

Revenge porn victim's brave battle as polities debate laws

A LOVER'S BETRAYAL

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THE former lover of a Cairns woman posted a naked photo of her on a New Zealand swingers' website in a shocking case of revenge porn.

Travel writer Fiona Harper, 54, said she felt mortified and horrified that a man who she once loved could betray her in such a public and shameful way.

Rather than be a victim forever though, Ms Harper (below) is telling her story in a bid to help others.

It comes as new revenge porn laws are set to be debated in parliament.
REPORT
PG-7



Betrayal stings but it's a chance to shine a light



COMMENT
FIONA HARPER

I WAS mortified to discover my naked body being used to elicit hook-ups for threesomes, straight, oral and outdoor sex, masturbation and exhibitionism.

It wasn't about the sexual pleasures sought – whatever floats your boat baby, it's no longer of interest to me.

What galled was the unauthorised use of my photo fea-

tured on his profile, implying consensual sharing of the image.

How many members had downloaded or screen-grabbed the image? I'll never know. The digital stain is virtually impossible to erase.

The next 24 hours went by in a sleepless fog of stunned stupor as I processed this betrayal of trust.

Then I got angry. Nay, furious. Before long fury turned to disbelief. Which only depressed and then saddened me.

Talking to friends and hearing their own sordid experiences as victims of revenge porn and

other toxic behaviour, I am now simply despairing.

But I am also gratified to hear from those who have the love and support of a partner with honesty and integrity, which ultimately gives me hope.

The irony is that the photo he used for his swingers profile is actually a beautiful image, worthy of gracing my living room wall.

But this is not a story about art. It's about consent and trust. And the far-reaching consequences and damage caused when one is denied and the other is betrayed.

Unwilling to roll over in shame



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"I APOLOGISE."

The two words were far too little too late for Fiona Harper.

The 54-year-old Cairns-based travel writer had been shaken to her core by the man she used to love, who told her repeatedly he loved her back, but then betrayed her in the worst kind of way.

It was about three weeks after they had decided to part ways that she discovered what he had done.

As a professional photographer, he had taken hundreds of pictures of her during their 18-month relationship as they sailed around stunning remote Fijian Islands; and in some of them she had posed nude.

When they broke up she asked that none be "shown anywhere they shouldn't".

But three days after she left him distraught at Cairns Airport in December he had joined a website called "NZ Swingers", a site where people discuss topics such as gang bangs and public sex, and her naked body was plastered across as his profile picture.

"I was mortified, horrified that he thought it was OK to use that photo for his own use," Ms Harper recalled.

"His justification was that it was a password-protected site, but the site has over 60,000

NEED HELP?

IF YOU believe you have been a victim of cyber crime you can file a report with the Australian Cybercrime Online Reporting Network at acorn.gov.au or lodge a complaint with your local police.

members. I never thought (revenge porn) was going to be in my world.

"Even though he had all those photos, I trusted him and didn't think they would end up on that type of site."

While she had managed to get the 57-year-old to remove the picture and delete her photos, she said the incident had shattered her trust in men.

She said she was not completely "bitter and twisted" but she wanted to use her story as a cautionary tale to others.

"I actually believe (revenge porn) happens way more than we ever know," she said.

"I've had so many women messaging saying something similar happened to them.

"I am a victim but I think it's given me an opportunity (to help others).

"A number of people have said I'm brave and courageous, but I have no shame in speaking about it. I think it needs to be spoken about."

She said she believed she was much more equipped to handle the fallout as she was a bit older, but could not imagine how hard it would be for teenagers and young adults.

For her, salvation has come in standing tall.

"I think we roll over too easily. It's too easy to just be a victim," she said.

"It's up to us to stand up and say it's not right and it's not acceptable.

"Women have the right to have control over their body and to have it be used as a tool for personal gratification is not right.

"It's just about respecting people."

Ms Harper filed a complaint over the matter with the Australian Cybercrime Online Reporting Network (ACORN) and was contacted by Far North police this week, but has decided to not take the matter further and he has not been charged with any offence.

Jurisdiction would be an issue with the photo taken in Fiji, the website hosted in New Zealand and her ex-partner, a Canadian, now living in South Australia.

Either way Ms Harper just hopes he now realises how wrong his actions were.

"It doesn't bother me that he did nude shots. If it had been in the *New York Times* or an exhibition I would have been OK with it," she said.

"I think sometimes people need to be held to account. I really hope he has (learned something). I suspect he hasn't been called out before."

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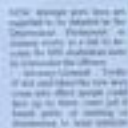
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REVENGE PORN

Politicians to finetune Bill

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After a long year, the government is expected to be able to bring the bill back to parliament in the next few weeks. It is expected to be passed in the next few weeks. The bill is expected to be passed in the next few weeks. The bill is expected to be passed in the next few weeks.

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Unwilling to roll over in shame



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If you're struggling with a problem, we can help. We can help you with your problem. We can help you with your problem. We can help you with your problem.

For the politician, the shame is not just in the act, but in the way they handle it. The politician is not just in the act, but in the way they handle it. The politician is not just in the act, but in the way they handle it.

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Betrayal stings but it's a chance to shine a light

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