



U. S. Department of Justice

*Todd P. Graves
United States Attorney
Western District of Missouri*

*Office of the United States Attorney (816) 426-3122
Charles Evans Whittaker Courthouse FAX (816) 426-4210
400 East 9th Street, Fifth Floor
Kansas City, Missouri 64106*

July 3, 2003

Ms. Sandy Rios, President
Ms. Janet M. LaRue, Chief Counsel
Concerned Women for America
1015 Fifteenth St., N.W., Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005

Re: Obscenity complaints

Dear Ms. Rios and Ms. LaRue:

We are in receipt of your letter dated April 30, 2003, inquiring about the status of any obscenity cases filed by this office and the status of investigations into complaints about obscene material available on the Internet that have been filed on Morality In Media's website, www.obscenitycrimes.org. The investigation and prosecution of child exploitation and obscenity is a priority in the Western District of Missouri. In fact, I personally attended the Federal Prosecutors' Symposium on Obscenity in June of last year in Columbia, South Carolina, at which Attorney General John Ashcroft unequivocally committed the Department of Justice to the task of combating obscenity. Accordingly, we continue to work with state and federal law enforcement agencies, as well as with prosecutors in the Department of Justice's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, to aggressively investigate and prosecute those individuals and companies who manufacture and distribute obscene materials.

We trust you understand that we are not able to comment on pending investigations into the distribution of obscene material into the Western District of Missouri. We can report, however, that we have asked our local federal law enforcement agents to investigate any and every complaint about potentially obscene material available in the Western District of Missouri. As we are sure you recognize, most, if not all of the obscenity complaints received by this office are not actually prosecutable because of the difficulty associated with locating the actual individuals or companies that create and distribute the

objectionable material. Unfortunately, the trail to finding those individuals sometimes ends outside of our country's borders and out of our prosecutorial reach or, even more frequently, to a dead end. Other reasons that obscenity complaints may not be prosecutable are that venue may not lie in the Western District of Missouri, or the objectionable material giving rise to a complaint may not be obscene under the Supreme Court's obscenity standard set forth in Miller v. California, 413 U.S. 15 (1973).

Thank you for your inquiry about the status of our obscenity prosecutions. In addition to our efforts to investigate and prosecute obscenity cases, we continue to aggressively prosecute those individuals who exploit children. Be assured that we take very seriously all the complaints we have received and will continue to make it a priority to investigate and prosecute those individuals and entities that violate federal law.

Sincerely,

Todd P. Graves
United States Attorney

By



Roseann Ketchmark
First Assistant U.S. Attorney

RK/dx