

The Fight to Hold Pornhub Accountable | The New Yorker

By Sheelah Kolhatkar

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Mickelwait pulled out her laptop, created a dummy e-mail account, and uploaded a video of a darkened corner of her bedroom to Pornhub. It appeared to go live almost instantly. No one had verified who she was, her age, or what her video contained. (MindGeek claims that, until review, the video would have been available only to Mickelwait.) “I began to be haunted by the question of: Why are we assuming these are legal and consensual videos?” Mickelwait said. The next day, she tweeted, “I could’ve been a trafficked 12 yr old and no one would know. Pornhub enables exploitation.”

“It wasn’t new information—millions of people already knew that,” Mickelwait said. “But for some reason people hadn’t been connecting the dots as to what that means for what’s on the site. I felt like people needed to know the most popular porn site in the world was populated with crime-scene videos.” Mickelwait wrote an opinion piece, submitting it to twelve publications. The Washington *Examiner*, a conservative news outlet, agreed to publish it. “At this very moment, there could be hundreds, if not thousands, of videos of underage sex trafficking victims on Pornhub,” she wrote. “It’s time to shut down super-predator site Pornhub and hold the executive megapimps behind it accountable.”

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