

# Trafficking, Sexual Exploitation, Lies & Deceit: What you haven't been told

*An expose of brothels, high-end and others, strip club trafficking and relevant data  
pertaining to various forms of prostitution*



*A response to “Selling Sex in Cape Town”*

(Published by ISS and the Sex Workers Education and Advocacy Taskforce (SWEAT).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Selling Sex in Cape Town. Sex Work and Human Trafficking in a South African City. Chandré Gould in Collaboration with Nicole Fick - Sex Workers Education and Advocacy Taskforce (SWEAT) (July 2008)

## **FOREWORD**

*We are a group of citizens and NGO's who are deeply concerned about the exploitation of women and children in prostitution, with special reference in this critique to high-end brothels in the Cape Town CBD. We were stimulated by SWEAT's publication with which we disagreed profoundly as we feel the general public should hear this side of the "story".*

*We should explain that the publication "Selling Sex in Cape Town" and the research involved was carried out by the Institute of security studies (ISS) and Sweat, but for the sake of convenience as Sweat has a high profile in the media etc, we use the title SWEAT throughout our commentary.*

*Our writers have had face-to-face interviews with many prostitutes (called 'sex workers' by some), ex-prostitutes, "johns" and "ex-johns", (called clients by SWEAT and brothels) and in one case an ex-owner, in order to understand and to receive information about their real, live, down-to-earth experiences and aspirations. Some of our exchanges appear on the last pages.*

*We use the words "girls" loosely, where the ones we have spoken to are mostly over 18, but not by much. Some never succumbed that far as they were rescued.*

*We do not refer to the young women as "sex workers" to pass judgment, but rather to avoid the inherent ideological bias contained in such terms.*

*Where we quote extracts from SWEAT's book, we include the words "sex workers" when used, but we do not use that terminology.*

*We have tried to avoid generalisations, preferring to rely on our experiences, reports from a host of informers such as past and current workers, past and current clients of brothels, experts in trafficking legislation, media - both local and overseas etc. It is interesting that as in the case of past drug addicts and dealers, when they emerge, victims are more than willing to become activists.*

*SWEAT will receive this critique and will be invited to comment.*

## INTRODUCTION

The publication “Selling Sex in Cape Town” purports to be an objective account with a minimum of emotional comment and opinion. In our opinion, this is unfortunately not the case. The authors are disturbingly opposed to anti-trafficking legislation, believe it is of no use in countering abuse, and believe there is little trafficking in Cape Town (contrary to experiences both local and international NGO’s). Brothel owners appear to be treated with the utmost respect, being more worthy than that of law enforcement officials. They are derogatory of those who are against prostitution. They regard prostitution as a worthy job option for those who have desperate financial needs.

We are concerned about the lack of employment opportunities for our young people. We appreciate that brothels, strip clubs, drug dealers, mule operators, are out there luring young people to situations with no future, dangling lots of cash. We would like to see a South Africa dealing with this scourge and finding ways to gainfully provide opportunities, to encourage young people to have principles and good morals.

SWEAT’s commentary is dispassionate and unfeeling and rather devoid of criticism of those who exploit women. The solitary evils seem to be the police and those who object to prostitution.

SWEAT believe they have been successful in this endeavour and P16,

*“central to our success...is due to SWEATs credibility in the industry....and we were fortunate to have 24 months of funding, an unusually generous sponsorship period for an NGO research.*

This is curious, as by relying on SWEAT, the research was fatally compromised. We are surprised that OXFAM was happy with this.

There appears little feeling for the women in the industry - indeed, as is stated over and over again - there is little or no evidence of trafficking. Their stance is that these girls are trying to make a living and the work they do should be regarded as “normal”.

There is no graphical representation of a declining earning power as they age, no concern that many are drug ridden after a few years, will seldom be able to hold a job, and there is little mention of the dangers of disease - not only HIV/Aids.

The lack of owners’ ethics is quickly passed on to the girls. The women in the brothels cultivate bad habits. They tend to be jealous of one another, lie to friends and family, covet, and fight amongst themselves. For money, some will do anything, commit any indecent act, smoke drugs with clients at times, and in this they are aided and abetted by the owners and fellow workers who at times make soporific drugs like marijuana available to ease the guilt feelings of the girls..

One would have thought that the writers would have made use of professional profilers, psychiatrists, and psychologists. We have profiles of a typical brothel owner by a well-respected US psychologist.

SWEAT interviewed brothel owners and it appears that they tend to go out of their way to assure the brothel owners that there will be no direct criticism of them and they seem to accept without question the statement made by the owners. Indeed, one would think these owners are persons of honour, like any chief executive of a corporation.

Despite all that has been said, SWEAT sanitises the industry. They admit that most of johns are married men but show no concern for the break up of families. Their only pity is for the women, when they say the police abuse them, and are manipulated, or raped by the police. The johns, on the other hand, are largely depicted as decent professional men.and do not receive the

criticism, as would apply, for example, in the USA. Possibly in real life they are, being as revealed in a media report some years ago, the men picking up street prostitutes in Kenilworth, consisted of a wide range including Architects, medical practitioners, attorneys, government officials etc..

We do not know who funds SWEAT, however, they give credit for assistance to the following:  
The Belgian Development Agency,  
Institute of Security Studies  
Novib/Oxfam,  
Open Society Foundation

but there are unknown financial supporters from all spectrums. We don't know if these include indirectly or directly brothel owners, owners of strip clubs, and even possibly persons acquitted as a result of SWEAT'S seeming ability in practice, to employ high-powered attorneys. Media reports of court actions can be located.

We would like to know more about the donor list by means and would hope to find out. We would like SWEAT's supporters to see what they might be overlooking.

Eric Harper, an official of SWEAT says "some girls can manage selling sex for money and some can't - it is a matter of human rights". But is it as simple as that. We don't believe it is!

#### **FURTHER EXAMINATION OF QUOTES FROM THE BOOK.**

***"SWEAT has been working with sex workers and brothels for 11 years." (page 3)***

In that time, it does not appear that any real long-term alleviative social benefits, skills development, assistance with substance abuse cases were given to the prostitutes that they were "working" with, where the matter did not present a possible legal opportunity to further their goal of decriminalisation of prostitution.

***"Our interpretation [of the Palermo protocol] .....is that all three elements of the definition [of trafficking] need to be present." (page 6)***

These three elements are:

- Force
- Deception or inducement at the point of recruitment and
- Re-location and exploitation.

In their view, there is no trafficking per se unless all three are present. We fail to see why they would go out of their way to interpret the definition of trafficking in the Palermo Protocol in the most restrictive way possible. The definition in the Protocol clearly poses these elements in the alternative and includes the abuse of vulnerability or a position of power. If any of these conditions were present the person would be regarded as a trafficking victim.

This is not so. Force is a physical thing perhaps using emotional blackmail. So SWEAT thinks that all the deception, lies during an interview, fake advertising, pressure to do things that were not made clear (see the UN Slavery definition where a job changes in character) are of no moment if physical or mental force is not used?

However, they have removed many of the elements that make up a trafficking scenario, and if they were to include factors such as ***"recruitment, harbouring, or receipt of a person by means of threat.....deception, abuse of power, abuse of a position of vulnerability,.....the giving and receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation"***, we believe that there would then be a dramatic increase of trafficking situations occurring in Cape Town.

This would lead us to ask the question, why would SWEAT wish to downplay the level of trafficking for the purpose of exploitation in our city by restricting the terms by which a victim is determined?

With that said, SWEAT has in the past acknowledged the huge problem of commercially sexually exploited children being prostituted in Cape Town. By this admission they have agreed that trafficking is an issue in Cape Town, as one can see from the Palermo Protocol that any child, who has been a victim of recruitment, transportation, harbouring, or receipt of a child for intended exploitation, *IS* in fact a victim of human trafficking.

If there is a large number of children trafficked, it would be logical to assume there is also a large number of slightly older victims, say 18 - 25.

### **RECRUITMENT AND THE MEDIA**

The media carries some responsibility for the increase in the number of brothels and the number of prostitutes, and ultimately some trafficking. So does SWEAT. In other countries the advertising of sex services in daily newspapers is hardly evident. In the UK and Europe there is a concerted effort to ban such advertising. This indicates that the silent majority do NOT want this.

Considering that on a daily basis, one Cape Town newspaper advertises anywhere from 100 - 125 different personal/sex ads, with up to 40 of those having multiple red flags for exploitation, we agree that, as SWEAT has admitted, they may have missed some, as they only report some 8 out of 164 women as having been likely victims. See page 16.

Readers should refer to

[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/about/fact\\_human.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/about/fact_human.html)

i.r.o .a US Department of Health and Human Services fact sheet. Fraud by deceptive fake advertising for commercial sex, stripping, pornography, and live-sex shows is dealt with. The adverts mentioned would include waitresses, dancers etc.. It mentions teenagers per se are included with children.

It states initial consent by the victim is rendered meaningless by the actions of the traffickers.

Research on the supply and demand within the sex trade has determined that where the supply increases, this creates a market for sex tourism, which in turn requires a greater supply. The demand for trafficking victims will come as those who buy sex will begin to require a more diversified market. Already “johns” who post on ESA (\*\*) discuss boredom with the current market, looking to cross age groups and exotic unusual practices.

If prostitution is legalized, why would those exploiters of women suddenly go away? They would cash in on the opportunity, especially as SWEAT wants de facto legalization through decriminalisation and also sees no usefulness in anti-trafficking laws.

*“deception is not common in recruitment” (page 6)*

*“we found that there was very little trafficking in the sex industry in Cape Town” (page 129).*

(\*\*) ESA means Escort South Africa, a website which can be accessed by members of the public. This website contains postings by men (including johns) to locate prostitutes and brothels, as well as by prostitutes looking for clients (johns).

We have much evidence from ex-young prostitutes and those who left soon after discovering what the particular “job” (including misleading advertisement and interviews) involved, There may be case for making civil claims in Court for loss of earnings and loss of a previous job. In the case of advertisements placed by the firms Elegance and Zandalee (examples available), ex-prostitutes ‘trained’ there have reported that most girls recruited were tricked by the then

deceptive job advert and some by false promises made at the interview which induced them to start working.

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The salary as then offered at R8100 (changed to earnings potential R9000 and subsequently changed to R9000 package)\* per month never existed, and the job offered (as it was then as including receptionist work) was not what could be drawn therefrom was indicated. They were not “staff”, as was stated in the fake advert as the owner has since stated he merely rented rooms for those taken on. Notwithstanding this, these “renters of rooms” have specific hours of work, are fined huge amounts if late, or if they leave the premises, or pick up a book to read or listen to music.

\*They modified this as the result of pressure in the media and blog sites

The picture of examples of “attractive” so called job offers found in the media, and what this ends up as can be found in

<http://prostitutionresearch.com/whatsnew.html>where

Then look up FAQ,s where you can see the “prostitutes hierarchy of coercion” diagram. Then locate “help wanted: women and girls Do YOU want this job?”

#### NOTE

WE SHOULD PICTURE THE JOB AND ADULT ENTERTAINMENT ADS of zanadalee somehow - I have sent them to you but I can fax them too. etc

(We are not aware of other high-end Cape Town CBD brothels who use these techniques. This is true and can't be disputed )

***“We [SWEAT] question...whether trafficking is a useful concept to use at all.” (page 6)***

This is outrageous. It is out of line with international thought in the fight against trafficking within and outside a country's borders.

***“We concluded...that regulation of sex work ...would provide a legal mechanism to act against exploitive employers.”(page 6)***

Yet, SWEAT are against regulation (which surely means legalization), using every conceivable pressure to support decriminalization, which does not have regulatory mechanisms except via common law.

However, we believe legalisation introduces a myriad of problems and actually will introduce huge increases in the number of girls entering the industry. In addition, the cost of policing this will be enormous and will result in many contraventions.

***An enormous amount of donor money is available specifically for projects that counter trafficking ...but there is very little trafficking in the sex industry in Cape Town ...so these organizations working against trafficking....stand to lose [their funding]” (page 6)***

We are not aware of this huge funding. SWEAT is the NGO which it admits has considerable funding, As such, they can employ high-powered advocates to contest police actions in Court.

Is it really to be believed that ant-traffickers will reduce their efforts? The word “trafficking will never go away! It is surely SWEAT’s opinion that there is little trafficking.

As on page 129

*“we (SWEAT) found that force and deception ....in recruitment are not common features of the sex work industry*

*“Our recommendation is to decriminalize ...because it offers better earning prospects and greater flexibility than other....opportunities [meaning conventional jobs] for those needing immediate cash, sex work provides cash-in-hand in place of a month long wait [as in conventional jobs].” (page 6)*

The so-called benefits are: declining pay from prostitution as they age, STDs, degradation of character, HIV and early average age of death.

<http://uri.edu/artsci/wms/hughes/mhvhealth.htm>

There are no pension benefits, medical aid etc. In our efforts to place ex-prostitutes in jobs, even sympathetic employers are concerned how this work might have adversely affected character, reliability, conscientiousness, honesty etc.

However, we have found in placing many that excellent work is possible if the move takes place quite soon after recruitment.

*“Such sex workers, would prefer alternative work if offered the same returns and the same flexibility.” (page 6)*

This is a very fatuous comment. What alternative work? And what returns? SWEAT could only be referring to the amounts earned initially by the high-end CBD brothels where huge amounts are initially paid to young prostitutes.

Why did SWEAT not try determining the discounted cash flow of earnings over a career of say 30 years? Is SWEAT perhaps suggesting that such persons would need to earn the salary after tax of some senior executives and persons with excellent academic achievements (to get the same returns).

Of course, those engaged in prostitution do not pay tax despite the fiscal needs of the country. The tax loss is estimated at many hundreds of millions, Mr. Finance Minister!

In conventional jobs, the women do not have to have sex with their boss (as distinct from a brothel owner), are not fined for trivial “offences” , threatened if they wish to leave (I mean in the case of a very popular woman with clients), their boss does not visit other firms and seduce their employees, inviting them to move immediately (as do some brothel owners to find the ‘best’ ‘workers’. The normal firm would not advertise for an engineer if they wanted an accountant. They would not be fined for a multitude of trivial offenses.

*“Sex workers would rather have their work treated as a legitimate job with the legal protection that comes with that.” (page 7)*

So their parents, friends, can have full knowledge of what they do and CV’s would rank as acceptable for future jobs (outside of the sex industry). And of course they would be known as a sex worker for tax purposes and in other situations. Would they be covered by Medical Aid, bearing in mind the accelerated risks of disease?

Would their fake wage slips sometimes provided by the brothel owners be able to be used for opening banks accounts, especially as the tax authorities will be vetting every bank account for a tax number soon in the effort to be collecting from “informal” earners? In the brothels we

have investigated, fake telephone numbers are provided by the owners so that their girls can deceive their parents and friends that they are in legitimate work.

A criticism of chapter 2, dealing with research methods is apt. The question

*(1) "How many sex workers were tricked or manipulated into this work? SWEAT says 82% were introduced by friends but we have not found this to be the case at all.*

*(2) What is the relationship with pimps and brothel owners?*

*(3) and are the women trafficked into prostitution allowed to refuse clients" [an admittance surely that being tricked is a form of trafficking]?*

In chapter 2 and in later chapters of their publication it is suggested that few are manipulated, they can refuse clients and the relationships are wholesome and harmonious.

Our interviews show that while technically this is possible, it counts against the girl retaining her job. One worker said that no matter how bad they look, a shower results in an acceptable appearance.

We have affidavits from ex- prostitutes (even some who are still involved in prostitution) who say they were tricked by fake job advertisements and when interviewed were told that nothing funny or even sexual was part of the job. They all said that after initially not doing more than massage, they were politely warned and that existing prostitutes were told to "bond themselves" to new girls as friendship so as to show them how more sex for money was advantageous. They were invited to "doubles" so they could see what to do - an iniquitous and deceitful technique.

One technique is to persuade a new girl to give a pelvic (nothing more). Once she succumbs to this, it is seen that the next step is to replace the hand with the mouth (thus the so-called blow-job). After that, the extra money does the trick. It is nothing less than plain manipulation of a girl looking desperately for a job in difficult times!

On page 26, the writer comments on how the girls prefer "working" in a brothel.

*"There are benefits to working there, because they can choose the services they are willing to offer, and don't have to provide a 'full house' (penetrative sex) if they don't want to."*

A check was carried out at two places in central Cape Town and in the intro line, each person was asked if they do full house, and NOT ONE declined. We paid the salon fee for the intro to do this. At another, a girl declined saying she was new but said, "Please don't complain to the manager as I could lose my job".

In fact, they have little option (besides being likely to be fired if they don't) as (see page 30 of their publication),

*"the clients want things I won't do such as anal, blow jobs, they want to come in your mouth, or sex without a condom. If you don't give it to them...when they come again they take someone else who might give them what they want" AND if the client complains they will be fined for losing a client.*

The fact is that brothel owners in the city seem to require that the girls to do everything, though they deny it. If, as a result of the girl refusing such, and she brings in less clients (according to "L" 40% are regular clients, she is always fired (or she leaves).

Owners get their bottom financial line by the number of clients, as in some cases there is a standard salon fee regardless of what the girl does. So the owner desires to maximize the



number of clients and that only happens if his market share is very high, meaning the clients flock in because they get any service they require.

In most cases, though, there is an “all inclusive” fee, ranging from R500 - R800. In these cases the girls have more control over her body and may impose limits on client’s demands.

Page 30 also says

*“not a lot about the brothel owners and managers”.*

There is good reason for this opinion. SWEAT interviews the owners, who, if they are going to give any info at all, will not want to be questioned about THEIR role.

The chapter deals with why owners entered the industry. The reasons given are very sanitized and clinical. SWEAT says was a good paying business and gives employment - they were “sex workers” (their terminology) who graduated and the like. We could not confirm this.

One aspect not covered is that (obviously the owners would never admit this) the owners often train the women to do their work. Such as getting the women to hide condoms, “toys” etc. They secure friendship, showing them the ropes in a non- alarming way, saying how protective the “boss” is, and how their parents will never know as there is a private phone where their work is concealed. (they are not allowed to use cell phones). The actual training often lasts less than an hour.

And if the police find that sex is being conducted, the owner will say “she was not allowed to do this and obviously has disobeyed orders- which are just to give massage.” OR “I just rent rooms to the ladies and I do not know what goes on there”

The firms Zandalee and Elegance pin price lists to the wall for all the services (photos are available) from touching to oral sex to full house intercourse, and delivery of the girls to hotels.. We have a handwritten price list given to a girl to persuade her to move to more sex.

The question is why does this place have a sliding scale? The answer seems to be that it is part of the trafficking method, where the applicant can be told that only massage is involved. OR it is a way of getting the young new naïve girls into the trade slowly.

On page 32 a girl says

*“the owner was very abusive to the ladies, which I did not agree with...”*

On page 45, from one owner about another...

*“A lot of the agency owners are into drugs and rip their girls off. ....When they want to leave they almost blackmail you into staying.”*

SWEAT says that it is unfortunate that the girls seem never to have contracts.

*“This would offer protection against exploitive conditions and unfair labour practices.”*

At this stage SWEAT discusses the desirability of decriminalisation and how ‘workers’ would then have common law rights. However they are opposed to regulation of the industry. Decriminalisation would result in even worse practices, we believe.

## DRUG USE

From Page 34 on, SWEAT discusses drug use. The facts contradict the findings that *“there is a low rate of drug use by brothel based sex workers”* (page 35).

They report that most of the drug use is *“for clients to use drugs in the presence of the sex workers.”*

They report from those who have left the work to us is that a high percentage use marijuana (“bupies”) and some crack. In several establishments a john brings in cocaine and makes the girls use it.

One owner says Page 35

*“ I understand why they use drugs because it is a difficult job when you have a different man on top of you every day [in this place likely 5 times a day!]”*

So much for SWEAT’s view that prostitution is a good and viable career (and future).

One senior girl said that “crack causes you to lose weight”. Why is this relevant? The owners demand the girls are slim and pretty. If not, they know they will be fired and lose the income. There appear to be ‘health’ checks, which the owner makes obligatory. There are vaginal inspections (refer report by “C...” and others) by the manageress or owner to see if they are shaved and odor free. How demeaning, especially when in that establishment they are told initially there is no such thing. Why, if massage is only allowed as the owner reports to the media? See also page 16 dealing with strip clubs.

In Elegance, the manageress Cherie-Anne Spyro has been arrested for drug use on the premises (case number available) and fined.

Contrary to SWEAT’s report, several ex-prostitutes reported to us that at least 50% use drugs. The ones that do not are largely those who manage to leave quickly. (Refer our informant “X”....) who has several years of input from brothel upscale workers).

We have evidence of and have been told of several deaths from drug use and one suicide. One girl (T) whose parents lived in Hong Kong, rushed to Cape Town to identify their daughter (20) who took an overdose of heroin. Their daughter worked for Cachet (closed for some years). Her parents were wealthy people who thought their daughter had a legitimate job.

Police raided one CBD place a number of times and found drugs and made arrests. However we were told by X, who has now left, that one girl had a large cache of hard drugs which she disposed of (in the toilet?) as the police entered. This girl was at a top school in the Peninsula. In an earlier raid, K was arrested with crack cocaine and a pipe. She undertook to give evidence of the brothel’s and owner’s activities and was discharged but she refused and changed her mind. She has not yet been re-arrested.

The effects of drug use in prostitution while not given much importance in the SWEAT publication is dire. While they did not apparently view the effects, it is useful to download

[http://hollywoodpolice.org/special\\_units/pic79](http://hollywoodpolice.org/special_units/pic79) 11.htm (view pic79 to pic89)

to see the progressive deterioration over 10 year from an younger woman of about 30 to an almost corpse like creature at the age of 40. While the johns see often young girls of 18 -21 these girls seem to quietly disappear to low level brothels. But sometimes death intervenes and I have seen a 24 year old riddled with maggots lying in a bath. Our ex client agent reports that “O” who stated at 18 and is now 23 looks like a woman of 30. Likewise “K” who is the pregnant girl described elsewhere also at the age of 18 was most attractive and we have her photo four years later looking terrible. “O” is still at the same CBD brothel but “K” has moved down the scale. Both take marijuana, cocaine and tik amongst other drugs.

## WORKING CONDITIONS

Chapter 4 outlines sanitised working conditions. It mentions how girls are free to come and go and can leave at a moments notice. This seems to be proved by the fact that many do move from brothel A to B and C etc. But, in most cases the owners only want a girl who “brings in the clients”.

Based on our calculations, in 2008 some 55 girls were employed in one city brothel during the year. Three girls were constant and did not leave. Cape Times and Argus advertisements for girls available at Z and E indicated that some 1.6 months was the period of work before a woman left, mostly to join another brothel. We have the record of all these girls from daily advertisements in the Cape Argus and Cape Times as they have started and “disappeared”.

We have found that owners never admit to firing unfairly. “She” was dismissed for “unbecoming behaviour”. Likewise Johns (and this includes our “spy” undercover operatives) they are “banned” for “unbecoming behaviour” (meaning they were asking too many questions etc).

[A feature of our work is the use of undercover personnel. Police are not allowed to do this. So we send in men to pose as johns and girls to pose as job applicants and who work there for a time, the purpose being to gather information. The undercover johns go as far as necessary in this endeavour and pay in full.

So movements were controlled not always by the freedom to move but by “firing.” For some time we have suspected that new girls were being passed on to other brothels thus perpetuating the supply of young new prostitutes. Thus, a sex industry ‘master plan’.

The high-income story, reflected by SWEAT is debunked somewhat by the fact that as the women move to other brothels they move to lower paying establishments. Thus “M” ended up in suburban house brothels making perhaps some R3000 a month compared to the R20 000 plus indicated at the first city brothel. Clearly, there is no future as in normal work, where employees are promoted and enjoy benefits. Interestingly, a normal employee of degreed status as might start at R7 000 a month and over 15 years would rise to around R30 000. However a young girl starting at a city brothel might earn say R15 000 a month but by the age of 35 would be taking drugs, have STD’s and be battling to make any kind of a living.

## PHYSICAL EFFECTS

SWEAT does not discuss the physical effects of excessive sex with thousands of clients a year per girl. We can only rely on evidence by medical practitioners who will never give evidence of patients. Thus we rely on statements taken from the website Escort South Africa. Everything that goes on is reported by the men clients who register on ESA. Here are some examples:

**“My meeting with X did not take place. She told me she was ill and had an infection. Don’t go there guys..**

**“She smelt like a fish factory. She was supposed to have been checked but she obviously has a serious infection.”**

Sorry to have to repeat this!

So the combination of drugs and sex 5 times a day, 25 a week, 120 a month and 1 400 a year of full-blown sex CANNOT be good and we are appalled that SWEAT has the presumption to sanitise this.

Health effects of prostitution: <http://uri.edu/artsci/wms/hughes/mvhealth.htm>

This describes harmful effects being inclusive of STD's, HIV/aids, chlamydia, gonorrhoea, herpes, human papilloma virus, and syphilis as being alarmingly higher in prostitution.

## POLICE

At this stage SWEAT deals with the Police. It is very disturbing to read SWEAT's account of the police. We are well acquainted with the police especially those more senior and those in the child protection units and the narcotics divisions. One of us has been a reservist and has worked with the police in countering drug abuse. There are officers of good faith and of undoubted integrity. That there are some bad eggs, no doubt, but we are of the view they are in the minority. In our discussions we have found they have to live with prostitution and despite this being illegal, the courts take a lenient view. However, they ARE concerned about underage prostitution and the climbing use of drugs.

Our evidence is that every prostitute knows a drug dealer even if she is not a user. For the simple reason some of the girls receive drugs from dealers who actually visit the premises. The owner might or might not know about it.

How do the police and civic authorities check the city brothels? They do concentrate on places where drugs are used and they try to find the drugs. They have "raids". They check for licences. They search, but the girls are resourceful and we know from accounts by other girls there that drugs are hidden, washed down the toilet etc. Sometimes a crack pipe is found for the simple reason the drugs have been disposed of. During the raid they photo the girls and examine ID's to check ages. Often the owner never looks at the ID for proof of age. Where drugs are found the girl or 'staff member' is arrested and a case file is opened. (information from media and similar - but police are not willing to give too much information).

A number of prostitutes have discussed the police with SWEAT interviewers. The accusations suggest that the police arrest them for just walking in the street, that they steal from the girls, that they rape them in the vans, that they abuse them, that they are sworn at, that they are asked for sex in exchange for being released from custody, and even force the client to go to an ATM and withdraw money to give the police.

Then it is summarised by prostitutes who say they are afraid of the police as they have to move to avoid them as the van goes by and as a result the 'poor client' is afraid to be seen being part of the solicitation, and the girl loses business. In our opinion, many of the complaints are fabricated. Police travel in the vans in pairs where one is more senior. All the actions above would have to be witnessed and agreed to by more than one. It would have to be a criminal act. Some actions would need to take place at the station.

To SWEAT, the word of a prostitute often seems worth more than the word of a police officer. That is clear from the interviews reported mainly on pages 55 and 56. In not one case do they report the possibility of prostitute misrepresentation, or that they discussed the matter with the police. These women know the officers quite well obviously and they do not seem to accuse any particular police member. The police do not have the funds to put up an aggressive defence in court against this blanket demonization.

However, those on the streets have a tough life. They are robbed and beaten by pimps, "johns" insist on not using condoms, putting them at great risk of STD and HIV/aids, and as a result, they often fall pregnant, followed by abortions.

SWEAT does not think there are many child prostitutes but the experience of, for example, Balm of Gilead Healing Homes, shows there are many and they have worked with a number of them. Recently one girl they rescued from the street was 14. Note that in another part of this report, one CBD brothel owner would be keen to employ 14 year olds.

## DECRIMINALISATION AND ALTERNATIVE CAREERS

Pages 61 comes to the conclusion that decriminalization would solve all the problems of abuse of prostitutes by police, as they would have common law rights, because it would then be legal. SWEAT attacks those who are critics of decriminalization, saying

*“sadly, their arguments do not take into account the needs of women for whom sex work is a real alternative to jobs...equally demeaning such as factory or domestic work where the remuneration is much lower.”*

SWEAT does not mention those of whom who have university degrees and who might earn very well, and who would be satisfied and content with normal earnings like most people. In any event, factory and domestic work is perfectly honorable.

Finally the chapter ends with the words

*“this study will inform a debate that usually excludes the voices of the very people whom the debate is about.”*

Very noble words, if true, but very slanted in our opinion. We have made contact with many prostitutes and ex-prostitutes who regret their own decisions or of having been tricked to work as prostitutes. We have spoken to johns and ex-johns. Most of these prostitutes would, if they could have the opportunity, rather work in a normal job giving enough (as determined by ordinary people) to live on, benefitting from promotion, and where no lies and deceit is necessary. In our rehabilitation work, we have helped a number to do this. Some have been real achievers, having been given the chance and provided with study courses, even university.

Listen to K. “Is this all I am to do for the rest of my life? I know I will get older and no (brothel) will have me. I will have to go on the street. The crack is killing me. I will die young!”

How true. Every high-end brothel concentrates on 18 -26 year olds. These places used to advertise the ages though we had that stopped. But what happens later? They go to a lower brothel but these won't have them either. So they advertise on “sex trader” and similar websites. They have to work from home, or have a flat to use, or go to the john.at his home or his hotel. This is not always safe. Drugs inevitably play a role. ESA advertise older prostitutes of 40 and 50 who run each other down continuously, and point to the other's drug use. There is no future for them. They cannot get jobs, they have no CV's and only the street enables a living of sorts.

Now SWEAT will point out the number of high-living ‘call girls’ who make huge earnings. Sadly, most who continue, suffer. And they are usually not older than 30 -35..

### Chapter 6 “Clients and their demands”.

Johns, like prostitutes, live in a world of lies and deception. What they do is mostly concealed from wives, girlfriends and family, as well as colleagues, because revelation of their activities would not be helpful. Indeed, sexual misdemeanors while normal to SWEAT and other activists' eyes, result in loss of self-respect, as well as divorce, job loss and damage to relationships.

We understand the SWEAT regards this as a resume of actual situations, but this is contradictory in that it goes out of its way to criticize any form of ant-trafficking legislation around the world including South Africa, noting

*“the term “trafficking” may not be a useful lens through which to consider issues of exploitation and abuse in the sex industry” and “that anti-trafficking discourse is based on a “mythology” and “is born out of the early “social purity” movement”.*

We are commenting briefly on SWEAT's assumptions in this chapter, which beyond declaring that clients are mainly married, broadly of the 35 - 55 age group, being based on brothel owner's and prostitute's reports.

Page 66 comments

*“if the demand for sex is being met by the brothels ...and sex workers in Cape Town, why should the demand be met by trafficked sex workers.... is there some advantage that trafficked sex workers would offer brothel owners and clients, over those who enter the industry voluntarily? “*

Here lies the lie to their assumption that there is no value. If trafficking includes girls of young age (18-20) desperately looking for work and deceived by misleading adverts by an unnamed firm **“in business for 20 years”**

for receptionists and other innocent sounding jobs offering a fixed salary (a lie) for “staff” (that’s a lie they never will be), incentive bonuses (also a lie - it is extras for sex), the obvious objective is to get more clients to visit rather this place than visit other competitive brothels.

In addition, SWEAT is told by other brothel owners that owners are always

*“looking for new faces” (a way of describing the youngest girls).*

Thus some high-end massage brothels such as Z and E, for many years showed the young ages **(e.g. Skye (18) barely legal)**

in their advertisements in ‘adult entertainment’ columns. The job adverts usually say **“no experience -training given”**

One college queried “what training?”

Actually, this is part of the deception as the applicant is told that in addition to becoming a receptionist (comment later) they will learn Swedish Massage.

That training consists, we are informed by affidavit, of a model lying on her stomach on a massage table being given a back massage. At that time all condoms etc (usually placed under a pile of napkins on the salon’s side table), are removed so as not to alarm the applicant.

Swedish massage see <http://wisegeek.com/what-1s-swedish-massage.htm>

**Such training can last weeks in a proper training environment and not an hour or so!**

However, we would add that if the owner detects a particular girl might be more willing (body language and verbally, she is sent to higher (refer “C” re Cindy and Odette) training where a dildo (plastic shaped erect penis) is produced with massage oil and the new girl is showed how to fit the condom and masturbate.

This illustrates the versatility of the owners. If the girl is a virgin or not experienced sexually, that does not disturb the owner as he believes that after a week or two of being there, the lure of big money will do the trick.

Accordingly, she can tell the john she is “new”. But one ex-john told us that the owner always advertises when he has new girls. He allows the girl to do as little as she wishes, but to slowly encourage her with kind words and a little progressive persuasion for the next visitor to expect progress.

This is hard on some girls (can include runaways) who look for accommodation. Some brothels advertise

*“accommodation provided”.*

These girls do not really want to be a prostitute but the accommodation is a lure and a form of trafficking.

Recently in ESA a john reported a rumpus in a city centre brothel. This john was in a salon with this girl, and suddenly there was shouting and screaming. The john's woman said "there must be a raid" and they quickly dressed. A woman had demanded entrance and rushed in to find her daughter of 16 having sex with a john. She apparently dragged her daughter out and threatened to sue the place. The police have the extract from ESA.

### **THE GREYLINE - PRESSURE TO REDUCE THE AGES OF GIRLS IN BROTHELS**

SWEAT MENTIONS the following statement by a city centre brothel owner (possibly the one advertising misleading jobs and known for in times past advertising young ages of "his" girls).

*(Page76) "If I were to advertise that I had 14 and 15 year olds, the place would be booming. ..."*

This owner admitted, says SWEAT,

*"that he would have liked to employ women under 18, but was constrained by the law."*

We were told by a SWEAT employee that they could not see any harm if younger girls were permitted to enter the field of prostitution.

### **INFLUENCE OF PAEDOPHILES**

We believe that because pedophiles, who cannot by law have sex with say 12 year olds would find 18 years olds quite acceptable. One of our informants (an ex-john) called this manageress and reminded her he was a client, and said "there is a pretty blonde 17 year old looking for a job. Can she be interviewed?" The response was

*"no we are not allowed to - but if she is well into 17 let her come in - it is not such a big difference." To be fair, this does not mean she would have been employed, however.*

Other men still want to fantasize that they are with schoolgirls etc. They ask the girl, if she looks young (to dress up?), and say "call me daddy". But this more decent owner (page77) says "my girls for them it is very emotional , a lot of them have small children and can't (handle this)."

### **PREGNANT GIRLS**

Page 72 deals with the demand for pregnant girls, including those breast feeding. One owner (page 73) says they had one girl (we knew her because she was offered free training in a IT course owned by the brother of the interviewer who dealt with her mother), who "got pregnant while she was working - she made more money than she had ever made while she was pregnant". Actually this girl had been previously arrested for drug possession and went back to the brothel.

The point here is that SWEAT could have made a comment that this is very dangerous for the pregnant girl and her unborn child. With the possibility that she could become pregnant from a client unprotected, there is always the danger of HIV (for the child). Apparently SWEAT did not remind the owner of this unmitigated lack of concern. Proves once again that some brothel owners regard the girls as "tins of jam" to be sold, and that SWEAT show a lack of concern.

We sent a letter setting out our opinion to the authorities. This showed conclusively that the pending trafficking legislation is adequate to convict perpetrators because "the consent of the victim...is irrelevant" (SWEAT would seem to prefer that if the victim were to say she is now happy and waives a trafficking charge, and the trafficker were to be absolved, that would be preferable).

## MIND CONTROL

Now let us deal with “mind control”. We have the opinion of a prominent US expert who deals with this. We do have many girls who were tricked into prostitution by deception, coercion while they were vulnerable, and who were shocked for a time, but have become accustomed to the money, have made friends with the other girls (bonding is spoken of and “pushed” to the girls by the owners) and later will deny they were trafficked. There are ways of historically ascertaining the truth from parents and others. By this means, what the girl or the owner says is of little moment and a conviction could likely be obtained when the new pending trafficking legislation now tabled in Parliament is passed. .

This expert deals at length with this “mind control”. It is not hypnotism but is not far removed. We have learned that a few girls regard the 65 year old owner of one city brothel as a sort of “father”, a loving pseudo-parent. In a number of overseas cases, girls kidnapped before their preteens became accustomed to the life. They even regarded the sex act with the perpetrator as “nice”.

Now SWEAT (see page 92) says

*“When so-called victims do not wish to be defined as victims, there is an insistence that they should be. This kind of thinking is persuasive in the anti-trafficking movement ...that NO woman would choose to do sex work...and that ... sex workers are, by definition, exploited.”*

The same page implies to that even “sex tourism” is accused thereby. There is this view that sex tourism (even to Cape Town) is proper and desirable. Such views deny that children are often the victims of sex tourism. So we see SWEATS ultimate “anything goes” tendency and attitude.

Page 103 lists 15 myths about trafficking. The list is skillfully drawn up and can confuse the reader. Non-serious situations are arranged with very serious situations. [SWEAT apparently is wiser than all the organizations around the world who have compassion for the victims of trafficking.]

We find it worrying that SWEAT can put itself in the place of the girls by assuming that they do not wish to be labelled victims. We have found many regard themselves as victims. Let THEM declare it!

## STRIP CLUBS

On page 114 SWEAT says (rightly) that

*“retention of travel documents (passports) by (strip) club owners (such as Teazers and the like) is a violation of rights”.*

Other than that, SWEAT does not see this trade as unacceptable. (namely “acceptable”!)

Let us deal with this question of gross trafficking by Teazers, Mavericks, Rasputin and others. This is the most reprehensibly disgusting example of slavery, extortion and cruelty. These disgusting places obtain girls from Russia and Eastern Europe via mafia syndicates

Russian mafia syndicates <http://www.rense.com/general47/sexs.htm>  
Also <http://www.uri.edu/artsci/wms/hughes/russia.htm>



who have blood on their hands from dealings into other parts of the world. In the US high ranking police and FBI and CIA officers and undercover officers penetrate the organisations and some have been assassinated.

Examples of the evils are legion and it is TIME that South Africa should attack this. It is hoped that the pending trafficking legislation will control it but the bribery and corruption alleged in Home Affairs MUST receive President Zuma's attention. We and our NGO's will certainly work on this.

These men should be jailed for long periods of over 20 years in our opinion, as in some countries, and even executed in others.

Some examples from a recent case is useful. On arrival the girls have their passports confiscated by the owner. They allegedly come in often on "holiday" visas or for "interviews". Many are decent girls and are horrified when they have to strip. If they won't they are dumped at the airport. They stay in houses with up to 8 bunk beds per room - far exceeding occupational regulations. They pay for that accommodation and for the travelling to the strip club. They are fined for any type of "offence" as in **CBD brothels** who do this all the time (up to R10 000). The debts they build up are enough for them to be effectively enslaved. They have to leave when their visa expires but it seems that a little backhander of a few grand to an official can sort that out. In fact in an article in Noseweek, it appears that no problem is a problem. Read the article.

#### **As in brothels the girls graduate to excess because of the money.**

We know, based on evidence that strip club girls at the end of their shift at say 4am can go off with selected johns for R2000 which is handed in cash to the owner. The girl then is paid extra by the john for sex. One girl (J) reported that she was gang seduced by ten men in a session after leaving with men. No condoms - they just "came inside her"

She can accumulate large sums but this can be taken away if certain offences are thought up by the owner.

The banks are not excused either as they must know that fake documents enable the girls to have illegal bank accounts.

**Like in CBD brothels** the girls are required to look "good". If not, they are fined. The Noseweek article reports how there is a

"Fat Butt list, a Tan-line list, a Nail list and Hair list". If dissatisfied the owner would add a girls name to the list. (Noseweek does not mention the "vagina list"!) And fined up to R10 000. "Tax" is deducted but never paid to the Finance department.

We all know of girls in night clubs and brothels around the world perishing in fires. Noseweek describes how three men arrived from the Fire department. The owner allegedly said "give them each a bottle of Jack Daniels and R1000. Next day a fire compliance certificate was issued. And so on!

#### **TRAFFICKING VICTIMS**

Page 121 onwards describes examples of abuse, blackmail, and drugs. Nevertheless SWEAT says (page 129) "force and deception are not common features of the sex work industry in Cape Town."

The next chapter deals with specific women in various situations. SWEAT does not see trafficking as a threat.

*"...our research ...identified 8 women out of 164 canvassed, who could possibly be considered victims of trafficking...we acknowledge that a few ...may have escaped our notice..."*

We ask, what about the strip clubs - now that IS trafficking - acknowledged world wide!

We are able to show by affidavit, recorded evidence, that with our limited resources (not the two years of “generous funding received from various agencies”, see introduction to the publication) that we have more evidence to the contrary.

There is much more that could be said in this commentary. But we are concerned that there are agencies and NGO’s and groups for and against exploitation/trafficking both in South Africa and overseas who would care to receive these or comments on “Selling Sex in Cape Town”.

We cannot close this research without saying that we do not see the women as worthy of all the blame. It is

- the johns (called clients)
- brothels
- strip clubs
- and owners of these establishment who deserve punishment.

We believe that 60% of the girls would love to be found a decent job at an ordinary salary.

We have found that by giving bursaries for study, under supervision, is very successful. If drugs are involved there must be rehabilitation centres. This is a very expensive need. The girls must not be treated like pariahs. Treat them like decent human beings, having compassion and care. One will be surprised at the success. We have some who are studying at university successfully passing all exams. Some are in the IT world. Some are in the beauty world.

We just need concerned, loving and bold people to help.

***“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves.”*** Proverbs 31:8

***“Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.”***  
Ephesians 5:11

***“Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter.”***  
Proverbs 24:11

## Appendix

**Testimonies from young women we have interviewed, some of whom we have rescued from the brothels mentioned.**

### **“M”’s story**

I started at E in Long Street after responding to an advert for a receptionist/trainee masseuse. I was divorced and needed the money for my baby... I really did not know what I was in for...I had to do what was required of me....As a white girl I found that the men preferred the so-called coloured girls ...and eventually I was not attracting enough clients...the manageress warned me and I tried to by not using a condom at times. I was earning around R20 grand a month...It dropped somewhat and I was fired...I knew I could work at Naughty 40 in Bree Street and worked a long time there. My earnings were a bit less as there were more girls there. The black clients preferred us white girls. I went through a succession of places. As you know I am now at “A” in the suburbs. Things are bad and I can’t support my kids so I have sent them away. I stay at this place and sleep in the beds we use for the clients. ....(otherwise I have no where to stay as I couldn’t not pay the rent of my flat). I am lucky if I get one client a day and I don’t have enough to live on. I won’t go on the street. Today I have earned R150 but I have to let them “do me up the back passage.”

You are right it is a complete mess up. I went to a good school and should be sitting pretty today. The sex (at the brothels) and the drugs messed me. “

“M” is 32. She earned big money at the start but now, at 32, she has no money, What will become of her when she reaches 40? Will SWEAT bale her out? Do SWEAT support or run “safe houses” for these women to go it to if they do decide to leave? We have rescued her since then and are doing what we can to help her.

“C”

“C” is a young women of 22, herself taking some cocaine, reports how a young girl “Elle” at another city “massage parlour”, was trying to avoid having intercourse as she was never told she had to at the interview, was pushed to sniff a powder by a “senior” girl. She became ill. The next day “C” reacted and shouted “she is new - how can you do that to her....” and left, and then we met her. We asked her about her life’s aspirations and how she did at school (Wynberg Girls High) and her reply is “I never got a mark lower than 65% and I shall think very seriously now about which direction to go, as I might need your guidance its been so long I almost gave up hope of a better life than this.”

We will be sponsoring her for studies and support as her parents can’t.

“K”

A young women of 19 gave an affidavit. She had been fooled by a fake advert for a job. She was rescued just in time and today is at University sponsored by us fully funded for living etc. She has passed with flying colours.

“J”

“J” was sexually exploited at this brothel for 4 years. We have her affidavit. We found she wanted out but could not afford to leave. We found she was not on drugs and had done well at school so we challenged her. Today she says, “18 months ago I had no future, now I have a diploma, a great job with a firm of attorneys and I can hold up my head high. God has forgiven me and my dad has in thankfulness just got baptized.”

“M”

“M” worked at a high-end brothel in the CBD. She left, as she was pregnant. She had been very promiscuous. She told a client “is this all I am meant to spend my life for?” This client joined our team. We offered her a free IT course with a great college. We arranged with her mother to make this offer to her. However the owner of the CBD ‘massage parlour’ sent two senior girls to fetch her. She declined but the owner demanded she return as clients gave him big business for girls who were 6 months or more pregnant. She never left and the owner fired her when she gave birth and she was last at naughty 40.

“N”

was at a CBD massage parlour. She said: “In December we had to deposit R1000 with the owner. If we missed one day at work during December and January we forfeited the R1000. We all lost it. Even if we were sick and had doctors certificate... And were fined...He forced us to participate in a porn website advertising the place. The site says “all the girls appearing in this video are working at Zandalee. The site is called [www.zandaleemassage.com](http://www.zandaleemassage.com). But I have left and he won’t respond to my request to delete my presence (full body minus the head). I am afraid of being blackmailed”. I have been very foolish but am starting studies to better my life.”

“H”

Haley Hansen is the most abused child (18) I have come across. Her father left the home a few years back and her mother is dead. The father had fathered 19 children from 4 “wives”. Haley was locked up as a sex slave since she was 10. She was a “street child” even though white. She joined a northern suburbs brothel via a “friend” last year. Now she is in the Aroma brothel at 90 Constantia Road. She refuses to have sex and is looked after by a girl Candice with whom she has a lesbian relationship. Haley had to pay rent for the bed and the proceeds of sex was inadequate. She is waiting for HELP!

**MY MOST HORRIBLE EXPERIENCE (a story given by a john)**

Having been tipped off, I visited a house in Salt River as a potential client. The Malay man invited me in. He took me into a room. "Here is some nice ..... for you" he said. There were 6 young girls of some 12 and 13. I said "how much". He said R500 for such young fruit. I said I was nervous and left. I reported it. I think he was arrested (it's some time ago). All I remember in the shock is they were shipped from Ashton and they called me "Oom".

What can be done to alleviate many of the distressing aspects of this business?.

The people and NGO's who back this report wish to create a new life and opportunities for the girls in this industry.

After a period of moving around from one brothel to another and getting near the "street", these girls have almost no way of exiting. They have no job CV, have saved no money for a rainy day, have little education (some do!). Some are thrown out of the brothel for some spurious reason and have nowhere to go. They have lost touch with parents and relatives.....

### **WHO SHOULD BE PUNISHED BY IMPRISONMENT AND PUT ON A NATIONAL ABUSE REGISTER?**

- Brothel owners
- Strip club owners
- Traffickers
- Pimps
- Johns who abuse and bring in drugs to girls at brothels

We do not believe in general that prostitutes deserve to be punished. We believe they should be given protection hop[efully to give evidence against the above. Especially those in the age category 21 and under. We need to understand that their drug taking after starting to work in brothels is often due to internal conflicts of mind and where owners abuse them, fine them, blackmail them, get them to deceive family and friends, and continue a life of deception, amongst others.

## LEGALISATION OF PROSTITUTION

SWEAT/ISS do not call for legalization. They recommend decriminalization. We believe legalisation is almost equally undesirable. A well researched study of this can be found in

*“The legalisation of prostitution and it’s impact on trafficking in women and children*

<http://sisyphe.org/spip.php?article1596>

## HELP FOR THE NEEDY.

Below are examples of what our fellow NGO’s are trying to organize.

- A safe house(s)
- Some contingent income sources for those wanting a new life.
- Approaching CEO’s of business concerns to have a number of jobs for those who are able and want to work.
- Colleges who would admit some capable girls at cut rates which we ngo’s could subsidise.
- Government exiting programmes.
- Homes by good people
- And many other ways of helping and showing love and care.
- (Some never have known what it is like to have a loving parent).

*\*\*List of NGO's and organizations who back or who can feel comfortably associated with this report.*

- *Stop Trafficking of People*
- *Matla a Bana*
- *Teens Lured to Prostitution*
- *Not for Sale*
- *Project Care*
- *Media Village*
- *Inter outreach Ministries*
- *Balm of Gilead homes*