



Advocacy on Behalf of Women Used in Prostitution

A Handbook for Rural Advocates

By Connie Sponsler

For Praxis International

Advocacy on Behalf of Women Used in Prostitution: A Handbook for Rural Advocates

Written by Connie Sponsler for Praxis International

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About Our Name

Praxis means action, but not just any kind of action. It is the application of a science or an art to practical work — in other words, action that results from thinking things through. We chose the name Praxis for our organization because we want our work to help communities take action that is firmly anchored in the reality and perspectives of battered women. We want to integrate *theory* and *practice* into a praxis that is effective for women who are battered.

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Foreword

In 1997 Praxis International was organized by a small group of activists working to end violence against women. We formed to develop a method and process of examining institutional practices and their impact on women's lives. This process, eventually called a safety audit, has been used with a number of police and sheriff's departments, the U.S. Coast Guard, several batterers education programs, and numerous coordinated community response groups to audit their institutional responses to domestic violence cases. In 1998 Praxis entered into a cooperative agreement with the federal Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) to coordinate a collaborative effort among a number of domestic violence experts to provide training and technical assistance to OVW rural grantees on ending violence against women in rural communities. We provide training and technical assistance to recipients of grants from the Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement Grant Program, U.S. Department of Justice. The assistance provided includes development of various educational and training materials, including this handbook.

This is a handbook for experienced battered women's advocates on providing advocacy in rural areas for women who have been prostituted. It will help advocates understand what prostitution looks like in rural areas, what prostituted women need, and how shelters and advocacy programs can best advocate for them. It provides information on the specific needs of prostituted women and directs advocates to additional resources for women.

Many rural advocacy programs have provided advocacy to battered women who have been prostituted by batterers as one form of sexual abuse and control. Some rural advocacy programs lack any information on how batterers or others prostitute women. But most battered women's programs, rural or urban, have yet to fully acknowledge how prostitution is a *system* of violence against women and that prostituted women are battered women in need of advocacy services. This handbook is intended to help you do just that, and to help prepare your program to be a resource for women used in prostitution in rural areas.

There is an overall lack of resources for prostituted women in our country. The few existing organizations that help women escape and heal from prostitution are located in urban centers where prostitution is more commonly visible. But prostitution does exist in rural areas. It may be more hidden or even invisible to your advocacy program, but girls and women are both recruited into, and used in, prostitution in rural communities throughout the United States and its territories. Given limited rural resources it's unlikely that specific services for prostituted women will ever exist in our rural communities. Instead, battered women's advocacy programs can be prepared to offer safe shelter, support and advocacy services to women and girls who are prostituted.

We wish to acknowledge the deep dedication and advocacy leadership of the author – Connie Sponsler – a strong voice on behalf of disenfranchised women everywhere. We also wish to recognize Shamita Das Dasgupta for her insightful introduction and for keeping our work grounded in an understanding of the larger global, political and societal forces that impact women's lives. Special thanks, always, to Kate Regan for her superb editing skills.

Praxis International

Preface

“Pretty woman” images, and misinformation about prostitution perpetrated by those who profit from the sale and consumption of women’s bodies, blinds us to the faces and lives of the real victims of sexual exploitation, rendering them invisible, and unserved by our advocacy programs.

The issues of prostituted women in rural communities mirror the unique needs of battered women in these same communities. The abuse is more hidden, the victims are geographically and socially isolated, and resources to assist victims are scarce.

In preparation for this handbook, I spoke with advocates and law enforcement in rural communities about their knowledge of prostitution activities in their area. Many police officers felt that there was no problem. Most advocates weren’t sure. Only a few advocates could share first-hand information about working with victim/survivors of prostitution. This lack of awareness about the prevalence and types of prostitution activities in rural areas prevents us from identifying and serving victims of the sex industry.

This handbook seeks to help advocates in rural communities understand how women and girls are coerced, lured or recruited into systems of prostitution, the impact of this abuse, and the advocacy challenges you will face in working with prostituted women.

I have drawn widely from the writing of activists and survivors, Donna Hughes, Dorchon Leidholdt, Evelina Giobbe, Vednita Carter, Kelly Holsopple, and Denise Gamache who have spent years articulating this issue in an effort to educate the worldwide community about the human rights abuse inherent in the commercial sexual exploitation of women and girls.

Connie Sponsler
Women’s Advocate

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Introduction

The concept of prostitution and the “prostitute” has always been connected to sordidness in all cultures—a dirty little open secret. Most societies have either denied the existence of “prostitutes” amid their respectable, law-abiding citizenry altogether, or blamed it on the twisted nature of the women so engaged. Societies have hardly ever accepted the responsibility for the existence of prostitution and the reasons women and children engage in the occupation. Priscilla Alexander writes, “For most of recorded history, societies have defined prostitutes, culturally and through systems of law, as “other,” a group often considered necessary for the functioning of society, but one that must be kept apart.” Thus, we find societies, past and present, have routinely attempted to confine prostitution and prostitutes to certain locations—districts, streets, and homes. Furthermore, to tell prostitutes from other “good” women, societies have often forced them by law and/or social convention to be marked, either by their clothing (e.g., style, make-up, tattoos, particular colors such as yellow), demeanor (e.g., going bareheaded, acting boldly, learning skills such as dancing and singing), or residence (e.g., the architecture of brothels, topography of locations, markings on the residence). In turn, women engaged in prostitution have used these indicators to advertise their trade to attract customers.

Historically, women engaged in prostitution have epitomized “bad” women, who make the “good” ones seem even better by contrast. They have been the standard by which, society has judged women’s goodness. Indeed, a common epithet batterers hurl at their victims to degrade them is “whore.” Despite such palpable contempt for the group, the real whore has been considered to have functional, albeit nefarious, value in society. For example, the existence of hetaera in ancient Greece, geisha in Japan, devdasi and baiji in India, point to a historically institutionalized acceptance of commercial sex for the male consumer (men still constitute the overwhelming majority of those who buy sex). Prostitutes were and still are deemed a channel for catharsis of men’s perverse sexual urges, and thereby, a way of protecting “good” women’s virtue. Thus, prostitutes are thought to have an evil but necessary presence in society, while prostitution, the trade, is believed to exist mainly in the anonymity and squalor of large cities, away from the idyllic intimacy of rural settings.

Due to the pervasive stigma of prostitution, legitimate institutions and individuals in society have openly exhibited concern for women engaged in prostitution only when there is a risk of recruiting from “good homes,” contamination of disease, lawlessness, and immorality from them. Society has frequently responded to such threats by punishing the women engaged in prostitution by arresting, fining, and jailing them, dismantling the locations they use, and hounding them with other draconian rules; the results of which are usually to drive them deeper underground. The customers are far less likely to be penalized for their use of prostitutes. Rarely have social policy experts and lawmakers addressed the root causes of prostitution—poverty, violence, homelessness, the lack of viable economic resources for women to support themselves and their families, and the socialization of men to objectify women—issues that might actually bring an end to prostitution. Society’s efforts have been focused on protecting not the prostitute or rehabilitating her, but shielding the rest of the “legitimate” populace. Even where prostitutes have been forced to submit to regular health tests and certifications, the motive has not been to provide health care for women in general, but to protect “johns,” the customers who traverse the borders between the mainstream world and the one inhabited by the marginalized “other.”

¹ Alexander, P. (1995). Sex workers fight against AIDS: An international perspective. In B. E. Schneider & N. E. Stoller (Eds.), *Women resisting AIDS: Feminist strategies of empowerment* (pp. 99-123). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Organizing and advocacy efforts to end violence against women, including anti-domestic violence movements, have generally overlooked prostitutes, even though women engaged in commercial sex are at high risk of being sexually or physically abused by their customers and men who tout or peddle them. At times, women engaged in prostitution have organized themselves, but they have generally concentrated on decriminalization, childcare, freedom from police harassment, housing, and healthcare problems. Even this organizing work has generally omitted concerns of violence, which has been assumed by insiders as well as outsiders to be an occupational hazard.

Advocating for or organizing women who are engaged in prostitution is not an easy task. Despite the popularity of the image of large brothels where women live together and work in camaraderie, the reality of prostitution is far from it. Most women in commercial sex trade work in isolation in a shadowy world of degradation, exploitation, violence, and subsistence living. Since women engaged in prostitution tend to be scattered in fear of pimps and police, it is difficult for advocates to locate and gather them for organizing activities.

In addition, between 480,000 and 640,000 females are internationally trafficked each year and the majority end up in prostitution. Most of these women and girls are transported while they migrate to seek resources to sustain their families or attempt to escape the political and social upheavals that jeopardize their lives and livelihoods in their own countries. In a new land, these women remain at the mercy of their pimps and oppressors. Additionally, the international prostitution industry entails billions of dollars. Thousands of people are involved in this industry, from the procurer, madam, pimp, trafficker, occasional police officer, politician, and other apparently respectable citizens. Because such large amounts of money are at stake, profiteers at each level are vigilant that the ground level workers, the prostitutes, do not organize to change or escape their situations. Such conditions make it difficult and dangerous for outside interveners to advocate for the women.

The U.S. adopted a strong stand on trafficking in person and passed two laws to protect and support victims. A new visa category, T, was also included in the provisions of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA). The T visa allows trafficking victims to remain in the United States with the understanding that they will assist federal authorities to prosecute the traffickers. However, such laws address only one part of the equation: the traffickers. To end trafficking and its concomitant prostitution, advocates need to understand and address the problem at least at three other levels: source, transit point (sending), and end zone (receiving). We need to find out why women and children from a particular region, the source, are being displaced and trafficked; the locale that is used as the hub or transit point of trafficking; and the areas that accept and use these women and children in prostitution—the end zone. By identifying and eliminating the conditions that create, encourage, and support prostitution at these three points—source, transit, and end zone—we can positively move towards ending prostitution.

This advocacy handbook certainly is not the ultimate statement in ending commercial sexual exploitation of women. But it provides a guide to anti-domestic violence advocates in the rural U.S. who are working with prostituted women. It begins with the basic premise that prostitution is an exploitation and therefore, harmful to women. By the language it chooses to use, “women used in prostitution,” this understanding of

² U.S. Department of State. (n.d.). The link between prostitution and sex trafficking. Washington, DC: Bureau of Public Affairs. Retrieved March 19, 2005 from <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/rls/38790.htm>.

³ Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-386) and Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2003 (H.R. 2620).

oppression of women becomes manifest. The nomenclature challenges the assumption of “free will” that is implicit in the term “prostitute.” By firmly placing prostitution as a form of insidious violence against women, the handbook makes the work integral to anti-domestic violence advocacy everywhere. No doubt, it is a guide to advocacy on behalf of the individual woman, but it provides essential information that can propel activists to embark on a much more complex journey in the future.

Shamita Das Dasgupta

Would YOU want this job?

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Careers 332 Customer Service

Now Hiring FT Work
Great career opportunity for women and girls

Tired of mindless, low-skilled, low-paying jobs? Want a career with flexible hours? Work with people? Offer a professional service?

- NO high school
- NO minimum age
- NO English language requirement
- NO drug testing
- NO experience
- On-the-job training
- Girls, poor women, single mothers, women of color encouraged to apply

Looking for women and girls to, perform oral, anal and vaginal sex with individuals or groups of strangers, to the customers' liking.

Job duties—Be penetrated orally, anally and vaginally with penises, fingers, and objects. May also include being bound, gagged, tied with ropes and chains; being raped by individuals or groups; being photographed or filmed while performing these acts; being beaten, kidnapped, and burned with cigarettes.

Travel opportunities—Work at hunting lodges, snowmobile clubs, bars, beer parties, dance clubs, parks, truck stops, or in trailers, apartments, motels, migrant camps, drug houses, parked and moving vehicles.

Wages—Negotiated at every transaction. Payment delivered by clients when services rendered to satisfaction. Sorry, no recourse for non-payment of fees. Corporate management fees range from 40-60 % of wages. Private managers reserve rights to impound all money earned.

Benefits—Provided at the discretion of management.

Contract stipulations—Employer not responsible for job hazards (sexually transmitted diseases, HIV, unwanted pregnancy) or injuries sustained through performance of services (bruises, cuts, internal injuries, mutilation, disfigurement and death). Accusations of rape considered a breach of contract by employee.

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Adapted from publication by WHISPER, 1992
(Women Hurt in Systems of Prostitution Engaged in Revolt)

Prostitution is portrayed in our culture as a legitimate job choice for women, as an answer to low-paying, low-skilled, or dead-end jobs, as a solution to high unemployment rates among poor women, as a form of sexual liberation, and as a career that women freely choose. Considering prostitution a “job” makes invisible what is really happening to women and girls in systems of prostitution.

Understanding Prostitution as Violence Against Women

Cultural mythology and media messages about prostitution convey the ideas that women freely choose prostitution, that no one is victimized in the transaction, and that indeed some women use prostitution as a way to express their sexuality. To understand prostitution as a system of violence and sexual exploitation, it is necessary to examine the institutional and cultural context in which it exists and the difference in power between prostituted women and the men who buy and sell them (“johns” and pimps).

The institution of prostitution allows some individuals (usually men) to achieve sexual access and domination over those with less power and fewer resources (usually women and girls), for the purpose of financial gain and sexual gratification.

As advocates for battered women, we understand battering between intimate partners as a system of abusive behaviors used by one partner to exert power and control over the other. The tactics employed by batterers include isolation, minimization and denial of abuse, threats and intimidation, using children, the exertion of male power, economic control, and emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. These are the same tactics used by pimps to keep women trapped in prostitution. The relationship between a pimp and the woman he is using in prostitution is a battering relationship.

Tactics of Power and Control	Women Battered by Partners	Women Used in Prostitution
<i>Isolation</i>	Batterer controls where she goes, who she sees, what she does.	PIMP: Controls where she goes, who she sees, what she does; moves her to different cities/states/areas; may kidnap her or hold her against her will. JOHN: Prostituted women isolated in red light districts, saunas, massage parlors, cars, etc., without protection from customer violence; may take her to a deserted area and abandon her there.
<i>Emotional abuse</i>	Puts her down; makes her feel bad about herself; calls her names.	PIMP: Verbally abuses her; calls her vile names; makes her into a commodity; tells her she’s “only good for one thing.” JOHN: Calls her degrading names like “slut” and “whore”; demands she engage in humiliating, sexually oriented conversations; treats her like a sexual servant.
<i>Economic abuse</i>	Tries to stop her from getting or keeping a job; takes her money; gives her an allowance.	PIMP: Takes most or all of her money; makes her ask permission to buy even basic necessities; dissuades or stops her from getting a job that would allow her to leave prostitution; steals/destroys her property if she leaves him. JOHN: Uses his economic power to make her comply with his sexual demands; may refuse to pay her or rob her.

Tactics of Power and Control	Women Battered by Partners	Women Used in Prostitution
<i>Threats and intimidation</i>	Puts fear in her by using looks, actions, shouting, smashing things; makes or carries out threats against her, her children or family	PIMP: Puts fear in her by using looks, actions, shouting, smashing things; makes or carries out threats against her, other prostitutes, her children or other family members. JOHN: Threatens to withhold payment or use violence if she refuses to comply with his sexual demands.
<i>Minimizing and denial</i>	Denies responsibility for abusing her; says she asked or it; denies her injuries or minimizes the abuse inflicted on her.	PIMP: Tells her she's smarter than other women who "give it away for free"; tells her prostitution is a job like any other job; tells her she's not selling herself, that she's just selling a services; tells her all women are prostitutes, some do it for dinner and others do it for straight cash. JOHN: Makes her pretend that she enjoys having sex with him; tells her she's lucky to get paid for having sex; tells her prostitution is a great career choice.
<i>Sexual abuse</i>	Makes her do sexual things against her will; attacks the sexual parts of her body; treats her like a sex object; forces her to pose for, watch, or act out scenes from pornography.	PIMP: Compels her to engage in unwanted sex acts with him or other men. JOHN: Compels her to engage in unwanted sex because he paid for her; overtly abuses her by tying her up, beating her (sado-masochism), urinates or defecates on her; takes pornographic pictures of her.
<i>Using male privilege</i>	Treats her like a servant; makes all the important decisions; acts like the "master of the castle."	PIMP: Treats her as his property; sells her to other men; rarely arrested for pimping. JOHN: Treats her like an object which he can buy and use any way he wishes; rarely arrested for prostitution-related offenses.

(From *A Facilitator's Guide to Prostitution: A Matter of Violence Against Women*, an education program of WHISPER, by Evelina Giobbe, 1990. Reprinted with permission.)

This individual exercise of power does not occur in a vacuum. It is supported by centuries of hierarchical practices, the domination of men over women, of adults over children, of rich over poor, of racial and ethnic majorities over racial and ethnic minorities.⁴

Cultural and institutional manifestations of power and control, such as rape, battery, poverty, gender discrimination, racism, and classism, reinforce acts of physical and sexual violence committed against individual women and girls. These conditions pave the way for the coercion or recruitment of women and children into prostitution and make it difficult for them to escape.

How women and girls get involved in prostitution

Most research indicates that 70% of prostituted women were 16 years old or younger when they were first used in prostitution. Almost two-thirds were victims of incest or child sexual abuse sometime between the ages of three and sixteen. Almost all women recruited into prostitution as juveniles were homeless and/or runaways.

Most juvenile prostitutes are recruited by pimps, and many adult prostituted women are also involved in a pimping relationship, one in which she is engaging in prostitution (through coercion or compliance) and turning over all or part of her earnings to another party. Her relationship with her pimp can be a “business” relationship, as with strip club or bar owners and drug dealers, or it can be an intimate relationship. Many women are pimped by their husbands, boyfriends, fathers, and other family members.

Not all women are recruited into prostitution as children or teens. Women who get involved in prostitution as adults are often battered women who escape their abusers and find themselves homeless, with few job skills and inadequate education. They may be women who perceive their only options for supporting themselves and their children are jobs like “dancing,” stripping, nude modeling, or topless waitressing, which promise lots of money and often end up being prostitution. Other women turn to prostitution to support a drug addiction.

Women who have been sexually abused as children may feel like “damaged goods” and believe that their only value is as a sexual object for men. And ... some women feel that they freely chose prostitution, persuaded by the cultural myth that it is a high-paying, harmless way to make a living or a form of liberated sexual expression.

Women in prostitution are shamed, stigmatized, and isolated. They may have been tricked or coerced into prostitution, but they can't ask the police for help and don't know where else to turn. This is particularly true for women who are immigrants or undocumented aliens, who have good reason to fear being reported to the authorities.

Escaping prostitution

Regardless of how women and girls get into prostitution, most want to get out, and that is a difficult proposition. Rarely do individual victims have any control over the conditions of their life, the sexual acts they are required to perform, or their own safety. Most prostituted women and girls cannot just change their minds and walk away from prostitution. There is always someone who is benefiting from their abuse

⁴ Leidholdt, D. (n.d.) *Prostitution: A modern form of slavery*, Making the Harm Visible.
www.uri.edu/artsci/wms/hughes/mhvslave.htm

and who may employ tactics of violence, power, and control to keep them trapped in sexual slavery. In addition, the psychological and emotional effects of prostitution – shame, guilt, and depression – can effectively strip women of their ability to envision any other type of life for themselves.

Prostituted women, like many other battered women, feel trapped. Our culture teaches us that women and girls freely choose to be prostitutes. The cultural message that prostitution is a “job” obscures the battering, sexual assault, and psychological trauma that is the everyday experience of these victims.

As a result, few resources exist to help women escape prostitution. In most communities she cannot go to a battered women’s shelter if she identifies herself as a prostituted, rather than battered, woman. As we come to understand that prostitution is a systemic form of violence and exploitation of women, we also understand that prostituted women are battered women who can and should be served by our advocacy programs.

Providing advocacy services for prostituted women demonstrates that we believe that they are victims of violence and oppression and more importantly, that they are deserving of help. This message is invaluable in freeing prostituted women from their isolation and internalized self-blame and guilt and the social stigma which identifies them as the “other” women – who are not at all like us.

Thirty years ago, as advocates recognized and articulated battering as a systemic oppression of women, we took steps to offer safety and options for individual women. The presence of safety and advocacy services for battered women in our communities sends a clear message that we are not going to accept the violence of battering as a cultural norm.

As a culture we have decided that we will not tolerate rape of our daughters and sisters, we will no longer be battered in our homes, and we will not be forced to work under conditions of sexual harassment. It is now our challenge to send the message that sexual access to our daughters and sisters cannot be bought or sold.

What Does Prostitution Look Like in Rural Areas?

You won't see scantily dressed women in hot pants and stiletto heels walking up and down the street in small towns or farming communities, but women in rural areas are still being recruited and coerced into unwanted sexual activity for the benefit of others. It just happens in different ways. Research and anecdotal information from rural advocates and victims of prostitution provide a look at some of the ways in which such prostitution is manifested. The following examples are based on real-life experiences of women in rural areas.



Dina

Dina, 24, is dancing at a topless bar outside of Rock Flats, a small town in the southwest. Larry, the father of her two young children, has been battering her for five years. He was the one who had encouraged Dina to dance in the first place. He is now pressuring her to make more money, to have a few “dates” with the bar customers: “All the other girls do it, what’s so special about you?” Dina is resisting and Larry’s violence is escalating. Dina wants to get away from him, but she likes her work as a dancer. She says that the other dancers are her biggest support system.

Mary, 41, has been turning tricks at truck stops along Interstate 95 for 15 years. She is from a nearby small town and has no children living with her and no current partner. She didn’t graduate from high school and worked in the local steel mill until it shut down. Last night she was raped and severely beaten by a john. She wants him arrested. She knows his trucking company, first name, and license plate. This is the first time Mary has ever turned to anyone for help and the first time she has ever reported a rape or assault. She admits to being a long-time alcoholic and more recently, an occasional drug user.



Mary



Bree

Bree, 17, was gang-raped last week at a party. She confides that for over a year she has been going to these after-hour parties at the home of a local resident, Danny. She first met him at the coffee shop in town. He owns his own auto-repair shop and was really “nice” to her. Bree was having a lot of problems with her family around this time and was staying out all night long and drinking. Danny invited her to a party and told her to bring one of her girlfriends. The guys there were older and really cool. They had lots of smoke and cocaine and plenty of booze. Sometimes she would get really high and drunk and have sex with one of them.

After a few weeks, Danny told Bree that one of the guys really liked her and wanted to have sex with her. He said he would set it up and this would be a good way for her to make some extra money—after all, she was already doing it for free. She agreed and has been operating under this arrangement for two months. Danny has never given her any of the money; he says she has smoked it all up.



Tya

Tya, 31, recently answered an ad in a Chicago paper for exotic dancers. She is recently divorced and the mother of two children, who are in Chicago with her mom. She was told that she was going on a three-week dancing tour in the Midwest. She is the only woman of color among the four dancers. At their first stop, a bar catering to hunters and snowmobilers, the owner informed them that they would be paying for their own lodging at the local motel. Tya had been told by the agency that lodging was to be paid by the bar owner who contracted for the dancers.

She didn't make enough in tips the first night to cover the motel bill. When she asked the other dancers how they managed, they informed her that the real work didn't start until after the bar closed. Each of them had set up "dates" after their dancing shift, or the bar owner would set up the dates for them for a "commission. This was not what Tya had agreed to. She confronted the bar owner, who told her that she had signed a contract, and that if she didn't keep her end of the deal he would kick her ass and leave her in the woods to die. She is 550 miles from home, broke and scared.

Luce, 16, entered the U.S. from Brazil on a tourist visa. She wanted to be adopted by an aunt, attend school and become an American! Luce discovered that her aunt and uncle lived near a rancheria in Arizona which did not have a Portuguese community, that she could not register for school while traveling on a tourist visa, and that her aunt wanted her to be a domestic servant for the family. Luce lived alone in the basement of the house, did not understand English, and felt depressed, and helpless to change her situation.



Luce

When Luce became pregnant from an encounter with a neighbor boy, her aunt insisted she get an abortion. When she returned from the clinic, her aunt turned her out of the house with only a bag of clothes – no money, nowhere to go, and her visa had expired. She was hungry, scared, and could not speak enough English to seek help.

At the local bus stop, a woman approached her, spoke kindly, and offered a place to stay for the night. The next day she offered Luce a job where she could make money to buy a plane ticket back to Brazil. She took her to a small bar in a remote area where Luce was to clean tables, mop floors, and have sex with customers. Her only income was the tips the customers gave her, and the bar owner took most of it to pay for her room and board.



Nisha

Nisha's husband, Alak, had been in the U.S. for ten years when he returned to India to marry her. Alak traveled back to the U.S. within a week after the wedding to return to his job managing a motel in a small town in Florida. Nisha came to the U.S. six months after her marriage on a K (fiancée) visa since it would take more than a year to receive an immigrant visa.

Alak required Nisha to clean 26 motel rooms daily, to prepare food for guests, and to take care of all household duties. She did not meet any neighbors or other Indian families during her first year in the States. Alak would physically abuse her if she showed fatigue, asked for a day off, or 'slacked off' her duties. One day he told Nisha the motel was losing money and that his father had warned him that he would be replaced if this didn't change. Alak pressured Nisha to have sex with some of the motel guests, explaining they would get more repeat customers. At first, Nisha vehemently refused but Alak beat her for her disobedience. He had also threatened to have her deported since she had no 'green card' and had an expired visa. After a while, Nisha gave up and started to have sex with travelers and soon the motel became financially successful.

“Adult entertainment”

Bars that offer topless waitressing, nude dancing and stripping are promoted as providing harmless entertainment for men. There is nothing harmless about the conditions for women working in these environments. Local bars that regularly offer partially nude or nude dancers recruit women from around the community and bring in dancers from businesses in other areas that rotate women through the rural strip circuits. Some bars bring in strippers at special times, such as late summer, for harvest crews, or hunting season.

Under the best circumstances, topless waitressing, nude dancing and stripping are sexual harassment as a job. This includes emotional, verbal, physical, and sexual abuse. In a survey of strippers conducted in 1998, 100% reported being physically abused in the club, 100% reported being sexually and verbally abused, and 100% reported being solicited for prostitution. Customers stalked 78% of them, and 61% reported that someone associated with the club had attempted to sexually assault them. Furthermore, stripping usually involves prostitution.⁵

Women working the strip circuit during hunting and harvest season stated that it was expected that they would turn tricks between dances or after the bar closed. In some cases the bar owner had already set up the “dates” for the dancers, expecting that they would have sex with five to ten men every night. The dancers who are brought in from other areas are particularly vulnerable because they are in a geographically remote area that is unknown to them, usually with little money. They are easy targets for bar managers who pressure them into prostitution so they can make enough money to get back home.

Private prostitution

Many victims of prostitution are pimped by their husbands, boyfriends, or other family members. These women and girls are prostituted in their homes, the homes or businesses of their partners/pimps, local bars, or truck stops. The father of one victim prostituted her out of the local auto repair garage. Another woman reported that her husband brought men from the local bars to their home and forced her to have sex with them; her husband received \$25.00 from each trick. Young women who are alienated from their families, skipping school, using drugs and alcohol, and engaging in promiscuous behavior are at high-risk of recruitment into prostitution activities. Adult men have been known to supply the girls with drugs,

⁵ Holsopple, K. (1998). Stripclubs according to strippers: Exposing workplace sexual violence.
www.uri.edu/artsci/wms/hughes/stripcl1.htm

alcohol, and a place to hang out and party. The party hosts invite other men and charge them a fee with the understanding that they will be able to have sex with the girls once they are drunk or high.

Production of pornography

The sale of homemade videos has become an extremely lucrative sector of the pornography industry. Generally these videos are made in private homes, including home in rural areas. Women have reported that their activity in pornography started with their husbands or boyfriends pressuring them to participate in filming sex acts between the two of them. Later they were coerced into being filmed while having sex with other men. A reported 49% had pornography made of them while in prostitution.⁶ These videos are then sold to pornography distributors who specialize in amateur pornography.

Migrant farm worker camps

Migrant women are especially vulnerable to being coerced into prostitution due to poverty, isolation, and lack of support systems. Often they do not speak English and may have entered the country illegally. An investigation completed by the U. S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (March, 2000) indicated that women from Mexico and Central America are routinely recruited to work as domestic help and end up being held in sexual slavery in migrant camp brothels. They are threatened with physical violence, loss of pay, and deportation if they do not comply. Many trafficked women are kept in cheap, crowded conditions to maximize industry profits and often they have to buy back their travel documents. They become indentured for up to \$50,000—a debt accrued from a string of inflated charges for passport, travel tickets, lodging, meals, alleged job, a “jockey” who accompanies them to the United States, and the trafficker’s fee.⁷

Sex for drugs

Rural areas have experienced an epidemic of methamphetamine production. It is relatively easy to manufacture. Labs for drug production can be set up in farm buildings and trailers. The geographic isolation of rural communities makes this activity easier to conceal. Anywhere there is a concentration of drugs there are prostitution activities. A woman who is addicted may trade sex for drugs; if her partner is addicted, she may be forced to have sex with other men to support his habit. Anecdotal information from meth-addicted women indicates that the exchange of sex for drugs is the one of the most violent and degrading forms of sexual exploitation.

Casinos

The proliferation of casinos in or adjacent to rural areas has provided another setting in which women can be prostituted. Hotel bars in urban areas are common sites for prostitution activity; the bars and hotels attached to casinos in rural areas offer the same setting. All the necessary factors are present, most notably, men with disposable cash. Many casino customers are from out of the area and so can anonymously engage in activities they wouldn’t take part in at home.

⁶ Farley, M., Baral, I., Kiremire, M., & Sezgin, U. (1998). *Prostitution in five countries: Violence and post-traumatic stress disorder*. *Feminism and Psychology*, 8(4):405-426.

⁷ Hynes, H.P. & Raymond, J.F. (2002). Put in harm’s way: The neglected health consequences of sex trafficking in the United States. In J. Silliman & A. Bhattacharjee (Eds.), *Policing the national body: Sex, race, and criminalization* (pp. 197-230). Cambridge, MA: South End Press.

Rural Advocacy Issues and Complications

Service providers treating and responding to victims in rural communities encounter obstacles specific to the character of these communities. The attitudes and barriers that make it difficult to identify and serve rural battered women make it even more challenging to serve prostituted women. Without understanding the unique characteristics of the rural environment, it is impossible to respond appropriately and fully to victims in rural areas.

“That kind of thing doesn’t happen here”

There is a belief that living in the country is safer and healthier than living in the city. Members of many rural communities would have a hard time believing that prostitution activities could take place in their town, or that the town mailman was involved in producing homemade pornography with underage girls. Often the clergy is the main source of information and support to community members regarding social issues like battering or sexual abuse. Prostituted women are rarely viewed with any sympathy by clergy because they are seen as “immoral.”

Racism

Racism exists in every community. Rural communities do not usually have civil rights groups or anti-racism organizations whose work it is to challenge racist practices and policies in the community and to support victims of discrimination and racist violence. It is hard to imagine that women of color who are being prostituted in rural strip clubs or in migrant camps would turn for assistance to a police officer they know to be racist. Racism inhibits the development of and access to services for women of color.

Lack of privacy

In small towns it is common for everyone to know everyone else’s business. It is difficult to obtain any help or services confidentially. It is almost impossible to expect that a prostituted woman could live down the notoriety of prostitution in a small rural community. This factor alone would inhibit most prostituted women from seeking help. Finding and maintaining safe shelter in a rural community is not always possible.

“Good ole’ boy” network

The police may be your neighbor or relative. Generations of families have lived in the same small community for many years. It is still not uncommon for the police, prosecutor, and judge/magistrate to be openly hostile to battered women; they would have no sympathy for a prostituted woman. In rural and urban areas police routinely extort money and sex from prostituted women. If she was to report this abuse, who would she report it to, and what would be the consequences for reporting it if someone did believe her?

Authority is suspect

Some people choose to live in rural areas because they want to live lives free of the authority invested in agencies like law enforcement, social services, and even medical facilities. These groups often believe that what goes on in the family is private; seeking assistance outside the family is forbidden.

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Preparing to Advocate for Women Used in Prostitution

Prostituted women are isolated and socially marginalized, and they feel responsible for their own situation. They will not usually seek out the services of battered women's programs. Why would they? Our culture does not identify prostitution as violence against women nor prostituted women as battered women. Advocacy programs have only recently begun to address this issue and many don't usually reach out to this population. Women who do seek shelter or advocacy services often do not acknowledge that they are or have been prostituted, or if they report assault by a pimp or john, they are routinely found ineligible for service. Rural advocacy programs may be hesitant to serve prostituted women because of the stigma, or given the hidden nature of rural prostitution, they may be unaware of the need.

Yet advocacy programs can change their response to prostituted women, in much the same way that changes have been made to serve other marginalized groups of battered women, e.g., immigrants, lesbians, and minors. Making such changes, however, is challenging. Expanding advocacy services to prostituted women will require consideration in several areas. The following section of this handbook may be useful for advocacy programs examining this possibility.

1. Acknowledging that advocating for prostituted women is consistent with the goal of ending violence against women and offering advocacy on behalf of battered women

It is necessary for advocates to understand and be able to articulate why prostitution is violence against women, that it is not a reasonable "job" for women, and that most women do not freely choose to be prostitutes. The "Classified Ad" at the beginning of this handbook may help program staff with this understanding.

2. Understanding it will be challenging

Providing safety options, advocacy, and a means of escape for victims of commercial sexual exploitation will not make an advocacy program the most popular service provider in your community. Be prepared to be the only voice on their behalf. Efforts to challenge historical and cultural norms that support and facilitate the right of men to buy sexual access to women and girls will not be widely supported, just as initial efforts to offer shelter and advocacy to battered women are often threatening to rural communities

While no battered women's program begins or stays alive without the support of important segments of small communities, even those supportive groups apply pressure on the programs to "moderate the message." Be professional, cooperate, smile, don't be strident, dress nicely; above all, defend yourself properly from those rumblings that you're a "man hater" and the shelter is just a place where they try to turn women into Lesbians.

There's no place to hide in a county with only 5,000 people. The activist worker who wants to promote social change, eliminate the myths about battered women, and teach the realities of racism, homophobia, classism, and how they nourish violence against women, is well known and, at the same time, highly isolated. Her support system is scattered (two women in her town, another 30 miles away, others somewhere in this very large state), and her opportunities to retreat and heal are so limited.
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence Rural Task Force Resource Packet, January 1991, Second Edition

3. Examining and revising existing policies and practices

To advocate effectively for prostituted women, it will be necessary to identify barriers that might prohibit prostituted women from being served by an advocacy program. To this end, it is necessary to critically examine existing internal procedures, policies, and practices; staff training needs; and written program materials. The following sets of questions can help in this process.

Policies and practices

- ✓ *Who is considered a battered woman? Who is eligible for service? Do we have criteria that screen out prostituted women? Do we require that a victim have an identifiable abuser/partner from whom she is escaping?*

A prostituted woman may not consider her pimp to be her partner or recognize him as an abuser. She may be trying to escape traffickers or johns that she cannot name. She may be asked, "Have you been harmed or threatened by an intimate partner?" This question is routinely used during intakes at many shelters. If she is being battered by a john, or by a pimp who is not her boyfriend or intimate partner, how would she answer? Would she be ineligible for your program? Or an advocate might ask, "Who are you afraid of?" If a prostituted woman answers, "A guy I went on a date with," the advocate is likely to ask, "Are you living with him?" When she says, "No," would she be ineligible for your program?

- ✓ *Do we limit service to women with permanent addresses in our area?*

Many prostituted women are trafficked in areas away from their homes. This is an effective isolation strategy that cuts them off from friends, access to support services, and a way home.

- ✓ *Do we need to get approval from our board of directors or collaborative partners to expand the definition of battered women to include women in prostitution?*

Board members represent the community. Like program staff, they too may benefit from a training session on prostitution as violence against women.

- ✓ *Do we refuse to work with women who are addicted to, or abuse alcohol and drugs? Do we have policies that say we will not offer services to women with alcohol on their breath, or who identify as addicted or who are intoxicated in our safe homes or shelters?*

Self-medicating with drugs or alcohol is often the only way for prostituted women to survive the daily degradation and abuse of this life. Alcohol or drug use may be the biggest reason a woman remains trapped in prostitution. Excluding her from services due to a completely understandable response to her situation (a response that any one of us facing repeated sexual humiliation and abuse would likely have).

As advocates, we accept that women recant, believe the abuse will end because he's promised it will, refuse to testify, and return to their abusers, and we understand their actions as reasonable responses to their situation. We don't refuse to serve them because they're not acting the way we wish they would. Self-medication with drugs and alcohol is a reasonable response for prostituted women. We need to find a way to serve them that doesn't put the advocacy program, shelter, safe house, or residents at risk.

✓ *Are we prepared to respond to women who are HIV positive or have AIDS?*

Because prostituted women are at high risk of exposure to HIV/AIDS, advocates need to be able to talk with women about it, and be prepared to do advocacy within the medical system. Staff need to have accurate information about HIV/AIDS and an understanding that the risk of contracting HIV while working with HIV-positive women is practically nonexistent. Programs whose confidentiality policies do not yet cover women's HIV/AIDS status will need to address the issue and all staff made aware of the revision.

✓ *Do we conduct routine criminal background checks on victims?*

There is an alarming new trend in some advocacy programs to refuse service to women who have been arrested or have a criminal history. In some communities this practice arose through advocacy collaborations with local law enforcement and is apparently meant to ensure that no "criminals" are hiding in the shelter.

Battered women may have criminal backgrounds for minor – or major – crimes. They are often coerced, manipulated, or intimidated into criminal activity by their partners, selling drugs, passing bad checks, shoplifting, etc. Sometimes police arrest the wrong person when they respond to a domestic; sometimes battered women fight back; sometimes they use violence in a pre-emptive manner. This does not mean that they are not in a battering relationship. Obviously background checks are problematic for many battered women. Many prostituted women will also have some type of criminal record, for engaging in prostitution if nothing else.

Outreach materials and methods

✓ *How will prostituted women in our community know that they can access our services? Does our program literature include prostituted women in the description of who you serve?*

✓ *Do we include information about prostitution as violence against women in our written materials, educational presentations, and women's education groups?*

Staff training

✓ *Are we prepared to work with prostituted women?*

We need to be able to explain why our program identifies prostitution as violence against women, and prostituted women as battered women. Being conscious of the language we use when working with prostituted women or talking about systems of prostitution is important. Using the term "prostituted woman" instead of "prostitute" is a first step in identifying that the abuse she has suffered is not the definition or totality of who she is. We don't define battered women as a "batteree" or rape victims as a "rapee." Such terms would define women solely by the abuse they have endured. Refusing to label women as prostitutes also defies the cultural message that being a prostitute is a job like being a waitress or an advocate.

- ✓ *Have we been trained to talk with prostituted women in a nonjudgmental way that validates their experience as a battered woman?*

The consistent messages that advocates give to battered women about their abuse — “I believe you,” “It is not your fault,” “No one deserves to be battered,” and “You have options” — are the same ones that will help prostituted women. It is also important to tell them that no one deserves to be bought or sold and that prostitution is something that happens to a woman, it is not who she is.

- ✓ *Have we discussed the complications that may arise with other battered women in our shelter, safe homes, or women’s groups if we decide to serve prostituted women?*

Battered women in the community have many of the same misconceptions about prostitution that the general public has. They may view women used in prostitution as “dirty” or “sinful” and not see them as victims of battering. It will be necessary to educate them about prostitution as an issue of violence against women. Advocacy programs need to include this information in their education/support groups, address the issue in house meetings, display posters on the topic, and have literature available.

- ✓ *Do we recognize the dynamics of prostitution?*

As advocates, we understand battered women’s behavior, batterers’ behavior, and the system’s response. We need to understand the same relationships as they apply to prostitution.

- ✓ *Are we able to identify the various manifestations of prostitution in rural areas?*

Systems of prostitution are often hidden in the community and it may not be obvious that a woman has been or is being victimized.

Advocating for Women Used in Prostitution

Advocacy is the practice of taking up or promoting the cause of another. The practice of advocacy necessitates developing a relationship with the woman you are working for and with. This relationship is based on non-judgmental support and trust. The experience of prostitution may be something that you as an advocate have not experienced, but your knowledge about battering and your experience as an advocate will provide the foundation for your work with women in prostitution. At the same time, the experience of prostituted women will direct your advocacy in particular ways. Experienced advocates who have worked with prostituted women suggest that women new to this area of advocacy start with the following approach.

Advocacy Approach

- **Understand the complex nature of a woman's situation.**

Most prostituted women are facing an extremely complex set of life experiences and realities. The combination of often years of abuse, self-hatred, drug abuse, and stigma ensures that there are no simple, easy answers. Solutions for her situation are likely to be beyond remedy by simply staying at the shelter, obtaining a protection order, and attending a battered women's group. Certainly these are advocacy approaches we typically use because so many women need them. However, they are not likely to be adequate responses to the needs of many prostituted women.

- **Accept her and offer non-judgmental support.**

She has experienced physical, emotional, and sexual abuse that most of us cannot imagine. Don't make assumptions about her – her intelligence, history, use of chemicals, or how she got involved in prostitution. Do not judge her, ask her why she “sells herself,” or tell her she's too good to be used like this. She doesn't want your pity. She is a survivor.

- **Listen to her.**

Your goal is to find out what she needs. Concentrate on her immediate safety. She wants the violence to stop, but she may not see acts of prostitution as violence. You don't have to persuade her of this today.

- **Connect her with an advocate/survivor.**

A woman who has escaped prostitution is likely to be a woman's greatest resource. Help her to contact a program that works with prostituted women, since most employ women who have been prostituted. These advocates will be able to relate to her on a “been there, done that” basis. You can use their experience to identify comprehensive options for other prostituted women as well. Phone numbers for such programs appear in the resources list at the end of this handbook.

- **Think holistically.**

Advocates are used to working with women on plans, both short and long term. Physical escape from the sex industry is not easy and may require more thorough and intensive planning than what we are familiar with. But escape from prostitution will most likely also require a long-term plan to address the shame, stigma, and isolation of prostitution.

- **Assist her with a realistic assessment of her options/choices.**

Options available to most other battered women are not necessarily available to prostituted women. Remembering that all decisions must be made by the woman, the advocate can best help by walking

through the process with her, helping her prioritize the decisions she is facing, listing options, and discussing the possible consequences of certain choices, especially those which will bring her into the social service and criminal justice systems. It is the advocate's responsibility to provide the woman with all the information she needs to make the best decisions for her situation.

• **Work with her to overcome barriers in the system.**

Most battered women face hurdles when they become involved with the system. For most prostituted women, these hurdles will be much more difficult to overcome, because they are often not seen as victims but as criminals. Systemic responses are likely to be inappropriate or biased, and cases mishandled, trivialized, or ignored. Be prepared to document such responses. The advocate is the intervener most likely to have an overall picture of the challenges facing a prostituted woman. Use your influence, knowledge, and persuasive powers to help her overcome obstacles to her chosen course of action.

It is also the advocate's responsibility to advise and educate service providers and agencies about the obstacles, including practices and policies that exist within their systems and impede a prostituted woman's ability to gain control over her life and provide adequate care for her children. Who will pressure the system to change if not the advocate? The advocate is the system's monitor and often the only catalyst for change in the community.

Women who are escaping systems of prostitution will need support, shelter, and advocacy to achieve short-term safety. Remember that we are not the only resource for victims of battering or systems of prostitution. Our main task is helping women identify their needs and priorities, then presenting resources and making referrals.

What do prostituted women need?

In a study of 475 prostituted women conducted in 1998 in five countries, the question was asked, "What do you need?" The answers of women from the USA were not significantly different from those of women in Third World countries. In the United States

- ✓ 88% stated that they wanted to leave prostitution
- ✓ 78% needed a place of safety
- ✓ 73% needed job training
- ✓ 67% needed drug and alcohol treatment
- ✓ 58% needed health care
- ✓ 48% wanted counseling
- ✓ 50% wanted peer support
- ✓ 43% wanted legal assistance
- ✓ 34% wanted child care
- ✓ 28% wanted physical protection from their pimp

The most noteworthy difference was the lack of supportive services in the USA for women escaping prostitution. *In the USA there is a widespread notion that prostitution is a reasonable job choice for women and wide denial of the extent of the problem.* Farley, M., Baral, I., Kiremire, M., & Sezgin, U. (1998). *Prostitution in five countries: Violence and post-traumatic stress disorder*. *Feminism and Psychology*, 8(4):405-426.

In a 2003 update of this study, prostituted women in nine countries were surveyed and it was found that

- ✓ 71% were physically assaulted in prostitution
- ✓ 63% were raped
- ✓ 75% had been homeless at some point in their lives
- ✓ 68% met criteria for PTSD
- ✓ 89% of these respondents wanted to escape prostitution but did not have other options for survival

Farley, M., Cotton, A., Lynne, J., Zumbreck, W., Spiwak, F., Reyes, M., Alvarez, D., & Sezgin, U. (2003). Prostitution and trafficking in nine countries: An update on violence and posttraumatic stress disorder. *Journal of Trauma Practice*, 2(3/4)33-74; also in (2003) Farley, M. (Ed.), *Prostitution, trafficking, and traumatic stress*. New York: Haworth Press.

Primary advocacy issues

A prostituted woman's most important needs will likely include immediate safety, relocation, health care, substance abuse treatment, and legal advocacy, but certain long-term issues will be important as well. She may also face civil or criminal legal problems or issues. The following section will help advocates think through some of the ways in which their work with prostituted women may differ from their work with other battered women.

• Immediate short-term safety

As you would any other battered woman, help her define her current needs, develop a safety plan, and identify appropriate resources. Safety planning – identifying strategies that will end or minimize the violence in her life – is familiar to all battered women's advocates. Such planning with prostituted women will require all the creativity and support an advocate can offer. Issues will include keeping her safe not only from her pimp/partner, but also from her johns and from those who benefit financially from her sexual servitude. Escaping those who have sexually abused, battered, and exploited her is the first short-term safety hurdle.

• Relocation

Relocation will be critical for those who have been trafficked into the community, as well as for some of the women who already live there. Many prostituted women will need a fresh start in order to regain control of their life and escape the label of "scarlet woman." Finding a shelter program that will house prostituted women is difficult, but not impossible. There are a few nationwide programs designed specifically to provide long-term housing assistance and support services to prostituted women; most of them accept referrals from other states. Many employ survivors of prostitution as advocates, and they are excellent resources for working with prostituted women. (See Services and Resources, page 33.)

• Physical health care

Access to health and dental care may also be an immediate need. Prostituted women do not receive health care benefits, nor can they claim sick time to see a doctor or dentist. The sexual activity of prostitution is physically harmful to women. The prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs),

including HIV/AIDS, chlamydia, gonorrhea, herpes, human papilloma virus, and syphilis, is alarmingly high among women in prostitution. Only 15% of the women in a study conducted in the Twin Cities (Minneapolis/St. Paul) in 1994 had never contracted chlamydia, syphilis, gonorrhea, or herpes. General gynecological complaints, particularly chronic pelvic pain and pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), are extremely common among women in prostitution. Thirty-one percent of the women interviewed had experienced at least one episode of PID. Women in prostitution suffer the same broken bones, concussions, STDs, chronic pelvic pain, and extreme stress and trauma as do women who have been battered, raped, and sexually abused. In fact, the case can be made that because they are subject to these assaults simultaneously over an extensive period, women in prostitution consistently suffer more severe health consequences than do other women.⁸ A 2000 survey of 17 Russian women used in prostitution in the United States reported they suffered an extremely high incidence of bruises, bleeding, and mouth injuries from clients. 71 percent suffered bruises with the majority reporting they were bruised often; 41 percent reported mouth and teeth injuries; 59 percent had vaginal bleeding and 41 had “other bleeding”; 65 percent reported suffering internal pain; 24 percent suffered head injuries, and 12 percent suffered broken bones.

- **Substance abuse and mental health treatment**

Surviving the abuse and dehumanization of prostitution is tough. A prostituted woman may have developed coping mechanisms that were crucial to her physical and mental preservation while in prostitution, such as use of drug and alcohol, disassociation, distancing behaviors, inability to trust others (including other women), and anger.

These means of coping can turn on her now and actually impede her escape from prostitution. They may also make her difficult to work with. The use of alcohol and drugs is a necessary coping behavior for victims of daily sexual abuse and dehumanization; 85% of prostitutes in the United States are addicted to crack, heroin, other drugs, and/or alcohol. (“Working for the Man,” *The Boston Phoenix*, October 23, 1997) She will almost certainly have some substance abuse problems. She will not be able to escape prostitution if she continues to need money for drugs and alcohol. An integral part of her safety plan will be an assessment of her substance abuse issues and referral to appropriate treatment.

Some women will need counseling or therapy. The emotional health consequences of prostitution include severe trauma, stress, depression, anxiety, self-medication through alcohol and drug abuse, and eating disorders.⁹ Seventy-eight percent of prostituted women seeking help in 1977 from the Council for Prostitution Alternatives in Portland, Oregon, had attempted suicide at some point. The majority of prostituted women are not mentally ill, but the effects of chronic and sustained emotional, psychological, physical, and sexual trauma can cause women to develop serious mental health problems. Mental health resources in rural areas are scarce and it is difficult to find such assistance for battered women in general. Call upon the experience of state and national advocacy programs that work with prostituted women to identify resources both inside and outside your area.

⁸ Parriott, R. (1994). Health Experiences of Twin Cities women used in prostitution.
www.nwescape.homestead.com/HealthStudy~ns4.html

⁹ Parriott, R.

- **Long-term strategies for self-sufficiency**

Communities have not traditionally welcomed prostituted women with supportive services that enable them to survive while they are acquiring job skills or finishing their education. A woman escaping prostitution will need to plan strategies for economic independence and will require job training and/or further education. If she was recruited as a child or young adult, she will probably not have completed high school. She may have a criminal record that will make it impossible for her to work in certain jobs – for example, daycare, home health care, or even driving a school bus. Lack of job skills and work experience is one reason many women are vulnerable to recruitment in the first place.

Additional advocacy issues

Clearly, prostituted women face all of the obstacles as do the battered women we currently serve in our shelters and advocacy programs. They often face a number of additional issues that require intensive advocacy.

Civil and criminal legal matters¹⁰

The fact that a woman has been used in prostitution will affect both her willingness to use legal remedies and the effectiveness of these remedies. She may have an existing warrant, a criminal history, or an open child protection case and fear appearing in court or even calling the police. It is necessary to consider how her prostitution history will impact any choices she makes and to fully explore all potential consequences. Consulting advocates who have experience with the complexities of providing legal advocacy to prostituted women can be very helpful. (See Services and Resources.)

- **Civil protective orders**

Prostituted women may need an order for protection (OFP) against either a pimp (her “intimate partner”) or a john. Securing an order for her may be complicated by several factors if the abuser is a john. He may have battered, sexually assaulted, harassed, and threatened her, and he may be stalking her. However, because prostitution occurs under anonymous circumstances, she may not know his name or where he lives or works. Even if she has this information, she may be reluctant to request an OFP because her status as a prostituted woman could be revealed and the order denied on that basis. One additional barrier to securing an OFP is that a prostituted woman typically has not lived with or does not have a child with the john. Theoretically, if the woman can identify her abusive john and wishes to pursue protection from the court, she may be eligible for a harassment order. In reality, judges are rarely sympathetic to this request.

Typically a prostituted woman who needs an order for protection from her pimp faces the same obstacles as do other battered women. Her safety concerns may be intensified by two factors: her abuser is losing money every day she is gone, and he may be liable for criminal prosecution if she exposes him for pimping her or for drug-related activities. Occasionally, the woman has not lived with him, which causes additional complications.

¹⁰ This section is adapted with permission. Carter, V. (1999). *Civil and criminal advocacy*. Available from Breaking Free, 1821 University Ave., St. Paul, MN 55104.

- **Child custody and visitation**

A prostituted woman may need legal advocacy concerning child custody or visitation. For example, she may be the subject of a child protection investigation, hearing, or open case. The fact that a woman is used in prostitution does not in and of itself make her an unfit mother, any more than being battered by a spouse or partner makes other battered women unfit parents. The impact of prostitution on a woman's life, though, may make her unable to parent to the best of her ability.

A child protection case is often initiated after a woman is arrested on prostitution or drug-related charges. It is imperative that an advocate protect the woman's legal rights while she is incarcerated so that she does not lose custody of her children by default. For example, in some states a woman must have a written case plan within thirty days of her child being removed from her care or risk permanent termination of parental rights. Further, because women in prostitution are typically chemically dependent, they are differentially affected by child protection statutes that allow for the termination of parental rights of chemically dependent parents who fail to complete mandatory treatment for drug abuse. Additionally, because women used in prostitution have multiple problems, case plans mapped out by well-meaning child protection workers are often impossible to carry out successfully or complete in the allotted time.

It is also imperative to help the woman communicate her concerns to her child protection worker. A woman's concern that her child will be in jeopardy if placed with a neglectful or abusive father (who may also be her pimp) or relative often goes unheeded. Conversely, the child protection worker may also ignore the woman's request to place her child with a trusted family member, viewing the entire family as "dysfunctional" due to the woman's prostituted status. Additionally, an advocate must strongly support the desire of a woman of color that her children be placed with a foster care provider who is also a person of color.

Lastly, it is important that an advocate is available to help the woman understand the proceedings and the consequences of her decisions. An abused, homeless, or drug-addicted woman who is trapped in prostitution may too readily agree to relinquish permanent custody of her child to the state or another individual because she has been convinced that she is incapable of ever caring for her child. In such a case, temporary placement plus advocacy to help the woman achieve control over her own life may result in successful reunification of mother and child.

A prostituted woman may require legal advocacy when her pimp places their children with one of his relatives (often in another state) to stop her from leaving him and prostitution. He may threaten to expose her to the police, the child protection service, or her financial worker if she attempts to remove her children from the custody of his family members. The advocate should proceed as she would in a custody or visitation dispute between a battered woman and her abuser, allowing for the particular barriers facing prostituted women.

A pimp may also attempt to obtain custody or establish visitation rights. In one case, a woman had escaped prostitution and her pimp sued for custody and child support. He testified that he was initially ignorant of her prostitution activities and when he became aware of them he "begged" her to stop for the sake of their family. The reality was that this man had brutally coerced the women into prostitution and was attempting to extort money from her by controlling her access to their children. Other women have complained that their pimps have contacted their child protection worker from prison to make false reports of child abuse and neglect.

• **When the woman is a crime victim**

Prostituted women are commonly the victims of beatings and sexual assaults. Seventy-nine percent of prostituted women were beaten regularly by their pimps.¹¹ Two-thirds were beaten many times by customers. Seventy percent were raped by “johns,” an average of 31 times for each woman. Seventy-three percent were raped by non-customers, almost all reporting serious physical injury as a result.¹² [Other studies report 68% to 70% of women in prostitution being raped.¹³]

Prostituted women are also assaulted or raped by drug dealers, who sometimes try to force them to deliver drugs or perform other illegal activities. Many times if the prostituted woman refuses to submit to his demands she is raped and/or assaulted. Again, because of her realistic fear of not being considered credible and the dangers associated with drug dealers, she is less apt to report her assault to law enforcement. Advocates must remember that when this kind of incident occurs that the prostituted women may need to be placed in a battered women’s shelter for her safety as well as having her medical needs met.

More often than not, law enforcement officials attempt to dissuade them from pursuing formal charges. This is because the police, and often the courts, believe that prostituted women lack credibility or argue that such assaults are the result of illegal transactions gone awry.

Some women are reluctant to pursue an investigation because she blames herself or because she has been conditioned to believe that rape and battery are merely one of the “occupational hazards” of prostitution. The advocate should patiently reassure her that no one deserves to be battered or sexually assaulted despite the circumstances. The payment of money does not negate that a rape or criminal assault has occurred.

Commonly, a woman may not wish to pursue legal charges because she fears that she will be exposed as a prostitute, which could have serious consequences regarding her housing, custody of her children, and safety in general. Do not attempt to minimize the victim’s apprehensions. The assailant and his attorney most likely will use her history as a defense, even if she is no longer in prostitution. Unfortunately, this approach is often successful.

In these cases, prostituted women require the same type of legal advocacy that other battered women need. Again, pay close attention to her fears of being exposed as a prostitute. This is similar to the care an advocate would take with a battered lesbian who feared being “outed” by her abuser.

Many prostituted women have reported that they have been sexually abused and/or physically and verbally assaulted by law enforcement officers during an arrest or while in custody. Some women have been raped by officers or have engaged in coerced sex to avoid being arrested. It is difficult for any women to prevail when her assailant is a law enforcement officer. Biases against prostituted women make it doubly hard. In these situations, work closely with a sexual assault program advocate who is familiar with police brutality.

If the victim wishes to pursue legal action against her assailant she will need a strong advocate to insist that the police or prosecutor’s office vigorously pursue the matter. Legal advocates should seek the help of battered women’s advocates, sexual assault counselors, and groups who have experience working with prostituted women.

¹¹ Giobbe, E. (1987). WHISPER Oral History Project, Minneapolis, MN.

¹² Silbert, M. (1982). Prostitution and sexual assault: Summary of results. *International Journal of Biosocial Research* (3)2.

¹³ Silbert, M. (1998). Compounding factors in the rape of street prostitutes. In A. W. Burgess (Ed.), *Rape and Sexual Assault Vol. II*. New York: Garland Publishing; Farley, M. & Barkan, H. (1998). Prostitution, violence against women, and posttraumatic stress disorder. *Women & Health* 27(3):37-49.

- **When the woman is facing criminal charges**

As with any battered woman, when working with a prostituted woman on issues dealing with the justice system it is imperative to begin by informing her that you are not an attorney, can't offer legal advice and that you will help her find a lawyer. The following information should be shared with a woman only after you clarify the limits of your legal advocacy role and explain that you can generally describe what commonly happens in your jurisdiction.

Typically prostituted women are arrested for engaging or agreeing to engage in prostitution, most often by a decoy officer posing as a john. Less often they are arrested for loitering with the intent to commit prostitution. In these cases, the advocate must work with the woman's public defender or other legal counsel, who may be overburdened and not have the time to explain her options to her. Women may hastily enter a guilty plea to avoid sitting in jail while awaiting trial. If it is a woman's first prostitution-related arrest, she may be eligible for a continuance for dismissal with no jail time or fine and expunction after a year in exchange for a guilty plea. This should be done only if her attorney feels that her chances for acquittal are low.

A woman arrested under the loitering statute has a good chance for acquittal if she takes it to trial. It is more difficult to prove her intent as opposed to actual behavior. If the woman doesn't wish to go to trial or if her attorney doesn't think that is a good strategy in her particular case, another option is pleading guilty to a lesser charge such as disorderly conduct. If a woman is arrested for "solicitation or engaging" in a sauna (brothel), she may wish to plead down to being in a disorderly house, thus avoiding a record for prostitution. A woman arrested through answering a call from an escort service may try to plead to giving a massage without a license.

Diversion to a program for prostituted women may be another alternative. In each case be sure that the woman clearly understands the consequences of the legal strategy employed. Work closely with her public defender to get the best possible outcome. Always try to encourage negotiations that preclude jail time or fines. Never promise a woman a particular outcome.

When a woman is incarcerated (she may be doing time for someone else's behavior), it is imperative that the advocate stay in contact with her. An incarcerated woman is vulnerable to pressure from her pimp, johns, and drug dealers, all of whom may pressure her to allow them to visit. Powerless and unable to control her environment, she needs the support of her advocate more than ever.

- **HIV status and civil rights violations**

Because of cultural biases against prostituted women and fears of HIV transmission, women used in prostitution who are or believed to be HIV positive are extremely vulnerable to civil rights violations. In one case, an HIV-positive woman revealed that she was being used in prostitution to a health care worker and the health care worker then revealed this information to the media and the police. This breach of confidentiality resulted in the woman being arrested for loitering with the intent and revocation of her probation. Another incident occurred where a prosecutor erroneously advised the court that a prostituted woman was HIV positive in an attempt to secure a prostitution conviction.

- **Denial of Social Security Disability (SSD) and Supplemental Security (SSI) benefits**

In some states, the money earned through prostitution is viewed by the courts as evidence of substantial gainful employment. Social Security Administration rulings have denied disability benefits to prostituted women on this basis. Such action keeps women trapped in the sex industry, the emotional, psychological and physical effects of which are truly disabling. To date, no successful strategy has provided a solution. Advocates need to let women know what barriers they may face if they apply for disability benefits.

- **Immigration issues**

Cases of international trafficking are especially dangerous for women used in prostitution and fraught with advocacy complications related to immigration issues. Although federal legislation was enacted in the U.S. in 2000 to assist victims of trafficking, advocates are advised to seek the advice of immigration lawyers and advocates before involving the police or taking any steps that would place an immigrant woman in contact with the criminal justice system. (See Additional Information on Prostitution and Trafficking.)

- **Housing**

Across the country, the lack of affordable housing has created a crisis for low-income people. The demand for such housing far exceeds the supply, which gives landlords the ability to set stringent standards for potential renters. Prostituted women often have poor rental histories and have been the subject of eviction actions, many times due to the illegal activities of male associates. Furthermore, women with histories of certain criminal offenses, including prostitution, may be ineligible for public housing. The scarcity of housing leaves them vulnerable to landlords who make sexual demands on them and threaten eviction should they not comply.

Assisting prostituted women with housing can be very challenging. Advocates must be familiar with tenants' rights law and with the process to have eviction actions expunged from an individual's record. Advocates must be willing to go to court and intervene on behalf of the prostituted woman who justifiably fears that because she has been involved in prostitution and the criminal justice system, the court will not listen to her side of the story. Her feelings should never be taken lightly. Especially in rural areas, it is possible that the hearing officer or judge will be someone she has already encountered in court.

- **Civil damages**

In August 1994 in Minnesota, a legal advocacy team spearheaded by WHISPER staff and volunteers successfully lobbied for the passage of MN Statute 611. This legal remedy allows individuals coerced into prostitution to bring a civil cause of action for monetary damages against the perpetrator. The law explicitly defines twenty-three forms of overt and covert forms of coercion. The criteria for coercion include kidnapping, exploiting chemical dependency, and making promises of marriage. This law has yet to be tested in the courts, but its mere existence supports the presumption that prostituted women are indeed victims of crime and eligible for redress. [The Minnesota bill was modeled after an earlier Florida bill; a similar law exists in Hawaii. A bill passed by the State House in Illinois is expected to pass the Senate in the upcoming session, and "according to supporters goes further than any comparable state laws to ease the burden on sex workers to prove they were compelled into prostitution" (Eric Ferkenhoff, Special to The Chronicle, May 12, 2005).]

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Case Examples and Advocacy Suggestions

These are the stories, based on real-life experiences of prostituted women in rural areas, that appeared at the beginning of this handbook. It may be helpful to consider what you might do in each case before reading the suggestions for advocacy.



Dina

Dina, 24, is dancing at a topless bar outside of Rock Flats, a small town in the southwest. Larry, the father of her two young children, has been battering her for five years. He was the one who had encouraged Dina to dance in the first place. He is now pressuring her to make more money, to have a few “dates” with the bar customers: “All the other girls do it, what’s so special about you?” Dina is resisting and Larry’s violence is escalating. Dina wants to get away from him, but she likes her work as a dancer. She says that the other dancers are her biggest support system.

Advocacy suggestions

Dina is a battered woman. Talk about options to protect her from immediate physical violence – shelter, protective orders, staying with a friend or relative. Discuss the basics of battering (it usually gets worse, it’s not your fault, etc.).

Don’t suggest that she stop dancing because it’s violence against women. Right now she needs to figure out how to be safe, leave Larry, support herself, and keep her kids. Is she married to Larry? Is he adjudicated as the father? Each of these situations will require different strategies regarding the children.

If she wants to use civil legal remedies, discuss the possible consequences of initiating custody and visitation actions while she is still dancing. Consider the court and community biases against strippers. Has she ever used /abused drugs? Does she have a criminal record? Has she ever received welfare while dancing? Can he use any of this against her to convince the courts and child protection that she is not a good mother? Thoroughly explore the potential hazards involved in each remedy considered.

When talking about stripping, ask her if there is anything about the job that she doesn’t like. How common is having “dates” for the other dancers? Has she been pressured at the club by anyone else to do this (owner, bartender, customers, bouncers, friends)? How does she handle it? How does she feel about it?

If rapport has developed between you, approach helping her to identify the negative aspects of dancing and planning for a different kind of life. Has she been sexually harassed, verbally abused, touched without her consent, stalked, threatened, degraded or made to feel ashamed? What are her plans for making money in the future to support herself and her children (she won’t always be young and beautiful)? Most dancers don’t see themselves dancing forever. Kelly Holsopple’s article on stripping is a good one to give her if you sense that she might be open to discussing it. (See Articles.)

Mary, 41, has been turning tricks at truck stops along Interstate 95 for 15 years. She is from a nearby small town and has no children living with her and no current partner. She didn't graduate from high school and worked in the local steel mill until it shut down. Last night she was raped and severely beaten by a john. She wants him arrested. She knows his trucking company, first name, and license plate. This is the first time Mary has ever turned to anyone for help and the first time she has ever reported a rape or assault. She admits to being a long-time alcoholic and more recently, an occasional drug user.



Mary

Advocacy suggestions

Did Mary receive medical care for the rape and beating? If not, she should go now. Explain the need for a sexual assault exam and photographs of her injuries. Accompany her to the hospital, and get her in touch with a sexual assault advocate.

Explain what she may be up against in trying to prove rape charges against a john. The police may give her a hard time, believing it is impossible for a prostitute to be raped. She has a right to make a report in any case. It will help if she has the sexual assault exam and the medical personnel call the police from the ER. The prosecutor may also be reluctant to charge for the same reason and because she may lack credibility due to drug/alcohol use. Talk with a legal aid program about other legal options. Call Breaking Free or Raven for more advice on how to proceed.

This is a case in which she desperately needs to be accepted as a chronically battered woman who has endured incredible serial abuse for many years. She is strong because she has survived, and she will need to be strong to hold her rapist accountable.

What else does Mary want from life? She is probably pretty resigned to her circumstances, lack of job opportunities, no close relatives, maybe no support system. All she has known for 15 years is prostitution, drinking, and self-medicating the emotional and physical pain.

Why would she want to stop using drugs and alcohol? What else does she have for pleasure or amnesia?

What hope does she have for another kind of life? She needs to know that other women have reclaimed their lives after years of prostitution. There are options. Get her in touch with a survivor/advocate just for support. If she is open to it, help her imagine and plan another life. What would it take? Relocation, living in a program for survivors, counseling, job skills, treatment, all of the above?

**Bree**

Bree, 17, was gang-raped last week at a party. She confides that for over a year she has been going to these after-hour parties at the home of a local resident, Danny. She first met him at the coffee shop in town. He owns his own auto-repair shop and was really “nice” to her. Bree was having a lot of problems with her family around this time and was staying out all night long and drinking. Danny invited her to a party and told her to bring one of her girlfriends. The guys there were older and really cool. They had lots of smoke and cocaine and plenty of booze. Sometimes she would get really high and drunk and have sex with one of them.

After a few weeks, Danny told Bree that one of the guys really liked her and wanted to have sex with her. He said he would set it up and this would be a good way for her to make some extra money—after all, she was already doing it for free. She agreed and has been operating under this arrangement for two months. Danny has never given her any of the money; he says she has smoked it all up.

Advocacy suggestions

What does Bree want? Is she afraid? Is she feeling ashamed or stupid? Does she need medical care now? Did she see a doctor after the rapes? Has she been tested for STDs and pregnancy? Does she feel she has a drug problem? What treatment options are available?

Is she still in school, and if not, why not? Does she want to go to school? What alternate school options are available for her if she feels she can’t go to her school because classmates harass her for being a “slut”? Does she want to call the police? (Probably not.) Get her in touch with a sexual assault counselor. Let her know that though she may have made some bad decisions, she is not a bad person. Adults took sexual advantage of her and that is a crime. What are the underlying family issues? Suggest a support group for sexual assault victims, some counseling for her, and possibly family therapy if she thinks it might help.



Tya

Tya, 31, recently answered an ad in a Chicago paper for exotic dancers. She is recently divorced and the mother of two children, who are in Chicago with her mom. She was told that she was going on a three-week dancing tour in the Midwest. She is the only woman of color among the four dancers. At their first stop, a bar catering to hunters and snowmobilers, the owner informed them that they would be paying for their own lodging at the local motel. Tya had been told by the agency that lodging was to be paid by the bar owner who contracted for the dancers.

She didn't make enough in tips the first night to cover the motel bill. When she asked the other dancers how they managed, they informed her that the real work didn't start until after the bar closed. Each of them had set up "dates" after their dancing shift, or the bar owner would set up the dates for them for a "commission. This was not what Tya had agreed to. She confronted the bar owner, who told her that she had signed a contract, and that if she didn't keep her end of the deal he would kick her ass and leave her in the woods to die. She is 550 miles from home, broke and scared.

Advocacy suggestions

What does Tya want? If she wants to go back to Chicago, help her get there. Since she is already disillusioned with "dancing," this might be a good time to give her some information about the connection between prostitution and stripping. Connect her with a survivor and give her Kelly's article.

Why did she decide to dance in the first place? Because she needed a job? Explore other options, including more education. Was it because she wanted to break into show business or videos? This will not get her there. It's a myth used by recruiters to seduce women into stripping. Help Tya set up a plan to survive back home without stripping.

Luce, 16, entered the U.S. from Brazil on a tourist visa. She wanted to be adopted by an aunt, attend school and become an American! Luce discovered that her aunt and uncle lived near a rancheria in Arizona which did not have a Portuguese community, that she could not register for school while traveling on a tourist visa, and that her aunt wanted her to be a domestic servant for the family. Luce lived alone in the basement of the house, did not understand English, and felt depressed, and helpless to change her situation.



Luce

When Luce became pregnant from an encounter with a neighbor boy, her aunt insisted she get an abortion. When she returned from the clinic, her aunt turned her out of the house with only a bag of clothes – no money, nowhere to go, and her visa had expired. She was hungry, scared, and could not speak enough English to seek help.

At the local bus stop, a woman approached her, spoke kindly, and offered a place to stay for the night. The next day she offered Luce a job where she could make money to buy a plane ticket back to Brazil. She took her to a small bar in a remote area where Luce was to clean tables, mop floors, and have sex with customers. Her only income was the tips the customers gave her, and the bar owner took most of it to pay for her room and board.

Advocacy suggestions

What are Luce's pressing needs? She needs a safe place to stay, food, and support, which the local shelter can provide. Luce also needs to communicate with advocates in her own language, which may be more difficult to achieve in a rural community. If no Portuguese-speaking advocate can be located nearby, perhaps Luce could be connected to someone from another part of the country on phone. The advocate may need to be prepared with a list of multilingual/ multicultural resources across the country to help monolingual women link with advocates in their communities. What are Luce's immediate health care needs? She has been mistreated in her aunt's home, undergone an abortion, and been on the street having sex with multiple men. Help assess her health care needs and find resources.

What does Luce want in terms of residency? Does she want to return to her family in Brazil? Since Luce is not an adult, nor emancipated (she may not be eligible since she is a foreign citizen), her options for residency in the U.S. might be limited. She may have to return to her native country. However, since her aunt had sponsored her tourist visa, she is legally responsible for her repatriation and would have to financially support her transportation back. There might be other options for Luce to remain in the U.S., if temporarily. She may apply for a T visa if the county Prosecutor decides to file trafficking charges against her aunt and her family. Trafficking for labor or sexual exploitation, especially of minors, is a crime and since Luce was transported across countries under fraudulent expectations, the option of T visa might be open to her. She might also be eligible for a U visa, which is offered to individuals who can assist with the prosecution of a felony. This visa is issued for 3 years and can be renewed for another 3. It is offered to victims of crime including domestic violence and sexual assault. *Residency issues and immigration-related visas are tricky options and need to be explored with the help of an attorney.* If Luce decides to leave the country and return

to her mother, she may be eligible for financial reimbursement from her aunt and the bar owner since she worked as a domestic help in her aunt's home and a maid at the bar. A labor attorney can assess whether Luce could seek compensation for her labor and perhaps even file a claim of damages. It is important to ask Luce about her long-term plans and to explore the dangers she and her family might face if she pursues the options above. Advocates must help women analyze how these risks could be minimized while securing some reparation for Luce



Nisha

Nisha's husband, Alak, had been in the U.S. for ten years when he returned to India to marry her. Alak traveled back to the U.S. within a week after the wedding to return to his job managing a motel in a small town in Florida. Nisha came to the U.S. six months after her marriage on a K (fiancée) visa since it would take more than a year to receive an immigrant visa.

Alak required Nisha to clean 26 motel rooms daily, to prepare food for guests, and to take care of all household duties. She did not meet any neighbors or other Indian families during her first year in the States.

Alak would physically abuse her if she showed fatigue, asked for a day off, or 'slacked off' her duties. One day he told Nisha the motel was losing money and that his father had warned him that he would be replaced if this didn't change. Alak pressured Nisha to have sex with some of the motel guests, explaining they would get more repeat customers. At first, Nisha vehemently refused but Alak beat her for her disobedience. He had also threatened to have her deported since she had no 'green card' and had an expired visa. After a while, Nisha gave up and started to have sex with travelers and soon the motel became financially successful.

Advocacy suggestions

Your level of interaction with Nisha would depend on Nisha's fluency in English. Locate and collaborate with South Asian community organizations around the country to help Nisha be more comfortable and to provide culturally appropriate services. Find out what Nisha wants. If Nisha is unsafe in her home, a shelter or protective order may be options.

She might be frightened of her visa status and current undocumented status. Although she entered the country on a K visa, if Alak is a permanent resident or citizen of the U.S., she could possibly apply for the battered spouse waiver or self-petitioning under VAWA II. As a witness and victim, Nisha could be eligible for the U visa if the prosecuting attorney's office decides to prosecute her husband and she substantially assists in the prosecution of a felony. *These options should be explored with an immigration attorney or agencies that focus their work on immigrant battered women.*

Also assess the level of threat Nisha believes her husband and his family pose to herself and her family in her native country. At times, such long-term and collective vulnerabilities might dissuade victims from bringing charges against their abusers and changing their situations.

Resources for Prostituted Women

A copy of this list of resources may be useful for the women you are working with, for use now or in the future. When providing legal advocacy it is advisable to contact agencies that have experience with the intricacies of such advocacy on behalf of prostituted women.

Arizona – Phoenix

Dignity

Program of: Catholic Social Service, Central and Northern Arizona
1825 W. Northern Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85021
(T) 602-486-4973; (F) 602-258-2808
Email: kmitchell@cssaz.org
<http://www.catholicsocialserviceaz.org/services/dignity.asp>
Outreach, jail diversion, residential program

Email: sage@dnai.com

<http://www.sageprojectinc.org/index.htm>

Group therapy, individual counseling, advocacy services, diversion program, youth program

California – South Gate

The Mary Magdalene Project

P.O. Box 8396
Van Nuys, CA 91409
(T) 818-988-4970 or 800-371-7230
Email: mmcombs@mmp.org or info@mmp.org
<http://mmp.org/aboutus/>

Alaska – Anchorage

Mary Magdalene Home Alaska, Inc.

P.O. Box 240111
Anchorage, AK 99524
(T) 907-277-6642; (F) 907-277-6643
Email: mmha@gci.net
<http://home.gci.net/~mmha/>
Case management, peer mentoring, support group, outreach

Hawaii – Honolulu

SOS (Sisters Offering Support)

P.O. Box 75642
Honolulu, HI 96836
(T) 808-941-5554; (F) 808-941-5511
Email: info@soshawaii.org
<http://www.soshawaii.org/aboutsos.html>
Drop-in center, support group, prevention program, 24-hr crisis-line, community education and In-service training

California – Los Angeles

Children of the Night (Rescuing America's Children from Prostitution)

14530 Sylvan Street
Van Nuys, CA 91411
(T) 818-908-4474; (F) 818-908-1468
HOTLINE: 800-551-1300
Email: llee@childrenofthenight.org
<http://www.childrenofthenight.org/home.html>
24 hour hotline, referral service for adult women, shelter, 11-17 year old sexually exploited youth

Illinois – Chicago

Genesis House

(T) 773-544-5600
Email: ajordan@genesishouse.org (outreach)
<http://www.genesishouse.org/index.htm>
Outreach, residential program, crisis intervention, court program, counseling

California – San Francisco

SAGE (Standing Against Global Exploitation)

The SAGE Project, Inc.
1385 Mission Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94103
(T) 415-905-5050; (F) 415-554-9981

Maryland – Baltimore

YANA (You Are Never Alone)

2013 West Pratt Street
Baltimore, MD 21223
(T) 410-566-7973; (F) 410-566-7938
Email: yanainc@earthlink.net
<http://www.yanaplace.com/index.html>
Street and community outreach, hospitality, counseling, case management, advocacy

Minnesota – Minneapolis/Saint Paul

Volunteers of America Women's Recovery Center (WRC)

5905 Golden Valley Road, Suite 110
Minneapolis, MN 55422
(T) 612-721-6327 or 763-546-3242;
(F) 763-546-2774
Email: bnelson@voamn.org
<http://www.voamn.org/>
Correctional services

Minnesota – Minneapolis

PRIDE: From Prostitution to Independence, Dignity, and Equality

Program of: Family and Children's Service
3125 E. Lake Street
Minneapolis, MN 55406
(T) 612-728-2065 or 612-729-2616;
(F) 612-729-2616
24 Hour Crisis Line: 612-728-2062
Email: athelenejohnson@fcsmn.org
<http://www.fcsmn.org>
Advocacy services, support/education groups, individual counseling, jail programs, diversion program

Minnesota – St. Paul

Breaking Free

770 University Avenue West
St Paul, MN 55104
(T) 651-645-6557; (F) 651-645-7073
Email: breakingfree@uswest.net
<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/hiv/hivgrantees.html#breakingfree>
Transitional housing, legal advocacy and outreach services, education/support group, parenting support, job training, community education

New York – New York City

Paul and Lisa

(T) 800-518-2238
Email: contact@paulandlisa.org
<http://www.paulandlisa.org/aboutus.html>
Prevention education, street outreach, advocacy services, adults and children, community education

Oregon – Portland

New Options for Women (NOW)

Project of: LifeWorks NW
4531 SE Belmont
Portland, OR 97201
(T) 503-234-3400; (F) 503-223-9424
<http://www.lifeworksnw.org/index.htm>
Mental health services, individual and group counseling

Washington – D.C.

HIPS (Helping Individual Prostitutes Survive)

P.O. Box 21394
Washington, DC 20009
(T) 202-232-8150; (F) 202-232-8304
Hotline: 1-800-676-HIPS
Email: hips@hips.org
<http://www.hips.org/index.html>
24-hr hotline, street outreach, advocacy services, information and referral

Wisconsin – Madison

Respect

Project of Arch Community Services
832 East Johnson Street
Madison, WI 53703
(T) 608-283-6435; (Arch Office) 608-278-2300
Email: kkinsey@archcommserv.com
Women specific programs: alternatives to incarceration, substance abuse, jail diversion program

Canada – British Columbia, Victoria

PEERS

1-744 Fairview Road
Victoria, BC V9A 5T9
(T) 888-733-7722; (F) 250-388-5324
Email: info@peers.bc.ca

Canada – Nova Scotia, Halifax

Stepping Stone

2224 Maitland Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3K 2Z9
(T) 902-420-0103; (F) 902-422-9665
Email : steppingstone@navnet.net
<http://www.supercity.ns.ca/~stepping/contact.html>

Additional Information on Prostitution and Trafficking of Women

A copy of this list of resources may be useful for the women you are working with, for use now or in the future. When providing legal advocacy it is advisable to contact agencies that have experience with the intricacies of such advocacy on behalf of prostituted women.

Coalition Against Trafficking in Women

Dr. Janice Raymond
Co-Executive Director
Professor, University of Massachusetts
P.O. Box 9338
N. Amherst, MA 01059
(F) 413-367-9262
<http://www.catwinternational.org/index.php>

Prostitution Research and Education (PRE)

Box 16254
San Francisco, CA 94116-0254
Tel. 415-922-4555
Email: mfarley@prostitutionresearch.com
<http://www.prostitutionresearch.com>

Freedom and Justice Center for Prostitution Resources

A Program of the Volunteers of America of Minnesota
2825 East Lake Street
Minneapolis, MN 55406
612-721-6327
Email: nelsonb@concentric.net
<http://www.angelfire.com/mn/fjc/>

Women Online Worldwide

<http://www.wowwomen.com>

Ending Violence Against Rural Women

<http://www.wowwomen.com/ruralzone/frontpage.html>

Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act

P.L. 106-386; October 28, 2000
<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/10492.pdf>

Reauthorization of Trafficking Victims Protection Act, 2003

P. L. 108-193; December 19, 2003

<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2004/33204.htm>

<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/28225.pdf>

Helpline: 1-888-373-7888

Prof. Donna M. Hughes

University of Rhode Island
316 Eleanor Roosevelt Hall
Kingston, RI 02881
(T) 401-874-2757; (F) 401-874-4527
Email : dhughes@uri.edu
www.uri.edu/arts/wms/hughes/

ECPAT USA (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes - USA)

ECPAT-USA
157 Montague Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201
(T) (718) 935-9192; (F) (718) 935-9173
Email: info@ecpatusa.org
<http://www.ecpatusa.org/>
Elimination of child prostitution, sex tourism, child pornography and trafficking of children for sexual purposes, networking

Women in Action

Association Of Hispanic Women Against Discrimination And Gender Violence
438 NE 35th Terrace
Miami, Florida 33137
(T) 305.573.6338 or 305.573.6357; (F) 305.573.6743
Trafficking, violence against women

Captive Daughters

10410-PMB 22 Palms Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90034
(T) 310-669-4400 ; (F) 310-815-9197
Email: captivedaughters@earthlink.net

<http://captivedaughters.org>

Sex tourism, child sex tourism, commercial sexual exploitation of children, trafficking

STORM (Sex Trade Opportunities for Risk Minimization)

Mailing Address

PO 49658, Greensboro, NC 27419

(T) 651-486-3808

Email: rhiannonn@triad.rr.com

<http://www.thestormproject.com/>

Harm reduction, education and counseling

Lola Greene Baldwin Foundation

P.O. Box 42393

Portland, OR 97242

(T) 506-236-7244

Email: contact@prostitutionrecovery.org

<http://www.prostitutionrecovery.org/index.html>

Drop in center, counseling, mental health & substance abuse information, advocacy

The Aurora Center for Advocacy & Education

Office for Student Affairs

407 Boynton

410 Church Street SE

Minneapolis, MN 55455

(T) 612-626-2929; (TTY) 612-626-4279

(24-Hr. Crisis line) 612-626-9111

aurora.center@umn.edu

Sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking; resources for prostituted women

Ms. Magazine recently compiled a list of resources to stop sex trafficking:

- Coalition Against Trafficking in Women: "Works internationally to oppose all forms of sexual exploitation." Actions include support for policy against trafficking and prostitution; statements on the United Nations and governmental roles to work against trafficking; and a report of a protest against one company that provides sex tours. Based in the United States.
<http://www.uri.edu/artsci/wms/hughes/catw/catw.htm>
- Coalition Against Prostitution, Child Abuse & Trafficking: Gives Thai-based organizations space to document their work on poverty, prostitution, and child labor, in order to compel people to take action. Based in Thailand.
<http://www.capcat.ksc.net/>
- The Center for the Protection of Children's Rights: Advocates for abused children, and works to stop trafficking. Based in Thailand.
cpcr@internet.th.com
- Empower: Provides services such as health education, job training, and literacy classes to sex workers. Based in Thailand.
P.O. Box 1065, Silom Post Office, Bangkok, 10504, Thailand
- Foundation for Women: Helps women vulnerable to trafficking by creating economic alternatives to prostitution. Based in Thailand.
FFW@mozart.inet.co.th
- Equality Now: Advocates for women's human rights. Recommends actions directed at United States officials to prosecute sex tourism companies. Based in the United States.
<http://www.equalitynow.org/>

Appendix A

Stripclubs According to Strippers: Exposing Workplace Sexual Violence

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to investigate women's experiences in stripclubs and to describe the activities in stripclubs from the women's point of view. The format approach is collective story narrative with the author as part of the collective voice. The research was inspired by the author's experiences in stripping over the course of thirteen years. The author's intention is to examine the conditions of stripclubs by describing the fundamental way stripclubs are organized. The description features bar activities focused on stripper-customer interactions, survey data on sexual violence in stripclubs, and women's thoughts on stripping.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Stripclubs are popularly promoted as providing harmless entertainment and as places where respectful men go to watch and talk to women (Reed 1997). Stripclub customers are described as normal men who use stripclubs to avoid adultery and therefor find a safe outlet for their sexual desires in balance with their marital commitments (Reed 1997). In contrast, stripclubs are criticized for being environments where men exercise their social, sexual, and economic authority over women who are dependent on them and as places where women are treated as things to perform sex acts and take commands from men (Ciriello 1993).

Stripclubs are organized according to gender and reflect gender power dynamics in greater society. "Gendered spaces are social arenas in which a person's gender shapes the roles, statuses, and interpersonal dynamics and generates differential political and economic outcomes and interaction expectations and practices" (Ronai, Zsembik, and Feagin 1997:6). Stripclubs are more specifically organized according to gender inequality, which is perpetuated by gendered spaces and consequently sexualized (Ronai, et al 1997). The typical stripclub scenario displays young, nude or partially nude women for fully clothed male customers (Thompson and Harred 1992).

The entire analysis of stripclubs is located within the context of men's domination over women. When organizations are produced in the context of the structural relations of domination, control, and violence, they reproduce those relations (Hearn 1994). These organizations may also make explicit use of gendered forms of authority with unaccountable and unjustifiable authority belonging to men (Hearn 1994). The stripclub elicits and requires direct expressions of male domination and control over women (Prewitt 1989).

In order to dominate or control and secure men's domestic, emotional and sexual service interests, male dominated institutions and individual men utilize violence (Hanmer 1989). Furthermore, male dominated

institutions and individual men "forge alliances and strengthen the notion of group masculinity and power through forced access to the female body" (Brownmiller 1976:211). Stripclubs turn acts of violence against women into entertainment and enterprise for men. Men associated with stripclubs use force and coercion to establish sexual contact with women in stripping and inflict harm upon the women. Violence against women is identified as physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, and representational, but all violence from men against women should be understood as sexual violence (Hearn 1994). This definition and the concept of a continuum are useful when discussing sexual violence, especially in stripclubs. Continuum is defined as a basic characteristic underlying many different events and as a series of elements or events that pass into one another (Kelly 1987). The common underlying element in stripclubs is that male customers, managers, staff, and owners use diverse methods of harassment, manipulation, exploitation, and abuse to control female strippers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite a substantial amount of research on the topic of strippers, stripping, and stripclubs, none focuses on sexual violence in stripclubs perpetrated against strippers. Instead the studies focus on sociological and psychological profiles of the women and the women's strategies for interaction with customers. Articles that focus on the women investigate the cultural space of the female nude dancer, her performance and auxiliary roles, test identity theory within the socially devalued role of the exotic dancer, and explore the effect of self-discrepancy on stripteasers' emotional stability (Forsyth and Deshotels 1997; Reid, Epstein, and Benson 1994; (Peretti and O' Connor 1989). Other articles about the women are concerned with contingencies for women's initiation and commitment to the deviance of striptease and with techniques topless dancers use to manage the stigma of a deviant occupation (Skipper and McCaghy 1970; Thompson and Harred 1992). Studies focused on stripper and customer relationships analyze counterfeit intimacy utilized by strippers and customers in interaction and performance and compare stripper and customer interactions with mainstream negotiation and sales strategies (Boles and Garbin 1974; Enck and Preston 1988; Ronai 1989). Although most studies mention male sexual violence and exploitation, the research regarding stripping fails to investigate and account for the problem of sexual violence in establishments that feature female strippers. The gap is the rationale for my study.

METHOD

Data for this research were obtained through interviews, a survey, and the researcher's participant observation while involved in stripping (Berg 1998; Babbie 1998; Lofland and Lofland 1984). Women in this study stripped in the local stripclubs in the Midwest metropolitan area where the researcher lives, in local nightclubs in the same area, in metropolitan and rural stripclubs and nightclubs across the United States, at private parties, in peep shows, and in saunas. The stripclubs featured a variety of attractions including topless dancing, nude dancing, table dancing, couch dancing, lap dancing, wall dancing, shower dancing, and bed dancing. In addition, some clubs had peepshows, female boxing and wrestling with customers, offered photographs of the dancers, or hired pornography models and actresses as headliners.

The study was conducted in two phases. In 1994, I conducted free-flowing qualitative interviews for one to four hours each with forty-one women while I was still involved in stripping and compiled participant observer notes about the activities in stripclubs. The women ranged in age from nineteen to forty years old and were involved in stripping from three months to eighteen years. All of the women identified themselves as Caucasian.

In 1996, I proceeded to design a twenty-six-question survey according to themes derived from the interviews to investigate sexual violence in stripclubs. My long-time involvement in the strip industry allowed an association with strippers that was invaluable for administering in-depth surveys regarding sensitive issues. The surveys were administered face-to-face to insure the information was indeed from the women in stripping. Again, the surveys and consequent discussions lasted from one to four hours. Many women explained that they had never talked about their experiences so extensively because no one had ever asked them the right questions. Participants were asked to say whether they had experienced different abusive and violent actions in stripclubs, to estimate how often each action happened, and then to identify which men associated with stripclubs perpetrated the action. The categories of men were defined as customer, owner, staff, and manager. Since I exited stripping, snowball sampling was employed to recruit the eighteen participants for the survey (Babbie 1998). Participants in the survey were asked to pass on postcards to other women. The range of ages was eighteen to thirty-five years old. The age of entry into stripping ranged from fifteen to twenty-three years old, with a mean age of eighteen years and ten months. The length of time the women in this study were involved in stripping ranged from three months to eighteen years with an average length of six years and seven months. Women predominantly identified themselves as Caucasian. Only one woman identified herself as Hispanic. Twelve of the women described their sexual orientation as heterosexual, two as lesbian, and four as bisexual. The survey data was analyzed on the Statistical Program for Social Sciences (Norusis 1988).

After the data was compiled, a focus group of 4 women currently in stripping and with no prior association with the study positively evaluated the relevancy of the study and approved the collective story (Berg 1998).

Statements in quotations throughout this paper are derived from the 41 interviews and the interviews that often followed the administration of the 18 surveys.

PART 1: TYPICAL STRIPCLUB ACTIVITIES

Recruitment

Women find out about stripping from a variety of sources. Upscale stripclub franchises recruit in new cities by having managers and imported dancers scout in nightclubs. Most women find out about stripping from girlfriends already in stripping, male associates, the media, and some from prior involvement in prostitution. One woman told how she loitered in and around urban stripclubs to pick up customers when she was fifteen and how her pimp eventually drove her to small town strip bars because those bars admitted her and hired her. Someone else got involved in stripping through an escort service for bachelor parties. Another young woman who went to a gentlemen's club to pick up her friend recounted her recruitment as an eighteen-year-old. She waited at the bar, was served alcohol, and the owner asked to check her I.D. Instead of censuring her for drinking, he told her she would make \$1000 per week and pressured her to enter the amateur contest that night. She won the contest, \$300, and worked there three weeks before being recruited into an escort service by a patron pimp.

In a typical hiring scenario women respond in person to a newspaper ad promising big money, flexible hours, no experience necessary. As an audition the club manager asks the applicants to perform on amateur night or bikini night, both of which are particularly popular with customers who hope to see girl-next-door

types rather than seasoned strippers. The manager will make a job offer based on physical attributes and number of women already on the schedule. Clubs portray the job requirements as very flexible. Women are told that they will not be forced to do anything they do not want to do, but clubs overbook women so they are forced to compete with each other, often gradually engaging in more explicit activities in order to earn tips (Cooke 1987).

Working Conditions

Women in stripping are denied legal protection relating to the terms and conditions under which they earn their livings (Fischer 523). Most strippers are hired to work as independent contractors rather than employees. Most strippers are not paid a wage (Mattson 1995), therefore their income is totally dependent on their compliance with customer demands in order to earn tips. More often than not, the strippers have to pay for the privilege of working at a club (Cooke 1987; Forsyth and Deshotels 1997; Prewitt 1989). The majority of clubs demand that women turn over 40 to 50 percent of their income for stage or couch rental and enforce a mandatory tip out to bouncers and disc jockeys (Enck and Preston 1988; Forsyth and Deshotels 1997). Usually a minimum shift quota is set and the women must turn over at least that quota amount. If a woman does not earn the quota and wants to continue working at the establishment, she owes the club and must pay off that shift's quota by adding it to the quota for the next shift she will work. The stripclubs may also derive income from promotional novelty items, kickbacks, door cover charges, beverage sales, prostitution, and capricious fines imposed on the women. As independent contractors, strippers are not entitled to file discrimination claims, receive workers' compensation, or unemployment benefits (Fischer 1996; Mattson 1995). Club owners are free from tax obligations and tort liability. Owners pay no Social Security, no health insurance, and no sick pay. Some club owners require strippers to sign agreements indicating that they are working as independent contractors and many clubs require women to sign a waiver of their right to sue the club for any reason.

Although strippers are classified as independent contractors, the reality of their relationship to their supervisors is an employee-employer relationship. Regardless of the agreements claiming independent contractor status, clubs maintain enormous control over the women. The club controls the schedule and hours, requires strippers to pay rental fees, tip support staff large amounts, and even sets the price of table dances and private dances. Clubs have specific rules about costuming and even dictate the sequence of stripping and nudity. For example, by the middle of the first song the woman must remove her top, she must be entirely nude by the end of the second song, and must perform a nude floorshow. All this regardless of whether customers are tipping her or not. A club may further influence dancers' appearances by pressuring them to shave off all their pubic hair, maintain a year-long tan, or undergo surgery for breast augmentation. At nude clubs, it is common for the performers to be shaved clean, giving them an adolescent and even childlike appearance.

Clubs also exert significant control over the strippers' behavior during their shifts by regulating when women may use the bathroom and how many of them can be in the dressing room at one time. Some clubs do not provide seating in the dressing room and forbid smoking in that room, thus preventing strippers from taking a break. When a woman wants to sit down or smoke a cigarette, she must do so on the main floor with a customer. Clubs enforce these rules through fines (Cooke 1987; Enck and Preston 1988; Ronai 1992). Women are fined heavily by club management: \$1 per minute for being late, as much as \$100 for calling in sick, and other arbitrary amounts for "talking back" to customers or staff, using the telephone without permission, and touching stage mirrors. Women are fined for flashing, prostitution (Enck and

Preston 1988), taking off their shoes, fighting with a customer, being late on stage, leaving the main floor before the DJ calls her off, not cashing in one dollar bills, profanity in music, being sick, not cleaning the dressing room, using baby oil on stage, dancing with her back to a customer (Enck and Preston 1988) and being touched by a customer.

Despite the stripclub's representation of a dancing job as flexible, strippers attest that their relationship with the club becomes all consuming and everything associated with being a stripper interferes with living a normal life. And despite the common perception that a woman can dance her way through school, many strippers report that their jobs take over their lives. Long and late hours, fatigue, drug and alcohol problems, and out of town bookings make it difficult to switch gears. Not only do the women spend a significant amount of their time in stripclubs, the activities and influences from the club environment permeate their personal lives and detrimentally effect their well being. Although stripclubs are considered legal forms of entertainment, people unassociated with the industry are unaware of the emotional (Peretti and O'Connor 1989; Ronai 1992), verbal (Mattson 1995; Ronai 1992), physical (Boles and Garbin 1974), and sexual abuse (Ciriello 1993; Ronai 1992) inherent in the industry. Despite claims from management that customers are prohibited from touching the women, this rule is consistently violated (Enck and Preston 1988; Forsyth and Deshotels 1997; Ronai and Ellis 1989; Thompson and Harrod 1992). Furthermore, stripping usually involves prostitution (Boles and Garbin 1974; Forsyth and Deshotels 1997; Prewitt 1989; Ronai and Ellis 1989; Thompson and Harrod 1992).

Stripper-Customer Interactions

Main Floor

Stripclub activities are offered in public spaces or private rooms or other isolated parts of clubs (Forsyth and Deshotels 1997). The typical stripclub scenario presents young, nude or partially nude women mingling with fully clothed male customers. They circulate through the crowd, encouraging men to buy liquor, drinking and talking with men, and soliciting and performing a variety of private dances (Prewitt 1989; Ronai and Ellis 1989). Women describe their role in the stripclub as hostess, object, prostitute, therapist, and temporary girlfriend and say they are there to entertain and attract men and business for the owners.

Women who work at small strip joints say they can hang out, order in food, and play pool during their shifts. On the other hand, women who work at gentlemen's clubs have to hustle photographs and drinks and are required to sell promotional T-shirts, calendars, and videos. They can be mandated to sell the items with private dances. For example, the dancers buy T-shirts from the house mom for \$8 and sell them for \$15. So for \$15, the customer receives a T-shirt and 2 \$10 table dances. Strippers at gentlemen's clubs are further informed by management that they are not allowed to buy their own drinks, that they have to be sitting with customers, and can never turn down a drink, even when their drinks are full.

Stage

Women report dancing on stages as cheaply constructed by laying plywood on the benches of restaurant booths to stages covered with kitchen linoleum to wood parquet or marble stages in a few upscale clubs. Some stages are elevated runways so narrow that strippers say that cannot get away from customers on each side touching them, especially when they are kneeling down to accept a tip in the side of their g-strings/t-bars or when they have their backs turned. Stages can also be sunken pits with a rail around it and a bar for the customers' beverages. During a set, a stripper may do striptease, acrobatics, dance, walk, or squat to display her genitals. Generally the progression for striptease begins during the first song with the woman

wearing a dress or costume covering her breasts and buttocks. Over the course of a set of 2 or 3 songs she will remove her bra and in nude clubs, her g-string/t-bar. Some clubs feature floorshows in which women crawl or move around on the floor posing in sexual positions and spread their legs at the customers' eye level. During a floorshow, a dancer changes her movements from upright to positions on her knees and squatting in a crabwalk in order to 'flash' tipping customers. "Flashing" is pulling the g-string/t-bar aside, revealing the pubic area and/or the genitals. Dancers describe this as "doing a show" for paying customers. Ordinarily, a dancer only positions herself in front of tipping patrons (Prewitt 145). Customers who fail to tip are ignored. Audience response can be expressed by clapping, hooting, barking, whistling, amount of money tipped, or complete silence depending upon time of day, state of inebriation, excitement over the musical selection, or the appearance and abilities of the stripper.

On stage, some women's thoughts wander, while others' focus on angry desperation. *"I daydream about nothing in particular to pass the time of 12 minutes."* *"I'm thinking about how good I look in the mirrors and how good I feel in dance movements."* *"I tell myself to smile."* *"I think about getting high and that I am making money to get high."* *"I am giving these guys every chance to be decent, so that I don't have to be afraid of them."* *"I am filled with disdain for the customers who do not tip, but sit and watch and direct you to do things for no money."* *"I think of how cheap these fuckers are, what bills I need to pay."*

Private Dance Activities

Private dances are usually performed in areas shielded from the larger club view (Forsyth and Deshotels 1997, Prewitt 1989). As a rule, the private dance involves one female dancer and one male customer. Private dances are situations where women are often forced into acts of prostitution in order to earn tips (Forsyth and Deshotels 1997; Prewitt 1989; Ronai and Ellis 1989). Men masturbate openly (Peretti and O'Connor 1989), get hand jobs (Forsyth and Deshotels 1997), and stick their fingers inside women (Ronai and Ellis 1989). Men with foot fetishes have been known to suck on dancers' toes.

A variety of private dances are promoted in strip clubs. Table dancing is performed on a low coffee table or on a small portable platform near the customer's seat. The woman's breasts and genitals are eye level to the customer. Couch dancing for a customer entails the dancer standing over him on the couch, dangling her breasts or bopping him in the face with her pubic area. Lap dancing requires the woman to straddle the man's lap and grind against him until he ejaculates in his pants. A variation involves the woman dancing between his legs while he slides down in his chair so that the dancer's thighs are rubbing his crotch as she moves. Bed dancing is offered in a private room and requires a woman to lay on top of a fully clothed man and simulate sexual intercourse until he ejaculates. Shower dancing is offered in upscale clubs and allows a clothed patron to get into a shower stall with one or more women and massage their bodies with soap. Wall dancing requires a stripper to carry alcohol swabs to wash the customer's fingers before he inserts them into her vagina. His back is stationary against the wall and she is pressed against him with one leg lifted. Peep shows feature simulated or actual acts directed by openly masturbating customers. Customers sit in a private booth and view the women through a glass window. Live sex shows involve 2 or more individuals engaging in simulated or sexual activity performed behind glass or on a stage. Customers openly masturbate while watching the show from the audience or through an opening in a private booth.

During private dances women are conscientious about their boundaries and safety. *"I don't want him to touch me, but I am afraid he will say something violent if I tell him 'no'."* *"I was thinking about doing prostitution because that's when customers would proposition me."* *"I could only think about how bad these guys smell and try to hold my breath."* *"I spent the dance hyper vigilant to avoiding their hands, mouths, and crotches."*

"We were allowed to place towels on the guys' laps, so it wasn't so bad." "I don't remember because it was so embarrassing."

Dressing Room

Women describe a range of types and qualities of dressing rooms. Strippers are expected to change clothing in beer coolers, broom closets, and public restrooms. Some stripclub dressing rooms are nice with lights, mirrors, vanities, and chairs, and are equipped with lockers, and tanning beds. Other clubs have make-up mirrors but no chairs or ashtrays to prevent dancers from lingering. Women complain that too many dressing rooms are down isolated halls or in the basements of establishments and that they have to scream for help when customers intrude. Some are so damp or filthy that the women cannot take their shoes off. Other dressing rooms are so frigid that dancers carry small space heaters to and from work. The dressing rooms are used to change costumes, drink, do drugs, do hair and make-up, iron costumes, do homework, bitch about customers, avoid customers, talk about problems, hang out. In strip joints and rural bars, women lay on blankets or inside sleeping bags between sets and nap and read.

The greatest response to questions regarding preparation for work was "drink". Women drink while getting ready to go to work and they drink while doing their hair and make-up once in the dressing room. Women who work at nude juice bars that do not serve alcohol or at bars that do not allow women to buy their own drinks report that they stop at another bar on their way in and "get loaded". Between stage sets and private dances, women drink some more, clean themselves with washcloths or babywipes after performing on a dirty stage or being touched by a lot of men, apply deodorant, and perfume their breasts and genitals.

PART 2: SURVEY DATA

One hundred percent of the eighteen women in the survey report being physically abused in the stripclub. The physical abuse ranged from three to fifteen times with a mean of 7.7 occurrences over the course of their involvement in stripping. One hundred percent of the eighteen women in this study report sexual abuse in the stripclub. The sexual abuse ranged from two to nine occurrences with a mean of 4.4 occurrences over the course of their involvement in stripping. One hundred percent of the women report verbal harassment in the stripclub. The verbal abuse ranged from one to seven occurrences with a mean of 4.8 occurrences over the course of their involvement in stripping. One hundred percent of the women report being propositioned for prostitution. Seventy eight percent of the women were stalked by someone associated with the stripclub with a range of one to seven incidents. Sixty one percent of the women report that someone associated with the stripclub has attempted to sexually assault her with a range of one to eleven attempts. Not only do women suffer the abuse they experience, all of women in the survey witnessed these things happen to other strippers in the clubs. The overwhelming trend for violence against women in stripclubs was committed by customers of the establishments. Stripclub owners, managers, assistant managers, and the staff of bartenders, music programmers or disc jockeys, bouncers, security guards, floorwalkers, doormen, and valet were significantly less involved in violence against the women. According to the women in this study, almost all of the perpetrators suffered no consequence whatsoever for their actions.

Physical Abuse

Customers spit on women, spray beer, and flick cigarettes at them. Strippers are pelted with ice, coins, trash,

condoms, room keys, pornography, and golf balls. Men pitched a live guinea pig and a dead squirrel at two women in the survey. Some women have been hit with cans and bottles thrown from the audience. Customers pull women's hair, yank them by the arm or ankle, rip their costumes, and try to pull their costumes off. Women are commonly bitten, licked, slapped, punched, and pinched. See Table 1 Frequency of Physical Abuse.

Abusive Action	Ever (by men in stripclub) (%)	At Least Once Every Day (%)	At Least Once Every Week (%)	At Least Once Every Month (%)	At Least Once Every Year (%)
Grabbed by arm	78	44 Customer 6 Manager 11 Staff	17 Customer 6 Owner 6 Manager 11 Staff	11 Customer 6 Owner 6 Manager	6 Manager
Grabbed by ankle	56	28 Customer		6 Customer 6 Manager	11 Customer
Grabbed by waist	94	50 Customer 6 Manager 11 Staff	33 Customer 11 Manager 1 Staff	6 Manager	11 Customer
Bitten	56	6 Customer	11 Customer		11 Customer
Licked	78	28 Customer	17 Customer	11 Customer 6 Owner 6 Manager 11 Staff	22 Customer
Slapped	39	6 Customer	11 Customer		17 Customer
Hair pulled	39	6 Customer	6 Customer	11 Customer	
Punched	72	6 Customer			
Pinched	72	17 Customer	17 Customer	6 Customer 6 Manager 6 Staff	22 Customer 6 Staff
Kicked	11	6 Customer			
Spit on	61	6 Customer			28 Customer

Abusive Action	Ever (by men in stripclub) (%)	At Least Once Every Day (%)	At Least Once Every Week (%)	At Least Once Every Month (%)	At Least Once Every Year (%)
Pulled costume off	83	22 Customer		6 Customer 6 Owner 6 Manager	22 Customer 6 Staff
Ripped costume	44	6 Customer		6 Customer	17 Customer
Flicked cigarette	33	6 Customer	6 Customer		11 Customer
Sprayed beer	39	6 Customer	6 Customer	6 Customer	6 Customer
Threw ice	61	6 Customer	11 Customer	6 Customer	6 Customer
Threw coins	83	17 Customer	11 Customer	11 Customer 6 Staff	28 Customer
Threw cans/glasses	22	6 Customer			
Threw garbage Threw other	39 28	17 Customer 11 Customer	11 Customer		

N = 18**Table 1 - Frequency of Physical**

Sexual Abuse

Stripclub customers frequently grab women's breasts, buttocks, and genitals. Customers often attempt and succeed at penetrating strippers vaginally and anally with their fingers, dollar bills, and bottles. Customers expose their penises, rub their penises on women, and masturbate in front of the women. Women in this study consistently connected lap dances to the sexual abuse they suffered in the club. *"That's the first thing men try to do when they get close to you and always in a lap dance."* Stripclub owners, managers, and staff also expect women to masturbate them and some have forced intercourse on strippers. See Table 2 Frequency of Sexual Abuse and Table 3 Attempted and Completed Sexual Abuse.

Abusive Action	Ever (by men in stripclub) (%)	At Least Once Every Day (%)	At Least Once Every Week (%)	At Least Once Every Month (%)	At Least Once Every Year (%)
Grabbed breasts	94	28 Customer 6 Manager	17 Customer	17 Customer 6 Manager	17 Manager 6 Owner
Grabbed buttocks	89	39 Customer	11 Customer	39 Customer 6 Manager 6 Staff	6 Owner 6 Staff
Grabbed genitals	67	17 Customer		11 Customer 6 Manager	17 Customer
Exposed penis to her	67	11 Customer	6 Customer		11 Customer
Rubbed penis on her	78	39 Customer 6 Manager	22 Customer 6 Owner 6 Manager 6 Staff	6 Customer	22 Customer 6 Owner
Masturbated in front of her	78	33 Customer 6 Manager	11 Customer	28 Customer	6 Customer

N = 18

Table 2 — Frequency of Sexual Abuse

Abusive Action	Experienced Attempted Abuse (%)	Experienced Successfully Completed Abuse (%)
Penetrate her vaginally with fingers	61 Customer 6 Manager	39
Penetrate her anally with fingers	33 Customer	17
Penetrate her with object	33 Customer 6 Owner	11
Force her to masturbate him	28 Customer 6 Owner 6 Manager	17
Force intercourse on her	17 Customer 6 Owner 6 Manager	11

N=18**Table 3— Attempted and completed sexual**

Verbal Abuse

Customers, owners, managers, and staff alike engage in harassing namecalling. Women are continually called "cunt", "whore", "pussy", "slut", and "bitch". Women in this study charge that men in the stripclub called them other demeaning or degrading names like ugly, looser, fat, pregnant, boy, stupid, crack, slash, snatch, beaver, dog, dyke, lezzie, brown eye, hooters, junkie, crackhead, and shit. See Table 4 Frequency of Namecalling Verbal Abuse.

Abusive Action	Ever (by men in stripclub) (%)	At Least Once Every Day (%)	At Least Once Every Week (%)	At Least Once Every Month (%)	At Least Once Every Year (%)
Called "cunt"	61	28 Customer 6 Manager	6 Customer	17 Customer	11 Customer 6 Manager
Called "slut"	61	28 Customer 6 Staff	6 Customer	17 Customer 6 Owner 6 Manager 6 Staff	11 Customer
Called "whore"	78	28 Customer 6 Staff	6 Customer	17 Customer 6 Owner 6 Manager 6 Staff	22 Customer
Called "pussy"	72	39 Customer 6 Staff	11 Customer	11 Customer	11 Customer
Called "bitch"	89	39 Customer 6 Staff	11 Customer 6 Owner 6 Manager 6 Staff	6 Customer	22 Customer 6 Owner
Called other	56	17 Customer	6 Customer	17 Customer 6 Manager	6 Customer

N=18

Table 4— Table 4 Frequency of Namecalling - Verbal Abuse

Forty four percent of the women report that men associated with the stripclub have threatened to hurt them physically. These women report from three to 150 threats during their involvement in stripping. Threats range from verbal threats of slaps, ass whippings, and rapes to physical postures of punching and back hand slapping. "When I wouldn't let a customer grab on me, he would call me a bitch and threaten to kick my ass or rape me." "When a customer grabs and the woman and the girl takes action, they threaten".

Stalking

Men associated with stripclubs repeatedly attempt to contact the women against their wishes. Strippers are followed home and stalked by stripclub customers. Customers telephone, write letters, send gifts, and follow the women around against their wishes. Women recount stories of catching customers following them to fitness clubs, parks and lakes, day care centers, and even lesbian bars. They describe times when customers have broken into their homes and taken underwear, hairbrushes, and family photographs. Women say that other customers have used their jobs at the telephone company or within the criminal justice system to target the women. The women complain that customers also have followed them home masturbating while driving in the next lane. Women who travel the strip circuit to rural areas report that customers and stripclub owners, managers, and staff alike follow women from city to city and state to state. Furthermore, local men in small towns harass the visiting women by calling and knocking on the doors of the motel rooms and have been caught peeping in the windows of strippers' motel rooms. See Table 5 Stalking Occurrences.

Abusive Action	Ever (by men in stripclub) (%)	Range of occurrences
Sent her letters against her wishes	28	3-100 times
Sent her gifts against her wishes	22	2-100 times
Called her home against her wishes	39	2-360 times
Followed her home against her wishes	56	2-500 times
Followed her to her car against her wishes	67	12-500 times
Followed her around on her private time	28	1-150 times
Followed her from club to club, city, and state	28	6-360 times
Other	28	1-360 times

N=18

Table 5— Stalking Occurrences

Twelve percent of the women who reported being followed to their cars further reported that they were robbed (5.6 %), beaten (11.1%), threatened with a weapon (5.6%), verbally sexually harassed (66.7%), and sexually assaulted (16.7%) by customers. A customer who claimed he was in love with the woman followed her to her car, called her a "fucking cunt" and strangled her hard enough to cause blood to squirt from her neck.

Sexual Exploitation

Only a minority of women report that they were asked to perform sexual acts on men associated with the stripclub in order to return to work (11% by owners); as a condition of being hired (11% by managers, 11% by owners); in order to continue working there (17% by owners); in order to get a better schedule (6% by owners); or for drugs (17% by customers, 11% by managers, 22% by owners, 11% by staff).

A majority of the women, however, report they were asked to perform sexual acts on men associated with the stripclub for money (100% by customers, 6% by managers, 17% by owners, 11% by staff). Customers and pimps

constantly proposition women (Boles and Garbin 1974; Forsyth and Deshotels 1997; Ronai 1992; Ronai and Ellis 1989). Fourteen (78%) women from the survey report they are propositioned for prostitution every day by customers, three (17%) every week, one (6 %) every year. Women comment that customers ask them "Do you date?" all night long. *"Infinite...too many too count."* Women say that prostitution is influenced and suggested by management. One woman new to stripping was dumbfounded at how little money she was making taking her clothes off, so she asked the manager for his advice on increasing tips. He suggested turning tricks and said he could help her set up dates. Management sets up tricks, says it is good for business, and obligates women to turn over money from prostitution to the club. Women say prostitution is promoted even though owners tell women they would be punished if they turn tricks. Some stripclubs are notorious for promoting prostitution. *"You have to be a 'ho to work there'."*

Women disclosed that they were recruited into prostitution through stripping. Although the strip industry markets stripping as something other than prostitution, some women consider prostitution an extension of stripping and stripping a form of prostitution. Pimps season women first with stripping and then turn them out into brothels or escort services for more money. Tricks, sugar daddies, pimps, and drug dealers in the stripclub seek to engage women in prostitution. Another young woman said that soon after she became involved in stripping, a pimp who posed as a customer in the stripclub manipulated her into an escort service by promising that she could make more money in less time simply by accompanying businessmen to dinner. She agreed in order to feed her crack addiction and as her addiction increased she slid down from gentlemen's clubs to escort service to brothel to street and crack house prostitution.

Not only are women in stripping pressured by customers to perform sexual acts on them, owners, managers, and staff pressure the women to perform sexual acts on them, their relatives and associates, on vice officers and police officers. Women explain the pressure could range from being coerced into dancing for the intended with an expectation to put on a real good show with special treatment, extra time, and sexual contact, to engaging in prostitution. Strippers, like other subordinates in worker-management relationships, respond with obedience to directives from management and others with authority (McMahon 1989). See Table 6 Percentage of Women Pressured for Sexual Exploitation.

Recipient	Pressured by customer (%)	Pressured by owner (%)	Pressured by manager (%)	Pressured by staff (%)	Pressured by vice officer (%)	Pressured by police officer (%)
Owner's friend		39				
Owner's relative		11				
Owner's business associate		33				
Manager's friend			17			
Manager's relative			6			
Manager's business associate			11			
Customer	72	22	17	6		
Vice officer		17	11	6	11	
Police officer		17	11	6		22

N=18**Table 6— Percentage of Women Pressured for Sexual Exploitation**

PART 3: WOMEN'S THOUGHTS ON STRIPPING

Money

Women in stripping are overwhelmingly motivated by the promise of wealth or a will to survive (Skipper and McCaghy 1970; Ronai 1992; Thompson and Harred 1992). Stripclub owners, managers, pimps and the media portray stripping as a glamorous way to earn big money fast and use this strategy to lure young women into stripping. Women in this study report the best part of stripping to be the money. *"The only part that keeps me there is the money"*. At the same time, women are trapped and disappointed by the money. *"I hated it...but glad I had it at the time for the income."* *"Women are reduced to exposing genitals for \$1 bills."* *"It pays the bills... if we could pay bills another way we would."* *"The bar owners and management are exploitative, they steal money."* *"It's hard to get out because of the money."* With respect to the money strippers seek to earn, they in turn must pay out fines, kickbacks, 100% of their social security insurance and taxes, travel and hotel expenses, and the costs for costumes, tanning, and plastic surgery. Women report that they have to have the right attitude to make money (Ronai 1992). This ordinarily was described as being drunk, high or numb (Forsyth and Deshotels 1997). Others feel it required tolerance. *"The ability to ignore customers for just being there."* Most women say it is easier when the men are tipping regularly and when they do not have to interact with men intimately. Women acknowledge that strippers measure their worth according to the amount of tips they earn and that they want attention, acceptance, and approval from the customers because it brings money (Futerman 1992).

Skills

Women in stripping feel it doesn't take much skill to be a stripper (Forsyth and Deshotels 1997; Skipper and McCaghy 1970). *"It would be nice to say women need dance talent but it's not true."* *"Tits, pussy, and blonde hair is all it takes."* Instead they referred to dissociation to abuse. *"It takes a willingness to do it...anybody can do it."* *"It takes somebody who can shut themselves off and be really fake."* *"...the ability to take a lot of abuse."* They state a stripper needs a good head on her shoulders, an open mind, guts, strength, and survival skills. They believe they need abuse counseling, a lifeline from the "outside world", and education about what's really going on. *"Need to know they have options, that they aren't always going to be a 'ho'."* Women in stripping want a union to protect strippers, decent working conditions, fair treatment, and an end to cruelty by management. Lastly, strippers think that women and girls don't know what they are getting into when they first start dancing. *"It's really harmful because it is so benign, so accepted."* *"Girls think they will have fun dancing and get paid, they have no idea they have to fight men's hands, and dicks, and tongues, and then fight for every fucking dollar bill you earn."* *"It was a lot different than I originally thought."*

Men

The women in this study condemn the men associated with stripping and the impact stripping has on them as the worst parts of stripping. Women do not like the way customers treat them (Thompson and Harred 1992). Furthermore they say they do not like talking to customers, asking men for money, and resent having to have to deal with them at all. They find customers irritating because they are drunk and have negative attitudes towards women. Women characterize customers as scum, psycho mama's boys, rapists and child molesters, old perverted men, idiots, assholes, and pigs. Strippers are largely disgusted by customers and describe them as pitiful and pathetic, stupid and ignorant, sick, controlling and abusive. *"They smell so sour, they breathe very heavy and kind of wheeze when women are near."* *"They are weak abusers who have to subordinate women and girls to feel like a man."* *"I see my dad. They're old enough to be my father."*

"Yuck. I am repulsed by the sight, sound, smell, and touch of them." "I'm embarrassed for them." The women offer insightful evaluations of stripclub customers. They say that these men do not know how to communicate. Moreover, they perceive that customers are out of control, have power and abuse problems, and will do anything to degrade women because they hate women. Strippers also state that customers want a free show and think women are cheap. In contrast, a few women positively perceived some customers as nice and added they are thankful to those who tip well.

Women in this study undoubtedly denounce stripclub owners as pimps and "glorified pimps" and maintain that owners misuse power and are sick. The women also label managers as pimps citing that they mistreat women, that they make every attempt to take money from the women, and that they are sick because they are affiliated with the industry and know the harm they do. Strippers accuse managers of being threatened and jealous of the money women make and that women are just a dollar to management. Finally, women refer to staff music programmers, doormen, bartenders, bouncers, floorwalkers, and valet as wanna-be pimps because they always want to be tipped. The women see staff as derelicts who can't get a job anywhere else and who think they are cool for working in a stripclub. Strippers perceive staff as creepy and disrespectful and as "looky-lous" who just want to look at naked women for free. Women criticize staff by pointing out that at least owners are making big money. Few women had positive responses, but those that did felt they got along well with staff and had no real hard feelings.

Clearly strippers' attitudes about men are impacted by the activities in stripclubs. Women say they don't like men and men are worthless. Likewise women believe stripping inhibits their ability to be involved in a normal relationship. *"It affects your lovelife and feelings about men." "Nice boyfriends can't handle it." "Too large a percentage of men fit into category of customer and I do not want to hate men."*

Stripping

Women in this study expressed mostly negativism regarding their experiences in stripping with themes of abuse, deception, drugs, and low self-esteem. *"I would never do it again. It was degrading." "No doubt that it led me to prostitution and my pimp." "Taught me how to control men and gave me a false illusion of control. Takes a long time to regain self-control." "Don't do it. Once you do it, it is hard to get out." "If there is any way you can avoid it...it is hard to get out once you start." "I wouldn't recommend it. It is too stressful and I am always comparing myself to other women on the outside." "I wish I had put more money away and had more education by the time I quit. I just didn't know it wasn't about success for us, it was about using us." "I spent my entire young adulthood being abused. It is hard to undo all this." "Drugs destroyed beautiful, healthy women." "I blame the men...it is all bad. I didn't think highly of myself while I was in stripping, but I am glad I got out of it by standing up for myself." "It is hard to view myself for who I am and my accomplishments rather than how I look and attention from men. I got this from stripping."*

Some women expressed fascination with stripping. *"It has been an experience of a lifetime. I've seen everything...some crazy shit." "I have never seen things like I have seen in stripping. It is weird."* Still others felt positively about their experience. *"If it wasn't for the money I made at it, I would have nothing right now. "It has its ups and downs, but I always enjoy the music and dancing and the attention." "I have been extremely fortunate as far as what happened in stripping. It provides a good life, but I look at it as a job, work day shifts and work a straight job at the same time."* A few women also determined positive outcomes for themselves from their involvement in stripping. *"It served its purpose as a group for a sense of belonging." "Helped me recognize what is right and wrong, and what is right and wrong for me." "After surviving it I felt strong."*

"Stripping distracted me from my personal problems that led me into stripping...no way could I have held normal job with the problems I had."

Above all, women in stripping reject the popular image of stripping and clarify the common misperceptions about stripclubs. *"That no one touches you, women enjoy it, and it's okay for men to go there."* *"That women actually get to wear a costume and actually get to dance."* *"That we get sexually aroused doing this."* *"That men are there to have harmless fun, when they are really there to abuse women."* *"That it is a big party and that the women want to be there for some reason other than money, like sex or to meet men or because they are nudists or exhibitionists."* *"That you are doing things you want to be doing."* *"That they are not degrading us because girls always are justifying it with college."* *"That it is not prostitution."* *"That it is glamorous, fast money, easy work, way to get ahead."*

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Men associated with stripclubs use force and coercion to establish sexual contact with women in stripping, proposition women for prostitution, intentionally inflict bodily harm upon the women, and expose themselves to the women. These actions are prohibited by law, yet when these crimes are committed against women in stripclubs, the general attitude that strippers deserve what they get prevails. Women's complaints of abuse are met with contempt and are dismissed by owners, managers, and staff. Women are customarily told to ignore abuse and have been rebuffed with "Go bend over and do your job" and "You have to expect a certain amount of that." In the case of women in stripping, enduring sexual violence is part of her job description. Women in stripping are expected to endure these abuses, degradations, and humiliations with a smile and a "Thank You".

The degree of sexual violence perpetrated against strippers explodes the myths about stripping as harmless entertainment. The verbal harassment, physical and sexual abuse, and financial exploitation women suffer in stripclubs is unparalleled in any other legitimate workplace. Women in stripping are subject to actions that would be perceived as assaultive or at least unwanted in any other context or were directed against other women. Stripclubs allow men to use and abuse women in a manner that is not tolerated in any other business.

The organization and conditions of stripclubs not only produce and reproduce gender inequality, but facilitate and normalize men's violence against women. Sexual violence has been normalized, institutionalized, and legalized in the stripclub industry as socially sanctioned male behavior. Stripclubs and the men associated with stripclubs have turned acts of violence into entertainment and tied male sexual pleasure to victimizing and exploiting. Stripclubs are structured according to male domination and control, and are inherently violent. It is impossible to set up stripclubs without sexual violence and that is reason to challenge the legitimacy of stripclubs.

Future research should address men associated with stripclubs and their views on women in stripping and stripclub activities. An exploration of why stripclubs exist, an explanation of why men go to stripclubs, and a description of how stripclub owners and government policy establish the tone and culture of stripclubs are also in order. Future research should explore gender role socialization and female strippers' perceptions of sexual harassment and violence. The definition of sexual harassment should be tested with strippers to learn if they perceive actions differently than women in other workplaces. In turn, strippers' rights in the workplace must be considered. Studies focused on women's emotional and psychological response to violence in stripclubs, including drug and alcohol abuse, should be conducted.

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Appendix B

A Comparison of Pimps and Batterers

Evelina Giobbe

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A woman is being pimped by a man when their relationship is contingent on her engaging in prostitution and relinquishing all or part of her earnings to him. (1) The relationship is defined and controlled by the pimp for his economic gain. Since he typically appropriates all of the woman's money and she receives only "non-negotiable goods" in return, the woman becomes financially dependent on him and unable to save for an independent future. This is particularly true of a woman who is paid with crack cocaine in lieu of cash, which prevents her from purchasing basic necessities such as food or clothing. Even when a woman receives costly gifts from her pimp (providing the illusion of prosperity) he will typically retain or destroy her property when she leaves him, impeding her from accumulating any wealth. In a study conducted on recruitment tactics, one pimp explained,

"They gotta go broke. That's the only rule for them leaving is that they gotta leave broke. They can't take nothin' with them...If they leave me they gotta pay goin' out the door." (2)

An examination of the power dynamics between pimp and prostitute clearly illustrates how the tactics of power and control used to recruit and keep a woman trapped in prostitution closely parallels those used by batterers to ensure the compliance of their wives or intimate partners. (3) The batterer uses tactics of power and control to dominate his partner within the context of an intimate relationship. The pimp uses similar strategies to exploit the prostitute economically. (4) These tactics include isolation of the woman; minimization and denial of her abuse; the exertion of male privilege; threats and intimidation; and emotional, sexual, and physical abuse.

The pimp isolates "his woman" by controlling where she goes, whom she sees, and what she does. (5) In addition, a pimp often moves a woman from different parts of the sex industry: on and off the strip circuit, from an escort service to a sauna or out on the street. (6) He may take her from city to city, often kidnapping her or holding her against her will. (7) A study of nineteen prostituted women revealed that 42% had been kidnapped by a pimp, a customer or both. (8) All of these tactics isolate her from her friends and family, and stop her from making connections with other people who do not share his positive views about prostitution. (9)

Pimps use minimization and denial to mask the impact prostitution has or will have on a prostitute's life. He may tell a woman that she's smarter than others who "give it away for free," or that all women are prostitutes; claiming some do it for dinner and others do it for straight cash. He also insists that prostitution is a job like any other job, that she is not selling herself, that she is just selling a service. (10)

A pimp uses male privilege to control a woman. This can be as simple as his making pronouncements about his manhood, like *"I'm a man. Don't question me...You'll do what I say because I am the man around here."* (11) He treats "his woman" as his property. He may purchase a woman from another pimp by posting her bond or he may buy her outright. Once ownership is established, he will put his commodity on the market. As one pimp so crudely put it, *"I'm the boss, the daddy. She brings the money home."* (12) A prostitute

without a pimp is considered an "outlaw" and is vulnerable to exploitation by all pimps. (13) Typically, a woman who escapes her pimp must quickly "choose" another. This is essentially a protection racket where she pays a fee, known as "choosing money," to her new "man" to ensure her safety, as her former pimp may use a "tracker," or bounty hunter, to return her. (14)

When more subtle tactics of power and control fail, a pimp will use threats and intimidation. He attempts to put fear into a woman by smashing things, shouting, glaring at her, or behaving in a menacing manner. One pimp boasted,

"I would say, 'bitch, you're holding out on me!' I would say like, 'Take your clothes off! Open your pussy!' And I would put my fingers up there, and you know it's just psych out shit, it was nothing...but it's a thing you gotta use in that game." (15)

A pimp may beat up a disobedient prostitute in the presence of other prostitutes. (16) He may threaten to disclose that she is a prostitute to others in order to insure her obedience. (17) He may also threaten to leave her or to harm her, her children or her other family members. (18)

A pimp will subject a woman to emotional abuse by calling her derogatory names. He dehumanizes her by making her into a commodity. (19) He tells her she's "only good for one thing." One pimp, for example, sent a letter to his woman from prison referring to her as "his little slot-machine." (20) This type of emotional abuse is compounded by the fact that it occurs within an environment of total emotional deprivation. (21) Pimps deprive prostituted women of nurturing, affection, and ordinary developmental support. The restrictions put on a woman by a pimp impedes the normal development of self-expression and the recognition of an autonomous identity.

Pimps typically subject women to sexual abuse as an expression of ownership or as a form of punishment. One woman explained,

"I was his property. Do what he wanted. A lot of times it was just pleasing him...[He'd] tell me I had to continue sucking him...that if I fell asleep, or if I bit him -if my teeth touched him - he'd blow my head off." (22)

Some pimps also sexually abuse women through the use or production of pornography. Thirty percent of the women interviewed by Giobbe reported that their pimps compelled them to emulate scenes from pornography to teach them how to be prostitutes. (23) Some pimps force women into pornography as a form of blackmail or punishment. A woman relayed the following account:

"I always knew there was a punishment coming for taking off...but he told me he wasn't going to hurt me so I believed him. [Then] he took off this belt and he starts whipping me...and he grabbed the dog and the dog knew just what to do...He took pictures of it, and he told me that if I ever left him again, that these would be mailed to my family." (24)

Finally, pimps use physical abuse for a number of reasons: to demonstrate their dominance privately or in public, as a prelude to, or as a part of sex, or gratuitously, as a means of expressing contempt and hostility. (25) All of the women interviewed by Giobbe had been harassed, assaulted, raped, kidnapped and/or forced to turn tricks by a pimp or a gang of pimps. (26)

The batterer and the pimp not only use similar tactics of power and control over "their women," but share

similar motives. According to Ellen Pence, of the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth, Minnesota,

The abuser employs tactics not only to gain his partner's submission to a specific demand, but also to establish a relationship that he can rely upon in the future. These tactics appear to be random and inexplicable, but in the context of attempting to establish power in a relationship, random acts of violence are fully explainable. (27)

Pence's theoretical construction of "Why men batter" comes alive in "Henry's" intuitive perception of successful pimping.

I figure if you have it together, you can bluff any woman; you can feel that power. When you feel that power, you know that usually works. You have them under your control. (28)

The name of the game here – for "love" or money – is patriarchal power over women.

NOTES:

- (1) Diana Gray Hilton, TURNING-OUT: A STUDY OF TEENAGE PROSTITUTION, 110 (1971) (Master's thesis, University of Washington) (pimp appropriates all or most of prostitutes money); This definition may be extended to include corporate pimps or brothel owners in that a woman's "working" relationship to her pimp "employer" is contingent on her engaging in prostitution and relinquishing all or part of her earnings to him.
- (2) NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE FOR MISSING AND EXPLOITED CHILDREN, FEMALE JUVENILE PROSTITUTION: PROBLEM AND RESPONSE, 23 (1992). (hereafter Female Juvenile Prostitution)
- (3) Ellen Pence, IN OUR BEST INTEREST: A PROCESS FOR PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CHANGE, 37 (1987) (published by Minnesota Program Development Inc.); Lewis Okun, WOMAN ABUSE: FACTS REPLACING MYTHS, 59 (1986) at xviii-xix.
- (4) Evelina Giobbe, *Juvenile Prostitution: Profile of Recruitment*, (hereafter Profile) 117, 128 (Ann Burgess, ed. 1992) (interview with Karen) ("[I] knew if I didn't be a prostitute, that he wouldn't want me..."); see also Mimi H. Silbert, SEXUAL ASSAULT OF PROSTITUTES, 54-55 (1982) (85% of 200 subjects identified a pimps as "someone who takes money"); BEFORE YOU TURN ANOTHER TRICK 2 (Evelina Giobbe, ed., 1989) (educational material developed by prostituted women in WHISPER program). at 3 ("He made a quota and I needed to make that quota before I could come back in and...it kept getting higher and higher and I never seen the money"); Enablers, JUVENILE PROSTITUTION IN MINNESOTA: THE REPORT OF A RESEARCH PROJECT, 69 (1978) (quotas).
- (5) FEMALE JUVENILE PROSTITUTION, at 57; SILBERT, at 55 (64% subjects mentioned "loss of independence" as disadvantage to having a pimp).
- (6) FEMALE JUVENILE PROSTITUTION (63% of women were prostituted on the street, 42% in massage parlors, and 26% with Escort Services interchangeably).
- (7) LEE, at 161; KATHLEEN BARRY, FEMALE SEXUAL SLAVERY (2nd Edition, 1988) at 125-126; ENABLERS, at 78, 80, 82
- (8) Giobbe, unpublished study, data and taped interviews on file with author
- (9) Nancy Erbe, Prostitutes: Victims of Men's Exploitation and Abuse, 2 JOURNAL OF LAW AND INEQUALITY, 612 (1984); BEFORE YOU TURN, at 5; Francis Newman & Paula J. Caplan, Juvenile Female Prostitution as a Gender Consistent Response to Early Deprivation, 5 INTERNATIONAL

JOURNAL OF WOMEN'S STUDIES, 132 (1981).

(10) See BEFORE YOU TURN, at 2; These positive and neutralizing definitions of prostitution curiously echo the ideological foundation of the pro-prostitution lobby's apology for prostitution, leading one to wonder if pimps inform the ideology of that view or if that view informs the rhetoric of pimps

(11) LEE, at 175.

(12) Interview with "Henry" (audio tape on file with author).

(13) MILLER & ROMENESKO, at 117.

(14) MILLER & ROMENESKO. at 132-133.

(15) FEMALE JUVENILE PROSTITUTION, at 24-25 (by referring to intimidation tactics as "psychic out shit," "Henry" also minimizes and denies the impact these tactics have on "his woman" as well as his responsibility for employing them.)

(16) Giobbe, (65% of the respondents had wife-in-laws, almost half had 2 or more wife-in-laws); A "wife-in-law" is another prostituted woman under the control of a woman's pimp. This configuration resembles a polygamous marriage in which all the participants most often share the same dwelling.

(17) FEMALE JUVENILE PROSTITUTION, at 57.

(18) LEE, at 163 (threatens to leave); Erbe, at 612 (holding children hostage).

(19) FEMALE JUVENILE PROSTITUTION, at v (prostitutes may be branded or tattooed by their pimps as a sign of ownership); also see Margaret Dragu & A.S.A. Harrison, REVELATIONS: ESSAYS ON STRIPTEASE & SEXUALITY (1989) at 33 ("Wendy [a stripper] had a tattoo on her arm that said 'Jude's Property'").

(20) Unpublished correspondence on file with author.

(21) See, e.g., Linda Lovelace (nee Marciano), ORDEAL 51 (1980); also see Evelina Giobbe, *The VOX Fights*, 29 VOX MAGAZINE (1991) ("To be a prostitute is to be an object in the marketplace: a three dimensional blank screen upon which men project and act out their sexual dominance...[I]t is the absence of identity: the theft and subsequent abandonment of self.")

(22) Profile at 122.

(23) Evelina Giobbe, *Confronting Liberal Lies About Prostitution* in THE SEXUAL LIBERALS AND THE ATTACK ON FEMINISM (Dorchen Leidholdt and Janice G. Raymond, eds, 1990 78; at also see Dolf Zillman and Jennings Bryant, Effects of Massive Exposure to Pornography, in PORNOGRAPHY & AGGRESSION 115, 132-133 (Neil M. Malamuth & Edward Donnerstein eds, 1984) (exposure to porn normalizes uncommon sexual practices in perception of the viewer).

(24) Profile at 70

(25) LEE, at 166-67 (public forced sex with pimp); SILBERT, at 60 (60% of women beaten for being "disrespectful"; 43% for breaking pimp's rules; 25% for leaving; 22% for "no reason").

(26) Giobbe (76% beaten); se also SILBERT, at 55 (68% of sample report physical abuse by pimp) at 60 (over half beaten regularly or consistently; ENABLERS at 70 (over half of sample abused); Baldwin, PORNOGRAPHY & THE TRAFFIC IN WOMEN, at 126-127.

(27) PENCE, at 37

(28) FEMALE JUVENILE PROSTITUTION, at 25

Appendix C

Prostitution: Oppression Disguised as Liberation

Denise Gamache and Evelina Giobbe, 1990

1985 A Minnesota shelter receives a typical call from a woman requesting emergency shelter for herself and her children. She is desperate to escape her violent partner whose chemical use and assaults have been escalating. Given further information about her situation, she explains that her partner is also her pimp. At this point, the advocate states that the shelter does not offer services to prostitutes and she'll have to seek housing elsewhere.

1990 A woman requests safe housing from the same Minnesota shelter for herself and her baby. She explains that she doesn't want to turn tricks anymore and needs shelter and help to reestablish her life. Fortunately, space is available and the shelter arranges for her to come in.

These anecdotes describe the actual experiences of two women who are currently active in our organization. The shift in the shelter's response is the result of the staff's thoughtful reevaluation of battering and their sincere commitment to their mission: to serve all battered women. For the past three years, battered women's shelters in Minnesota have been discussing WHISPER's analysis of prostitution as a form of violence against women. We hope that this position paper will persuade programs around the country to follow their lead.

Conditions of women used in prostitution

There are approximately one million adult prostitutes in the United States.³ Most were recruited or coerced into prostitution before they reached the age of majority; studies indicate the average age of entry is fourteen years.⁴ Others were "traditional wives" who escaped from or were abandoned by abusive husbands and forced into prostitution to support themselves and their children. Many have dependent children. Many are women of color. Women in prostitution have few resources. Most have not completed high school. Few have had any job experience outside of the sex industry. Most have been victims of childhood sexual abuse, incest, rape and/or battery, prior to entry into prostitution.

A preliminary analysis of data collected by the Whisper Oral History project illustrates the violence that pervade prostitutes' lives. Ninety percent of the women interviewed were subjected to an inordinate amount of physical and sexual abuse during childhood: ninety percent had been battered in their families; seventy-four percent had been sexually abused between the ages of 3 and 14. Of this group, 57% had been repeatedly been abused over a period of one to five years; forty-three percent had been victimized by two or three perpetrators; ninety-three percent had been abused by a family member (50% were abused by a

³ Winick and Kinsie, *The Lively Commerce: Prostitution in the United States*. (New York. Signet. 1971): 14.

⁴ D. Kelly Weisberg, *Children of the Night: A Study of Adolescent Prostitution*, (Lexington, MA/Toronto, 1985): 94.

natural, step or foster father). Additionally, fifty percent of this group had also been molested by a non-family member.

Once in prostitution, these women and girls were further victimized by both pimps and customers. Seventy-nine percent had been beaten by their pimps. Seventy-four percent reported assaults by customers; or these, seventy nine percent were beaten by a customer, and fifty percent had been raped. Seventy-one percent of these women were victims of multiple customer assaults. Thus the conditions of their lives in prostitution often replicated the abuse they had sustained prior to recruitment.

When women attempting to escape prostitution contact battered women's programs because they have suffered overt physical abuse, they are sometimes provided with these services. However, our movement should recognize that prostitution as a system creates an environment in which men have permission to abuse women because they are prostitutes. Battered women's programs should provide services to women used in prostitution in order to facilitate their escape from the systemic abuse that is the foundation of prostitution as well as to prevent women from experiencing additional overt violence at the hands of pimps and johns.

Why Prostitution Exists in Our Society

Prostitution, like battering, must be viewed on a societal as well as an individual level if we are to understand why it exists in our culture, who benefits, and who is victimized. The function of the institution of prostitution is to allow males unconditional access to women and children limited solely by their ability to pay for this privilege. Culturally supported tactics of power and control facilitate the recruitment or coercion of women and children into prostitution and impede their escape. These tactics can be grouped into the following triads: child sexual abuse, rape, and battery; educational deprivation, job discrimination, and poverty; racism, classism, and heterosexism. They are compounded by our social institution through unequal enforcement of laws and policies. Lastly, these tactics are shaped and maintained by sexism-the ideology and instrument of the patriarchy.

Child Sexual Abuse, Rape, and Battery

Child sexual abuse, rape, and battery are crimes committed by individual men against individual women and children. However, the contention that these crimes are institutionalized forms of social control can be justified by the prevalence of such crimes against these specific groups and the failure of social institutions to prevent or redress these victims' injuries.

Approximately 25% of women in the United States are sexually assaulted by an adult male before the age of 13. Eighty percent of sexual assaults against children are committed by family members or family friends; of these 80-90% of the assailants are male and 87% of their victims are female. The FBI estimates that a woman is raped every six minutes in this country; however, rape crisis centers estimate that one in three women are raped during their lifetime and that a rape occurs every three minutes.⁵ When one includes all forms of rape, sexual abuse and harassment (contact or non-contact), it is estimated that only 7.8% of women in the United States have not been sexually assaulted or harassed in their lifetime.⁶

The rate of battery has reached epidemic proportions in this country. It is estimated that a woman is beaten

⁵ Sisterhood is Global, ed. Robin Morgan (New York, Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1984): 702-3.

⁶ Catharine A. MacKinnon, *Feminism Unmodified*, (USA: Harvard University Press, 1987): 6.

by a male partner every eighteen seconds. Between 2-6 million women are beaten annually. Two to four thousand women are beaten to death each year by their husbands and 40% of all women murdered are killed by their male partners.⁷

Prostitution creates an environment whereby crimes against women and children become a commercial enterprise. When a john uses a juvenile prostitute for sexual gratification, he is committing the crime of child sexual abuse. When a john demands that a prostitute allow him to use her in bondage or sado-masochistic sex scenes or to urinate or defecate on her, he is battering her. When a john compels a woman to submit to his sexual demands as a condition of "employment," he is committing rape by a feminist (if not legal) definition which differentiates between compliance and consent, and defines rape as any sexual act to which a woman is forced to submit even without overt coercion as a mitigating factor. The fact that a john gives money to a woman or a child for submitting to these acts does not alter the fact that he is committing child sexual abuse, rape, and battery; it merely redefines these crimes as prostitution.

Educational Deprivation, Discrimination, and Poverty

The majority of the world's poor and illiterate are women. In the United States, 90% of single parent families are headed by women and 77% of people living below the poverty line are women and children. Although poor women may be eligible for General Assistance (GA) and Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), both of these systems maintain women at subsistence levels and, in effect, punish them if they secure employment because subsidies are reduced in direct proportion to any income earned. Living just above subsistence level are the "working poor" in America. Full-time female employees earned only 64.7% of the median weekly income for males age 16 or older. Eighty percent of American women work in what has been described as the "Pink Collar Ghetto": sex-segregated, low-paying, low-benefit jobs. Most often they work without the benefit of health insurance or pension plans and notwithstanding the rare exceptions, without state or company subsidized childcare.⁸

In all of these ways, women are kept economically subordinate to men. By maintaining a society in which women are kept economically marginalized, the system of male supremacy ensures that a pool of women will be vulnerable to recruitment and entrapment in prostitution.

Racism, Classism, and Heterosexism

White male supremacy maximizes oppressive conditions that make women of color particularly vulnerable to recruitment or coercion into prostitution. By limited educational and career opportunities and fostering dependence on an inadequate and punitive welfare system, racism creates economic incentive.

Racist stereotypes of women of color in pornography and racist policies that zone pornographic bookstores, peep shows, topless bars and prostitution into communities of color create an environment in which women are particularly vulnerable to recruitment by pimps and harassment by johns.

Racist law enforcement policies disproportionately target women of color for harassment, arrest, imprisonment, and fines. Such actions create a revolving door through which women are shunted from the street to the courts to the jails and back onto the streets again to raise money to pay these penalties.

Selective application of laws prohibiting prostitution constitutes a de facto regulation in which a tax is levied

⁷ Morgan, Sisterhood.

⁸ Morgan, Sisterhood.

primarily against women of color by white men who maintain, control, and benefit from the system of abuse in which the women are trapped.

The lack of effective, community-based intervention programs for women of color who are trapped in abusive relationships—including prostitution—tells them that they are not deserving of help. Further, it puts women of color in a double bind by forcing them to go to white dominated agencies to seek relief and redress for their injuries. If they speak out within their own communities against the injuries they have sustained, they risk isolation, the possibility that their complaint will fuel racist stereotypes, and the probability that they will not receive effective advocacy.

The role of classism in maintaining systems of prostitution is similar to that of racism. Classism makes poor and white ethnic women vulnerable to recruitment by limiting their educational and career opportunities. Pornographic stereotypes of women as "barefoot and pregnant," "promiscuous Jewesses," or "hot Italians" portray poor and ethnic women as willing targets for men's sexual aggression. Lastly, by zoning "sex shops" into economically depressed neighborhoods, classism makes poor and ethnic women more subject from harassment by pimps and johns.

Heterosexism defines heterosexuality—and specifically intercourse—as the only normal, socially acceptable form of sexual intimacy, while viewing homosexuality as deviant and undesirable. In addition to creating a homophobic culture which fosters discrimination and violence against gays and lesbians, heterosexism supports the male sexual imperative: the belief that men have uncontrollable sexual urges which women must fulfill or they will be driven to rape women and children. Herein lies the classic functionalist justification for prostitution—to fulfill the basic needs of men who would not otherwise have sexual access to women.

All of the aforementioned factors are further compounded by unequal application of laws prohibiting prostitution and sexism in the culture. Although women used in prostitution are routinely targeted for arrest, fines and imprisonment, only a token number of johns are arrested. It is an even rarer occurrence for men to be arrested or convicted of pimping or pandering. By allowing men to traffic in women and children with impunity yet simultaneously prosecuting prostitutes, the legal system tacitly supports sexual exploitation and profits through the collection of fines. Lastly, sexism, the values and beliefs used to justify the oppression of all women in a male supremacist system, overtly and covertly supports tactics of control and thru maintains systems of prostitution in the culture.

How Women are Victimized in Systems of Prostitution

Many cultural misconceptions about prostitutes are founded on the fantasy of their mythical sexual prowess and erotic control over men. This perspective ignores the power differential that exists between the prostitutes and the john as individuals, and as men and women in a male supremacist society. Just as batterers use various tactics to control their partners, johns use various forms of power to control prostitutes.

In his book *Anatomy of Power*, Galbraith identifies three forms of power that allow groups or individuals to force the submission of others to their will: coercive power, compensatory or economic power, and conditioned power.⁹ Johns use all three forms of power to compel prostitutes to comply with their wishes.

The most overt form of power used by men to ensure a prostitute's compliance is compensatory or economic power. Because an exchange of money occurs between the prostitute and the john—irrespective of

⁹ John Kenneth Galbraith, *Anatomy of Power*, (Boston:Houghton Mifflin Company, 1983).

whether the woman benefits from or maintains control over the proceeds of this exchange—the john is given permission to use the woman in any manner that he chooses. Any refusal on the woman's part can result in the withdrawal of compensation or the john may use another form of power to enforce his wishes. His ability to do so is enforced directly and indirectly by pimps and owners of prostitution businesses who may use a system of fines or overt violence to insure a woman's compliance so as to maximize their profits. Additionally, the compensatory power that johns used against prostitutes must also be viewed within the broader context of women's economic subordination to men generally and the specific educational and economic limitations that shape the lives of the majority of women used in prostitution.

A john can and often does use coercive power against a prostitute by threatening, battering or raping a woman who refuses to meet his sexual demands. Customer violence against prostitutes is quickly hidden by brothel owners whose primary concerns are happy customers and maximum profits. Johns also benefit indirectly from the coercive power that pimps wield over women under their control. A woman whose pimp uses violence or threats to force her to earn a daily quota is unlikely to refuse to cooperate with the sexual demands placed on her by a customer. Furthermore, because of her stigmatized status, a prostitute is most often unable to obtain legal redress for a crime of violence committed against her. In this way, society reinforced the ability of men to use violence against prostitutes.

In spite of the relative advances of the second wave of feminism, women in western society are socialized to cultivate attractiveness, to be passive and nurturant, and to seek approval from and defer to men. In a gender stratified culture, men exert conditional power over women when they use or manipulate sex role expectations in order to obtain their desires. Furthermore, female socialization that reinforces male expectations may constrain a woman from acting in her own best interest and contribute to her capitulation to his demands.

Women used in prostitution have not only been socialized in the traditional sense but may be further socialized in "hyperfeminine" roles after initial entry into prostitution. Sociologists describe this as an apprenticeship period during which the woman is taught an occupational ideology which provides her with positive or neutralizing definitions that glorify prostitution or justify her participation.

Johns exert conditional power over prostitutes by using and manipulating the traditional sex role expectations of women as well as the particular occupational ideology of prostitution. They rigidly define and control the conditions under which prostitution occurs and strictly proscribe prostitute/customer interactions. The role of the prostitute is consistent with the traditional female sex role in that it requires the woman to make herself attractive to males, that she behave passively (prostitutes stand on street corners or line up in brothels for men to "pick"), and that she nurture and defer to men's needs and desires by complying with his sexual demands. Johns also exert conditioned power over prostitutes by reinforcing positive and neutralizing definitions of prostitution. Lastly, johns indirectly benefit from positive and neutralizing definitions of prostitution that are instilled in women by pimps and perpetuated in the mainstream media and pornography.

Viewing Women in Prostitution as Battered Women

Cultural mythology ignores the social construction of women's sense of self in relation to men as well as the power that pimps wield over women used in prostitution. Furthermore, it misrepresents the prostitute's apparent acquiescence to a customer's sexual demands as a reflection of her own sexual preferences and autonomy. An analysis of prostitution as a form of systemic violence against women based on a gendered

power differential in our society better explains the dynamics of the industry and provides us with options to strategize for change on an individual and cultural level.

If prostitution is a form of systemic violence against women, then prostitutes are battered women who could be appropriately served in our programs. This approach communicates several important messages to women. It expresses a view that they are victims of an oppressive system who are deserving of assistance. This can be invaluable in freeing women from the self-blame and guilt they may feel due to prevailing social attitudes which hold them accountable for their victimization. In a battered women's shelter, women can be helped to understand that prostitution is only one form of women's oppression, like battering and rape, and that their experiences connect rather than separate them from other women who have been so isolated, stigmatized, and rejected by society. The mere existence of a battered women's shelter in a community is a powerful symbol of the end of male ownership of female partners, a longstanding patriarchal tenet. We look forward to the day when battered women's programs also symbolize the end of centuries of male exploitation of women and children through pornography.