

VIRGINITY SELLS

Twenty-two year old Natalie Dylan, a graduate of Sacramento State University, is auctioning off her virginity to pay for graduate school. She is auctioning herself via a brothel in Nevada (where it is legal to pay for sex). She's done a lie detector test and will go through a physical examination to verify the authenticity of her virginity. She wants her first time to be "a positive experience, so I won't automatically take the highest bidder." She's looking for a intelligent and nice person. "I feel empowered doing this," she says. Offers are said to be in six figures. Ms. Dylan's graduate studies will be in *Marriage and Family Counseling*. Uh... at least she isn't studying to be a youth worker.

Rocio Montalvo

Vocabulary

Transgender: someone appearing to be, or acting like, a member of the opposite sex.

SKREW THE VIEW

What determines the views and values of youth? Overwhelmingly, it is their parents. However, keep in mind the words from the movie, *True Lies*, "But you aren't her parents; Bon Jovi is her father and Madonna is her mother." Often the secondary influencers of youth – peers, the media and role models – have a primary influence in getting teen values to change. Here are a few items of note that may skew the view of current teens.

BEAUTY IS FLEETING

America's Next Top Model began its 11th year on television with Isis Tsunami as one of the contestants. Isis was living on the streets a year ago when *she* was discovered. *She* is anatomically male (transgender). Executive producer Ken Mok said he decided to cast a transgender contestant to further one of Tyra Banks' initial reasons for launching the "reality" series: "We want to redefine what beauty is." (And what is normal...)

CHANGE IS HAPPENING

[Broadcast television](#) will have 16 gay and bisexual regular characters in prime-time series this fall, more than double that of a year ago.

CBS wants to overturn the television indecency laws and intends to [act on its plans](#) by airing banned profanity in prime time on *Big Brother*.



Isis Tsunami of
America's Next Top Model

MEDIA AND MORAL CHANGE

The accomplishing of moral change follows a pattern. Take that which is illegal, immoral or abnormal and present it as "more common than was thought". Next promote tolerance as the morally upright response to it. When enough people begin to tolerate it, call it normal or OK and finally condemn as *oppressive and closed-minded* those who disagree with the new morality.

The best strategy for accomplishing change is with youth. They are easier to convince. Change is a huge part of their normal experience. How things were in the past matters little to them. Youth also don't want to be closed-minded and questioning moral values is a just part of growing up.

Since about 1960 youth have been growing up in a world of rapid moral change. It continues. The changes underway may not succeed, but be prepared for tomorrow's teens to sell their virginity, share a dorm room with someone transgendered and to be considered strange if they don't just accept it all as normal.

TWO MAIN DANGERS IN THIS LIFE ARE PEOPLE WHO WANT TO CHANGE EVERYTHING AND PEOPLE WHO WANT TO CHANGE NOTHING.

~ NANCY ASTOR

BACK TO THE FUTURE

(This article is the second part of a talk given by Michael Shaughnessy to Kairos leaders in May 2008.)

Youth culture is a world-wide phenomenon. Expect it to continue to have a universal market. Katy Perry's *I Kissed a Girl* has topped the charts of most countries that don't speak English. Rhianna's *Disturbia* is on it's way and *Death Magnetic* by Metallica is the top selling album in places as diverse as Taiwan and Finland. The iPod is uniting the world even as it cuts off the user from those nearby.

However, niche markets are also growing as youth experience the lack of human community and seek an identity. Take hipsters for example. Most come from



fashion conscious upper middle class families, and anti-fashion is their fashion. They smoke European cigarettes, drink cheap American beer and wear a keffiyeh as a fashion accessory.

Many youth *niche-communities* are based around alternate identities. Cosplay, short for costume play, is one

example. Cosplay involves dressing and relating as a character from a Japanese cartoon (Anime). Similar niche-communities exist for vampires (Otherkin) and human/animal identities (Furry). Communities based on alternate identities feel more safe, after all it is not your ego but rather your alternate ego that gets accepted or rejected.



My Furry Friends

Many youth niche-communities are built around rock music genres such as Emo, Hip Hop, Gangsta, and Goth. Each community has clear, but unwritten, rules of dress and attitude.

The upsurge in desire among youth to fit into some form of community is in part due to the breakdown of family and the traditional geographic community. In at least some cases youth are looking for a **real** community and not just a **reality** show.

Providing a **real** community united around faith in Christ and love of **real** people is a key feature of our Kairos work. It could be an age of opportunity unlike anything we have seen.

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Comments and ideas can be sent to Kairos.editor@gmail.com

Lies & more lies & statistics

- Twelve percent fewer American teens are having sex now than in 1995.
- Under half of teenage girls have had intercourse.
- Yet one in four teenage girls in the United States has an STD (sexually transmitted disease).
- There was a 34% increase in H.I.V. and AIDS cases among teenagers from 2003 to 2006.
- There has been a 22% decline in optimism among American teens over the past five years.
- Seventy-two percent of teens believe global warming is an urgent or serious problem.
- Google was 10 years old on September 7th.

I ALWAYS WANTED TO BE SOMEBODY, BUT NOW I REALIZE I SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE SPECIFIC.

~LILY TOMLIN