

Pornography Social Criteria Screen

Authority: The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has expressed its distress about the damage done personally and socially by the impact of pornography and the related practices of commercial sexual exploitation in several of its social teaching documents. These include *Human Sexuality: Gift & Trust* (2009), *Commercial Sexual Exploitation* (a social message from 2001) and *Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor* (2003).

Wording of the Screen: The ELCA recommends no investment in firms involved in the production, marketing or distribution of pornography and related practices.

Definition of Problem: The ELCA holds that “Sexual exploitation in any situation, either personally or commercially, inside or outside legally contracted marriage, is sinful because it is destructive of God’s good gift [of sexuality] and human integrity.” (message, 1) In particular the ELCA message identifies as harmful commercial sexual exploitation exercised in forms such as pornographic magazines and videos, sex tourism, strip clubs, escort services, the internet or other means that degrade all participants, both providers and customers. (1) As indicated in *Human Sexuality* “The possibility of profit or pleasure is not a sufficient moral basis to use human sexuality for purposes that harm individuals or undermine social trust.” (34) The ELCA documents also indicate that Christian social responsibility includes monitoring the way in which economic forces harm or support healthy individual choices and social structures.

Recognizing that various investors will implement this along a continuum, for the purpose of this screen commercial pornography might include companies that manufacture pornography or other products of the sex industry, and those companies selling, promoting and marketing in this industry. It also includes other corporations deriving profit from pornography. These might include distribution networks (television, movies/videos, hotel chains, etc.) as well as industries touched by sex trafficking.

Social policy and studies:

[Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor](#) [ELCA, 2003]

[Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust](#) [ELCA 2009]

[A Message on Commercial Sexual Exploitation](#) [ELCA, 2001]

[The Victims of Pornography and Pornography](#) [ALC, 1985 and 1974]

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