

MEN WHO SOLICIT PROSTITUTES: A DEMOGRAPHIC
PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE VANCOUVER POLICE
DEPARTMENT'S PROSTITUTION OFFENDER PROGRAM

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1. The Prostitution Offender Program

Traditionally, in Vancouver, men charged with the offence Communicating for the Purpose of Prostitution (Section 213 of the Criminal Code of Canada) have been processed through the court system. While this method of addressing prostitution may act as a deterrent, the social and community issues, and human consequences of prostitution are largely ignored. The Vancouver Police Department, in conjunction with community agencies and the John Howard Society of the Lower Mainland, have been offering an education program, the Prostitution Offender Program, to men arrested for Section 213 offenses. Attendees of the Prostitution Offender Program gain an understanding of the impact of their behaviour and the far-reaching negative effects of their support of the sex trade.

The mission of the Prostitution Offender Program is to educate the offender in the following:

- Legal Ramifications Related to Prostitution
- Health Risks Associated with Prostitution
- Effect of Prostitution on the Lives of Women and their Families
- Effect of Prostitution on the Community
- Dynamics of Pimping and the Cycle of Prostitution
- Group Discussions

An independent comprehensive program evaluation is also being conducted. Researchers from the University of British Columbia, Department of Psychology – Drs. Kennedy, Gorzalka, and Yuille are spearheading this task.

The Prostitution Offender Program of British Columbia held its first class in September of 1999. As of December 31st, 2003 711 men had successfully completed this program. Of those, 597 had voluntarily completed research questionnaires prepared by the research team from the Department of Psychology at the University of British Columbia. This is a response rate of 84%.

2. Interim Report

This report is a profile of the men choosing to participate in the Prostitution Offender Program of British Columbia (POPBC) after being arrested for soliciting prostitutes in the Lower Mainland. This report supplements and updates information presented in the December 2000 report and the November 2001 report. Information is presented in three main areas - demographic information, experiences with prostitution, and attitudes towards prostitution. The demographic information is based on the first 734 POP participants through the program. The experience and attitude information is based on 597 participants who voluntarily completed research questionnaires.

3. Demographics

The demographics presented below are based on participants who were arrested primarily in the city of Vancouver (79.3%, 578 men), Surrey (4.9%, 36 men), Chilliwack (1.6%, 12 men), Abbotsford (1.6%, 12 men), Campbell River (1.6%, 12 men), Burnaby (1.4%, 10 men) and Victoria (1.0%, 7 men). 54 participants (7.4%) were referred through the

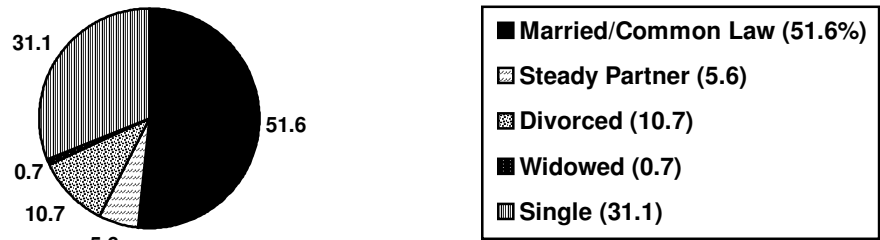
Alternative Measures Program. POPBC has also begun to work with other diversion programs, accepting participants who were arrested and charged in other cities such as Seattle and Edmonton.

Demographic information was collected by the John Howard Society at the intake interview and passed on to the University of British Columbia researchers without any identifying information. To ensure confidentiality, participants of the POPBC are assigned a number and only identified by this code, not by any personal information. Individual responses are not reported here, only responses that are averaged across the group as a whole.

The average age reported for the men who participate in the program is 38 years old, with a range of 18 - 94 years of age. The mode age was 33.

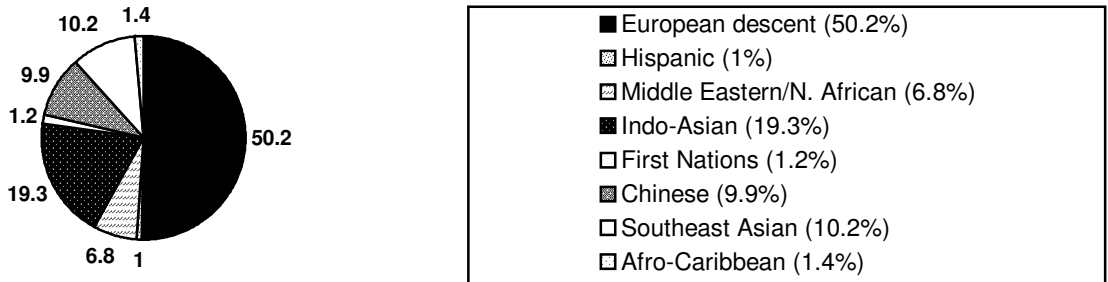
MARITAL STATUS

Contrary to the popular belief that clients of the sex trade are single men who don't have other access to sexual relations, over 57% of those arrested were in serious, committed relationships.



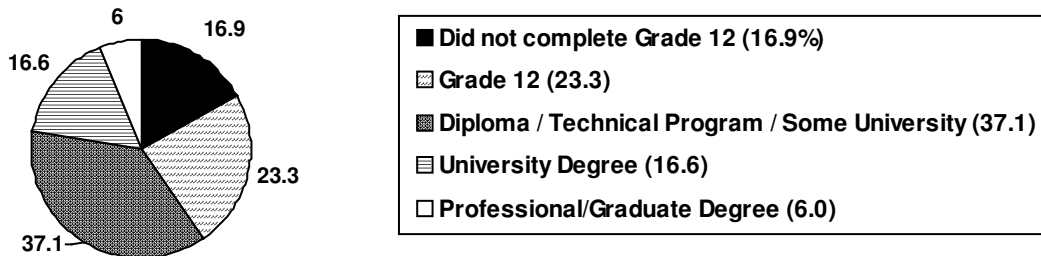
ETHNICITY

The ethnic composition of the men stopped for soliciting an undercover police officer is very similar to the ethnic population of the Lower Mainland.



64.9% of the participants indicated that they spoke a 2nd language.

EDUCATION



EMPLOYMENT

Types of employment reported cover a wide range of occupations. Full time employees included doctors, teachers, entrepreneurs, tree fallers, bakers, postal clerks, day traders, plumbers, truck drivers, cooks, valet parkers and many other occupations. Casual or seasonal employees included professional snowboarders and film crew members.

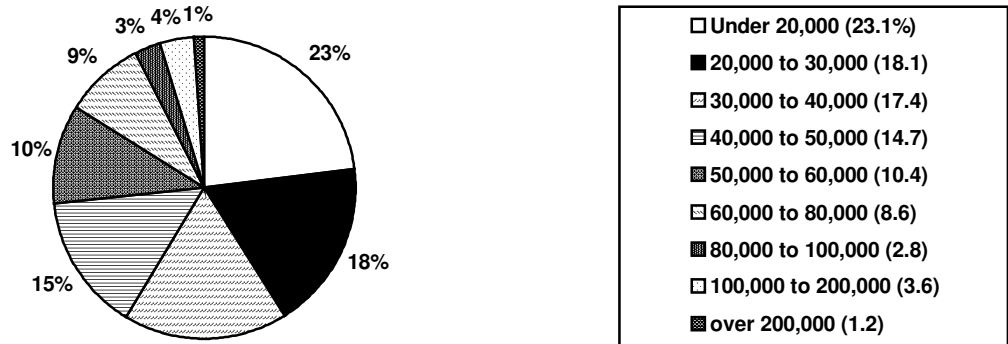
Employment Status



INCOME (PERSONAL NOT HOUSEHOLD)

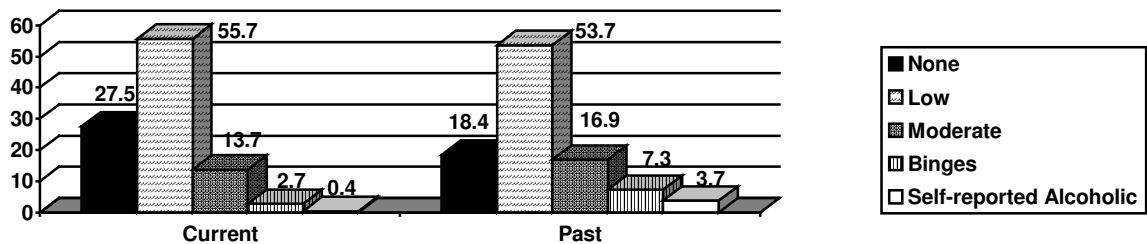
Participants were asked for approximates of their personal income. This income was what they personally earned, not what their household income was. The average income across 712 men was \$41,050. The incomes reported ranged from \$2,000 to over \$300,000.

Personal Income

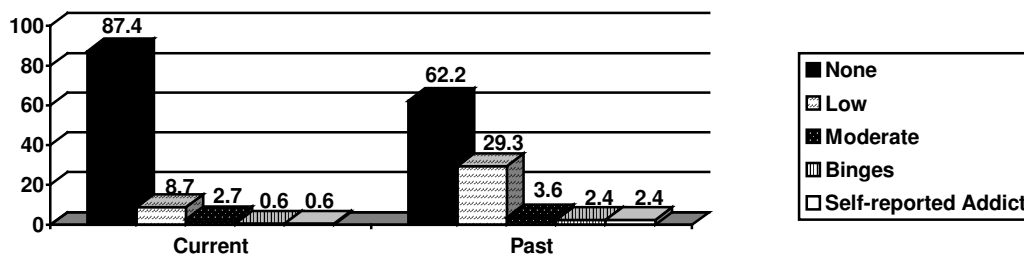


ALCOHOL USE

Participants were asked about their current and past levels of alcohol use.



ILLEGAL DRUG USE



When describing past drug use 222 people reported using marijuana, 26 cocaine, 7 LSD/acid, 6 ecstasy, 2 heroin, 1 hashish, and 5 describe their drug use as encompassing all types. When describing current drug use 71 people disclosed using marijuana regularly, 4 described using cocaine regularly and 1 disclosed using heroin but was also on a methadone program.

HEALTH

When asked about their health - physical, mental and emotional – the group overall reported being very healthy and able-bodied. With respect to physical health, 84.5% reported no concerns, 2.3% reported a permanent disability, 9.3% reported chronic problems, and 3.9% occasional problems. Ulcers, back pains, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and asthma were the most common issues.

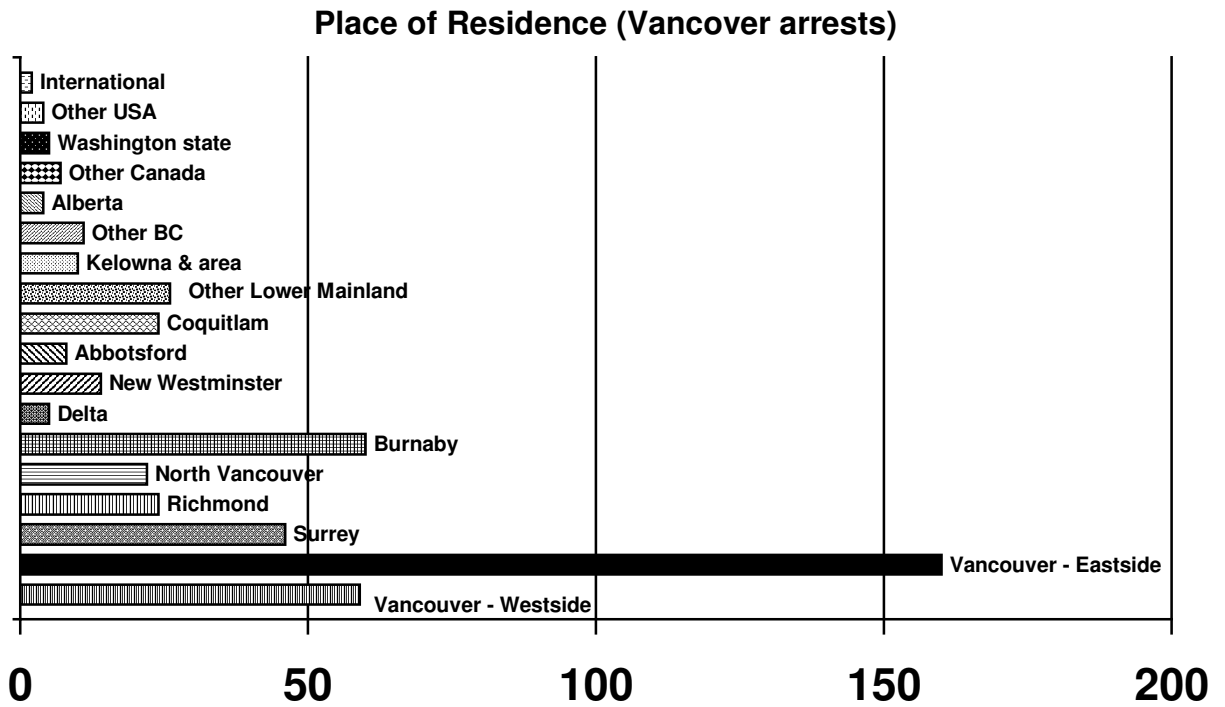
With respect to mental health, 96.5% reported no concerns at all. Those dealing with mental health issues included 0.3% reporting a permanent disability, 0.4% reporting chronic problems and 2.8% reporting occasional problems. Depression was the most common mental health issue. With respect to emotional health, 88.9% reported no concerns, 0.3% reported a permanent disability, 3.2% reported chronic problems and 7.6% reported occasional problems. There was a significant overlap with emotional health and mental health. Those people reporting mental health issues were also the ones reporting emotional health issues.

CHILDREN

495 men were asked about their children. 52.9% of that group indicated that they did have children. Of the 47.1% who did not have children, 85.1% of them stated that they planned to have children.

PLACE OF RESIDENCE

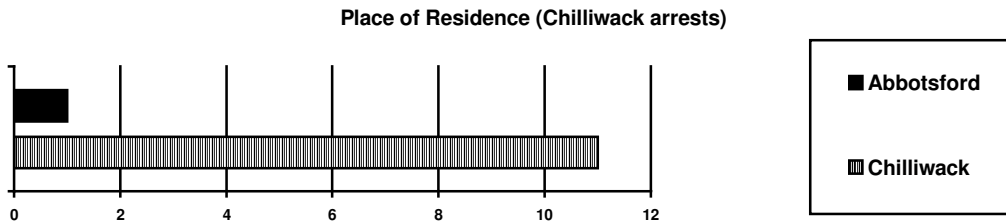
When participants were surveyed about their home address, a large proportion of the men lived in the same region where they were arrested. Participants were from all over the Lower Mainland and beyond but most participants were arrested close to home. For example, the graph below presents the home area of residence for men who were arrested in Vancouver (based on 148 arrests). These arrests took place in stings predominantly conducted in Vancouver’s Eastside. For information on arrests conducted in other parts of the Lower Mainland, please see the graphs below.



Areas included in the Other Lower Mainland category included West Vancouver, Langley, Mission, Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows and Chilliwack.

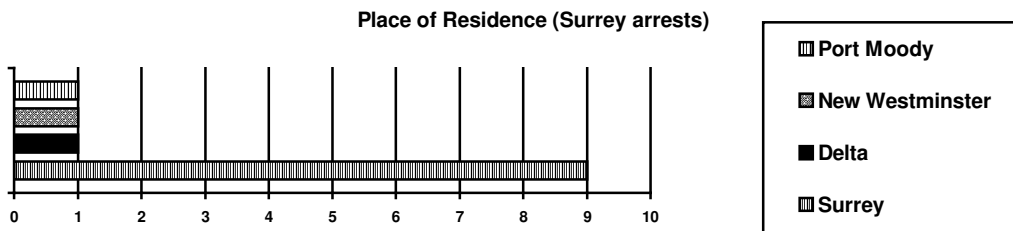
CHILLIWACK

The residence of men arrested in stings conducted in Chilliwack (based on 12 arrests) found that 11 were from Chilliwack and one was from Abbotsford.



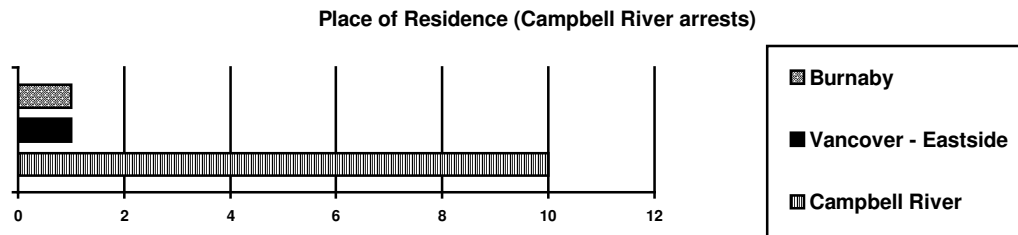
SURREY

The residence of men arrested in stings conducted in Surrey (based on 12 arrests) found that 9 were from Surrey, 1 from New Westminster, 1 from Port Moody and 1 was from Delta.



CAMPBELL RIVER

The residence of men arrested in stings conducted in Campbell River (based on 12 arrests) found that 10 were from Surrey, 1 from East Vancouver, and 1 was from Burnaby.



4. Experience with Prostitution

Descriptions of past experience with prostitution were collected anonymously through “self-report” questionnaires. The participants completed these questionnaires in private a few weeks before their attendance at the POP day-long school. The data was collected independent of any identifying information and dropped by the participant in a sealed box to ensure anonymity. The number of participants who chose to answer each question may vary up to a maximum of 597 participants providing responses.

While many men, upon their arrest, claimed that this was their first time at attempting to hire a prostitute, this picture changed when POP participants were asked anonymously about their previous experience. The first question that they were asked in their self-report questionnaire booklet was “Have you ever had sex (or some other service) with a prostitute?” Sixty-four (58) percent (308 respondents) answered that they had and forty-two percent responded that they had not. At least 15 respondents who responded no to that question went on to provide details about their previous experience with prostitutes in later questions.

The following questions are examples of the information volunteered by the POP participants.

Q. How old were you when you first had sex with a prostitute?

R. Average = 27 Range 12 - 57 years old

Q. How old were you when you first had sex?

R. Average = 18 Range 11 - 32 years old

Q. How many times have you purchased sex in the past? (For those disclosing a history of prostitution use.)

R. Average = 42 Range 1 - 4000 times
The median response for this question was 7 [half reporting above and half reporting below].

Q. How much have you spent on prostitutes in your lifetime?

R. For those who reported monies spent the median response was \$500.00 [half reporting above and half reporting below] with a mode response of \$1,000.00 [most common response]. Since the range spent was so large (\$20 - \$50,000) the average

reported of \$1,964.00 reflects a standard deviation of \$5,400. Interestingly, the 10% of participants reporting having spent over \$4,000 on prostitutes were not among the wealthiest participants. Income level was not correlated with money spent on prostitutes. For the top 5% (having spent \$8,000 or more) 1 reported earning under \$10,000 per year, 4 earned less than \$20,000, 3 under \$40,000, 5 under \$60,000, 2 under \$70,000 and 2 under \$80,000.

Q. Do you enjoy sex with prostitutes?
 R. 60.0% responded 'No', 40.0% responded 'Yes'

Q. Why did you first go to a prostitute?
 R. (% of responses given)

Curiosity	27.3%
Lonely	19.4%
Sexually frustration	16.1%
Sexual gratification	5.4%
Stressed	5.4%
Bachelor party	2.9%
Drunk	2.1%
Prostitute approached /enticed me	2.1%
Legal (Reno/Amsterdam)	1.7%

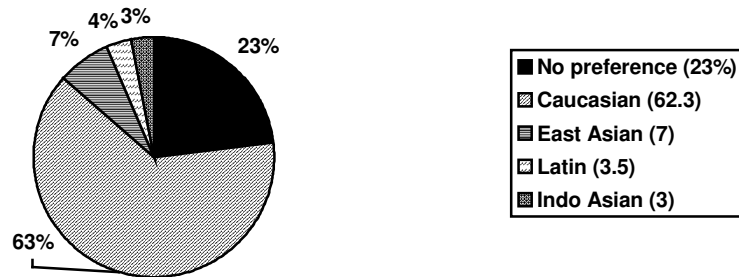
Q. What is the best part about sex with a prostitute?
 R. (% of responses given)

No commitments/attachments	23.8%
Quick sexual encounter	22.1%
Sexual gratification	14.3%
Variety/different partners	11.7%
Can get a specific sex act	10.8%
Anonymity	4.3%
Intimacy/closeness	3.0%
Being in control	0.9%

Q. What is the cost of your ideal prostitute?



Q. What is the race of your ideal prostitute?

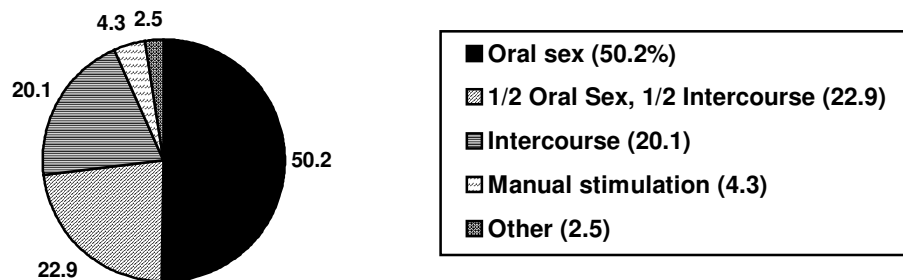


Q. What is the appearance of you ideal prostitute?

R. (% of responses given)

Attractive	35.8%
Health	30.2%
Slender/nice figure	9.9%
Blond	5.6%
Tall	3.7%
Busty	2.5%
Acceptable	2.5%
Small build	2.5%
Dark skin	1.2%
Brunette	1.2%
Young	1.2%
Revealing clothes	1.2%

Q. What do you regularly request as service from a prostitute?



Q. When do you usually go to a prostitute?

R. (% of responses given)

After work	38.9%
Weekends	20.4%
No specific time	15.4%
Evenings	14.2%

Q. What is your preferred time of day to hire a prostitute?

R. (% of responses given)

Nights (9 p.m.- 12:00 a.m.)	46.9%
Evenings (5 p.m. – 9 p.m.)	26.3%
No preference	12.6%
Late nights (after 12:00 a.m)	6.3%
Afternoon	2.9%
After work	2.3%

Q. What do you usually do before you go to a prostitute?

R. (% of responses given)

Nothing specific	32.8%
Fantasize	27.0%
Drink	17.5%
Work	7.3%
Fight/Argue	4.4%

Q. What do you usually pay a prostitute?

R. Average = \$67.50 Range \$20 - \$300.00

Q. How do you know where to go when you are looking for a prostitute?

R. (% of responses given)

See them when driving around	38.6%
Media/news	12.4%
Common knowledge	11.4%
Not sure/Don't know	8.4%
Friends/business associates	7.4%
Always in certain areas	6.9%
Luck/accidental	4.5%

Q. Have you ever used an escort service for sex?

R. 15.2% responded 'Yes', 84.8% responded 'No'

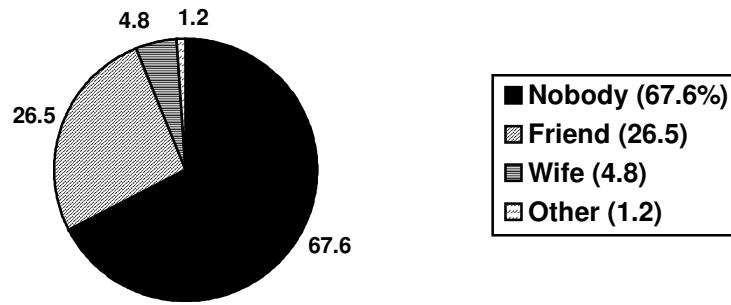
Q. Have you ever visited a massage parlour for sex?

R. 19.1% responded 'Yes', 80.9% responded 'No'

Q. Have you ever visited a bawdy-house for sex?

R. 4.3% responded 'Yes', 95.7% responded 'No'

Q. Who knows that you go to prostitutes?



Q. Do you believe that your behaviour with prostitutes is a problem or has caused problems for you?

R. 52.9% responded 'Yes', 47.1% responded 'No'

Q. Have you ever tried to stop going to prostitutes?

R. 60.8% responded 'Yes', 39.2% responded 'No'

Q. Before this happened, did you think you might get stopped by the police for communicating with a prostitute?

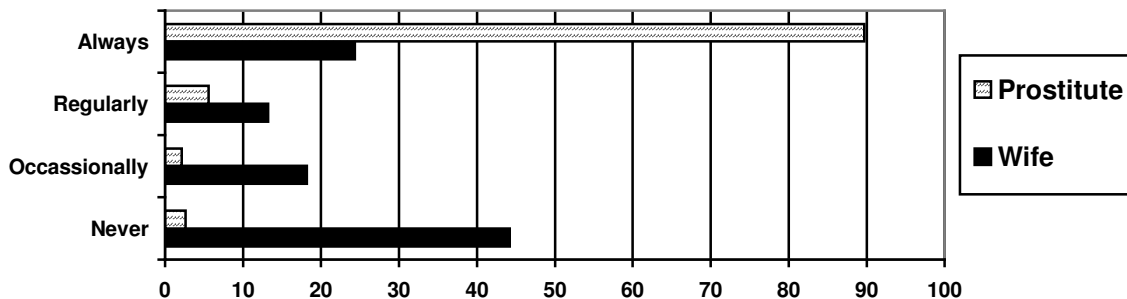
R. 24.2% responded 'Yes', 75.8% responded 'No'

Q. What is your biggest concern about being stopped by police for communicating with a prostitute?

R. (% of responses given)

Embarrassment	30.4%
Criminal record	27.8%
Effect on family	15.9%
Breaking the law	10.7%
Jail time	4.4%
Wife finding out	3.7%
Interference with job	1.9%
No concern	1.5%

Q. How often do you use condoms with...



5. Attitudes towards prostitution

Prior to attending the POP day-long school, participants voluntarily complete an anonymous short questionnaire asking about their attitudes towards prostitution. At the end of the day, an identical questionnaire is handed out again along with a program evaluation form. These responses are dropped anonymously by the participants into a box.

When considering attitude change across the whole group polled from time one to time two, significant results are appearing on most items. Below are a few examples of the questions that are indicating a change (or no change) in attitude. These changes are simply being presented as the average attitude reported across all participants who responded to that question. Attitudes were measured by asking participants to choose whether they agreed with a statement. The measurement was a five point scale ranging from 1 as strongly agree to 5 as strongly disagree

There was a significant change (towards increased disagreement) with the following statements following the POP program:

There is nothing wrong with prostitution.

Women are prostitutes because they want to be, it's their choice.

Most prostitutes make a lot of money.

As long as a man's wife does not know about it there is no harm to the marriage if the man goes to a prostitute.

It would be okay if my son went to a prostitute.

If my wife or partner did not satisfy me sexually it is okay for me to go to a prostitute.

Prostitutes enjoy sex with their customers.

Red light districts would reduce the harmful effects of street prostitution on neighbourhoods.

No matter what the society tries to do, prostitution will always exist.

Prostitution has no effect on the neighborhood or community.

There was a significant change (towards increased agreement) with the following statements following the POP program:

Prostitution is a serious problem in our society.

Prostitutes are victims of pimps.

Most prostitutes live in poverty.

Prostitution exists because of the demands of the customers.

Street prostitution causes urban decay.

Street prostitution should be prohibited in residential areas.

Street prostitution reduces property values.

Street prostitution is harmful because of the used condoms left lying around.

Street prostitution is harmful because of the used needles left lying around.

There was no significant change in agreement or disagreement with the following statements following the POP program:

It would be okay if my daughter was a prostitute.

It is okay to have sex with a juvenile under the age of 16.
I wouldn't mind marrying a prostitute.
Juvenile prostitution is more cause for concern than adult prostitution.

A more detailed analysis of attitude change can be found in the paper, "Attitude change following a diversion program for men who solicit sex" by M. A. Kennedy, C. Klein, B. B. Gorzalka, & J. C. Yuille, currently in press for the *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*. That research found that attitude change was consistent across ethnic groups and level of prior experience with prostitution. The finding that, for the most part, the program had an equal effect on participants regardless of their experience levels suggests that prior experience with prostitution does not reduce the value of an educational diversion program as a viable option for men arrested for soliciting sexual services

Analyses have also revealed that for all but two items, the measure of social desirability demonstrated by participants did not cause the degrees of attitude change to differ. It is encouraging to note that attitude change is not exaggerated by socially desirable response patterns. The motivation of men involved in the criminal justice system to present a socially desirable response pattern was an important consideration.

6. Conclusions

The means presented in the previous three sections (demographics, experience with prostitution and attitudes) are for informational purposes only. They do not represent a complete analysis of the survey information collected to date. They also present only a small portion of the questions asked of the voluntary participants. More thorough analyses will follow over the next few years as the data pool grows.