



Ending the Business of Human Trafficking in NYC: 2007 Campaign

LOCAL PUBLICATIONS: THE MARKETING ARM OF TRAFFICKING

- The human trafficking industry is part of the local economy and involves more participants than just the traffickers and their victims. Traffickers depend on the support of legal businesses for their operation, and these businesses are generating enormous profits on the backs of exploited women and girls.
- News papers and magazines serve as the best marketing vehicle for traffickers. In fact, the ads traffickers place in these publications are often traffickers' only link to customers. Some publications make the distinction themselves between legitimate spas and illegal massage parlors by charging up to 3X standard ad rates for their Adult Sections.
- Community newspapers continue to grow rich with sex ads. "Adult" advertisements generate up to 35% of these newspaper's gross revenue on a weekly basis. Many papers report that they would be unprofitable or unable to publish if not for these advertisements.
- *The Village Voice* generates an average of \$80,000 a month on the adult ads that line its back pages, according to the classified ad sales department. Nationally, the Verizon Yellow Pages generates hundreds of thousands of dollars annually on its extensive escort services and massage parlor advertising categories. Ads in the Manhattan book feature photos and sketchings of pre-pubescent girls. One such business is called "Asian Flowers."

WHAT DO THESE ADS HAVE TO DO WITH HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

- There aren't enough American women and girls willing to do sex work to meet the huge demand that exists for commercial sex. Foreign women are brought to the U.S. and then forced into brothels, domestic servitude and sweatshops. Originally told they'll be given jobs as nannies or waitresses, once in the United States, trafficking victims report having their passports and money taken, enduring threats against themselves and their families back home, as well as physical violence.
- Ads featuring specific ethnicities and "in call only" escort services are most often found to have human trafficking ties, according to the Division of Criminal Justice Services in New York. The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Services documented 250 brothels in 26 cities, including New York, with trafficking victims in 2000. Publications are willing to turn a blind eye, in order to increase revenue.
- In March, 2006, a large brothel in Flushing, Queens housing Korean women who spoke little or no English was shut down after a 10-month investigation. The brothel, which generated \$4,000 a day, was successful to a large extent because the traffickers had bribed two veteran police officers, who received free sex, drinks, cash and tips on other criminal activity. This trafficking operation regularly advertised in the *World Journal*, a daily Mandarin newspaper with circulation of over 88,000 readers.

John the Blogger:

Websites masquerading as "Hobbyist Boards" are, in reality, a forum for "johns," a slang term for someone who purchases sex, to exchange tips, hints and advice about brothels around the New York City and New Jersey area. In these forums, the links between massage ads, prostitution, and the human trafficking industry become crystal clear. Here are some examples of what the "johns" have to say:

- "Coming to an AMP near you....Was at the airport last night to pick up a friend and while waiting in the car outside the terminal, I noticed about 10 asian broads with luggage and papers in their hands....escorted by 2 asian guys to a van with NY plates...must be new providers just arrived with fake papers etc... right to apartments in Flushing and ready to help us mongers out...ha ha....what a country..."
- "Getting back to Suny, or Sunshine, I asked her (after, of course) if she minds doing this to men. After much pantomime and language barrier breakthrough, she said, "Oh. For first six months, I cry every night. Now it not so bad." That was a pivotal moment for me because I realized what a scumbag I am. Then I wished I'd seen Candy again."

Sex Tourism:

- It is no secret that sex tourism occurs most heavily in countries rife with poverty, yet what most people don't realize is United States citizens make up an estimated 25% of sex tourists worldwide.
- Sex tour operators and sex tour websites regularly advertise in print media. ExoticRetreat.net has advertised in several local publications. It offers adult vacation packages promising full time companionship with women imported "from Eastern Europe, where sexual attitudes are much more open than they are in the USA." Customers are explicitly assured that "hostesses understand the meaning of a 'full service' adult entertainment experience. Should you...want [your hostess] to join you, just say so and she will happily comply." Basic packages include one woman; upgrades are available for an additional \$500 per woman, per night, and in addition to the girls living on-site, "non-affiliated ladies living on the island...are readily available upon request."

NOW-NYC's "Trafficking Free, NYC!"

- In March, 2007 NOW-NYC launched its "Trafficking Free, NYC!" campaign to publications throughout the five boroughs, compelling New York newspapers and magazines recognize their role as a potential marketer for the trafficking industry, and publicly commit to being "trafficking free."
- NOW-NYC provides support to publications and training in identifying human trafficking red flags. Once educated, publications are able to use their own discretion in order to avoid ads obviously related to human trafficking, such as those offering "Young Russian Girls, 24hr Delivery". This ad appeared in the May 17, 2007 edition of *El Diario/La Prensa*, a daily Spanish-language newspaper. El Diario has agreed to require massage license #s, but still accepts classifieds such as the one highlighted above.
- NOW-NYC's "Trafficking Free, NYC!" campaign asks publications to do basic due diligence and use common sense when it comes to choosing which advertisements to accept. For example, NOW-NYC asks that publications adhere to long-standing New York State law prohibiting unlicensed businesses from advertising under the "massage" or "massage therapy" title. The law states:
- ARTICLE 155 MASSAGE THERAPY § 7802.
No person, firm, partnership or corporation claiming to be engaged in the practice of massage or massage therapy shall in any manner describe, advertise, or place any advertisement for services as defined in section seventy-eight hundred one of this article unless such services are performed by a person licensed or authorized pursuant to this chapter.

Trafficking-Free Publications!

Time Out New York
The Brooklyn Paper
Hoy
Our Town
West Side Spirit
The Westsider
Our Town Downtown
City Hall
Chelsea Clinton News
AVENUE
New York Family
Queens Courier
The L Magazine
New York Press
New York Magazine

Marketers of Human Trafficking

The Village Voice
El Diario/La Prensa
The World Journal
AM New York
Park Slope Courier
Gay City
El Especialito
Times-Ledger
Courier-Life
Sing Tao
Hudson Reporter

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO BECOME ACTIVE IN FIGHTING TRAFFICKING:

Please visit: <http://www.nownyc.org>

You can report trafficking crimes or get help by calling the **Trafficking in Persons and Worker Exploitation Task Force Complaint Line at 1-888-428-7581 (voice and TTY)**. New laws provide options for trafficking victims regardless of immigration status. Operators have access to interpreters and can talk with callers in their own language. The service is offered on weekdays from 9AM to 5PM EST. After these hours, information is available on tape in English, Spanish, Russian, and Mandarin.