

Porn Spam: It's Getting Raunchier

By Julia Scheeres

Naked women performing oral sex with guns pressed to their heads, naked women with large dogs clutching their backs, naked women in pig-tails pretending to be daughters having sex with fathers.

These are some of the explicit images that have started slipping into inboxes lately as spammers try to drive traffic to a growing number of sites featuring rape, bestiality, and incest pornography.

Although many recipients are disgusted by the imagery, experts are worried that these niche porn sites could lower the inhibitions of sexual deviants and provoke them to act out their fantasies in real life.

Type "incest rape" into the Google search engine, for example, and the first result is for the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN), a Washington nonprofit organization that aids sexual assault victims. The second result is for *brutalextrême.com*, which advertises its content as stories, pictures and videos of the "most violent rapes in the history of mankind."

In the small letters at the bottom of the page is the site's disclaimer: "We do not condone non-nocensual (sic) sex. This site is about forced-sex FANTASY only."

Nevertheless, the faked images have stirred traumatic memories in sexual assault victims who stumble

across them in spam, said RAINN president Scott Berkowitz.

"In the past six months, we've gone from one or two complaints about this kind of spam a week to about 150 complaints a week," said Berkowitz. "There's not much we can do about it, because it's legal unless there's a child involved or you can prove a rape actually took place."

Even the e-mail subject lines—known in the marketing world as "teasers"—have gotten raunchier: "Famous victims of parental incest!" and "Welcome to the brutal rape archive!" are two currently making the e-rounds.

"The tragedy of spam is that it's sent to anyone whose e-mail they have, regardless of interest," said Jason Catlett, president of *Junkbusters.com*, a site that helps consumers reduce the amount of unsolicited advertising in their lives.

For example, Catlett—who lives in New Jersey—was surprised to receive a spam recently from a man in Peru trying to sell a Toyota Corolla.

The tactic has gotten smut peddlers in trouble in the past, Catlett said. After skin magazines targeted the teen market in the 1960s by sending racy subscription offers to their home addresses, causing parents to complain, the Supreme Court ruled that such solicitations could be blocked by using a simple

Post Office form.

U.S. law also bans junk faxes. But there is no law prohibiting spam in the United States, even from sites featuring bestiality, an activity outlawed in 24 states. Subject lines include "XXX Farm Holiday," "Zoo Depravity" and "Raping furry naked barnyard friends."

The Humane Society, which investigates allegations of animal abuse, has been swamped with complaints about Internet sites featuring people having sex with dogs, horses, snakes and almost every other creature imaginable, said spokesman Brian Sodergren.

"It's gross," said Sodergren. "It's just plain wrong. But unfortunately, most of those websites are hosted overseas and we can't do anything about it."

Al Cooper, a California psychologist who recently published a book that explores the Internet's effect on sexuality, said the rise in offensive porn spam may be due in part to some surfers' dwindling interest in mainstream fare.

"There's only so many naked pictures of women's breasts you can see until you get tired of it," said Cooper. "For sex sites to make money, they need to supply people with new material.... You have to think of something new and exciting."

The Internet allows peo-

ple to anonymously view imagery that would have required a trip to the seedy side of town, or to a foreign country, a few years ago. But for some people, what begins as prurient curiosity eventually leads them to jail.

"We're seeing a tremendous increase in people looking at child porn online, then trying to solicit kids for sex," said Cooper. "In pedophilia stings we find a lot of people who would never get involved in child pornography if it wasn't for the Internet. They wouldn't have known how to get the material or even dared to ask. The power of the Internet is that people who wouldn't have gotten involved in these kinds of things now are."

Likewise, Cooper added, men with repressed rape fantasies could become less inhibited about real life sexual assault after perusing sites such as *rapedbitch.com* or *outcold.com*, which includes fantasies of men slipping sedatives into women's drinks and raping them. The site offers free memberships to visitors who send their own original pictures of "passed out girls."

"Drunk, stoned, passed out, unconscious, out cold girls sleeping it off! Cum on in and find out what we did with them!" teases the site's homepage.

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