



ADDRESSING MISCONCEPTIONS: PROSTITUTION

Adapted from the Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation
References for all statistics available by contacting VAST at info@thevast.org.

October 30, 2015- The Morning Call- An Easton man accused last spring of pimping is now charged with human trafficking and witness intimidation for allegedly threatening to kill a woman if she testified against him.

October 30, 2015- The Morning Call-An Allentown man (Corderro Cody) who forced women to work in a prostitution ring he called "the program" pleaded guilty in federal court Friday to sex trafficking charges. Cody pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit sex trafficking by force, fraud or coercion, 12 counts of sex trafficking, conspiracy to transport individuals across state lines for the purpose of prostitution and one count of sex trafficking of a minor. The charges carry a minimum sentence of 15 years in prison and a maximum of life. Cody could also be ordered to pay a fine of up to \$3.75 million. October 30, 2015- The Morning Call

November 6, 2015- WKBN 27 First News – A western Pennsylvania woman has pleaded guilty to conspiring to sex trafficking four teenage runaways from Ohio who were found during a traffic stop involving her co-defendant, along with what state police said were 8,000 individual dose bags of heroin.

Misconception: Prostitution is a victimless crime. REALITY ✓

Studies of women in prostitution have documented that 79% of prostitutes were coerced through some degree of force, such as kidnapping or violence by a pimp and 79% reported beatings by customers. And, “most victims of sex trafficking in America are women and children, particularly girls under the age of 18,” according to the U.S. State Department.

Misconception: Women involved in prostitution make a lot of money. REALITY ✓

While some men do pay large amounts of money to purchase sex, it is rare that prostituted women are allowed to keep a significant amount of that money. Most of the money is taken by her pimp or “madam,” the brothel or strip club owner, or others who have control over her earnings. In a study of former pimps, the majority of those surveyed said that the girls and women they controlled did not keep any of the money they made.

However, while money is exchanged, the act of prostitution usually requires an individual involved in the sex trade to submit to the demands of the buyer. To refuse these demands usually leads to physical and sexual violence against the woman who is being prostituted.

Misconception: Prostitution is just another job. REALITY ✓

Prostitution is fundamentally different from any other work setting because of the high levels of violence and danger involved.

People in prostitution face a “workplace” homicide rate 51 times higher than the next most dangerous job for women (working in a liquor store). Moreover, no legitimate job lists its acceptable “occupational hazards” as rape, sexual assault, torture, and homicide. Even countries that have legalized prostitution recognize that it is unlike any other “job.” For instance, the Australian occupational safety guidelines recommend that women entering prostitution take classes in self-defense.

Misconception: Prostitution is usually glamorous, like high-class escorts at expensive hotels. REALITY ✓

A 2002 study of prostituted women found that whether their prostitution occurred on the streets, in drug houses, or in hotels, 82% of them had been physically assaulted and 21% of women in escort services reported being raped more than ten times.

Moreover, women and children involved in prostitution, wherever it takes place, suffer from high rates of mental and physical health problems, including sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), cervical cancer, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). All of these facts are underscored by the FBI’s estimate that a woman’s average life expectancy is only 7 years after the date of entry into prostitution, with HIV/AIDS and homicide being the main causes of death.