

Legal whoring epitomizes capitalist evil

I almost went blind after reading your "Prostitution" editorial (ODE, Jan. 11). So disturbed was I by your manifesto, I had to take the time to deconstruct your absurdity paragraph by paragraph. I want you to know that I am not a habitual stickler.

The title, "Prostitution sting raises legal, moral questions," is provocative, as though whoever wrote the article actually considered legal and moral issues before writing it. Prostitution is illegal, and the officers who performed the sting were enforcing the laws of our burg in a timely and just fashion.

Let's proceed to the moral question: Is prostitution immoral? Strangely, the writer does not pose that question.

In fact, you seem to avoid relating to the issue from a moral standpoint by treating it as a practical matter. "[A] waste of time and money" was your cold appraisal of the sting. The article reads like a litany of ills related to prostitution including rape, emotional abuse, drug addiction and AIDS, yet you boldly proclaim it to be a "victimless crime." Hell, you practically call it an "economic opportunity!"

Then, your stab at an interpretation of American moral code from a staunch feminist standpoint shows only how disconnected you are from your countrymen.

Whores do carry an occupational stigma, it's true. And most Americans, including myself, think of whores as "impure" or "fallen" women. That is because a person so misled and hurt and confused by the world that she attaches a price tag to her body, her soul, her innocence, her intimacy, her love, and her desire, and sell it to any cruel stranger who has the bucks to f---, demands our sorrow and our pity.

If you want to be indignant about women being treated like property, don't point at us, friend. Walk up two blocks from my house and talk to the discriminating shoppers who dicker over the cost of a blow job or an hour of her time.

When "we" arrest these people, "we" are vainly acting out our heartfelt horror at being such a cruel and spiteful race.

Nobody believes that an arrest is a rescue, but in order to live with ourselves we must express our disapproval, if only symbolically. I will also question the effectiveness, if not the existence, of "community outreach programs" for prostitutes. A homeless activist informed me that there is only one women's shelter in Eugene, and it is for battered women.

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As for legalizing prostitution in zoned districts, which district do have in mind?

I think you would have a hard time convincing people that their wives and children would be perfectly safe in such a district.

Your tragic misunderstanding of this issue is encapsulated in this sentence: "Like other businesses, sex sellers would need to be licensed by the city." In one casual phrase, you attempt to legitimize whoring as "selling," imply that the commercial trade of human flesh is just "like any other business" and suggest that the people's government not only condone, but coordinate it?!

Is our wounded democracy now supposed to become pimp and pusher to its wayward men and women? Are you mad?!

Your conclusions about the benefits we would reap from this institutional slavery are ludicrous.

How many times a day do you think the average prostitute is exposed to STDs? Now multiply that by 30, and tell me again how monthly testing will "curb the spread of sexually transmitted diseases."

Do you honestly believe that letting women sell their bodies lessens their dependence on abusive men? Who, in your mind, are they selling their bodies to?

As for providing "a way out," you must have forgotten the millions of low-income families who can't afford to send their daughters to college. Legalized prostitution would be the "way out" for these poor, uneducated and underemployed women.

Lastly and most importantly, using "increased tax revenue" as a viable reason for institutionalized flesh peddling is one of the coldest, cruelest and darkest justifications of capitalist evil that ever blurred these jaded ears.

You are the campus newspaper, and I want to trust you to be thoughtful, sensitive and sincere. Please think about these things as you disseminate your opinions to this community.

Jonah Howard is a University student and resident of the Whiteaker neighborhood.

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