

# *Prostitution on Demand*

## *Legalizing the Buyers as Sexual Consumers*

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*Research, programs, and legislation related to sex trafficking are often premised on the invisibility of the male buyer and the failure to address men's role in buying and abusing women in prostitution. Governments, UN agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and others act as if the male demand for sexual exploitation is insignificant, or that prostitution is so entrenched because, after all, "men will be men." Little research on trafficking has focused on the so-called customer as a root cause of trafficking and sexual exploitation. And even less legislation has penalized the male customer whose right to buy women and children for prostitution activities remains unquestioned. This article looks at the demand—its meaning, the myths that rationalize why men buy women in prostitution, qualitative information on the buyers in two studies conducted by the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW)—as well as best practices that address the gender of demand.*

**Keywords:** *male buyers of prostitution; prostitution; sex trafficking*

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*What does legalization of prostitution or decriminalization of the sex industry mean? In the Netherlands, as well as in other countries where prostitution has been normalized, legalization amounts to sanctioning most aspects of the sex industry, including pimps who are reconstructed as prostitution businessmen and legitimate sexual entrepreneurs. Legalization/decriminalization of the sex industry converts brothels, sex clubs, massage parlors, and other sites of prostitution activities into above-board venues where commercial sexual acts are allowed to flourish legally with few restraints. Under the regime of legalization, "prostitute users," or the men who buy women for the sex of prostitution, are also empowered as sexual consumers.*

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In calling for legalization or decriminalization of prostitution, some people believe that they dignify the women in prostitution. However, validating prostitution as work dignifies the sex industry and the male consumers, not the women in it. People often do not realize that decriminalization means decriminalization of most of the major participants in the sex industry, not just the women. In addition, they have not thought through the consequences of legalizing pimps as legitimate prostitution entrepreneurs, or the fact that men who buy women for prostitution activities are now accepted as normal consumers of a sexual service.

There is a persistent research, program, and legislative silence about the role of men who abuse and buy women in prostitution. Governments, UN agencies and reports, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) send the message that the male demand for sexual exploitation is not a large part of the problem, or that prostitution is so entrenched because, after all, “men will be men.” Little research on trafficking and prostitution has focused on the men who buy women for prostitution—the so-called customer—as a root cause of trafficking and sexual exploitation. In addition, there is meager legislation that penalizes the male customer whose right to buy women and children for prostitution activities remains unquestioned.

This article looks at the demand—its meaning, the myths that rationalize why men buy women in prostitution, and qualitative information on the buyers contained in two studies conducted by the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW)—as well as best practices that address the gender of demand. I do not contend in this article that it is only male demand for the sex of prostitution that promotes trafficking, prostitution, and the sex industry. I do contend that male demand is a primary factor in the expansion of the sex industry worldwide and sustains commercial sexual exploitation, and that the buyer has largely escaped examination, analysis, censure, and penalty for his actions.

### WHAT IS THE MEANING OF DEMAND?

The UN *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime* (United Nations, 2000) is the first UN instrument to address demand. It

does so in the context of prevention of trafficking, generally calling on countries to take or strengthen legislative or other measures to discourage the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation of women and children (Art. 9.5).

The Swedish Law That Prohibits the Purchase of Sexual Services (Ekberg, 2004) is a more exact elucidation of the demand. The Swedish Law clearly articulates that demand has a gender and this gender is male—not as in male biology but as in male behavior. The Law goes further than the UN Protocol on trafficking and states that prostitution is men's violence against women (Swedish Government Offices, 1998); and, as such, the Law prohibits the purchase of sexual services within the larger framework of a Violence Against Women Government Bill (*Kvinnofrid*). The Swedish Law is a model in targeting the demand for prostitution and in delineating the demand, naming the demand as the men who use and abuse women in prostitution.

Instead of abandoning women in the sex industry to state-sponsored prostitution, the Swedish Law addresses the predatory actions of men who buy women for the sex of prostitution. Recognizing the inseparability of prostitution and trafficking, the Law states, "Prostitution and trafficking in women are seen as harmful practices that cannot, and should not be separated; in order to effectively eliminate trafficking in women, concrete measures against prostitution must be put in place" (Ekberg, 2003, p. 69).

Legislators often advance legalization proposals because they think nothing else is successful in legally addressing prostitution. However, there is a legal alternative. Rather than sanctioning prostitution, states could address the demand by penalizing the men who buy women for the sex of prostitution. Sweden has drafted legislation recognizing that without male demand, there would be a much-decreased female supply. Thinking outside the repressive box of legalization, Sweden has acknowledged that prostitution is a form of male violence against women and children, and the purchase of sexual services is criminalized.

The dictionary can be helpful in defining and describing demand. One definition is, "To claim as just or due." Another definition taken from economics, without being economically reductionistic, is, "The desire to possess something with the

ability to purchase it." In the context of prostitution and trafficking, these definitions accurately describe the demand aspect of prostitution.

Julia O'Connell Davidson, who coined the useful term, *prostitute-users*, has cowritten an International Organization of Migration (IOM) Migration Research Series report titled "Is Trafficking in Human Beings Demand Driven?" (O'Connell & Anderson, 2003). This report maintains that there is no direct and unilateral relationship between consumer demand and any specific form of sexual activity. More than male demand for the sex of prostitution, the authors cite three reasons for the rapid expansion of the sex industry: a market that is (a) poorly regulated, (b) widely stigmatized, and (c) partly criminalized.

One theme in this report is that "sex work" is much too complex an issue to limit demand simply to the consumers of sexual services. We agree that factors promoting the expansion of global commercial sexual exploitation are indeed complex. However, we do not agree that complexity should be allowed to serve as an academic excuse for inaction, or as a non sequitur from which few answers can then follow. Indeed, we must not simplify the complexity; however, at the same time we must confront complexity. Complexity should be conducive to clarity, not confound it.

In the IOM report that proposes to address demand, there is a reluctance to target the gender of demand, much less to legally penalize the buyers.

Even when focusing only on the sex sector, it is not clear that calls for punitive policies against customers would lead to the desired outcome. . . . Given the political and moral problems posed by a policy of legal suppression, and the fact that individual patterns of consumer behavior are often established at a very young age, we would argue instead that those who wish to see the commercial sex market shrink rather than continue to expand . . . need to come up with more creative, less punitive and longer-term strategies. (O'Connell & Anderson, 2003, p. 43)

Of course, many scholars and advocates who work against trafficking and prostitution and who see consumer demand as a root cause of prostitution and trafficking know that male demand is not the only promoter of prostitution. National and international

economic policies; globalization; an organized sex industry; countries in financial and political crisis; female poverty that is preyed on by recruiters, traffickers, and pimps; military presence in many parts of the world; racial myths and stereotypes; and women's inequality all contribute to the rise in global sexual exploitation. These factors, too, are highly gendered. At the same time, many scholars and activists would see the male demand for the sex of prostitution as the most immediate and proximate cause of the expansion of the sex industry, without which it would be highly unprofitable for pimps, recruiters, and traffickers to seek out a supply of women. This may be labeled simplistic, unnuanced, or conceptually impaired; however, a prostitution market without male consumers would go broke.

One reason that the authors of the IOM report offer for not targeting the male consumers is that the same argument would be "rarely applied to any other sector—for example, consumers who buy the product of the labor of 'trafficked' women, children and men in the form of T-shirts, diamonds, processed meat, etc." (O'Connell & Anderson, 2003, p. 10). The authors conveniently elide that these "products" of other trafficked persons do not involve the exploitation of their bodies both as "product" and as "labor." In T-shirt making, the consumer buys the T-shirt, not the person making it. In prostitution, the consumer buys the woman's body and her "labor" of blow jobs, "half-and-half," "full service," or whatever else he wants her to "work at." One survivor of prostitution criticized the superficiality of this comparison when she stated in response to the claim that prostitution was no better or worse than flipping burgers at McDonald's: "In McDonald's, you're not the meat! In prostitution, you are the meat" (Giobbe, 1999, n.p.).

Some critics of sex trafficking use terminology of supply and demand to explain factors that promote trafficking. They acknowledge that we must address the demand. However, what they mean by *demand* often amounts to an abstract emphasis on market forces. Unfortunately, in much discussion of demand, men once more become invisible when demand is articulated in terms of the market and economic push/pull factors. Demand supposedly has no gender.

## MYTHS ABOUT WHY MEN BUY WOMEN IN PROSTITUTION

There are many myths surrounding the perpetrators of prostitution that are used to rationalize and often to excuse what men do and why they do it. Here are some of the ways in which men escape responsibility for their sexual abuse of women in prostitution:

- Male customers of prostituted women are basically decent men looking for a bit of harmless fun.
- Men who use women in prostitution are sexually frustrated men who do not get what they need/want/demand from the women in their lives.
- Men purchasing sex is the inevitable result of natural male instincts.
- Prostitution protects “good” women. If prostitution did not exist, more “good” women would be raped. Prostitution, therefore, is a sexual safety valve, not for the women in prostitution, but for the “other” women.
- Prostitution is a needed sexual service for men without women, whether temporarily or more long term: for military men on tours of duty, for captains of industry on tours of business, for migrant male workers away from home, for men who because of disability or dysfunction do not have the usual number of women available to them, or for lonely, frustrated, or oversexed men—literally for all types of men. This myth assumes that there is always a population of men who need sex and must get it, even if it means they buy the bodies of women and children.
- Men need to release tension, especially if they are in the military, or on business, or in competitive or stressful work situations. Buying women for the sex of prostitution is letting off steam.
- Male biology is different from female biology and requires multiple women for sexual satisfaction. Men who use women in prostitution fulfill the sexual evolutionary process.
- Prostitution is a means of education for initiating boys and men into sexual activity in a way that allows them to control the situation and dominate the woman.
- Many men who buy women in prostitution are vulnerable themselves and have little control of their lives. Thus, buyers are victims, too.
- Men are giving many women the means to make a living in a society where they would starve or exist in utter poverty. This is not exploitation. This is charity.

- Men are able to compartmentalize their lives and thereby do not regard themselves as unfaithful to their wives or partners when they buy women and children for sex.
- Men buy children because they want to be ensured that they will not contract venereal diseases. In some societies, having sex with a supposed virgin is said to cure a man of sexually transmitted diseases or to have miraculous powers that will rejuvenate him.

Many of these myths are used to rationalize men's use and abuse of women in prostitution. It is not my task here to analyze the *why* behind these myths, as if understanding these rationalizations may give us some insight into why men prostitute women. That may well be true; however, I list these myths to show that men buy women in prostitution, as Barry (1979, 1995) stated, because they can. What these rationalizations reveal is that men construct prostitution as inevitable, not that it is inevitable. If we allow any of these myths to justify prostitution, then we are telling women and girls in prostitution that they must continue to do what they do because prostitution is predestined and that's the way men are.

### CONSEQUENCES OF LEGALIZED PROSTITUTION ON THE DEMAND

Some have argued that normalizing prostitution as work is good economic development policy. The International Labor Organization (ILO) has called for prostitution to be recognized as a legitimate economic sector, suggesting that women in the sex industry and countries will benefit. The ILO report has proposed that recognizing and regulating prostitution as a normal economic sector would be particularly beneficial for poorer countries in Southeast Asia, and that revenues from the sex sector could be an enormous source of tax revenue to aid countries in financial crisis (Lim, 1998).

Prostitution as good economic development policy means prostitution on demand. Legalizing prostitution and normalizing it as economic development is satirized quite well in the following tongue-in-cheek commentary:

As sex is a human need and prostitution is here to stay, we should think about a proactive and realistic approach to deal with the



situation. Therefore, I would suggest to pay more attention to sustainable prostitution (SP) in order to transform inevitable prostitution into a more responsible and beneficial industry. As with the term sustainability in general, it is a bit difficult to concretely define SP. But clearly, SP can be a miracle agent for sustained economic growth in the Third World. . . . [U]nder properly planned and managed conditions, SP has the potential to make positive contributions to community development and environmental protection. Most importantly, it can also empower poor and underprivileged women. In its ideal form, SP can create jobs and income, boost foreign exchange, disperse benefits to rural areas, and generate funds for public purposes such as education, health care, preservation of culture and nature. (Pleumarom, 1997, n.p.)

In the sustainable prostitution paradigm, prostitution not only gives the customer what he wants ("The Sex Industry," 1998) but also is viewed as an economic development strategy for poor, marginalized women. *Sustainable prostitution* is an apt description of what now exists in countries where legalization of prostitution and decriminalization of the sex industry has been implemented.

Since the onset of legalization of prostitution in Victoria, Australia, more men go to more and bigger brothels because legalization and decriminalization are out of control and, quite simply, are impossible to control. "Each week 60,000 men spend \$7 million on prostitution. . . . When one considers that Victoria's population is around 3.5 million people, these figures attest to how mainstream buying the right to sexually abuse a woman has become in the state" (Sullivan & Jeffreys, 2001, p. 4). After legalization of prostitution in New South Wales in 1995, brothels tripled in number by 1999 and expanded in size, the vast majority having no licenses but operating and advertising with impunity.

Specialty brothels advertise services that cater to men with disabilities, and caretakers (mostly women) are now required to take disabled men to brothels and assist them in engaging in sex acts (Sullivan & Jeffreys, 2001). In New Zealand, where prostitution was legalized in June 2003 by a one-vote majority, disability agencies are seeking money to train women in prostitution to provide "sexual services" to disabled men ("State-Funded Sex," 2003). Legalization makes more prostituted women available to more men.

Advertisements line the highways of Victoria offering women as objects for sexual use and teaching new generations of men and



boys to treat women as subordinates. Businessmen are encouraged to hold their corporate meetings in these clubs where owners supply naked women on the table at tea breaks and lunchtime. A Melbourne brothel owner stated that the client base was "well educated professional men, who visit during the day and then go home to their families" (Sullivan & Jeffreys, 2001, p. 14).

Women who desire more egalitarian relationships with men find that often the men in their lives are visiting brothels and sex clubs. They have the choice to accept that their male partners are buying women in commercial sexual transactions, deny what their partners are doing, or leave the relationship (Sullivan & Jeffreys, 2001).

In the Netherlands, legalization has brought with it professional associations of prostitution buyers and entrepreneurs, whose express purpose is to promote prostitution for more men, and who consult and collaborate with the government to further their interests. These include the Association of Operators of Relaxation Businesses, the Cooperating Consultation of Operators of Window Prostitution, and the Man/Woman and Prostitution Foundation, a group of men who regularly use women in prostitution, and whose specific aims include "to make prostitution and the use of services of prostitutes more accepted and openly discussible," and "to protect the interests of clients" (Bureau NRM, 2002, pp. 115-116).

Faced with a dwindling number of Dutch women who engage in prostitution activities and the expanding demand for more female bodies and more exotic women to service the prostitution market, the Dutch National Rapporteur on Trafficking has stated that in the future, a solution may be to "offer [to the market] prostitutes from non-EU/EEA [European Union/European Economic Area] countries, who voluntarily choose to work in prostitution" (Bureau NRM, 2002, p. 140). These women would be given "legal and controlled access to the Dutch market" (Bureau NRM, 2002, p. 140). As prostitution has been transformed into sex work, and pimps into entrepreneurs, so too this recommendation redefines trafficking as "voluntary migration for sex work." Looking to the future, the Netherlands is targeting poor women for the international sex trade to remedy the inadequacies of the free market of sexual services. Prostitution is thus normalized as a suitable option for the poor.

Interpol and the Dutch national police confirm that the Netherlands is a prime destination and home for child sexual abusers, also known as pedophiles. The British police have accused the Netherlands of being a leading pedophile country in Europe. Claims that legalization of prostitution would control and reduce child prostitution have not proved true, with police suspecting that child prostitute abusers choose the Netherlands because of its prostitution-promoting environment. The pedophile lobby is also very strong in the Netherlands, advocating the "right of children to sexual self-determination." The lobby has had several legal victories, one of which has been to make sexual abuse of children older than age 12 years actionable only in cases where a parent or child reports the crime. Because no action may be taken without a complaint, abusers are freer to use children and most often go free (Child Rights Information Network [CRIN], 1995, p. 4). In Romania and Poland, Dutch child sexual abusers have started their own sex resorts (CRIN, 1995, p. 5). In addition, the trade in children from eastern Europe and other continents to European countries passes through the Netherlands (CRIN, 1995, p. 6).

Some argue that we must make distinctions between forced and voluntary prostitution, prohibiting child prostitution but allowing women the choice. However, most male consumers who buy women for sexual activities do not debate the alleged distinctions between forced and voluntary prostitution, between child and adult prostitution, or between trafficking and prostitution. Most male consumers do not stop to ask whether women and girls elect or are forced into prostitution or whether they have been trafficked from abroad. In fact, if men do learn that force has been a means of initiating and keeping some women in prostitution, this can be a turn-on. Force has been an intrinsic part of the repertoire of many men's sexuality outside of prostitution. Men use coerced sex in the home, with children, and with subordinates.

### **WHO ARE THE INVISIBLE MEN WHO CONSTITUTE THE DEMAND FOR PROSTITUTION?**

There has been some research on men who are prostitute-users. More generally, there have been studies that try to account for the

number of men who, as buyers, engage in prostitution activities. In Asia, a study of Thailand conducted by the U.S. Agency for International Development reported that 75% of Thai men were prostitution buyers and that almost 50% had their first sexual intercourse with women in prostitution (Brown, 2000). In Vietnam, 70% of those caught in brothels are reported to be state officials ("Officials Make Up 70%," 2000). Brown (2000) also cited studies that indicate that 60% to 70% of men in Cambodia have purchased women for sexual activities.

In Europe, 1 of 8 (or 12.5%) men in Sweden uses women and children in prostitution (Ministry of Industry, 2003). At a recent conference in Alba, Italy, on the subject of legalization of prostitution, it was reported that 1 of 6 (or almost 17%) Italian men uses women in prostitution. Differently stated, this means that in Italy, 9 million men use an estimated 50,000 women in prostitution (International Conference, 2004). According to German criminal psychologist, Adolf Gallwitz, 18% of German men regularly pay for sex ("Stolen Youth," 2003). A German doctoral thesis in process finds that one million prostitute-users buy women daily in Germany for sexual activities (Herz, 2003).

A 1997 study in the United Kingdom estimated that 10% of London's male population buys women for the sex of prostitution (Brown, 2000). In the United States, as early as 1948, it was estimated that one half of the adult male population was frequent prostitute-users, and that 69% of the same population had purchased women for sexual activities at least once (Brown, 2000). Numbers, of course, can always be debated. Yet these various statistics, ranging from lower to higher, indicate that large-enough numbers of men buy women and children to satisfy their sexual demands.

To understand the impact of legalization and decriminalization of the sex industry, we must examine who and what activities are being legally sanctioned. As part of two larger studies on sex trafficking into the United States, the CATW interviewed women in local prostitution and women who had been trafficked from other countries into the United States. In addition, we also interviewed social service providers and law enforcement authorities about men's behavior and activities as buyers to understand the role of men in creating the demand for prostituted and trafficked

women. From these studies, we gained a description of prostitute users, the findings of which I cite here, not as a quantitative assessment of male buyers, nor as a full picture of the demand side of prostitution, but rather as primary information about prostitute-users and about men's attitudes and treatment of women in prostitution.

The first study, supported by a U.S. Department of Justice grant, titled *Sex Trafficking in the United States* (Raymond, Hughes, & Gomez, 2001), interviewed 128 individuals, including 15 international women, most of whom had been trafficked to the United States, 25 U.S. women in local prostitution industries, 43 social service providers, 32 law enforcement officials, and 13 others. The second study, supported by a Ford Foundation grant, titled "A Comparative Study of Women Trafficked in the Migration Process," interviewed 146 victims of sexual exploitation, most who had been trafficked across and within borders in five countries (Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Venezuela, and the United States; Raymond, D'Cunha, et al., 2002). Information on male prostitute-users from these studies is referenced below by year and page.

#### **BACKGROUND OF BUYERS**

Several studies reveal that men who buy women in prostitution come from all nationalities, races, and walks of life. In our U.S. study, many of the brothels housing international women, most of whom had been trafficked, specifically catered to buyers from within women's ethnic communities. One law enforcement agent reported that in New York City's Chinatown, the Chinese houses of prostitution are closed to non-Chinese buyers. Not even other Chinese men are allowed into the Fucanese brothels. Prostitute buyers have to speak the correct dialect to gain access to the brothels. Restriction of buyers also applies in the Mexican establishments, where certain speech patterns are monitored for entry (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 69).

A number of African American women in the sex industry in the United States commented that the majority of their customers were White, mostly married, and from the suburbs. However, other ethnicities of men were also described as buyers:

I had one Chinese guy 16 years old. He brought other people from China and he brought them all to me. We really didn't do nothing. All they wanted to do was to see my black skin. They just kept rubbing it to see if the color would come off. (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 70)

In our five-country report (Raymond, D'Cunha, et al., 2002), Filipino women trafficked to Japan reported that many Japanese customers were demanding and violent. Filipino women trafficked to Nigeria found their Filipino buyers were generally well behaved. Although empathizing with their plight, many Filipino men nevertheless bought them for sex (Raymond, D'Cunha, et al., 2002, p. 107).

The Thailand country report (Raymond, D'Cunha, et al., 2002) describes how women and children of diverse ethnic groups and nationalities are incorporated into the Thai sex industry:

With an emphasis on "differentness, exotica and mystery," Thai and Japanese men demand fair skinned hill-tribe girls from Thailand, or from the Northeast part of the country, or from Burma; farangs (foreigners) prefer browner women from North Thailand; and Chinese buyers demand Chinese women from the region. (p. 138)

Men from U.S. military bases were frequently mentioned as buyers in the U.S. study. Clubs, massage parlors, and brothels replicate the sexual rest and recreation (R&R) areas that proliferate near U.S. military bases to serve U.S. servicemen outside the United States. The military demand for prostitution in the towns and cities surrounding U.S. military bases abroad continues to be responsible for the exploitation, rape, and prostitution of impoverished local populations in these areas. The infrastructure and culture are re-created in the United States, with inordinate numbers of Asian women especially, trafficked and exploited in U.S. massage parlors, strip clubs, bars, and brothels surrounding U.S. military bases (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 70).

#### **AGE, EDUCATION, AND OCCUPATIONS OF BUYERS**

Women in the sex industry stated that buyers come from all age groups. The range of ages reported was from age 15 to 90 years. One U.S. woman in prostitution stated that younger men use women in street prostitution because they are cheaper and easy to

access, and the young men think they are getting away with something. One internationally trafficked woman who saw mostly older men stated that they came for the company, not so much for the sex, because “a lot of old men can’t perform.” This same woman commented that fathers often brought sons to give them a “good time—training on sex” (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 70).

In CATW’s five-country study, the Indonesian country report noted that buyers of women in prostitution in the areas of Batam and Karimun Islands were very old men who came from ethnic Chinese backgrounds. It was a common picture in these areas to see a very old man holding hands with a young woman in the streets or the entertainment establishments, looking more like grandfather and granddaughter than buyer and young woman in prostitution. Some of these men were also reported to use medicine to achieve sexual function. Respondents reported that some older men died in the act of sex when the medicine they consumed (possibly Viagra) precipitated a heart attack (Raymond, D’Cunha, et al., 2002, p. 81).

Buyers also came from all walks of life. Several women in the U.S. study commented on the number of married men (70% to 90%) who bought women for prostitution. In the five-country report, 75% of the buyers in the Indonesian country report were married, whereas the common assumption among Indonesians is that it is unmarried men who buy women in prostitution (Raymond, D’Cunha, et al., 2002, p. 82). Buyers in the Venezuela country report were between the ages of 17 and 80 years, the majority of whom were married.

Men in the five-country study had more education than the women they bought in prostitution. Women interviewed in Venezuela reported that the educational level of buyers ranged from illiterate to Ph.D.s. The majority of men had completed high school or university, and a number had attained a doctoral degree (Raymond, D’Cunha, et al., 2002, p. 166). Compared to the educational levels of the Indonesian women, the buyers in Indonesia had a relatively high education (Raymond, D’Cunha, et al., 2002, p. 82).

In the U.S. study, occupations of U.S. buyers of women in prostitution ranged from working class, such as fast food employees, truckers, oil rig and pipeline workers, or warehouse workers, to

professional men, some of whom were prominent community members, such as businessmen, lawyers, doctors, politicians, and dentists. One woman reported, "Guys with the best jobs are the cheapest. The others (farmers, etc.) are more lenient with their money" (p. 70).

Several U.S. women reported that police officers or undercover cops had asked for sex in exchange for dropping charges against them.

Police officers—they were abusive. The undercover cops asked me to have sex with them—straight and oral—in order to drop the charges. Police are frequent customers, though, and they walk in like they own the place. In fact one of the cops ran his own house somewhere in Brooklyn and was always trying to get me to be part of his posse. They'd come in and be on a power trip and treat us like we were nothing. (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 71)

Another U.S. woman commented that her first trick was a policeman. She was not arrested, because he let her off (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 71).

These reports indicate that the main users of women in prostitution are regular men who are in regular marriages, study in regular educational programs, and have regular jobs, some of whom are entrusted with upholding the very laws that they violate. In other words, studies indicate that prostitute-users in general are not marginalized men, unlike the women they use and abuse. As another report noted, even those who use children in prostitution "are nice people, often occupying a leading position in society. . . . The image of the pedophile as a 'dirty old man' is hardly ever correct" (CRIN, 1995, p. 3). In all regions of the world that we studied, men are seeking young women, often underage girls.

#### **BUYERS' DEMANDS**

In the United States study, all those interviewed reported that, on average, women were required to service 1 to 10 men per day. Law enforcement estimates were higher, with a majority reporting that women were required to engage in commercial sex with 6 to 20 or more men per day. One immigration official reported that one of his witnesses stated, "It was a ridiculous figure. Depending on the day—it was sometimes at least ten. . . . Over a period of two



and a half months, one of our witnesses said she had to sleep with over a hundred men" (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 71). Another law enforcement agent reported that if you include other sexual activities, such as stripping, in this tally, essentially women are providing sex to 50 or more men a night.

In the cheaper venues, some women had to have sex with 20 to 30 men per day. When there were few buyers, women had to entertain the guards and the pimps. One trafficked woman reported that weekends were the busiest times. When women were brought into bachelor parties or conventions, they might have to engage in sex with up to 20 men (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 71).

In the five-country report, Indonesian women reported that they had to service men throughout the night, even when they were ill or did not feel well (Raymond, D'Cunha, et al., 2002, p. 83). In the Thailand country report, Raymond, D'Cunha, et al. (2002) wrote about Thai women trafficked to Australia:

All the women said they had no control over the number of clients they were made to service. In Australia, the brothel was a sex factory with a woman forced to take a minimum of 500 clients without payment, to repay a debt of A\$40,000 that could be unilaterally increased. After repayment, women would be paid A\$40-50 per client. Living in conditions of complete bondage, these women were made to work 12 hours a day, 7 days a week to meet the target so that they could start earning money. Police admitted at least three Melbourne brothels used contract girls who had to sleep with 700 clients each, without payment, to meet their contract terms. (pp. 141-142)

D'Cunha commented further that, "Once in prostitution a woman realizes that she has no control over the choice of client, the pace or price of work, or the nature of the sexual activity. She is the shared property of any male who can pay a price for sex and for her body (p. 141).

In the U.S. study, the majority of trafficked and local women (82% and 58%, respectively) were expected to comply with all requests of the buyers (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, Table 7). If the women tried to place limits on what they would do, what the men could do to them, or where they could be touched, the men would complain. Activities in which women were expected to engage were, "Everything. From half and half, some [men] liked

to be beaten up, some [men] liked to be urinated on, some [men] wanted us to dress in different clothes" (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 72). Another woman responded to the question about buyer demands by listing the sexual acts requested with a price tag attached to each one:

Sitting naked: \$10; Verbally abusing men: \$10 - \$20; Masturbation: \$20; Homosexual fantasy: \$20; Using a dildo: \$30; Anal sex with dildo: \$40; Pee in a glass: \$100; Sniff shoes, pop balloons with my high heels, hotdog man—put ketchup and mustard on his penis, tie a string on his penis and tug. (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 72)

Some women stated that they would refuse to accept verbal abuse or enact men's fantasies of sex with children. Other women said that if they needed the money (e.g., to buy drugs) they would take what they could get and do what was demanded. One woman summed it up by stating that the most important thing was to say you enjoyed whatever the customer requested that you do (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 72).

## CONDOMS

In the U.S. study, almost one half of the trafficked women and U.S. women in prostitution (47%) reported that men frequently expected sex without condoms. Fifty percent of the international women, and 73% of U.S. women reported that men would pay more for sex without a condom. A significant portion of the women (international women 29%, U.S. women 45%) reported that men became abusive if women tried to insist that they use condoms (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, Table 8).

Some women said that establishments have rules that men wear condoms; however, in reality, men still try to have sex without them. One woman said, "It's 'regulation' to wear a condom at the sauna, but negotiable between parties on the side. Most guys expected blowjobs without a condom" (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 72). Several U.S. women reported that men try to slip off the condom without the women knowing it. Another woman reported that she did not use condoms regularly when she was offered extra money: "I very rarely had sex using a condom. I'd be one of those liars if I said 'Oh I always used a condom.' If there

was extra money coming in, then the condom would be out the window. I was looking for the extra money" (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 72).

Many factors mitigate against condom use: the need to make money; older women's decline in attractiveness to men; competition from places that do not require condoms; pimp pressure to have sex with no condom for more money; money needed for a drug fix/habit or to pay off the pimp; and the general lack of control that prostituted women have of their bodies in prostitution venues (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, pp. 72-73).

### SCREENING BUYERS

Health checks and screening women for sexually transmitted infections have been themes in the public health approach to prostitution. The unexpressed goal in this approach, and in the public health literature in general, has been screening of the women for the protection of the male buyers and the general public. Few researchers question whether the male buyers are screened for protection of the women, not only for disease but also for protection of the women from abuse.

Almost unanimously, law enforcement officials and social service providers, advocates, and researchers in the U.S. study indicated that they were not aware of any sex industry practices of screening men for disease or for protection of prostituted women. In most sex venues, there is also little physical protection for the women from violence and abuse of buyers. One social service provider reported that in some establishments, "They tell you that there's a bouncer, but I have never ever seen a bouncer before" (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 73). One law enforcement official stated,

As long as they are making the money, anything goes. In [a particular club], they have dungeon rooms—there's no way for her to get help if she wanted. One of the girls had reported to her pimp that one of the johns had brutally raped and beat her. All he [the pimp] said was did you get the money. Plus the pimps beat them up too. (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 74)

Social service providers generally reported that screening for disease and protection from abuse were impossible, especially in

the escort services where women travel to different locations. One social service provider reported that in the saunas or health clubs, women had no one they could call on for protection. In one rural trafficking case involving migrant male workers, men came into the trailers (makeshift brothels) high on drugs and alcohol and wanted the women to perform sexual acts on demand. According to an advocate for the women, if the women refused, they would frequently be beaten and raped by the buyers and/or those guarding the brothel. The buyers would call the ring leader "who would personally come in and give them a beating as well. The young girls got it bad" (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 74).

International and U.S. women in prostitution in the U.S. study also indicated that prostitution establishments did little to protect them. "The only time they protect anyone is to protect the customers. For instance, they only put in the surveillance camera after a customer was killed" (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 74). Of the women who did report that establishments gave some protection, they qualified it by pointing out that no protector was ever in the room with them, where anything could occur. "The driver functioned as a bodyguard. You're supposed to call when you get in, to ascertain that everything was OK. But they are not standing outside the door while you're in there, so anything could still happen" (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 74).

## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Trafficked and prostituted women in the sex industry suffer the same kinds of violence and sexual exploitation as women who have been battered, raped, and sexually assaulted. The difference is that when women are subjected to this same kind of violence and sexual exploitation in prostitution, it is viewed as sex and often tolerated as part of the so-called job. The findings of these two studies reveal that violence is endemic to the sex of prostitution and traps women in the system of prostitution.

Much of the violence of prostitution is perpetrated by buyers. In the U.S. study, U.S. women reported higher rates of violence compared to international women, most of whom had been trafficked into the sex industry. The highest rates of buyer violence reported by both groups of prostituted women were in the following categories: physical violence, sadistic sex, and use of weapons

to threaten or harm women. Other types of violence cited included being harassed by obsessive men, videotaped, robbed, kidnapped, stalked, and destruction of women's property (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, Table 9).

In the five-country report, rates and frequency of violence and control are extremely high, with physical harm (almost 80%), sexual assault (more than 60%), emotional abuse (more than 80%), verbal threats (more than 70%), and control through the use of drugs/alcohol (almost 70%) leading the indicators (Raymond, D'Cunha, et al., 2002, p. 62). The five-country report did not separate violence perpetrated by pimps and traffickers from violence perpetrated by buyers.

Indonesian respondents reported the highest rates and frequency of violence of the four country reports quantified. Ninety percent to 100% of Indonesian women reported that they experienced physical harm, emotional abuse, immigration status threats, death threats to themselves or their families, and control through the use of weapons. Seventy percent to 90% of Indonesian respondents reported enduring sexual assault, threats to report them to the police, control through the use of drugs/alcohol, and withholding of money. In addition, the frequency of violence, means of control, and threats were very high (Raymond, D'Cunha, et al., 2002, p. 62). When women reported violence from buyers, however, they often did not define these acts as violent because they had been instructed to do anything the buyers wanted. Most Indonesian women reported feeling violated by the buyers when the men demanded oral or anal sex. Using strategies of avoidance and survival, women plied the buyers with alcohol until they were drunk and sleepy. Most of the respondents also reported that they had tried to leave the sex industry but received little help (Raymond, D'Cunha, et al., 2002, pp. 83-84).

To understand how violence is intrinsic to prostitution, it is necessary to understand the sex of prostitution. The sexual service provided in prostitution is most often violent, degrading, and abusive sexual acts, including sex between a buyer and several women; slashing the woman with razor blades; tying women to bedposts and lashing them till they bleed; biting women's breasts; burning the women with cigarettes; cutting her arms, legs, and genital areas; and urinating or defecating on women. One woman interviewed in the Thailand country report, Choy, told of a buyer

who inserted an iron rod into her vagina. She bled profusely and suffered vaginal inflammation, bleeding, and pain for more than 10 days. The buyer insisted it was menstrual blood and complained about her to the brothel owner who, although he believed her, did nothing to the man (Raymond, D'Cunha, et al., 2002, p. 143).

Women in prostitution are often raped on the job, so to speak. Nine of the women in the Thailand country report said they had been raped in prostitution multiple times. Others reported that an agreement to service a single buyer resulted in being gang raped by several of his friends. None of the women sought any help or reported the rapes to the police, knowing that they would be told they asked for it (Raymond, D'Cunha, et al., 2002, p. 143).

D'Cunha listed common responses of women in prostitution to the men who buy them: disgust, fear, resentment, indifference, feigning cheerfulness and enjoyment of sex, play acting and pandering to buyers, and jeering at buyers who fall prey to their pretenses. Some women perceive the men solely as sources of income. Some women are also attracted to and fall in love with buyers. Dissociation from the buyer and the sexual act is a very common survival technique used by women in prostitution. Other methods of survival are use of alcohol and drugs, avoidance of kissing, and trying to avoid penetrative and oral sex. One of the service agencies interviewed in the Thailand country report stated,

Some of the girls insist on condom use, or develop ways of slipping on the condom without the client's knowledge, not just as a disease or pregnancy prevention mechanism, but to avoid skin contact. They thus ensure physical and emotional detachment and a preservation of their integrity. (Raymond, D'Cunha, et al., 2002, p. 143)

Rather than speaking about the violence done to themselves, it was easier for many of the women interviewed in these two studies to speak of violence done to other women in prostitution. Many women witnessed or knew of others who were mutilated, drugged, stalked by tricks, and murdered by serial killers. One woman said, "I knew of three girls who were murdered. One was stabbed by the cashier at [a well-known sex club] in February 1991. The other incident was in 1994 where two buyers killed the two women they took home" (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001,

p. 75). Another woman reported, "One girl went with a Russian client. She was drugged. She didn't know where she landed up. They held her for 24 hours. About five of them. She was gang raped. She never reported this to anyone" (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 76). Another international woman trafficked to the United States reported that her Russian girlfriend was killed by a buyer who picked her up on the street. She also knew an Asian American woman who was also killed by a "trick on the street" who had slit her throat (Raymond, Hughes, et al., 2001, p. 76).

The reported findings with regard to violence against women in prostitution are particularly significant because they indicate high levels of violation, harm and trauma, and the fact that prostitution is a form of violence against women. The ambivalence on the part of many researchers, NGOs, and governments to view prostitution as violence against women parallels an earlier disregard and neglect of the harm done to battered women on the part of those who believed that if women made the choice to stay with abusive husbands or partners then "it couldn't be that bad." In addition, sexually abusive male behavior and practices are transformed into socially sanctioned and acceptable behavior in countries that have decriminalized the sex industry.

#### **PROGRAMS AND POLICIES THAT ADDRESS THE DEMAND**

Women's and human rights groups should be advocating for study and replication of the Swedish law prohibiting the purchase of sexual services and penalizing the buyer. Instead of giving legal permission to profoundly abusive sex industries, governments should respond to the male violence and sexual exploitation of women in prostitution by legally addressing the demand for prostitution.

We hear too little about the role of the sex industry in creating a global sex market for women and children. Instead, we hear that prostitution could be made into a better job for women through regulation and/or legalization, through unions of so-called sex workers, and through campaigns that provide condoms to women but fail to provide them with alternatives to prostitution. We hear much about how to keep women in prostitution but very little about how to help women get out.



In some countries, labor unions have been encouraged to accept prostitution as work. The London-based International Union of Sex Workers has affiliated with the General Municipal Boilermakers (GMB), the fourth largest union in the United Kingdom, to form an adult entertainment branch and to recruit persons in prostitution, strip clubs, and pornography. The GMB is also lobbying for a review of U.K. laws relating to prostitution and other sexual activities ("Sex for Sale," 2003). Rather than affirming prostitution as work, however, labor unions could follow the example of Denmark's Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) that, in June 2003, prohibited its 1.5 million members (in a country of 5.4 million) from engaging in prostitution when they represent the union on business and travel abroad (Agence France Presse, 2003).

Some agencies, such as the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) that brings together more than 15 UN and multilateral agencies, have devised codes of conduct for their personnel in humanitarian crisis situations (Inter-Agency Standing Committee [IASC], 2002). One of the core principles of the IASC code of conduct states, "Sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination" (IASC, 2002, p. 1). Another core principle makes clear that "Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior is prohibited" (IASC, 2002, p. 1).

It would be a great leap forward in the campaign against sexual exploitation for governments and UN agencies to prohibit their diplomats, military personnel, UN police, and peacekeepers from engaging in prostitution activities on or off duty. In 2002, Norway required its civil servants not to purchase sexual services during official travel, with violations leading to disciplinary measures. Finnish defense forces have implemented regulations to prevent prostitution use among their peacekeepers (Sanomat, 2003).

Legal measures penalizing the demand, military measures and codes of conduct, and labor union policies must be supplemented with prevention programs that target the demand. CATW Asia Pacific has initiated an innovative 3-year project in the Philippines to prevent sex trafficking by discouraging the demand for

prostitution. The project is aimed at boys and young men in schools and communities in the Philippines where prostitution flourishes (Coalition Against Trafficking in Women [CATW], 2003).

The overall objective of the project is to change the sexual attitudes and practices of boys and young men that result in the sexual exploitation of women and children by employing various educational tools: reproduction of an innovative video titled *First Time* to be distributed in video compact disc (VCD) format, illustrating how young men go through male rites of passage by using women in prostitution; use of education materials such as flyers and flipcharts detailing causes of prostitution and trafficking; comic books portraying the stories of women who have been in prostitution, including the role of male buyers; workshops in 12 regions of the Philippines during a period of 2 years educating young boys and men about the harm of prostitution and trafficking, men's role in perpetuating sexual exploitation and the sex industry, and men's potential role in being catalysts for change.

This program is being carried out with the collaboration of survivors of prostitution and trafficking in the Philippines. Survivors have been part of the team that has planned the program and educates boys and young men, especially about the harm of prostitution to girls and women.

During the first year of the program, CATW Asia Pacific has designed a questionnaire and discussion format to be used with young men, established criteria and methods for male trainers who will help conduct workshops for boys and young men, and conducted seven focus groups to pretest the questions to be asked in future workshops with boys in 12 regions of the Philippines. Focus group participants have been drawn from various sectors: male students of mixed class background in four colleges of the Philippines; two focus groups from selected communities; and one focus group composed of working class, urban poor jeepney drivers in metro Manila.

I visited the Philippines from January 5 through 9, 2004, to observe the project and to discuss its design, implementation, and changes with CATW Philippines staff. I observed the focus group discussion that was conducted with jeepney drivers—poor, urban working men—who drive the public transport and “float-

ing art" vehicles in metro Manila. This group of men was reached through contacts with the drivers' union.

Questions and discussion, at first, centered on why men thought prostitution exists, followed by questions about what men get out of prostitution. How do men feel after having sex with a woman in prostitution? What do men tell their friends about their experiences engaging in the sex of prostitution? How do men think that women or girls feel when they are having sex with a prostitution customer? And ultimately, men in the focus group were asked whether they had engaged in sexual activities with women in prostitution. Almost all responded affirmatively.

There was a lot of joking among the men and a certain level of discomfort in responding to the questions. However, after the discussion was finished, the CATW male and female discussion leaders talked for about 15 minutes about their own responses to the questions and CATW's work and experience with women in prostitution. Responses then began to change, and some of the men acknowledged that men's role in buying women for the sex of prostitution perpetuated the problem. Some even made suggestions about how to change male patterns in the jeepney drivers' environment. One suggestion made was for drivers, who are approached by street women in prostitution to engage in sex in exchange for giving the women a free ride on the jeepney or in exchange for money, to give them a free ride or the money rather than engage in exploiting the women.

Finally, the men were given T-shirts with various messages, such as "Stop the Sale of Women and Children" or "Women Should be Valued, Not Sold." In departing, men said they would wear the shirts and seemed pleased with the session, thanking the facilitators for what they had learned. This is not to say that a mass conversion took place among the men but rather to suggest that some significant learning did occur, that men themselves recognized this, and that consciousness-raising programs for men are an important intervention in addressing the demand (CATW, 2003).

The actual workshops with young men began in March 2004. They are intensive camp sessions in 12 regions of the Philippines continuing into Year 3 of the project, and work will continue with hundreds of young men from these regions.

### THE INVISIBLE MAN, CONDOMS, AND SAFE SEX

On August 13, 2001, the World Health Organization (WHO) in Vietnam recommended that prostitution be decriminalized to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS. The WHO told a press conference that attempts to eradicate prostitution had failed. The WHO Southeast Asia advisor called on governments to “accept the imperfections of society” and rather than “condone [prostitution], [decriminalization] is a matter of accepting that [prostitution] is a reality that takes place, and we are trying to reduce harm” (“Vietnam Presses On,” 2001, n.p.).

The WHO response in the modern health campaigns to check the HIV epidemic is the traditional public health response to prostitution as codified in the Contagious Diseases Acts of the 19th century: Monitor the women to protect the men. Little has changed when AIDS-prevention advocates target prostituted women, not male customers and transmitters, for disease control. Although epidemiologists have documented that the HIV epidemic is driven largely by male-to-female viral transmission and male use of prostituted women, it is potentially infected women, not the sexual consumption habits of infected or potentially infected men, that are the focus of control (Hynes & Raymond, 2002).

Burdening women in prostitution industries with the responsibility for negotiating with men to use condoms by making themselves and condom use “sexy”—in other words, teaching women to eroticize their sexual objectification and sexual submission—is an ineffective way to fight HIV/AIDS. A more sensible anti-AIDS program would target the group who engages in the most unhealthy and high-risk behaviors: men who buy the sex of prostitution. Yet the common solution to male demand for prostitution is only to give women condoms to give to men.

Harm reduction programs are not enough. Carried out within the context of supporting the legalization and decriminalization of prostitution, they are very misguided. A lot of safe sex programs teach women demeaning and sexually subordinating ways to respond to male demand under the umbrella of protecting themselves. A director of an organization providing services to women and children in prostitution wrote, “The damage

caused by the substance and style of HIV/AIDS propaganda in countries like India and the role it is playing in normalizing commercial sexual exploitation of women (as also of children) worries me immeasurably" (Pravin Patkar, personal communication, March 3, 2003). The advocate was criticizing the ways in which HIV/AIDS projects and policies are making the situation worse for sexually exploited women in prostitution by putting the burden on them to negotiate male condom use and safe sex and then blaming women if negotiations fail.

Conducted within the orbit of the sex industry, HIV/AIDS programs give new respectability to pimps, traffickers, and buyers, valorizing them as allies in the struggle against death and disease without challenging their role in an institution that doles out death and disease by harming women in so many other ways. In fact, HIV/AIDS advocates must usually seek permission from the brothel owners if they enter the brothels, from organized crime if they enter the red light areas, and from buyers with whom women are taught to negotiate, promising in most cases not to propose alternatives to women and to ignore trafficked or child prostitutes in these areas (Friedman, 1996).

Many men who act recklessly in their sexual lives by engaging in habitual prostitution use are not doing so because they lack information about condoms but rather because they lack responsibility, intimacy, emotion, a sexual identity based on gender equality, and a sense of justice. As one commentator expressed it, "They don't want 'safe.' That takes the thrill out of it" (Elias, 2003, p. 2). This view was reinforced at a conference in South Africa where experts were discussing attitudes of many men to HIV risk. Men's behavior was unfortunately permeated by scorn for safe sex, high promiscuity, and often forcing wives or girlfriends into having intercourse. In discussing how to change male attitudes, many conference participants stated that "conventional sex-education campaigns, with the condom invariably in the spotlight, might be a waste of time and resources" ("Change the Man," 2003, p. 2).

Ultimately, condoms and safe sex programs ensure a healthier supply of prostituted women for male buyers if they do not challenge the sex industry and provide alternatives for women in it as part of safe sex education. Safer sex intervention programs also do not protect women against condom breakage during intercourse,

nor against latex allergies and vaginal abrasions from frequent sex with multiple customers and, most important, against the high incidence of physical and psychological harm that women in prostitution have reported. Condom programs in prostitution are similar to gun locks in gun safety programs: they do save some lives; they don't eliminate the source of the harm (Hynes & Raymond, 2002).

A more comprehensive and courageous public health response would advocate for the health and safety of women within the sex industry, at the same time that it seeks to dismantle the sex industry. Most HIV/AIDS programs, enacted in the context of the sex industry, have concentrated on modifying female behavior rather than changing male behavior. These campaigns have not encouraged men to question their sexual attitudes and practices, have done almost nothing to erode pimp control of women, and leave untouched the buying and selling of women's bodies in the marketplace. When safe sex advocates for women in prostitution are as willing to confront the sex industry as they are to challenge the pharmaceutical industry and other multinationals, this will be an enormous step forward (Hynes & Raymond, 2002).

## CONCLUSION

Those who argue for legalization of prostitution and decriminalization of the sex industry contend that normalizing prostitution as work will restrain male abuse of women in prostitution and decrease the number of buyers by controlling and regulating the industry. Rather, legal legitimation of prostitution gives more customers what they want and grants more men moral and social permission to practice the prostitution of women and children. If prostitution is something that is done to women, as conveyed by the term *prostituted women*, then it is the buyers who more accurately can be said to practice prostitution.

A progressive response to the sex industry and its promotion of prostitution must go beyond prostitution on demand—exactly what the sex industry is lobbying for. Legal approval of prostitution promotes a model of male sexuality that is based on the sexual exploitation of women. This model endorses a double standard for women and men.

Recognition of prostitution as work can only give more customers what they want by increasing the current expansionism of the sex industry, giving it the stable marketing environment for which it continues to lobby. Rather than economic opportunity for women, state-sponsored prostitution is economic opportunism. The most glaring evidence of women's economic marginalization and social inequality is the rampant commodification of women in prostitution, sex trafficking, sex tourism, and mail-order-bride industries. In a context of severe global economic decline, it seems the height of economic opportunism to argue for the recognition of the sex industry based on transforming women's sexual and economic exploitation into legitimate work. Actual unemployment of women is disguised by the fact that large numbers of women are limited to the "employment" of prostitution and other "jobs" in the sex industry.

The alleged benefits of legalizing/decriminalizing prostitution sound a lot like the promised land of trickle-down economics. Proponents simply assert the benefits of legalization/decriminalization of the sex industry. In addition to regulating abuse by buyers, proponents of legalization often claim that the benefits include better regulation of the entire sex industry, less violence to women in prostitution, more control of the "work" by the women, higher earnings, and protection of women's health, all of which will trickle down to women in prostitution and society at large when legalization/decriminalization of the sex industry takes place. These romantic notions about state-sponsored prostitution are belied by what has actually happened in countries that have already legalized prostitution (see Raymond, 2003).

Legalization of the sex industry and normalizing prostitution as sex work sanctions prostitution on demand. Instead of abandoning women in the sex industry to state-sponsored prostitution, we need research, programs, and public policies that target the demand.

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