



Who is the Demand?

One of the most common questions concerning the demand for human trafficking is whether or not it is “everyman” or if it is “specific men.” The reality is that while men who buy sex have been found to come from all walks of life – all ages, ethnicities, socioeconomic status, education level, occupation, etc. – they also hold certain attitudes, life experiences, and behavioral tendencies that set them apart from men who do not buy sex.¹

Statistics from a recent study of 101 men who purchased sex in Boston²

- Age: range 20-75, average 41
- Income: range under \$20,000 per year to more than \$140,000
- Education: range less than high school diploma to graduate or professional degree
- Ethnicities: categories reported included African American, Asian or Pacific Islander, Latino or Hispanic, Multiracial, Native American and White European-American
- Occupations reported included: construction, arts, management, finance, computer and mathematical science, community and social services, education, library, government, legal, healthcare and support, service-related

Comparing sex buyers with men who do not buy sex³

	Sex Buyers	Non-Sex Buyers
Had wife or girlfriend at the time of study	61%	70%
More than 25 sex partners in their lifetime	61%	21%
View prostitution as consenting sex	62%	37%
View prostitution as sexual exploitation	38%	65%
Imitate sex acts seen in pornography	52%	29%
Number of types of pornography viewed	10.32	7.70
Self-reported likelihood to rape ⁴	15%	2%
Average number of arrests (of those who had been arrested at least once)	11.66	4.74

¹ Melissa Farley, Emily Schuckman, Jacqueline M. Golding, Kristen Houser, Laura Jarrett, Peter Qualliotine, & Michele Decker, 2011, *Comparing Sex Buyers with Men Who Don't Buy Sex: 'You can have a good time with the servitude' vs. 'You're supporting a system of degradation,'* Report at Psychologists for Social Responsibility Annual Meeting, Boston. <http://www.prostitutionresearch.com/pdfs/Farleyetal2011ComparingSexBuyers.pdf>

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

⁴ Men in the study were asked to acknowledge whether they would rape a woman if they thought that they could get away with it. Sex buyers (15%) were significantly more likely than non-sex buyers (2%) to acknowledge that they would likely do it if they thought they could get away with it.

While it is the case that men who buy sex come from all walks of life, it is clear that men who buy sex share certain characteristics that set them apart from non-sex buyers. Men who buy sex tend to view pornography more often and view a greater variety of pornography; they are also likely to have less ability to show empathy for women and girls in prostitution and human trafficking. They are significantly more likely to have had many sex partners in their lifetimes, and reported that they committed more sexually coercive and aggressive behaviors with their partners. Finally, they were more likely to have committed crimes, and those who had been arrested, were arrested more times than non-sex buyers. Their crimes were more likely to be violent crimes and also included more felony arrests than non-sex buyers.

Why they buy sex

Contrary to common belief, most men who buy sex do not do it simply to fill physical needs. Rather, studies have found that many men who buy sex have wives or girlfriends at the time that they purchased sex and they say that they purchase sex because they want more – whether sex acts that their partners will not do, the excitement that comes with the hunt for a woman, or sex without relationship responsibilities.⁵ Some of the men from the Boston study said that they desire the “girlfriend experience,” but without emotions and demands made on them.⁶ Other researchers have found that men are seeking control and sex in contexts in which they do not have to be concerned about the other person and where they can humiliate, degrade, and even hurt the other person.⁷

Other reasons sex buyers reported for buying sex:⁸

- Satisfy immediate sexual urge, entertainment, pleasure
- No commitment, convenient, no emotional connection
- Can't get what they want sexually or emotionally in their current relationship
- Variety
- Thrill-seeking, breaking taboos
- To feel in control, to dominate or abuse a woman
- Addiction, self-esteem or emotional problem
- Male bonding or peer pressure

Top ten deterrents to men who buy sex from 526 respondents

Men from Boston, England, Chicago and Scotland were all asked what would deter them from buying sex. The following were the top ten responses:⁹

- 89%: Added to sex offender registry
- 84%: Photo or name in local newspaper
- 84%: Photo or name on a billboard/poster
- 82%: Time in Prison

⁵ Donna M. Hughes, 2004, *The Demand: Where Sex Trafficking Begins*, Report at A Call to Action: Joining the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Embassy and the Holy See, Rome.

⁶ Farley, et al., *supra* note 1.

⁷ Hughes, *supra* note 5.

⁸ Farley, et al., *supra* note 1, at 27.

⁹ *Id.* at 37.

- 82%: Picture or name on Internet
- 80%: Letter sent to family members
- 78%: Suspension of driver's license
- 75%: Greater criminal penalty
- 74%: Car impounded
- 72%: Greater monetary fine