

A National Conference

**Prostitution:
Violence Against
Women & Children**

Friday 28 November 1997

**Westminster Central Hall
Storey's Gate
London SW1**

Speakers

**Joan Blaney, Fiona Broadfoot, Emma Humphreys,
Patricia Holmes, Irene Ivison, Sheila Jeffreys, Sara Swann
Plus Panel Discussion**

& from the USA

Standing Against Global Exploitation Project (SAGE)

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

This important and timely event will focus on the issue of prostitution as *violence against women and children*. It brings together speakers renowned for their expertise in this area. Topics covered on the day will include: redefining 'child prostitution', pimping on the Internet, how to legislate against pimps and men who use prostitutes, vigilante gangs and 'tolerance zones', violence and abuse of women in the sex industry, supporting women leaving prostitution and more. The day will consist of keynote speakers and questions from the floor and a panel discussion to end the day. Those expected to attend include: social services, probation, police, magistrates, lawyers, survivors/feminist activists, support agencies, health workers, academics, MP's and policy makers and other interested individuals.

Note for Solicitors : Application has been made for continuing professional development hours.

**The Conference will be opened by:
Emma Humphreys**

Keynote Speakers are :

**Joan Blaney, Fiona Broadfoot, Patricia Holmes,
Irene Ivison, Sheila Jeffreys, SAGE Project
Sara Swann**

Chair for the Day: Jalna Hanmer

Standing Against Global Exploitation Project (SAGE):

is a service which is dedicated to creating a continuum of care for all women who are survivors of abuse, and individuals escaping prostitution. SAGE also coordinates the first ever 'John School' for the re-education of men using prostitutes. Individuals involved in the SAGE project believe that real solutions to the problem of prostitution, exploitation and abuse, will only come about after those voices that have historically been silenced are heard. Currently all SAGE volunteers are survivors of prostitution, rape, torture and kidnapping. They have designed, implemented and directed model jobs, educational and research projects that have been adopted locally, nationally and internationally. SAGE's direct service component in development provides outreach, treatment, and vocational services for women wishing to escape all violence, sexually exploitative relationships, and individuals escaping the sex industry. This component has an excellent opportunity of becoming a model programme world wide.

Fiona Broadfoot: was coerced into becoming a prostitute at the age of fifteen, after running away from a difficult home life. She suffered years of abuse, being beaten so badly once that she was hospitalised for six weeks, but with support from another woman, eventually managed to escape. The past continued to affect her life, stopping her from getting a job at a nursery due to a previous conviction for prostitution. This discrimination coupled with the murder of a friend who was working as a prostitute, made her determined to use her knowledge of

prostitution to help other women escape from the streets. She worked on a local project before moving to the *Bradford Working Women's Project*, where she gained experience that allowed her to do legal work in a health project in Wakefield for sex workers. Fiona met Irene Ivison in March 1996 and they formed a campaigning and research group to protect women in prostitution, to get 'child prostitution' recognised as child sexual abuse, and to support the families of children who are working or at risk.

Joan Blaney : is the director of *Women Acting In Today's Society*, (WAITS) a women's community education trust that works with women from diverse backgrounds to build supportive networks, address personal and social issues and promote women's fuller involvement in the decision making process. This is achieved through workshops and seminars for women from disadvantaged and low income groups. WAITS also works with women in South Africa and Eastern Europe. Joan will discuss the impact of the vigilante gang intimidation and attacks on prostitutes in Birmingham. She will explore economic and social issues surrounding the politics of prostitution; how various groups have a vested interest in prostitution; if legislation such as the Social Chapter and the minimum wage will help women escape; and how prostitution can be looked at in relation to domestic violence, where women are controlled by men who subject them to sexual and physical violence.

Emma Humphreys: was 17 years old when jailed for life for killing a man in defence against rape. After 7 years in prison she contacted the feminist organisation *Justice for Women* to ask for help in appealing the murder conviction on the grounds of provocation. Emma's campaign was successful and in 1995 her conviction was quashed. Emma worked as a prostitute from the age of 11 when she ran away from home to escape abuse. She is planning to write a book on her experiences in order to dispel the myths about 'child prostitution.'

Patricia Holmes : is a founder member of the *Greater Manchester Women's Support Project*, working with women in prison and the sex industry. The objectives of the project are to identify gaps in service provision, provide and facilitate direct support services to women and to offer training and consultancy to develop good practice guidelines. Patricia has been working with women in prison for the past seven years around issues of sexual violence and co-facilitates a weekly drop-in group for women working in the sex industry in Manchester. She will speak on the setting up of the drop-in sessions for women in the sex industry and the systematic everyday level of abuse women working as prostitutes face, and will consider how women can be best supported when this level of violence is almost routine.

Patricia will address the lack of consistent care in prison, and women's reluctance to identify as prostitutes whilst in prison, as well as outlining ongoing attempts to establish groups for women in prison.

Irene Ivison: is the author of *Fighting for Fiona* (1997). Irene's daughter Fiona was murdered whilst working as a prostitute in the North of England. Fiona's killer was imprisoned, but her pimp never faced any criminal charges. In response to this tragedy Irene formed the organisation *Campaign for the Removal of Pimps* (CROP). CROP is currently conducting research into the coercive tactics of pimps in association with the Suzy Lamplugh Trust. Other objectives are to bring the role of pimps in prostitution to the attention of the government, to develop programmes for use in schools about preventing these exploitative practices, and to set up a support network for the families of children and young women who have been coerced into prostitution. In doing this, Irene is speaking for young people who have become victims of the abuse inflicted by prostitution and pimps.

Sheila Jeffreys: is a well-known writer and polemicist. She has been teaching lesbian and gay politics and sexual politics in the Department of Political Science at the University of Melbourne (Australia) since 1991, where she is a Senior Lecturer. She was active for many years in the UK in anti-male violence and anti-pornography politics. She is author of 3 books on the history of politics and sexuality: *The Spinster and Her Enemies* (1985), *Anticlimax* (1990) and *The Lesbian Heresy* (1993). Sheila's forthcoming book *The Idea of Prostitution* will be launched at the conference. The book 'challenges the idea of men's entitlement to abuse and profit from the exploitation of women in prostitution.' The book shows how this idea, central to male supremacist ideology, has been bolstered by masculine systems of thought such as psychology, sociology and historiography. Sheila argues that the feminist challenge has become more difficult in recent times because sexual liberalism, economic individualism and free 'choice' ideas have persuaded some feminists that prostitution should be seen as a 'job just like any other'. Sheila's presentation will focus on the history of women's responses to the issue of prostitution over the last hundred years.

Sara Swann : is the leader of *Barnardo's Streets and Lanes* project working with young women involved in prostitution. For the last 20 years she has worked with adolescents in a variety of settings including education, youth services and social services. The project began in April 1995 and over the months the workers have come to recognise a pattern of abuse and control which facilitates the young women's entry into the system. Her paper will focus on so-called 'child prostitution' as commercialised sexual violence and examine legislation and criminal

justice intervention. She argues that adult male customers who procure young women under the age of sixteen should be considered child sexual abusers, and should be brought before the criminal court. Whilst recognising there are no 'instant solutions' she will look at broad objects for change.

Panel Discussion will include:

Women Against the Prostitution of Women Maureen O'Hara will speak on behalf of WAPOW, a national network of women and women's groups who are working to oppose prostitution as an institution, and to expand services and options for women and children in prostitution. WAPOW lobbies for greater protection for women working as prostitutes through improvements in the police and the criminal justice system.

Action Against Child Sexual Abuse Diane Butterworth will talk about the use of the Internet in the trafficking of women, and the issue of mail-order brides. Diane is a computer programmer and trainer. Diane is a radical feminist, has been an anti-pornography activist and is currently involved in ACSA.

Kalayan Justice for Overseas Domestic Workers is an umbrella organisation which campaigns against the trafficking of women in Britain from the Philippines and elsewhere for purposes of domestic slavery.

Bradford Working Women's Project is for women working in Bradford as prostitutes. It is funded by the Health Authority to cater for the health needs of women involved in the sex industry and to raise awareness and provide training for professionals.

Chair for the Conference, Professor Jalna Hanmer: Leeds Metropolitan University, Director of the Research Centre on Violence, Abuse and Gender Relations. She researches on violence against women and children agency responses, and the development of Women's Studies in Europe.

The organisers of this event are also hosting a half-day **National Networking Meeting in Central London on Saturday 29 November 1997**

This second event is free for those attending the conference who are working to support women escaping from the sex industry and/or campaigning for legislative change. The aim of this day is to build a national network of organisations dealing with issues of prostitution as violence and abuse of women and children. It is envisaged that a large number of women attending will be survivors of the sex industry.

How To Register

The cost of the day is **£95** for Employed/Organisations
or **£50** for Unwaged/Volunteers

If you are receiving funding to attend this event, or can afford to make a further contribution, you can sponsor a place for a survivor of the sex industry by sending a cheque for £50 to the address below.

There are refreshments throughout the day, but lunch is not included

The organisers reserve the right to alter the programme if necessary

Cancellations are subject to a charge of 50%

To book a place at this event, please return this application form to:

Research Centre on Violence, Abuse & Gender Relations

School of Cultural Studies,

Leeds Metropolitan University

Calverley Street

Leeds

LS1 3HE

(Please make cheques payable to Leeds Metropolitan University)

If you need further information, please write to the above address or telephone, fax or Email on the numbers below:

Telephone (0113) 283 6710

Fax (0113) 283 6709

Email J.Bindel@lmu.ac.uk

(Invoices *must* be settled by 10 November 1997 or you will be asked to pay on the day)

Name _____

Telephone (Home) _____

Fax / e.mail _____

Telephone (Work) _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Firm/Professional Address _____

Postcode _____

Please Circle: Cheque Enclosed or Address for invoicing:

Postcode _____

Cost : Tick Tick Group Rates Available
 £50 £95