

Hooked ★1/2

(2005) 60 min. DVD: \$19.95. Eclectic DVD (avail. from most distributors). Color cover.



Todd Ahlberg's documentary presents a slice-and-dice of interviews with scores of gay men who actively and aggressively use the Internet in search of quickie sex. Finding "Mr. Right Now" is easy thanks to a plethora of chat rooms, portals, and message boards that serve up an endless digital sexual buffet. Many of the interviewees here recklessly pursue dangerous offline encounters by traveling to apartments or isolated locations where their safety is clearly at risk. More often than not, however, the men discover that the web is overrun with others who unapologetically lie about their appearances, either through wildly inaccurate listings of physical measurements (a.k.a. "stats") or by posting outdated photographs of themselves (one guy was visited by an online contact that was missing all of his teeth). Unfortunately, *Hooked* ultimately grows tiresome as the men recount their sexual adventures in coarse detail and discuss their addictive reliance on the Internet to feed their carnal appetites—literally telling the same story over and over and over again. Had Ahlberg focused on a few men whom we could have gotten to know, rather than the dozens seen fleetingly here, this would have been a better film. DVD extras include a director's commentary and "making-of" featurette. Not recommended. Aud: C, P. (*P. Hall*)