



Getting Screwed: Sex Workers and the Law

Alison Bass

Download now

Read Online →

Getting Screwed: Sex Workers and the Law

Alison Bass

Getting Screwed: Sex Workers and the Law Alison Bass

Alison Bass weaves the true stories of sex workers with the latest research on prostitution into a gripping journalistic account of how women (and some men) navigate a culture that routinely accepts the implicit exchange of sex for money, status, or even a good meal, but imposes heavy penalties on those who make such bargains explicit. Along the way, Bass examines why an increasing number of middle-class white women choose to become sex workers and explores how prostitution has become a thriving industry in the twenty-first-century global economy. Situating her book in American history more broadly, she also discusses the impact of the sexual revolution, the rise of the Nevada brothels, and the growing war on sex trafficking after 9/11.

Drawing on recent studies that show lower rates of violence and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV, in regions where adult prostitution is legal and regulated, Bass makes a powerful case for decriminalizing sex work. Through comparisons of the impact of criminalization vs. decriminalization in other countries, her book offers strategies for making prostitution safer for American sex workers and the communities in which they dwell.

This riveting assessment of how U.S. anti-prostitution laws harm the public health and safety of sex workers and other citizens—and affect larger societal attitudes toward women—will interest feminists, sociologists, lawyers, health-care professionals, and policy makers. The book also will appeal to anyone with an interest in American history and our society's evolving attitudes toward sexuality and marriage.

Getting Screwed: Sex Workers and the Law Details

Date : Published October 6th 2015 by ForeEdge (first published September 22nd 2015)

ISBN : 9781611686340

Author : Alison Bass

Format : Hardcover 280 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Law, Feminism, Sexuality, Sex Work

 [Download Getting Screwed: Sex Workers and the Law ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Getting Screwed: Sex Workers and the Law ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Getting Screwed: Sex Workers and the Law Alison Bass

From Reader Review Getting Screwed: Sex Workers and the Law for online ebook

Erin Cataldi says

This look into the underbelly of society is fascinating and eye opening. Before reading this I had no understanding of the legalities behind sex work. All I knew was what I had gleaned from memoirs and *Pretty Woman*. This book lets readers explore how laws affecting prostitution differ by state and by country. It also goes in depth on how laws and regulations affects prostitutes and what works and doesn't (New Zealand has the best model if you're wondering). She gets lots of testimonials from lawyers, streetwalkers, high end escorts, and madams. Its a fascinating look at why we should decriminalize sex work and what we can really do to crack down on the underage workers and victims who are illegally trafficked. The testimonials from the sex workers helped change any pre-conceived notions that I had. An interesting read for anyone interested in law or the lives of sex workers.

I received this book for free from Library Thing in return for my honest, unbiased opinion.

Andrew Alt says

This book helped me to understand that what I've learned about adult consensual prostitution from the media over the years - and misconceptions I've inferred from movies and television - is primarily very inaccurate. I highly recommend this book to anyone, regardless of what his or her moral stance is on sex work. Clearly, there is a difference between adult consensual sex work, and children or adults being enslaved for the purpose of prostitution. If both those concepts are thought of as the same thing, effectiveness is lost when trying to help people who are forced against their will to be in the sex trade, and progress can't be made in preventing these things from happening. An honest discussion is needed by politicians, community members, and the media.

Bass cites all her sources and as far as I can tell (I'm not a journalist or statistician), the research is thorough, and the conclusions and suggested solutions are completely logical and sane.

Some people write notes at the end of their reviews noting that they were given a book by the publisher in exchange for an honest review. That's not the case here. I bought the Kindle edition of this book, and halfway through reading, I bought a copy for my mother. She's read it since then, and while having trouble understanding all the points of view, she enjoyed reading it (I won't try to speak on her behalf and keep this to a single review ;)).

Even Bass's first book, *Side Effects...* I never received for free. I've purchased... I think 5 copies of that over the last 9 years. In fact, it might be time for this author to begin sending me free things.

In *Getting Screwed*, my eyes glazed over a little when I reading sections with a lot of numbers, but I've never been much of a numbers guy, and those parts were few and far between. Some people will appreciate numbers more than me and be able to digest them more easily.

I think I would have liked to read more about the perspective of "Johns", and more interviews with "lower" and "middle class" prostitutes. Though I assume getting interviews for a topic like this would be quite challenging, and probably not necessary.

I'm going to keep things simple and just give this book 5 stars. It will prove to be a valuable reference to future researchers and add to the growing body of human knowledge and understanding. And if the issue of sex work is given the consideration it deserves, will save lives and improve the health of our society.

Paul says

This book confronts some very difficult truths about this country. First, that prostitution is absolutely an economic decision when there is no other way to earn an income. Second, that the number of young men and women who are "trafficked" into prostitution is vastly overestimated. Third, that police forces and citizens are quick to go after "trafficking" cases and legislators to give money to them because it's much easier to arrest a naked woman in a motel room than chasing a bad guy who has a Glock down a dark alley; police are able to get their arrest statistics up while arresting victims that are easy to catch and no threat to the public commonweal. Meanwhile, serious crime continues apace.

The hardest part of this book for me to get my head around was the idea that decriminalizing prostitution may be the only solution to reducing the number of streetwalkers, because that is by far the hardest and most dangerous way to make a living in the sex trade. And at least two serial killers, the Green River Killer and a pig farmer in Canada the author describes, both went specifically after prostitutes to murder them. The author records several interviews with escorts who went into the business to pay for college or to pay off college loans or just keep their families intact after their husbands had left them. The criminalization of prostitution drives escorts into the streets, where they are much more vulnerable to crime, serious injury, and death.

At the same time, it's hard to imagine that any neighborhood would welcome or even tolerate an escort business in its area that would be allowed to exist under decriminalization. It's a thorny problem, but the book provides a sympathetic case for sex workers not to be brutalized and arrested once they were no longer considered criminals. They could actually report bad clients to the police instead of having the police ignore them or want to arrest them.

This is a fascinating book on a very narrow and usually buried subject. I would have given it five stars had the subject of the book not been so narrow and of little interest to vast parts of the reading public.

Darcia Helle says

Our war on sex is a lot like our war on drugs - long, expensive, and pointless. Let's face it: Sex sells. We, as a society, are never going to win this war, so maybe it's time we took a different approach.

This book, whether intentionally or not, offers a compelling narrative for legalizing and regulating sex work. Alison Bass makes the argument that adult, consensual prostitution should be treated as a social problem, and perhaps a bit of a public health issue. By criminalizing the act, we are actually creating far more detrimental circumstances for the women involved. Here, I think, is where this book excels. You can't read this book with an open mind, and then honestly say that our current system makes sense.

The author is careful to consistently point out that under-aged and forced prostitution, such as with human trafficking, is an entirely different entity. Trafficking is a vile and violent act that is more akin to slavery, and should be treated as such. Sadly, these victims, when caught in the act of prostitution, are often treated as criminals, pushing them further underground and into the hands of abusers.

The content does occasionally become repetitive. Still, it's well written, engaging, and certainly thought-provoking.

I received a copy of this book from the publisher, in exchange for my honest review.

6655321 says

Ok, lets start with the good, even in the most haphazard way Alison Bass talks about trans sex workers and gives some statistical and demographic information (even if she doesn't think to perhaps, talk about trans sex workers as a distinct group perhaps marked with a very different relationship to more than just the everyday violence of being trans, i.e. the "market" they work in, the lack of opportunities to move into the Madam run higher end escorting that takes up a lot of Bass' analysis) and it would really help if she didn't use really transphobic language (you would be surprised X is biologically a man, Y is very handsome) like, there are actual guidelines for how you talk about people in academic and journalistic literature. Bass' also clearly cares about trying to get the voices of sex workers although she mostly interviews Madams and Escorts, a few activists, and demographically she interviews mostly cis women. I think it is impossible to document all the ways that the law (and alternative formulations like "End Demand") work to make life harder for sex workers but a more diverse sampling (i.e. there are people who trade erotic services other than straight up sex for money) and specialization (which Bass only lightly touches on) adds a dynamic (i.e. pro-dommes and pro-sub's have a very different sort of work than escorts and street walkers even if all of the work falls under sexwork). Since Bass (as a journalist) favors narrative, i can't really comment on her choosing people she found interesting and making them central features because that's how you craft a narrative in her case but it sometimes feels more like she is giving her friend's story and some stuff has a major squick factor (Bass doesn't have much of anything to say about age of entry that is under the age of consent other than decriminalization would prevent this).

Annie says

This was great! A well-written, engaging overview of some of the history and the arguments about the legality of sex work. The best part of this book is its readability. For a book written by a law professor, that's always a nice surprise. Bass traces the stories of several sex workers over the course of their careers and really makes them come alive on the page, almost like a novel.

Michael says

Such a fascinating book about the lives of people who sell sex and the policies which could promote community health. Alison Bass respectfully depicts the lives of those she interviews in order to help the audience connect with individuals society dictates they stigmatize. I truly enjoyed this book and thought it balanced scientific research and personal narrative quite well; I will certainly suggest this book to those just learning about sex work.

????? ?????????? says

I stumbled upon this book by accident, while searching for literature on anti-depressants. Alison Bass wrote a book about modern psychiatry, and since that one was out of my reach I gave "Getting screwed" a try.

The book provides an overview of legal, economic and social aspects of prostitution. It's main ideas go like this:

- 1) sex work is usually either a temporal cash source, needed to support a family, pay for education or mortgage, or a trap with no exit, because once you are criminalized, it is hard to change a job.
- 2) sex work is relatively rarely entwined with trafficking, and these two terms are completely separate
- 3) laws in US and many other countries criminalize sex workers and generally produce more violence, unsafe sex and other problems.
- 4) politics, police and antitrafficking organisations are inflating trafficking statistics to ensure proper governmental support of the war with sex workers, which is easy to wage, because sex workers has little means of self-defense.
- 5) countries with decriminalized sex work enjoy less trafficking, better street safety and better sexually transmitted diseases statistics.
- 6) there are lots of scientific data to back most of these claims, all cited in the book.

The biggest problem with the book is the lack of structure. To the end I could not understand the principle for argument and chapter order. This is the main to skip one star.

Also, there area lot of tear-squeezing sex workers stories and only a little pinch of police point of view. Therefore this book is strongly pro sex work. Personally I am okay with that, because mostly I agree with the author. But some readers may be alerted by this "silenced no more" rhetoric. Nevertheless it does not undermine book value.

Tyler Kroon says

Chock-full of first-hand interviews with and historical accounts of sex workers across the globe. Bass has clearly done her research, providing dozens of sources corroborating these accounts over the course of the entire book, while citing local, federal, and international laws that affect the well-being of those in the industry. She manages to combine all of this information into a work that effectively raises awareness of the issues that sex workers face, many of which stem directly from the laws governing them. My only lament is the use of transphobic language in the sections discussing trans sex workers.

Shannon Mckenzie says

Good read! Recommended.

I did receive this book for free through Goodreads Giveaways.

Lexie says

Extremely disorganized and occasionally hard to follow (Interviewees are used in multiple chapters and it's difficult to remember who is who), but the first hand accounts and facts are eye opening. Worth reading.

Rachel Smith says

This is a pretty fantastic book if you want to understand the legal place that sex workers are in. It's also an interesting historical text, backed up by interviews and facts. It goes into great nuance to discuss the groups working for, against, and in a gray area with sex workers, and the differences between trafficking and prostitution. It's a valuable read if you want to understand better what is helpful for sex workers and the world at large, and what is not.

Cass says

I got this book through goodreads giveaway. Getting screwed was very informative and had some very interesting first hand stories. the book tends to lean more towards the pro side of sex work and looks at how different laws criminalizing sex work make prostitution more dangerous for the workers. At some parts of the book, I was enthralled, at others I zoned out. Overall, it was a good read and I recommend it

Alex Johnson says

Always been of the mindset that prostitution laws just endanger women in the sex trade, this book just helped solidify that within my mind. Overall an interesting book I would say. Dispelled some preconceived notions I had about the industry.

Artemis says

This is a good rundown of how different legal approaches affect sex workers. It also, thankfully, dispels some of the myths surrounding sex trafficking, though it could have been more critical of the rescue industry.

On the negative side, some of the language used was uncomfortable, particularly when it came to trans women and the writer's need to constantly describe the body shape and attractiveness level of every woman she met. They were all very pretty, we get it.
