

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE December 14th, 2017

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December 17th: International Day To End Violence Against Sex Workers

15th International Day To End Violence Against Sex Workers Event Remembers More Than 33 Women Killed in 2017

San Francisco, CA - The Erotic Service Providers Legal Education and Research Project (ESPLERP) joins sex workers, activists, allies and advocates from around the world in observing the International Day to End Violence against Sex Workers. We come together in solidarity to honor sex workers lost to violence and to renew our commitment to the struggle for empowerment, visibility, and rights for all sex workers.

The International Day To End Violence Against Sex Workers was started in 2003 by the sexologist, educator, and former prostitute Annie Sprinkle, in response to Gary Ridgeway's killing spree from 1982 through 1998 in King County, Washington. Ridgeway may have killed as many as 90 women, many of whom were prostitutes (sex workers) - who he deliberately picked (as he said) "because they were easy to pick up without being noticed. I knew they would not be reported missing right away and might never be reported missing. I thought I could kill as many of them as I wanted without getting caught."

"The criminalization of prostitution facilitates violence against women," said Maxine Doogan, President of ESPLERP. "Crimes against sex workers go under-reported, unaddressed and unpunished. But no matter what you think about sex workers, they are part of our families, neighborhoods, and communities - and they deserve to be safe."

As part of the observances, Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics (Coyote RI) has a longer press release (<http://coyoteri.org/wp/international-day-to-end-violence-against-sex-workers-december-17th-2017/>), a Memorial List (<http://coyoteri.org/wp/memorial-list-2017-usa/>) and a Memorial Slideshow (<https://onedrive.live.com/view.aspx?resid=1F4EDD18712F4DE5!1088&ithint=file%2cpptx&app=PowerPoint&authkey=!AKwZF02kGZZe-Qc>). The US PROStitutes Collective also has a film show, discussion and potluck at the Center for Sex and Culture in San Francisco (<https://uspros.net/2017/12/13/bay-area-intl-day-to-end-violence-against-sex-workers/>) featuring Nick Broomfield's film "Tales of the Grim Sleeper".

The Erotic Service Providers Legal, Education and Research Project (ESPLERP) is a diverse community-based coalition advancing sexual privacy rights through litigation, education, and research.

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