

Barbara Kay: Ottawa wastes money on pointless exhibition about sex

[National Post](#) - Friday May 11th, 2012

Just when you thought Ottawa and area adolescents would never find out a single thing about sex until their wedding nights, along comes “Sex: A Tell-All Exhibition” to the Canada Science and Technology Museum in Ottawa. It’s opening May 17 and staying until January.

Whew. About time. As everyone knows, nobody ever tells Ontario children anything about sex: not their parents, their teachers or the Internet. They’re completely clueless by the age of twelve, the minimum age for attendance of the exhibition without an adult escort. So a very expensive exhibition explaining all about sex to kids 12 and older is exactly what taxpayers have been yearning for.

Not.

Seriously: What will our 12-year olds see at this exhibition? Well, some of the exhibition will expose them to stuff they have already seen a hundred times since Grade One. Stuff like eggs and sperm, the naked human body (although perhaps never before life size and in full colour), and condoms.

And then there is the other stuff that maybe kids don’t have to see in the company of their peers. For example, is it really necessary for adolescents to watch videos of a boy and a girl masturbating? News flash: For all of recorded history until our era, boys and girls learned how to masturbate all on their own, with nobody giving them instruction, and in many cultures with nobody ever mentioning it to them. Unlike animal sex, human sex is a private activity. When it goes public, it is always a trigger to the prurient side of our natures. Watching others masturbate and watching others watching people masturbate is voyeurism, plain and simple. Please, Mr. Sophisticated Curator, don’t tell us this is “educational.” Where I come from, that’s soft porn.

I have no idea why this exhibition was thought to be necessary. Our children are bombarded by sexual content in their lives from a too-early age. Some of it is informative and appropriate; much of it is intrusive and unwholesome. The last thing students need is more sexual graphics, more full-frontal life-size nudity, another invitation to early experimentation (one video has a woman praising the virtue of multiple sex partners; another interviews 12 people about sexual orientation, not one of them heterosexual).

The exhibition is not ideologically neutral, either. Naturally the subject of unwanted pregnancy arises. Disturbingly, the option of keeping an unplanned-for child, or giving it up for adoption is not mentioned. The only advice given is to have an abortion as soon as possible.

According to one attendee, when asked why children should be exposed to such charged sexual content, the museum’s director of public affairs said that experts have found that the earlier you tell children about sex, the later they will engage in sex. This happens not to be true. So the question remains: Why was this exhibition created? What end does it serve? And at a time when funding for the arts is being cut right and left, is this really the best use of public money?

National Post