



‘Ethical porn’ company workers share their views regarding the stigma on the porn industry, the gender gap in porn consumption, and why porn is still “for men”

Amateur porn platform Lustery extends the invitation to have a look into what working in the porn industry feels like, as told by those working in its offices

Public opinion on pornography has been fed for decades with narratives making the industry look pretty bad, to say the least: from stories about how porn performers are exploited by definition to blaming porn for violence against women, the media are flooded with stories that ultimately are harmful to those who work in the porn industry. As an 'ethical' amateur porn company, [Lustery](#) decided to get its own workers together to discuss the industry, the gender gap in porn consumption, and why porn is still seen and marketed as a product "for men."

[Lustery](#) came from the idea of porn filmmaker and performer [Paulita Pappel](#) to create more authentic, relatable, and inspiring representations of sex and intimacy – more than amateur porn; it's "documentary porn" – an archive of people's real sex lives behind closed doors. Real partners from all around the world share their passion for sex and each other on the 'ethical' platform [Lustery](#) under the mission of normalizing porn as something to be freely explored by consenting adults beyond any norm or shame.

“I love the authenticity behind real-life partners’ porn. It’s raw, real, and more of a turn-on. I love that I also get to know the couples behind the videos. My favorite couple is probably [James & Lola](#); I have a bit of a nomadic spirit, too, and love how they travel around, surf, and have sex in beautiful locales. ”

Kimberly, Editorial Content Manager at Lustery

[Lustery](#) strives to encourage more women and gender non-conforming people to access porn by capturing the intimacy of real partners of different genders, sexual orientations, and kinks. The platform is made of roughly 30% of queer content. It's porn made for everyone who enjoys watching people have sex.

“Working with the diverse couples at Lustery has opened my eyes to a new paradigm of sexual liberation, showcasing a wide range of individuals and

For press queries and interview requests:
Sara Brown - Press & Communication Manager
sara@lustery.com

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relationships. Jasko & Kali stand out as a personal favorite. As a queer woman myself, I deeply resonate with their intimacy. Their interactions are filled with laughter, conversation, and a palpable infatuation for each other. Witnessing such representation is so important and profoundly beautiful. ”

Janine, Social Media Manager at Lustery

Lustery pays couples a flat fee based on the type and length of their video, not by how many views or likes their video gets. This comes from the intention of not wanting couples to feel pressured into having sex a certain way to get more clicks; what's more important is that people are having sex the way they want to and having fun while doing it.

“We watch every video submitted to Lustery closely and give the couple in-depth feedback on the technical settings, location, lighting, image quality, sound, framing, energy mood, and anything else we think can help. We want to help couples get the most out of their content both on Lustery and on their own channels. ”

Brogan, Lead Adult Content Manager at Lustery

Despite being fully-fledged part of the most recent wave of 'ethical porn,' **Lustery**'s team is aware of the limits of marketing porn as “ethical,” as opposed to the so-called “mainstream,” as it can reinforce stereotypes about the porn industry as inherently exploitative.

“‘Ethical porn’ has fostered a conversation in society around porn and has helped people find a way to enjoy it without shame or guilt - which is great! However, ‘ethical porn’ also reinforces the idea that ‘mainstream porn’ is unethical by definition. That is not only vague and inaccurate, but it is harmful to sex workers and the whole industry, as well as to people who then fear relating to any explicit representation of sex. ”

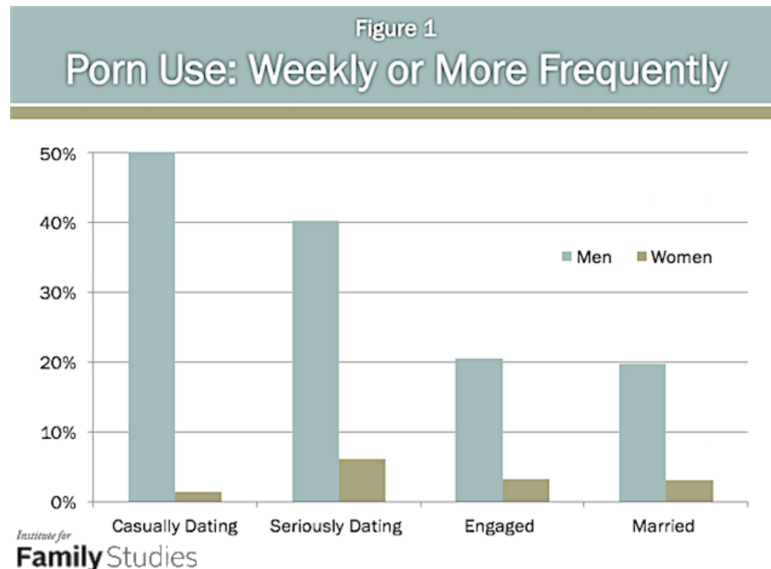
Paulita Pappel, Lustery's Founder

→ **Is porn still “a man's thing”?**

People working in porn, especially women, are often patronized in public discussions around the porn industry; this not only reinforces the idea that women are always potential victims in any

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Sara Brown - Press & Communication Manager
sara@lustery.com

sexual interaction instead of sexual subjects with agency but that porn is a product just for men to enjoy.



Some of the most recent studies and statistics on porn consumption¹ tend to show a proportion of 70-60% men and 30-40% women.² In 2020, one of the most-visited porn sites stated that its audience was only 32% women³. In 2021, it was 35% women and 65% men⁴.

Every month, **Lustery's** team spends 8h/day catching the most popular moments in videos to see what users enjoy the most. It may not come as a surprise that those moments are very predictably what heterosexual men tend to prefer – e.g., male pov blowjob, male pov doggy position, or male pov woman on top during penetration, when she looks into the camera... While how couples choose to have sex on camera is entirely up to them, this information is given to them when they are planning a new video in case they want to include some of these popular practices or positions (they are not mandatory). In any case, in 2024, **Lustery's** audience continues on the average trend of 30% women and 70% men.

How come men are still the largest audience of porn, despite the efforts made through the new wave of porn studios targeting a female audience? Is porn still “a man’s thing”? Men have always had more economic power than women (see the large number of inequalities women

¹ *The Porn Gap: Gender differences in pornography use in couple relationships*. (n.d.-b). Institute for Family Studies.

<https://ifstudies.org/blog/the-porn-gap-gender-differences-in-pornography-use-in-couple-relationships>

² Graphics from *The Porn Gap: Gender differences in pornography use in couple relationships*. (n.d.). Institute for Family Studies.

<https://ifstudies.org/blog/the-porn-gap-gender-differences-in-pornography-use-in-couple-relationships>

³ Castleman, M., M. A. (2020, June 1). This Is Why Many Women Watch Porn. *Psychology Today*.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/all-about-sex/202006/is-why-many-women-watch-porn>

⁴ (2022, July 11). *2021 year in review*. Pornhub Insights. <https://www.pornhub.com/insights/yir-2021>

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sara@lustery.com



face in access to work and the gender pay gap). At the same time, porn has been objectively viewed as harmful to women for decades:

“Men feel entitled to watch it, whereas women are often scared of it. We need to dismantle the essentialist idea that “men are more visual and women need more context.” It’s like saying that women’s brains are smaller. We need to encourage women to watch and create porn on their terms.”

Paulita Pappel, Lustery’s Founder

“Men have been taught that expressing their sexuality is not just okay but that being sexual is a part of being a man. On the other hand, female sexuality has been kept under wraps for ages or should cater to men. So, while men often feel free to explore their sexual desires through porn without much judgment, women often feel like they have to tiptoe around it or even feel guilty for enjoying it.”

Janine, Social Media Manager at Lustery

With most porn still marketed primarily to men and often produced for the “male gaze,” marketing porn “for women” has been a way of enabling individuals who aren’t men to access pornography and feel that it was made with them in mind, too. However, the flip side is that marketing porn “for women” can reinforce gender-biased ideas of sexuality.

→ Working in the porn industry

Contrary to what the moral panic around pornography dominating mainstream conversations around the porn industry might suggest, working in porn often means being surrounded by open-minded, creative, sex-positive people who have very different backgrounds and ways to live their lives and sexualities. Working at a company like **Lustery** means having one’s views on sex, intimacy, relationships, and cultural and societal norms positively challenged.

“People working in the porn industry are independent and inspiring people that you can learn so much from.”

Janine, Social Media Manager at Lustery

“The porn industry is like a little ecosystem of people supporting one another,

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and I feel grateful to be a tiny part of it. What people don't realize is that porn sets are an incredibly safe sexual environment—possibly one of the safest. Consent and boundary conversations are had in-depth. I can't even begin to explain the lessons I've learned about communication from working in this industry. ”

Kimberly, Editorial Content Manager at Lustery

However, the stigma attached to porn that continues to permeate public discussions around it from outside the industry often leads to a lack of financial support, making it an uncertain career to some due to the precariousness of working in a marginalized industry – unless you are a big player in it, as in any other industry. There are so many websites providing all kinds of porn movies for free, so people think, “Why should I pay for my porn?”. People generally still believe that porn is a free product, while just as much as streaming music or movies illegally, not paying for porn hurts the industry and those who work in it daily.

→ The challenges of marketing porn

Talking about stigma, using social media platforms to promote content that brings awareness about sexuality and sexual health means facing many limitations, like having to self-censor content so as not to be silenced by online platforms that want to sanitize their reputation by dictating biased rules of acceptability. Not everyone who posts "sexually suggestive" content is threatened to have their profiles permanently banned from one day to the other:

“When promoting porn, your usual marketing tools might not serve you. The team has to get very creative not to get banned from social media: “sex” becomes “seggs,” and “anal” is often reduced to “🍑 stuff. ”

Sarah, Head of Marketing at Lustery

Sexual-based censorship on social media systematically targets specific groups – it affects sex workers, transgender and BIPOC creators, sex educators, accounts of female and LGBTQ+ individuals, artists, writers, brands, activists, and journalists more than their white, cis-male counterparts from different corners of the world. In this scenario, porn companies certainly don't have the same rights and freedom of expression that other brands and individuals have.

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From Canada with [Asteria and Ulysses](#) to South Africa with [Candy & Mike](#) flying by Argentina with [Gin & Jano](#) through Miami with [Godiva & Raquel Savage](#) and landing in Germany with [Kitti & Uri](#); from hetero, gay, lesbian, queer, older, and younger; from soft and tender mutual masturbation to hardcore roleplay, real-partners porn means gazing into a universe of different bodies, desires and relationships.

[Lustery](#)'s curated smut collection of real couples' sex lives – made of enthusiastic consent and authentic connection, freed from any shame and norm, is homemade porn of 'ordinary' people in their own houses and bedrooms that take the film out of the secrecy where anything related to sex has always been hidden. Above all, [Lustery](#) advocates for what the porn industry really needs – high production standards, fair payment, and access to resources.

→ About Lustery

Established in 2016 by pornographer, author, sex performer, and co-curator of the Berlin Porn Film Festival [Paulita Pappel](#), Lustery's porn is authentic and relatable, putting consent and real connection in the frontline.

[Lustery](#) was nominated as Erotic Site of the Year at the XBIZ Europa Awards 2023 and one of [Lustery](#)'s foursome videos was recently nominated as Best International Group Sex Scene at the AVN Awards 2024.

[Lustery](#) is also [POV](#), a thought-leading, community-centered platform that challenges the status quo by providing sex-positive, educating content.



POV: lustery.com/pov

Instagram: [@lusterypov](https://www.instagram.com/lusterypov)

Twitter: [@lusteryhq](https://twitter.com/lusteryhq)

TikTok: [@lustery.pov](https://www.tiktok.com/@lustery.pov)

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