

Muslim and Christian Scholars Issue Letter to Hotel Execs on Porn

A Muslim and a Christian released in early July a letter to hotel executives asking them to remove pornographic movies in hotel rooms - even if it cuts into a profitable portion of their business.

"We write to ask you to stop offering pornographic movies in your company's hotels. We make no proposal here to limit your legal freedom, nor do we threaten protests, boycotts or anything of the sort. We simply ask you to do what is right as a matter of conscience," began the letter written by Robert P. George, a professor of jurisprudence at Princeton University, and Shaykh Hamza Yusuf, co-founder and faculty member of Zaytuna College.

George and Yusuf [wrote](#) that their appeal was based on a commitment to the common good, not "truths revealed in our scriptures."

"Pornography is degrading, dehumanizing and corrupting. It undermines self-respect and respect for others. It reduces persons ... to the status of objects. It robs a central aspect of our humanity - our sexuality - of its dignity and beauty. It ensnares some in addiction," they wrote.

Noting that their request would mean the abandonment of "a profitable aspect" of the hotel business, they said that "it is morally wrong to seek to profit from the suffering, degradation, or corruption of others."

Yusuf and George challenged the notion that legality was synonymous with morality.

"[W]e trust that you need no reminding of the fact that something's being legal does not make it right," they wrote.

"Our purpose is not to condemn you and your company but to call you to your highest and best self. We have no desire to hurt your business. On the contrary, we want you and your business to succeed financially," concluded the letter. "We believe that the properly regulated market economy serves the good of all by

providing products and services at reasonable prices and by generating prosperity and social mobility. But the market itself cannot provide the moral values that make it a truly humane and just institution.”

Covering the letter, CNN [reported](#) that Omni Hotels “removed all adult films from its in-room systems in 1999,” while Marriott International pledged in 2011 “to phase out adult content” from its new hotels in the years ahead.

CNN also said that 55 percent of in-room hotel movie rentals are for porn, based on a 2005 report from Adult Video News, an advocacy trade group.

The Christian-Muslim letter drew a retort from Andrew Sullivan, a gay rights activist, who [called](#) their initiative a “campaign against freedom.”

Conor Friedersdorf, staff writer for *The Atlantic*, [complimented](#) them “for conducting themselves in the best possible manner while trying to effect social change.”