selling title for Spinifex), and *Big Porn Inc: Exposing the harms of the global pornography industry* (Spinifex Press, 2011, co-edited with Dr Abigail Bray).

A columnist with Fairfax Media, Melinda is a regular guest on morning television and many radio programs.

Melinda is co-founder of the grassroots campaigning movement, *Collective Shout*: for a world free of exploitation, exposing corporations, advertisers and marketers who objectify women and sexualise girls to sell products and services.

In demand as a speaker, Melinda is named in the *Who's Who of Australian Women* and the *World Who's Who of Women*. Melinda is also an ambassador for the *Raise Foundation* and *Compassion Australia* and a *World Vision Associate*.

www.melindatankardreist.com

Melinda presents on topics relating to the objectification of women, sexualisation of girls, harms of pornography, teens and pop culture, media and society.

Her audiences include students, educators, medical professionals, child development experts, parents, women and girls advocacy bodies and organisations addressing violence against women. Her main presentations - provided as keynotes, workshops, seminars, or as part of a panel - are:

- Sexualisation of children in media and popular culture: and what we can do about it
- The sexual world of the 21st century adolescent: how pornography harms young people
- Girls and the online world: bullying, exhibitionism, pro eating disorder and suicide sites fuelling depression and self-doubt: how to help girls stay positive in cyberspace
- Positive Bodies: You're OK just the way you are!
- How the advertising industry harms women and children: the failure of self-regulation and what we can do about it
- Violent Media: What are the impacts on young people?
- *Collective Shout*: for a world free of exploitation: history and victories

"The best speaker we have ever had"

Antionette Jones, Principal,
Mitcham Girls High School

"Intelligent, passionate, brilliant, fearless... I could not recommend her more highly"

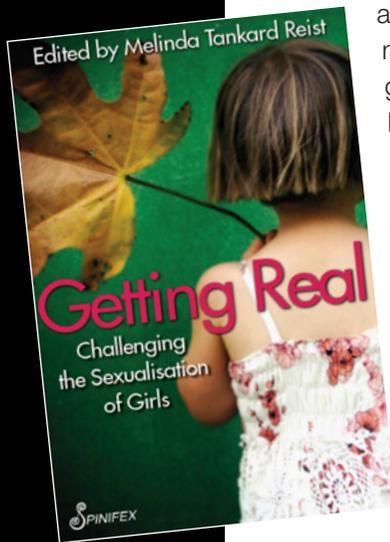
Dr Michael Carr-Gregg

"Melinda has had a transformation effect on our school"

Ms Stephanie McConnell,
Principal, Turramurra
High School



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Sexualisation of girls in media and popular culture: and what we can do about it.

Have you noticed that children seem to be growing up too fast? That even younger children are more conscious about their looks and bodies? That they feel pressure to look thin, hot and sexy? That they are being exposed to sexualised images and messages you would like to protect them from?

There is growing concern about the impact on young people of stereotyped representations (primarily) of women and girls. Society is plastered with hyper-sexualised messages and images, in media, billboards, toys, games, magazines, music video clips and clothing. Many authorities believe this is contributing to an environment which is increasingly harmful to girls, by presenting their value in terms of their looks and sexual attractiveness.

Taking your audience on a visual 'tour' of more than 200 images from popular culture, Melinda will explore the way these messages shape and mould young people's ideas of themselves, their bodies and their relationships. Her presentation will provide strategies to help girls rise above the airheaded cult of celebrity, fashion and outward appearance and discover their true value and worth.

Session details: Versions offered for parents, educators, child welfare, adolescent health, medical professionals, women's health. Students Yrs 7-9/10-12. Sessions from one hour to half day/full day. Single sex classes preferred.

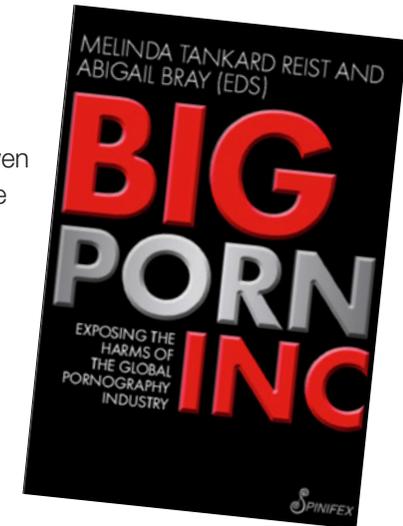
The sexual world of the 21st century adolescent: how pornography harms young people

Young people's lives are increasingly socialised, conditioned and informed by pornography. They are exposed to hardcore violent pornography often before their first sexual experience – even before their first kiss. The average age of exposure is 11.

Boys are being socialised into a brutal and calloused version of masculinity. Girls are conditioned by pornography to see themselves primarily in terms of being providers of sexual services. Young people are increasingly becoming not only consumers but 'creators' of pornography through sexting and social media platforms.

The proliferation and globalisation of sexual imagery is contributing to a distorted view of relationships and sexuality. What is the impact? What can we do to address it?

Session details: Parents, educators, child welfare, adolescent health, medical professionals, women's health/anti violence bodies. A combination of sexualisation and harms of pornography for students Year 10 upward. Single sex classes preferred. One-two hour sessions. Note: a combination of the presentations on sexualisation and porn harms are also available for other groups.



Girls and the online world: bullying, exhibitionism, pro-harm sites: how to help girls stay positive in cyberspace

Based on Melinda's chapter in Steve Biddulph's new book *Raising Girls* (Finch, 2013), Melinda explores some of the sites many girls and young women frequent, which can fuel depression, anxiety and erode self-esteem. Strategies for helping empower girls to make healthy decisions around on-line engagement are discussed.

Session details: Educators, parents, child welfare, adolescent health, medical professionals. Note: Part of this content can be incorporated into Sexualisation presentation where requested.

Positive bodies: You're OK just the way you are!

A presentation for primary school level using multi-media to explore messages children receive about their bodies and worth in an age-appropriate way. Incorporating significant engagement from the children, Melinda will help them recognise good messages and bad messages, and facilitate a process of recognising that they are valuable and acceptable as they are.

Session details: Primary level. Half hour to one hour sessions.

How the advertising industry harms women and children: the failure of self-regulation and what we can do about it

The advertising industry has used self-regulation to its commercial advantage, to the detriment of the community, and women and girls in particular. The self-regulation model has proven inadequate to deal with the barrage of hyper-sexualised imagery and the commercialisation and commodification of childhood. There are no meaningful penalties to provide an incentive for advertisers to change their behaviour. What needs to be done to change a system that isn't working?

Session details: Educators, child welfare professionals, media literacy educators, corporate social responsibility advocates.

Violent Media: What are the impacts on young people?

Children and young people are increasingly subjected to violence media in the form of advertising, music video clips, film and video games. Examples will be given from media and popular culture and the latest research indicating harm to young people from this exposure.

Session details: Parents, educators, child welfare, adolescent health, medical professionals, anti-violence bodies.

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History and Victories

Growing a new grassroots movement through new forms of social media

The exciting journey of the founding and remarkable growth and success of Collective Shout: for a world free of sexploitation. Unpacking a number of case studies of specific campaigns, Melinda will demonstrate the effectiveness of citizen activism using new forms of social media.

www.collectiveshout.org





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Endorsements

"At conferences of parents and teachers around the country, I have often spoken alongside the wonderful educator and girls' advocate, Melinda Tankard Reist. If I arrive late, I know how to find the theatre, because the sound of a thousand people gasping or saying, 'Oh no!' in unison is hard to miss. Melinda's powerpoint presentation of what young people will encounter online leaves audiences reeling. Melinda delivers her message with a clarity and commonsense without peer."

Steve Biddulph, Author, Raising Boys, Raising Girls

"Melinda delivers her very important messages with passion, humour and vivid, current imagery. Staff, parents and students believe Melinda has been the best speaker we have ever had. The response from every student in the school was amazing as they connected very quickly with all of the issues she spoke about."

Students now readily comment on what is appropriate or inappropriate behaviour. To quote a student: 'we feel as if we have been given permission to say NO, I find that offensive and inappropriate, without feeling like losers'. Parents and students have requested that we invite Melinda back to the school every year".

Antionette Jones, Principal, Mitcham Girls High School

"Melinda spoke to our girls in November of 2011 as a part of our 'gender day' and she was absolutely inspiring. Not only did she enlighten them to the toxic sexualisation of women and girls, she gave them positive, affirming messages about how this can be resisted. Every girl was engaged for the entire presentation. It is so exciting to know that there is someone who is able to get such an important message across to young women. I warmly recommend Melinda to all schools."

Rena Hatzi, Menai High School

Melinda Tankard Reist is an exceptional speaker and presenter. She inspires young women to challenge a culture that bombards them with toxic messages of objectification and hyper sexualisation. Melinda's work is powerful and necessary at a time when no previous generation of teens has been exposed to such a volume of pornified images."

Julie Gale, Founder/Director, Kids Free 2b Kids

"Melinda has chosen to become a front line fighter in a culture war whose outcome will be fundamentally influenced by the way that we choose to treat our women and children. Melinda unleashes the sociological napalm we need to both illuminate the strategies used by commerce and the media and then ignite our collective will to action. Her work is at the cutting edge of this necessary counter attack: she is a force to be reckoned with."

Dr Ramesh Manocha, Senior Lecturer in Psychiatry, Sydney Medical School, University of Sydney

"Melinda Tankard Reist is not just a passionate and articulate crusader against the commercial sexualisation of children and the sexual exploitation of women, she is also an intelligent, charismatic presenter with a fabulous sense of humour. This brilliant and fearless woman has single-handedly set out to stem what she sees as the polluted tide of a pornified society. I could not recommend her more highly as a speaker to schools, community groups or at conference"

Dr Michael Carr-Gregg, Adolescent Psychologist

"Melinda Tankard Reist was an invited speaker at Paediatric Grand Rounds at The Canberra Hospital – a medical education forum for the various health professions with the Department of Paediatrics & Child Health. Melinda crystallises the confronting reality of popular culture and its role in distorting our collective social conscience. Her presentation provided an enormous amount of insight into some of the factors that have contributed to the many psychosocial issues that many of our paediatric and adolescent patients, and the health system as a whole, struggle to cope with. She is charismatic, dynamic, and has an ability to communicate the exceptionally important message about our complicity in promoting values that confuse and hurt our young people. Her talk remains one of the highlights of the Paediatric Grand Rounds calendar to date."

Dr Tony Huynh FRACP, Staff Specialist Paediatric Endocrinologist, Chairman Paediatric Grand Rounds, The Canberra Hospital

"Melinda has had a transformational effect on our school. Melinda is an outstanding presenter who is passionate about her message. I would highly recommend Melinda to any school or community organisation who cares for their kids and for their future."

Ms Stephanie McConnell, Principal, Turramurra High School

"Melinda's presentation to Middle and Upper School students at Pymble Ladies' College was absolutely brilliant! Although her talk contained disturbing ideas about the extent the media unethically shapes values, she left the girls feeling positive and empowered."

Justine Hodgson, English Faculty, Pymble Ladies' College

"I could not recommend Melinda highly enough. She was warm, funny, sincere and passionate...the feedback we had was overwhelmingly positive."

Alexandra Norton, Abbotsleigh

"You've helped me navigate my world and empowered me to protest when I come face to face with oppression in whatever form"

Victoria, Psychology Student, Sydney

"I think, well I know, that the work you do is so unbelievably valuable to all women, especially those in my generation. And if the women in your generation fail to see this, then I'll work hard to make sure the ones in mine do."

Marnie, 15, Melbourne

"Keep up the amazing work. For those of us in the sexual assault field it is so validating and supporting to be able to walk hand in hand with extraordinary social advocates such as you!"

Alison Grundy, Clinical Psychologist, Sydney

For more information

If you would like to enquire about booking Melinda please complete the 'Speaking Request Form' under 'Bookings' on this site. We will get back to you within 14 days regarding availability and quote.