

There's No Reason Money Changes The Nature of a Trade

It's common among us libertarian whiners to talk about the widespread belief that money seems to change the nature of an act between consenting adults.

For example, sex between consenting adults is fine, but sex between consenting adults when one of them is *also* adding money to the trade, ie. prostitution, is not fine.

Another example, a Christian baker refusing to bake a gay wedding cake as a favor is fine, but a Christian baker refusing to bake a gay wedding cake for payment is not fine.

Whether we are engaging or refusing to engage in a consensual activity with other people is fine until the activity involves money. I can't for the life of me understand why. Let's break it down.

What is happening when consenting adults have sex? They are trading emotional and/or physical feelgoods. And when money is involved? They are likewise trading emotional and/or physical feelgoods... Say what now?

It's true. Money is merely a middleman to achieving an emotional or physical feelgood. Having sex with someone is an immediate feelgood, enough to satisfy the effort. Prostitutes need more than immediate feelgoods to make it worth their while, so they request money. But they don't want money just to have money. They want money in order to trade it in the future for goods and services that will give them emotional and/or physical feelgoods.

The very same logic applies to the refusal to engage in a consensual activity. The expectation is an emotional or physical feelbad, so its refused. The promise of a future feelgood just isn't enough, at least not at the offered level. Refusing a favor or refusing a trade are the same thing.

There's no reason why money changes the nature of a trade. It doesn't. All relationships are trades, and all trades are the pursuit of feelgoods somewhere down the line. And all refusals of trade are for either the protection of feelgoods or the prevention of feelbads. The interference by a coercive third party in trade is to limit feelgoods or to create feelbads. It's never win/win.

The next time someone tries to rationalize coercion on these grounds, throw this at them.