



Coalition Against Trafficking in Women Australia

MEDIA RELEASE

Victoria's strip clubs hot spots for sexual violence and organised crime: report

Strip clubs are hot spots of sexual violence and organised crime and should be regulated like brothels, according to a new report to be released next week.

Titled, *'Not Just Harmless Fun: The strip club industry in Victoria'*, the report will be launched at the University of Melbourne on Wednesday 8 December.

"Lap dancing is clearly a form of prostitution," said Professor Sheila Jeffreys, report co-author and founder of the Australian branch of the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATWA). "As prostitution venues, strip clubs should be subject to the same regulations as brothels, including the prohibition of alcohol."

After Iceland banned strip clubs earlier this year, recognising the harm they pose to women and the wider community, Professor Jeffreys believes that this new report suggests that we need to rethink attitudes to the strip club industry.

"These clubs threaten women's equality by reducing women to naked genitals for men's viewing delight," she said. "By promoting the objectification of women, strip clubs are fostering a prostitution culture which is normalised through pole dancing classes and buck's nights."

The new report shows that strip clubs not only involve significant violence against the women who strip, they also commonly have links to organised crime, threaten the safety of the surrounding communities, create a new 'glass ceiling' for women in the corporate world and promote a model of sexuality which is harmful to women and girls.

CATWA is pushing for strip clubs to be recognised as a form of prostitution and to be regulated accordingly. Most Victorian strip clubs are currently only classified as night clubs and not as venues providing 'sexual services'.

While the Coalition ultimately seeks the abolition of all forms of prostitution, in the interim it is calling on the Victorian Government to regulate strip venues in a similar way to brothels, including banning the service of alcohol.

'Not Just Harmless Fun': The strip club industry in Victoria.

Report launch details:

When Wednesday 8 December, 2010, 6.00pm – 8.00pm
Where University of Melbourne, John Medley Building, Level 5, Faculty
 Function Room

Links: <http://www.catwa.org.au/> and <http://www.catwinternational.org/>

CATWA is the Australian branch of CATW International, a Non Governmental Organization having Category II consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council. It works locally and internationally to end all forms of sexual exploitation of women, especially the violence of prostitution, trafficking and pornography.