

Problems of Pornography Matrix (Answer Key)

Student Name:

<i>Problems</i>	<i>Society</i>	<i>Relationships</i>	<i>Individuals</i>	<i>Affirmed by the Teachings of the Catholic Church</i>
<i>Pornography promotes violence against women.</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>Many individuals in pornographic videos are trafficking victims.</i>	X		X	X
<i>Pornography exploits the individuals depicted.</i>	X		X	X
<i>Pornography can be addictive and cause physical changes in the brain of the user.</i>			X	X
<i>Pornography use can cause the relationship between couples to deteriorate.</i>		X		X
<i>Pornography use has been linked to depression and anxiety.</i>			X	X
<i>Pornography leads to less satisfaction with real physical intimacy.</i>		X	X	X
<i>Pornography leads to the objectification of others.</i>		X		X

Problems of Pornography Matrix (Answer Key)

1. Pornography promotes violence against women.

◆ *Create in Me a Clean Heart*,¹ USCCB

- “Men in particular can develop a narcissistic self-identity and an inflated sense of ‘machismo.’ Viewing pornography can distort one’s view of sexuality, marriage, and the opposite sex.”
- “Women (and men) may feel pressured to engage in degrading sexual acts that are portrayed in pornography. There is also more serious collateral damage in terms of violence against women. Much of pornography is violent, and when for example men view it, they are more likely to sexually abuse a girlfriend or wife.”

◆ Catholic Psych Institute,² Dr. Greg Bottaro

- Many “[women] feel deep down that pornography is somehow way off. It presents an unreal version of women, and a type of relationship they would never want to be a part of, because it supports the idea that women exist for men’s physical pleasure.”

2. Many individuals in pornographic videos are trafficking victims.

◆ *Create in Me a Clean Heart*, USCCB

- “Tragically, children and youth are also victimized by being forced or coerced into participating in the production of child pornography. Child pornography is illegal, abusive, and a form of human trafficking because of a child’s inability to consent. There are many reasons why a child might become a victim of child pornography, including extreme poverty, deplorable neglect by his or her parents or guardians, or manipulation by child pornographers. Children and youth exploited in this way face serious side effects and need plentiful resources for emotional, psychological, and physical healing. Most of all, they need to know that the abuse was not their fault or choice, no matter how their abusers deceived them.”
- “There are many victims of pornography. Every person portrayed in it is beloved by God our Father and is someone’s daughter or son. Their dignity is abused as they are used for others’ pleasure and profit. Pornography has connections to sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation worldwide, an evil that we, as bishops, have condemned strenuously. Many sex trafficking victims (mostly women and girls) are forced into prostitution, which may include pornography as ‘training’ or as their ‘product.’ All child pornography is automatically trafficking and a crime, because it involves the sexual exploitation of a minor for commercial gain and it is against the child’s will due to the inability to give consent. The actors in pornographic films also face serious risks, such as contracting a sexually transmitted infection (STI) and high rates of drug and alcohol abuse.”

3. Pornography exploits the individuals depicted.

◆ *Create in Me a Clean Heart*, USCCB

- “All pornography exploits both the persons portrayed and the viewer and is devoid of love and relationship.”

¹ *Create in Me a Clean Heart*, USCCB, <https://www.catholicpsych.com/>

² Catholic Psych Institute, Dr. Greg Bottaro, <https://www.catholicpsych.com/>

Problems of Pornography Matrix cont. (Answer Key)

- “Tragically, children and youth are also victimized by being forced or coerced into participating in the production of child pornography. Child pornography is illegal, abusive, and a form of human trafficking because of a child’s inability to consent. [...] Children and youth exploited in this way face serious side effects and need plentiful resources for emotional, psychological, and physical healing. Most of all, they need to know that the abuse was not their fault or choice, no matter how their abusers deceived them.”

◆ Catholic Psych Institute, Dr. Greg Bottaro

- “Pornography comes from the same word as prostitution, which is the Latin for ‘price.’ Porn uses a person as a marketable good in a transaction. Pornography is evil primarily because it goes against the very nature with which we were created. As John Paul II said, ‘the person is the kind of good which does not admit of use and cannot be treated as an object of use and as such the means to an end.’”

4. Pornography can be addictive and cause physical changes in the brain of the user.

◆ *Create in Me a Clean Heart*, USCCB

- “Both science and personal testimonies confirm that many people who start by occasionally viewing pornography later become compulsive viewers who feel trapped in a cycle of fantasy, ritual, acting out, and despair. Viewing pornography, usually combined with masturbation, directly affects the brain’s reward pathways and has been noted to have a similar effect on the brain as cocaine does on a person with a drug addiction or as alcohol on a person with an alcohol addiction. After using pornography, the person craves more and over time seeks out a higher number of and/or more extreme images to get the same ‘high.’ A person addicted to pornography may [...] continue viewing it despite adverse consequences to self and others, and may feel out of control or helpless to stop. He or she may also deny that a problem exists.”

◆ Catholic Psych Institute, Dr. Greg Bottaro

- “The way the brain processes porn literally changes the way the brain functions. Pornography changes the brain.”
- “The brain was made to feel pleasure, but pleasure that is attained through complex behaviors. Pleasure is often the reason to try to make sacrifices and act with discipline to reach some goal that produces it. When we can introduce a chemical directly into the brain that stimulates the same pleasure, why would we make the sacrifices and act with discipline? Pornography directly stimulates this chemical.”
- “Greater stimulus, in terms of the sexual brain response, is attained by a novel experience. The brain gets ‘used to’ a particular kind of stimulus, and eventually that stimulus does not produce the same response. If only the same stimulus is available, it will take longer exposure to produce the desired effect. Presenting a different stimulus shortens the exposure time necessary for the desired effect to occur. This means that as a person gets used to watching a specific kind of pornography, he or she eventually needs to find a new type of pornography to reach the desired stimulation. [...] Ultimately all novelty eventually turns into tolerance and an addicted person cannot be satisfied. Depending on the situation, this process may take 10 to 15 years to become problematic, but it will always become problematic if the porn-watching behavior goes unchecked.”

Problems of Pornography Matrix cont. (Answer Key)

5. Pornography use can cause the relationship between couples to deteriorate.

◆ “Pornography Harms Everyone,”³ USCCB

- “[S]ince pornography attacks sexual desire and the conjugal act itself, it wages war on marriage. It is important to remember what God created for husbands and wives. “

◆ *Create in Me a Clean Heart*, USCCB

- “Pornography use within marriage severely damages the spouses’ trust and intimacy both because of the pornography use itself and because of the deception and lies usually involved in one spouse hiding his or her behavior from the other. It has been identified by divorce lawyers as a major factor in over half of divorces.”
- “For single men and women, viewing pornography can make it more difficult to discern and embrace a vocation, whether to marriage, priesthood, or consecrated life. It can damage the ability to enter and maintain a self-giving relationship of mutual trust and respect, in part because it trains viewers to use another person for their own physical pleasure.”

◆ Catholic Psych Institute, Dr. Greg Bottaro

- “Extracting the direct stimulation of pleasure from sexual relationships has dismal consequences for marriages and other single people. If a married person is addicted to porn, ‘normal’ sex with one’s spouse will no longer be as stimulating.”

6. Pornography use has been linked to depression and anxiety.

◆ *Create in Me a Clean Heart*, USCCB

- “The effects of pornography on those who view it are becoming better documented and more understood. They include physiological, financial, emotional, mental, and spiritual effects... Those who use pornography can often experience a deep sense of shame and an erosion of self-worth.”
- “For girls, an over-sexualized society in general and pornography in particular can contribute to low self-esteem, eating disorders, and depression.”
- “Because of the shame and feelings of unworthiness that come with pornography use, some young adults may not feel they ‘deserve’ a real, healthy relationship.”

7. Pornography leads to less satisfaction with real physical intimacy.

◆ *Create in Me a Clean Heart*, USCCB

- “Contrary to the common idea that pornography can be an aid to marital intimacy, pornography use tends to decrease sexual satisfaction and interest in sex and can lead to impotence in men. One spouse might also feel degraded by the other’s requests for demeaning forms of sexual activity common in pornography. In contrast, God’s plan for marriage and chastity within marriage brings real happiness and intimacy to couples; the Church wants this for all husbands and wives!”

³“Pornography Harms Everyone,” USCCB, <https://www.usccb.org/topics/natural-family-planning/pornography>

Problems of Pornography Matrix cont. (Answer Key)

◆ Catholic Psych Institute, Dr. Greg Bottaro

- “[P]ornography presents fantasy as reality. Porn trains its viewers to believe in a version of reality that does not actually exist. Marketers and producers of porn have figured out how to provide instant and exaggerated gratification to the desires of men and women. In reality, true gratification does not come in the same form.”

8. Pornography leads to the objectification of others.

◆ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #2354

- “Pornography consists in removing real or simulated sexual acts from the intimacy of the partners, in order to display them deliberately to third parties. It offends against chastity because it perverts the conjugal act, the intimate giving of spouses to each other. It does grave injury to the dignity of its participants (actors, vendors, the public), since each one becomes an object of base pleasure and illicit profit for others. It immerses all who are involved in the illusion of a fantasy world. It is a grave offense. Civil authorities should prevent the production and distribution of pornographic materials.”

◆ “Pornography Harms Everyone,” USCCB

- “Rather than respecting and cherishing this image of God, pornography promotes harmful and destructive anthropology (view of the human person). It teaches people to use others as “objects”--in this case, a means of selfish, lustful gratification.”

◆ *Letter to Families*,⁴ Pope John Paul II

- “The person can never be considered a means to an end; above all never a means of pleasure. The person is and must be nothing other than the end of every act” (2).

⁴ *Letter to Families*, Pope John Paul II, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/1994/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_02021994_families.html