



## The Dangers of Pornography Grade 8

### UNIT OVERVIEW

*Do you not know that you are God's temple  
And that God's Spirit dwells in you?  
For God's temple is holy  
And you are that temple.  
1Cor 3:16-17*

### DESCRIPTION

- This unit builds on the topics introduced in grade seven – Internet Safety and The Increasing Use of Violence and Domination in Popular Media.
- The focus is to help our youth understand how the gift of human sexuality is trivialized, fragmented and devalued through pornography.
- Emphasis on the inherent dignity of all persons provides positive reasons to avoid pornography rather than simply a list of ‘do nots.’
- Students are invited to claim their own responsibility in making decisions about their choices of entertainment and to be able to articulate the reasons for those choices.

### DURATION

1. [What's all the Fuss About Pornography?](#) 45 minutes
2. [What Wisdom Does the Church Offer?](#) 45 minutes
3. [What Wisdom Does Science Offer?](#) 45 minutes

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

Students will be able to:

- Apply living skills (e.g., decision-making, problem solving and refusal skills) to respond to matters relating to sexuality. (Healthy Living, Ontario Curriculum, Grade 8, Health and Physical Education)
- Develop an understanding of their responsibility to participate in building a loving and just society(5:1 FA)

### ONTARIO CATHOLIC SCHOOL GRADUATE EXPECTATION

A reflective, creative, holistic thinker who solves problems and makes responsible decisions with an informed moral conscience for the common good (CGE 3)

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. The current grade 8 Fully Alive program briefly introduces the topic of pornography. There is a paragraph in the Teacher Manual (p. 84) and a boxed paragraph in the Student text (p. 82). The following lessons expand those ideas to give students background information concerning Church teaching about pornography and a creation-centered / relationship-centred way of seeing persons holistically rather than with the distorted images presented by pornography. An evaluation component is also included.
2. The *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, CCCB Publications Service, Ottawa, 2005) offers a framework and direction for dealing with the topic of pornography:
  - a. **What is the root of human dignity?** The dignity of the human person is rooted in his or her creation in the image and likeness of God... (358)
  - b. **How is a moral conscience formed to be upright and truthful?** An upright and true moral conscience is formed by education and by assimilating the Word of God and the teaching of the Church. It is supported by the gifts of the Holy Spirit and helped by the advice of wise people. Prayer and an examination of conscience can also greatly assist one's moral formation. (374)
  - c. **What are the other requirements of purity?** Purity requires *modesty* which, while protecting the intimate center of the person, expresses the sensitivity of chastity. It guides how one looks at others and behaves toward them in conformity with the dignity of persons and their communion. Purity frees one from the wide-spread eroticism and avoids those things which foster morbid curiosity...(530)
3. Article 2354 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states that;
  - a. Pornography consists in removing real or simulated sexual acts from the intimacy of 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.
4. Teachers of grade 8 students have both the responsibility and privilege of being partners with parents and Church in guiding young adolescents in their moral development. Presenting our church's moral teaching based on the inherent dignity of all people builds the solid foundation upon which they will continue to form their conscience. That framework is built into these lessons and Notes to the Teacher so that you will be empowered to teach this delicate topic with confidence.
5. Rather than lecturing or 'preaching' to students about the dangers of pornography, we appeal to what they already know and help them to formulate their own responses to this huge, exploitive industry

6. Excerpts from the Pontifical Council for Social Communications' 1989 document, *Pornography and Violence in the Media*, are the basis for Lesson 2.

## **ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

Several evaluation strategies are suggested for this unit;

- Written: journal, prayer, poem, commentary, position paper, editorial, protest letter
- Artistic: poster
- Participation in classroom discussions
- Group presentations
- Summative factual quizzes
- Designing word searches or crossword puzzles (helpful web sites included in Resource section)
- Response to Guided Meditation

## **LINKS TO FULLY ALIVE AND MOE-PHE**

Other than a brief mention in the grade 8 Fully Alive program, the topic of pornography is not taught overtly. However, the entire theological foundation of Fully Alive is based on the inherent dignity of all people and thus, provides the foundation for expanded teaching.

The Ministry's Physical Education and Health program does not deal specifically with pornography

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR ACCOMMODATIONS**

As per individual student's IEP's such strategies as flexible groupings, less content expectations, scribing, rephrasing, retelling, quizzes done orally, less content expectations, posters rather than written work, etc. are some suggestions.

## **BLACK LINE MASTERS**

1. BLM 1 Definitions (lesson one)
2. BLM 2 Pornography and Violence in the Media, Pontifical Council for Social Communications, Vatican City, 1989 (lesson two)
3. BLM 3 FAQ's Quiz (lesson two)
2. BLM 4 Guided Meditation (lesson Three)

## TEACHER RESOURCES

- Bible, NRSV edition
- Fully Alive, Grade 8 (1992)
- Compendium of the catechism of the Catholic Church. Ottawa, CCCB Publication Services, 2005
- Radical Amazement: Contemplative Lessons From Black Holes, Supernovas, and Other Wonders of the Universe. Judy Cannato. Indiana, Sorin Books, 2006 ISBN-10:1-893732-99-1

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. Two excerpts from The Pontifical Council for Social Communications publication, *The Catholic Church's Handbook for Ethics in Advertizing*

### Section III: Moral and Religious Harms of Advertizing

Advertising can be tasteful and in conformity with high moral standards, and occasionally even morally uplifting, but it also can be vulgar and morally degrading. Frequently it deliberately appeals to such motives as envy, status seeking and lust. Today, too, some advertisers consciously seek to shock and titillate by exploiting content of a morbid, perverse, pornographic nature.

What this Pontifical Council said several years ago about pornography and violence in the media is no less true of certain forms of advertizing:

"As reflections of the dark side of human nature marred by sin, pornography and the exaltation of violence are age-old realities of the human condition. In the past quarter century, however, they have taken on new dimensions and have become serious social problems. At a time of widespread and unfortunate confusion about moral norms, the communications media have made pornography and violence accessible to a vastly expanded audience, including young people and even children, and a problem which at one time was confined mainly to wealthy countries has now begun, via the communications media, to corrupt moral values in developing nations."20

### Section IV: The Dignity of the Human Person

There is an "imperative requirement" that advertising "respect the human person, his right duty to make a responsible choice, his interior freedom; all these goods would be violated if man's lower inclinations were to be exploited, or his capacity to reflect and decide compromised."27

These abuses are not merely hypothetical possibilities but realities in much advertising today. Advertising can violate the dignity of the human person both through its content -- what is advertised, the manner in which it is advertised -- and through the impact it seeks

to make upon its audience. We have spoken already of such things as appeals to lust, vanity, envy and greed, and of techniques that manipulate and exploit human weakness. In such circumstances, advertisements readily become "vehicles of a deformed outlook on life, on the family, on religion and on morality -- an outlook that does not respect the true dignity and destiny of the human person."28

2. A Pastoral Letter: A Theological Reflection on the Human Body, (Archdiocese of Newark, December, 2002).  
[www.rcan.org/archbishopjjm\\_letters/HumanBody.htm](http://www.rcan.org/archbishopjjm_letters/HumanBody.htm)
3. A Pastoral Letter on the Dignity of the Human Person and the Dangers of Pornography. Bishop Robert W. Finn, Kansas City, Missouri. February, 2007.  
[www.diocese-kcsj.org/Bishop-Finn/pastoral-07.htm](http://www.diocese-kcsj.org/Bishop-Finn/pastoral-07.htm)
4. Essay: *Pornography: The Poison Pill*, by Father Michael Crosby, OFM.  
[www.believersweb.org/view.cfm?ID=209](http://www.believersweb.org/view.cfm?ID=209) Full text is included for teacher reference.

PORNOGRAPHY: The Poison Pill  
March 20, 2003

Fr. Michael Crosby, OFM

Every once in a while we hear reports about some crazed person contaminating Halloween candy, or adulterating medicine on a drugstore shelf. We are outraged that familiar aids to feeling good have become deadly because someone injected them with poison. . . I feel the same way about crude violence and pornography being injected into entertainment. Very often they are unexpected ingredients in an otherwise enjoyable magazine, movie, or home entertainment channel. An ordinary enjoyment becomes a sick expression of the very depravities from which we seek protection. This is entertainment? . . . I think I am not a prude. I consider the human body a fascinating creation, and all its functions beautiful in proper context. My objection to obscenity is that it distorts this beauty, making it boring and even grotesque. I dislike unwarranted smut and brute violence because they spoil what promised to be a delightful presentation. It's like finding a bug in my soup. . . To my mind, obscenity is whatever degrades human dignity and violates the trust basic to human relationships. So what critic and author Norman Cousins wrote about pornography applies also to stark violence, whether physical or psychological:

"The trouble with pornography is not that it corrupts, but that it desensitizes; not that it unleashes the passion; but that it cripples the emotions; not that it encourages a mature attitude, but that it is a perversion to infantile obsessions; not that it removes the blinders, but that it distorts the view. What we have is not liberation, but dehumanization."

Dehumanization is indeed a threat. Clinical psychologist Victor Cline, a professor at the University of Utah, reports research which "clearly suggest personal and psychological harm when individuals immerse themselves in pornography." His research dealt with the effects of both the pornography of violence (e.g., the "slasher" films) and garden variety porn flicks. He found these patterns among frequent viewers:

. "They became addicted by exposure to explicit sex and/or violence, because the appetite for thrills is increased rather than satisfied by viewing such material.

. They became de-sensitized by such exposure, so that what at first seemed gross and disturbing was gradually accepted as normal. . . They tended to be influenced to act-out the brutality portrayed, so that fantasy becomes reality."

. Drugs that produce hallucination or artificial "highs" are routinely banned or at least controlled, especially when they prove to be addictive. What about material that produces an emotional addiction to destructive and anti-social fantasies? Surely we deserve protection against poisoning the wellsprings of morality. . . Such protection is not available in our common law because the courts tend to shield even gross pornography under the First Amendment, and perhaps wisely

so, for government censorship has historically proven at least ineffective if not repressive. . . So that puts the remedy squarely in the area of personal responsibility. It's up to each of us to acquire and use critical taste to discern the poison served up so frequently by our media. We need to clearly tag the crud for what it is, and encourage our families and friends to distinguish entertainment from pandering, art from degradation, excitement from morbid fixation. . . Putting the proper label on adulterated products is the first step. Refusing to ingest them is our most reliable protection. Then we need to guard our loved ones from casual exposure to contamination as we communicate to them positive values and attitudes about respecting the dignity of the human person. . . I'm delighted that a recent TV movie -- supposedly a comedy -- broadcast in prime-time and portraying graphically the seduction of a teen-ager by a middle-aged maid, drew the outrage of many viewers and a reprimand from the FCC. Widespread public rejection of the channel and its sponsors was the best remedy against aggressive contamination of the family entertainment hour. That show and its sponsors received the ultimate statement of viewer disapproval: an empty chair and closed wallet. . . I propose a similar solution for Christian outrage over a current movie that trashes traditional reverence for Jesus. Instead of engaging in demonstrations that serve only to hype the film, greet it with the protest producers fear most: utter silence. Show your disapproval by staying away. Ignore it into oblivion. These two instances of public rebuke for offensive entertainment indicate that the court of last appeal for censorship will always be individual responsibility. Moral choice cannot be abandoned in the name of fun and games.

## ADDITIONAL STUDENT RESOURCES

On line Catholic Youth Updates are available by searching for *Catholic Youth Update* and clicking on Archive for the following:

Or directly at: <http://www.americancatholic.org/Newsletters/YU/ay0699.asp>

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### 1. Wired Up and Plugged in: the Influence of the Media

This *Youth Update* asks:

- Is Media a Monster?
- Is all media to be mistrusted?
- Is media itself some great evil? No.

You have to sort it all out—just as you sort out other influences in your life. Media is created by people. You know you are capable of both good and evil, right and wrong. So are the people who create media.

True, excellent movies, songs and publications are created all the time. Many teens, though, don't listen very closely to lyrics and don't think much about the underlying message of what they see and hear.

You can choose to be influenced by positive, life-giving thoughts—or not.

## WEB SITES

- [www.disciplesnow.com/life/sya\\_qa.cfm?id=4](http://www.disciplesnow.com/life/sya_qa.cfm?id=4) and id=314 for two questions and answers about the Church's teaching on pornography.
- School.discovery.com and edHelper.com can assist in designing word searches and crossword puzzles.



## The Dangers of Pornography Grade 8

### Lesson One

### WHAT'S ALL THE FUSS ABOUT PORNOGRAPHY?

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#### **MATERIALS:**

- Dictionaries
- Chart paper
- Copy of Black Line Master I for each student

#### **DESCRIPTION:**

Starting with their own knowledge, the class will develop some key vocabulary and attending concepts that will enable them to study the document: Pornography and Violence in the Media.

#### **SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS:**

The students will be able to:

- Identify terms that will help them understand and discuss why pornography is wrong and dangerous. (new expectation)

#### **ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES:**

1. Design an acrostic poem based on one of the terms introduced in BLM I: e.g.  
I – intimacy  
N – not relational  
T – trivialize  
I –intellectual  
M – mature  
A – art celebrates the human body  
C – caring  
Y – yes to the dignity of all people
2. Design a word search or crossword puzzle (school.discovery.com has a puzzle maker section, another source is edHelper.com)



**TEACHING / LEARNING STRATEGIES**

1. Using **BLM 1**, develop the following definitions either as a whole class activity or in small groups with each group responsible for 3-4 terms.
2. Key points should be written on chart paper to remain on display for the duration of the unit. Make sure that the following points are included in the definitions:
  - a) **Sexuality**: our very femaleness and maleness, from conception till death we are sexual beings, the only way we can be in the world is in our bodies, the sum total of who we are – emotional, physical, intellectual, psychological, spiritual. Sexuality is far more than body parts – penis and vagina.
  - b) **Sexual intimacy**: the sharing of our total selves through giving our bodies in love and trust to our partner in marriage.
  - c) **Pornography**: explicit pictures, images, lyrics that focus only on private body parts or sexual activity with the sole purpose of arousing sexual feelings. It takes the viewer away from relationships and intimacy and distorts what it means to be a sexual being. Often pornography involves force, violence and domination which further reduce the humanity of the subject. When violence is involved, it is usually male over female.
  - d) **Habitual**: habit forming. It is possible to become addicted to pornography. If this happens to young people, they start to become isolated and turned in on themselves, preventing the development of healthy relationships. Becoming dependent on pornography actually stunts emotional, social, and spiritual growth.
  - e) **Art and nudity**: great art is designed to celebrate the beauty of the human body, to rejoice in the gift of sexuality not to simply arouse sexual feelings
  - f) **Dominance**: power over, control, force. One person exercising power over another person for their own ends.
  - g) **Oppression**: overwhelm with superior force, being weighed down, to have no voice, cruelty and injustice.
  - h) **Trivialize**: to make less important, to not count, to have little or no importance.
  - i) **Fragment**: only a piece of a whole, not the whole thing
  - j) **Permissiveness**: the attitude that ‘anything goes.’ As long as something feels good, it’s all right to do it.

- k) Modesty: respect for one's body and the feelings of others; demonstrated by wearing clothing that does not flaunt one's body, not potentially making the person into an object of sexual attention.
- l) Chastity: Morality with respect to sexual relations; the integration of sexuality into one's appropriate stage of life.
- m) Lucrative: making big money
- n) Virtue: moral excellence; goodness;
- o) De-sensitize: reduce or destroy the right way to think about an issue. E.g., getting involved in pornography makes one think that it is the normal way to be sexual, when, in fact, this is not the way that loving couples honour and respect each other's bodies.

## The Dangers of Pornography Grade 8

### Lesson Two

### WHAT WISDOM DOES OUR CHURCH OFFER?

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#### DESCRIPTION:

Students will read with you and discuss relevant sections of the document, *Pornography and Violence in the Media* by the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, 1989.

#### MATERIALS

- Student copies of **BLM 2** *Pornography and Violence in the Media* (numbers correspond to the paragraph numbers in the complete text)

#### NOTES TO THE TEACHER

1. Guide the reading of this document and the ensuing discussion with the whole class to discourage personal student stories. It is best to indicate a clear boundary that personal experience, of self or others, is not appropriate in a classroom setting. If a closure should happen during the teaching of a class, interrupt promptly, calmly but firmly indicating that a personal boundary has been crossed, and you wish to get back to an objective, not personal study of the topic.

Script Response: “Our purpose here is to examine what is wrong with pornography in general and the millions of dollars made from this industry and to help each of you make good choices about sexuality. These lessons are not about centering anyone out or asking personal questions. If anyone has some private questions maybe we could talk at recess or put the question in the question box.” Make sure you provide a question box.

2. If a student does blurt out a disclosure in front of the whole class, you can gently explain that whatever may have been a previous experience, this unit will help all students to realize what is wrong with pornography and to make good choices from now on. It is not about judgment.
3. If a student expresses concern about a friend, an older sibling, or a parent involved with pornography, again reassure them that the lessons in this unit will give them a framework for their own personal decisions. At least they will be empowered to lead by example. When they disclose very serious concerns, direct them to professional services, either in your School Board or Children’s Aid

according to your local Board policy. In these cases inform your principal and together help the student to seek help.

4. Using a question box. Explain to students that this time questions need to be concerned with pornography and that you will not address them until the unit is finished because they need a context in which to think about this problem. Allow questions to be anonymous and emphasize that you respect their need for honest answers. No question is too silly and that if one person is wondering about something, be assured that others are wondering the same or similar thing too. Many questions at this age level will be about specific things they have actually seen or heard about and although, deep down may be disturbed, they may react inappropriately by trying to be 'cool'. All answers will be centered in human dignity and the wholeness of personhood as opposed to the trivialization, fragmentation, and domination that makes pornography so dangerous.
  
5. It is important to reassure students that pornography is not real life. Some of them may be quite disturbed by thinking this is how people are supposed to be sexual. Pornography's words and images are designed to make money and do not represent how loving people are intimate with each other. Loving couples do not humiliate shame or degrade each other. There is no room for domination and violence in loving relationships. Even in marriage, you never have to do something that makes you uncomfortable.
  
6. Reinforce, too, that emotional and social development are huge tasks during the teen years. These happen in relationship so that to become isolated with pornography can prevent healthy all-round development.

#### **SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS:**

- Explore the Christian vision of sexuality as relational and God-given. (adapted from Fully Alive)
  - Deepen their understanding of the human person as a reflection of God (Fully Alive, Theme I)
  - Be encouraged to deepen their commitment to follow God's plan for sexuality (Fully Alive, Theme III)
  - Develop an understanding of sexuality and Christian vision (3.1 FA)

#### **ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

- Completion of KWL chart
- Black Line Master III: FAQ's Quiz based on the Vatican Document

- Write a letter to a rap singer, a television network or company protesting the pornographic depiction of women in their music, programming or advertising.

### **TEACHING / LEARNING STRATEGIES**

- 1) Begin by asking students what they think the ‘job’ of the Church is. List suggestions. They will probably say things like:
  - a) Teach us to pray
  - b) Say Mass
  - c) Celebrate the sacraments
  - d) Make rules
  - e) Talk about God
  
- 2) Tell them that, perhaps surprisingly, our church knows all about pornography and its dangers and has written some very strong statements concerning the problem.
  
- 3) Read aloud and discuss together the excerpts from *Pornography and Violence in the Media* (Black Line Master II) Students will need help navigating through and understanding the complexities of this article. Some questions that will assist discussion have been included following each section.
  
- 4) Break into small groups – choose a recorder and presenter. Divide chart paper into three sections:
  - i) Something We Knew – Something We Learned – Something That Surprised Us
  - ii) Present to the whole class or post findings on the walls and do a ‘gallery walk’
  - iii) Develop a bulletin board of responses
  
- 5) Black Line Master III: Faq’s Quiz based on the Vatican Document (filling in the blanks)
  
- 6) Write a letter to a rap singer, a television network or company protesting the pornographic depiction of women in their music, programming or advertising.

## The Dangers of Pornography Grade 8

### Lesson Three

#### WHAT WISDOM DOES SCIENCE OFFER?

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#### DESCRIPTION

The scientific theory of holons and St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians, further illustrate how pornography distorts the meaning and purpose of sexuality, and degrades and abuses the dignity of human beings.

#### MATERIALS

- bibles for each student
- 1Cor 12:20-22 on chart paper or poster:

As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, the parts of the body which seem to be weaker are indispensable.

- definition of a holon on chart paper:

A *holon* is a whole that is part of other wholes. For example, a whole atom is part of a whole molecule; a whole molecule is part of a whole cell; a whole cell is part of a whole organism. Or again, a whole letter is part of a whole word, which is part of a whole sentence, which is part of a whole paragraph, and so on. Reality is composed of neither wholes nor parts, but of whole/parts, or holons.\*

\*Cannato, Judy. *Radical Amazement: Contemplative Lessons From Black Holes, Supernovas. And Other Wonders of the Universe*. Notre Dame, Indiana: Sorin Books, 2006, p. 96 ( quoted from: Ken Wilber, *A Theory of Everything*. Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc. 2000.)

#### NOTES TO THE TEACHER

- The purpose of Activity #3 (pornography doesn't show enough) is to have students realize that the fragmented images of pornography do not show whole persons, lack human dignity, omit any sense of relationship, love, and are one-dimensional rather than holistic.



### **SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS:**

Students will:

1. Develop an awareness of the personal and relational nature of human sexuality (3.1 FA)
2. Develop an awareness of acceptance and respect towards their bodies and the bodies of others (adapted from 3.3 FA)

### **ONTARIO CATHOLIC SCHOOL GRADUATE EXPECTATION:**

A reflective, creative thinker who:

- o examines, evaluates, and applies knowledge of interdependent systems (physical, political, ethical, socio-economic, ecological) for the development of a just and compassionate society. (CGE3f)

### **ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Journal entry in response to the guided meditation ( can be a written prayer, poem, picture)
2. Write a commentary or position paper (in a position paper you state your personal opinion about the topic) addressing the following statement:  
*Pornography is an industry that exploits the sacred meaning of sexuality, reducing it to a commercial transaction.*
3. Or, break into small groups of 4-5 and discuss the above statement:  
Choose a recorder and allow about 10 minutes for discussion. Present and display the conclusions and develop a class list entitled *Pornography is an Industry that....*

## TEACHING / LEARNING STRATEGIES

Write the word **HOLON** on the board and ask if anyone has ever heard of the term. Post the definition and explain that this recent theory of holons provides a new way to talk about relationship and interconnection.

1. After reviewing the definition, develop a list of other holons, e.g., a whole flower is part of a whole plant, a whole football player is part of a whole team, a whole finger is part of a whole hand, etc.
2. Consider our own bodies; each whole part is part of the whole body and an isolated part cannot function without the whole body. For instance, although our eye is a whole eye, it cannot be an eye in isolation – it must be connected to the rest of the body. By the same token, a penis or vagina is whole, but unless it is connected to the whole body, it has no function. Our bodies are whole, but must be part of the larger whole that includes emotions, thoughts, spirit, relationships. To focus on any one part in isolation then, is to reduce our wholeness. And God is always calling us to wholeness.
3. Almost 2000 years ago, St. Paul didn't know anything about holons but he said a very surprising thing. Have students find 1Corinthians 12:20-22. Have it read several times and discuss its relationship to the theory of holons. Post it beside the holon definition.
4. Depending on your class, you may break them into small groups, pairs, triads or continue with the whole class format to discuss the question: *What do the theory of holons and the words of St. Paul have to do with the problem of pornography?* They will develop written statements to place around the holon definition and the scripture quote.
5. If they have trouble with formulating the connections, guide them to conclusions such as:
  - Pornography is not whole
  - Pornography focuses in on body parts only
  - Pornography reduces whole people to body parts
  - Pornography does not show any relationship or love.
  - Pornography makes people (especially women) into things or possessions
  - Pornography reduces humanity
  - Pornography is definitely not part of God's plan for how a husband and wife express their sexuality in loving relationships
  - Pornography promotes the idea that men must have power over women
  - Pornography portrays women as objects rather than whole persons
  - Pornography involving children is a serious evil

Conclude the lesson with some quiet music and the Guided Meditation (**BLM 4**)

**BLM 1**

**DEFINITIONS...**

From what you already know and with the help of your dictionaries, define the following:

1. Sexuality: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Sexual Intimacy: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Pornography: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Habitual \_\_\_\_\_
5. Art and nudity: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Dominance: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Oppression: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Trivialize: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Fragment: \_\_\_\_\_
10. Permissiveness: \_\_\_\_\_
11. Noxious: \_\_\_\_\_
12. Nefarious: \_\_\_\_\_
13. Lucrative: \_\_\_\_\_
14. Disdain: \_\_\_\_\_
15. De-sensitize: \_\_\_\_\_

**PORNOGRAPHY AND VIOLENCE IN THE MEDIA**  
**Pontifical Council for Social Communications**  
**Vatican City, May, 1989.**

5. Among the alarming developments of recent years has been the widespread increase of pornography and wanton violence in the media. Books and magazines, recordings, the cinema, the theatre, television, DVD's, advertising and even telecommunications (*including the internet*)\* frequently offer a representation of violent behaviour or of permissiveness in sexual activity that reaches the point of being openly pornographic and morally offensive.

- Can you think of some examples of movies, music videos, TV, etc. that treat people (often women) as objects to be used then discarded.
- Can you think of some examples where sex is so trivialized that nothing of God's gift remains. (there is no need for all the details, or any swear words – just the overall impression)

10. ... Pornography and sadistic violence debase sexuality, corrode human relationships, exploit individuals – especially women and young people – undermine marriage and family life, foster anti-social behaviour and weaken the moral fiber of society itself.

- How does pornography hurt marriage and family life?
- What is anti-social behaviour?

11. Thus, one of the clear effects of pornography is sin. Willing participation in the production or dissemination of these noxious products can only be judged a serious moral evil. Likewise, production and dissemination of these materials could not continue if there were not a market for them, so those who use such materials not only do moral harm to themselves, but contribute to the continuation of a nefarious trade.

- Sin is a very strong word here. Our church teaches that it is sinful to produce pornography because it takes away the dignity of persons who are all created and loved by God. What does this statement say about how to stop pornography?

12. ... violence in the media can condition impressionable persons, especially those who are young, to regard this as normal and acceptable behaviour, suitable for imitation.

- Can you think of an example where what is shown in the media does not seem to be real life at all?

18. A fundamental message of pornography and violence is disdain, the consideration of others as objects rather than persons. Thus, pornography and violence can eat away at tenderness and compassion and can foster insensitivity and even brutality.

- How does pornography stop relationships from being healthy?

## CAUSES OF THE PROBLEM (of pornography)

20. - The profit motive. Pornography is a lucrative industry.
- Bad arguments. Freedom of expression is said by some to require toleration of pornography (*in all its forms including child pornography*)\*. ...The right to freedom of expression does not exist in a vacuum. Every right carries with it a corresponding responsibility.
  - The lack of carefully prepared laws or the ineffective enforcement of laws which already exist to protect the common good, especially the morals of the young.
  - Apathy on the part of many persons *who think they can do nothing about the problem*.
- What does ‘pornography is lucrative’ mean?
  - What is apathy?

## RESPONSES TO THE PROBLEM

26. Youth: Young people themselves can help stem the tide of pornography and violence in the media by responding positively to the initiatives of their parents and educators and by *taking responsibility* for their own moral decisions in the choice of entertainment.
- You are just a young teen; what can you do in your own personal life?
27. The Public: The general public also needs to make its voice heard. Individually and collectively, concerned citizens – including young people – should make their views known to producers, commercial interests and public authorities.
- Apparently, just one complaint about an offensive commercial, can lead to it being pulled
  - What commercial(s) do you find offensive? Why?

\*italics indicate adaptation of the text to make it more accessible to students.

The entire document can be found at [www.ewtn.com](http://www.ewtn.com)

### **BLM 3** FAQ'S QUIZ (from Pornography and Violence in the Media)

Fill in the blanks with the phrases below. You may use the article to help you.

1. The only purpose of pornography is \_\_\_\_\_.
2. God's plan for human sexuality is that it takes place in \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Pornography does not rejoice in human sexuality; rather it debases or \_\_\_\_\_ this gift of our sexuality.
4. To say that pornography is a lucrative industry means that \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The business of pornography would end if \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Pornography and \_\_\_\_\_ often go together.
7. Freedom of expression is a right enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Human Rights. However, this right carries with it a matching \_\_\_\_\_. This responsibility means that images or lyrics that foster \_\_\_\_\_ are wrong.
8. The basic message of pornography is that others (most often women or children) are \_\_\_\_\_.
9. I can do my part to stem the tide of pornography and violence by \_\_\_\_\_.

- Taking responsibility for the entertainment I choose
- Relationship
- people stopped using it
- violence
- to arouse sexual feelings
- objects or things rather than whole persons puts down
- responsibility
- makes millions and millions off dollars
- hate or disdain for life
- puts down

**GUIDED MEDITATION**

*The teacher slowly and reflectively reads the meditation. Students may have copies for reflection afterwards but their response is based on their experience; it is not a paper and pencil task.*

Get into a relaxed, comfortable position. Close your eyes and breathe deeply; feel your heart beating; be aware of sounds far in the background – maybe a clock, traffic, people in the hall, voices outside, etc ; let those sounds fade away and stillness surround you. That stillness is the Spirit of God deep within you. Listen.

In this stillness, picture yourself. Your whole self as if you were looking in a mirror.

Now imagine your arm – think of all the holons that make your arm work: skin cell holons, muscle cell holons, nerve cell holons, imagine inside each of those cells the molecule holons and inside the molecules, the atom holons Without all these smaller holons, your arm could not be a holon. Be amazed at the complexity of your arm.

But your arm is not an arm unless it is part of more holons that make up your body. Think of the many holons that work to make you a whole person – every gene, chromosome, atom, cell, skin, bone, brain, heart, muscle, hair, etc., etc.

But those physical holons are not all that make you you. All of your feelings, beliefs, emotions, abilities, strengths, weaknesses, friends, family, community, culture, town/city, country are also holons that form you. And all those holons are part of bigger and smaller holons. Be amazed at the complexity of you.

You are a whole composed of many parts, yet part of an even greater whole – part of the mystery of all creation, part of God. Every person is part of this whole – part of the mystery of God. Be amazed at the complexity of creation.

Sit quietly with this sense of amazement for a few minutes.

Let us pray.

Dear God, thank you for loving me into being. Thank you for making me a complete and complex person. Help me to see your presence in everyone and therefore to always treat people as whole and entire and not as fragments or just body parts to be used and then discarded. Help me to choose wholeness and to grow in my understanding that pornography, violence, domination, and anything that denies the dignity of personhood is wrong and far from your plan for human sexuality.

Jesus, you always saw people as whole and worthy of love. Be my guide. Amen

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