

**NYSAAUW Convention
April 24, 2010**

**Too Sexy, Too Soon
Deborah Borie**

"The sexualization of childhood is being normalized in our culture and throughout the developed world . . . Our consumption of these images is often passive and uncritical; we're not even aware we're doing it. But, instead of remaining in the realm of visual fiction, these images creep into the everyday language, behavior and dress codes of our children who, desperate to grow up, see them as blue prints for their identity."

"We must seize the opportunity to challenge and change this normalization before it becomes even more deeply accepted and expected. We must make the sexualization of childhood socially, economically, politically, and spiritually unacceptable in our nation and world."

WAYS TO TURN THE WORLD AROUND

- Regulate marketing to children.
- Require good, clear, coordinated ratings for all programs, video games and other media.
- Fund research on the impact of media and marketing and sexualized content on children.
- Assure that children have access to accurate updated information about sexual health and development.
- Insist that media owners and producers accept some responsibility.
- Use the media to educate the public and draw attention to the problem.
- Incorporate media education into the school curriculum.
- Join and support organizations working on these issues.
- Form coalitions and networks.
- Work politically to create the kind of culture and government that support families and children and make it more difficult for corporations to exploit them.

Source -

D. Levin and J. Kilbourne, *So Sexy So Soon* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2008).