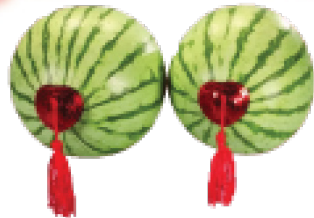


A History of
the Internet
Through Sex
Work

@gladisrevenge



Volume 1
SANITIZED NOT SAFE

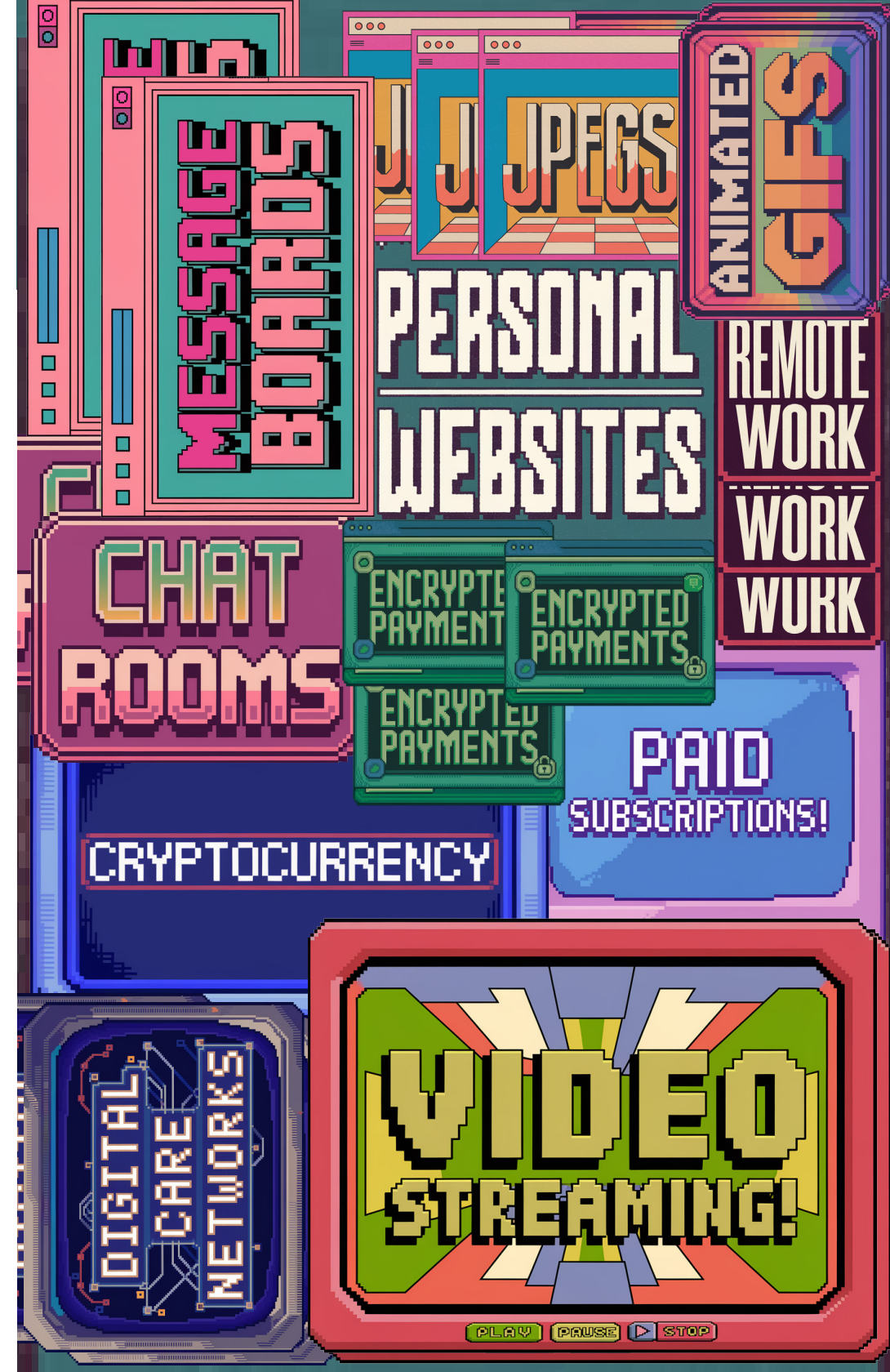
Did you know that many of the pivotal innovations that led to the development of the commercial internet as we know it were developed (sometimes unknowingly and uncredited) championed by sex workers, adult content creators, and performers?



Just because the Internet has been sanitized doesn't make it ~~SAFE~~.

Who profits from
(y)our body,
data,
content creation,
clicks,
likes,
creativity,
ingenuity,
networks of care,
and intimacies?


Who decides the limits to and
overreach of privacy, surveillance,
security, accessibility and profitability?





In the 1990s and early 2000s,
sex workers and adult performers
shifted

their services
online and
gained
greater

CONTROL 
over their
working
conditions.

Communities were
forged, care and
safety
networks

expanded,
information and
harm reduction
tools circulated,
and personal and
political
narratives
shared. Workers


could work
independently and
reach clients
directly without
a manager or
intermediary.



Efforts to police
sex work(ers)
inevitably lead to
broader surveillance
of people's sexuality.

The myths and carefully
curated histories that
persist about the
Internet, what it was,
and what it should
be make it seem
like this is how the
Internet was supposed
to evolve!

IS
THIS
THE
INTERNET
WE
WANT?

Except the
Internet today is a
PLATFORM-DOMINATED IS
 **SPY MACHINE** GEARED IT
TOWARD AD DELIVERY! THE
INTERNET
WE
DESERVE?

THIS
THE
INTERNET
WE
WANT?
IS
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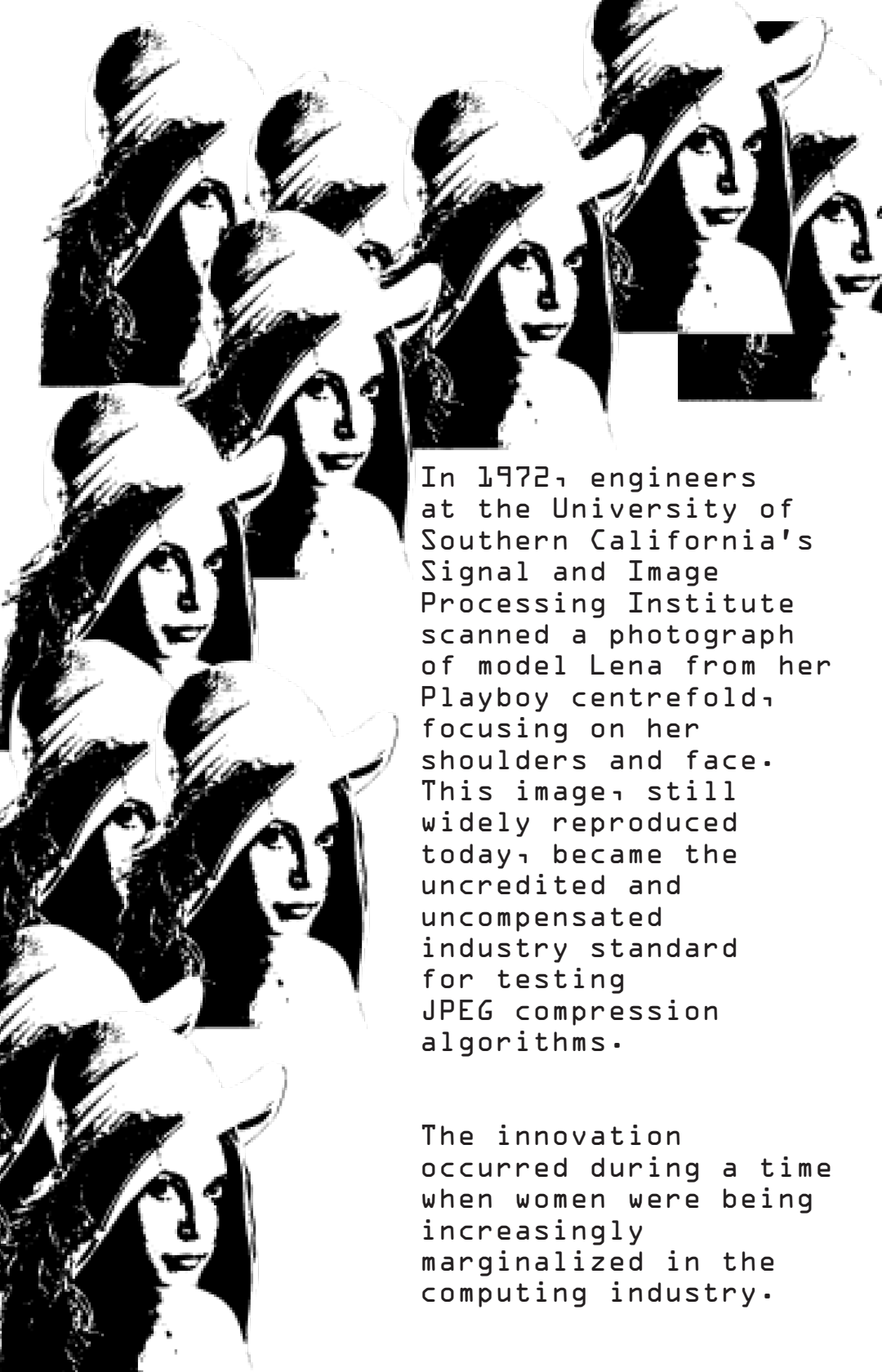
Critics argue that FOSTA/SESTA
has had unintended CONSEQUENCES,
such as driving sex work
further underground and making
it more dangerous by forcing it
off safer online platforms. It
has raised concerns about ~~free~~
~~speech~~ and the potential for
~~over-censorship~~ on the internet.

IS
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Anyone who uses eroticimagery or
language for artistic or
educational purposes is
susceptible to anti-sex
algorithms, OVERSIGHT BOARD
policies, and the *interpretive*
dexterity of human reviewers.

IS THIS THE
INTERNET
WE WANT?

IS IT THE
INTERNET
WE DESERVE?



In 1972, engineers at the University of Southern California's Signal and Image Processing Institute scanned a photograph of model Lena from her Playboy centrefold, focusing on her shoulders and face. This image, still widely reproduced today, became the uncredited and uncompensated industry standard for testing JPEG compression algorithms.

The innovation occurred during a time when women were being increasingly marginalized in the computing industry.

SHADOWBANNING has become increasingly more common in the U.S. following the *Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex*

Trafficking Act of 2017 (FOSTA/SESTA).

The act amends Section 230 of the *Communications Decency Act*, which

PREVIOUSLY

PROVIDED BROAD

IMMUNITY TO ONLINE

PLATFORMS for the

content posted by their users. With FOSTA/SESTA,

PLATFORMS CAN NOW

BE HELD LIABLE if they facilitate or promote prostitution or sex trafficking.

~~"Shadowbanning" is when an account is deactivated without explanation.~~

In 2023, Meta's
Oversight Board,
which Mark Zuckerberg
refers to as the company's
"SUPREME COURT,"
decided it would not block
nipples on Instagram and
Facebook — but only for
SOME users. The change was
made to its long-standing
policy because the ban
discriminated against
transgender users.



"Dear Internet, I've retired."

- LENA

THE COMPANY SAID
IT WOULD RELY ON
'human reviewers'
TO ASSESS A
USER'S SEX AND
GENDER IDENTITY,
'AS THIS POLICY
APPLIES TO 'female-
nipples.'



In the early years,

the
pornography
industry
was one of the few
industries making

money
through the
Internet.

DANNI'S HARD DRIVE, launched in 1995 by
Danni Ashe, a former stripper and nude model,
is recognized as one of the earliest online
pornographic websites. Ashe created and
personally coded the site after discovering
nude modelling images of herself that other
users were uploading and sharing for free on
Usenet groups.

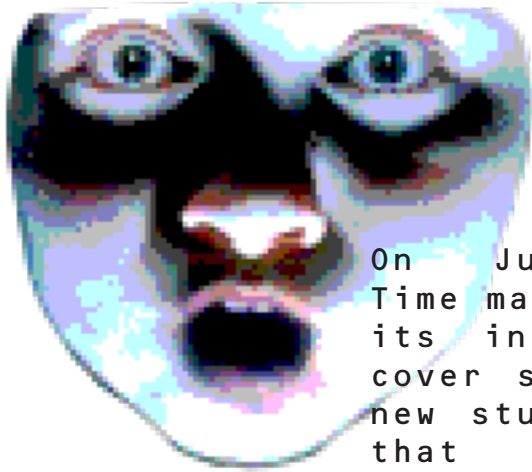
In 2012, Facebook pulled a
cartoon the New Yorker posted on
its page and
suspended the
account because
the image violated
the website's guidelines
prohibiting sexually graphic
images. The comic depicted
biblical characters Adam and Eve

(in the *nude*, of course).

in its "sex and nudity" guidelines
at the time, Facebook maintained
that it would block "naked
'private parts' including female
nipple bulges and naked butt cracks;

male nipples are ok."

(•)(•) 3(¯¯3)



On July 3, 1995, Time magazine published its infamous 'cyberporn' cover story, touting a new study that claimed that 83.5% of all images on Usenet were pornographic. This figure was wielded by members of Congress looking to place constraints on Internet content. In time, the story was widely criticized for its overzealous coverage of a study with several problems in its methodology.

But the
damage had
already
been done.

But not all tech companies
wanted to be associated
with porn. They sought ways
to

distance

themselves from the
industry to gain
widespread legitimacy
and acceptance
and entice investors.



In 1994, Comdex, a major
computer industry trade
show, expelled adult
industry exhibitors who
had been relegated to the
basement alongside
lesser-known companies.
After some violated a ban
on nudity and explicit
materials, Comdex
organizers not only
ejected them but also cut
off ~~electricity~~ to the
entire floor when they
refused to leave.

Moronic Inferno

"Comdex is a jarring urbanscape
- Microsoft's cathedral and Vivid
Video's porn shop, 3M's Century City
tower, and Micrographx's armadillo
racetrack - a sprawl of (mostly) men
and moving things in which you lose
your way and your head."

- Marshall Blonsky, "Moronic Inferno,"
June 1, 1994 in *Wired*