

Los Angeles Times

## Los Angeles' new porn condom law a hot topic in the industry

Nita Lelyveld

November 12, 2012

After voters approved health measures for porn shoots, industry types ponder compliance - and taking their lucrative business elsewhere.

For the most part, the group assembled in the Sofitel meeting room appeared classically corporate: heavy on suits and button-down shirts, wearing laminated name tags.

Hotel memo pads and pencils were placed on tables for use during panel discussions. Attendees nibbled on pain au chocolat.

Along a wall were slick trade-show banners - including one for the Sex & Mischief line of "fantasy-play accessories." It featured a black-and-white photo of a stylish woman, smiling, clad in a collar and leash.

Such was the extent of raciness on display at the industry summit hosted last week by the Free Speech Coalition, a trade association for adult entertainment companies.

That this was big business, not back alley, was a point alluded to often during a session on what to do about Measure B, the newly passed Los Angeles County ballot initiative requiring health permits and condom use in porn productions.

There was plenty of talk about lawsuits and of leaving for Las Vegas - of showing L.A. voters what losing 10,000 jobs would look like. One lawyer suggested moving production to another country or even out to sea on "a love boat for real."

Still, participants conceded that part of what had landed them with voter-imposed regulations they did not want and insist they do not need was their own discomfort with stepping out of the shadows and exposing the way they do business.

"All those years of being under the radar means people could walk all over us," said Diane Duke, head of the Free Speech Coalition.

Jessica Drake, a porn actress and director, floated into the summit in a black pantsuit with a deep V-

necked blouse, perfect waves of blond hair cascading down her back. She came not just to talk Measure B but also to attend an evening banquet where she was to receive the coalition's Positive Image Award for a female performer. (Drake is about to visit Haiti, not for the first time. She said she works with a charity but declined to name it for fear of giving it negative publicity.)

She has worked for Wicked Pictures for 10 years. Drake directs as many as eight movies a year and stars in seven more. She described her most recent vehicle, "\$ex," as a "futuristic story about the collapse of the financial system" in which she plays Annika, a high-priced call girl with a laser-scannable bar code on her wrist. Most of what Wicked produces is plot-driven, she said, featuring sex that "means something."

Wicked has a 100% condom-only policy. But other companies - whether they use condoms or not, Drake said - follow the industry standard of requiring performers to be tested every 14 to 28 days for HIV, chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis.

"I'm so clean, I squeak," said porn star Kylie Ireland of her 17 years of tests for about 480 films. (She now also does production design, and said the "big thing" is "superhero porn" such as "Avengers XXX" and "Iron Man XXX.")

Measure B's enforcement details still have to be worked out, although some producers said the cost of the permit fees, which will pay for the inspections, will break them.

Also worrisome, they said, were requirements that any producer of adult films take a blood-borne pathogen training course and submit an "exposure control plan."

Measure B repeatedly references the state's regulations for occupational exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials, which include requirements that employers provide "protective equipment."

Ireland and others painted a picture of porn stars decked out in goggles and gloves. That might work for a "Blade Runner"-style plot but not for most of what they produce, they said.

Ireland, a curvaceous redhead, put it this way: "It's going to make it so it's impossible for us to make the kind of porn that you want to watch."

nita.lelyveld@latimes.com

Follow Lelyveld's City Beat on Twitter @latimescitybeat or on Facebook at Los Angeles Times City Beat.

[See the topic on aegis.org](http://aegis.org)