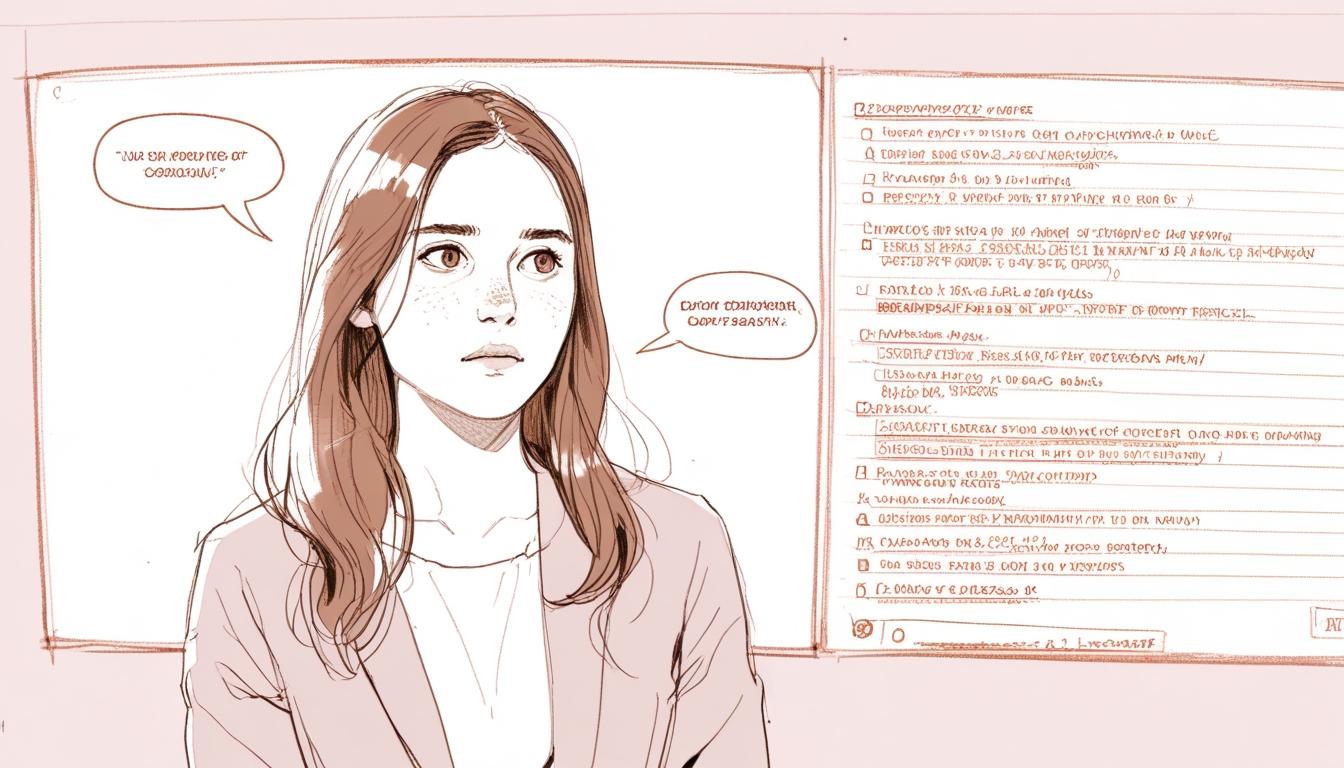
# Jess Davies reveals ordeal of image-based abuse and digital exploitation



Jess Davies, now a 32-year-old presenter, influencer, and women’s rights campaigner, has shared her experience of having a private photograph circulated without consent when she was just 15 years old. During an art lesson in Aberystwyth, Wales, in the early 2000s, Davies’ Nokia phone began to buzz with messages after a photo she had shared privately was spread around her school and town. The image, a photograph of her in underwear sent to a boy she trusted, became widely viewed, subjecting her to public scrutiny and unwanted attention from peers and members of local sports teams. “I was the one shamed,” Davies said in an interview with The Guardian.

Davies described the early onset of unwanted attention, noting that boys began to view her through a sexualised lens from the age of 10, as her physical development became apparent. Despite being the victim of betrayal and widespread sharing of her image, none of those responsible faced serious consequences. Davies explained that there was no precedent or support for someone in her position at the time, which led her to try to "own" the situation by laughing it off and fronting it out.

By the age of 18, while at university, Davies was working as a glamour model for men’s magazines, a decision influenced in part by the earlier experience with the circulated image. She reflected, “Without that image going round my school, would I have ever felt confident to go on a modelling shoot? There was already so much stigma attached to me, I thought: ‘Why not try to embrace it and be confident in my body?’”

Her newly released book, *No One Wants to See Your D*ck\*, delves deeper into her challenging experiences with digital exploitation. It examines issues such as unsolicited exposure to explicit images (cyberflashing), the use of her images on pornography websites, dating apps, escort services, and disturbing online communities. Davies highlights the widespread misuse of images and the normalisation of derogatory and threatening behaviours on popular platforms like Reddit, Discord, and 4chan. “People will say: ‘It’s not all men’ and no, it isn’t, but it also isn’t a small number of weirdos on the dark web in their mum’s basements. These are forums with millions of members,” she said.

Davies also recounted instances of personal violations, such as a photo taken of her naked while asleep by someone she was dating and the spread of her modelling agency’s private content beyond paywall restrictions, resulting in a loss of control over how her images were shared. She spoke candidly about the emotional toll this took, including feeling ashamed and powerless for much of her adult life.

The book further unpacks the toxic online 'games' played by men where women’s images and personal information are exchanged and weaponised. Davies described "Risk," a game where participants try to 'catch' a woman's image and then must provide her full name and social media details, sometimes involving the women’s relatives. Other games involve creating violent or humiliating captions or issuing direct threats to women who appear in these forums. “At this point, looking at this gently smiling, oblivious girl, I felt a crushing weight on my chest,” she said.

Despite the trauma, Davies has channelled her experiences into activism. She now speaks in schools about consent and challenges the irresponsible behaviours found online, aiming to educate the next generation of boys, many of whom have never had conversations about consent. She highlighted the role of community decline and cuts in youth services in England as contributing to the problem, with the internet stepping in to fill that void in often harmful ways.

Davies also noted some positive developments, such as the significant removal of content from Pornhub following financial restrictions and the implementation of the Online Safety Act 2023 which is working to hold tech companies accountable for harmful content. “We’re so close to change. We’re at the beginning of creating laws and saying this isn’t OK,” she said.

Personally, however, Davies remains cautious and finds it difficult to engage in dating or trust others fully due to her past experiences. She lamented the lack of accountability from those who misused her images, stating, “No one has ever contacted me to apologise for sharing my image without consent. No one from that adult football team when I was 15 years old. Not the people who ran my website, or distributed my image or started the fake accounts.”

Her story and ongoing campaign work reveal the enduring complexity of digital exploitation and image-based abuse, underscoring ongoing challenges in accountability and cultural attitudes towards consent and respect online. The Guardian is reporting on these revelations, highlighting the persistence needed to tackle such digital harms.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

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