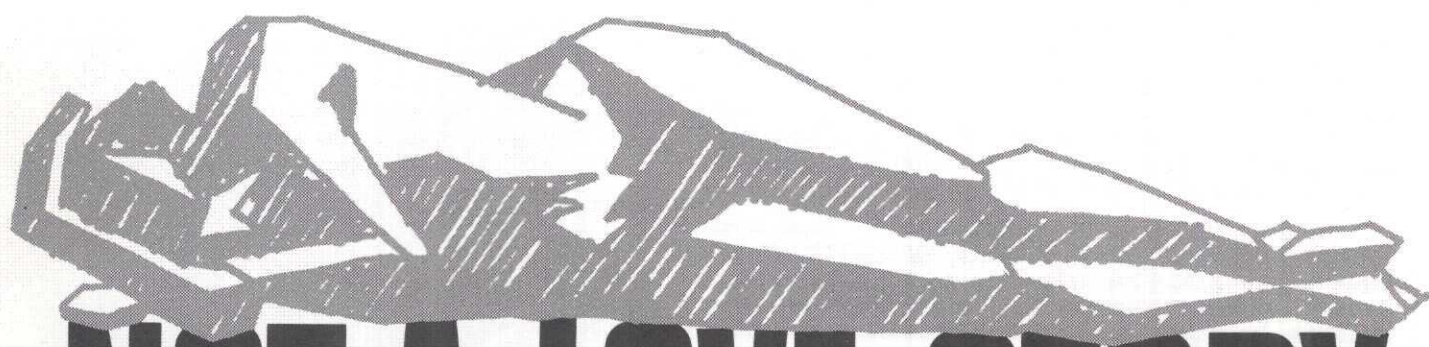


The National Film Board of Canada  
presents



# NOT A LOVE STORY

a film about

# PORNOGRAPHY

Produced by the National Film Board of Canada



National  
Film Board  
of Canada

Office  
national du film  
du Canada



## Not a Love Story: A Film About Pornography

### About the Film



Linda Lee Tracey and Bonnie Sherr Klein

*Not a Love Story* is a thought-provoking, emotional chronicle of two women — Bonnie Sherr Klein, filmmaker, and Linda Lee Tracey, a Montreal stripper. Together they set out to explore the world of peep shows, strip joints and sex supermarkets. Although their backgrounds are very different, both are motivated by a desire to know more about pornography — why it exists, what forms it takes and how it affects relations between men and women.

The film does not invent or promote pornography. It does, however, make clear the extent and growth of its existence. There is no pornographic image in the film which is not available, legally or under the counter, anywhere in North America. With annual sales well in excess of five billion dollars, pornography is no longer an isolated phenomenon but a pervasive part of our culture.

The film offers insights and perspectives from men and women, both inside and outside the "business." There are frank interviews with people who earn their living in the porn trade — among them strippers; performers; Suze Randall, a photographer for *Hustler* magazine; and David Wells, publisher of five of Canada's most profitable "men's entertainment" magazines.

*Not a Love Story* also includes interviews with some of pornography's most outspoken critics. Prominent feminists Kate Millett, Robin Morgan, Kathleen Barry and Susan Griffin provide thoughtful analyses of pornography as an expression and a cause of sexual inequality as well as an arena for violence practiced against women. Writer Margaret Atwood makes a personal statement through a reading of her poem, "A Women's Issue." The emotional and psychological effects of pornography on men are explored by a discussion group organized by "Men Against Male Violence." Research psychologist Dr. Edward Donnerstein links aggressive pornography with aggressive behavior in men.

*Not a Love Story*, by the very nature of its subject, contains some sexually explicit scenes. While these may be embarrassing and, in some cases, shocking, none has been used gratuitously. No amount of verbal description could adequately recreate the impact of the images themselves. Only by seeing them can the viewer begin to fully realize the enormous impact of pornographic imagery on our society.

The first film of its kind, *Not a Love Story* is an inquiry into pornography for people who may have never given it serious thought but whose lives are affected by it in the most subtle and obvious ways. *Not a Love Story* also addresses the issue of pornography within the context of what it means for women, expressing a point of view that is personal, feminist and based on the experience of the women who made the film. This landmark documentary begins a dialogue that leaves no viewer unengaged. Without advancing a particular strategy toward the complex social problem of pornography, the film neither advocates nor appeals for censorship. Instead, *Not a Love Story* raises questions which must be answered, asks us to consider their far-reaching implications and encourages us to find possibilities for positive personal and political action.



Bonnie Sherr Klein and Kate Millett

### Use of the Film: Some Recommendations

As a film to be seen *and* discussed, *Not a Love Story* is most effectively used when plans for your screening are coordinated before the event takes place. Attention to the particular focus, goals and format of the program in which it will be shown and to the size and composition of the audience who will be viewing it is essential preparation for any screening. Selection of a facilitator who can introduce the film and later coordinate audience discussion should be done well in advance. The decision whether or not to involve appropriate resource people in your program should also be made ahead of time. Furthermore, awareness that the film produces strong audience reactions, revealing that women and men often respond very differently to the issues raised in *Not a Love Story*, will assist you in selecting a suitable structure for any discussion which follows the film.



Individual approaches to programming the film will vary from user to user. Obviously, what may work best with a women's group or cultural center may not be as successful for a community agency or university class. Also, a program format designed for larger groups will be desirable in organizing a public screening at a campus facility or other educational institution. Yet in all cases, recommendations based on our experience with the film may be especially helpful. To assist you in presenting *Not a Love Story*, a discussion kit is available from the National Film Board of Canada. See the back cover of this brochure for details.

## After the Film

The following questions and quotes have been included for consideration after screening the film. As examples of follow-up which may aid with presentation of the film, they are for immediate or for future use, for personal contemplation or for group discussion. It is their purpose both to recall and to go beyond some of the specific issues raised in the film and to encourage both women and men to reflect and to act on them.

## Some Questions for Thought and Discussion

- How aware are you of the extent of pornography's influence in your life? How much subtle pornographic imagery have you noticed in commercial advertising, for example?
- To what extent has pornography, in any of its various forms, affected your self-image as a man or as a woman? How has that affected your relationships with others?
- Why do women and men react so differently to the questioning of pornography?
- In the film, Kathleen Barry states that it is better to know about pornography, no matter how awful that knowledge might be. Is it important that we confront pornography? How do we deal with it, as individuals or in groups, now that it is part of our popular culture?
- The distinction between pornography and erotica is much debated. The dictionary defines the word *erotica* as being derived from the Greek word *eros*, meaning love; *eros* has also been described as *gender-free mutual passion*. Pornography, also from the Greek, means literally the *depiction of prostitutes or female sexual slaves*. How do we distinguish between pornographic and erotic images? Where do we look for positive sexual images?
- How can we help young people to develop their sexuality so that it is based on true human emotions rather than on media-created fantasies?
- Much of what the film says about the dehumanizing of women in pornography also may be applied to the depiction of children and men in pornography. What is it in our society that causes us to objectify human beings?
- The most frequently discussed strategy for combatting pornography is censorship. However, there is no consensus on this issue. Many who have grappled with the problem are torn between their commitment to civil liberties and a concern for the social consequences of pornography. Is censorship, in fact, an effective method of dealing with pornography? What are alternative strategies?



Robin Morgan

## Quotes from the Film

### Robin Morgan — Activist/Poet/Writer

"When people speak of the 'sexual revolution in the sixties and the seventies'... what they mean is what Marcuse prophesied as repressive tolerance, and that is more and more proliferation of superficial sex, of kinky sex and appurtenances and toys and things to first benumb... the normal human sensuality. Then once it is comatose, you need greater and greater stimuli to supposedly wake it into life. None of which has to do with the subtleties of eroticism, of love, of affection, of amiable communication."

### Kate Millett — Writer/Artist

"What's disturbing about pornography for me is that it's so unsexy. It's all mixed up with old dreadful, patriarchal ideas that sex is essentially evil and that the evil in it is female."

### David Wells — Editor/Publisher of *Rustler*, *Elite* magazines

"I would say that the standards are a little rougher. The magazines (now) are more explicit, possibly because of women's liberation. Men have started to feel emasculated and they like to fantasize about women. They would prefer to dominate these women."

### Member of "Men Against Male Violence" discussion group

"You're the victim of your fantasies because you perpetrate the male myth of performance, goal orientation... and the ultimate irony is that they (the fantasies) are really self-inflicted."

### Kenneth Pitchford — Poet/Writer

"The more that women can be just cardboard cutouts, or bunnies, or pets, the easier it is not to have any feeling for them, not to have any compassion. Compassion is a very dangerous thing. It cuts across that domination relationship."

### Susan Griffin — Author

"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 in which our status as objects is made real."

### Dr. Ed Donnerstein — Research Psychologist

"There's something about the combination of pornography and aggression which becomes a very powerful image. If we list all the variables which we think can increase aggressive behavior and rank the top ten, probably eight of them are thrown together in aggressive pornography."

### Kathleen Barry — Author

"It may be just simply how you treat your secretary four weeks from now. It may be what you decide you want your wife to do because she isn't as interesting as what you see in the films. But somehow, it (pornography) gets translated back. And that's why all of us remain as potential, if not real, victims of what goes on in those theaters."



## About Studio D

*Not a Love Story* was produced by Studio D of the NFB's English Production branch. Founded in 1974, the studio is presently the only publicly funded women's film unit in the world. Although the studio includes male filmmakers as well, its main objective remains to bring a woman's perspective to social issues and to act as a catalyst for social change through the medium of film.

*Not a Love Story* represents a significant contribution to the work that the studio has done. Many of the films made by the studio explore the position of women in society and the attitudes and relationships that exist between women and men. Pornography, because it perpetuates fantasies that both create and respond to cultural stereotypes, is an important and revealing aspect of this study.

## Service and Ordering Information for Nontheatrical Exhibition

5-year life-of-print license      \$825 (16 mm)  
   \$450 (¾" or ½" videocassette)

Rental:  
1 showing and                      \$80 (16 mm)  
no admission charged          \$80 (¾" videocassette)

All prices are subject to change without notice.

For longer rentals, additional showings and exhibition involving an admission charge, please apply.

Written rental or licensing requests should be accompanied by a statement of intended print or tape use and must be approved by the National Film Board of Canada.

Rental orders must be accompanied by an official purchase order or prepayment from your sponsoring institution or community group. Please order at least 5 weeks in advance, providing an alternate playdate which is at least 3 weeks later than your first choice.

Support material for the film is available from the National Film Board of Canada in the form of a discussion guide and screening notes.

**Upon request, a copy of *Beyond the Image: A Guide to Films about Women and Change* can be purchased (\$2) from the NFBC.**

## Credits

Director

**Bonnie Sherr Klein**

With the participation of

**Linda Lee Tracey**

Associate Director and Editor

**Anne Henderson**

Producer

**Dorothy Todd Hénaut**

Associate Producer

**Micheline Le Guillou**

Research Assistance

**Irene Lilienheim Angelico**

**Andrée Klein**

**Rose Aimée Todd**

Camera

**Pierre Letarte**

Second Camera and Assistant

**Susan Trow**

Location Sound

**Yves Gendron**

Location Business Manager

**Andrée Klein**

Sound Editor

**Jackie Newell**

Assistant Picture & Sound Editor

**Micheline Le Guillou**

Graphics Layout

**Gayle Thomas**

Animation Camera

**Raymond Dumas**

Original Music & Musical Director

**Ginette Bellavance**

Lyrics

**Tina Horne**

Vocalist

**Cathy Miller**

Music Recording

**Louis Hone**

Executive Producer

**Kathleen Shannon**

**Produced and distributed by  
National Film Board of Canada  
(Studio D)**

**16 mm color videocassette  
Screening Time: 68 min. 40 sec.**

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