

**A Swedish pimp explained,  
 “If you film, you are not buying a whore, you are producing a movie”**

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In 2021 a Swedish woman had the courage to report to the authorities that she had been pimped into prostitution, and that she had been raped many times. The case was heard in the Södertälje District Court. The pimp, age 49, was arrested and charged with 3 counts of negligent rape (Carlén & Bünz, 2023; Sweden National Law, 2017). In Sweden, negligent rape is sex without explicit consent (Edwards, 2019). The victim had gone with her pimp to the home of a sex buyer. The sex buyer paid the pimp for the session with the victim. The pimp filmed the session, explaining to both the sex buyer and the victim, “*if you film, you are not buying a whore you are producing a movie*” (Police Authority, 2022, p 130). Like other pimps, he was interested in maximizing his profits in the business of sexual exploitation, so he filmed the paid-for rapes and the paid-for abuse, in order to make more money. In the court proceedings, it was revealed that the pimp had a 2018 conviction for possession of 18 child pornography films (Uppsala District Court, 2018). The pimp was convicted of rape and trafficking and sentenced to 1.5 years in prison (Södertälje District Court, 2022).

The pimp appealed the court's decision. The rape and pimping charges against him were dropped in 2022. The pimp and his attorney convinced the Swedish appeals court that he was not a pimp but a pornographer (Svea Court of Appeal, 2022). He also convinced the Court that his victim had consented to the filmed rapes and other violent acts of torture. Like most pimps today, he was a *pornpimp*, a pimp with a camera. *The camera appears to have become a legally fetishized object that transforms acts of contemptuous violence against women into a pimp's “free speech.”* The implication of this legal decision is clear: if a pimp wants to avoid being charged with the crimes of rape and trafficking under Sweden’s current laws – all he has to do is to film his crimes. At that point the crimes will be named “pornography” and declared to be protected speech.

The Svea Court of Appeal agreed with the pimp and his lawyer that the rapes could not be proven *because his victim signed an agreement* to perform certain specific sex acts. The Court stated that “the voluntariness requirement refers to the actual act and not the person's inner attitude” (Svea Court of Appeal, 2022). The Court’s reasoning seems to deliberately exclude

consideration of psychological coercion and the victim's fear of coercion by the pimp who had previously talked her into joining his prostitution business. An investigative report was provided to the Court, and in her legal testimony the victim explained that the pimp "managed" the victim by uploading her image to the Rosa Sidan website and also by advertising her for sale for sexual use by sex buyers on the applications Skype and KIK (Police Authority, 2022, p 102).

The agreement that the pimp appears to have deceptively manipulated his victim into signing was a list of acts of torture. In court testimony, the victim stated that she was so drunk that she could not remember the details of what she signed. Psychologically defeated and intoxicated, she signed an agreement to be tortured and filmed in order to work off a friend's debt to the pimp (Police Authority, 2022, p 106). The victim told the Court that the reason she agreed to debt bondage was to save her friend from suffering what the pimp had planned to do to her (Police Authority, 2022, p 114). The victim's reasoning was that she herself was already a "destroyed" person, and suicidal so it didn't matter what happened to her. She signed a consent to torture - we wonder is that legal in Sweden? - which acknowledged that she was in debt bondage to the pimp for the amount of her friend's debt. Here are some of the torture/sex acts that the pornpimp manipulated the victim into "consenting" to: anal dilation and penetration of anus and vagina with multiple penises, "blood play," "extremely painful" rope bondage, "electroplay"[torture using electric shock]. verbal humiliation, blindfolding, whipping, catheters, slavery, and "pain through beating, biting, pinching, using weights, clamps (nipple/vagina), hot wax, violent penetration with objects," "vampirism" (biting and breaking the skin so it bleeds (Police Authority, 2022, p 6-12). These are acts of torture which are illegal under international torture conventions (Istanbul Protocol, 1999; United Nations General Assembly, 1984; Farley & Kennedy, forthcoming, 2024). Why has a Swedish Appeals Court decided that the victim legitimately signed a contract agreeing to such horrors? The miscarriage of justice in this case shocks any person with common sense and humanity.

Many people agree that pornography is separate from the rest of prostitution. This turns out to be a mistaken assumption. In fact, pornography is fully integrated into and usually indistinguishable from other arms of the multinational sex trade. Women in prostitution move from online locations to physical locations to webcam sessions and then to wherever the sex buyers are located and wherever the pimps send them, for example, sports events, sales events/conferences, military bases, escort to street and back again, escort to webcam. A prostituting woman in Sweden

explained that she went from her home to the street in order to locate sex buyers whenever her escort agency's mobile phone stopped ringing (Skarhed, 2010). As is true of other global businesses, there are domestic and international sectors of the sex trade, marketing sectors, and a range of physical locations out of which sex businesses operate. In today's market, sex buyers may pay for a photo or they shoot cellphone videos with or without permission in the locations where prostitution happens. A sex buyer offered this opinion about studio-produced pornography: "*Yes, the woman in pornography is a prostitute. They're prostituting in front of the cameras. They're getting money from a film company rather than individuals*" (Farley, 2007, p. 147).

The same crimes of violence against women are perpetrated in pornography, prostitution, and trafficking, including sexist verbal abuse, racist verbal abuse, degradation, physical and sexual assault, and acts that are identical to torture as defined by international legal conventions. (Istanbul Protocol, 1999) A survivor of pornography and prostitution described their sameness, explaining that she had been physically hurt, raped on camera, and coerced to do more extreme sex acts on film in exactly the same ways that sex buyers had coerced and harmed her in prostitution (Simonton & Smith, 2004).

Like the Svea Court of Appeal, United States courts have tended to agree that if a rape in prostitution is filmed, then it becomes the pornographer's speech. A film showed 251 sex buyers humiliating, raping, and torturing Grace Quek (named Annabel Chong in the film). Sex buyers paid to perpetrate life-threatening sexual assaults which resulted in severe physical and psychological injuries (Farley, 2006). The film production of sexual assaults on Quek was stopped after 10 hours because she was bleeding internally. After being edited to 4 hours, the film of the men raping her was named pornography. The film was titled "*The World's Biggest Gang Bang.*"

In the United States there has been one remarkable exception to this trend (US v Marcus). Glenn Marcus ran a torture pornography website. He dominated and coerced a woman to permit pornography of her to be sold on Slavespace.com. She managed to bring charges against Marcus who was her pimp/pornographer/trafficker and torturer. At one point he had stuffed a ball gag in her mouth, sewed her mouth shut and hung her on a wall. Her attorneys used the following definition: *sex trafficking is coercing or selling a person into a situation of sexual exploitation, such as prostitution or pornography*. On March 5, 2007, pornographer Marcus was convicted of sex trafficking in the United States. This legal decision reflects an understanding of the ways in

which pornography, prostitution, and trafficking are the same for the person who is being sexually used and harmed for profit. (Sherloc, 2007; Marzuli, 2012).

Pimps benefit when they can artificially segregate an arm of the sex trade - such as pornography - legalize it, and then mainstream it. Prostitution advocates de-link pornography, prostitution, and trafficking because that compartmentalization provides legal protections, thereby increasing profits. Words are used by pornpimps and their allies to camouflage the harm of the sex trade. Strip clubs are named exotic dance clubs or gentlemen's clubs, massage parlors are named health clubs, sugar daddy/baby prostitution is named mutually beneficial dating, and pornography is named "content creation" or "speech" instead of a filmed record of humiliation and torture. And then these de-linked sex trade businesses are legally mainstreamed. 'Freedom of speech' attorneys promote the idea that a film of prostitution is speech rather than a documentation of abuse; they insist that pornography is separate from the same acts of prostitution that are not filmed. The pornographers' free speech argument is a cruel but very profitable lie.

It's not only the pimp who causes the harm. Sex buyers, including pornography sex buyers, cause harm. Pornography sex buyers often engage in harmful behavior; they are not just "porn consumers." A web-cam prostitution survivor explained that "camming was worse than the rest of the porn industry because we had direct contact with the consumer, people who were often very cruel and demanding by threatening to leave negative reviews and therefore affecting your pay if you didn't perform exactly as they wished" (Anonymous, 2018). In webcamming and in sugardaddy or girlfriend experience (GFE) prostitution, women are distressed by being forced to playact whatever the sex buyer wants, and by having to be nice to abusive men. "The emotional labour that goes into camming is unreal – constantly chatting, trying to be yourself [and] pleasant" (Shehadi & Partington, 2020). In both online and offline prostitution, sex buyers exert psychological control, sometimes with threats of violence if the women don't accede to the men's requests, including requests for performances of specific emotional states. The greater her economic and social vulnerability, the less power she has to say no to any pornography/sex buyer's specific demand.

Webcam prostitution has unique dangers. Women who prostitute online via webcams encounter "privacy breaches, potentially dangerous interactions with clients, and laws that are

not designed to protect them” (Drolet, 2020). Many women express fear about the lack of privacy in online pornography, with some resigned to inevitable privacy violations (Deliatto & Fenton, 2020). Women fear harassment, blackmail, or being subject to revenge porn when they upload videos to pornography sites. Videos are often stolen from pornography websites; “The platforms lack security and confidentiality. Anyone can take a screenshot and then share it,” one woman said. In 2020, 1.5 TB of women’s pre-recorded videos and images were stolen and leaked from the UK porn site OnlyFans (Shehadi & Partington, 2020). Women reported that pimps’ siphoning-off their earnings and refusing to remove video clips when asked to (Cole & Cox, 2020).

More than forty years ago, Andrea Dworkin was deeply concerned about the many ways that pornography harmed women.

A defense of pornography is a defense of the brute use of money to encourage violence against a class of persons who do not have—have never had—the civil rights vouchsafed to men as a class. The growing power of the pornographers significantly diminishes the likelihood that women will ever experience freedom of anything—certainly not sexual self-determination, certainly not freedom of speech. (Andrea Dworkin, 1980, p 258)

Dworkin was prescient about the growing power of pornographers. Today, pornpimps and their academic and legal allies, rule the Internet. In Sweden and elsewhere, pimping, trafficking and purchasing sex are illegal, but if these criminal acts are filmed then they are not illegal. This is an argument used by sex trade businessmen the world over to evade accountability for prostitution’s criminality. From the sex trade survivor’s perspective, in real life, the only difference between prostitution and pornography is the camera in the room. Survivors of pornography production have explained this for many years:

*“Pornography is filmed prostitution”* (Giobbe, 1993)

*“Pornography is prostitution that is legalized as long as someone gets to take pictures”* (Simonton & Smith, 2004).

*“Pornography is a meticulously planned and executed violation, sourced in an intense hatred of women, like a hate crime”* (Jewell Baraka, personal communication, June 30, 2020).

Roger Young, retired Nevada FBI agent, asked: *“What happened to common sense? The fact that there is a camera filming the prostitution doesn’t change the fact of the prostitution.*

*Pornography is essentially a crime scene surveillance tape. You can’t say to someone, hey let’s go rob a bank but if we film it then it won’t be robbery”* (Farley, 2007).

A report released in Stockholm October 17, 2023 offered research evidence that pornography can not be separated from prostitution or trafficking (Farley, Bergkvist, Asbogard et al., 2023) We interviewed 105 women and men in the Swedish sex trade, most of whose prostitution was photographed, videotaped or livestreamed. We found an essential similarity between prostitution, pornography production, and trafficking with respect to early life history that creates vulnerability, modes of recruitment, racism, harms perpetrated by pimps and by sex buyers, coercion, and economic exploitation. The report discussed possible legal responses to pornpimps and their friends who declare, “If you film, you are not buying a whore, you are producing a movie”

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