



Montana Regional Violent Crime Task Force

Sex Trafficking Terminology

Automatic: A term denoting the victim's "automatic" routine when her pimp is out of town, in jail, or otherwise not in direct contact with those he is prostituting. Victims are expected to comply with the rules and often do so for fear of punishment or because they have been psychologically manipulated into a sense of loyalty or love. All money generated on "automatic" is turned over to the pimp. This money may be used to support his phone account or to pay his bond if he's in jail.

Bottom Bitch or Bottom Girl: A female who sits atop the hierarchy of prostituted females working for a particular pimp; appointed by the pimp to supervise the others, report rule violations, and sometimes even help inflict punishment. The bottom bitch can sometimes work as a prostitute for the pimp and have a romantic relationship with him. Whether the bottom bitch is prostituted is often based upon the level of income being generated by the group. The bottom bitch may also be made to work as a prostitute as a punitive measure by the pimp and/or as a method of control and dominance by the pimp.

Boy-friending: The method of recruiting females into prostitution by positioning oneself to be her boyfriend; not as a pimp.

Branding: A tattoo or carving on a victim that indicates ownership by a trafficker/pimp/gang.

Breaking; or Break a Bitch: To give all one's earnings to a pimp; may be done several times a day. It is common for a pimp to "break a bitch" after each of her dates.

Brothel (Cathouse or Whorehouse): These establishments may be apartments, houses, trailers, or any facility where sex is sold on the premises. It could be in a rural area or nice neighborhood. Most brothels have security measures to prevent attacks by other criminals or provide a warning if law enforcement are nearby. The security is two sided—to keep the women and children in, as well as robbers out. The places often are guarded (and open) 24 hours a day, but some have closing times in which the victims are locked in from the outside. Victims may be kept in this location for extended periods of time, or rotated to other locations every few days.

Caught A Case: Refers to when a pimp or his female has been arrested and charged with a crime.

Charge it to the Game: A pimp's way of saying something is a loss, but there was a lesson learned. In the pimp culture, a pimp should not chase a person who leave his employ, rather he should replace said person. "Charging it to the game" is often considered the pimp's way of paying taxes. An example would be a female running away with the night's earnings and the pimp remarking, "Just charge it to the game".

Choosing Up: Process by which a different pimp takes "ownership" of another pimp's prostitute. Females are instructed to keep their eyes on the ground at all times. According to traditional pimp rules, if female makes eye contact with another pimp (accidentally or on purpose), she is choosing him to be her pimp. If the original pimp wants the victim back, he must pay a fee to the new pimp.

Circuit: A series of cities among which prostituted people are moved. One example would be the West Coast circuit of San Diego, Las Vegas, Portland, and the cities between. The term can also refer to a chain of states such as the “Minnesota pipeline” by which victims are moved through a series of locations from Minnesota to markets in New York.

Client (John or Trick): An individual who pays for or trades something of value for sexual acts.

Daddy: A term pimps often require their females to call them based on the pimp’s position in the group. The “Daddy” is a father and in many cultures considered head of the household, or family. Therefore, calling the pimp “Daddy” positions the pimp as a protective father figure; masking the violence and exploitation of what the pimp is really doing.

Date: The exchange when prostitution takes place or the activity of prostitution.

Escort Service: An organization, operating chiefly via cell phone and the internet, which sends a victim to a buyer’s location (outcall) or arranges for the buyer to come to a motel room (in-call); this may be the workplace of a single woman or small brothel. Some escort services are networked with others and can assemble large numbers of women for parties and conventions.

Exit Fee: The money a pimp will demand from a victim who is thinking about trying to leave. It will be an exorbitant sum, to discourage her from leaving. Most pimps never let females leave freely.

Family or Folks: The term used to describe the other individuals under the control of the same pimp. He plays the role of father (or “Daddy”) while the group fulfills the need for a “family.”

Finesse Pimp or Romeo Pimp: A pimp who prides himself on controlling others primarily through psychological manipulation. Although he may initially shower his victims with affection and gifts (especially during the recruitment phase), the threat of violence is always present.

Fronts; or Walking-Around Money: Cash a pimp gives his female(s) he is prostituting to use for cab fare, food, drinks and condoms.

Gorilla Pimp: A pimp who controls his victims almost entirely through physical violence and force.

Ho: Short for “whore” or female specifically conducting acts of prostitution or prostituted person.

Ho Line: A loose network of inter-city or interstate communications between pimps, usually via phone, used to trade, buy, and sell prostituted females and minors.

Hustler: Someone who will do anything for money, including sell drugs, steal, defraud and pimp.

In-Call: When a prostitute hosts the client.

Lot Lizard: Derogatory term for a person who is being prostituted at truck stops.

Out-Call: When a prostitute travels to the client.

Out of Pocket: The phrase describing when a victim is not under control of a pimp but working on a pimp-controlled track, leaving her vulnerable to threats, harassment, and violence in order to make her “choose” a pimp. This may also refer to a victim who is disobeying the pimp’s rules.

Peel a Trick: When a prostitute steals money, check books and credit cards from a client.

Pimp: Someone who lives in whole or in part off the earnings of female(s) engaging in prostitution. A pimp may also utilize force, fraud or coercion to manipulate female(s) to engage in prostitution.

Pimp Circle: When several pimps encircle a victim to intimidate through verbal and physical threats in order to discipline the victim or force her to choose up.

Pimp Hard: To raise quotas, reduce rest times, and/or require females to accept tricks they would ordinarily avoid (such as dangerous tricks).

Pimp Party: When several pimps come together to rape, beat, drug, and/or torture a female who is resisting being prostituted, or who is "out of line" by trying to escape, talking to the police, etc.

Quota: A set amount of money a trafficking victim must make each night before she can come "home." Quotas are often set between \$300 and \$2000. If the victim returns without meeting the quota, she is typically beaten and sent back out to earn the remainder. Quotas vary according to geographic region, local events, etc.

Reckless Eyeballing: A term which refers to the act of looking around instead of keeping your eyes on the ground. Eyeballing is against the rules and can lead a female to "choose up" by mistake.

Renegade: A prostitute who is not under the control of pimp. Renegade females are vulnerable to threats, harassment and violence intended to make them choose a pimp. The term can also refer to a prostituted female who violates a pimp's rules.

Roll a Trick: Robbing a client with force by the prostituted female, the pimp, and/or his associates.

Runner or Catcher: Someone who watches and/or oversees the females on the street for a pimp; frequently younger "wannabe" pimps who might be being "trained" in the game by a pimp.

Seasoning: A combination of psychological manipulation, intimidation, rape, sodomy, beatings, deprivation of food or sleep, isolation from friends or family and other sources of support, and threatening or holding hostage of a victim's children. Seasoning is designed to break down a victim's resistance and ensure compliance.

Squaring Up: A female who is attempting to escape or exit prostitution.

Stable: A group of victims who are under the control of a single pimp.

Trap: Cash earned from acts of prostitution can be referred to as "the trap," however; the term is usually associated with a location where cash is hidden while working (street track or hotel room). A "trap" is utilized in the event the female is not able to immediately provide a pimp with earnings due to circumstances (back-to-back dates, law enforcement contact, etc).

The Game or The Life: Subculture of prostitution, complete with rules, a hierarchy of authority, and language. Referring to the act of pimping as 'the game' gives the illusion that it can be a fun and easy way to make money, when the reality is much harsher. Women and girls will say they've been "in the life" if they've been involved in prostitution for a while.

Track or Stroll: An area of town known for prostitution activity. This can be the area around a group of strip clubs and pornography stores, or a particular stretch of street.

Trade Up or Down: To move a victim like merchandise between pimps. A pimp may trade one girl for another or trade with some exchange of money.

Trick: Committing an act of prostitution. A victim is said to be "turning a trick" or "with a trick."

Turned Out: To be forced into prostitution or a female who is newly involved in prostitution.

Wifey or Wife-in-Law: What females under the control of the same pimp call each other.