

Decriminalizing prostitution would create a...

PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

You Cannot Deregulate the Harm Out of Prostitution.

Being bought for sex is physically and mentally harmful. Sex buyers treat prostituted people like objects, acting out dangerous and demeaning sex acts with no care for their health and safety.

Pimps and traffickers violently control prostituted people with only one thing in mind: profit.

Decriminalizing prostitution means no accountability for sex buyers and pimps who would have unimpeded access to sexually exploit and physically harm the most vulnerable in our communities.

Bodily and Mental Harm is the Norm in Prostitution

PTSD



One study in San Francisco found that 68% met the criteria for a diagnosis of PTSD as severe as levels of PTSD suffered by combat veterans and victims of state torture.¹

BRUTALITY



Prostituted women report being urinated, defecated and ejaculated upon, forced to have unprotected sex, and subjected to the insertion of foreign objects into their bodies.¹

HEAD INJURY



61% of prostituted women had sustained Traumatic Head Injuries while in prostitution from being hit in the head with objects and/or having their heads slammed into objects.²

RAPE



98% of prostituted women surveyed had been raped by sex buyers or pimps. 92.2% report being subjected to rape, being shot, strangled, burned, beaten, stabbed, or punched.^{3 & 1}

1. Yasmin Vafa & Nora Hennick, Buyers Unmasked: Exposing the Men Who Buy Sex & Solutions to End Exploitation (Rights4Girls, January 2025), <https://rights4girls.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Buyers-Unmasked-02122025.pdf>.

2. Farley, Melissa; Banks, Martha E.; Ackerman, Rosalie J.; and Golding, Jacqueline M. (2018) "Screening for Traumatic Brain Injury in Prostituted Women," Dignity: A Journal on Sexual Exploitation and Violence: Vol. 3: Iss. 2, Article 5. DOI: 10.23860/dignity.2018.03.02.05

3. Melissa Farley and M. Alexis Kennedy, "Torture and its sequelae among prostituted women in the United States," European Journal of Psychotraumatology, 15, no. 1 (2024): 1-12, <https://doi.org/10.1080/20008066.2024.2404307>.