

*"I felt like I was forcing myself on a 40+ year old fat sex slave":
Behavior and Attitudes of "Johns" in Rhode Island*

WARNING: This report contains graphic language and sexual content.

Melanie Shapiro, co-founder of Citizens Against Trafficking, has done an analysis of the online comments from men who buy sex in Rhode Island. "A john" is a common term for a man who buys sex acts. In online forums these men discuss their experiences and give reviews of different spa-brothels and individual women in the brothels. Their comments reveal their attitudes toward the women and how they treat the women in the spa-brothels.

According to what they write about themselves, the "johns" come from diverse backgrounds of class, ethnicity and occupation, and they range in age. Many of the men are married or in relationships and describe satisfactory sexual relationships with their partners. They have different attitudes and expectations of the spa-brothels. On the Internet forums, there is camaraderie among the men as they boast about their experiences. Some men describe going in groups to the spa-brothels to share a common experience. The johns discuss ways to keep their behavior secret from their wives and partners.¹

Occasionally, a young man who has never been to the spas will seek advice, and other men will coach him through the experience. One john said he was using the experience to reminisce about his time in the military: "Not [to] degrade the importance of the day [Memorial Day], but I went to Downtown Spa to remember the days I spent with my Brothers in Arms, on leave in various countries."²

The men's comments reveal violent, narcissistic, misogynistic, and racist attitudes and behaviors. The women are often treated like objects that the men humiliate and rape.

Treating Women Like Objects

Although the average john likes to think of himself as a respectable person, his posting show he is very self-centered. They view prostitutes as vessels for sex and little more. The johns are often aware that the woman is a possible victim of sex trafficking. They say this concerns them, but they always have sex with the woman anyway. They view the transaction as strictly commercial. If he is buying someone's life for the hour, he expects the woman to be at his full disposal, willing to engage in the sex act he desires, and to perform the acts to his satisfaction.

¹ Posted on the USA Sexguide on 7/25/06: "Yup, I saw it [a Donny Deutsch 'Caught on Tape' special about the Providence Asian spa-brothels] With my wife sitting next to me on the couch!!! Don't know if she noticed me turning white as a ghost."

² Posted on the USA Sexguide on 5/29/06.

If he is not pleased with the woman's performance, he sometimes refuses to pay. This consumerist attitude toward women was found repeatedly. One man wrote:

"While I try not to think of the girls as 'robots' and always/ ALWAYS treat them the same as I would any other lady, in this transaction, I am the customer/client. I am not interested in their state of mind, making them feel good about themselves or their career choice... They are doing a job and it needs to be done correctly/as advertised or I will not return for their 'services' and will patronize their competition. Plain and simple."³

Johns believe that women in the spa-brothels can be treated differently than they treat the other women in their lives. They know they are vulnerable with few choices and no recourse if they are abused. Therefore, they feel free to treat them harshly. One man wrote:

"Where the hell else is a middle aged man gonna hook up with a young sexy hot sex slave in real life? Like the old saying goes, we want a ***** [whore] in the bedroom but a lady in the kitchen. Just don't expect you gf [girlfriend] to be as whory as the real whores. You'll be disappointed. Even though we have plenty of sex, I still crave that AMP [Asian Spa] experience just for the fun of it, and I doubt if I'll ever get over it. So beware what you're getting into, it can be very addicting."⁴

Violence and Degradation

A substantial number of johns have sadistic attitudes towards prostitutes. They are obsessed with power and control and take pleasure in the discomfort, fear, and pain they cause the women in the spas. Several johns have commented on being turned on by forcing an unwilling woman to perform a sex act. Other johns reveling forcing the women into degrading and unusual sexual acts, such as urinating on them or treating them roughly during sexual intercourse.

In one situation, a john tried to convince a prostitute at Downtown Spa to let him use a sexual toy on her that he brought with him. Although she could not speak English, she clearly communicated through single words and gestures that she did not want this done to her by placing a towel over the object. The john, however, forced it on her while engaging in sexual intercourse. He described being sexually gratified by causing the woman physical pain during intercourse:

"After a while I was ready, and she was making broken English remarks about too big. Now all of us want to be told that, but I know I am no super hero. I flipped her on her back and went at it. NO S**T!!! She was really small, and I think it actually hurt her. She was tight as hell. So after a few positions, I completed my mission."⁵

Another john wrote about the pain he caused a woman and his disregard for her resistance:

³ Posted on the USA Sexguide on 1/24/09.

⁴ Posted on the USA Sexguide on 4/6/09.

⁵ Posted on the USA Sexguide on 8/21/05

“We then go into some missionary [a sexual intercourse position] and again I start a heavy pound which she attempts to thwart with her hand bracing my stomach. This slightly annoys me.”⁶

Another john has posted many accounts of buying sex in which, he describes his behavior as an “assault,” “attack,” or a “pounding.” In one instance, he writes:

“It just starts; my asian itch!...S**t happens, but I continue my assault with even more vigor...before she can protest (which she began), I’m face to face with her kitty [vagina]...and she nearly jumps off the bed. ‘I no do this’ she says.”⁷

Despite the woman’s protests, he john continues to perform cunnilingus on her. These situations are just a few of the many described by the johns in which they forced unwilling women to have sex.

Johns ruthlessly criticize women for less than perfect bodies. They describe women having missing teeth, unpleasant body odors, being fat, or having other physical impairments. They call them derogatory names, but then seem to take pleasure in feeling superior to the women. They seem to be turned on by women with physical frailties and emotional difficulties. Some johns, twenty to thirty years younger than the women seek out, claim they are not attracted to them, but are still turned on enough to have sex with them. One john called a woman a “big fat cow”⁸ and described another woman’s breasts as “saggy, wrinkly, nasty two week old party balloons.”⁹ Another man wrote that the woman had “delightful rotted teeth and nice pot belly in her ever so late 40’s.”¹⁰

The johns often say they are disgusted with the prostitute’s physical appearance, but still have sex with them:

“She has had at least 1 kid and doesn't have a good body. It was a mess, she closed her eyes as tight as they would go. I was losing my erection fast, I asked if I could go on top. Again with the eyes closed as tight as they can go. I had to stop as I felt like I was forcing myself on a 40+ year old fat sex slave. Hands down the worst sexual experience I have ever had. I asked for a HJ [hand job] and closed my eyes and pictured that I was in a different place...She did NOT want to be there...I did finally ‘finish.’”¹¹

The johns look for easy victims, who they believe are less valued by society. They target smaller women and women who lack confidence, with whom they can more easily be brutal and controlling. They are turned off by women who have self-esteem, are empowered and stable. For instance, one john complained that the women at Lily’s Spa “believe they are elite.”¹² He said he would not return to Lily’s Spa for that reason.

⁶ Posted on the USA Sexguide on 1/4/08.

⁷ Posted on the USA Sexguide on 3/28/07.

⁸ Posted on the USA Sexguide on 6/21/08.

⁹ Posted on the USA Sexguide on 3/27/09.

¹⁰ Posted on the USA Sexguide on 1/4/08.

¹¹ Posted on the USA Sexguide on 3/28/07.

¹² Posted on the USA Sexguide on 7/26/06.

One john wrote a lengthy report about the pleasure he took from what he labeled a “consensual rape.” He humiliated and brutalized a drug-addicted Asian woman in her sixties. First, he described his disgust with her appearance, cocaine usage, and her pathetic situation. He claims he is not sexually aroused by her at first, but becomes aroused by assaulting her. He describes it as “master[ing]” her. The following is an excerpt from his post:

“So. I closed my eyes and began my ‘assault’ of her throat. I’m not kiddin’! You might call it a ‘consensual raping.’ I made her gag again and again; jammed deep in her throat and left it there til her eyes were watering like small, black rivers (too much mascara). I called her every name I could think of and she just took it. Finally I blasted in her throat with my balls on her chin. She just let it go down and I’m sure she thought it was over, but I wasn’t through. She started to say something, but I told her ‘shut up; this is my dime’! had her lie on the bed (on her back) with her head hanging over the edge and ‘went to town’ again. I said to ‘suck me like a wh*re-vacuum while I facef**k your lying mouth” which she did and after another ten minutes of CR [‘cum rag,’ meaning a towel to wipe up ejaculate], I thanked her by ending round 2 with a very nice face-spraying. She laid there trying to catch her breath/moving her jaw slowly up/down as I wiped myself clean with her bed sheets and got dressed. Dropped my C-note [money] next to her head, told her she should be more honest and maybe try offering ‘wh*ore-vacuum’ as a service.”

Seeking Sexual Experiences with Underage Girls

Some johns indicate a preference for girls or women who appear to be very young. They call them “spinners”—very petite, thin girls who can be easily physically manipulated.¹³ These could be underage girls or young women who the man can pretend is underage. Johns write that some of the women at the spa-brothels as petite, timid, undeveloped, and vaginally “tight.” Johns also emphasize how tiny a woman is by saying she is under one hundred pounds and complain when women have more than an ounce of fat on them.

The spa-brothels advertise to this market, with advertisements that read: “We offer great body therapy given by young and warm very friendly oriental girls,” or “young hot Asian beauties.” One john, frustrated by the older prostitutes he found at one spa-brothel, asked about another girl. He was very pleased to hear she was “very very young.”

Racism

Johns seek out women to act out their racist fantasies. They get turned on by stereotypes of Asian, Latina, or African women. Accents, inability to speak English, and submissiveness are what these johns seek out. One john wrote:

¹³ Posted on the USA Sexguide on 9/1/09.

“If I want to hear a woman speak English I just listen to my wife complaining, or my mother, or that ***** at work. The language barrier is sweet silence my friends. My ideal woman would say nothing at all. That said, some latinas would be nice to have around, or Haitians (wow!)”¹⁴

Another john complained that the Asian woman he was assigned did not fit the fantasy he sought:

“I get assigned a girl—whose name I forget, I apologize. But she was short, very petite, and 100% anglicized. Asked her where’s she’s from---‘New York.’ She was clearly U.S. born and raised, probably not even first generation. I knew this was going to be a problem... But the weirdest thing was that one there appeared to be from the old crew not fresh-off-the-boat Asians. Even the woman washing the towels was Hispanic!”¹⁵

Alternatively, one john expressed his disdain for Asian and Middle Eastern women:

“but skinny asians (especially Koreans) with death breath from bad oral hygiene and that s**t they eat that passes for food, not to mention middle easterners and their sheer disdain for anything resembling deodorant.”¹⁶

Conclusion

These examples show the attitudes and behaviors of men that frequent the spa-brothels in Rhode Island. The graphic writings of johns sometimes show the underlying criminal intentions of their behavior. They use and mistreat the women in the brothels, often knowing the women are little more than sex slaves. They seek out powerless victims. Johns fuel the demand for the spa-brothel industry, and consequently fuel the trafficking of women and girls into the industry.

Johns should be held accountable for the harm they do. They exploit vulnerable women. They rape and abuse them. Under the current state law, purchasing sex acts indoors is not against the law.

Rhode Island needs a legitimate prostitution law that makes purchasing a sex act a misdemeanor offense. The House prostitution bill (H 5044A) does that. The Senate prostitution bill (S 596A) makes the first offense a civil violation with a \$250 donation to the crime victims fund.

Rhode Island needs to send a clear message to johns about the seriousness of their behavior and the harm they cause. Many activists are convinced that only when johns are held accountable will prostitution and sex trafficking end.

¹⁴ Posted on the USA Sexguide on 3/19/09.

¹⁵ Posted on the USA Sexguide on 4/6/07.

¹⁶ Posted on the USA Sexguide on 6/21/08.