



Asian Women Coalition Ending Prostitution

Winter newsletter
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The Asian Women Coalition Ending Prostitution (AWCEP) challenges the normalization of human trafficking and prostitution of Asian women in Canada and around the world. Find us on Facebook Website: awcep.org E-mail: awcep.info@gmail.com

Welcome to the first edition of the Asian Women Coalition Ending Prostitution's quarterly newsletter.

2012 was a busy year for our members. We thank the groups who invited us to speak at their events including the Emancipation Now Summit at Capilano University, the National Research Day Conference on *Sexual Violence, Domestic Violence: Exploring the Continuum of Violence Against Women and Girls* in Vancouver, and a documentary screening of "Sex and Money: A National Search for Human Worth" in Port Moody. As well, we were consulted by the RCMP and the Office to Combat Trafficking in People in the development of policies and training strategies. We proactively addressed emerging policies at the municipal level by presenting our perspective and recommendations to the Vancouver Police Board about their proposed guidelines to respond to the growing sex trade. We continued to ally locally with women's groups working to prevent the normalizing of pimping and brothel keeping.

In the summer, AWCEP was invited to present on "Supporting Prostitution Survivors Activism" at the RadFem Reboot conference in Portland, which involved American abolitionists from across the United States. In the fall, we met with feminist Japanese activists from Sendai and learned about their work to assist women after the tsunami virtually destroyed their home city.

Marking Asian Heritage Month



On May 10th, AWCEP hosted a panel discussion and movie screening in recognition of Asian Heritage Month. The event opened with remarks by Carole Anne Soong, followed by a clip

from the National Film Board's documentary "Avenue Zero" on human trafficking in BC, and features an interview with AWCEP member Alice Lee.

AWCEP members Sarah Mah, Nerissa Yan, and Suzanne Jay discussed the buying and selling of Asian women, the proliferation of Asian massage parlours as fronts for prostitution and the negative impacts on achieving gender and racial equality.

Recognizing International Day of No Prostitution

On October 5, AWCEP organized a documentary screening of "The Fallacy" by Canadian filmmaker, Eve Lamont. The documentary chronicled stories of individual women actively trying to leave prostitution, and the struggles they face in escaping. The film was followed by a short panel discussion with Grace Balbutin, Jaclyn Chang, and guest speaker, Clay Tang. Grace and Jaclyn initiated the discussion by bringing to light the similar challenges

that Asian women also face in prostitution, and how the misrepresentation of women in the media contribute to the marketing, selling, and packaging of Asian women in Vancouver. We thank Clay for addressing the beliefs and attitudes of men that entrench the racist and sexist practice of prostitution.

Both events were well attended. Thank you everyone who came out and supported our events this year.



Our study of Vancouver's Craigslist over a 24-hour period found that **60% of women advertised for sexual services were Asian.**

Response to Deeply flawed UN Report on Asia and the Pacific

In October 2012, the United Nations published a report on sex work, laws and HIV in Asia, which concludes that decriminalization is key to combating HIV/AIDS in the region.

It is clear that HIV/AIDS is a disease that disproportionately strikes the poorest people in society, and particularly those in the Global South. To argue that the legalization of prostitution is an effective solution to solving the HIV pandemic places the burden on marginalized women to control the spread of HIV, rather than addressing the social, political and economic conditions that contribute to HIV transmission. The reality is that men are more often the agents of disease transmission.

The inherent violence of prostitution will not be solved with legalization. The authors of the study presume that the violence from police, johns and pimps will be reduced with the legalization of prostitution, but they fail to understand

prostitution is a form of male violence against women.

The recommendations of this report are troublesome on many levels. Legalization of prostitution would lead to greater regulation of women's bodies through mandatory testing and screening. Ultimately, the report fails to call for concrete measures that would help women avoid or exit prostitution such as housing, education, or health care. As Asian women living in North America, we join our sisters across the Pacific Ocean to say "no" to legalizing prostitution.



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TAKE ACTION

REJECT THE MYTHS

Reject the myth that prostitution and human trafficking are inevitable or natural to human societies.

CREATE EQUALITY FOR WOMEN NOT PROFITS FOR PIMPS

Removing barriers to human traffickers and local pimps will not improve women's status in society, increase our safety or improve our equality.

GET INVOLVED

- Like us on Facebook and check out our website: www.awcep.org
- Invite us to speak to your group or at your event
- Join us at our events
- Sign up on our mailing list to get the latest updates

MAKE A DONATION

The Asian Women Coalition Ending Prostitution is a volunteer-run, registered non-profit society. We are not yet able to provide tax receipts for donations, but hope to be able to do so soon. In the meantime, we welcome your donations to help us advance education and awareness about the impacts of prostitution on Asian women.