

USE OF THE INTERNET FOR GLOBAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

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<http://www.uri.edu/artsci/wms/hughes/internet.pdf>

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In this article, Dr. Hughes examines the ways that the Internet is used as a tool for men's sexual exploitation of women and children. According to Dr. Hughes, global sexual exploitation is on the rise. She describes that there are few risks to those who sexually exploit and the profits and profit margin is very high. In this article, Dr. Hughes specifically examines the following forms of sexual exploitation: bride trafficking, sex tours, exchange of information on where to buy prostituted women, and live sex shows through videoconferencing. She proceeds, through the rest of the report to detail some examples of the ways that men use the internet to sexually exploit women and children in these ways.

Exchange of Information

Men reportedly use the Internet to share information with each other about their experiences of sex tours including: where to go to find prostituted women, hotel prices, telephone numbers, taxi fares, costs of alcohol, the kinds of sexual acts that can be bought, the prices for each act, and evaluations of women's appearances and performances (an example of such a site is alt.sex.services – now alt.sex.prostitution). Men use these venues to describe, often in graphic detail, their experiences of using women or children. As Dr. Hughes describes, this medium allows men to participating in the global pimping of women or children – a man can use a woman, go home and post the details, and by the next morning, men internationally can have access to what this women did and how they might be able to access her as well. Based on what men report on line, they are well aware that some portion of the women or children “involved” are basically enslaved along with encouragements of how to “show the girl a good time whether she's a slave or not” (p. #4)

Sex Tours

The Internet has become the largest advertising source for sex tourism. The centers for sex tourism are also the main sources of trafficking of women – mostly from poorer countries to wealthier ones. In addition, as prostitution and other forms of “sex work” have become a form of tourism for men, it has also become a form of economic development for poorer countries.

Bride Trafficking

Mail order bride services are increasingly using the Internet as their main marketing location to target a prime group of potential buyers – men from Western counties with higher than average incomes. It is now possible for a man to locate a woman of any age, ethnicity, or color, virtually from anywhere in the world, and pay for her on line with a major credit card. After which, she becomes his wife.

Live VideoConferencing

The most advances, and possibly the fastest growing form of Internet used for sexual exploitation involve live videoconferencing. This form is live audio and video communication beamed across the internet. This kind of real-time technology allows men to tell women how to act, what to do and how to do it while he sits at home in one part of the world and she performs for him – to his commands – in another. The only limitation on this kind of technology (and thus this form of sexual exploitation of women) is the need for high-speed transmission and processing, and multi-media capabilities. The software required is free and readily available on line.

Regulation

The attempts to regulate the Internet so far have com primarily from efforts and concern about the sexual exploitation of children, and protecting children from gaining access to these kinds of internet sites. Little, if any, attention or concern is shown for the women or children who are exploited in the making of the pornography, or who are used in these ways. As. Dr. Hughes states in her conclusion, “In any search for a solution to pornography and prostitution it is crucial to remember that sexual exploitation starts with real people and the harm is to real people” (p. #9).