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Pornography and feminism : fellow travelers or strange bedfellows?

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Pornography and
Feminism: Fellow
Travelers or
Strange
Bedfellows?

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Pornography and Feminism: Fellow Travelers or Strange Bedfellows?

by

Erangee Kaushalya Kumarage

**A Thesis
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of Lehigh University
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English

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I would like to dedicate this to Amma, Thaththa, Prema, Aiya, and Thara who probably didn't have this subject in mind when they were told that my thesis would be dedicated to them.

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Abstract

In this paper, I focus on the implications of the feminist anti-pornography stand in Bonnie Kline's 1982 film *Not A Love Story*. I argue that the anti-porn stand in the film overlooks the issue of class in the pornography debate, both in terms of the women who work in the porn industry as well as the ways in which pornography is viewed as a low form of culture pertaining to the working class, the lower body and low culture. In contrast, the anti-porn feminism in *Not A Love Story* comes across as a middle class, intellectual stand advocating high culture and one correct sexuality. I argue that anti-porn feminism contributes to the breakdown of solidarity between women and that it prevents the use of pornography as a potentially subversive tool which could be utilized to create a space where the representation and exploration of women's sexual pleasures would take precedence over the repression of the pleasures of men.

Pornography and Feminism: Fellow Travelers or Strange Bedfellows?

The sexual cause – the demand for sexual freedom, but also for the knowledge to be gained from sex and the right to speak about it – becomes legitimately associated with the honor of a political cause: sex too is placed on the agenda for the future. (Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, Vol. 1, 294)

In its attempt to sensitize society to the adverse effects of pornography on women, Bonnie Kline's 1982 film, *Not a Love Story*, unwittingly creates a boomerang effect. Instead of inspiring the desire to join a messianic endeavor to destroy all existing pornography in the world, this film creates a need to answer certain questions that it leaves unanswered or that it just does not ask, thus keeping the Pandora's box of feminist porn issues firmly shut away – or so it thinks. To the extent that it creates an entree, limited though it is, to the discussion of the explosive topic of pornography, the film can be viewed as a brave step into the mine-ridden battlefield of human sexuality debates. To the extent that it claims to speak for all women, ignoring the complexities of class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identification and age; to the extent that it glorifies white middle class heterosexuality as the only "normal" and "natural" expression of human sexuality; to the extent that it castigates all pornography as unequivocally evil, it runs the risk of closing down any possible exploration of female sexual desire, agency, pleasure and power both within and outside the realm of pornography.

My own initial reaction to *Not a Love Story* was a combination of shock and disbelief at the visual representations of women in the sex industry; outrage at the *Hustler* magazine cover of a woman being fed into a meat-grinder; curiosity about what really

goes on in peep-shows and live sex acts; admiration for Linda Lee Tracey's comfort with her sexuality and her spunky willingness to candidly appraise her work as an erotic dancer, and a need to know more about how women who work in the sex industry feel about their sexuality and their work. Until I watched *Not a Love Story*, I had always believed that women who worked in the sex industry were forced to work in it for economic reasons, that they were only driven to sex work by poverty. Yet the sex workers who were interviewed by Bonnie Kline also mentioned factors other than a need for money, such as making people feel comfortable about their sexuality, feeling comfortable about it themselves, and feeling pleasure and agency and control and self-esteem -- goals that the feminist movement has been trying to achieve for all women. So, while I found the anti-porn endeavor of the film rather seductive, especially with its arsenal of articulate, confident women who were obviously passionate about improving the conditions of women -- something that any feminist would find appealing -- what made me hesitate to jump onto the film's anti-porn bandwagon was the filmmakers' tendency to overlook class issues in porn and their advocacy of wholesale repression and censorship, and, what it ultimately boils down to -- their advocacy of silence. In *Not A Love Story*, the author Susan Griffin maintains that "Pornography is like a film that's projected on a blank screen and that blank screen is women's silence. Pornography is filled with images of silencing women. Our silence is the way which our status as objects is made real."

Not a Love Story, the anti-porn movement and, their bedfellows, the Moral Majority, also advocate silencing --the silencing of the issue of class in modern

pornography, both in terms of those who work in the sex industry and in terms of the ways in which pornography is perceived as a form of low culture associated with the working class. Yet another, more insidious manifestation of repression is the silencing of the possibility of women creating a space for the exploration of their own desires and fantasies, using pornography as a way of subverting the patriarchal notions concerning female sexuality and pleasure which are limited to socially sanctioned heterosexual marriage, motherhood, and reproduction.

The most troubling drawback of *Not A Love Story* is its equation of feminism and "normal" sexuality with white middle class anti-porn heterosexuality. What becomes most problematic to an open feminist discussion of pornography in the film is that Bonnie Klein, Robin Morgan, Kathleen Barry, and Susan Griffin all seem to subscribe to this equation. When they take it upon themselves to speak for all women, they portray themselves as the saviors of their lower class sisters who have been forced by patriarchy, or led by ignorance and lack of understanding, into working in the sex industry. B. Ruby Rich sees Klein as the "missionary in the heathen land" in her positioning in the film (406). Both Rich and Mariana Valverde have pointed out the Christian morality fable upon which *Not A Love Story* has been constructed. The filmmaker's task is nothing short of a moral crusade, and, as such, the film is plagued by the usual symptoms of movements which try to bring about sweeping changes fuelled by righteousness and religiosity – it generalizes, universalizes, sensationalizes, and simplifies in a matter of sixty minutes or so, a subject that, at the core, is about human sexuality, and as such, has the power to engage people in complex ways. The workers in the sex industry are the

victims whose souls have to be saved or allowed to be damned if they do not have the grace to see and repent their sins. Those who make money off the porn industry are the forces of evil, while the male customers become the "sinners". The group of men against male violence are the "penitents" while, Robin Morgan, her husband, and her son comprise the "Holy Family" (406).

Thus, you have the typical white bourgeois family sanctified as the only "normal" political, social, economic, and sexual unit. The one "correct" sexuality, according to the film, and according to Robin Morgan, in particular, is heterosexual sex which takes place within the framework of loving and committed relationships, if not always within a middle class marriage. In *Not a Love Story*, Morgan not only frowns upon "superficial sex, kinky sex, appurtances, [sex] toys," but also upon masturbation which she sees as an activity that makes people anti-social. Coming (no pun intended) from a professed feminist, this is a rather astonishing statement. Modern Western feminism has largely been a rebellion by middle class white women trying to escape the confines of their conventional suburban married and sexual lives. As Laura Kipnis maintains, Morgan should be celebrating "appurtances" and "toys" that end women's dependence on men for their sexual pleasure. Furthermore, to castigate masturbation as encouraging social passivity is to undo much feminist work on trying to remove the guilt and shame involved with women finding pleasure from their own body, something that has been particularly hard for women with the cultural pressure on them to think of themselves and their bodies only in relation to (the pleasures of) others. The debate raging over abortion is a case in point.

The only cautionary voice from the anti-porn feminist camp is that of Kate Millett, a writer and creator of "erotic art" for women. She hypothesizes that men need porn because "they never had enough sex, they never had enough love, they never had enough partners. . . remember what we came out of-- small towns, puritanical ideas, hard to get laid and the rest of it." She even claims that "up to a certain point there is an educational aspect to" straight porn: "at least people can see a whole beaver. A lot of them hadn't seen one." Suze Randall, a female photographer for pornographic magazines, who could be seen as Kate Millett's counterpart in the porn industry makes a similar point. She says that until *Hustler* published explicit pictures of female genitalia, it had been perceived as "where babies come from. And suddenly," she claims, "it looked a lot nicer."

What is rather tragic about both these interviews is that neither the interviewer nor the interviewees are aware that they are concentrating exclusively on men's sexual experience and male pleasure. As Anne McClintock points out, if it has been hard for men to get enough sex, love, and partners, it has been even more difficult for women because of the high premium society still places on women's purity, virginity, innocence, naivete and ignorance as well as the serious physical risks of pregnancy, abortion, sexual abuse and harassment: "women's desire . . . has been crimped and confined to history's sad museum of corsets, chastity belts, the virginity cult, and genital mutilation. Alongside women's erotic malnourishment, men's sexual scarcity looks like a Roman Banquet" (113). Wendy McElroy puts it succinctly when she maintains that " the price of social purity is sexual ignorance " (75). And since women have had to bear the brunt

of safeguarding social purity, they are the more susceptible to being sexually ignorant. The anti-porn movement, which advocates the censorship of pornography on the grounds that it encourages violence against women, although there is no conclusive evidence for this position, closes down a potential site for a more useful form of feminist reformism -- that of "insisting that the penis take a more modest place in a far more generous [porn] world of sexual diversity" (McClintock 131).

The film also fails to perceive that porn has made it possible to view "where babies come from" not as an important teaching tool for human reproduction, but as a possible site of an education in the ways to pleasure for women as well as for straight men. Even if pornography is often tangled up with "old dreadful patriarchal ideas that sex is essentially evil and that the evil in it is female," as Millet claims it is, at least it can sometimes eroticize the "evil" in ways in which women can find a space for their desires.

As noted earlier, the formula offered by *Not A Love Story*, plays up the importance of sex within the confines of heterosexual relationships and marriage, thus perpetuating the myth that sex is healthy only if it has been patriarchally sanctioned. Millett maintains that "instead of ending a period of repression," pornography "is creating a whole new set of negative values toward sex and we don't need that." However, anti-porn feminist discourse, like the one in the film, that views all porn as without "any redeeming social value" and that views "superficial sex, kinky sex, appurtenances, toys" as "abnormal" could be said to do the same, for what it does is portray masturbation, lesbian and gay sex, S&M, and in general, any sex for the sake of pleasure (as opposed to for biological reproduction) as the dark other to sex within institutionalized heterosexuality. So that the

message that we get from the film is not only that “alternative” sexual practices are different but are suspect and inferior as well.

An offshoot of the anti-porn feminist imposition of one correct sexuality and set of sexual practices is the perpetuation of certain old stereotypes about women. By describing them as victims, as perpetrators of crimes against their own sex, as saints or sinners, anti-porn feminism keep alive categories that divide women into good women and bad women; madonnas and whores; middle class feminist intellectuals and working class victims/traitors. Much of *Not a Love Story* focuses on Linda Lee Tracey, an erotic dancer who defines her work as “neither pornographic nor erotic” but a “parody” of what it is supposed to be. Before her “conversion” by the anti-porn spokespersons in the film, she takes issue with the anti-porn feminist “party line” that women who work in the sex industry are either “stupid,” “being used” or “really have no choice whatsoever.” She points out that this is dangerously similar to what most men want to think of women. As Tracey maintains, anti-porn feminists believe that:

The hookers were not to be blamed for their plight. It was the pimps and the club owners. They [anti-porn feminists] were making excuses for me, they were very condescending, and when you get anyone who is condescending, they've already passed judgement on you.

She protests against the role of victim that is being attributed to sex workers like her by certain feminists. It serves the anti-porn cause to show women, both those who work in the sex-industry and those who don't, as the victims of male imposed systems. If it can be shown that sex-workers are coerced, physically, psychologically or economically, into

working in a system that only affords pleasure and power to men, then doing away with pornography can be viewed simply as yet another bastion of patriarchy being toppled by the feminist endeavor for the benefit of all women.

It's a shame the filmmaker's sense of ideological zeal doesn't allow them to really hear what a number of their interviewees, like Tracey, are saying. For, as many of the interviews with sex-workers attest, it is not as clear-cut or simple as pornography equals evil. If it were, the pornography debate would not have lasted this long. Men do not have a monopoly on the realms of power and pleasure in the sex industry. One woman who performs live sex acts with her real life partner stated, "I don't feel that what I'm doing is wrong. I'm not harming anybody. I am not pulling anybody here. I am not soliciting. I feel perfectly comfortable. I know we make a lot of people feel good about themselves by showing that what they fantasize about doing is o.k.." She goes on to talk about how her mother was a prostitute and how she has known about sex since she was six years old and how comfortable she feels performing in front of an audience. When asked about the most negative aspect of her work, she is quick to point out that her work has been advertised as "raunchy" and how offensive she finds that. In effect, it is the stigma attached to the kind of work that she does and how it is negatively perceived by those in the audience and society that she finds offensive. She differentiates between her attitude towards sexuality and the attitude of the audience, either positive or negative towards her.

Both Linda Lee Tracey and "Blue Sky" also make this distinction, but they also give some sense of how their self-esteem and confidence in themselves is closely tied to

the satisfaction of their customers. It is evident that they are trying to achieve a precarious balance between feeling good about their sexuality and their work while combating the stigma, the shame, the guilt and the illegality attached to their professions. Linda Lee Tracey juxtaposes her experience of trying to rent apartments and having to deal with raised eyebrows when she mentions her work and the feeling of satisfaction she gains every time the audience applauds. "Blue Sky" maintains that most girls like to see their customers satisfied as much seeing the money rolling in. It is evident that there is more to this issue than sex workers simply being colonized or misguided. While most feel comfortable about their sexuality, they have to work uphill against the stigma attached to their professions. Anti-porn feminism lends fuel to this stigma, which in turn, makes it more difficult for sex-workers to work towards bettering their working conditions.

Rather than trying to abolish pornography, which might be self-defeating in the long run anyway, anti-porn feminists would be investing their time, money and energy more productively by trying to improve the political, social and economic conditions of sex work. While that might not be as glamorous, high profile or dare we say "sexy," it might help bring about more mundane but crucial reforms in the lives of real women. But anti-porn feminists who make films like *Not a Love Story* seem more concerned about helping these women by saving them for middle class heterosexuality rather than by helping them on their (the workers) own terms. In a survey of women in prostitution conducted by Wendy McElroy, the main disadvantages of working in the sex industry that were commonly cited were, in order of importance, social stigma, police harassment,

the risk of physical harm, poor hours, unpleasant customers, the lack of security, low self-esteem and the inability to have romantic relationships (220). As B.Ruby Rich maintains:

The degree to which sex-workers are exposed to more exploitation and hazardous working conditions is a function of the stigma, illegality, or marginal legality of sex work. People in stigmatized or illegal occupations find it difficult to obtain the protections, privileges, and opportunities available for other jobs. Prostitutes, porn models, and erotic dancers have less recourse to police, courts, medical treatment, legal redress, or sympathy when they are subject to criminal, violent or unscrupulous behavior. It is more difficult for them to unionize or mobilize for protection as workers. (249)

Anti-porn feminism contributes to the stigma attached to these jobs, making it harder for women who work in the sex-industry to seek redress in situations where there are broken contracts, physical violence, and financial exploitation. Ironically, one male in *Not a Love Story* points this out to the filmmakers when he says, "you are downing them." As Margo St. James, founder of the prostitutes advocacy group, COYOTE (Cast Off Your Old Tired Ethics) states, "keeping women as pariahs, as sex sex objects without property rights, and arresting us for our own good only promotes disrespect, contempt, and brutality in men" (Atlas 202). Middle class women who try to enlighten their working class sisters about the errors of their ways add fuel to the traditional idea that women don't know their own minds. It appears that anti-porn feminists have taken over a

traditional role of men in patriarchal societies – that of telling women what is good for them. There is a telling instance in *Not A Love Story* when Bonnie Kline asks Linda Lee Tracey, “Can’t you see that you are a part of this, that you are contributing to it [the oppression of women]?” This “they are oppressing the rest of us by choosing to work in these jobs” attitude does not bode well for a movement which professes to speak for all women. The most common reason cited by sex workers for their sense of not being represented by feminism was that “modern feminism is anti-sex workers” (McElroy 224). As Margo St. James, states,

Too bad conservative feminists have a blind spot about the whore label and how to get rid of it. Good Girl feminists fail to connect the repeal of the prohibition on prostitution to emancipation. The gender stigma is official as long as prohibition remains on the books. It facilitates the divide –and-conquer strategy utilized by white men and the collaborator Good Girls (who succumb to the sell-out because of their internalized oppression). The media continues to ignore nine million part-time pros and one million full-time pros in the U.S. who are kept silent as long as the prohibition exists. (203)

Due to the underlying class differences between most anti-porn feminists and most sex workers, *Not a Love Story* does not devote a significant amount of time on finding out how women in the sex industry really feel about themselves and the work that they do. It seems clear that what remains of their interviews are those parts where they say what Bonnie Kline, the interviewer, wants to hear. Yet, in spite of that, what still

comes across from these women in bits and pieces is a celebration of women's sexuality in the face of an onslaught of "old patriarchal ideas of sex as evil," shameful, dirty and therefore in need of repression and monitoring to be kept within what is deemed as heteronormative. This division and lack of identification between women along class lines cuts off a possible solution to the labyrinth of pornography. "The whore," Margo St. James states, "is the only one who can successfully ridicule porn and not be written off as a prude" (203). Considering sex workers as allies would encourage change from within, thereby enabling women who work in the sex industry to gradually bring about changes that are more in line with both feminist sensibilities and female sexual pleasures (although it is debatable whether these two are always compatible). Female sexuality as defined by anti-porn feminists straight-jacket female sexuality into water-tight compartments and frown upon deviations from the "norm" as being anti-feminist. Female control over the production of porn will be limited, however, as long as the stigmatization of pornography and women who work in it remains, because of class division between those who oppose pornography and those who work in it and those who advocate a "correct" sexuality and those whose occupations fly in the face of "correct" sexual practices.

The studies conducted by Linda Williams have shown that instead of being a monolith geared to perpetuating patriarchy and sexual domination of women, pornography has been responsive to and influenced by the changes in societal attitudes towards sexuality. Women's demands for the depiction of female pleasure has not been ignored by the porn industry. Anne McClintock argues that women constitute the biggest

growth area for porn, accounting for 40 per cent of all x-rated video rentals and that a *Redbook* magazine survey shows that nearly half the women surveyed regularly watch porn films (McClintock 130). As well known female porn producers Candida Royalle and Veronica Hart have pointed out, porn is not geared towards pleasing men as much as being "geared towards making money" (Fuentes and Schrage 232). If there is no market for porn geared towards straight women, then those films would most probably not be made. Most pornography caters to male pleasure because men have so far constituted the greater part of the market while women have been culturally conditioned to eschew pornography since it has been presented by the Moral Majority as evil and shameful and by anti-porn feminists as unfeminist and "unfeminine." Since the porn industry, which was a five billion dollar industry when *Not A Love Story* was produced, has shown no signs of abating, the anti-porn movement would better serve the feminist cause by encouraging women to view pornography and judge for themselves and demand porn cut to the measure of their pleasures. Despite what Judeo-Christianity maintains, sexual knowledge not sexual ignorance is bliss. As Wendy McElroy points out, the way to obtain that knowledge with the least physical risk to one's self is to consume pornography (110). As Kathleen Barry states in *Not a Love Story*, it is better to know than to not know, although she is referring to the dangers of pornography and not its pleasures. Increased consumption by women will most certainly have an impact and if it does not educate women about their sexual likes and dislikes, it will, at least empower women who are already in the sex industry to produce porn that caters to female pleasure. As McClintock argues:

If women organize instead of agonize, we can alter the shape of the industry on terms more suitable for our own uncharted pleasures. At least we can expand our historical experimentations in female sexual pleasure, and demand more power to come. (131)

For a film that claims to have a feminist agenda, the ideology of *Not A Love Story* is remarkably similar to Victorian phobia's about discussing sexual matters. As Judith Butler points out, the proliferation of sexual discourse has resulted in "Foucault's nightmare" – "sex has come to dominate our discourse, thereby obsessing us without liberating us" (Atlas 64). Laura Kipnis maintains that this is a result of the philosophical shift in Western academia;

On the cultural left, there has been a loss of faith in traditional ideologies as a potential agent of social change. So the left has turned to culture as an explanation of how social consent is obtained, the ways that subjectivity gets produced in conformance with social norms. The idea now is that there won't be political change until there's inner change" And inner change nowadays, . . . "means discovering the true nature one's sexuality, by whatever means possible. (Atlas 64)

Adapting this framework of looking at forms of culture as sites of ideological contestation, Laura Kipnis views pornography as playing a subversive role in capitalist and late capitalist society. Pornography, she maintains, is the site of class struggle; it is a form of civil disobedience in the face of bourgeois values. Kipnis maintains that "control over the body has long been essential to producing an orderly work force, a docile population, a passive law-abiding citizenry" (134), and she sees the anti-porn movement

as yet another form of female reformism which, though aimed at bettering the condition of women through the reformation of “rowdy and irresponsible male behavior,” as in the temperance movement, ends by “too easily dovetailing the with the interests of capital and officialdom” (147). Hence, anti-porn feminism, in battling what it sees as one form of patriarchy (pornography) has embraced even a more potent one (class affiliation) leading, in turn, to divisions within feminism and making of strange bedfellows of some feminists and the antithesis of radical feminism – the Moral Majority. As McElroy points out, “pornography is said to be a bastion of patriarchy. Conservatives, who are said to support patriarchy, also oppose women’s rights. If both statements are true, why do Conservatives crusade against pornography?” (112). Wendy McElroy argues that if pornography attacks family values by breaking down the traditional ties between sex and motherhood and sex and marriage, as the Conservatives say that it does, should not feminists, who have long seen the family unit as the cornerstone of patriarchy support the demise of patriarchal conventions rather than uphold it like the female “angels in the house” ubiquitous in Victorian literature who upheld the cult of domesticity and the separation of the public from the private world?

As latter day “angels of the house,” anti-porn feminists, not surprisingly, uphold class divisions as Kipnis points out:

Social distinctions are maintained through the expression of taste, disgust, and exclusion. Historically, the upper classes defined themselves against what they defined as dirty, low, repulsive, noisy, and contaminating; acts of exclusion that precisely maintained their identity as a class. (139)

Robin Morgan's derogatory statements about certain sexual practices that "benumb...normal human sensuality" in the anti-porn discourse of *Not a Love Story* attests to the role class identification plays in the making of cultural sexual attitudes, thereby proving Judith Butler's point that pornography "is not a utopian ideal, it's just a new area of struggle. . . Sexuality has a history; it takes certain forms; it's a cultural inheritance" (Atlas 64).

Kipnis maintains that unlike middle class anti-porn feminists who do not acknowledge that middle class heterosexuality is a "cultural inheritance," the pornographic magazine, *Hustler*, "isn't disseminating universal pronouncements. It offers an explicitly political analysis of power and the body, in addition to being explicit about its class locations" (139). Unlike *Penthouse* and *Playboy*, which have upwardly-mobile aspirations, *Hustler*, "with its anarchistic, antiestablishment, working-class politics" uses "grossness as the perfect blunt instrument with which to register its protests... The power of grossness is very simply its opposition to high culture and official culture, which feels the continual need to protect itself against the debasements of the low (the lower classes, low culture, and the lower body)" (137). Pornography then, is political to the extent that it attempts to make the private public, not unlike the feminist manifesto to make the personal political. "Coyness and veiling of the body" is a metaphor for the forces of political, economic, and religious repression as well as social hypocrisy which depend upon "decorum and civility, on not naming names or saying it the way it really is" (129). Pornography eschews such coyness and veiling because it leads "to docility in the face of secret abuses of power and privilege" (Kipnis 129).

Thus, the attack against pornography, Kipnis argues, is politically motivated because pornography *is* political:

Pornography is transgressive and socially unsettling. It assaults the idea the idea that genders are handed down by God and nature. Its class aspirations are downwardly mobile in a society that fears and loathes downward mobility. It's so profoundly antiaesthetic that it can even be, at times, viscerally upsetting. It dredges up long-repressed materials that we're much happier relegating to the trash heap of the unconscious. And it's far safer, and more gratifying to imagine its audience – especially if you count yourself as not among its members – as scuzzy, pustule-ridden perverts than as your friend, spouse, or clergymen. (Kipnis 205-206)

The issue of class in pornography has lagged behind the passionate endeavor to repress male consumption of porn. Even in the more sexy issue of female sexuality the anti-porn feminist endeavor has limited its focus to defining a “correct” way of representing female sexuality based, to a great extent, on white middle class heterosexuality. Yet, in terms of its predominantly male audience at least, pornography has cut across class and racial lines. In other words, while the issue of pornography has divided women into those who oppose it and those who either see redeemable aspects of it or who choose to work in it, it has not caused any major upheavals among men either as producers or consumers. Rather than proving that pornography is a bastion of patriarchy, it proves that pornography, as it exists, still caters towards men. It also proves that while class is not an issue for male consumers, it is has caused a major rift in feminist stand on

pornography. As *Not a Love Story* attests, anti-porn feminism has embraced the fears and concerns of the bourgeoisie with all its accompanying cults of domesticity, sexual purity, sexual prudery, repression, division of the private and the public domains, and fear of low culture, the lower classes and the lower body. As such anti-porn feminism like *Not a Love Story* could be most harmful to any feminist endeavors that strive to create a space where the exploration of women's sexual pleasure takes precedence over the repression of male pleasure.

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ACADEMIC AWARDS, PUBLICATIONS AND LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

SUMMER 1999

Wrote the introduction to a Sinhalese translation of R.K. Narayan's novel, *The Guide*.

Lehigh University

Participant in panel that presented a paper at the *Medieval Forum*, Plymouth St. College, NH(4/99).

University of Maine:

Honors Scholar- class of 1997.
Honor Thesis on Jane Austen - 1997.
Contributed articles on the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, on *Gawain and the Green Knight*, and a piece of creative non-fiction to three university publications.
Recipient of Honors Pin and Honors Certificate.
Tuition scholarship 1993-1997.
Member of Honors Program 1994-1997.
Student Representative in Honors Council - 1997.
Deans List - 1993-1996.
Vice President and President of the International Club - 1994-5.

Colombo International School:

Two pieces of creative non-fiction published in a school publication.
English Prize - 1992
Social Service Society
Classical Music Society

Bishop's College, Sri Lanka:

English Prize 1986 -1990.
Social Science Prize.
President of the Social Science Club - 1990.

Tennis Team
Swimming Team - 1983 -1990.

LANGUAGES

Fluent in speaking, writing, and reading Sinhalese and English. Basic reading ability in Spanish.

REFERENCES

Daniel P. Gunn, Professor of English, University of Maine at Farmington.

Doug Rawlings, Director of the Honors Program, University of Maine at Farmington.

Elizabeth Cooke, Assistant Professor of English, University of Maine at Farmington.

**END OF
TITLE**