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## Accessible Lust

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# Accessible Lust

## **Abstract**

"Rapid access to information can also lead to the activities that steal rather than give life."

Posting about the dangers of online pornography from *In All Things* - an online hub committed to the claim that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ has implications for the entire world.

<http://inallthings.org/accessible-lust/>

## **Keywords**

In All Things, God, pornography, technology, Christian ethics

## **Disciplines**

Christianity | Communication Technology and New Media

## **Comments**

*In All Things* is a publication of the [Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service](#) at Dordt College.

# Accessible Lust

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 [all in allthings.org/accessible-lust/](http://allthings.org/accessible-lust/)

Aaron Baart

Recently, I turned 39. Calling to wish me a happy birthday, my mom reminded me (again!) that when I was born, my grandparents were visiting family in the Netherlands. My dad sent them a telegram to tell them that all went well: “Mother and baby are doing well. Stop. His name is Aaron Isaac. Stop.” Seriously. They sent a *telegram*. Today, it could have been a text, an email, a Snapchat, a Facebook post, an Instagram pic, a call from a cell phone with an international calling package, or any other number of tech tools to get the word across the Atlantic. The message could ping off of a satellite in space and be across the world in less than a second.

Communication technology has moved at a torrent pace in the last half century. Some of it is beautiful in the potential it holds and the opportunities it creates. For example, I communicate with close friends in West Africa over crystal clear cell phone calls with absolutely no time delay. And I can access any of the 4.67 billion webpages available on the internet in seconds from my handheld smartphone, including providing updates to my own ministry website. Or, I can donate money to a pressing global crisis via a simple text message. Information and communication are so close at hand, and as a result, so is the possibility of faster global transformation!

But life-giving transformation isn’t the only thing I can access so quickly. Sadly, I can *also* access any of the hundreds of millions of webpages containing internet pornography just as quickly and just as easily. Or worse yet, the 20% of those pages that include child pornography! Rapid access to information can also lead to the activities that steal rather than give life. Now, just to offer an idea on how large the adult industry actually is, consider the following statistics:

\* Internet Filter Review estimates the global adult industry to be worth 97 billion USD. Put into perspective, that’s bigger than the revenues of Microsoft, Google, Amazon, Ebay, Yahoo!, Apple, and Netflix combined!

\* According to the New York Times, the adult industry in the US alone is worth an estimated 13 billion USD. Again, put into perspective, that’s more than the revenue of the NFL, NBA, and MLB combined!

Those numbers are staggering, aren’t they? Meanwhile at home, my eleven-year-old son is already asking me for a cell phone. He also regularly asks for more media access in our home. However, we also know that the average age of first exposure to hardcore online pornography is 11 (United Families International and other sources). I know I can’t protect him forever because I know that he will come across internet pornography whether he goes looking for it or not. (Or whether I buy him a phone or not!) Internet filters, regulated online usage, or even accountability partnerships won’t be enough. There’s simply too much out there. Internet pornography truly is unavoidable. So what is a healthy Christian response? “Protect” him from it by keeping everything dangerous out of harm’s way? Create discipleship via higher fences and stricter rules? That never works. Besides, I don’t think God just wants our behavior. He wants our hearts.

In the past couple of years, I decided that I was sick of having to deal with porn issues for young men and women only at the college level, after many of them had already fallen into the deep end. Instead, I started dreaming of what it might be like to get ahead of the learning curve by talking to younger kids. To be the first voice on sexuality and not just the one picking up the pieces. As a result, I have begun a ministry of sorts, talking at area churches and schools about pornography. I present the statistics and point toward tools. I cite quotes from industry workers and those from porn addicts. I try to help everyone understand

how prevalent internet porn accessibility and addiction really is. But at the end of the day, here's why I really hate porn: "*The problem with pornography isn't that it shows us too much sex; it's that it doesn't show us enough*" (Mark Houck). Or to use the words of Dr. Mary Anne Layden, "Pornography is toxic mis-education about sex and relationships." Houck and Layden couldn't be more right. Porn doesn't show us too much sex. It doesn't show us enough! Pornography is void of relationship, context, and complexity. It reduces sex to something so cheap and small. I can hear the heart of God crying out for his kids, "I wanted more than this for you!"

At the end of the day, I don't want my eleven-year-old, myself, or anyone else looking at online porn because:

- \* it begins the process of eroding and distorting our view of men and women
- \* it wrecks our view of our own sexuality
- \* it further fuels an industry that exploits fellow image-bearers
- \* it divorces our sexuality from our spirituality
- \* it can easily initiate a cycle of addictive behavior
- \* it's a pale substitute for what God really designed

## **Dig Deeper**

If you're looking for good online tools regarding internet pornography, we recommend [covenanteyes.com](http://covenanteyes.com) or [fightthenewdrug.com](http://fightthenewdrug.com). If you're interested in having Aaron come and lead a workshop, sermon, or chapel on the topic of pornography, email him at [aaron.baart@dordt.edu](mailto:aaron.baart@dordt.edu)