

## Reflection Paper 5

The discussion on prostitution was very interesting this week. It was interesting that most people wanted to decriminalize the act in some way. The main break was whether or not the state should sanction prostitution. Some people felt that it was immoral for the government to support prostitution, while others thought that decriminalization for prostitutes but punishing johns would not solve the problem. I fell into the latter group.

Legalization is the best option to help protect prostitutes. By making what they do a legal activity, it opens it up to government regulation and oversight. This could cut down on violence and other dangers that are inherent in the job now. The running of operations could be left to private companies, which means the government is not pimping out its own citizens. The presence of aboveboard businesses might also help drive out less than reputable competitors, helping in the fight against human trafficking. Of course, these all depend on the system working as intended.

Decriminalization would be a less drastic option, designed to protect the women who have to prostitute themselves. However, by punishing the johns, decriminalization would only drive the sex trade further underground. This would leave more room for human trafficking, disease, and sexual slavery. If a prostitute could avoid those it would still decrease her livelihood by making customers scarce.

The main problem with prostitution is that it is a symptom of a larger problem. Poverty and drug addiction are two of the driving forces behind prostitution. By launching a larger assault against these societal issues, especially poverty, many other problems would become more manageable. While some people may actually enjoy prostitution as a job, many fall into it as a last resort. By offering more opportunities to these people and legalizing prostitution between consenting adults, hopefully lives will begin to turn around.

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