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Prostitution Online

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SUMMARY. The technological innovations and unregulated use of the Internet have created a global medium for men's sexual exploitation and abuse of women and children. The sex industry has aggressively adopted every new information technology to increase men's sexual access to women and children. A mutually beneficial relationship exists between the Internet and sex industries. New technologies enable pimps to market women and children in prostitution or related activities, such as online strip shows, sex shows, and commercial voyeurism. The global communications forums have increased the visibility and exposure of women and children being exploited and abused, while conversely, increasing the privacy and communication of the men who exploit and abuse them. These forums normalize men's exploitative and abuse behaviors. Violence and humiliation are eroticized. The combined experience of using new information technologies, finding a supportive community on the Internet, and having a sexual experience is positively reinforcing and empowering to perpetrators. Viewing and interacting with women in online sex sites causes a loss of empathy for them as human beings. Women used in online sex shows are exploited and abused in ways that are both similar to the regular sex industry and unique to being online. In some instances, the abuse and exploitation is worse. More research is needed on

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the use of new information technologies for the sexual exploitation and abuse of women and children.

. . . it's pretty bad working at [an] adult [Web] site. . . . the abuse is way beyond what goes on at strip clubs . . ." (Email from Renee, May 19, 2000)

INTRODUCTION

The technological innovations and unregulated use of the Internet have created a global medium for men's sexual exploitation and abuse of women and children. Internet forums are used to advertise prostitution and compile men's experiences buying women and children in prostitution. Technological advances, such as live video chat, have enabled pimps to sell a range of sexually exploitative and abusive entertainment.

The global communications forums have increased the privacy and decreased the isolation of the men who exploit and abuse women and children. The Internet provides an anonymous network of support for perpetrators to share their experiences, legitimize their behavior, and advise and mentor less experienced men. Little pimps can advertise the availability of a few women; big pimps can offer live sex shows and online prostitution with women from anywhere in the world.

The Internet has enabled pimps and pornographers to distribute unlimited amounts of pornography, including extremely violent pornography and child pornography. At the end of 2001, there were 300,000 pornography sites on the Web. This is a 350% increase in the number of pornography sites from January to December 2001. From 1996 to 2001, the FBI documented a 1,280% increase in child pornography (Kellog, 2002).

The first section of this paper describes new Internet Web technologies and how they are used to promote prostitution and deliver online prostitution. These new Web technologies have increased sexual exploitation and abuse by making women and girls more visible and exposed, while enabling men to exploit and abuse women and children with more privacy and anonymity. The paper then describes men's increased capacity to harm women and children through new information technologies. Men's use of online communities as information networks is discussed and women's experiences in online stripping, sex shows, and voyeurism are described.

NEW WEB TECHNOLOGIES AND THEIR USE FOR PROSTITUTION

The sex industry has aggressively adopted, and in a few cases invented, Internet technologies to increase men's sexual access to women and children.

There are many modes of communication and forums online: email, ftp (file transfer protocol), newsgroups, the Web, chat, newsgroups, and peer-to-peer servers. Although a variety of forums are used, most of the activities related to prostitution are found on the World Wide Web (also called the Web). In a few cases, the content of newsgroups are archived on Web sites.

The Web started growing rapidly in 1994, after Netscape introduced the Netscape Web browser, which enabled transmission and viewing of Web pages with text, images, sound, and video.[1] From the beginning, sites on the Web became meeting places for sex offenders and exploiters of women and girls. The first Web-based prostitution business, A Personal Touch Services, from Seattle, Washington appeared in 1994 (Bosley, 1995). *The Internet Business Journal* described this site as the most significant Internet marketing innovation of 1994 (Strangelove, 1995). This endorsement of the sex industry's marketing on the Internet was an early indication of the mutually beneficial relationship between the Internet and sex industries (Hughes, 2000).

Advertisements for prostitution tourism followed in 1995. Alan J. Munn, from New York City, advertised group prostitution tours to the Dominican Republic and Nevada, USA on the Web in 1995. Calling himself PIMPS 'R' US, he offered four days and three night trips to a "wonderful setting" which includes "many female prostitutes." A tour guide on the trip provided "practical information about how to find and deal with prostitutes and how to arrange group orgies." On one night, Munn boasted, "oral sex (fellatio) is provided by an attractive female whore chosen by the tour guide" (Munn, 1995).

Advertisements for prostitution tours to Asia, Europe, and South America soon followed. Pimps offered "Tropical Paradise Vacations" to Central America and the Caribbean for "single men." An advertisement for Erotic Vacations to Costa Rica quoted a price, which included double occupancy rooms and intra-country flights, booked for two. Men were told: "Your companion [a euphemism for prostituted woman] will meet you at your hotel . . ." (The Travel Connection, 1995).

Before the Web came into popular usage, newsgroups on Usenet offered information regarding prostitution. The newsgroup alt.sex.services (later renamed alt.sex.prostitution) was formed for men to write about their experiences buying women and girls in prostitution, and to give advice to other men (Atta and M., 1997). When the Web became available, postings from this newsgroup were archived into a Web site called The World Sex Guide, which provides "comprehensive, sex-related information about every country in the world." The slogan of The World Sex Guide in 1996 was "Fuckers of the world unite!" In 1997, it changed to "Where do you want to fuck today?" and in 1998, changed to the more pretentious sounding "A research project about prostitution worldwide" (Atta and M., 1996, 1997, 1998).

Other Web sites dedicated to information about finding women in prostitution in one region appeared online, such as PunterNet, which specializes in locating and reviewing women in prostitution in the United Kingdom (http://www.punternet.com). In these forums, men use misogynistic and pornographic language to rate their experiences with prostituted women. The women are rated more favorably if the men are able to coerce them into sex acts that are painful, risky, or humiliating. Men specify street addresses on where to find special kinds of sex or victims. The following posts from the World Sex Guide offer tips on obtaining children in Europe:

(1). Street girls, Some of the girls are young, really young, but don't imagine them "clean." They live more or less on the street. They will join your car. They have places which you can reach in about 10 minutes by car. Mostly empty parking lots. (Frankfurt, Germany, 2000)

(2). [. . . . .], the street where very young girls hang out. You might find 12-15-year-old girls here . . . (Copenhagen, Denmark)

(3). On down the street . . . some younger scared looking girls in doorways. They didn't come out to talk. (Berlin, Germany, 1996)

In 1995, a new information technology called live videoconferencing enabled live video and audio connection between users (White Pine & Cornell University, 1995). Pimps immediately adopted this new technology for online prostitution through live person-to-person video and audio transmission. By late 1995, live videoconferencing was delivering live strip shows and sex shows to buyers over the Internet (Rose, 1997). By either keyboard or telephone, the buyers could communicate with the women in the sex show and make requests for what they wanted the women to do. The viewer could be in another state, or even another continent from the actual show. One of the first live videoconferencing sex industry sites was Virtual Dreams. The site advertised itself as follows:

Virtual Dreams uses cutting-edge technology to bring you the most beautiful girls in the world. Using our software and your computer, you can interact real time and one-on-one with the girl of your dreams. Ask her anything you wish–she is waiting to please you! (Virtual Connections, 1995)

In 2002, all large sex industry subscription sites on the Web included live strip and sex shows, referred to as live video chat. Viewers can watch pas-

sively, interact by voice or keyboard, or direct the sex acts performed. Multiple viewers can be linked at one time, or viewers can pay extra for a private show.

Specialized companies produce "streaming video content" for sex industry sites on the Web. For example, women act out pornographic scenarios in 8-by-8 foot cubicles setup in a warehouse in Seattle, at one company (Wired for Sex, 1998). Stage sets included a health club, bedroom, shower, and dungeon, each with a microphone and speakers so the strippers and the buyers can communicate. The men often ask the women to give special signals to indicate that the performance is live, and that they are in direct contact with the women (Rose, 1997).

In 1999, the scope of live video chat for online prostitution came to world attention when a man from the U.S. announced that he was opening a live "rape camp" online (http://www.rapecamp.com). Men were given the opportunity to pay for and watch acts of rape and torture perpetrated against Asian women in Phnom Penh. Viewers made requests for acts that they wanted to see committed against the women (Hughes, 2000b).

Sex offenders or exploiters may use video capture technology to record the transmissions of the live video chat sessions. Thus, live sex shows can be recorded and repeatedly watched. The videos may be considered "trophies" if the women or children responded to the men's requests.

Web sites facilitate the marketing of women by pimps. Many escort services and brothels advertise on the Web. Photographs of women in the brothels are increasingly available on Web sites.

Men communicate with the pimps and book "appointments" through the Web or by email. Message boards on brothels' Web sites encourage men to inquire about what sex acts they can buy with different women. The following is from the Web message board of a brothel in Prague.

> I understand . . . you have, 6 girls our more, ATT [sic] the time, girls are from Ukraine. I will be in Praha, late August 2000, . . . me [sic] flights is from Iceland to Copenhagen and from Copenhagen to Praha. . . . I wold like to stay in your house the first 2 nights when I am testing your girls after that I will know which of your girls I like. . . . I will have one of your girls, one hour at the time in your house . . . I wold prefer to have sex with all of them, and then chosen one of the to stay in me hotel four 2 night after thatch, is thatch [sic] ok with you? Are your girls shaved? [full name] Iceland [Email address] 01.07.00. (Milas Holiday and Escort Service, 2001)

Pimps use computer technologies to maintain surveillance of women in prostitution. Cameras linked to computers (Web cams) transmit live images.

With these cameras, pimps monitor women from remote locations, which could be either another room in a brothel or any location with an Internet connection. In Yorkshire, England, one pimp planned to maintain control of an 18-year-old girl from his prison cell. After his arrest, he transported her to a studio for live sex shows on the Internet. He planned to continue to pimp and monitor her online performances from prison (personal communication with anonymous source in UK, May 2001).

Live video broadcasting on the Internet enabled pimps to sell online voyeurism. By setting up houses with live video cameras (video cams) in each room, they created commercial voyeurism. Members pay a subscription fee to watch the women eating, sleeping, taking a shower, dressing, and going to the toilet (VoyeurDorm.com, 1999).

As new technologies become available, pimps, exploiters, and abusers of women quickly adopt them.

INTERNET TECHNOLOGIES: INCREASING THE IMBALANCE OF POWER

In some cases, prostitution Web sites are little more than electronic versions of telephone yellow pages or free advertising tabloids from the sex industry. However, the Web is a unique communications system. The ways that men access and interact with prostitution-related images and texts on the Web creates new experiences and influences offline attitudes toward women. In an online environment of exploitation and abuse, new Internet technologies shift the balance of power toward the perpetrators.

WOMEN'S VISIBILITY AND MEN'S ANONYMITY

In prostitution, women are exposed and vulnerable. They stand on street corners; they strip in clubs and bars; they are used in making pornography; and their photographs are used to advertise escort services, massage parlors and other venues for prostitution. The purpose of sex businesses is to increase women and children's sexual accessibility to men. While women have never been able to control the pornographic photographs and videos made of them in the sex industry, the global network of the Internet makes the distribution of these images both vaster and more unknown.

Increasingly, Web sites for escort services and brothels publish photographs of the women. Men's texts in the online guides to prostitution graphically describe specific sex acts the women were paid to perform, and often include cruel comments. In some cases, individual women are named, de-

scribed, and their addresses and locations posted for other men to find them. For example, for several years, men maintained a special Web site on specific women in brothels in Nevada (Hughes, 1999).

Having their photographs on the Web exposes women to the public as prostitutes. Some of the women may not realize that their photographs are on Web sites (personal communication with NGO representatives). This public exposure as prostitutes adds to women's humiliation and trauma.

Men post evaluations of women's appearances and "performances" on Web message boards on brothel's Web sites. In the following message, a man asks a pimp about a woman's weight:

> Dear Milla: What happened to Alina? Alina's new photos indicate that she has gained some extra weight!! She must not be 52Kg as written on her page Please advise what is her weight currently. (Milas Holiday and Escort Service)

Men and pimps frequently photograph or videotape women in prostitution, sometimes without their knowledge or permission. Women have no control over these pictures once they are taken. Men take the photographs and videos home as trophies or souvenirs. The following is a man's description of his trophy video:

> They have full video equipment at their premises. Prices for video services start from 1000 Danish Kronor for 30 minutes with one girl, including a strip, vibrator action and to finish, a hand job with a condom. For 3000 Kronor you get 30 minutes with one girl with a bit of everything–oral, straight sex and anal. I chose _____a perfect young body with a hint of puppy fat, and an amazingly tight pussy. The only fault was that she was so cool and unresponsive throughout. That apart, great value and the video of our fuck is still a prized possession. (Anonymous, 2000)

A woman who lived in a house equipped for commercial voyeurism (VoyeurDorm.com) described feeling very upset that men distributed nude pictures of her on the Web (*Tech TV, 2002*).

Some Web sites consist of "amateur" images and videos, where men post pornographic pictures of their girl friends, wives, or women they bought in prostitution. Bill Bensen of Memphis, Tennessee, for example, displayed and sold images and videos of "streetwalkers," bragging that: "All the whores on my site I personally picked up and paid to pose nude" (http://www.StreetwalkerPics.com, March 4, 2001). Bill measures his success

by the number of photographs he gets of the woman. The following are comments that accompany women's photos on the Web site:

> This cute little white trash natural redhead says she hasn't been working the streets to long but she sure acts like a pro. Maybe that is just cause she has been fucking for so long. She got her cherry popped at the age of 12 by a 10-year-old that lived down the street. <Lucky Little Fucker> And since then she was hooked. . . . I picked her up on the warm sunny morning of Sept 1st 98. I took 88 pics of her.

> Meet Sharron of Knoxville, TN, a 33-year-old with a fetish for pain. She likes to get burned with cigarettes and beaten by her girlfriend during sex. You can see some of her 'love scars' (as she calls them) in her pics. . . . I picked her up on the street beside the hotel in which they live. (http://www.streetwalkerPics.com, August 21, 1999)

New technologies are used for the invasion of women's bodies to make her sexual anatomy visible for inspection. On sex industry Web sites there are advertisements for "dildo cams," tiny cameras inside dildoes.

In contrast, men who use women and children in prostitution prefer to remain invisible and anonymous. Men are rarely scrutinized as they go into sex industry businesses (personal communication with Nikki Craft, 29 July 2001). One man wrote:

> I don't like . . . the waiting room where you are seemingly expected to sit down together with other customers . . . the chance of having other males enter this room while I am there makes me cringe on the inside. (Aarhus, Denmark, 1999, http://www.worldsexguide.org)

The Internet is popular because it gives men greater access to pornography, live strip and sex shows, and information about prostitution, while giving them more privacy. Previously, they had to visit pornography stores and theaters to view pornography. Video cassettes and VCRs made it possible for men to view pornographic videos in their homes and not have to go to poor sections of town where peep shows were zoned and risk being seen by others. Computers and the Internet have further privatized men's viewing and access to pornography, strip and sex shows, prostitution, and voyeurism. The increased privacy and anonymity give men more protection from social stigmatization and law enforcement interference with their exploitation and abuse of women.

ONLINE COMMUNITIES FOR PERPETRATORS

On the Web, there is unfettered operation of the sex industry (Hughes, 1999, 2000a). Perpetrators who buy women and children in prostitution can find like-minded men for support. For boys and men who have not yet exploited or abused a woman or child, these images and text legitimize the exploitation and abuse and provide how-to-guides.

Their online writings and images reveal that men who buy women and girls in prostitution are not all alike or looking to use women and children in the same way. They range from apparently lonely men who think it is acceptable to use a woman for a short period as long as they pay to serial rapists.

Men online describe "the hunt" for women offline. They describe, often at length, looking for the right woman they want to buy. Men circle the block in cars, or go from bar to bar, looking for a woman who meets their requirements. Some men write that the anticipation and excitement they feel during "the hunt" is more enjoyable than the actual sexual act that follows. A man who photographs "street walkers" for his Web site describes his search for women:

> I have always had a thing for hookers whores prostitutes no mater what you call them they are all women of the street. I guess I am one sick fuck . . . Around the time I got my drivers license I would drive around town and look for hookers. . . . I didn't need to do anything with them though cause I could feel it in the pit of my stomach that scared excited feeling when I would see them. . . . To this day I still get that scared sick feeling in the pit of my stomach when I pick up a prostitute even though it's just for some pics and videos. (http://www.streetwalkerpics.com)

> He also writes: "If you want to consider me a predator fine. You might even be right" (Email from Bill Bensen www.streetwalkerpics.com, April 24, 2000).

Men write about their experiences as a way of reliving the experience. One man wrote, "I'm getting a hard-on as I remember this night to write about it" (Anonymous, 2000). Some men include graphic descriptions indicating they are getting enjoyment out of reliving the experience through writing about it.

Men write about "good" and "bad" experiences buying women in prostitution. They have "good" experiences when women comply with everything the men want them to do, focus all their attention on the men, and pretend they like the men and enjoy the sex acts. Men express great satisfaction in being able to ejaculate on a woman's face or in her mouth (Raymond, Hughes, & Gomez,

2001, p. 77). They consider it a stroke of luck when they find a woman who does not insist on a condom, and are happy to find a woman who permits anal intercourse. Men have "bad" experiences when women will not do everything they want, or are disinterested, perfunctory, and try to minimize the physical contact with them.

Sometimes, the men write that they coerce or force the women to do what they want. The men often claim they like or even love women, but write about them using misogynistic, pornographic language. Violence, degradation, and humiliation are eroticized. Because women and children smile in pornography, perpetrators are convinced that women and children enjoy abuse and exploitation. Researchers who interviewed sex offenders who used the Internet to collect child pornography found that they lacked the ability to perceive harm being done to the children.

> Offenders talk of a lack of any objective measure as to whether the child in the picture was actually being abused . . . A frequent comment refers to the smiling faces of the children in the pictures, as proof of their enjoyment . . . (Taylor, Quayle, & Holland, 2001)

Over time, watching women and sex shows online causes people to lose empathy for the women and children or even see them as real. A woman who lived in Voyeur Dorm with 24 live video cameras broadcasting all her activities–eating, undressing, showering, and eating–to paying subscribers said:

> One member wrote a letter, he said he couldn't accept that we were real people. We were just little people who lived in the computer. Sometimes, I look at them that way. I have a hard time thinking of them as real people. (Tech TV, 2002)

When Tampa, Florida officials shut down the commercial voyeurism site for violation of zoning laws, the operator claimed that no activity was occurring at the house, it was all in cyberspace: "People don't show up at the house and pay money to get in. Everything's happening in virtual space and not at that location" (Roos, 2002).

Men who write about buying women usually try to present themselves positively. The most frequent fantasy is that the woman had an orgasm. These self-aggrandizing writings normalize the activity and reinforce the offender's perception of the activity.

These publicly accessible writings, which number in the thousands, legitimize the perpetrator's activities to others who read them. The accessibility of this material produced by the sex industry and individual perpetrators often

leads men (and boys) to search for increasingly violent and extreme pornography, and travel to locations throughout the world where they exploit and abuse women and children without likelihood of arrest.

"DOING IT" ON THE INTERNET:
COMPUTER SKILLS
AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF PERPETRATORS

The extent to which men's experiences and behaviors are affected by using Internet technologies is not known. Early research in this area indicates that the impact is high and contributes to an escalation of exploitation and abuse of women and children. Using the Internet to access prostitution related information and engage in virtual prostitution empowers men to sexually exploit women and children. The combined experience of using high tech computer hardware and software, finding a supportive community on the Internet, and having a sexual experience (masturbating to pornography, live sex shows, and writings about prostitution) is reinforcing and empowering.

Max Taylor, head of the Combating Pedophile Information Networks in Europe (COPINE) Project, investigated use of the Internet by child pornography collectors and found that sex offenders are empowered by using the computer to locate child pornography (Taylor, Quayle, & Holland, 2001). Pedophile behaviors are reinforced in that the perpetrator acts in an environment with no social rules, and with minimal chance of being held accountable.

> . . . through Net experience people come to reinterpret society, relationships, and self. Through the Internet we see a potential change in the offender's beliefs, values and cognitive styles. The fact that through the Internet users can in the main go anywhere and say anything without any official governing body restricting those actions means that for some people this will be their first experience of acting outside the confines of a conventional hierarchy . . . Such experiences may empower some people such as sex offenders who have otherwise felt marginalized in conventional society. Those who have never been able to function at an optimal level in the real world may feel that they have the chance to do so now that conventional structures are broken down. (Taylor et al., 2001)

Collecting child pornography is a psychological process and is directly connected to acquiring new computer and Internet skills. The offender is reinforced by the combination of a physical collection, sexual satisfaction, computer skills, and a supportive online community.

> The rapid acquisition of images largely goes hand-in-hand with the acquisition of technical skills. Collecting also leads to an increase in fantasy and sexual activity, particularly masturbation in relation to images or through engaging in mutual fantasies with others while online. With increasing mastery of the Internet comes a sense of power and control. (Taylor et al., 2001)

The technology is part of the excitement. The newest, fastest technology becomes the sexiest, and enables the best sexual experience online. Possessing the latest computer equipment is compared to masturbating to a live strip show:

> Here's something that will make your modem sizzle! I was sitting at home . . . when I stumbled across "Video Fantasy" on the net. With Windows, my 486, and their software, I called a pretty girl's studio with my modem and watched her undress. All of this was live and in color on my computer monitor. What will they think of next. Sitting at home being entertained by a beautiful girl. Talk about "safe sex"! I love it! Check out their website at http://www.videofantasy.com. This is lot's of fun. (Hamilton, 1995)

Using the Internet to access pornography leads to an escalation in accessing, collecting, and using pornography. Among child pornography collectors, offenders usually start out downloading adult pornography, but move on to child pornography as they acquired more computer skills and find an online support community (Taylor et al., 2001). Accessing sexual material on the Internet lowered sexual inhibitions and increased online sexual activity of some men convicted of downloading child pornography. Some men tried to maintain an erection the entire time they were online. One man said:

> I was with the masturbation . . . almost avoiding coming . . . because if I was online for an hour or so I would actually be masturbating on and off for an hour . . . and wanting to maintain the state of arousal. (Taylor et al., 2001)

WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES ONLINE

In prostitution and pornography, women and children's experiences are distorted and fabricated; yet, little is known about women's experiences in online sex shows. The newsgroups and web sites only include the men's voices and experiences, and the sex industry promotional claims.

Prostitution is not a victimless crime. Each sex act, whether online or not, is a violation of women's dignity and bodily integrity. Each sex act adds to the accumulation of trauma in prostitution (Farley, Baral, Kiremire, Sezgin, 1998; Iliina & Kalugin, 2002). Only glimpses of women's experiences online are available. During the live strip shows and commercial voyeurism, multiple men can be connected simultaneously, watching the same show. Men who pay for the shows often expect the women to respond directly to them and do what they request. That's how the shows are advertised. In these situations, the men compete for the woman's time and attention. One woman reported that it is overwhelming to have a number of men expecting her attention at one time.

> It's really disconcerting. Suddenly, the phone will pop on and a man will say hello, and when another one pops on it's like two kids tugging on your arm. A lot of them are very clear about what they want to see and what they want you to say. (Rose, 1997)

Women in the live strip and sex shows are usually in the same constrained economic circumstances with limited opportunities as women who strip in clubs. In 1998, the women stripping at one of the largest online sex sites were paid US $20/hour when they were online (Wired for sex, 1998). One woman said that she stripped online because her other job did not pay enough for her to support her family. She concealed the stripping from most of her friends and family. She described the same depersonalization as other women undergo in pornography and prostitution. She took on another personality to act out the scenarios required. "Out there, I'm a completely different person than I am in [the online studio]. This is my shadow side." (Wired for sex, 1998)

A woman from Voyeur Dorm said:

> We use stage names. That way if you're ever out, your walking down the street and someone calls you by the name you use here at the dorm, then you know not to turn around. Just keep walking. Get out of there. (Tech TV, 2002)

In online stripping, women do not have to physically interact with men as they do in clubs and bars. Madeleine Altmann, who was formerly in pornography, runs her own online strip site, Babes4U. She records herself dancing and stripping, and then transmits it to buyers on the Internet. She says, "I would never be a stripper or a prostitute. I don't want to be near the clients or see them." Although Altmann herself does not want to have any contact with the

men, she pays other women to engage in sexually explicit "chat" with the men while they are logged on to the site (X-rating sites pace online, June 24, 1997).

A woman who does live shows on the Internet wrote about the exploitative conditions, poor pay, and degrading treatment she experienced.

> I used to be a dancer . . . Now cyber sex sites like www._____.net is very much like dancing at a club, we are "independent contractors" yet they charge a membership and we lose an additional percentage of our "50% cut" of what rate we charge per min to transmit live video. . . . I quit dancing to work at an adult site. . . . but it's pretty bad working at adult site . . . the abuse is way beyond what goes on at strip clubs, men requesting the women and men to penetrate with toys, vaginally and anally . . . Phone sex for less than 1.00 per minute . . . (Email from Renee, May 19, 2000)

Women can be identified by men unknown to them when they are offline. One woman on an online voyeurism site described being afraid of being recognized when she went out in public.

> Like I can't go out in public. I'm always looking around. Especially when you go out to a club . . . then you look in the corner and see this old guy in the corner like staring you down. Oh, my god, it's a member. . . . I always feel like I'm being watched. (Tech TV, 2002)

FUTURE RESEARCH

Little is known about men's use of Internet technologies for the purpose of sexual exploitation. The criminal activities of downloading and distributing child pornography, and contacting and meeting children for sex have received the most law enforcement attention (Taylor, 1999; Quayle, Holland, Linehan & Taylor, 2000; Taylor, Holland, & Quayle, 2001; McLaughlin, 2001). These first studies contribute to an understanding of child sex offenders and their use of the Internet. There are a few descriptive reports on the use of the Internet for sexual exploitation globally (Hughes, 1999, 2000a, 2001).

According to James McLaughlin, Keene Police Department, New Hampshire, USA, who has been involved in the arrest of numerous offenders using the Internet:

> Presently there is no profile for people who go on to the Internet and seek out child pornography, sexual contacts with children or who want to engage in cybersex with children. At this time there is not enough

data collected to determine if there is any difference between those who engage in the sexual abuse/exploitation of children in traditional ways as compared to those who employ computer technology to do so. (McLaughlin, 2001)

Conducting research within the present legal standards can make it difficult to understand who the victims are and how they have been hurt, and who the perpetrators are and how they harm the victims.

Stating that that it is not possible to understand the scope of collecting and the motivation of men with a sexual interest in children by looking only at what is illegal by present standards, which varies widely, COPINE Project's research on sex offenders' collections of child pornography is not based on legal standards. Taylor et al. (2001) emphasize the importance of examining and analyzing all the images and videos collected by men with a sexual interest in children.

Although the focus of the researchers at the COPINE Project is on child pornography and sex offenders who target children, they note the lack of information about consumers of adult pornography.

The Internet is a collection of innovative communication applications, with new ways of transferring information becoming available each year. To date, each new application has been adopted for the transmission of sexually exploitative and abusive material, or networking among perpetrators.

The sexual exploitation of women has been normalized by the sex industry. There appears to be no limit to what can be done to women if men pay for it and it is transmitted online (Hughes, 2000b). The current trend is for continued and expanded use of Internet technologies for promotion of prostitution, sex shows, and voyeurism. Glimpses of the impact that Internet technologies are having on men's increased exploitation and abuse of women and children indicates greater harm to women and children in the future.

NOTE

1. The Web browser Mosaic preceded the Netscape browser, but lacked the functionality of Netscape.

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