

3.2.2.3.1.20 Restricting American men abroad

I cannot write much about prostitution in Asia because I do not use the services of prostitutes. As a matter of fact, I would be happy if the prostitution that can be found in Asia would not exist, and would never have existed.

In this context, it is important to use a correct definition of prostitution.

Prostitution is the providing of sexual services in exchange for money or material benefits under the following conditions: a) indiscriminately to anybody who is willing to pay an asked-for price, b) on a promiscuous basis and/or c) in ad-hoc and short-term arrangements.

Please note that there is an additional defining element, apart from the fact that a sexual relationship is entered with an expectation of a monetary or material benefit. The most important additional defining element is that sexual services are provided indiscriminately (to anybody who is willing to pay an asked-for price).

If a woman enters sexual relationships only with men she desires sexual contact with, then this is not a case of prostitution, even if she will normally derive material benefits from such relationships (the element of providing the service indiscriminately is lacking).

The fact that material benefits are derived is even less sufficient to qualify a sexual relationship as a case of prostitution when the element of promiscuity is absent.

Many women all over the world marry richer men, or prefer rich boyfriends because of the material benefits that are involved. They are not prostitutes because of this attitude.

One may criticize their behavior on moral grounds. However, to characterize such relationships as "prostitution" would dilute the meaning of the term "prostitution" and allow us to characterize

practically every sexual relationship as prostitution. But any terms in any language only makes sense if it differentiates something that is covered by the term from something that is not covered by the term.

Adding to the linguistic confusion is the fact that nowadays, many people use the term “commercial sex” as a euphemism for prostitution. But while prostitution is a form of commercial sex, not all forms of commercial sex are prostitution. For example, a sex shop may be an establishment in the field of commercial sex. It may sell sex literature, or real life plastic dolls with full anatomic features, so that buyers can use them for (let’s avoid a euphemism in this case) fucking. One may correctly state that the sex shop operates in the realm of commercial sex, though the two cited products don’t have anything to do with prostitution.

Now, I don’t mind if people use wrong language when they discuss matters in a pub, or if they use euphemisms when they talk to their children. But when wrong language creeps into legislation, then it’s a different matter. Lack of clarity on the job of lawmakers can become rather tragic when judges take words for what they really mean.

The sexual laws of many countries are full of linguistic traps, and I would be glad if readers were to send in examples. At this point, I just want to refer to one case:

On a web site of the US State Department (the US foreign ministry), we find the following explanation:

“For purposes of the PROTECT Act, illicit sexual conduct includes any commercial sex act in a foreign country with a person under the age of 18. The law defines a commercial sex act as any sex act, on account of which anything of value is given to or received by a person under the age of 18.”

The URL for the above quote is:

<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/emergencies/arrest/criminalpenalties.html>

The Protect Act was probably passed with US male customers of underage prostitutes in Third World countries in mind. But it outlaws much more than this kind of relationships.

I am not quite sure whether the term “commercial sex acts” is an euphemism for “prostitution” or a conscious word choice, intended to give the law wider coverage. Is it a commercial sex act if a girl asks a man for the entrance money for a disco, and when doing so, leans heavily on the man? Wasn't padding an underage boys head considered a sex act in the Michael Jackson trial?

In Latin America (and other parts of the world), it is expected of girls that they have a boyfriend before the age of 18. If they were to wait with having a boyfriend until 18, this would greatly impede their chances of getting married.

Though the girls, officially, are expected not to have sexual intercourse before marriage, it is considered normal that boyfriends and girlfriends hold hands, and kiss each other (and, from case to case, more than that).

Initially, the man may take the young woman out to some entertainment places (and it is expected that the man pays for everything); he may also give her money for a taxi ride back home.

And when the romantic relationship is going strong, he may buy her some clothes or jewelry (“anything of value”, so to speak).

If any of this involves a US citizen, then it is criminal conduct that is prosecuted in the US, and the US boyfriend of a 17-year old Mexican girl could go to jail for a decade, and find himself on a sheriff-published Internet list of sexual predators for the rest of his life: and all of that for a kiss and a taxi fare.

Maybe he will find a lenient judge who differentiates where lawmakers didn't. Or maybe not. Once convicted, people (especially those campaigning for morals) typically no longer are interested in further details. He will carry the same “sexual offender” label as a rapist.

As mentioned above, I disapprove of prostitution. Many people who

disapprove of prostitution do so on moral or religious grounds. Feminists argue that prostitution is degrading of those who provide such sexual services, or that it is a manifestation of the repression of woman.

Radical feminists, as well as the media (which has a tendency to dramatize anything sexual), often refer to all prostitutes as “sex slaves”, though this is again an over-extension of a term, just as the classification as prostitution of any sexual relationship in which one partner derives material benefits.

Moral grounds for rejecting certain patterns of human behavior are, of course, not as solid as are personal interests. If people condone or reject something on moral grounds only, they may change their opinions easily. Some skillful argumentation is all that is needed.

It's a different story when people approve or disapprove of certain patterns of human behavior because it is good or bad for their personal interests.

To give an example: all those who are in the alcohol business, from brewers to pub owners will likely argue that the consumption of alcohol is, in principle, OK. They will cite that alcohol promotes socializing, and it lets people relax from the daily stress.

On the other hand, those who are in the Pepsi business are much more likely to admit to the many detrimental effects of alcohol consumption.

That's what I call solid grounds.

You will always have an easy time convincing people of those moral percepts that are good for their interests, while they will always be less likely to adopt moral views that conflict with their interests. “Das Sein bestimmt das Bewusstsein.” People's moral views often reflect their interests. Their views are an ideology.

I do want to make sure that readers understand that I disapprove of prostitution not just on moral grounds but because it is against my interests.

It's not that I never make use of the services of prostitutes because having a woman providing sexual services as a prostitute is degrading for the woman. (It may well be degrading for the woman, but that is not my point.) Fact is: I do not hire prostitutes because it would be a degradation of my sex life (in a prostitution setting, the sex is lousy, anyway).

I do a lot in order to be sexually attractive. I am well-groomed, though it doesn't directly appear that way (I don't push the impression, as do those men who use perfumes). I have good oral hygiene and I don't drink alcohol and I don't smoke (both causes bad breath, apart from other negative effects). I have the proper weight for my height. I send the right signals through the way I dress. I speak three languages fluently, and can communicate in two more (one cannot have a romantic sexual relationship with a girl if one cannot talk with her.) I am not an idiot. I have an interesting job. And I have been successful enough, commercially, so that I can buy a new car (and pay cash) when I feel I need one.

And after all of that, I should have to resort to prostitutes when I need sex? I am better than that! There are enough women in the world for me to have one who wants sex particularly with me, rather than with anybody who is willing to pay for it.

Yes, prostitution is degrading for women, even when women are in the trade on their own free will. But it's also degrading for the customer. Men who have to go to prostitutes for sexual satisfaction are losers. Just like woman who become prostitutes.

Yes, some prostitutes clearly are victims of crime (those who have been abducted and forced to become prostitutes). But not all women who become prostitutes are victims. Some women become prostitutes on their own choice because they like fast cash. Many of the women who become prostitutes are stupid (as are many men who frequent them). That's too bad. But society has given them the freedom to do something as stupid as becoming prostitutes, and one can't just argue that they are victims because they opted for a poor and self-degrading way to earn money. This, again, would be an over-extension of a term ("victim"), just as the previously cited over-extensions of the terms "prostitution" and "sex slaves".

If we consider prostitutes as victims per se, then it's not far to argue that every person everywhere in the world is a victim, and then, the term becomes useless.

For feminazis, when it comes to sexual relationships, men are always perpetrators (because they are men), and women are always victims. Feminazis condemn people on grounds of male gender, which is just as bad as condemning people on grounds of race, which is why the "nazi" suffix is fully justified.

I have mentioned earlier in this article that I do not have to call on morals when I say that I disapprove of prostitution. I disapprove of prostitution not only because I do not use prostitutes but because, actually, when prostitution exists in environments where I try to establish sexual relationships, then this has a negative impact on my chances.

In societies where prostitution is endemic, women who are not so stupid as to become prostitutes are more concerned not to be regarded as prostitutes than they are in environments where prostitution is almost non-existent.

Especially in societies where it is a common occurrence that prostitutes serve foreign men, I have a hard time approaching women at public places because these women are weary of being regarded as prostitutes, too.

On the other hand, if in another society, there are practically no prostitution tourists, local women will normally not object to being seen with foreigners.

Better, if in a particular society, a large number of foreign men are legitimate spouses of local women. And better still, if the foreign husbands are mostly much richer than the average local men. In such an environment, local women typically are very open to sexual advances by foreign men.

Have I explained with sufficient clarity why I disapprove of prostitution? This is important because now, I want to argue against much of the recent anti-prostitution legislation. But I do so, not because I would like to preserve a prostitution status quo, but

because most anti-prostitution legislation is anti-sex on a wider scale, and apart from that, it often also is anti-male.

Most legislators anywhere around the world are not linguists. Therefore, the usage of the term “prostitution” often is vague, or arbitrary, or wrong, and feminazis and anti-sexual Christian fundamentalists (the two types that typically make up the NGOs that lobby the governments and parliaments of poor Third World countries), often succeed to have much more covered by anti-prostitution laws than even the legislators themselves are aware of.

If, for example, “prostitution” is defined as any sexual relationships outside marriage in which one partner provides material benefits to the other partner, most men in sexual relationships outside marriage could be persecuted legally. This, of course, fits the agenda of Christian missionaries and fundamentalists who definitely are against all sex outside marriage.

Furthermore, if theoretically, all men who provide material benefits to female partners in sexual relationships outside marriage can be accused of being corrupters (and thereby oppressors), and the female partners can be portrayed as victims, then this creates an atmosphere in which men are easily threatened (and thereby controlled), which definitely fits the agenda of feminazis.

Therefore, in the current ideological climate where only feminist positions are politically correct, any new legislation that outlaws “prostitution” will likely, in one way or another, have negative legal effects on men in any heterosexual relationship. For this reason alone, and even though I genuinely disapprove of prostitution, I am also deeply skeptical of any new legislation that regulates prostitution.

And there is another point, which I argue in other articles, but to which I want to make a short reference here: while I see the necessity for legislation against violence (which includes abducting women and forcing them into prostitution), I am, by-and-large, against legislation that targets consensual sexual conduct, or is based solely on morals, as such legislation interferes with personal freedom on a wider scale.

I do not use prostitutes, and I believe that becoming a prostitute is a poor career choice, and that sex with prostitutes is of an inferior quality. But by and large, I am against anti-sexual legislation, and this includes legislation that targets prostitution because it is sexual (and not for components of violent crime, which, anyway, are covered in statutes on violent crime).