

University of Rhode Island

From the Selected Works of Donna M. Hughes

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Bibliography of Sources on Prostitution Decriminalization in Rhode Island

Donna M. Hughes, Dr.
Melanie Shapiro, Esq



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Available at: https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/95/

Decriminalized Prostitution: Research & Advocacy

A Bibliography of Sources from Donna M. Hughes, PhD & Melanie Shapiro, Esq.

For 29 years prostitution was decriminalized in Rhode Island (if it occurred indoors). Sexual exploitation and violence against women and girls were integrated into economic development. The number of sex businesses grew rapidly and organized crime groups operated brothels and extorted money from adult entertainment businesses. Rhode Island became a destination for pimps, sex traffickers, and other violent criminals. The lack of laws impeded police from investigating serious crimes, including sex trafficking.

Below is a bibliography of sources on the research we did on prostitution and sex trafficking and the advocacy work we did to end decriminalized prostitution.

Harm of Decriminalized Prostitution to Victims, Families & Community

Sex Trafficking and Decriminalized Prostitution in Rhode Island by Melanie Shapiro

Since decriminalization in 1980, the sex industry has expanded and Rhode Island has become a destination for commercial sex in New England. The goal of this project was to research the history of decriminalization, gather information on Asian massage parlor brothels, and determine if sex trafficking is occurring in these establishments.

<http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/srhonorsprog/135/>

Decriminalized Prostitution: Impunity for Violence and Exploitation by Melanie Shapiro & Donna M. Hughes

A case study of decriminalized prostitution. Lack of laws or regulations created a permissive legal, economic, and cultural environment for the growth of sex businesses. New brothels opened at an increasing pace as brothel operators learned that Rhode Island lacked laws against or regulations on indoor prostitution. Men on the sex buyer forums reported that they traveled from other states and Canada to Rhode Island. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/94/

Top U.S. Official on Trafficking Says Lack of Prostitution Law Creates a “Zone of Impunity” for Traffickers by Donna M. Hughes

The lack of a law against indoor prostitution can create a “zone of impunity in which police can’t go, and where traffickers can exploit their prey,” according to Luis CdeBaca, Ambassador at Large to Combat Human Trafficking and Director of the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons in the U.S. State Department. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/56/

Tattoos of Girls Under Pimp Control & Pimp Rules for the Control of Victims by Donna M. Hughes

Tattooing, and sometimes branding or scarification, are marks of ownership. It is one of the ways that pimps maintain physical and psychological control over emotionally vulnerable girls.

https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/88/

Rhode Island Left Out of FBI Initiative by Donna M. Hughes

Rhode Island has been excluded from federal law enforcement investigations of sex trafficking of children because there is no law against prostitution.

https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/60/

John Contracts Skin Disease at Spa by Melanie Shapiro & Donna M. Hughes.

A virus that causes a skin disease called Molluscum contagiosum is being spread at a spa-brothel in Providence. <https://works.bepress.com/donnahughes/64/>

Prostitution Destroys Families by Anonymous in Providence

The bill against indoor prostitution should be passed. Prostitution destroys many families. What happens when a wife catches her husband going to a spa or strip club?

<https://works.bepress.com/donnahughes/77/>

Life is Precious by Donna L. Landry

Human trafficking is the slavery in our lifetime. Many women and children are deceived, coerced, or forced into a life of bondage and exploitation. <https://works.bepress.com/donnahughes/75/>

Behavior and Attitudes of Johns by Melanie Shapiro

A “john” is a common term for a man who buys sex acts. In online forums, these men discuss their experiences and give reviews of different spa-brothels and individual women in the brothels.

<https://works.bepress.com/donnahughes/59/>

Review of Happy Endings by Donna M. Hughes

Tara Hurley, the filmmaker, has testified before the RI House Judiciary Committee and said on talk shows that based on observations making the film, there is no sex trafficking in Rhode Island. This is the view that is conveyed in her film *Happy Endings*? There are serious omissions of information about the people in the film and political biases that the filmmaker does not acknowledge. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/79/

Protect Our Children by Jenny Meyen

There is something very disturbing about a business that advertises they are for “men and children” and evidence exists that this business has sexual acts occurring in the same building.

https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/78/

Rhode Island Law Makes It Pimps’ Paradise by Donna M. Hughes

In June, a 16-year-old Boston runaway was found beaten in Providence. She was being held against her will in a basement apartment by a 40-year-old fugitive from justice and alleged pimp. He had her stripping in a local club. In Rhode Island, there is no law that prohibits 16- or 17-year-old girls from stripping. She had a purse full of condoms, indicating she was probably being used in prostitution as well. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/80/

Evicted Brothel Relocates by Melanie Shapiro & Donna M. Hughes

As it has become apparent that Rhode Island will pass a law prohibiting prostitution, property owner Joseph Paolino moved to evict a spa-brothel in his building. The Bali Day Spa has relocated to a sister spa-brothel at Smithfield Avenue. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/62/

Salon 657 American Brothel in Middletown, Rhode Island by Melanie Shapiro

Most of the spa-brothels in Rhode Island are run by Asians with Asian women engaging in prostitution. Salon 657 is one of the increasing numbers of prostitution venues with American women. Salon 657 advertises in the “adult entertainment” section of the *Providence Phoenix* that it offers “erotic massage and hair cutting services” for men only.

https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/83/

Men Still Visiting Brothels by Melanie Shapiro

One Spa, an illegal spa-brothel, is next door to the coffee shop and just above the office of the *Federal Hill Gazette*. From the time I got out of my car and returned with my coffee, I saw three men go into the brothel—one white man in his late thirties dressed in carpenter pants, a flannel shirt, and baseball cap, one older balding white man with glasses, and a middle-aged Asian man.

<https://works.bepress.com/donnahughes/76/>

Holding Rhode Island Strip Club Owners Accountable by Donna M. Hughes

For almost 30 years there were no laws against indoor prostitution in Rhode Island. During that time, being an owner of a strip club where prostitution occurred in the private booths or being a landlord for a massage parlor that was really a brothel were shady, but legal, ways to make money. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/17/

Rhode Island Should Target Sex Buyers by Donna M. Hughes

Men who buy sex----and they are only a small minority of men---are responsible for the crime of sex trafficking continuing to thrive. When sex traffickers find victims and coerce them into prostitution, they are serving the sex buyers, who pay them well for finding and marketing the victims to them. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/48/

Harm of Decriminalized Prostitution to Local Businesses*Asian Woman Fled Middletown Brothel Last Year* by Melanie Shapiro

A business owner has told Citizens Against Trafficking that late last year Asian women fled a spa-brothel nearby and came to their shop to ask for assistance.

https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/58/

Middletown Loses Children’s Science Center by Melanie Shapiro

After years of problems and the inability of the police to do anything about the brothel next door, a children’s science education center is relocating to another part of the state.

https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/66/

Federal Hill Protest Targets Brothel Landlords by Donna M. Hughes & Melanie Shapiro

Landlords who rent space to spa-brothels were the target of a protest on Atwells Avenue on Federal Hill in Providence on the evening of March 28th. About two dozen neighbors, friends, and anti-trafficking activists gathered to condemn landlords who rent to spa-brothels.

<https://works.bepress.com/donnahughes/69/>

Federal Hill Resident and Restaurateur Forced to Move because of Spa-Brothel by Melanie Shapiro & Donna M. Hughes

The illegal operation of a spa-brothel on Federal Hill, Providence, has forced a resident and restaurateur to move. <https://works.bepress.com/donnahughes/63/>

Organizing to End Decriminalized Prostitution and Human Trafficking

Watching Justice Come Alive by Daniel Weiss

With the nation watching, a college student, a professor, and a legislator team up to top indoor prostitution in Rhode Island. <https://works.bepress.com/donnahughes/16/>

The Citizens Were Heard by Donna M. Hughes

Congratulations to the citizens of Rhode Island and national anti-trafficking advocates for the legislative victory in Rhode Island. This past week, the Rhode Island Assembly passed an unprecedented three pieces of legislation that will protect victims from sex industry predators and give law enforcement the tools they need to arrest pimps, traffickers, and “johns.”

<https://works.bepress.com/donnahughes/90/>

Victory in Rhode Island by Michael Horowitz

In stunning culmination of a David-Goliath struggle that, at least until lately, few believed the David side had the slightest chance of winning, the Rhode Island legislature enacted three major anti-trafficking bills last night that the Governor will soon sign into law.

<https://works.bepress.com/donnahughes/92/>

Media Attention Gets Inspections at Middletown Spa-Brothel by Melanie Shapiro & Donna M. Hughes

For years, the owners of a science education store have been trying to get police and city officials to take action against the brothel next door. The police have said that there was nothing they could do to close the brothel. Since there is no law against indoor prostitution in Rhode Island, law enforcement’s hands are tied. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/65/

Sex Radicals Target Rhode Island by Margaret Brooks & Donna M. Hughes

Citizens Against Trafficking responds to the letter from 50 academics who support the status quo of decriminalized prostitution (indoors) in Rhode Island. A letter co-authored by Ronald Weitzer and Elizabeth Anne Wood and signed by 48 other “members of the academic community” was

sent to the Rhode Island General Assembly opposing any bill banning prostitution indoors.
https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/86/

Indoor Brothel List by Senate District in Rhode Island by Melanie Shapiro

Because of decriminalized prostitution, the number of locations where there is indoor prostitution is rapidly increasing. The following is a partial list that demonstrates the escalating problem in Rhode Island, particularly since the Korean spa-brothels are known to be connected to Asian organized crime. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/61/

Citizens Confront Officials in Middletown, Rhode Island by Melanie Shapiro

The parking lot was overflowing for the Middletown Town Council meeting on Monday evening. Dozens of citizens, including local business owners and parents, were there to express their concern about the presence of spa-brothels in the community and the loss of a children-centered business as a result. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/68/

Rhode Island Take Back the Night by Donna M. Hughes

Women uniting to take back the night in marches have symbolized women's resistance to sexual violence and their declaration of freedom and dignity for decades. "Speaking out" against violence is the way we break the conspiracies of silence that the perpetrators try to impose on us. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/81/

Advocacy for Good Legislation

Rhode Island's Carnival of Prostitution by Donna M. Hughes

After my experience at the Senate Judiciary Committee last Thursday, I believe Rhode Island is headed for a human rights disaster and nationwide political embarrassment. It is becoming apparent that the Senate is not going to pass a much-needed prostitution bill. Rhode Island will continue to have an expanding number of spa-brothels, prostitution of minors in clubs, and no law that will enable the police to stop it. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/82/

Governor Carcieri Calls for Passage of Prostitution Bill by Donna M. Hughes

On Thursday, Governor Carcieri held a press conference to support Gianinni's prostitution bill and her House trafficking bill. Giannini's bill will create laws against prostitution to "close the loophole" as it is often referred to. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/70/

Testimony on Prostitution Bill, Senate Judiciary Committee by Donna M. Hughes

I am here to support a bill that will give Rhode Island the prostitution law it needs to combat the growing sex industry and sex trafficking. <https://works.bepress.com/donnahughes/72/>

Testimony for Trafficking Bill, Rhode Island House Judiciary Committee, October 2009 by Donna M. Hughes

I am here to support a trafficking bill that will do two things: 1) Criminalize forced labor as a form of human trafficking. 2) Make it easier to prosecute sex trafficking of minors by removing the requirement to prove force, fraud, coercion. <https://works.bepress.com/donnahughes/73/>

Senate Prostitution Bill Weakens Law by Jim Meyen

Senate prostitution bill weakens the law: House has been the leader on closing the loophole. <https://works.bepress.com/donnahughes/84/>

Updates from Middletown, Rhode Island by Melanie Shapiro

Asian spa-brothel closes; Middletown Council passes anti-prostitution resolution. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/67/

Levesque Misrepresents View of Laura Lederer by Donna M. Hughes

Last week, Senator Charles Levesque (D-Portsmouth and Bristol) sent an email that misrepresented the view of Laura Lederer on the need for a prostitution law in Rhode Island. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/74/

Senators' Prostitution Bill Is a Sham by Donna M. Hughes

Rhode Island needs a good prostitution law to halt the metastasizing problems of prostitution and sex trafficking. The growing number of spas and clubs are sordid destinations for foreign women and teens from around the Northeast. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/85/

Speak Your Voice on Prostitution Bill by Donna L. Landry

Now is the time to speak your voice and urge your Senator to pass the House bill. Now is the time to close the loophole of indoor prostitution in Rhode Island. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/87/

The Obstructionism of Senator Paul Jabour by Donna M. Hughes

I am disappointed in the last minute amendments [to the prostitution bill]. For Senator Jabour to suggest that after all we have suffered through, with the way we are perceived as a state and the [lack of] tools we need in a court room; to suggest that [prostitution] is a violation, something like a traffic ticket, is a woeful decision. [Jabour's amendments] are "what derailed [the prostitution bill] in the last week." – Attorney General Patrick Lynch. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/91/

Testimony in Support of "An Act Relating to Criminal Offenses—Prostitution" by Donna M. Hughes

Prostitution is harmful to individuals involved, their families, and the community. It is **not** a victimless activity or just a private sex act. https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/71/

Action Alert for Senate: Comments on Human Trafficking Bills by Donna M. Hughes

Rhode Island Senate President Paiva-Weed has said that she is “confident that we will address the issue of prostitution and human trafficking” this session. The votes in the Senate are crucial to Rhode Island getting a prostitution law and improving our trafficking law.

https://works.bepress.com/donna_hughes/93/