

# THE OBSERVER



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*Reporting Accurate and Objective Information Based on Facts, not Agenda-Setting Theories*

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## **Child Prostitution**

Promoters of Pedophilia - Prostitution

Series- Part 3 of 5

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It was 1995, "**dot com**" businesses were thriving and created major relocations to Silicon Valley and San Francisco. To assist with the housing search, a Charles Schwab analyst named Craig Newmark added real estate ads to his website "Craigslist" which initially was created for art and technology activity postings. Later a dating section was added and within ten years Craigslist soared to international portal status used by twelve (12) countries. In 1999, [EBay bought a 28.4%](#) stake in Craigslist, making them the largest shareholder with founder [Craig Newmark](#) and CEO [James Buckmaster](#).

Although this action took place in 1999 and created a very profitable Craigslist, Newmark's interviews in 2003 continued to downplay the 'business angle' and highlighted the community aspect.

*["We think of it as a grassroots community service, not a business"](#) (2003) ["We provide a community service that helps people."](#) (2005) ["I'll be doing customer service only as long as I live; after that, it's over."](#) (2006). Newmark's words returned to haunt him when Cook County, Illinois Sheriff Thomas Dart filed a lawsuit against Craigslist requesting a discontinuation of erotic services. The lawsuit also wanted reimbursement for more than \$100,000.00, representing the cost to initiate a sting that resulted in the arrest of 156 people via Craigslist between January and November 2008. *"Craigslist is the single largest source of prostitution in the nation. Missing children, runaways, abused women and women trafficked in from foreign countries are routinely forced to have sex with strangers because they're being pimped on Craigslist,"* said Sheriff Dart during a Chicago press conference.*

Via an FBI investigation confirming more than 2,800 prostitution ads for sex with children on Craigslist, a February 2009 sting was justified. Phone number verification for one's credit card and a \$5-\$10 ad fee was all that was necessary to solicit a child. 571 arrests were made and 48 prostituted teens as young as 13 years old were located. Although [pressure from 18 Attorney General Offices](#) around the country and activist groups pressured Craigslist to withdraw their escort and erotic services, they only agreed to block the U.S. portion; however, [they continue to permit ads outside of the U.S.](#)

Could the loss of \$3.7 million in monthly fees to Craigslist generated by erotic service ads have anything to do with the website taking so long to curtail such activity?

Following the money trail appears to show that Craigslist was a business after all and had paved an avenue for pimps and pedophiles. [Backpage.com](#) which is associated with Village Voice Media has

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replaced Craigslist as the leader of online **promoting** of prostitution according to AIM. However, Craigslist has also been [used successfully as bait](#) to entice pedophiles.

International investigations have reaped many arrests such as [Project Flicker](#) which was a four year investigation that revealed an Eastern European ring operating from jail. 30,000 customers in 132 countries were identified which resulted in hundreds of American convictions.

Craigslist also made headlines in Canada when a man advertised on Craigslist after supplying his four brothels near Vancouver with girls from Hong Kong and forcing them into prostitution. According to [AIM Group](#), 150,520 erotic sex service ads were posted within a thirty day period within the four major Canadian cities of Victoria, Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal. Prior statistics for comparison were not available.

The majority of studies regarding child [prostitution in Canada](#) have been done by researchers in British Columbia (often referred to as “*Canada's California*”) and where the majority of the child **sex trade** occurs. Karaoke bars, massage parlors and locations known as trick pads host between 50-80% of this horrendous criminal activity. A study in the late 1990's reported that between 20-50% of the pedophilia trade openly solicits children on the streets. Although rural communities appear to have a more clandestine community selling child sexual services, it can be found in parks, on fishing boats, truck stops and back alleys. Even some children in guardianship care have used Craigslist for advertising sex.

Sweden's approach to child trafficking and prostitution has resulted in a **violence against women legislation law in 1999** that **decriminalized the selling of sex and criminalized the purchasing of sex...decreasing the number of Johns by 80%**. The Swedish government regards prostitution as a form of exploitation and violence against women and children. This legislation also provides education to the public regarding this issue and aids and assists prostitutes who want to leave the profession.

Sweden's annual statistics of 200-400 sex trafficked victims shame Finland's annual stats of 15,000-17,000 prostitutes. Given Finland's geographical nearness to St. Petersburg, Russia, could account for the high ratio of sex trafficking in Finland. Sex tourism targeting the Scandinavian countries is abundant in St. Petersburg and active exploitation of children for prostitution is high. Poverty in Russia coupled with drugs and alcohol dependency are factors promoting child prostitution.

Sweden's social solution to child prostitution and prostitution in general, appears to be a common sense approach for consideration. Presently [Sweden](#) is hailed as a global rescue leader.

**For additional information on this subject:**

[Colombia](#)

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