

# The Case for Legalizing Sex Work

Football players make money with their bodies. Some are injured. But football is legal.

So why is sex work illegal?

My video this week focuses on that.

Sex worker “Aella” has made hundreds of thousands of dollars, mostly by “camming,” showing her body to men online and talking intimately with them. Her customers are happy to pay for that.

This offends people.

It’s “exploitation...under the banner of a career choice!” complains feminist Heather Brunskell-Evans.

Aella laughs at that, saying, “Where was she when I was working at a factory? Lots of people work terrible jobs. [But] a lot of sex workers make more money.”

Aella left home to escape strict parents when she was 17. That’s when she got that factory job.

Eventually, someone suggested she try camming, which Aella says turned out to be much better than factory work. “I could decide what kind of things I wanted to do, what my limits were.”

Also, she made \$200 an hour.

After camming, Aella tried “escort” work. That’s really just another word for prostitution.

“I remember going into my first appointment feeling really nervous. Then it was actually a lovely experience....And I left with a bunch of money in my pocket. I was like, ‘This was awesome.’”

To protect themselves, Aella and her friends have a screening process. When a new man calls, they demand references from previous escorts.

She doesn’t understand why prostitution is illegal, why people like her need to be “protected” from prostitution. On Twitter, Aella labels herself “whorelord.”

“When I was working at the factory, that was a thousand times worse,” she says. “But nobody cared about that.”

Prostitution is legal in parts of Nevada, in Germany, Switzerland, Greece, Netherlands, Hungary, Turkey, Indonesia, Australia, and New Zealand.

Legalizing sex work doesn't solve its problems, but it makes it safer and easier to regulate.

Of course, some women are *forced* into prostitution. Some are tricked into coming to America, where traffickers confiscate identity papers, withhold pay, and tell the woman they owe them for bringing them to the U.S.

That's obviously evil and should be prosecuted. But that would be easier to do if sex work were legal.

"It really would be a lot safer if it were decriminalized," says Aella. "I've been assaulted during sex work. It wasn't an option in my mind to go get the authorities' help."

Also, the vast majority of sex work is voluntary—a business transaction between consenting adults.

You might not realize that most is voluntary because police and media routinely call *voluntary sex work slavery*.

In 2019, New England Patriots owners Robert Kraft patronized a massage parlor that offered "happy endings." Police arrested him as part of what they called a "sex trafficking" sting.

But there was no "trafficking." Later prosecutors conceded that.

"Ninety-nine percent of the headlines are not true," says *Reason* reporter Elizabeth Nolan Brown. "They say 'we rescued these women,' but by 'rescue,' they put them in jail and give them a criminal record. The victims are the sex workers themselves."

Today, Aella has mostly retired from sex work. She got funded to work as a data scientist.

She uses her hundreds of thousands of followers on Twitter, Reddit, FetLife, and TikTok to run polls that ask provocative questions like, "Do women have systemic privilege due to their gender?"

"I'm really curious about the ways that our moral intuitions don't line up," Aella says. "I poke at things that make people feel confused about what they believe."

Sex work is one of those things.

Polls show a slight majority of Americans think sex work should be decriminalized. Support for legalization has been increasing.

“It should be legal,” says Aella. “Discovering sex work was one of the best things that’s happened to me. I have my own life. I make good money. I have a ton of spare time to do what I want. People are concerned about my ‘exploitation’? That’s wrong.”