

The Feminist Position on Prostitution

Type of Feminism	Source of Women's Oppression	Coercive Effects of Prostitution	Solution to the Social Presence of Prostitution	Role of the Woman as a Prostitute	Degrading Effects	Position on Decriminalization	Prostitution Should Be Eradicated
Radical	Sexual and procreative practices. Men are socialized to have sexual desires while women are socialized to be submissive. Source of oppression cultural not biological, therefore changing attitudes is desirable.	Prostitution is equated to be on the level of rape. Prostitution is slavery. All women are affected by the coercive, exploitative, and oppressive inclinations of men towards women. Coercion has cultural derivations rather than biological ones.	Eradicate male oppression. Change attitudes and promote social change towards greater equality between the sexes. If prostitution is to be illegal the client should be equally pursued by the law.	The prostitute is a victim of a system of male oppression. Prostitution is not a harmless private transaction. It affects all women.	Prostitution is degrading to the prostitute and to women in general. Prostitution is equated to be on the level of rape.	Against Decriminalization will not solve the problem. Changing men's attitudes and fostering social equality are more important.	Yes Eradicate inequality between the sexes by discouraging any actions that degrade all women.
Socialist	Social and psychological sources including sexual and procreative practices. Changing social and economic structurings desirable to eradicate oppression.	Women are coerced into degrading roles by the construction of social class systems. Without the presence of capitalism, women would choose other roles.	Seeks non-legal remedies such as changing the social structurings. When exploitative economic systems such as capitalism disappear, so will prostitution.	The prostitute is a victim of the system.	Prostitution is a corruption of the capitalist system.	Against It is more important to change the social structuring that cause prostitution in the first place. Socialists do not seek a legal remedy to prostitution.	Yes Eradicate exploitative economic systems such as capitalism. Focus on human needs in a more caring way.
Marxist	Class distinctions, corruption of wage labor, and capitalism.	The coercion is economic in its source. Wage labor is involuntary servitude and the subordination of the dignity of human beings, exacerbated by the definition of social and occupational classes.	Seeks non-legal remedies. When exploitative economic systems such as capitalism disappear, so will prostitution.	The prostitute is a victim of the economic system.	Prostitution is degrading of the dignity of humans caught in involuntary servitude to a system that unconsciously exploits people.	Against It is more important to attack the underlying cause of prostitution by eliminating capitalism. Marxists do not seek a legal remedy to prostitution.	Yes Eradicate systems like capitalism and prostitution will disappear.
Existentialist	Inequality of social freedoms. Improving individual liberties and rights are desirable.	Women are not coerced into prostitution. Prostitution can be a liberating and empowering experience. Where there is little freedom or few choices, prostitution is a good option. Biological differences important.	Encourages actions that liberate women as free human beings. Greater level of equality between the sexes is desirable.	The competent woman has a choice to be an entrepreneur and find methods to support herself.	Women of all descriptions and occupations possess extraordinary powers to overcome adversity. Prostitution is not degrading, rather it is empowering to women.	For	No
Liberal Unconditional Freedoms	Inequality of social freedoms. The need for education and reason to prevail as a solution. Improve society by promoting equal treatment between the sexes.	Prostitution derives from a natural biological urge. The prostitute acts of free choice. That choice can be seen as an ordinary business decision.	Conditions for prostitutes can be improved through education and in seeking greater equality between the sexes.	The prostitute is an entrepreneur contracting out her labor as is her right. As with any business her ability to thwart danger is dependent upon her awareness of the world.	Prostitution is a business. In all businesses there are degrading aspects that must be overcome.	For	No Prostitution is a civil right.
Liberal Freedoms With Moral Constraints	Inequality of social freedoms. The need for education and reason to prevail as a solution. Improve society by promoting equal treatment between the sexes.	In theory the liberal might object to the undue effect of cultural persuasion on uneducated women interfering in her search for autonomy, thus being a coercive influence in her decision making.	These liberals question the possibility that a prostitute can make an informed choice, given certain levels of educational and cultural awareness.	The prostitute is an entrepreneur with the right to contract out her services. Prostitution has problems associated with it and should not be encouraged.	Education, reason and equality between the sexes could improve the conditions of prostitution. Liberals hint there are probably better choices a woman could make.	Qualified	No Prostitution is a civil right but should not be encouraged.