

Screens and Truth

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In recent years, an increasing number of young women have been drawn into online sex work. The apparent ease and safety in which the job is carried out reveals how the screen functions as a veil. Not only does it protect the sex worker from potential harm, it also protects the streamers from the gaze of shame, as they remain invisible. However, the truth of the image is at stake: customers require proof that the body exists. Fragmented pieces of object *a* in the form of sweat, fingernails, and even more are sent by post. Can leftovers of the body claim the truth of a veiled encounter? What other truths might be revealed by this new form of sexual economy?

Bonnie Blue¹ is a sex content creator who pushed the boundaries of the industry by using members of the public in her stunts. She had sex with “freshers” she approached outside universities and streamed it for paying viewers. Blue appears to be a well-educated and almost angelic-looking blonde woman who deceives by claiming to have sex with more than one thousand men in a day. The clash between her image and her acts produces a dissonance: a normalisation of extreme sexual behaviours among young people. In the documentary, Blue promises that in her next stunt she will be “completely helpless, tied down, gagged and choked.” Blue is banking on the confusion that porn has already created for the younger generation as independent research conducted in UK on the effects of online porn² has recently led to the criminalisation of consensual choking.³

Blue offers her body for free, claiming she does so because she loves sex and is giving men what they want. Is this what men believe? Setting aside the cameras in the room and the money she is making, what truth is at stake here? We find here the capitalisation of sex; the transactional and performative nature of the encounter; and the rage bait. There is yet another truth revealed by Blue in the documentary: her husband abandons her and she finds herself receiving daily death threats. So far, nothing stops her - not even the fear that someone might deform her face by an acid attack. This is what Blue wants to keep veiled.

¹1000 Men and me: The Bonnie Blue Story. Channel 4 Documentary, first aired on the July 29th, 2025: Available in: <https://www.channel4.com/programmes/1000-men-and-me-the-bonnie-blue-story>

² Creating a Safer World - the Challenge of Regulating Online Pornography by Baroness Bertin, 27 February 2025, available online: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67bf014ca0f0c95a498d1f9a/The_Challenge_of_Regulating_Online_Pornography_A.pdf

³ Domestic Abuse Act 2021, Section 70 , 19 November 2025, available in <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/section/70>

Lacan described one of the forms of tearing of the veil: the moment when the fantasised truth is torn apart, revealing a truth other than that veiled by fantasy.⁴ Screens reveal all kinds of sexual fantasies and hide a variety of truths: encounters are easily simulated, and the leftovers of bodies attempt to prove a true image exists. Some consumers want to believe they are being loved, whilst others satisfy a fetish. As for those women - who oversee their bodies, content, and working hours- they face the truth of the zero-hour contract from the gig economy of unlimited, perverse jouissance. A pound of flesh for the dream of millions in the bank.

⁴ Hakobyan, R., *Tearing the veil; Revelation, Emergence*. Orientation text for the 2026 NLS Congress.