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The logo for the journal 'Logos' is written in a large, elegant, cursive script. The letters are interconnected, with the 'L' and 'o' being particularly prominent. The 'g' has a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

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## **Prostitution, Liberalism, and Slavery**

by Melissa Farley

*Inconvenient statistics, feral facts like the average life expectancy of prostitutes, the average age of induction into prostitution, the average income of prostitutes, and so forth – hard demographics – have never disturbed those who defined the sex business as a force of liberation. The fact that the ‘freedom’ being realized is mostly the freedom of men to access the bodies of women and children – or of G8 nations to access the markets and raw materials of Third World nations – is conveniently overlooked when predation is redefined as progress. (D.A. Clarke, 2004)*

Former Swedish Minister of Gender Equality Margareta Winberg noted that in prostitution, certain women and children, often those who are most economically and ethnically marginalized, are treated as a caste of people whose purpose is to sexually service men. Sardonicly noting the refusal to recognize prostitution as sexual violence, Andrea Dworkin said, “Hurting women is bad. Feminists are against it, not for it.” Yet liberals, including people who describe themselves as liberal feminists, have avoided acknowledging that prostitution hurts women. In their acceptance of the institution of prostitution, they have condoned harm against those most vulnerable. Far from liberating women from restrictive social roles, prostitution locks them into sexist and racist role playing that is often slavery and always a slavery-like practice. Liberals agree about the oppression of race, class, and religious fundamentalism. But liberal men have assumed that

their entitlement to sexual access should be more protected than women's right to survive without prostitution.

In rape cultures, the sexual terrorism of rape and prostitution are downplayed, underestimated, or denied. A prostituted woman explained, "What rape is to others, is normal to us." Prostitution is a cornerstone of rape culture. Rape cultures normalize the objectification and commodification of women as sex and blame victims for their own victimization. The global finding that women aged 15-44 are more likely to be injured or killed by male violence than from cancer, malaria, traffic accidents and war combined – only makes sense when understood as a result of cultural acceptance of sexual violence. Prostitution is a commodified form of violence against women, a last-ditch survival option rather than a job choice. The lies that prostitution is a victimless crime, that she chose it, or even that prostitution isn't really happening at all –enable people to avoid the discomfort of knowing about the brutal realities of prostitution. And sex businesses rely on social, political and legal denial of denying the harms of prostitution.

In prostitution, johns and pimps transform certain women and girls into objects for sexual use. Many research studies provide evidence for the harms caused by this process. The emotional consequences of prostitution are the same in widely varying cultures whether it's high or low class, legal or illegal, in a brothel, a strip club, a massage parlor, or the street. There is overwhelming psychological damage from sucking ten strangers' penises a day, from getting raped weekly, and from getting battered if you don't do whatever pimps or johns want. While sweatshops are exploitive and vicious, they don't involve invasion of all your body's orifices on a daily basis for years or having to smile and say "I love it" when a foul-smelling man your grandfather's age comes on your face. Symptoms of emotional distress resulting from prostitution are off the charts: depression, suicidality, post-traumatic stress disorder, dissociation, substance abuse, eating disorders.

Two-thirds of women, men and the transgendered in prostitution in a 9 country study met diagnostic criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This level of extreme emotional distress is the same as that suffered by the most

emotionally traumatized people ever studied by psychologists – battered women, raped women, combat veterans, and torture survivors.

Survivors tell us about the psychological devastation caused by strip club prostitution. A woman who worked as a lap dancer at a strip club said,

“I can no longer tolerate the touch of a man, any man. A man’s touch has come to represent labor and degradation, and a sad, sick feeling of desperation and despair. Every sort of hateful, spiteful, rude, venomous remark, I have endured. Vile anger, vomited from the crude, the resentful, the desperate and desolate, has been heaped upon me until I have choked on it. I have come away with, not hate, but worse, a numb disinterest.” (Jordan, 2004)

Strip clubs are an integral part of prostitution yet the fiction is maintained that prostitution doesn’t happen there. “If I hadn’t had the experience I had working in vice,” a police officer said, “I would probably think that strip clubs, escort services were cool... But I think the layperson has no idea what goes on in strip clubs and escort services. I’ve seen the boyfriends, the pimps. I see how the women are treated. It’s given me a whole different perspective” (Schoenmann, 2003).

In order to perform the gynecological demonstration for men in the front row of an all-nude strip club in Las Vegas, a woman must split off her mind from her body. Spreading the labia to permit men to look inside women’s vaginas sends the message that “the stripper has no private self, that everything about her is open to inspection and invasion, that her very soul is up for grabs, that she can be turned inside out, and that she has no boundaries, no conditions, and no limits on who she lets in.” (Scott, 1996)

Just when I think I’ve heard the most horrific example of the liberal denial of sexual exploitation, up pops another: impoverished Vietnamese, Chinese, Thai, and Korean women are enslaved and transported by organized criminals to San Francisco for men’s sexual use. Yet these women have been renamed ‘migrant sex workers.’ From a neoliberal perspective these trafficking victims are just women in the world’s marketplace struggling to cross a border for a better wage. No

sexism or racism is understood in this analysis which views immigration policy as the bogeyman. And another devastating example of the denial of sexual and racial violence: writing about the “paradox of pleasure and violence in racial subjection,” postmodern film professor Celine Shimizu (1999) discusses the rapes of slaves by their masters and recommends that we not prematurely dismiss “a telling of slavery from the point of view of slave sexual contentment.” These examples are reminiscent of the 18th century propaganda released by the British West India Committee – slave traders and ship owners who kidnapped and sold slaves from Africa to British colonists in what we now call the Caribbean. The proslavery disinformation disseminated by the Committee included renaming slaves “assistant planters.”

The fantasied “high class independent escort” facilitates liberal denial of the harms of prostitution; it’s good for business. In that phrase, the implication is that she chose prostitution, that she’s making lots of money, and she certainly isn’t being pimped. These may be true for 1% of the world’s women in prostitution, but they do not reflect the reality of most prostitution. Third-party control is common in prostitution, with some estimates of pimping as high as 80% of all prostitution. Pimping and other coercive control meet most legal definitions of trafficking. Elliott Spitzer bought a woman from the Emperor’s Club VIP (described in the media as a high class escort agency) who was from an abusive home, had been homeless, had a drug problem, had pornography made of her when she was 17 by Joe Francis, producer of *Girls Gone Wild* with convictions for prostitution, child abuse, assault, and witness tampering. The pimps at Emperor’s Club VIP took 50% of her earnings. Spitzer most likely refused to use a condom, thereby threatening her life according to several women he bought for sex.

### **Commodification**

Commodification is a cornerstone of sexism and of prostitution. Once a young woman is “made into a thing for others’ sexual use” as the American Psychological Association’s Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls has defined sexual objectification, then the stage is set for sexual violence. Men’s dominance over women is established and enforced by the dehumanizing process of sexual

objectification that is the psychological foundation of men's violence against women. In prostitution, sexual objectification is institutionalized and monetized. Yet when liberals confront this commodification, only racism and classism are addressed. In justifying women's commodification, groups such as the International Labor Organization point out that between 2 and 14% of the GDP of Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines is based on prostitution. South Korea's sex industry generates 4% of its GDP while the Netherlands nets 5% of its GDP from prostitution.

Liberalism today subordinates all of us to the corporations. Wages offered women by corporations such as Gap, WalMart and Nike are so low that they actually drive women into prostitution. Especially vulnerable to corporate control are poor women and girls of color who are the supply side of the sex trade but who have been called "erotic entrepreneurs." The branding of any and all consumerism as hip, fun, and even democratic has contributed to the acceptance of prostitution.

### **The Liberal Belief in Choice and the Denial of Victimization**

Only a tiny percentage of all women in prostitution are there because they freely choose it. For most, prostitution is not a real choice because physical safety, equal power with buyers, and real alternatives don't exist. These are the conditions that would permit genuine consent. Most of the 1% who choose prostitution are privileged because of their ethnicity and class and they have escape options. Poor women and women of color don't have these options.

"We want real jobs, not blowjobs," said a First Nations survivor of prostitution in 2009. Prostitution exploits women's lack of survival options. Research conducted in nine countries found that 89% of all those in prostitution said that they were in prostitution because they had no alternatives for economic survival and that they saw no means of escape. In Indonesia another study found that 96% of those interviewed wanted to escape prostitution. Sex discrimination, poverty, racism and abandonment drive girls into prostitution. Women in prostitution were sexually abused as kids at much higher rates than other women. So they are defined as 'whores' by rapists when they are little and they then end up in

prostitution – getting paid for the abuse they have grown up with and believing that’s all they are good for.

Here are four examples of invisible coercions that drive women into prostitution. In each case, the woman said that she consented to prostitution but her living conditions made prostitution impossible to avoid. An Indian woman said since women in most jobs in West Bengal were expected to tolerate bosses’ sexual exploitation, prostitution was better pay for what was expected of her in her last job, anyway. A woman in Zambia, which had a 90% unemployment rate at the time, stated that she “volunteered” to prostitute in order to feed her family. A Turkish woman was divorced, and had no means of support in a fundamentalist state that strongly discouraged women from working outside the home. She prostituted in a state-run brothel guarded by police. A sixteen year-old was sold by her parents into a Nevada legal brothel. Ten years later, she took six different psychiatric drugs that tranquilized her enough to make it through a day selling sex.

Survivors have described prostitution as ‘paid rape,’ and as ‘the choice that is not a choice,’ while liberal sex industry apologists insist that prostitution is ‘sex work,’ unpleasant labor much like factory work. The fetishized and objectified woman in prostitution is seen by postmodern liberals as benefiting from her own exploitation and commodification. The disappearance of the harm of prostitution is not an abstraction. At a Left/Labor conference in Australia, speakers who offered an analysis of prostitution as a violation of women’s human rights were denied the right to speak. A pseudofeminist speaker who was employed by the sex industry’s Eros Foundation spoke instead about prostitution as sexual freedom. We can’t let these logical absurdities disappear the truth of women’s experiences in prostitution. Each act of violence that has been made visible as a result of the women’s movement—incest, sexual harassment, misogynist and racist verbal abuse, stalking, rape, battering, and sexual torture—is one point on prostitution’s continuum of violence. This violence is denied by liberals who support prostitution as a choice made by consenting adults. Liberal sex business apologists declare that opposition to trafficking is “sex-slave panic,” and that since many trafficking victims knew they would be prostituting, they therefore consented to trafficking. “I’ve never met a Thai woman smuggled in for sex work

who didn't know that's what she'd be coming here to do," wrote Debbie Nathan. Nathan implies that if a woman knows she will be prostituted, she deserves whatever she gets.

People who are horribly harmed "consent" to lesser harms in order to survive for example in totalitarian regimes, battering relationships, slavery, and in prostitution. The appearance of consent is actually a creative survival strategy. But that doesn't mean that those of us who are able to avoid prostitution should then become passive bystanders and watch the predatory institution flourish. The agency of a prostitution survivor in avoiding starvation is not the same as the agency of a white European American middle class academic. Agency and oppression coexist in women's lives. Both should be named.

Harm reduction programs that offer support groups and condoms but fail to offer exit programs contribute to a denial of the harms of prostitution. While free condom distribution (of female as well as male condoms) can save lives – harm reduction programs' advocates often suggest that this bandaid solution is sufficient. While accepting condoms and support, almost all women in prostitution seek the option of escape as well. They deserve the right to harm *elimination* (by leaving prostitution) as well as the option of harm reduction.

Again and again women and men tell us that in order to turn tricks they must go numb or split off from their real selves or dissociate. Yet the liberal opines that this destructive removal of the self is an individual's free choice. The payment of money hides the erasure of self that is required for survival in prostitution.

### **Sex Buyers**

To get to the root of what is really happening in prostitution it is useful to ask: Who is getting off in prostitution? And who is not getting off? The inequality of prostitution then becomes clearer. Although sex buyers don't really believe it, women in prostitution almost never enjoy the sex. Research interviews shed some light on the thinking of sex buyers in the prostitution relationship. Sex buyers who were guaranteed anonymity said prostitution was "renting an organ

for ten minutes,” and that the woman was “just a biological object that charges for services.” Another man said, “I use them like I might use any other amenity, a restaurant, or a public convenience.” For example, “If my fiancée won’t give me anal, I know someone who will.”

Sex buyers are not nice guys who just need to get laid. They are predators. Men’s favorable opinion of prostitution is one of a cluster of attitudes and opinions that justify violence against women. This includes beliefs that men are superior to women and that they’re entitled to sexual access to women. Consistent with other studies of men’s sexual aggression, a 2011 study found that compared with a matched group of men who don’t buy sex, sex buyers engaged more criminal activity (in addition to prostitution), had more nonrelational sexual relationships, a greater number of sex partners, and that they used pornography extensively. Sex buyers had less empathy than men who didn’t buy sex, were more likely to say they’d rape if they could get away with it, and admitted having engaged in more sexually coercive acts with non-prostituting women than men who didn’t buy sex.

## **Torture**

Sex buyers commit acts against women in prostitution that meet legal definitions of torture. Torture is any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as punishing him... or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind. According to recent definitions, torture can be either a private event or one that is state-sponsored.

Specific acts commonly perpetrated against prostituted women are the same as those that define the meaning of torture: verbal sexual harassment, forced nudity, rape, sexual mocking, physical sexual harassment such as groping, and not permitting basic hygiene. The unpredictable and extreme violence used by pimps in prostitution, like that of torture, is used for economic gain as well as sadistic pleasure. Systematically and according to well-known methods used by torturers, pimps psychologically traumatize women in order to establish control over every aspect of their lives. Pimps assume psychological, biological, social, and economic



control through the use of chronic terror, cunning use of captivity, and isolation from others who might offer support and validation. They use starvation, sleep deprivation, protein deprivation, conditioned physiologic hyperarousal, unexpected sexual violence, and learned helplessness. In prostitution, any autonomy is considered insubordination and is actively suppressed by pimps. The use of torture ensures that the prostituted woman will comply with any demands of johns or pimps. Just as torturers do, pimps insidiously season violent or coercive strategies with intermittent rewards, special favors, promises of relief and, at times, tenderness, all of which create a powerful and enduring trauma bond.

Pimps and traffickers aim to destroy the self by using the three-pronged strategy of torturers—debilitation, dread, and dependency. Torture sends the message that the victim is utterly worthless. Experts on state-sponsored torture have explained that the specific goal of sexual torture is to make a captive believe that she is a whore or an animal, rather than a human. A survivor explained that the outcome of state-sponsored torture is that “they make a non-person out of you.” Prostitution, also a process of dehumanization, is a dominating transformation of a woman into a special commodity in which the man who buys her shapes her into his own physical and psychological masturbatory entity. Evelina Giobbe explained: “The word ‘prostitute’ does not imply a ‘deeper identity;’ it is the absence of an identity: the theft and subsequent abandonment of self. What remains is essential to the ‘job’: the mouth, the genitals, anus, breasts . . . and the label.” (Giobbe, 1991)

Liberals fail to see in illegal or legal prostitution the same sexual humiliation and techniques of state-sponsored torture. Historian Joanna Bourke described the photographs of U.S. military sexual torture at Abu Ghraib: “Torture aims to undermine the way the victim relates to his or her own self, and thus threatens to dissolve the mainsprings of an individual’s personality.... The sexual nature of these acts shows that the torturers realize the centrality of sexuality for their victims’ identity. The perpetrators in these photographs aim to destroy their victim’s sense of self by inflicting and recording extreme sexual humiliation.”

Liberals viewed this torture of prisoners by the United States at Abu Ghraib with shock and horror yet when the same acts were paid for by men who use prostituted women, torture was redefined as sexual entertainment.

## **Slavery**

Liberals' failure to acknowledge both the intrinsic violence of prostitution and the intersection of sexism, racism, and poverty in prostitution makes it difficult for them to understand why abolitionists view prostitution as such a miserably oppressive institution. Anthony Gumbs, whose relatives were enslaved, objected to prostitution as a version of slavery.

The current practice in Jamaica of the widespread use of the sanitised or politically correct terms 'sex workers' when referring to prostitutes, and 'sex industry' when referring to prostitution, sends a clear message of a trend towards acceptance or legitimisation, if not outright legalisation. Jamaicans have had a long, hard history of brave struggle and sacrifice to lift our people out of the quagmires of slavery, poverty, indignity, ignorance and exploitation. Are we ready to give up now? Surely those who must earn their living by renting their genitals, instead of by using their brains or hands, are little better off than the slaves of yore in terms of human dignity. Is this what we want to be 'accepted' ... in our beautiful home called Jamaica? Is this what we want for any of our people?

The refusal to confront sexism while at the same time stepping forward to eliminate racism is not new. Abolitionists in the 19th century attacked slavery as profoundly unjust and immoral but at the same time refused to support women's right to vote. Suffragist and abolitionist Olympia Brown noted with resentment, "I have often found men who, if you could believe their words, were ready to die for the negro but would at the same time oppose bitterly any engagement of women's opportunity or sphere."

Slavery is a loss of freedom backed up by violence or the threat of violence. All of the elements of slavery are present in the relationship between pimps/traffickers and those they prostitute including gross power inequity, physical abuse, and lack of free will. All of the forms of coercion and vulnerabilities recognized by the

Thirteenth Amendment are common in prostitution such as being deprived of food, sleep and money, being beaten and being raped, being tortured and threatened with death. A slave relationship is characterized by control of movement, control of the physical environment, psychological control, measures taken to prevent or deter escape, force, threat of force or coercion, subjection to cruel treatment and abuse, control of sexuality and forced labor. These modes of control are also characteristic of pimp and sex buyer relationships with women in prostitution.

Slavery is a condition of choicelessness. The experience of prostitution, like slavery, varies according to the extent of unfreedom suffered by a woman. If a woman has class and race privilege and if she has family and friends with resources to help her out with housing and food, then she is far more able to exit prostitution when she wants to. As one man explained,

I don't think prostitution is quite the same as rape. Rape is worse. But it's close to the rape end of the spectrum. It's not rape, because there is superficial consent...On the face of it, the prostitute is agreeing to it. But deeper down, you can see that life circumstances have kind of forced her into that...It's like someone jumping from a burning building—you could say they made their choice to jump, but you could also say they had no choice. (Farley et al., 2011)

If a woman in prostitution is physically or mentally controlled by a pimp then she is enslaved, without freedom. But less visible factors contribute to her unfreedom. For example the more financially desperate she is and the more her life has been limited by racist inequality or by sexual assaults then the less freedom she has in prostitution and the more limited her resources for escape. Hunger and a lack of education or job training can compel a woman into prostitution where it then becomes difficult if not impossible to escape. In the United States, women exchanged sex acts for hamburgers (2012) and gas money (2011).

The commodity fetishism of slave buyers and sex buyers is seen in their obsession with detailing the “products” they are buying. Slave sellers and buyers catalogued skin color in fanatic detail. Sex buyers also catalogue details about women they

buy for sex, criticizing, grading, and bragging about purchased sex via online chat boards. Online advertising facilitates trafficking, with up to 80% of today's sex businesses now operating online.

Planters sometimes mimed the conventions of romance, enabling them to temporarily forget that they owned slaves. Similarly some sex buyers today seek what they describe as a "girlfriend experience" in which prostituted women are paid to mimic a love relationship. The performance must fool the sex buyer.

Central to the experience of prostitution and slavery is degradation and humiliation. Non-slaves had little understanding of the depths of degradation of slavery according to former slave Harriet Jacobs. Similarly, Claude Jaget describes the traumatic experience of being selected from a brothel lineup:

"I'd freeze up inside...It was horrible, they'd look you up and down. That moment, when you felt them looking at you, sizing you up, judging you...and those men, those fat pigs who weren't worth half as much as the worst of us, they'd joke, make comments....They made you turn and face in all directions, because of course a front view wasn't enough for them. It used to make me furious, but at the same time I was panic-stricken, I didn't dare speak. I wasn't physically frightened, but it shook my confidence. I felt really [demeaned]....I was the thing he came and literally bought. He had judged me like he'd judge cattle at a fairground, and that's revolting, it's sickening, it's terrible for the women. You can't imagine it if you've never been through it yourself."

Women who have survived prostitution say that the experience is profoundly degrading and that it is as if one becomes "something for him to empty himself into, acting as a kind of human toilet." In the language of the times, an enslaved woman explained, "A slave woman ain't allowed to respect herself." Upon refusal to permit sexual assault by her owner, an enslaved sixteen year-old was sent from the mid-Atlantic to a southern state where she was worked to death. One young woman said in 2007 that she felt that she was approaching death by prostitution because her pimp forced her to work 7 days a week, servicing dozens of men a day. A woman in a Nevada legal brothel said, "No one really enjoys being sold. It's

like you sign a contract to be raped.” Another woman described Dutch legal prostitution as “volunteer slavery.”

Summarizing the psychological damage of prostitution, a survivor’s description is reminiscent of Orlando Patterson’s description of the social death that is caused by slavery: “It is internally damaging. You become in your own mind what these people do and say with you. You wonder how could you let yourself do this and why do these people want to do this to you?”

When women in prostitution begin to accept that role and identify with their pimps, physical violence is not necessary to control them. Prostitution is gradually seen as a normal if regrettable way of life rather than calculated violence. The coercive control employed by pimps causes feelings of terror, helplessness, and dependence in prostituted women. A trafficking victim in the United Kingdom explained, “Sometimes I don’t see the point in doing anything. It seems useless. When someone has controlled you and made decisions for you for so long, you can’t do that for yourself anymore.” This same dynamic existed in slavery, with historians noting the vacant look of despair in the eyes of the enslaved as she was about to be sold.

Challenges faced by the abolitionist movement to end slavery in 1840 are echoed in today’s movement to abolish prostitution. Buyers and sellers of slaves, and buyers and pimps of prostituted women were sometimes described as “kind” or engaging in mild or nonviolent slavery/prostitution. Yet the hallmark of slavery and of prostitution is that the enslaved or prostituted are *subject to domination and to the arbitrary will of another person*, however that domination is effected. Both institutions occur on a continuum of coercive harm, whether for example she was whipped once or one hundred times; whether she was permitted better or worse quality food. Systems of slavery and of prostitution are rotten to the core. Improving the food of slaves or offering them medical care during their transatlantic journey did not alter the “beastliness” of slavery, as Patterson has named it. Similarly, offering condoms is presented as a harm reduction quick-fix solution to the health problems of women in prostitution, and legalizing the institution of prostitution is proposed as a solution to the “stigma” of prostitution. Both fail to address the essential beastliness of prostitution.

## Laws

A battle is being waged by those who promote prostitution as a reasonable job for poor women against those of us who consider prostitution an institution that is so intrinsically unjust, discriminatory, and abusive that it can't be fixed, only abolished. Prostitution was described by Friedman in 1996 as sexual slavery and by Bishop in 1993 as sexual annihilation – in articles published in the liberal magazine, *The Nation*. These views have shifted dramatically. Today liberals including the Greens have redefined prostitution as sex work. In that one word – work – the sexism and the physical and psychological violence of prostitution are made invisible.

Regulationist laws were proposed to improve the conditions of slavery in the 18th century. The argument was that a regulatory law was better than none at all. Over the opposition of abolitionists, who feared that it would concede that the slave trade was in itself just but had been abused, the law proposed to limit the number of slaves based on a ship's weight, to require every ship to have a doctor, and to record all crew and slave deaths. There is a parallel debate today regarding the legalization or regulation of prostitution. It is widely but incorrectly assumed that legal prostitution is safer than illegal prostitution although evidence to the contrary documents the abuses and harms of legal prostitution in Australia, the Netherlands, and Nevada.

Frank de Wolf, a Labor Party member of the Amsterdam City Council and an HIV researcher stated, "In the past, we looked at legal prostitution as a women's liberation issue; now it's looked at as exploitation of women and should be stopped."

Wherever prostitution thrives, so does sex trafficking. If you were a pimp, where would you market your 'product?' Not in Sweden where there's a law against buying or selling people for sex. You would more likely pimp women in countries that provide a legal welcome to pimps: the Netherlands, Germany, Australia and wherever prostitution is legally tolerated. Sweden on the other hand has a feminist prostitution law in which buyers of women, pimps, and traffickers are criminalized but prostituted people are not. Trafficking has plummeted in

Sweden since the law was passed. The rationale underpinning the Swedish law is that prostitution is a harmful social institution because prostitution always exploits those who are the most vulnerable and the most marginalized.

We can not permit a pimp's or a sex buyer's money to cover up the sexual harassment, rape, and battering in prostitution. The same oppressive phenomena that liberals attack as evidence of the injustice of slavery are defended in prostitution: gross power imbalance, objectification, sexual and labor exploitation (yes women in prostitution are sometimes expected to clean and cook), coercion, lack of freedom. If we ignore the evidence for the structural inequalities of sex, race, and class in prostitution and if we ignore the clear statements of women who tell us that they want to escape prostitution, then we end up in a postmodern neverland where liberal theory unanchored to material reality frames prostitution as a problem of sexual choice, workers' rights or sex trafficking as an immigration problem. Prostitution is the international business of sexual exploitation. Describing the strategic focus on sex buyers, a Swedish detective said, "trafficking is a business, we try to destroy the market." Yes.

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