**Indecent Representation of Women in media and its effect on the Society.**

Media has acted as a tool to perpetuate patriarchy. Women have been objectified (their intellectual being has been trivialised and there are looked down upon as objects of sexual pleasure) in media whether it be in films or advertisements.

Films have never accorded a woman the position of a protagonist and have always portrayed her as a sexual object to celebrate the successes of the hero instead of celebrating her sensuality. Advertisements have used women and her body (parts) out of context to endorse products of any sorts. Magazine covers portray nude and semi-nude photographs of women to attract buyers. The list goes on like this.

The prime law regulating this indecency is the Indecent Representation of Women Act, 1986. With the recent amendments proposed on October 8, 2012, the act now covers both print and electronic media. but there are a number of loop holes in this act that demand rectification. The term indecent is subjective, the context of booking someone guilty is not defined, unfettered powers have been given to a police inspector for search and seizure and materials of public good have been given immunity without any proper definition. The Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 deals with this problem and also hat of moral objectification (negatively stereotyping women as a house-maker). The IT Act, 2000 has impressive provisions but it has to do a lot to regulate cyber cafes, school and college proxies and also make the guidelines for international servers strict. Moreover the cybercrime branches need recruitment and training.

The body dealing with the regulating of advertisement content is the Advertising Standards Council of India. It is a highly inefficient body as it is completely self-regulated. The board consists of the media advertising agencies without any representation from the public or the government. A new body should be setup that has a balanced representation. The Broadcasting Contents Complain Council (BCCC) regulates the television program content. Its composition is ideal but the complaint mechanism needs simplification. The complaint (which presently is allowed to be filed only within a week of the airing of the program and either in Hindi or English) should be allowed to be filed till the time the program is on air and any language. The committee should arrange for translations. The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has no grievance redressal mechanism except for an officer that is not efficient enough.

The complaint mechanism needs to be simpler to allow a common man to register a complaint. It can either function as a toll free number or a simple email mechanism comprising of a system of just giving details of the complainant and the offending material. National Advertising Monitoring Service (NAMS) is an excellent initiative by Adex India running for ASCI that monitors around 1500 advertisements both in print and electronic and forwards the details on a weekly basis to the ASCI. The same can be used by the new co- regulatory body.