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“Prominent Auckland businessman” a depraved predator

The 15-year prison sentence imposed on a “prominent Auckland businessman” for shackling and sexually violating young drug-addicted girls in a dungeon, has been welcomed by sexual violence advocacy group, Stop Demand Foundation.

The 59-year-old man, who has name suppression pending a separate trial next February, was sentenced today in the Auckland District Court on various counts of sexual violence, underage prostitution and supplying drugs.

The facts of the offending are chilling, with the offender and his associates preying on vulnerable young women and girls aged as young as 14.

In one case, a girl was taken off the street by the offender’s associates, taken to his “dungeon”, stripped naked, assaulted by the associates and shackled in a device with leg irons and a collar. The Court heard how the horrors perpetrated on this victim were so great she begged the offender to rape her to get it over and done with. Instead, he prolonged her sexual degradation for hours.

Stop Demand’s founder, Denise Ritchie, says: *“The offender has been variously referred to as a ‘prominent’ or formerly ‘astute’ businessman. Let’s call him what out for what more accurately defines him: a depraved sexual predator. As are his associates.”*

Judge Russell Collins noted that the man had shown no remorse. He is reported to have remained expressionless during sentencing, but smiled when ongoing name suppression was ordered.

Ritchie says the case is another wake-up call around sexual callousness and the mistreatment of girls and young women. *“Last year the nation grappled with the worrying sexual callousness of the so-called ‘Roast Busters’ – behaviour and attitudes subsequently reported as being more widespread.”*

“In this case, this group of older men’s sense of sexual entitlement will undoubtedly have been bolstered by the normalisation of prostitution and their perceived right to pay, with money or drugs, to use and abuse vulnerable young women and girls. To these men, women and girls are mere sex objects to denigrate, violate and discard.”

Stop Demand also urges a wider reflection of the issues surrounding this case. Ritchie says, *“Perversely, early next year countless people – some of whom will ‘tut-tut’ over the horrors of this case - will flock to watch the movie ‘Fifty Shades of Grey’, where scenes of bondage and masochism not dissimilar to this case and likewise inflicted by an older man on a young woman, will be heralded as ‘erotic’. Try telling that to real-life victims.”*

Stop Demand Foundation calls for action to stop sexual violence, sexual exploitation and sexual denigration of women and children www.stopdemand.org

ENDS

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