



**Publication:** TNL      **Date:** 23 Aug 2006      **Page:** 10

**Headline:** Porn to be king

**Author:** SUTTON Michelle

**Subjects:** PORNOGRAPHY;ADULT ENTERTAINMENT;BIOGRAPHIES ( TARANAKI )

**Section:** FEATURES    **Sub Section:** GENERAL

**Caption(s):** Porn promoter Steve Crow with American porn stars Jessica Drake and Shayla Leveaux, in New Zealand for an earlier Erotica Expo.;Porn star Yasmin Taylor signs autographs at a Steve Crow erotica show in Christchurch.

**Edition:** 1      **Words:** 1171      **Source:**      **Copyright:**

Topless women will ride down Auckland's Queen St on motorbikes today and it's all because of Steve Crow. MICHELLE SUTTON finds out how a boy from a conservative

Inglewood family turned into a champion of individual freedom and all things x-rated

-----  
'I'm not going to shut up.  
It's not in my personality'

-----  
YOU can call Boobs on Bikes promoter Steve Crow just about anything, but don't call him the porn king.

"I hate that name," he says when asked to explain how a smart Taranaki lad with two masters degrees turned to the seedy business of selling pornographic movies.

"I'm no king of anything," he says. "I think it's very presumptuous, that's not me at all."

But what about your company Vixen Direct? Isn't it New Zealand's biggest distributor of porn movies? And remember when you wanted to video a woman giving birth for an x-rated film? Or the time you had a relationship with former stripper and Penthouse pin-up Hayley Marie Byrne?

"I just do a job and run my companies," Crow says.

Surely this must be Crow's conservative upbringing talking, because at 49 he has created a multi-million dollar empire out of the adult entertainment industry. He is well on the way to becoming Australasia's biggest porn movie distributor and that's just the start. Crow attracts controversy and publicity almost as often as he gets arrested for selling objectionable material (so far he has 33 convictions), and he married his police officer wife, Senior Sergeant Gaylene Rogers, in Las Vegas. The happy couple wore US prison, chain-gang uniforms.

All of this from a man who claims to have never bought a porn movie in his life.

"I don't watch porn, never have; never been interested in it any more than any other guy. I have never gone out and rented a movie, never gone out and bought it."

Hard to believe, but Crow says he only saw a business opportunity when he first stumbled into the world of adult entertainment in Thailand 12 years ago.

He was visiting the country for work when he came across pirated copies of adult

computer games for sale. He bought one copy of every game, returned home and contacted the company behind them and became the legitimate New Zealand distributor. Then, in 1997, one of his suppliers asked him to distribute its adult entertainment videos and magazines.

Back then, Crow, a former marine biologist who spent 13 years on the oil rigs, was a property developer and his then girlfriend was fronting the porn business, operating out of his garage.

"I was concerned about the taint that the adult industry unfortunately has."

When the couple split in 2000, Crow decided to "come out" and front his company, Vixen Direct. That year he staged the first Erotica Expo, a three-day R18 exhibition of overseas porn stars, jelly wrestling, sex toys and strip shows.

"I decided I was going to become an ambassador for the industry."

A career in porn was never on the cards for Crow growing up in Inglewood. He attended New Plymouth Boys' High School, was in the top professional stream, but says he wasn't a good student until university. He went to Sunday school and occasionally to church with his parents.

"My mother grew up in the war years and is conservative. Dad wouldn't like to think he is, but he is."

They have never been able to understand why their son, with masters degrees in marine biology and business administration, turned to the adult entertainment industry to make a living.

"They thought it was a huge waste and they still do. My mother's never been to Erotica and doesn't really want to know anything about it. I think they are still very disappointed in where I ended up."

They have given up trying to talk him round. He has never liked being told what to do, but likes to think his parents would be proud of him for standing up for individual freedom.

Crow hates any form of censorship. Maybe that's why he is unashamedly outspoken, frank, even crass. He is also incredibly protective of his industry when it comes under attack.

"What is the ridiculous focus on the adult industry and on porn? If someone wants to watch other people have sex, then good, let them."

Of course, not everyone agrees. Auckland Mayor Dick Hubbard, also dubbed the king of his industry, cereal making, tried to ban the Boobs on Bikes parade down Queen St today. The parade is a promotion for Crow's seventh Erotica Expo this weekend and includes 30 topless porn stars riding pillion on motorbikes.

Hubbard has called it morally repugnant and degrading to women. Crow isn't the sort to give a damn what the critics say, and the parade will go on, no matter what. And he doesn't miss the opportunity to have another go at Hubbard, whom he describes as a religious nutter.

"He is completely ignorant of the facts. The problem with people like Dick Hubbard is that they think it's their God-given right to impose their opinion on other people."

The facts, says Crow, are that none of the girls in the parade are being forced to bare their breasts down Queen St. They are not being paid and there's no contractual obligation.

"A bunch of girls want to do it and suddenly I'm seen as the big bad male out to exploit them. What are they, children who can't make up their minds? Is it Hubbard's job to

protect them as inferior beings?"

The parade is just one of Crow's many publicity stunts. He sued the New Zealand Stock Exchange when it tried to change its name to NZX, the same name as his adults-only magazine, and he upset Taranaki residents when he claimed to have produced a Maori porn movie, Anal Mana, which was later revealed as a hoax.

Crow is a master at keeping his name in the newspapers, on TV and in gossip columns. His marriage to a policewoman in May this year hasn't slowed him down either. It will screen on cable channel ESPN.

His wife, Rogers, was investigated by police bosses in 2004 over whether it was appropriate to date the country's biggest producer and publisher of adult entertainment.

Their spur-of-the-moment nuptials, while racing in the Gumball Rally through Europe and the US, was classic Crow, thumbing his nose at authorities once again.

"She's totally supportive, don't get me wrong," says Crow, "but I don't think she likes the way I stand up for it (adult entertainment) sometimes. I don't think she likes some of the extreme things I do but I'm not going to shut up. It's not in my personality."

The chances of Crow keeping quiet are as unlikely as his porn stars keeping their clothes on. He is adamant he is not exploiting women, but sticking up for individual rights.

Maybe he is, but one thing's for sure, he is exploiting the adult entertainment industry for every cent it's worth. \*

