Stop Trafficking!  
Anti-Human Trafficking Newsletter  

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This issue highlights methods used to expose sex and labor trafficking and the issues feeding it.

Exposing Human Trafficking

‘Big Porn Inc: Exposing the Harms of the Global Pornography Industry’

The unprecedented mainstreaming of the global pornography industry is transforming the sexual politics of intimate and public life, popularizing new forms of hardcore misogyny, and strongly contributing to the sexualization of children. Yet challenges to the pornography industry continue to be dismissed as ‘uncool’, ‘anti-sex’ and ‘moral panic’.

With contributions from leading world experts and activists, “Big Porn Inc” offers a cutting edge exposé of the hidden realities of a multi-billion dollar global industry that promotes itself as a fashionable life-style choice. Unmasking the lies behind the selling of porn as ‘just a bit of fun’ this book reveals the shocking truths of an industry that trades in violence, crime

‘Big Porn’ cont. pg. 2

‘Backpage.com’ and Child Sex Trafficking

By the time Mr. Barnes was picked up by Massachusetts state troopers, he had made $19,000 forcing a 15-year-old girl to have sex with up to eight men a day for 10 days. He advertised her services on Backpage.com, the classified website owned by Village Voice Media.

In August a Seattle man posing as a law enforcement officer allegedly raped two 15-year-olds, whom he found on Backpage.com.

Backpage.com is reported to be the nation’s #1 online platform for advertising sex with minors. A recent letter from 51 Attorneys General to Village Voice Media’s lawyers cites over 50 cases (in 22 states) of trafficking or attempted trafficking of minors for sex, using the site. Although such use violates Backpage.com’s terms of service, the site continually fails to identify and remove ads selling sex with children.

Backpage.com cont. pg. 2

‘The Impact of Pornography on My Life’

“I’m anxious about writing this. Anxious that although I know rationally there is no way you can know who I am, I am still afraid.

In one sense you will know me. I’m the woman behind you in the supermarket queue or sitting opposite you on the train. Middle aged, middle class, educated, professional. Ordinary. Yet there is something in my life I will hide from you, no matter how close we are.”

The anonymous author of the above excerpt, appearing in ‘Big Porn Inc’, shares how she discovered her ‘partner’ of many years was viewing porn and how they struggled to come to terms with what that meant in their relationship.
Human Trafficking Statistics

The first full report from the Department of Justice (DOJ) on human trafficking cases prosecuted within the U.S. was released in 2005 for the years 2001-05. It showed 555 suspected cases, 44% of which occurred in 2005. Following that report, Congress reauthorized the TVPA and added a requirement for a biennial report from the DOJ on all human trafficking cases. The first of those reports recorded more than 1,200 suspected incidents of human trafficking for 2007-08.

State and local law enforcement agencies entered data on trafficking investigations into the Human Trafficking Reporting System (HTRS). The findings represent the government’s ‘best estimate’, since data systems are still being established and probably not recording all incidents.

To view the report, go to: http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=2372

‘Backpage.com’ cont. from pg. 1

Driven by the universal moral imperative to end child sex trafficking, a new multifaith action network called ‘Groundswell’ has started a petition on Change.org. The petition is aimed at shutting down the adult services on Backpage.com. Village Voice Media executives are fully aware that their site is used as a platform for child sex trafficking, but have done close to nothing to stop it. Instead, after executives were confronted by the Attorneys General, the Village Voice ran a shocking cover story ‘expose’ that smeared hard-working advocacy groups by presenting sensationalist statistics on child sex trafficking. What the story didn’t mention is that Village Voice Media earns $22.7 million a year from its adult services ads on Backpage.com, which amounts to $2 million per month, largely attributable to its functioning as a virtual red light district for pimps/traffickers and johns. Currently, Backpage is facilitating sex trafficking in at least 10 other countries.

On November 16th the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW) and Prostitution Research & Education (PRE), along with organizations that include Equality Now, Soroptimist International of the Americas, Apne Aap, Aboriginal Women’s Action Network, Breaking Free, the Frederick Douglass Family Foundation, Temple Committee Against Human Trafficking, A Call to Men and a growing list of co-sponsors, will hold a protest in front of the New York offices of Village Voice Media Holdings, LLC, in order to expose their lack of action.

See pg. 7 for an action targeting Backpage.com.
Members of the Anonymous ‘hacktivist’ movement are claiming responsibility for taking down more than 40 secret child-pornography websites and leaking the names of more than 1,500 members of one of the illegal sites.

The campaign began in October 2011 when members of the hacktivist group found a cache of child-pornography websites while browsing a secret website called the Hidden Wiki, a guidebook to hundreds of underground websites invisible to search engines and regular Internet users. The hackers singled out Lolita City, a file-sharing site used by pedophiles, and leaked the names of the site’s 1,589 active members to Pastebin, a type of web application that allows users to upload snippets of text, usually samples of source code, for public viewing.

In the past year, Anonymous-affiliated hackers have gone after many other organizations with whom they disagree, such as the New York Stock Exchange, the Westboro Baptist Church, the Recording Industry Association of America and government sites in Malaysia, Egypt, Tunisia and Zimbabwe.

Yet, in targeting child pornography sites, and in explaining their methods of attack, these Anonymous-affiliated hackers have revealed a deeply disturbing side of the Internet unknown to most people.

The so-called ‘darknet’, from which this ‘Operation Darknet’ hacking campaign takes its name, is any part of the Internet that is hidden from view — not just hard to reach, but deliberately concealed. The ‘darknet’ appears to have grown out of the free TOR (The Onion Router) routing service, which offers anonymous, encrypted Web browsing to any user.

The TOR-based ‘darknet’ has reportedly grown into a private, encrypted constellation of websites offering a variety of shady and illegal services, from fake IDs and steroids to e-mail hacking and tips on how to call in police raids as pranks. There’s even a hidden site called ‘The Last Box’ that bills itself as an ‘Assassination Market.’ Only computers that have installed TOR browser plug-ins can access the TOR-based darknet, including its guidebook the ‘Hidden Wiki’.

In another Pastebin posting, the hackers explained that their campaign against the child pornography sites took root when they found a site listed on the Hidden Wiki called ‘Hard Candy’, which ‘was dedicated to links to child pornography.’ The group delved deeper and discovered that nearly all of the pornography sites listed on the Hidden Wiki “shared a digital fingerprint with the shared hosting server at Freedom Hosting.”

The Anonymous-affiliated hackers then issued a warning to Freedom Hosting asking it to remove the child pornography links from its server. Freedom Hosting did not comply, so Anonymous shut down Freedom Hosting’s server. Freedom Hosting restored service the following day, but it was attacked and taken down again. In their statement, the Anonymous members promised repeated pressure and consistent online attacks, saying, “The owners and operators at Freedom Hosting are openly supporting child pornography and enabling pedophiles to view innocent children, fueling their issues and putting children at risk of abduction, molestation, rape and death. For this, Freedom Hosting has been declared #OpDarknet Enemy Number One. By taking down Freedom Hosting, we are eliminating 40+ child pornography websites, among these is Lolita City, one of the largest child pornography websites to date containing more than 100 GB of child pornography. We will continue to not only crash Freedom Hosting’s server, but any other server we find to contain, promote, or support child pornography.”

The statement added a demand to Freedom Hosting and other Web servers hosting child pornography. “Remove all child pornography content from your servers. Refuse to provide hosting services to any website dealing with child pornography. This statement is not just aimed at Freedom Hosting, but everyone on the Internet. It does not matter who you are, if we find you to be hosting, promoting, or supporting child pornography, you will become a target.”

(/http://www.securitynewsdaily.com/anonymous-hackers-child-porn-sites-1260/?mid=50)
Forced Labor Conviction in U.S.

Two Ukrainian brothers were convicted in October 2011 of smuggling desperate Ukrainian villagers into Pennsylvania to work long hours at little or no pay, cleaning retail stores and office buildings.

Nine workers testified. They described being raped, beaten or threatened by the 52-year old defendant, who glared at prosecutors after the verdict and shouted at them in his native tongue as he was led out in handcuffs. The jury found him guilty of using sexual and physical violence to intimidate workers. He had denied the accusations. He faces 20 years to life in prison on racketeering and extortion charges.

He had been acquitted of similar charges at a trial in the Ukraine.

His brother, 36, was convicted of the racketeering enterprise but acquitted of extortion. He faces up to 20 years in prison. Three other brothers were named in the indictment; two are in prison. Three other brothers were given the lack of economic opportunity. Sentencing will take place in early 2012.

Prosecutors described the defendants as the “enforcers” of the enterprise in America, while brothers in the Ukraine served as “recruiters”, an easy task. Authorities have said the retail stores, along with homes and offices were unaware of the situation, because they hired cleaning crews through contractors. “I think every business should know who’s working for them, but this is a common practice in all large businesses, they use subcontractors to hire workers,” the U.S. District Attorney said.

Labor Trafficking: Exposed Abroad

A writer for The New Yorker uncovered information about trafficking victims lured to Iraq under false pretenses to work for American military contractors. Among the victims were women from Fiji, who thought they were going to lucrative salon jobs in Dubai. They ended up “unwitting recruits for the U.S. Pentagon’s invisible army — more than seventy thousand cooks, cleaners, construction workers, fast-food clerks, electricians, and beauticians from the world's poorest countries, servicing U.S. military logistics contracts in Iraq and Afghanistan,”

Exposing Supply Chains

“The California Transparency in Supply Chains Act of 2010 requires retail sellers and manufacturers in CA, with more than $100 million in annual worldwide gross receipts, to publicly disclose their efforts to eradicate slavery and human trafficking throughout their direct supply chains. It affects more than 3,000 companies doing business in CA. These companies represent approximately 87% of economic activity in CA, which has the eighth largest economy in the world.

Beginning in January 2012, companies affected by the act will have to post on their websites what policies they have in place to ensure that their supply chains are free of slavery and human trafficking. These policies can include evaluating and addressing the risk of human trafficking, auditing suppliers, and training employees and management on human trafficking and slavery.” (TIP 2011, pg. 23)
New Publication on Child Trafficking and Child Welfare

Child trafficking is one of the most disturbing human rights abuses of our time, involving cases of boys and girls trafficked for labor or sex. The U.S. State Dept. estimates that thousands of U.S. citizen youth are trafficked each year. While children are estimated to comprise a large proportion of human trafficking victims in the U.S., they continue to represent the smallest victim class identified. Between 2001 and 2009 U.S. authorities successfully recognized only 304 foreign minors as victims of trafficking.

Much of the current response to human trafficking in the U.S. has not effectively addressed the special needs of children. From a systemic approach, child welfare agencies are in an ideal position to identify and respond to trafficking cases based on their existing mandate to work with vulnerable children and families — yet few agencies have the capacity and resources to do so.

In response to this critical gap, the International Organization for Adolescents (IOFA) and the Center for the Human Rights of Children at Loyola Univ. developed the “Building Child Welfare Response to Child Trafficking Project”. The purpose of the project was to address systemic gaps in knowledge, policies, and procedures within local child welfare agencies in the U.S.

The outcome of the Project is the handbook, “Building Child Welfare Response to Child Trafficking.” The handbook, which uses Illinois as a case study, provides tools for identifying, screening, and providing case management to trafficked children; a summary of services available to child victims of trafficking; and a discussion on legal protections and advocacy for them.

To order a hard copy, contact:
The Center for the Human Rights of Children, Loyola Univ.
Phone: 312-915-6350
Email: chrc@luc.edu
(http://www.luc.edu/chrc/Chil.pdf)

Corporate Stance Taken

Impassioned by our desire for justice, we, Sisters For Christian Community Desert and Mountain Region, stand in solidarity with our sisters and brothers whose dignity is violated as victims of human trafficking. We commit to educate ourselves and others about the root causes of this grievous injustice. We support actions of advocacy, empowerment, and direct service to eradicate this social evil. (Adopted April 2011)

‘Childhood Under Siege: How Big Business Targets Children’

In a recent book, Joel Bakan reveals the astonishingly callous and widespread exploitation of children by profit-seeking corporations and society’s shameful failure to protect them. The book shows how corporations pump billions of dollars into rendering parents and governments powerless to shield children from a relentless commercial assault designed solely to exploit their unique needs and vulnerabilities.

Elaine Cohen, CSRwire writer, says this book is a “true eye-opener and a ‘must read’. If there is one book on your reading list, make it this one.” The book begins with mind-shattering stories of the child-targeting video games market, which ‘ramps up media violence, cultivates addiction, cynically exploits social network friendships, sexualizes girls and promotes hyperconsumerism.’

Manipulation of children’s emotions and carefully crafting strategies to hook kids into the most vile media violence, as well as other addictive online attractions, may make big money for corporations but they also make big problems for society, by immersing kids in a world where ‘violence is fun, especially when it is cruel and sexualized... and that as human beings, we are naturally prone to be violent and brutal.’

Other issues addressed include pharmaceutical companies, government regulation, parental responsibility, and the widespread cases of child labor in the U.S. where it is still legal for children to work at the age of 12.

Films

‘Made in L.A.’

Made in L.A. is an Emmy award-winning feature documentary that follows the remarkable story of three Latina immigrants working in Los Angeles garment sweatshops as they embark on a three-year odyssey to win basic labor protections from a trendy clothing retailer. Made in L.A. reveals the impact of the struggle on these women’s lives as they are gradually transformed by their experience. Compelling, humorous, deeply human, Made in L.A. is a story about immigration, the power of unity, and the courage it takes to find one’s voice.

http://www.madeinla.com/

‘The Harvest’

This film is the story of children, working as many as 12 hours a day, six months a year in the scorching hot sun, without the protection of child labor laws. More than 400,000 migrant child workers in the U.S. journey from their homes, going from state to state, farm to farm, crop to crop, picking the produce we eat. Many of these children are American citizens. All are working to help their families survive, while sacrificing the birthright of childhood: play, stability and school.

http://www.theharvestfilm.com/

‘The Dark Side of Chocolate’

In 2001 consumers around the world were outraged to discover that child labor and slavery, trafficking, and other abuses existed on cocoa farms in the Ivory Coast, a country that produces nearly half the world’s cocoa. Negative publicity and consumer demands for answers and solutions soon followed. Sen. Tom Harkin (IA) and Rep. Eliot Engel (NY) tackled the issue by adding a rider to an agricultural bill, proposing a federal system to certify and label chocolate products as ‘slave free’. The measure passed the House of Representatives and created a potential disaster for Cargill, Mars, Hershey’s, Nestle, Barry Callebaut, Saf-Cacao and other chocolate manufacturers.

To avoid legislation that would have forced chocolate companies to label their products with “no child labor” labels, the industry fought back and finally agreed to a voluntary protocol to end abusive and forced child labor on cocoa farms by 2005.

In 2005 the cocoa industry failed to comply and a new deadline for 2008 was established. In 2008 the terms of the protocol were still not met, and yet another deadline for 2010 was set.

Miki Mistrati and U Roberto Romano launched a behind-the-scenes investigation to verify if these allegations of child labor in the chocolate industry continue today, a decade later.

http://www.documentaryheaven.com/cutting-edge-the-child-sex-trade/

‘Cutting Edge: The Child Sex Trade’

Liviu Tipurita returns to his homeland, Romania, to investigate stories of a sudden rise in the trafficking of children into the sex trade, involving boys and young men. He meets an old friend, a 15-year-old street boy, who tells him he’s been selling sex to foreign pedophiles since he was twelve. He said a wealthy German bought him a passport so that he could go to the West. The boy introduces Liviu to his street gang, some as young as eleven, being preyed on by pedophiles.

Liviu follows stories of kids trafficked to Italy and on the streets of Milan films a fourteen year old boy being pimped by his own father. Over weeks of investigation, several more cases of families selling their own children for sex are documented.

Back in Romania, Liviu hears about an English pedophile/trafficicker called ‘Tom’. Co-producer/director, Andrew Smith, infiltrates Tom’s pimping network and films damning evidence of how underage boys are preyed upon and trafficked to wealthy pedophile clients in the West.

http://documentaryheaven.com/cutting-edge-the-child-sex-trade/

Holiday Option: ‘TassaTag’

The Travelers Against Sex Slavery and Trafficking ‘TassaTag’ is a 4x6-inch bright, hand-woven cotton luggage tag. Besides being practical, environmentally sensitive, and fair trade, TassaTags serve a much larger purpose than helping spot luggage.

Every TassaTag supports ECPAT-USA (End Child Prostitution and Trafficking), which strives to protect children in the U.S. and abroad from commercial sexual exploitation, a major illegal trade around the world.

TassaTags are made by women at the Regina Center in Nongkhai, Thailand. The project enables women to stay in their villages, earn income and keep their children in school — major strategies in reducing sex trafficking.

The Regina Center is a producing partner of HandCrafting Justice, a member of the Fair Trade Federation.

Order at: http://www.tassatag.org/orderN.html
**Stop ‘Backpage.com’**

Let Village Voice Media executives know that they can’t hide their complicity. Sign Groundswell’s petition to end child sex trafficking on Backpage.com:

http://www.change.org/petitions/tell-village-voice-media-to-stop-child-sex-trafficking-on-backpagecom

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**‘Modern Slavery: A Beginner’s Guide’**

Three leading experts combine original research with first-hand accounts from actual slaves to expose one of today’s worst humanitarian crises. A guide to modern slavery in all its forms, coverage includes modern slavery’s history, economy, health consequences, gender/racial/religious dynamics, the pressures from armed conflict and environmental disaster.

Kevin Bale also authored the award-winning ‘Disposable People’ and ‘Ending Slavery’. Zoe Trodd teaches in the Dept. of English and the Institute of African-American Studies at Columbia Univ. and Alex Kent Williamson of Harvard Univ. is a pathologist and a member of Physicians for Human Rights.

The $15.00 book is available through Free the Slaves and proceeds from sale of the book support Free the Slaves projects worldwide.


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**ECPAT Activist Toolkits Available**

Centered on child sex trafficking in the U.S. and child sex tourism, these toolkits are helpful for fundraisers, panel discussions, or club meetings. Each has valuable information on the issues, as well as activities, video links and discussion materials for group facilitators. Through the process, groups will learn about common misconceptions regarding sexually-exploited youth, as well as gain an overall understanding of prostitution, human trafficking, and sex tourism. Teachers can also access the toolkit presentation in lesson plan format.

Download the toolkits at:

http://www.ecpatusa.org/take-action/spread-the-word/

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**Stop Trafficking!** is dedicated exclusively to fostering an exchange of information among religious congregations, their friends and collaborating organizations, working to eliminate all forms of trafficking of human beings.

Use the following web address to access back issues of Stop Trafficking! http://www.stopenslavement.org/archives.htm

To contribute information, or make requests to be on the mailing list, please contact: jeansds2010@yahoo.com

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