**FOPP and Sex Worker Rights**

Prepared by Alix Lutnick, Ph.D. in consultation with various sex workers, sex worker activists and community service providers

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1. Targeting of clients has been shown to increase vulnerability of street based workers
	1. Displaces sex workers into more isolated areas
		1. Not familiar with these areas or the clients
		2. When displaced into more isolated areas lack social protection of other workers who watch out for each other
		3. Increases the likelihood of feeling compelled to have a facilitator/pimp for protection
	2. Can result in shorter negotiation periods with a client which compromises sex worker’s safety. Less time to assess for threats of violence
	3. May deter non-violent clients from solicitation and the remaining clients may be more problematic
	4. Sex workers who work in the venues targeted by reverse sting operations need to be consulted to provide guidance.
2. Both Abt & Associates (2008) and the audit prepared for the Board of Supervisors in 2009 highlight how the FOPP lacks an evidence based curriculum.
	1. The guiding principle of FOPP relies on a radical feminist analysis which positions all prostitution as violence against women.
		1. Unfortunately this results in the use of inaccurate, incendiary language, and does not foster a greater understanding of the diversity of people and experiences connected with sex work
		2. Does not discuss the role of structural factors that bring people to sex work
		3. Provides a limited narrative that the act of buying sex created harm, instead of also examining the circumstances in which they bought sex.
	2. To ensure the development of evidence based curriculum and culturally appropriate responses, the St. James Infirmary and former and current sex workers need to be involved in the process.
	3. The “effects on prostitutes” portion of the curriculum needs to be expanded to diversify the types of sex workers who share their stories.
3. What outcomes indicate a successful program? The FOPP lacks clear goals as stated in the audit prepared for the Board of Supervisors in 2009.

*“The one-day education program offered to men eligible to participate in FOPP does not meet the National Institute of Justice’s characterization of programs to reduce recidivism, which include more intensive and longer interventions than the one-day education program and follow up of program participants.”*(Budget Analyst report, p. 3)

* 1. If recidivism, no evidence that it prevents clients from re-engaging
		1. Abt & Associates (2008) look at whether someone was rearrested. This of course is different than whether they solicited again.

*“inability to reliably link FOPP referral data to criminal history data, and to reliably distinguish program successes from program failures or ineligible individuals, seriously compromised the ability to measure recidivism specifically for the set of FOPP participants and others referred to the program”.* (Shively et al, p.73)

* + 1. The Abt & Associates (2008) evaluation found that participation in the FOPP was not associated with lower self-report scores about the likelihood of soliciting in the future.
		2. Monto & Garcia (2001) found no statistically significant differences in re-engagement between samples who participated in an intervention program versus those who did not.
	1. If it’s about helping women stop their sex trade involvement, need to revisit this.
		1. Currently participation in SAGE’s Early Intervention Prostitution Program (EIPP) is limited to women who have less than three prior prostitution convictions.
			1. Shouldn’t anyone with a prostitution conviction be offered the opportunity to avoid criminal charges?
			2. As a diversion program, why do different criteria exist for clients and sex workers? Clients go through an 8 hour training, sex workers 25 hours)
			3. Are there other program options for women who want diversion but do not feel that SAGE’s program is the best fit for them?
		2. What resources/programs can be offered to women who are not willing/able/interested to stop engaging in sex work?
		3. What about men and transgender clients and sex workers?

* 1. Outcomes need to focus on decreasing violence against sex workers
		1. Questionable that the men who enroll in FOPP are violent offenders.

Think it’s true that if prior violent offense, not eligible for the program

* + 1. If want to decrease violence against sex workers, need a shift from end demand to talking about power relationships and what kind of specific behavior sex workers abhor from their clients.
			1. Haggling rates, slyly slipping off a condom, non-negotiated rough stuff, shorting money, etc., these are all unacceptable, hurt real human beings, and are not "part of the game".
			2. Focus on helping clients understand how their behaviors as clients impact sex workers.
			3. Avoid hyperbolic, often-untrue lessons that conflate all prostitution with sex trafficking/slavery of children etc.
		2. How can the FOPP shift its focus from clients in general to clients who cause harm?
		3. An advisory project to determine best practices to address dangers of violence from clients is needed.
	1. Whatever outcomes are decided upon, quarterly data about FOPP arrests and outcomes need to be publically available.
		1. Data should include, but not be limited to, numbers of arrests, neighborhoods/locations where arrests took place, gender (clearly distinguishing clients from workers, and male, female, transgender).
		2. Quarterly reviews of the data should be coordinated with a project aimed at reducing violence against street based workers.
1. Sources of revenue need to be generated for programs so their funding is not predicated on the criminalization and arrests of clients and sex workers.
	1. When clients are targeted in reverse sting operations, sex workers are harmed. I can think of no program in the Bay Area that wants to see sex workers harmed or further marginalized.
	2. The SAGE Project does very important work and, like most CBOs, does that work on a limited budget. To lose the money it gets from the FOPP would compromise their ability to continue this work
		1. In the Abt & Associates evaluation of FOPP, they state that from 1995 through 2007 SAGE had received $1 million. The program itself had generated about $3 million in revenue.
			1. Ultimately for those 13 years, SAGE received approximately $77,000 a year to cover the EIPP and their role in the FOPP.
	3. As highlighted in the Budget Analyst’s report to the Board of Supervisors, the costs of the FOPP exceed the fee revenues
		1. It may not be financially prudent for the SFPD to continue the reverse sting operations
			1. Drawing from the numbers reported in the Abt. & Associates evaluation, from 1995 through 2007 it has cost an estimated $3,516,479 for SFPD reverse stings.
				1. Only about one third of those costs were recovered through the SFPD’s share of fee revenue ($1,047, 706).

Additional notes to share:

On March 24, 2007 I attended the FOPP. When I was there the shaming of clients and sex workers came not just from the women sharing their stories, but also from representatives of the District Attorney’s office, concerned neighbors, and representatives of the San Francisco Police Department. Some of the women sharing their stories said the following things:

*"you've been rescued from HIV & STDs by getting arrested"*

*"all you look like is a walking, talking dollar sign"*

*"when you're with a criminal what do you expect but crime"*

*"you get an opportunity today to change your evil ways"*

*"you don't want to go to prison because you'll meet Bubba and Bubba likes guys"*

*"something is wrong with you if that's how you get your thrills"*

*"if you're participating in it, then you are contributing to it and you are as bad as a pimp"*

*"If you don't give her enough money she may rob you"*

And a quote from the DAs office representative:

*"The type of people you are dealing with with solicitation are not necessarily truthful"*

Another troubling aspect of the process was that the majority of the men (at least those willing to speak out during the sessions) voiced that they thought if they went through the program nothing would remain on their legal records. What actually happens is that the arrest remains, so if anyone ever asks if they have been arrested they have to say yes. They were not aware of this.