

‘Whistle Blowing’ *not* ‘Revenge Porn’

Not Buying It challenges the sexual exploitation of the porn and sex industries, working closely with those harmed by them. We have spent years exposing the exploitation and abuse in strip clubs along with lap dancers. This has been consistently ignored. There have even been 2 court cases exposing the industry as incompatible with equality law and yet Councils go on licensing strip clubs.

In light of this, we felt we had no option but to send in undercover investigators to expose the strip trade. Here we explain how this is ‘whistle blowing’ not ‘revenge porn’.

In Grey - Statements from former lap dancers

UK Government Definitions

Revenge Porn

Sharing of private sexual images without consent for the purpose of causing embarrassment or distress.

Whistle Blower:

A worker who reports information of wrong doing that is in the public interest and shows current, past or likely future practice of:

- Criminal offences
- Failure to comply with an obligation set out in law
- Miscarriages of justice
- Endangering of someone’s health and safety
- Covering up wrongdoing

Summary

- Undercover investigators (former police detectives) were hired to expose the abuse and lack of regulation of the strip industry after all other attempts to do this have been ignored.
- They found that lap dancers have to provide sexual contact in order to make any money at all and that all regulation in place to prevent this and safeguard lap dancers is being completely circumvented.
- Instead of this ‘whistle blowing’ of the industry being the news, it has been turned into a story about ‘revenge porn’ and ‘filming naked women without consent’.
- Any filmed evidence gathered was merely to corroborate what was witnessed. Without this, all evidence would have been ignored and accusations of ‘forcing women into sex acts’ would have been made.
- Video evidence has been given only to investigating officers at the relevant Councils, is kept under lock and key, will not be shown to anyone else and will be destroyed once Council investigations are complete.
- Lap dancers are naked as part of the job description and are filmed all the time on clubs’ CCTV, which they only consent to in order to protect them. Clearly this consent is being given under false pretences.

‘Management threaten and intimidate you if you tell them you are going to the authorities’

Why did you go into Strip Clubs to Film Women Naked?

This is not about exposing lap *dancers*, this is about exposing the lap dancing *industry*.

We didn't go into strip clubs. We asked experienced independent investigators – former police detectives – to gather evidence on how the industry operates and if all the regulation that is in place to protect dancers is actually working.

Video evidence was obtained, as is standard in such investigations, of Individuals in their place of work, a public place, in order to expose the conditions in that work place. The fact that they are naked as part of the job description is neither here nor there in the eyes of the law.

Lap dancers are filmed on Club CCTV, which Councils have access to at any time, and if this CCTV was doing what it was supposed to do, Councils should have been able to see all this for themselves.

Undercover investigations have been carried out many times previously – exposing prostitution and a total lack of regulation in clubs across the UK including The Windmill Theatre (now shut) and the entire Spearmint Rhino chain (still operating).

If there *hadn't* been any filmed evidence, everything that was found would be called a lie. It is already being called a 'misunderstanding' and 'an exaggeration' by supporters of the strip trade even *with* filmed evidence.

In fact, we would be facing serious criminal charges that we hired investigators to 'force and coerce lap dancers to perform sex acts'. Even *with* video evidence we are being accused of this.

So clearly, it is absolutely imperative that there was filmed evidence.

'Men pay you to get naked and grind on their crotch'

You've Made Revenge Porn!

This is the UK Government's definition of 'Revenge Porn': 'The sharing of private sexual images without consent for the purpose of causing embarrassment or distress'.

Imagery has not been shared with anyone except with the licensing authorities who clearly need to see this – and would have been able to see all this for themselves if the CCTV in clubs wasn't being circumvented.

The investigating officers in each Council have it under lock and key. Only they are viewing it and they are not sharing it with anyone else – neither Councillors nor clubs. (The clubs of course would immediately sack any dancers they can identify to suggest that has 'solved the problem'). And it will be destroyed as soon as their investigations are completed.

We have actually taken every conceivable measure to make sure there is *no distribution* or leakage of this material.

And clearly nothing has been shared with any intent of causing embarrassment or distress.

'Everyone I knew had abuse in their lives. We were vulnerable'

'Clubs are full of drugs and drug dealers'

Fake News, White Wash & Click Bait

It has been asserted that video footage has been given to the press, even though it is transparently obvious from all press coverage that this is not the case.

Isn't it somewhat shocking that no one, including the national press, appears to have even looked up the definition of 'Revenge Porn' before running with this?

It also seems extremely belittling to actual victims of revenge porn to promote such claims.

The media has been complicit in turning non stories of 'revenge porn' and 'invasion of privacy' into the news, using the usual 'click bait' of 'women fighting other women' in order to boost popularity.

The *real* news – the reality of the strip trade, its circumventing all regulation and the lies we have been told about it for decades - has been studiously ignored.

Channel 4 has even used an expose of the abuse in the strip trade as an excuse to make a soft porn promotion of the strip industry - utterly irresponsible journalism and a total dereliction of duty for all those abused in it.

'I was drugged and raped by a security guard on club CCTV'

'You're fined at every opportunity and on the flimsiest of excuses. Fines can be £50, £100, £300'

You Violated Lap Dancers!

It is the strip industry that violates lap dancers, comprehensively, both emotionally and financially, all the time.

In fact, the strip industry has violated lap dancers even in terms of their giving consent to be filmed on club CCTV. Lap dancers only consent to this as a safeguarding measure to protect them.

We have shown that club CCTV is offering no protection whatsoever. Lap dancers' consent to be filmed by clubs has clearly been given under totally false pretences.

'The only way to really make good money is to provide 'extras''

'I've lost count of the number of times I was called 'a piece of sh*t'

Why are you Saying you are Whistle Blowers?

What is important here is the reason *why* this investigation was done. It was done to expose the workings of this industry – like other whistle blowers. And much of the evidence of the harm of the industry has in fact come from women who have worked in it ie whistle blowers.

It was done because of the years of evidence already obtained as to the exploitation and abuse, and potentially illegal activities, in the industry, including specifically in relation to the clubs actually visited.

It is clearly of considerable public interest and concern to know that the strip industry's entire mode of operation appears to be to breach its licensing conditions (which are there to protect both lap dancers and the public), potentially to such an extent it could be seen as a form of illegal brothel keeping.

The bottom line is, we have all been sold a lie that young women can glamourously waft around poles and make £1000s in a highly regulated, deeply protected, profoundly safe environment. Clearly nothing could be further from the truth.

'You are in debt before you even start working'

'Sometimes there were 10 lap dancers and 40 punters'

Strip Clubs - The new Wharlton Hall

Wharlton Hall had undergone 100 inspections by the local authorities - who never found cause for concern. It was not until genuinely independent, undercover investigations took place that the scale of abuse at this care home came to light.

Likewise, every time Councils inspect their strip clubs, nothing untoward seems to be found. This includes the strip clubs that the private investigators visited.

Clearly, just as at Wharlton Hall, the strip industry has made all the regulations put in place to protect dancers absolutely meaningless.

'You are harassed, intimidated, threatened and assaulted all the time'

'Clubs lay on far too many dancers. There's intense competition to make even £20'

Why Aren't you Talk to Lap Dancers?

We cannot engage with women in the industry because they are currently trying to sue us for 'revenge porn' and 'invasion of privacy'. We equally cannot engage with those who support the strip trade as we merely receive a barrage of abuse and always have done, such as: 'TERFS', 'Sexually Repressed', 'Ugly', 'Jealous', 'Old Hags', 'Moral Crusaders', 'Anti Sex', 'Anal B*tches', 'SWERFS'

This is even coming from official representatives such as club management, the trade union which represents lap dancers and even elected local councillors.

We represent those *harmed* by the strip trade. Surely they are the most important voices in this debate? But, as usual, there has been a blanket refusal to include or listen to a single one of these voices by all those who support the strip trade or by the media.

'I was threatened with attack dogs'