Attitudes and Perceptions Toward Sex Tourism in Las Vegas

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ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS TOWARD SEX TOURISM IN LAS VEGAS

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study is to explore attitudes and perceptions as they relate to the consensual and non-consensual aspect of sex and tourism. This practice of engaging in sexual activities, aligned with the tourism industry, is referred to as ‘sex tourism’, ‘romance tourism’, or ‘prostitution tourism’. This has evolved into a global phenomenon where sex has become a commodity in many tourist destinations. Previous research available from Asia, Europe, the Caribbean, and Central America will be used to demonstrate similar patterns in transnational motivations and practices by looking at concepts, perceptions, legality, and potential exploitation as it relates to sex tourism in Las Vegas. Countries within these areas are diverse geographically and have unique characteristics; however, the overall representation is that sex tourism practices observed in these areas are highly generalizable. This study measured attitudes and perceptions toward various consensual and non-consensual sexual activities, specifically sex tourism. Interestingly, with transnational differences in practices, overall perceptions regarding sex tourism were similarly understood by people living in Las Vegas; a city with robust sex and tourism industries.
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In the words of Maya Angelou “I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” For all those who helped me along this journey, I will never forget the way you made me feel. I felt loved and supported, but most of all encouraged, by your kind words or by just being there. For this I say thank you, and now I know I can do anything!
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Sex tourism has emerged as a new global phenomenon in the tourism industry where individuals travel for the purpose of sex and romance (Holt, Zeoli & Bohrer, 2013; Jeffreys, 1999; Ryan & Hall, 2001). The term “sex tourism” is a euphemism (Jeffreys, 1999) often used to describe prostitution, an age-old problem, on a transnational level. Sex tourism has become a “blanket” under which prostitution is normalized, as it “conceals the harm involved to prostituted local people and communities by representing the behavior as fun and entertaining” (Jeffreys, 1999, p. 224). As a result, travellers with economic resources exploit the human body, under the guise of sex and romance (Jacobs, 2009; Kempadoo, 2004; Pettman, 1997). This has developed into a modern trend where travelling is centered on the idea of sexual encounters with locals in these vacationing areas (Rye & Meaney, 2007).

Academic research and data on sex tourism is limited, as “it remains a fairly obscure and unknown activity to the general public, academia and helping professions” (Bender & Furman, 2004, p. 176). Current literature highlights the idea that tourists (both male and female) travel to exotic destinations in search of sex, romance, and sometimes long term relationships that are unattainable in their native countries (Frohlick, 2013; Herold, Garcia & DeMoya, 2001; Sánchez Taylor, 2001). For some, if not all, the prospect of sexual fantasies and unknown adventures is what fuels their desires to engage in sex tourism (Leheny, 1995; Rye & Meaney, 2007; Weichselbaumer, 2011). This demand offers many locals a viable opportunity, a way of surviving in a society where there is the need for economic guarantees when economic disparities exist. As stated by
Pettman (1997), the body is often used as a form of international currency (p. 95). It can be bartered to achieve anything as long as there is a demand and/or a desire. Hence, in many aspects, the practice of bartering an individual’s body for economic gain can be considered a form of prostitution, which would include sex tourism.

It appears that certain countries (i.e., Belize, Costa Rica and Jamaica) are emerging to be among these vacationing destinations, where sex has become a commodity (Frohlick, 2013; Kempadoo, 2000). This research paper will begin by looking at previous studies which focused on vacationing destinations in different areas like Europe, Asia, Central America and the Caribbean where this phenomenon exists, and to explore definitions of sex tourism as understood by people living in a city with a robust sex industry, Las Vegas. This exploration of available literature allows for a multifaceted comparison of attitudes and perceptions regarding sex tourism by regions, including Las Vegas. In order to measure attitudes and perceptions relating to sex tourism, general concepts and practices (similarities and differences); legal authority, how laws are enforced; motivations of the consumers and providers; and risk for potential exploitation of those engaging in this type of behavior will be explored.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Sex, Tourism, and the Economy

The sex industry has become immensely profitable, providing considerable resources not just to individuals and networks, but also to governments that have promoted it (Jeffreys, 1999). According to Jeffreys, in some countries, for instance the Philippines, the government promotes prostitution tourism because of its profitability and income generated from the tourism industry. As with the Philippines, many other countries rely heavily on tourism and, as a result, people become vulnerable and often engage in sex tourism because of its exceeding demand. This demand is oftentimes easily fulfilled because of the level of inequality that exists in these societies. Research is just beginning to explore the role of sex tourism, while highlighting the vulnerability of a particular population within these consumer-oriented communities that promote tourism, and to a greater extent, sex tourism as an income generator (Leheny, 1995; Petttman, 1997).

The following excerpt is an indicator of the association between sex and the tourism industries in many countries, and exemplifies the potential contributions that can be made by this practice. As a result, when looking at sex tourism, it is of critical importance to evaluate whether the tourism industries in these areas are fueled directly or indirectly by its resources (tourist attractions) or because of exploiting its local population.

If tourism is big business, then sex tourism is likely to be a lucrative segment of the industry. According to Kempadoo and Doezeema (1998), the size of this underground industry is unknown but it is estimated to be a multibillion transnational industry creating incomes for finders, brokers, syndicate operations
and pimps “managers”. Sex tourism is no longer associated with only Europe, East, and South Asia but is now an established segment of the sex tourism industry in Latin America, Africa, and the Caribbean. (Mullings, 1999, p. 58).

To fully conceptualize the paradigms of sex and tourism, it is essential to recognize the importance of both within society. Tourism is considered to be a socially sanctioned escape route for adults into play, fantasy, and adventure (Ryan, 2000). Besides these aspects, Sánchez Taylor (2000) makes mention of tourism as a medium, allowing people to purchase and consume cultural experiences when travelling to these destinations. Strong parallels exist between the demands for tourism and commercial sex, as the need for relaxation, company, sex, escape, fantasy and family bonding are common to both (Ryan, 2000).

Within the tourism sector, commercial sex can be considered as consensual and non-coercive or non-consensual and coercive. The non-consensual and coercive aspects largely speak to human trafficking and prostitution practices which can potentially serve as avenues to providing sex tourism. Even though available literature rarely speaks of human trafficking as a factor when looking at sex tourism, it is important to do so, even if only on a contextual level.

As defined by United Nations Office in Drugs and Crime (UNDOC; 2014), human trafficking is “the recruitment, transport, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons, by threat or use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or giving payments or benefits to a person in control of the victim, for the purpose of exploitation (prostitution, force labor, slavery)”. Human trafficking is considered a crime, as is prostitution in certain areas, but when enmeshed in the culture of sex tourism they are often overlooked or ignored. This “turning a blind
“eye” to illegal commercial sexual activity has been touched on in the various definitions of sex tourism.

Sex Tourism Defined

Attempts at defining sex tourism have continued to be problematic, but a practical definition is “travel for which the main motivation is to engage in commercial sexual relations” (Clift & Carter, 2000, p. 6). Other scholars have attempted to define sex tourism as tourists (both male and female) engaging in sexual encounters with locals that involve monetary exchange and romance while on vacation, and potentially long-term relationships when tourists return to their native countries (Jeffrey, 1999; Kempadoo, 2004). As noted, the financial aspect of this practice is what closely associates it to prostitution, but sex tourism differs slightly depending on perceptions, legality, and what individuals are pursuing (sex, romance, or companionship).

Directly defining sex tourism as a form of prostitution has been difficult because many of these relationships are considered to be reciprocal. Intimacy and companionship, not only sex, is provided to the consumer (tourists) while providers acquire economic security. As a matter of perception, many see these “transnational intimacies” (Frohlick, 2013, p. 113) as a type of symbiotic relationship where both parties benefit, one economically, and the other emotionally and physically. In fact, in some cases, as we will later see, these benefits are often intertwined and transposable between consumer and provider (Jeffreys, 2003; Kempadoo, 2004). Thus, individuals are unaware of the level of exploitation that exists.

Gender involvement associated with sex tourism creates another complexity in defining this practice. Pruitt and LaFont (1995) coined the term “romance tourism”,


which describes the relationship between female travelers as consumers and local males as (sexual) providers (Jeffreys, 2003; Sánchez Taylor, 2001). As a result, there has been developing interest regarding sex tourism from a gendered perspective as some researchers argue that women are not participating in sex tourism as men are (Jeffreys, 2003). Hence, the development and use of different terms like “romance tourism” and “female sex tourism” to describe sex tourism practices (Jeffreys, 2003; Pruitt & LaFont, 1995).

For the purpose of this paper and to create a streamlined definition, sex tourism will be considered as: the practice of tourists participating in PAID sexual encounters with locals while on vacation. This practice is prevalent in areas where laws are absent, relaxed or not rigorously enforced. These regions are usually third world (less developed) countries where trips are organized and advertised within the tourism sector (Model United Nations Colegio Humboldt, 2012).

Legal Authority Regarding Sexual Practices

Sex tourism is considered by some scholars to be a form of organized prostitution (Bender & Furman, 2004), yet laws are not in place to address such issues and practices within many societies. For example, the laws in certain countries, particularly Belize and Japan, “forbids only public solicitation, provision of facilities, and management of prostitutes; it says nothing directly about the exchange of money for sexual services” (Leheny, 1995, p. 374; Ragsdale & Tomiko-Anders, 1999). Other regions where studies have been conducted, specifically Amsterdam, Costa Rica, Dominica Republic, and Prague, also share similar laws where prostitution is legal (Carter, 2000; Frohlick, 2013; Schifter-Sikora, 2007). The way these laws are written, the actual act of prostituting
oneself is not illegal but the precursory activities are. In some areas, the absence of laws governing prostitution itself is a direct indicator of the permissive aspects of many societies; but more importantly it further demonstrates a lack of regulations prohibiting and restricting locals from engaging in sexual relations for monetary gain (sex tourism).

With lax laws surrounding sex tourism, this practice is often hidden from law enforcement through meticulous social connections in these local areas (Frohlick, 2013; Jeffreys, 1999; Kempadoo, 2004). Networking among those who engage in the sex tourism industry is done via referrals. For that reason, different phrases have been coined like “Rent a Dread or beach boys” referring to local men, and “rent a friend” referring to local women (providers) who engage in sex tourism (Weichselbaumer, 2011). These phrases allow travellers to seek out specific services while explaining their needs obscurely. In many of these areas there are no prostitution strolls, referrals and link ups are usually made in social settings such as local nightclubs, dive shops, tour reservations, and at resorts or on beaches (Kempadoo, 2004). Individuals in these localities are not considered “hardcore” prostitutes, but typically the “girl next door”, and males who directly work in the tourism industry (Pruitt and LaFont, 1995; Sánchez Taylor, 2001). This aspect in itself enables these practices to be concealed from law enforcement making it difficult to address.

Sex Tourism Practices and Motivations

The motivations to engage in sex tourism as with any other type of behavior are tailored to satisfy an individual’s needs. Referred to as a rational choice (Holt, Zeoli & Bohrer, 2013), these needs can be simple or complex; intrinsic or extrinsic; and can be centered on financial, emotional, and physical elements that are obtainable by consumers
and providers. As Ryan (2000) suggests, sex tourism is a search for identity as well as exploitation (p. 23) and it is this search of identity that makes individuals vulnerable.

In regards to motivation, Herold et al. (2001) make mention that for some beach boys, particularly the younger ones, the sexual conquest of tourists is a major objective (p. 983). Further research notes one main motivation given by locals who engaged in sex tourism is financial; this motive remains the same regardless of age and gender (Frohlick, 2013; Herold et al., 2001; Oppermann, 1999; Sánchez Taylor, 2001). According to Frohlick (2013), the Afro Caribbean men of Costa Rica saw female tourists as “economic providers”, and in return, they would offer companionship, romance, and sex. This exchange between tourist and locals was conducted elusively through what was referred to by many as loans, sponsorships, and contributions (Frohlick, 2013; Jeffreys, 2003; Sánchez Taylor, 2001).

Using terms like “loans” and “contributions” enabled individuals to make distinctive assertions that what they were doing did not represent sex tourism or prostitution. One individual interviewed stated, “Well it’s not like sex tourism. The men don’t get paid for ‘sex’ but they do get money” (Frohlick 2013, p. 134). This implies that the money they receive is not for sexual services directly, but instead to maintain their daily lifestyles so they can be free to provide companionship to these women (Frohlick, 2013).

With regard to seeking payment, the beach boys reported that they never directly ask for a specific sum of money, as do female prostitutes. Rather they use different strategies to indicate their lack of money to pay for drinks, admission to discos, or taxi transportation. In these kinds of situations, the woman would often give the man money under the table (Herold et al., 2001 p. 991).
This behavior was observed specifically in the Dominican Republic, but similar behaviors were also mentioned in sex tourism literature based on Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Costa Rica (Frohlick, 2013; Jacobs, 2009; Kempadoo, 2004; Mullings, 1999; Pruitt and LaFont, 1995). Accordingly, this establishes how the financial aspect of sex tourism emerges and allows for a loose interpretation where differences between sex tourism and prostitution become distinguishable. The transactional process related to sex tourism is often times highlighted in literature focusing more on female tourists than males as consumers (Frohlick, 2013; Jacobs, 2009; Kempadoo, 2004; Mullings, 1999; Pruitt and LaFont, 1995). This is not to say that men are not engaging in similar transactional practices, just that the women, involved in these sexual activities with male sex tourists, often do not make their financial demands explicit. As a result, men are deluded as to the type of the relationships they are engaging in (Jeffreys, 2003).

Beyond the financial aspect of sex tourism, there are sometimes emotional elements to these transnational sexual relationships, where emphasis is placed on courtship and romance. The main reasons given for tourist’s involvement (both male and female) with local men and women were romantic relationships and sexual excitement (Frohlick, 2013; Herold et al., 2001; Jacobs, 2009; Sánchez Taylor, 2001). This indicated that some individuals were seeking an emotional connection (intimacy) and not just sex (Bender & Furman, 2004; Frohlick, 2013; Jeffreys, 2003; Pruitt & LaFont, 1995). Jeffreys (2003) pointed out that some of these relationships between tourists and locals evolved into long term relationships and marriages, with many (tourists) returning to live with their local partners, thus creating a different dimension to sex tourism.
Motivations for locals who engage in sex tourism are extremely different from those who travel to engage in it. Some locals share the same aspirations as foreigners in finding love and companionship, but their (locals) aspirations are increasingly dependent on the economic aspect of this practice (Jacobs, 2009). Herold et al. (2001) asserts that one major benefit of working as beach boys is the opportunity for them to travel that few other occupations can provide. This was often observed in the relationships local men have with female travellers, even after they return home. Motivations to engage in sex tourism are often dependent on gender; even so some similarities were often observed (Jeffreys, 2003; O'Connell Davidson, 2000).

Gender Roles

Consumers

Consumers within the sex tourism industry are considered to be sex tourists, as they have “commodified” sex as a part of their tourism experiences. Sex tourists are not a homogeneous group in terms of socio-economic status, race, gender, or age; but they are often considered to be Western, white, heterosexual males. However, the emergence of females as sex tourists has garnered recent popularity and prominence especially in the Caribbean (Sánchez Taylor, 2000, p. 42). Scholars have noted that sex tourism is not gender specific, which suggests, women just as men engage “in relationships of exploitation. Like their male counter parts, Western female tourists employ sexual fantasies of Otherness to legitimize obtaining sexual access and affirm their own sexual desirability” (Jacobs, 2009, pp. 43-44). In this context, “Otherness” refers to the exotic characteristics associated with hypersexual black males in Caribbean tourist destinations (Jacobs, 2009).
In obtaining sexual access, the only gender difference observed was in behavior regarding sexual and romantic interactions; men were accepting of and more likely engaged in one night stands, while women sought long term romances (Jeffreys, 2003). Women often maintained long term relationships with local men while only a “few of the female sex workers maintained ongoing relationships with male tourists” (Herold et al., 2001 p. 993).

Providers

As providers, men and women benefit financially, emotionally, or physically from engaging in these types of sexual relationships (Bender & Furman, 2004, Weichselbaumer, 2011). As with the consumers, locals who engage in sex tourism do not consider themselves prostitutes even though they receive cash and gifts in exchange for sex (Frohlick, 2013; Jeffreys, 2003; Rye & Meaney, 2007; Weischselbaumer, 2011). Pruitt and LaFont (1995) theorize “while tourism acts as a catalyst for these men to manipulate gender identity as a strategy for economic access, it also places them in a subordinate role to women, which conflicts with their own gender ideals of male dominance” (p. 429).

Sex tourism creates a conflict between gender identity and gender ideals and, as a result, males often lose their traditional gender roles within these societies where they are seen as providers and protectors. Their male dominance seems to be lost because of their financial dependency, but it is also bolstered as many cultures view male promiscuity as a form of conquest and domination (Weichselbaumer, 2011). In a sense, men are receiving the best of both worlds, being sexually gratified and financially rewarded simultaneously; because of this, they are unable to see themselves as being victimized. The same cannot
be said of female providers (sex workers) within these societies, as they are often seen as vulnerable, and stigmatized as being deviant or abnormal (Carter & Clift, 2000; Ryan & Hall, 2001).

When looking at the gendered aspect of sex tourism, Pruitt and LaFont argue that neither actor (tourists or locals) considers their interaction to be prostitution, even when others may label it so. These actors placed emphasis on courtship rather than the exchange of money (Oppermann, 1999, p. 257). Male and female sex tourists (consumers), particularly, do not consider their practices as engaging in, or associated with prostitution even though the majority of them acknowledged providing some economic elements such as helping with gifts, cash and food in exchange for romance (Frohlick, 2013; Jeffreys, 2003; Sánchez Taylor, 2001). Using gender as a basis to explain sex tourism practices complicates the intricacies of sex tourism by describing behavior and labeling it differently.

Exploitation Associated with Sex Tourism

Sex tourism and prostitution are often considered to be on opposite ends of the sex trade spectrum (Kempadoo, 2004). Other scholars have considered it to be within the realm of prostitution (Bender & Furman, 2004). Also, Oppermann (1999) attempted to redefine prostitution and sex tourism to show both are interconnected. Even though there are many similarities, previous literature, social customs and public perceptions have failed to establish a definitive link between sex tourism and prostitution. Consequently, there is “confusion by tourists as to whether they are participating in prostitution, friendships, flirtation or love” (Bender & Furman, 2004, p. 178) and for this reason
individuals are unable to relate to the exploitation aspects accompanying sex tourism (Sánchez Taylor, 2001).

Research shows that in certain geographic regions, such as Asia, there is certainly an enormous potential for exploitation due to economic, racial and gender inequalities (Leheny, 1995; Oppermann, 1999; Pettman, 1997). In these areas, the sex trade industry is considered to be embedded in a culture where women are made legally subordinate to men, which further reinforces the concept of male dominance, creating a distinct association between prostitution and sex tourism practices (Leheny, 1995). Literature focusing on these areas often refers to sex tourism as a form of organized prostitution, which is encouraged and tolerated in these societies (Bender & Furman, 2004).

In Asia, women speak strongly about their abusive experiences with Western men and have often perceived these practices to be chilling and brutal (Jeffreys, 1999). In regions like the Caribbean, on the contrary, this level of exploitation is not readily seen. When referring to sex tourism in the Caribbean, many individuals often hint at “happy endings” and pleasurable experiences implying that the practice encompasses little (if any) abuse (Frohlick, 2013; Jacobs; 2009; Rye & Meaney, 2007). Sexual encounters in the Caribbean are seen as less coercive when compared to those in Asia and are often seen as more consensual, even though both may be financially motivated.

Apart from the coercive and brutal or pleasurable and consensual aspects of sex tourism, there also exist the health and welfare aspects related to this practice. Because this practice is often considered a type of risky behavior (like prostitution), it increases the potential for the transmission of various sexually transmitted diseases to both providers and consumers (Bender & Furman, 2004; Leheny, 1995). According to Jeffreys
“Human Rights Watch reports explains that men’s use of women in prostitution is often a death sentence for women because the male abusers pass on the HIV virus” (p. 189). In many regions, the threat of HIV has been placed on the forefront, especially as it relates to prostitution. However, when looking at sex tourism the same has not been done, which emphasizes fewer concerns for those involved in sex tourism practices (Bender & Furman, 2004; Leheny, 1995).

Besides the potential exploitation associated with locals where sex tourism is practiced, tourists (consumers) also face potential victimization as well. Research from Costa Rica and Jamaica often mention unwanted sexual advances experienced by tourists while vacationing (Frohlick, 2013; Herold et al., 2001). Bender and Furman (2004), state “many male tourists are also exploited through their false beliefs, propagated sex tour agencies, that they may have emotionally satisfying relationships with female prostitutes” (p. 178). Likewise, female sex tourists are construed as lonely women with the ability to travel because of their elevated socio-economic status (compared to locals). The socio-economic aspect is what makes them vulnerable to potential exploitation by Caribbean men (Sánchez Taylor, 2000, p. 45).

Looking At Las Vegas

Academic literature on sex tourism in Las Vegas is extremely limited making describing specific practices difficult. Because of this limitation, commercial sexual activities engaged in by tourists, will be compared to establish parallels as they appear in sex tourism literature, to explore whether these activities can be applied transnationally, specifically to Las Vegas. For this comparison, microenvironments of social and physical spaces relating to Amsterdam and Prague will be a starting point for examining sex
tourism in Las Vegas. All three cities are considered robust, westernized tourism destinations, thus making a comparison more practical.

Tourism destinations are often associated with the provision of commercial sexual services, utilized by travellers or tourists. These services are highly accessible as most tourism destinations have definable “red light” areas where sexual services can be found (Carter, 2000). Las Vegas, like any other city, can be incorporated in this category when exploring the spatial organization of sex tourism services. In Amsterdam and Prague, sex tourism is affiliated with prostitution and there is little differentiation between both. Essentially, sex tourism in these places refers to the strict practice where tourists participate in paid sexual activity, either in the red light districts or other establishments that provide legal sexual services (Carter, 2000).

In comparing and contrasting these areas, the legality of prostitution must be addressed. In Amsterdam and Prague, prostitution is legal (Carter, 2000), but in Las Vegas, prostitution is illegal, even though there is a “legal brothel industry in 10 of the rural counties of Nevada” (Brents & Hausbeck, 2007, p. 426). The legality of prostitution can be seen as a contrasting characteristic between Amsterdam, Prague, and Las Vegas, but the microenvironments related to proving sexual service are similar in many aspects. There are several categories of sexual services provided to tourists in Amsterdam and Prague, which include street prostitution, sex clubs, and escort services. Even though prostitution is illegal in Las Vegas, these characteristics constitute a part of this highly sexualized city.

According to Carter (2000), the following microenvironments and spatial distributions are consistent with the availability of sex services in many cities. For
instance, services associated with street prostitution are not usually found in the city center and are rarely used by tourists (Carter, 2000). Sex clubs (strip clubs) are also situated away from the center but are accessible as free pick up services are available. Escort services also offer another opportunity where sexual services are provided to tourist (Carter, 2000). This allows for anonymity since bookings and payments are handled via telephone or Internet, with clients receiving services in the privacy of their hotel rooms (Carter, 2000). Commercial sex is also available to tourists and travellers in hotel lobbies, but because workers are in close proximity of these tourist areas, they have to strike a balance between being subtle while allowing initial negotiation to happen (Carter, 2000). This suggests a collusion or tolerance of this practice by individuals directly providing service to tourists in the tourism industry (Carter, 2000).

Another important element linked to the microenvironments of tourism destinations is advertisements. These are often found in prominent areas like lampposts, billboards, placards, and magazines, which advertise the availability of sexual services. Advertisements can be explicit or subtle playing an important role in the decision making process in destination and activity choices, therefore, the strategic location of these advertisements is essential to it effectiveness (Carter, 2000). In Las Vegas, advertisements play a decisive role in promoting tourism both locally and internationally as it is often referred to as the best choice for an adult experience (Leco, 2014).

As previously mentioned, because there is limited research on sex tourism per se in Las Vegas it would be baseless to look at gender and assume behavior or motivation, as explained in current literature, are the same throughout regions. However, there is some degree of similarity, but sufficient information is not available to make an assumption.
Sex tourism literature on Amsterdam and Prague do not focus on gender, but literature on the Caribbean and Central America does. Contrasting, sex tourism in Las Vegas differs drastically from the Caribbean and elsewhere, in that; Las Vegas is portrayed to be a city with a “party” atmosphere. Hence, sex tourism practices in Las Vegas focus more on the prostitution-like aspects (buying and selling sexual activities) and to a lesser extent the emotional aspects that have been previously described.

Theoretical Framework

Sex tourism practices are not considered a form of deviance nor have they been criminalized in regions where observed (Carter, 2000; Ryan & Kinder, 1996). For this reason, it is difficult to address this issue from a criminal justice perspective, or create laws to prevent potential exploitation. This difficulty arises as perceptions differ, creating several concerns as to whether this practice can be considered a social problem. According to McCorkle and Miethe (2002) social problems are derived from issues within society, that are considered to be problematic, or causing social harm, and are usually addressed by stakeholders. Thus far, sex tourism has not been seen in this light, neither in Las Vegas nor the rest of the world. To explain this lack of vigor and uniformity in addressing issues related to sex tourism, this thesis explores the theory of social constructionism; how social problems are constructed and why.

McCorkle and Miethe (2002) state, “before a condition is defined as a social problem it must be brought to peoples’ attention, the public must be persuaded that the condition exists and that it poses a significant threat to society” (p. 11). Sex tourism has not reached this pinnacle, or so it seems. These practices are often described as fun and entertaining, a part of the tourist experience, and for that reason they are not regarded as
“problems” in many areas. From this portrayal, we are aware that sex tourism does exist but there is an inability to define it as a specific threat.

As stated previously, there is little consensus as to what sex tourism is, what it incorporates, and whom it affects. According to Best (1987), when defining a problem it is fundamental to establish the relevance of the issues, understand the phenomenon, and essentially what can be done to address the problem. In Las Vegas, this has not been done with regard to sex tourism and the sexual practices associated with it. Even with extensive discourse on the sex industry in regards to prostitution and human trafficking, little has been done to establish how the sex industry provides for a “tourist experience” when people travel (sex tourism).

Issues relating to human trafficking and prostitution are socially constructed as problems, resulting in related legislations. As a society, we often demonize behaviors associated with these practices, but not sex tourism, even though available literature relates it to prostitution. In comparing Las Vegas to Amsterdam and Prague, inferences can be made about the prostitution-like aspects of sex tourism and the potential for exploitation. However, in areas where people travel to engage in sex tourism, perceptions create a disconnect between sex tourism and prostitution broadening the assumption that sexual activities within the tourism industry are different.

Sex tourism seems to describe a lighter side of tourist interactions within the sex industry in Las Vegas. For that reason, stakeholders have not designated this issue as a social problem as Las Vegas is considered to be a highly sexualized city and a robust tourist destination. For instance, the famous slogan “What happens in Las Vegas stays in Las Vegas” seems to send a message that any type of behavior is welcomed and
condoned. The idea of sex tourism is not considered to be illegal in Las Vegas, but the prostitution-like practices associated with sex tourism are.

In the regions described in previous chapters, we understand that sex tourism occurs in these areas because it is socially acceptable and not considered a problem. In Amsterdam and Prague sex tourism is not a social problem because prostitution is legal and tolerated while in the Caribbean and Costa Rica, it is considered to be fun and entertaining. People do not see themselves as victims and in order to consider something harmful we must be able to identify those who are harmed (victims).

Even though sex tourism appears to be represented as socially acceptable in Las Vegas, stakeholders’ awareness of these issues directly affects whether or not it will be socially constructed as a problem. Perceptions are that little harm is ever associated with something that is fun and entertaining, or income generating, as sex tourism is. Because of the scarcity of literature, media coverage, and overall awareness associated with sex tourism, it is difficult to establish whether or not this phenomenon has developed awareness in Las Vegas.

Las Vegas is a unique city, as it is located in a state where prostitution is legal in some areas. According to Hausbeck, Brents, & Jackson (2006), Las Vegas is internationally recognized as a highly sexualized tourist destination with a flourishing market in commercial sexual entertainment and services. This perception of Las Vegas further reinforces the difficulties in addressing sex tourism as a social problem. With this international recognition, sex tourism practices have become acceptable and little or no emphasis is placed on the sexual aspect of sex tourism, since it is considered customary and often overlooked.
Even locally overt sexual images and sexual practices are considered a part of Las Vegas, and a renowned characteristic of the city. Without establishing sex tourism as a threat or problem, the need to address this issue is nonexistent. It is indefinite whether this threat will be established in Las Vegas because the practice of tourists participating in the local sex industry is not referred to as sex tourism. These practices are referred to as being prostitution-like, so we are addressing issues relating to prostitution rather than sex tourism.

Current Study

Available research on sex tourism, when compared to prostitution and human trafficking, has shown that there is no general agreement regarding concepts, perceptions, or practices. Since there is no general agreement, it becomes difficult to define this practice and recognize sexual activities associated with it, thus becoming difficult to address this phenomenon as a problematic issue within society. Available literature from different regions will be used in an attempt to amalgamate existing perceptions and attitudes regarding sex tourism from a transnational perspective.

Since literature on this topic is scarce and lacks diversity, this exploratory research intends to provide insight into how people in Las Vegas perceive sex tourism. This insight will be instrumental in providing hypotheses, and not just assumptions, as to how public perceptions and attitudes affect sex tourism practices by regions. International perspectives on sex tourism, prostitution, and human trafficking will be used to establish how these types of sexual activities are constructed and applied in different contexts. The purpose of this study is to explore attitudes and perceptions about these types of sexual activities across a sample of respondents who live in an American city (Las Vegas),
known for its tourist economy and hyper-sexuality associated with “Sin City”. The famous slogan “What happens in Las Vegas stays in Las Vegas” implies that casual sexual behaviors are regarded as a part of the tourist experience.

This study attempted to look at attitudes and perceptions by addressing the following research questions:

Research Question 1: How much do people know about sex tourism in Las Vegas? Sex tourism presented in prior research has been described as a third world phenomenon. This research explored whether people living in the overtly sexual tourist destination of Las Vegas knew much about concepts, definitions, and practices relating to sex tourism.

Research Question 2: Is sex tourism considered to be a social problem comparable to prostitution and human trafficking? Prior research has been inconsistent on whether sex tourism is considered to be a social problem similar to human trafficking and prostitution. If commercial sexual behavior lands on a continuum, the expected findings were that human trafficking was considered to be the most serious social problem, then prostitution, and lastly sex tourism.

Research Question 3: Are participants able to identify areas where sex tourism is practiced? Participants were expected to be able to identify areas where sex tourism is practiced. General consensus from prior research would predict that sex tourism is practiced internationally and not in the United States.

Research Question 4: Are participants aware of current laws internationally, in the United States or in Las Vegas regarding the following sexual practices: human trafficking, sex tourism, and prostitution? Based on prior research it was expected that
participants would be aware of human trafficking and prostitution laws internationally, in the United States and Las Vegas, but would be unaware of laws regarding sex tourism.

Research Question 5: Are participants able to identify types of advertisements that promote sex tourism locally and internationally (Amsterdam, Costa Rica and Las Vegas)? Participants were expected to be able to identify overt advertisements for commercial sexual activity but not those with subtle undertones promoting sex tourism.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Participants

In order to measure public perceptions, as they relate to sex tourism, a survey was conducted and data collected from undergraduate students enrolled in an introductory Criminal Justice class (CRJ 104), at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Data collections were for two semesters beginning Fall 2013 and ending Spring 2014. For the Attitudes Toward Sex Tourism survey, a college student population was chosen based on two factors: accessibility of sample and CRJ 104 research subject pool availability. Students who completed the survey received course credit for their participation.

Within these semesters, two versions of a survey were administered to different groups of participants. The first wave, administered Fall 2013, had 369 participants who responded (n = 369), while the second wave, administered Spring 2014 had 193 participants (n = 193). All participants took an online self-report survey.

Procedures

Anonymous questionnaires (See Appendix A and B) were administered to participants in the Law and Social Issues Research Laboratory, located in the Criminal Justice Department at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. The Attitudes Toward Sex Tourism survey was created by Carolyn S. Willis, under the supervision of Dr. M. Alexis Kennedy. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), approved all procedures in Fall 2013 (Protocol #1307-4508). Before completing the survey, participants were informed of their right to skip any questions that made them
uncomfortable while still getting participation credits. Participants gave an electronic conformation acknowledging their consent before starting the survey.

Two versions of the survey were administered, one Fall 2013 (Wave 1) and Spring 2014 (Wave 2). The first wave questionnaire consisted of 46 survey questions with limited information regarding the sexual activities being explored (see Appendix A). The second wave of data collection had 49 questions, 75% being identical to the first wave, but this time provided participants with written definitions for sex tourism, human trafficking, prostitution and consensual sex near the start of the questionnaire. Soliciting opinions on consensual sex was added to the second wave.

Another modification was the expanded response categories for survey questions asking about images (question 13 to 15) and scenarios (questions 20 to 30). The stimuli remained the same but the response categories were expanded from dichotomous (yes/no), to include specific sexual practices, sex tourism, human trafficking, prostitution, and consensual sex. Specific instructions about answering questions were also added to the second wave for these questions, and participants were asked to choose all that applied (See Appendix B).

The variations between these two surveys attempted to measure unbiased and generic perceptions of individuals’ knowledge of different sexual practices specifically sex tourism (Wave 1). After measuring the unprompted perceptions, the second wave provided a clear definition of each type of sexual activity and variations in responses for images and scenarios. Response categories were expanded to measure what individuals perceived these practices were, if they did not recognize them as sex tourism practices.
For example in wave 2, respondents were able to choose whether images and scenarios depicted sex tourism, human trafficking, prostitution, consensual sexual activity, or none.

The surveys were divided into different sections where participants were asked to define and describe sex tourism, human trafficking, prostitution and consensual sex (the latter found only in wave 2); report general knowledge and awareness regarding sexual practices, assess advertisement features; suggest motivations; and provide limited demographic information.

Measures

In exploring participants’ attitudes toward sex tourism, perceptions relating to sexual activities were measured using several research questions and formulated assumptions guided by the literature reviewed. Knowledge about sex tourism was measured using definition responses, participants’ familiarity with the term sex tourism and participants ability to identify sex tourism practices. Definition responses were analyzed using a Wordle application, which calculated the frequency of word usage (See Appendices C to E and Table 1). Harm associated with these sexual practices and perceptions of them as social issues were measured on a Likert scale, while definition questions were open ended.

The extent of these behaviors being seen as a social problem was the second area explored. Questions were asked if participants thought behavior associated with sex tourism, prostitution, and human trafficking were a problematic behavior (first wave) or a social problem (second wave). The level of harm associated with these practices was assessed on an 11 pt. scale. Questions were asked if participants were able to identify areas where sex tourism is practiced. This addressed participants’ ability to identify areas
where sex tourism occurred in order to establish if sex tourism is a “third world” concept describing sex work as literature suggests. Questions were asked regarding participants’ awareness of current laws internationally, in the United States, or Las Vegas regarding the following sexual practices: human trafficking, sex tourism and prostitution.

Finally, questions were asked whether participants were able to identify types of advertisements that promote sex tourism locally and internationally. These open-ended questions were analyzed using the Wordle application. Also, the use of images depicting a window parlor, Red Light District in Amsterdam (image 1), a mobile billboard of “Hot Babes”, Las Vegas (image 2), and a female street worker in a crowded area, Costa Rica (image 3) were also analyzed to estimate respondents’ ability to recognize types of sexual activities associated with these images.

Survey responses were collected and analyzed in SPSS using both univariate (frequencies and means) and bivariate analyses (independent samples t-test) to measure whether perceptions and knowledge varied by gender. A computer word cloud application (Wordle) was also used to analyze the qualitative responses from the survey.

Demographic Characteristics

Data collected from the first wave (Fall 2013) indicated that more than half of the respondents were females (56.7%), and 43.3% were males. Respondents’ age ranged from 18 to 53 years old with the mean age being 20.42 years (81.5% were 21 years old or younger). Length of time living in Las Vegas was equally dispersed across categories, 31.8% born in Las Vegas, 35.4% lived in Las Vegas less than 10 years, and 31.8% lived more than 10 years. The race individuals primarily identified with were Caucasian or White (41.6%), Hispanic (29.8%), Asian (13.8%), Black or African American (13.5%),
Mixed Race (7.7%), and Native American (1.1%). Only 12% (n = 43) of individuals were employed in the tourism industry, 13.2% (n = 47) have been asked where to purchase sex, and 59.4% (n = 212) reportedly travelled internationally.

From the responses collected in the second wave (Spring 2014), about half of the respondents were males (50.5%), and 49.5% were females. Respondents’ age ranged from 18 to 53 years old with the mean age being 21.3 years (76% were 21 years old or younger). Length of time living in Las Vegas was equally dispersed across categories, 34.2% born in Las Vegas, 35.3% lived in Las Vegas less than 10 years, and 30.5% lived more than 10 years. Race characteristics were reported as Caucasian or White (44.6%), Hispanic (30.6%), Asian (14.5%), Black or African American (9.8%), Mixed Race (8.8%), and Native American (1.6%). Only 8.9% (n = 17) of individuals have been employed in the tourism industry, 13.2% (n = 25) have been asked where to purchase sex, and 62.6% (n = 119) reportedly travelled internationally.

Even though some differences in demographic characteristics were noted across wave one and two, when compared, t tests revealed that differences observed were not statistically significant.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The results from Wave #1 indicated that a large proportion of survey respondents had limited knowledge of the term "sex tourism" and its meaning. To provide a uniform frame of reference for this concept, respondents in Wave #2 were given specific definitions of sex tourism (i.e., individuals participating in paid sexual activities while on vacation) and other types of sexual activity, specifically, consensual sex, prostitution, human trafficking.

Based on the survey data collected under these uniform definitions, univariate and bivariate analyses were conducted with the second wave of data to assess general attitudes and beliefs about different types of sexual activities and gender differences in these ratings. Overall, responses from the first wave and second wave of data collection mirrored each other. The results for the second wave of data are summarized below.

Knowledge and Familiarity Regarding Sex Tourism

Multiple survey questions were combined to analyze respondents’ knowledge and familiarity regarding sex tourism concepts, definitions, and practices.

In responding to the first research question: “How much do you know about sex tourism?” responses from different survey questions in wave 1 were combined to measure respondents’ knowledge. Respondents were asked to indicate their familiarity with the term “sex tourism”, while the follow up question asked about the depth of their perceived knowledge regarding sex tourism. Results are displayed in Figures 1 and 2.
As shown in Figure 1, a small majority (62.2%) of respondents indicated that they were not familiar with the term, while 37.8% of respondents said they were familiar. When analyzed by gender, more men (63.1%) than women (61.8%) said they were not familiar with this term. There were no statistically significant gender differences in response to familiarity with sex tourism.

Respondents were further asked to indicate their knowledge about sex tourism. As displayed in Figure 2, a large minority of respondents (44.4%) reported that they knew nothing at all about sex tourism, 37.5% knew a little, 17.4% knew some, while only 0.8% reported they knew a lot. When overall knowledge was measured by gender, of the 44.4% of respondent who reported knowing nothing at all about sex tourism, more women (48.5%) than men (38.5%) said they knew nothing at all. There were no statistically significant gender differences in knowledge about sex tourism.
Describing, Defining Sex Tourism, and Other Sexual Activities

Survey questions in wave 1 further measured knowledge about sex tourism by asking respondents to describe the following terms: sex tourism, human trafficking, and prostitution. Of the 369 respondents, 98.4% (347) were able to provide a response for sex tourism, while 99.7% (365) provided a response for both human trafficking and prostitution. Further analysis demonstrated that 29.7% (n = 103) of respondents were unable to define sex tourism, 2.4% (9) of respondents were unable to define human trafficking while 100% of respondents defined prostitution. Responses for those unable to define these terms included phrases like: do not know, unsure and not applicable.
The frequency of words and phrases used were measured using a Wordle application. Table 1 shows frequencies for the top 10 commonly used words and phrases across all three categories.

Table 1. Word Frequency in Describing Sex Tourism and other Sexual Activity (Wave 1, N = 369).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Sex Tourism</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Human Trafficking</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Prostitution</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sex*</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>People**</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>Money***</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sexual*</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>Selling*</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>Selling*</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>Sex*</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>Sex*</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tourist</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>Force</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>Body</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Work</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Sexual*</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Prostitution**</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Slavery</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Exchange</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Selling*</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Illegal</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Pay</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Money***</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Acts</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>People**</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Sexual*</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>One’s</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Different</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Prostitution**</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Favors</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Table of frequency for words used to describe a particular sexual activity
*Words used in sex tourism, human trafficking, and prostitution definitions
** Words used in sex tourism and human trafficking definitions
*** Words used in prostitution and human trafficking definitions
When examined, language used to describe all three terms sex tourism, human trafficking and prostitution, suggested that these concepts are interrelated. Looking specifically at words as a unit of analysis showed the most frequently used words (top 10) seen across all categories were: sex, sexual, selling. Other words used, to a lesser extent, to describe these concepts were people, prostitutes, force, and money.

While response patterns were similar across both waves of data collection, participants who were not provided with a definition used a broader range of words to describe sex tourism; language used highlighted this practice as being non-coercive and consensual; while portraying it to be fun and a part of the leisure experience. Sex tourism was viewed as involving sex, selling, and tourists. Most respondents identified prostitution-like practices as a part of their definitions, which confirms an existing connection between sex tourism and prostitution as some scholars have indicated. The contrast in definitions provided, actually mirrors the debate in current research, as some researchers classify sex tourism as a form of prostitution while others do not. Interestingly, when defining sex tourism, some respondents mentioned characteristics relating to human trafficking, like force and trafficking, not detailed in current sex tourism literature.

Prostitution definitions were proximate to standard legal definitions. Key concepts identified included money, sexual, paying, selling, sex, etc., which demonstrated these concepts (prostitution and sex tourism) were connected. Words used to describe prostitution were generally non-coercive and voluntary in nature. Even though prostitution was used to describe sex tourism practices, the term “sex tourism” was not mentioned in prostitution or human trafficking definitions.
Also, human trafficking definitions were found to be consistent with available definitions. Words used to define this term showed the highest level of coercion and nonconsensual behavior of all three terms; these included force, slavery, sex, people, and selling. Human trafficking definitions also had the most frequent mention of particular populations, based on gender (men/women) and age (children/adult). The word prostitution was commonly mentioned when defining this term.

Identifying Scenarios Associated with Sex Tourism and Other Sexual Activities (Wave 2)

Tables 2 and 3 summarize respondents’ perceptions regarding situations associated with sex tourism and other sexual activities. This was measured using scenarios from wave 2 that were grouped geographically by “Other” locations and “Las Vegas”.

As shown in Table 2 respondents’ perceptions regarding these situations varied. Results from the “Other” locations demonstrated that three-fifths (60%) of the scenarios were considered to be sex tourism, while one-fifth (20%) was considered as prostitution and consensual sexual activity respectively. None of the scenarios for this category was considered to be human trafficking.

Significant gender differences in perceptions were found for responses where individuals perceived the situation to be prostitution in scenario 1 (Woman travels to tropical island) and scenario 5 (Man travels to tropical island). Females were more likely than males to perceive both of these situations as being prostitution. In addition, gender differences were also observed for scenario 4 (Cruise ship docks), as more male respondents than female respondents were likely to perceive this situation as representing all of the sexual activities mentioned ($p < .05$).
Table 3 summarizes respondents’ perceptions regarding scenarios based on Las Vegas. For this context, only 16% (one-sixth) of the scenarios were most often viewed as sex tourism, while 34% were viewed as prostitution and half (50%) were viewed as consensual sexual activity. None were considered to be human trafficking.
Table 2. Scenario Responses for Type of Situations Occurring in “Other” Locations (Wave 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Highest Rank</th>
<th>Sex Tourism</th>
<th>Prostitution</th>
<th>Human Trafficking</th>
<th>Consensual Activity</th>
<th>All 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Woman <em>tropical island</em>, meets a man <em>companion</em> for a week. Assists him financially <em>daily expenses</em>; in return he provides <em>companionship and sex</em>. Returns several times.</td>
<td>Sex tourism</td>
<td>69.4%</td>
<td>56.6%*</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Man told about <em>specific location; sexual activities (local women) for cash encouraged</em>. Decides to vacation and searches for the best places to engage in these sexual activities.</td>
<td>Sex tourism</td>
<td>81.3%</td>
<td>74.1%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Man <em>vacationing</em>, meets local woman, they have a <em>sexual encounter</em>. He arranges to care for her financially until he returns. They <em>communicate</em> and he returns to marry her. They relocate to his country.</td>
<td></td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>92.7%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <em>Cruise ship</em> docks and <em>tourists</em> go on shore for scheduled day tours. Instead of the proposed tour a man is taken to the <em>local hotspots</em> and introduced to a local</td>
<td></td>
<td>53.4%</td>
<td>83.4%</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>4.1%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Man <em>travels</em> to a <em>tropical island</em>, meets a woman <em>companion</em> for the week. He assists her financially with <em>daily expenses</em>; in return, she provides <em>companionship and sex</em>. He vacations several times yearly.</td>
<td>Sex tourism</td>
<td>70.5%</td>
<td>54.4%*</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>53.9%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample size  
N = 193  
N = 193  
N = 193  
N = 193  
N = 193  
N = 193

Notes: Table value indicate the percentage of respondents who classified as scenario as representative of a particular sexual activity

*t-test of gender differences is statistically significant at p < .05
Table 3. Scenario Responses for Type of Situations Occurring in Las Vegas (Wave 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Highest Rank</th>
<th>Sex Tourism</th>
<th>Prostitution</th>
<th>Human Trafficking</th>
<th>Consensual Activity</th>
<th>All 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6. Man travels from Europe to Las Vegas; business conference meets woman, pays rent, and expenses; in return, she provides companionship and sex. He returns to Las Vegas several times yearly, assists her</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Booking a weekend vacation: “What happens in Las Vegas stays in Las Vegas”. Man aware that it is legal to have sex in exchange for money in some places. Decides to visit Las Vegas, searches for the best places to</td>
<td>Sex tourism</td>
<td>80.8%</td>
<td>71.5%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Woman Europe visits Las Vegas, business trip. She hits local hotspots where she meets man. They head to the club; she picks up the tab for the night. Both returned to her hotel room where they have sex.</td>
<td></td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>93.8%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Several men decide to visit Las Vegas for a bachelor party. While in Las Vegas one of the men decide to pay a local woman for sex.</td>
<td></td>
<td>37.8%</td>
<td>92.7%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Local taxicab drivers, tourists to local hotspots in Las Vegas sexual services provided. Fee charged, they pay for sexual services.</td>
<td></td>
<td>69.4%</td>
<td>77.2%*</td>
<td>46.1%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Woman visits Las Vegas from Chicago meets a college student. She spends time with him and starts paying his rent.</td>
<td></td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>67.4%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes: Table value indicate the percentage of respondents who classified as scenario as representative of a particular sexual activity

*t-test of gender differences is statistically significant at p < .05
Significant gender differences were found for scenario 6 (Man travels from Europe to Las Vegas), and scenario 10 (Local taxicab drivers shuttles tourists to local hotspots), as female respondents were more likely to perceive scenarios as being prostitution ($p < .05$). No other gender differences were found in these types of sexual activities in Las Vegas.

**Seriousness of Sex Tourism and Other Sexual Activities as a Social Problem (Wave 2)**

As shown in Table 4, respondents’ average ratings of the seriousness of particular types of sexual activities as a social problem ranged from a low of 2.1 (indicating “somewhat of a problem”) to 2.9 (indicating a “serious problem”) on a 3-point scale. Of the types of sexual activities, sex tourism was considered the least serious social problem and human trafficking the most serious problem. Significant gender differences were found for sex tourism and prostitution. For these two types of activities, female respondents viewed them as significantly greater social problems ($p < .05$). Male and female respondents had similar views of human trafficking as a serious social problem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Sexual Activity</th>
<th>Total Sample Means (sd)</th>
<th>Female Means (sd)</th>
<th>Male Means (sd)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex Tourism</td>
<td>2.11 (.67)</td>
<td>2.23 (.67)</td>
<td>1.99 (.64) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td>2.43 (.64)</td>
<td>2.58 (.57)</td>
<td>2.29 (.68) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Trafficking</td>
<td>2.91 (.28)</td>
<td>2.94 (.23)</td>
<td>2.87 (.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Size:</td>
<td>N = 189</td>
<td>N = 94</td>
<td>N = 95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Scale values are 1 = not problem at all, 2 = somewhat of a problem, and 3 = a serious problem.
* t-test of gender differences is statistically significant at $p < .05$.  


Perceived Harm of Selling and Buying Types of Sexual Services (Wave 2)

As shown in Table 5, survey respondents viewed all types of sexual services as harmful (means ranged from 6.7 to 8.4 on 11-point scale). Of the types of sexual services being sold, sex tourism was considered the least harmful and human trafficking the most harmful. Significant gender differences were found for selling sexual services associated with sex tourism and prostitution, with female respondents rating these particular types of sexual services as significantly more harmful than males ($p < .05$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Perceived Harm for Selling Types of Sexual Service</th>
<th>Total Sample Means (sd)</th>
<th>Female Means (sd)</th>
<th>Male Means (sd)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex Tourism</td>
<td>6.75 (3.1)</td>
<td>7.28 (2.9)</td>
<td>6.23 (3.2) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td>7.48 (2.9)</td>
<td>8.02 (2.7)</td>
<td>6.96 (2.9) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Trafficking</td>
<td>8.45 (2.9)</td>
<td>8.60 (2.8)</td>
<td>8.30 (3.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Size:</td>
<td>N = 190</td>
<td>N = 94</td>
<td>N = 96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Perceived Harm for Buying Types of Sexual Service</th>
<th>Total Sample Means (sd)</th>
<th>Female Means (sd)</th>
<th>Male Means (sd)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex Tourism</td>
<td>5.89 (3.4)</td>
<td>6.54 (3.0)</td>
<td>5.26 (3.6)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td>6.81 (3.0)</td>
<td>7.10 (2.9)</td>
<td>6.52 (3.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Trafficking</td>
<td>7.04 (3.4)</td>
<td>7.21 (3.3)</td>
<td>6.88 (3.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Size:</td>
<td>N = 190</td>
<td>N = 94</td>
<td>N = 96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Scale values range from 0 = not harmful at all to 10 = extremely harmful. * t-test of gender differences is statistically significant at $p < .05$. 

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Table 5 also summarizes the nature of attitudes about the perceived harm associated with buying sexual services. For each type of sexual service, buying these activities was viewed as harmful (means ranged from 5.9 to 7.0 on a 11-point scale), but these average ratings for buying were lower than for selling these sexual services. Of the types of sex services being purchased, sex tourism was considered the least harmful and human trafficking the most harmful. Female respondents viewed buying sexual services as more harmful than males, but only in the case of sex tourism was this gender difference statistically significant ($p < .05$).

**Identifying Locations and Visual Images of Sex Tourism and Other Activities (Wave 2)**

Survey respondents were asked several questions about their opinions about specific locations where they thought sex tourism was practiced, and how they evaluated advertisements and visual images of sexual activity. These results are summarized below.

When asked whether sex tourism happened in Las Vegas, all (100%) of survey respondents confirmed this belief. Nearly all (92%) of the study participants said they believed that sex tourism occurred “often” in Las Vegas. Female respondents were slightly more likely than males to believe that sex tourism occurs often in Las Vegas (93% vs. 91%, respectively), but these gender differences were not statistically significant ($p > .05$). Participants were also asked whether they would be able to tell if sex tourism was featured in an Internet advertisement. Fewer than half (44%) of respondents said they would be able to identify this particular type of sexual activity being featured in an advertisement. Respondents noted women, nudity, girls, and
anything of a sexual nature to be predominant features of advertisements depicting sex tourism. There were no statistically significant gender differences in these beliefs.

To further explore perceptions of sex tourism, three visual images of public settings were shown to survey participants and they were asked to identify the particular type of sexual activity that is occurring within each picture. These pictures included an image of (1) Amsterdam's Red Light District, (2) a mobile billboard of "hot babes" in Las Vegas, and (3) a female street worker in a crowded urban scene. Actual visual images are shown in Appendices G to I. Table 6 summarizes respondents' evaluations of these visual images of sex tourism, prostitution, and/or human trafficking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Sexual Activity Classified by Respondents</th>
<th>Image 1: Amsterdam Red Light District</th>
<th>Image 2: Mobile Billboard of “Hot Babes”</th>
<th>Image 3: Female Street Worker in a Crowded Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex Tourism</td>
<td>67.4%</td>
<td>78.8%</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td>83.9%</td>
<td>72.0%</td>
<td>78.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Trafficking</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consensual Sex</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of the Above</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None/Not sure</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample size</td>
<td>N = 193</td>
<td>N = 193</td>
<td>N = 193</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
Table values indicate the percentage of respondents who classified an image as representative of a particular type of sexual activity.
As shown in Table 6, survey respondents had different perceptions of the type of sexual activity conveyed in these visual images. In particular, most respondents viewed the pictures of the mobile billboard (Image 2) and Amsterdam’s Red Light District (Image 1) as most indicative of sex tourism, but only about one-fifth of them viewed the image of the women street worker (Image 3) as representative of sex tourism. In contrast, the vast majority of respondents thought that prostitution was depicted in all three pictures, ranging from a low of 72% for the image of mobile billboard of “Hot Babes” to a high of 84% for the picture of Amsterdam’s district. Only a small minority of respondents viewed any of these pictures as indicative of human trafficking, consensual sexual relations, or all types of sexual activities.

The results in Table 6 are suggestive of two general conclusions about respondent’s visual perceptions of sex tourism. First, all categories were representative of sex tourism, and images with explicit sexual overtones (images 1 and 2) were chosen by most respondents as being sex tourism, more so for Image 2 (billboard). For image 3, only a small percent recognized this as being sex tourism as compared to the other sexual activities as it was a subtle depiction. Secondly, respondents were more likely to perceive these images as representing prostitution than any other sexual activity, except for image 2.

**Perceptions of the Geographical Distribution of Sex Tourism (Wave 2)**

Survey respondents were asked whether they believed that sex tourism occurred in different geographical regions in the world. Their responses to this question are summarized in Figure 3.
Based on the pattern of results in Figure 3, sex tourism was viewed by the majority of respondents as occurring in each country and world region listed. The most commonly identified countries and regions for sex tourism were the United States (95%), Europe (92%), and Mexico (88%). The countries and regions that were least often identified as locations for sex tourism were Middle East (57%), Oceania (55%), and Canada (54%).

Awareness of Laws: Sex Tourism and Other Sexual Activity Across Contexts (Wave 2)

Table 7 summarizes respondents’ awareness of particular laws associated with sex tourism, prostitution, and human trafficking in different contexts (i.e., internationally, internationally,
United States, Las Vegas). The reported awareness of particular laws ranged widely across these geographical contexts and respondents’ gender.

As shown in the first panel of Table 7, the proportion of survey respondents who said they were aware of international laws for particular types of sexual activity ranged from a low of 19% to a high of 45%. Of the types of international laws, respondents were least aware of international law on sex tourism and most aware of international prostitution laws. There were no significant gender differences in respondents' awareness of international sex tourism laws. However, significant gender differences were found for self-reported awareness of international prostitution laws, with male respondents more likely to say they had knowledge of these laws than female respondents ($p < .05$).

The second and third panels of Table 7 summarize respondent’s awareness of different types of sexual activity laws in the U.S. and Las Vegas. For ratings in the U.S. context, the proportion of respondents who were aware of these different laws ranged from a low of 35% to a high of 94%. These proportions ranged from 32% to 87% when questions were asked about awareness of particular sexual activity laws in Las Vegas. A far lower proportion of respondents reported knowing about sex tourism laws than prostitution laws in both the U.S. and Las Vegas (see Table 7). The only significant gender difference in the ratings of awareness involved sex tourism laws in the U.S., with men reporting a higher awareness of these laws (43%) than women (27%). No other gender differences in awareness of sexual activity laws in the U.S. and Las Vegas were statistically significant.
Table 7. Proportion of Respondents Aware of Laws for Particular Types of Sexual Activity Across Different Geographical Contexts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Awareness of Laws</th>
<th>Total Sample Percent (sd)</th>
<th>Female Percent (sd)</th>
<th>Male Percent (sd)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Tourism</td>
<td>18.5 % (.39)</td>
<td>14.0 (.35)</td>
<td>22.9 (.42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td>45.5 % (.50)</td>
<td>37.6 (.50)</td>
<td>53.1 (.50) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Trafficking</td>
<td>44.7 % (.50)</td>
<td>41.3 (.50)</td>
<td>47.9 (.50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Size</td>
<td>N = 188-189</td>
<td>N = 92-93</td>
<td>N = 96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Awareness of Laws</th>
<th>Total Sample Percent (sd)</th>
<th>Female Percent (sd)</th>
<th>Male Percent (sd)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Tourism</td>
<td>34.9 % (.48)</td>
<td>26.9 (.45)</td>
<td>42.7 (.50)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td>93.7 % (.24)</td>
<td>91.5 (.28)</td>
<td>95.8 (.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Trafficking</td>
<td>71.1 % (.45)</td>
<td>71.3 (.45)</td>
<td>70.8 (.46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Size</td>
<td>N = 190</td>
<td>N = 93-94</td>
<td>N = 96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Awareness of Laws</th>
<th>Total Sample Percent (sd)</th>
<th>Female Percent (sd)</th>
<th>Male Percent (sd)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Las Vegas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Tourism</td>
<td>31.6 % (.47)</td>
<td>25.5 (.44)</td>
<td>37.5 (.49)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td>86.8 % (.34)</td>
<td>85.1 (.36)</td>
<td>88.5 (.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Trafficking</td>
<td>58.4 % (.49)</td>
<td>55.3 (.50)</td>
<td>61.5 (.49)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Size</td>
<td>N = 190</td>
<td>N = 94</td>
<td>N = 96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
Rating scales for awareness of particular laws: 0 = No and 1 = Yes.
* t-test of gender differences is statistically significant at p < .05.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Literature and research on sex tourism has indicated that identifying and labeling sex tourism has become a challenge, as behaviors and attitudes are observed differently worldwide. This challenge is compounded, as there is no general consensus as to what sex tourism is, or how pervasive this economic exploitation has become over the past decade. In this regard, this study intended to explore perceptions of sex tourism in a Westernized “first world” region (Las Vegas), to assess general knowledge of this concept and explore whether there are qualitative differences in perceptions regarding sex tourism practices elsewhere. For this research, five research questions were derived from existing literature and were used to gauge general trends in perceptions regarding sex tourism and other sexual activity.

Research Question 1:

How much do people know about sex tourism?

The first question looked at how current literature focuses on sex tourism as mainly a third world phenomenon, and suggested that people in Las Vegas would not be knowledgeable about relating concepts, definitions, and practices. This research question was supported as the first wave of data collection showed that one-third of the respondents were not able to define sex tourism - they were unsure what it was or did not know how to define it. In the second data collection wave where definitions were given, respondents were more confident in describing this concept.

Noteworthy, the definitions and descriptions were similar for both waves even when definitions of these concepts were not given. Respondents were using variations
and synonyms of the words “sex” and “tourism” to describe sex tourism but without providing concrete examples of behaviors that would fall under these definitions. Language used in defining and describing these types of sexual activities shows that these concepts are intertwined, maintaining a relationship (connection) that previous literature neglects to discuss.

Current literature links sex tourism to prostitution, but it does not directly link it to human trafficking. In Asia, particularly Philippines and Thailand, the coercive attributes associated with sex tourism are often mentioned, but not those associated with meeting supply and demand (Oppermann, 1999). In the Caribbean, for instance, there is significant agreement among researchers that individuals perceive sex tourism to be less coercive, fun and entertaining (Frohlick, 2013; Jacobs, 2009). However, perceptions regarding sex tourism in Las Vegas revealed a clear connection to both prostitution and human trafficking, with words like: sex, money, sexual, force, prostitutes, selling, illegal, and body being used to describe all three concepts (see Appendices C to E).

For further analysis of respondents’ perceptions relating to sex tourism, a comparison was done using 11 scenarios based sex tourism practices observed in current literature. Respondents’ perceptions were that sex tourism is practiced in different regions, but people in Las Vegas only described a few exemplars as sex tourism. (Frohlick, 2013; Herold et al., 2001; Jeffreys, 1999).

For scenarios with “Other” locations, respondents’ perceptions were that these situations represented mainly sex tourism and to a lesser extent prostitution. This aligns with current literature and survey descriptions where perceptions regarding sex tourism included prostitution-like concepts. Scholars have often described sex tourism as
prostitution tourism and organized prostitution in other regions, excluding the United States, and responses from this section (tropical locations) are indicative that respondents’ perceptions are the same in that these sex tourism practices occur in “Other” locations and not Las Vegas (Bender & Furman, 2004; Oppermann, 1999).

Scenarios for Las Vegas were perceived as sex tourism to a lesser extent as compared to similar behaviors in other locations. Regardless of gender, motivations, and practices, behaviors in Las Vegas were more likely perceived as consensual sexual activities and prostitution. Distinctive differences were noted for scenarios where consensual sexual activity was chosen as the primary description, while those for sex tourism and prostitution were marginally different. Only in scenario 9, in which several men decide to visit Las Vegas for a bachelor party and decide to pay a local woman for sex, were the differences in response largely indicating this practice to be primarily prostitution.

When scenarios indicated “pay for sex,” respondents were less likely to associate these with sex tourism, and more likely to associate these as situations involving prostitution. Respondents are classifying these situations as being prostitution even though scholars have noted people engaging in sex tourism do not perceive their behaviors as such. Also, situations indicating phrases “assist financially and visits yearly” are considered more as consensual sex for Las Vegas, but as sex tourism for “Other” locations. Deriving from respondents’ perceptions of these scenarios, an inference can be made that individuals view behaviors happening in Las Vegas as more consensual, when compared elsewhere. This was observed specifically for scenarios where only the locations were changed, but the practices remained the same.
Scenarios were used to establish a general agreement as to what behavior constituted sex tourism. For the most part, these scenarios reflected an agreement that ambiguities exist when tourists travel and decide to engage in sexual activities ranging from casual sex to long-term relationships. Based on specific locations, inferences can be made that it is a matter of perceptions, motivations, purpose and to a lesser extent gender involvement that respondents are relying on to determine whether these situations constitute sex tourism practices or other sexual activities.

The culture of Las Vegas creates a highly sexualized atmosphere and the famous slogan “What happens in Las Vegas stays in Las Vegas” implies that casual sexual behaviors are condoned. This creates a status quo where people are recognizing sexual practices in these scenarios, but not predominantly identifying them as sex tourism, where tourists are participating in (paid) sexual activities while on vacation. As noted in sex tourism literature, this failure to recognize situations involving sex tourism limits awareness and ignores potential problems because it is not labeled as such in Las Vegas and elsewhere (Frohlick, 2013; Jacobs, 2004; Jeffreys 1999).

**Research Question 2:**

*Is sex tourism considered a social problem as compared to prostitution and human trafficking?*

The second research question tested in this research was whether sex tourism is considered to be as serious of a social problem, as human trafficking and prostitution. In comparing all three, if placed on a continuum, human trafficking is considered to be the greatest social problem, more so than prostitution and sex tourism, with the latter considered a social problem to a lesser extent.
The level of harm regarding sex tourism also revealed that respondents perceive sex tourism as the least harmful and least problematic of the three types of commercial sexual activities, while human trafficking was the most harmful and problematic. This is consistent with current literature, which often describes sex tourism as the least harmful of these three sexual activities, by portraying it to be fun and entertaining with different levels of exploitation depending on where it is practiced (Jeffreys, 1999). Perceptions in Las Vegas also reflect this because even though respondents perceive some harm associated with sex tourism they are not viewing it as a serious problem like prostitution and human trafficking.

**Research Question 3:**

*Are participants able to identify areas where sex tourism is practiced?*

The third research question assessed whether participants are able to identify areas where sex tourism is practiced. Consensus among scholars indicated that sex tourism is practiced internationally, but not in the United States.

In contrast, respondents’ identification of regions where sex tourism occurs was inconsistent with the existing literature, as respondents were selecting the United States as the primary region where sex tourism occurs. This contradiction was also reflected in the definitions of sex tourism, being mainly viewed as a “third world” phenomenon, since current literature did not specifically reference the United States or Las Vegas.
Research Question 4:

*Are participants aware of current laws internationally, in the United States, or in Las Vegas regarding the following sexual practices: human trafficking, prostitution and sex?*

The fourth research question involved whether participants were aware of human trafficking, and prostitution laws internationally, in the United States and Las Vegas. It was expected that they would be unaware of laws regarding sex tourism. Respondents’ limited awareness regarding laws associated with sex tourism was consistent with the available literature, since no specific laws addressing sex tourism have been noted (Oppermann, 1999; Pettman, 1997). Generally, only prostitution and human trafficking laws were mentioned in available literature (Farley, 2005; Leheny, 1995; Carter, 2000).

Research Question 5:

*Are participants able to identify types of advertisements that promote sex tourism locally and internationally (Amsterdam, Costa Rica and Las Vegas)?*

The fifth research question involved evaluating participants’ ability to identify advertisements promoting sex tourism. Based on existing research, participants should be able to identify overt advertisements but not those with subtle undertones. Accordingly, respondents’ perceptions regarding advertisements supported this assumption since overt depictions were chosen as being most representative of sex tourism practices.

Gender comparisons for the first and second waves of data collection revealed that men and women perceived certain aspects of sex tourism differently. Women perceived sex tourism scenarios more as prostitution than any other type sexual activity. Women also perceived sex tourism as more of a social problem, as they were recognizing
higher levels of harm with selling, and buying of sexual services associated with sex tourism and prostitution. Even though women were recognizing the harmful aspects of sex tourism, males were reportedly more aware of laws associated with sex tourism, while both men and women were not familiar with the idea of sex tourism.

Respondents’ perceptions further supported the perspective of this paper suggesting that there is little awareness regarding sex tourism in Las Vegas, because sex tourism is not constructed to be a social problem. For that reason no laws are in place in Las Vegas and elsewhere to criminalize sex tourism practices as compared to prostitution and human trafficking.

Furthermore, motivations chosen for purchasing and selling sexual services were also consistent with the literature reviewed. As with current literature, the main motivation chosen for selling sexual services was financial while the main motivation for purchasing sexual services was sexual satisfaction (Herold et al., 2001; Ryan 2000). Also, women considered companionship as a motivation for both purchasing and selling sexual services more than men. This also supports assertions in current literature that women are not participating in sex tourism as men are (Frohlick, 2013; Jeffreys, 2003; Sánchez Taylor, 2001).

Limitations

In exploring general knowledge and perceptions relating to sex tourism, one of the major limitations was the scarcity of data regarding prevalence and practices for Las Vegas. For that reason a survey was created and used to measure perceptions as it relates to sex tourism concepts, definitions, motivations, and practices. Available literature was
also used to make a relative comparison of sex tourism transnationally in order to explore these areas.

Another limitation of this study has to do with the sampling frame. Using a convenience sample of entry-level Criminal Justice students limits the generalizability of this survey because the actual population probably engaging in sex tourism was not targeted. This creates difficulties in comparing groups (tourists and students) and measuring perceptions. Perceptions of those participating in a particular type of behavior are often different from those observing a behavior. Future research should include a sampling of actual tourists in these vacation areas.

Implications

Focusing on sex tourism practices has become important in creating awareness in areas where sex tourism occurs, both globally and locally. Since sex tourism is not considered to be part of the sex trade paradigm in some areas, it has become crucial to develop legislations and policies that address this phenomenon. These legislations would protect a vulnerable population, as the potential exists for sex tourism to become analogous with other forms of sex work (prostitution and human trafficking).

In order to address issues regarding sex tourism, advocacy plays a major role. Increased awareness will propel sex tourism to the forefront allowing for it to be recognized as a social issue, influencing governments; local and international watch groups, stakeholders, and members of the community to act in order to prevent exploitation and abuse. Because sex tourism is not socially constructed as a problem or a social issue, government participation becomes extremely important in order to address underlying issues of inequality, poverty, and exploitation.
Future Directions

Sex tourism is considered a relatively new construct. Future directions would be to create a succinct definition of what sex tourism is as it relates to concepts, definitions, and practices. This would create a distinctive link between sex tourism and prostitution, while looking at how differences in perceptions can create a market which fuels the sex industry. By determining the legality of sex tourism, many questions can be addressed. For instance: How do societies socially construct laws and enforce them to protect a group of people who do not see themselves as victims?

Research also needs to be done to determine how widespread sex tourism is, since tourist destinations can be found worldwide. Observing the proportion of tourists that engage in sex tourism can shed light on the prevalence of these practices, along with the populations involved. Exploring this area would be important in examining the level of child sexual exploitation that can potentially occur when looking at sex tourism, since previous literature focused mainly on sexual exploitation of adults.

Furthermore, it is important to assess the prevalence and overall motivations regarding this practice when individuals travel. In this regards, we can compare existing literature and understand the potential effects this emerging trend has on society; differences, and similarities by regions; along with perceptions, and recognition of sex tourism transnationally. This becomes important in attempting to answer these questions being put forward: 1) As a society, have individuals and governments become facilitators in the sex industry under the guise of tourism? 2) As tourists, has there been an evolution from being sightseers to becoming sex seekers? Finally, while gender differences were
analyzed, further demographic comparison, like age, race, time lived in Las Vegas and whether respondents travelled internationally, may prove to be insightful.

Conclusion

Academic literature and research indicate that sex tourism is indeed an emerging phenomenon with far-reaching impact, especially since these behaviors and attitudes are now being observed and practiced globally. It was evident, even with variations in practices and cultural norms; those findings from prior research, and this current study are fairly generalizable transnationally. By all definitions, it is clear that sex tourism is happening in Las Vegas but it is not being recognized as such within the tourism sector. Research often highlight prostitution, sex, and tourism as being independent of each other, when in fact they coexist as a part of the tourist experience. Apart from this practice not being recognized, there is limited research done specifically in the area of sex tourism; because of this, it becomes difficult to establish how prevalent this problem is in Las Vegas. Also, differences in perceptions and practices associated with sex tourism have created inconsistencies in defining this concept; the absence of laws, along with the shortage of research data have also created ‘gray areas’ when exploring the concept of sex tourism.

Since existing laws are not socially constructed to address sex tourism in Las Vegas, it becomes difficult to determine the legality of these practices. The only comparison made regarding sex tourism and other sexual activities, in the literature reviewed, and by people in Las Vegas was that it closely resembled prostitution. Thus, without a clear description of this practice, it gives rise to individuals engaging in paid sexual activities without law enforcement intervention. Sex tourism has become a way
for people to legitimize and fulfill their sexual fantasies, as it is a low risk behavior due to the lack of criminalization. The absence of restrictions comes with anonymity, the fact they cannot be identified or judged, while their behaviors are validated by the idea it is a part of the tourist experience, and that they are trying something new.
APPENDIX A

Survey Questionnaire from First Wave of Data Collection

Consent – Attitudes toward Sex Tourism

INFORMED CONSENT
Department of Criminal Justice
TITLE OF STUDY: Attitudes toward Sex Tourism
INVESTIGATOR(S): M. Alexis Kennedy, Ph.D.
CONTACT PHONE NUMBER: 702-895-5122

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to assess attitudes toward sex tourism. Assessing general knowledge about the topic will help develop policies related to this issue.

PARTICIPANTS
You are being asked to participate in the study because previous research has shown that college level students share similar attitudes with other adults in the community at large.

PROCEDURES
If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following: participate in an online survey. Your participation will be completely anonymous. You will complete the survey online in the research lab. You will be asked to provide some demographic information (e.g., age, sex, and ethnic background). We will not ask for your name or any other personally identifying information. The research is conducted by Dr. Alexis Kennedy who is an expert in the area of victimization. Data will be analyzed by the researcher and be stored in a password protected electronic file.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION
There may be direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. You may benefit from gaining direct knowledge about the process by which psychological data is collected in a university setting. You may experience benefit from an increased awareness of your knowledge about victimization. We also hope to learn about what information needs to be communicated to the community at large on accessing services for victims.

RISKS OF PARTICIPATION
There are risks involved in all research studies. This study may include only minimal risks. Your responses collected today are anonymous and can in no way be linked to your name or student number. If you inadvertently reveal any identifying information during the course of the survey, it will be deleted from the data set. You might be uncomfortable answering some of the questions asked. You may choose not to answer or skip any question that makes you feel uncomfortable.

COST/COMPENSATION
There will not be financial cost to you to participate in this study. The study will take approximately 30 minutes of your time. You will not be compensated financially for your time. You will receive two (2) CRJ 104 research credit points for your participation.
CONTACT INFORMATION
If you have any questions or concerns about the study, you may contact PI Alexis Kennedy (University of Nevada, Las Vegas) at 702-895-5122. For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted you may contact the Office of Research Integrity - Humans Subjects at 702-895-2794.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION
Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice to your relations with the university. You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or any time during the research study.

CONFIDENTIALITY
All information gathered in this study will be kept completely confidential. No reference will be made in written or oral materials that could link you to this study. All records will be stored in a password protected electronic file after completion of the study. After the storage time the information gathered will be destroyed.

Approved by UNLV Office of Research Integrity - Humans Subjects IRB on 08/05/2013. Will expire on 08/04/2014. Protocol #1307-4508

Participant Consent:
I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I am at least 18 years of age. A copy of this form has been provided to me.

PLEASE CLICK ‘I Consent’ NEXT TO GO TO THE SURVEY. BY CLICKING ON THIS ICON, YOU INDICATE THAT YOU HAVE READ AND AGREE TO THE ABOVE CONDITIONS, AND GIVE YOUR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

IF YOU DO NOT CONSENT TO THE SURVEY, PLEASE CLICK EXIT THIS SURVEY AT THE TOP RIGHT CORNER OF THE SCREEN.

1. Are you familiar with the term ‘sex tourism’?
   - Yes
   - No

2. How much do you know about sex tourism?
   - A lot
   - Some
   - A little
   - Nothing at all

3. How would you define the following?
   - Prostitution
   - Sex Tourism
   - Human Trafficking

4. Do you think this behavior is...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No problem at all</th>
<th>Somewhat of a problem</th>
<th>A serious problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex Tourism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Trafficking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Do you think selling sexual activities is harmful to the person selling?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not harmful at all</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Extremely harmful</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex Tourism</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>Human Trafficking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Do you think paying for sexual activities is harmful to the person buying?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not harmful at all</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Are you aware of any laws regarding the following practices INTERNATIONALLY?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex Tourism</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
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<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Trafficking</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Are you aware of any laws regarding the following practices IN THE UNITED STATES?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex Tourism</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
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<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Trafficking</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Are you aware of any laws regarding the following practices IN LAS VEGAS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex Tourism</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
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<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Trafficking</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Do you think sex tourism happens in Las Vegas?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
11. How often do you think sex tourism occurs in Las Vegas?
- Very Often
- Fairly Often
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

12. Do you think sex tourism occurs in the following areas? (Please check all that apply).
- Africa
- Asia
- Canada
- Caribbean
- Central America
- Europe
- Mexico
- Middle East
- Oceania
- South America
- United States

13. Do you think if you viewed an Internet advertisement promoting a particular destination you would be able to tell if sex tourism is being featured?
- Yes
- No

14. What is a specific feature in any advertisement that would indicate sex tourism is being offered?

15. Based on the image below, do you think sex tourism is being offered?
- Yes
- No
- Not sure
16. Based on the image below, do you think sex tourism is being offered?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
Question 16

17. Based on the image below, do you think sex tourism is being offered?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
18. In Las Vegas, what do you think is the primary motivation for purchasing sexual services?

- [ ] Sexual satisfaction
- [ ] Companionship
- [ ] Romance
- [ ] Excitement
- [ ] Curiosity
- [ ] Other

19. Other (please specify)
20. In Las Vegas, what do you think is the primary motivation for selling sexual services?

- Sexual satisfaction
- Companionship
- Romance
- Excitement
- Curiosity
- Financial need
- Other

21. Other (please specify)

Read the following short sentences and indicate whether you consider them to be sex tourism practices. These situations involve adults 18 yrs or older and occur on a beach or at local hotspots where people frequently travel.

22. A woman travels to a tropical island and meets a man who becomes her companion for the week she is on vacation. She assists him financially with his daily expenses; in return he provides companionship and sex. She vacations several times yearly at the same location where she met her ‘local friend’.

Is this a sex tourism practice?
- Yes
- No

23. A man is told about a specific location where engaging in sexual activities with local women for cash is encouraged. He decides this is where he will vacation next. Once there, he searches for the best places to engage in these sexual activities with local women for the length of time he is there.

Is this a sex tourism practice?
- Yes
- No
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Sex Tourism Practice?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>A man vacationing meets a local woman and they have a sexual encounter while he is on vacation. He arranges to care for her financially until he returns. They communicate frequently and he returns to marry her. They later relocate to his native country.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>A cruise ship docks and tourists go on shore for scheduled day tours. Instead of the proposed tour a man is taken to the local hotspots where he is introduced to a local woman whom he pays for sex.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>A man travels to a tropical island where he meets a woman who becomes his companion for the week he is on vacation. He assists her financially with her daily expenses; in return she provides companionship and sex. He vacations several times yearly at the same location where he met his ‘local friend.’</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>A man travels from Europe to Las Vegas for a weeklong business conference where he meets a woman. He pays her rent and other expenses; in return she provides companionship and sex. He revisits Las Vegas several times yearly to spend time with her while he continues to assist her financially.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
28. When booking a weekend vacation a man sees the following: “What happens in Las Vegas stays in Las Vegas”. He is also aware that it is legal to have sex with women in exchange for money in some places. He decides to visit Las Vegas and searches for the best places to purchase sexual activities for the time he is on vacation.

Is this a sex tourism practice?
- Yes
- No

29. A woman from Europe visits Las Vegas on a business trip. She hits the local hotspots where she meets a man. They head to the club and she picks up the tab for the night. They both returned to her hotel room where they have sex.

Is this a sex tourism practice?
- Yes
- No

30. Several men decide to visit Las Vegas for a bachelor party. While in Las Vegas one of the men decide to pay a local woman for sex.

Is this a sex tourism practice?
- Yes
- No

31. Local taxicab drivers shuttle adult tourists to local hotspots in Las Vegas where sexual services are provided. A fee is charged to each tourist before they enter and once inside they pay for sexual services from the women employed at these hotspots.

Is this a sex tourism practice?
- Yes
- No
32. A woman visiting Las Vegas from Chicago meets a college student studying in Las Vegas. She spends time with him and starts paying his rent.

Is this a sex tourism practice?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

33. What is your gender?
- [ ] Female
- [ ] Male

34. What is your age?

35. How long have you lived in Las Vegas?

36. What race do you primarily identify with?
- [ ] Asian
- [ ] Black or African American
- [ ] White or Caucasian
- [ ] Hispanic (any race)
- [ ] Native American
- [ ] Mixed race
- [ ] Other (please specify)

37. Are you an international student?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

38. What is your major?


39. What is your religious affiliation

☐ Protestant
☐ Catholic
☐ Mormon
☐ Christian
☐ Jewish
☐ Muslim
☐ No affiliation

Other (please specify)________________________

40. Have you traveled internationally?

☐ Yes
☐ No

41. Have you ever been employed in the tourism industry?

☐ Yes
☐ No

42. Have you ever been asked by a tourist about where to purchase sex?

☐ Yes
☐ No

43. Does your employment encourage or turn a blind eye to arranging paid sex for tourists you are working with?

☐ Yes
☐ No

44. Have you ever been employed in law enforcement?

☐ Yes
☐ No

45. Have you ever worked in the sex industry?

☐ Yes
☐ No
46. Have you ever paid for sex in the past?

- Yes
- No
CONTACT INFORMATION
If you have any questions or concerns about the study, you may contact PI Alexis Kennedy (University of Nevada, Las Vegas) at 702-895-5122. For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted you may contact the Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects at 702-895-2794.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION
Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice to your relations with the university. You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or any time during the research study.

CONFIDENTIALITY
All information gathered in this study will be kept completely confidential. No reference will be made in written or oral materials that could link you to this study. All records will be stored in a password protected electronic file after completion of the study. After the storage time the information gathered will be destroyed.

Approved by UNLV Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects IRB on 08/05/2013. Will expire on 08/04/2014. Protocol #1307-4508

Participant Consent:
I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I am at least 18 years of age. A copy of this form has been provided to me.

PLEASE CLICK “I Consent” NEXT TO GO TO THE SURVEY. BY CLICKING ON THIS ICON, YOU INDICATE THAT YOU HAVE READ AND AGREE TO THE ABOVE CONDITIONS, AND GIVE YOUR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

IF YOU DO NOT CONSENT TO THE SURVEY, PLEASE CLICK EXIT THIS SURVEY AT THE TOP RIGHT HAND CORNER OF THE SCREEN.

This survey intends to look at various sexual practices within society, some consensual and non-consensual relations among adults, age 18 and older. The following questions ask about your opinion regarding these practices.

Here are a few definitions they relate to these practices.

SEX TOURISM: individuals participating in paid sexual activities while on vacation.

PROSTITUTION: engaging in sexual activities in exchange for money or something of monetary value (e.g., food, alcohol, drugs, shelter).

CONSENSUAL SEX: sexual activity agreed to by adults involved (age 18 and older).

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: recruitment, transportation, harboring or holding of people for the purpose of exploitation.

1. What terms would you PERSONALLY use to describe the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Tourism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Trafficking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consensual Sexual Activity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. How much of a social problem do you think the following are?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No problem at all</th>
<th>Somewhat of a problem</th>
<th>A serious problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex Tourism</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Do you think selling sexual activities is harmful to the person SELLING?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not harmful at all</th>
<th>Extremely harmful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex Tourism</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Do you think paying for sexual activities is harmful to the person BUYING?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not harmful at all</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Are you aware of any laws regarding the following practices INTERNATIONALLY?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex Tourism</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
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</tr>
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<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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6. Are you aware of any laws regarding the following practices IN THE UNITED STATES?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex Tourism</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Are you aware of any laws regarding the following practices IN LAS VEGAS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex Tourism</td>
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<td>□</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Trafficking</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. Based on the images below, what type(s) of sexual activities do you think is being offered? (Please check all that apply)

- Consensual Sexual Activity
- Human Trafficking
- Prostitution
- Sex Tourism
- Not Sure
- None
14. Based on the images below, what type(s) of sexual activities do you think is being offered? (Please check all that apply)

- Consensual Sexual Activity
- Human Trafficking
- Prostitution
- Sex Tourism
- Not Sure
- None

15. Based on the images below, what type(s) of sexual activities do you think is being offered? (Please check all that apply)

- Consensual Sexual Activity
- Human Trafficking
- Prostitution
- Sex Tourism
- Not Sure
- None
16. In LAS VEGAS, what do you think is the primary motivation for PURCHASING sexual services? Please rank from 1 (primary) to 6 (least primary).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Option</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sexual satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Companionship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Romance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Excitement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Curiosity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. Other (please specify)
18. In LAS VEGAS, what do you think is the primary motivation for SELLING sexual services? Please rank from 1 (primary) to 7 (least primary).

- Sexual satisfaction
- Companionship
- Romance
- Excitement
- Curiosity
- Financial need
- Other

19. Other (please specify)

Read the following short sentences and indicate which term(s) you would use to describe them. These situations involve adults, age 18 and older and occur on a beach or local hot spots where people frequently travel.

20. A woman travels to a tropical island and meets a man who becomes her companion for the week she is on vacation. She assists him financially with his daily expenses; in return he provides companionship and sex. She vacations several times yearly at the same location where she met her local companion.

Which of these term(s) would you use to describe this situation? (Please check all that apply)

- Sex Tourism
- Prostitution
- Human Trafficking
- Consensual Sexual Activity
21. A man is told about a specific location where engaging in sexual activities with local women for cash is encouraged. He decides this is where he will vacation next. Once there, he searches for the best place to engage in sexual activities with local women for the length of time he is on vacation.

Which of these term(s) would you use to describe this situation? (Please check all that apply)
- Sex Tourism
- Human Trafficking
- Prostitution
- Consensual Sexual Activity

22. A man vacationing meets a local woman and they have a sexual encounter while he is on vacation. He arranges to care for her financially until he returns. They communicate frequently and he returns to marry her. They later relocate to his native country.

Which of these term(s) would you use to describe this situation? (Please check all that apply)
- Sex Tourism
- Prostitution
- Human Trafficking
- Consensual Sexual Activity

23. A cruise ship docks and tourists go on shore for scheduled day tours. Instead of the proposed tour, a man is taken to a local hotspot where he is introduced to a local woman whom he pays for sex.

Which of these term(s) would you use to describe this situation? (Please check all that apply)
- Sex Tourism
- Consensual Sexual Activity
- Prostitution
- Human Trafficking
24. A man travels to a tropical island where he meets a woman who becomes his companion for the week he is on vacation. He assists her financially with her daily expenses; in return she provides companionship and sex. He vacations several times yearly at the same location where he met his local companion.

Which of these term(s) would you use to describe this situation? (Please check all that apply)

- Sex Tourism
- Prostitution
- Human Trafficking
- Consensual Sexual Activity

25. A man travels from Europe to Las Vegas for a weeklong business conference where he meets a woman. He pays her rent and other expenses; in return she provides companionship and sex. He revisits Las Vegas several times yearly to spend time with her while he continues to assist her financially.

Which of these term(s) would you use to describe this situation? (Please check all that apply)

- Prostitution
- Sex Tourism
- Human Trafficking
- Consensual Sexual Activity
26. When booking a weekend vacation a man sees the following: “What happens in Las Vegas stays in Las Vegas”. He is also aware that it is legal to have sex with women in exchange for money in some places. He decides to visit Las Vegas and searches for the best place to purchase sexual activities for the time he is on vacation.

Which of these term(s) would you use to describe this situation? (Please check all that apply)
- Sex Tourism
- Prostitution
- Human Trafficking
- Consensual Sexual Activity

27. A woman from Europe visits Las Vegas on a business trip. She goes to a local hot spot where she meets a man. They head to the club and she picks up the tab for the night. They both returned to her hotel room where they have sex.

Which of these term(s) would you use to describe this situation? (Please check all that apply)
- Consensual Sexual Activity
- Human Trafficking
- Sex Tourism
- Prostitution

28. Several men decide to visit Las Vegas for a bachelor party. While in Las Vegas one of the men decide to pay a local woman for sex.

Which of these term(s) would you use to describe this situation? (Please check all that apply)
- Human Trafficking
- Consensual Sexual Activity
- Sex Tourism
- Prostitution
29. Local taxicab drivers shuttle adult tourists to local hotspots in Las Vegas where sexual services are provided. A fee is charged to each tourist before they enter and once inside they pay for sexual services from the women employed at these hotspots.

Which of these term(s) would you use to describe this situation? (Please check all that apply)

- Human Trafficking
- Consensual Sexual Activity
- Sex Tourism
- Prostitution

30. A woman visiting Las Vegas from Chicago meets a college student studying in Las Vegas. She spends time with him and starts paying his rent.

Which of these term(s) would you use to describe this situation? (Please check all that apply)

- Consensual Sexual Activity
- Human Trafficking
- Prostitution
- Sex Tourism

31. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male

32. What is your age?

33. How long have you lived in Las Vegas?
40. Have you ever been employed in the tourism industry?
- Yes
- No

41. Does your workplace encourage or turn a blind eye to arranging paid sex for tourists you are working with?
- Yes
- No

42. Have you ever been asked by a tourist about where to purchase sex?
- Yes
- No

43. Have you ever been employed in law enforcement?
- Yes
- No

44. Have you ever worked in the sex industry?
- Yes
- No

45. Have you ever paid for sex in the past?
- Yes
- No

46. Were you familiar with the term ‘sex tourism’ before this survey?
- Yes
- No

47. How did you learn about sex tourism?

[Text box for input]
48. Before completing this survey, how much did you know about sex tourism?
- A lot
- Some
- A little
- Nothing at all

49. After completing this survey, how much do you know about sex tourism?
- A lot
- Some
- A little
- Nothing at all
APPENDIX C

Top 10 Words Used to Describe Sex Tourism (Wave 1)

- Travel
- Sexual
- Sex
- Unsure
- Don't Know
- Prostitution
- Tourist
- Selling
- People
- Different
APPENDIX D

Top 10 Words Used to Describe Prostitution (Wave 1)
APPENDIX E

Top 10 Words Used to Describe Human Trafficking (Wave 1)

- Sexual
- People
- Sex
- Selling
- Illegal
- Money
- Work
- Slavery
- Force
- Prostitution
APPENDIX F

Top 10 Words Used to Describe Features in Advertisements Offering Sex Tourism

(Wave 1)
REFERENCES


Model United Nations Colegio Humboldt (MUNCH), 2012


VITA

Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Carolyn S. Willis

Degrees:
Associate of Science, St. John’s College, 1994
Belize

Bachelor of Arts, Criminal Justice, 2012
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Thesis Title: Attitudes and Perceptions Toward Sex Tourism in Las Vegas

Thesis Examination Committee:
Chairperson, M. Alexis Kennedy, Ph.D.
Committee Member, Terance D. Miethe, Ph.D.
Committee Member, Tamara Madensen, Ph.D.
Committee Member, Emily Troshynski, Ph.D.
Graduate Faculty Representative, Kathleen Bergquist, Ph.D.