

Nordic Model Briefing Paper

This briefing paper is intended to support proposers who are required to make a speech in support of the 'Support the Nordic Model' motion and to address questions.

More in-depth information and links to references can be found at www.nordicmodelnow.org

Note: The vast majority of those who are bought and sold in prostitution are female and almost all sex buyers are male. Therefore, to emphasise the gendered nature of prostitution, this briefing paper will often refer to those who are prostituted as women and girls and those who buy the prostituted as men. This is not to say men, boys and transgender people are not also prostituted and it should be noted that the Nordic Model does not differentiate by sex or gender and so is applicable to everyone equally.

What is the Nordic Model?

The Nordic Model (sometimes known as the Sex Buyer Law, or the Swedish, Abolitionist, or Equality Model) is an approach to prostitution that has also been adopted in Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Northern Ireland, France and Ireland.

It has several elements:

1. Decriminalisation of those who are prostituted

Prostitution is inherently violent and prostituted people should not be criminalised for the exploitation and abuse they endure.

2. Buying sex becomes a criminal offence

Buying human beings for sex is harmful, exploitative and can never be safe. We need to reduce the demand that drives sex trafficking.

3. Support and exit services

High quality, non-judgemental services to support those in prostitution and help them build a new life outside it, including: access to safe affordable housing; training and further education; child care; legal, debt and benefit advice; emotional and psychological support.

4. A holistic approach

A public information campaign; training for police and CPS; tackling the inequality and poverty that drive people into prostitution; effective laws against pimping and sex trafficking, with penalties that reflect the enormous damage they cause.

What are we campaigning for?

Nordic Model Now! is a UK grassroots group campaigning for the abolition of prostitution and related practices.

We are calling for:

- The introduction and effective implementation of the Nordic Model approach to prostitution.
- The clearing of criminal records for soliciting to sell sex.¹
- The legislation against procuring, pimping and sex trafficking to be strengthened and brought into line with our obligations under the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (known as the Palermo Protocol).
- The eradication of all the factors that push people into prostitution, including the entrenched inequality between the sexes, the impoverishment of mothers, the inadequate support for “looked after” children, student fees, low pay, zero-hour contracts, benefit cuts and sanctions, and so on.
- The UK government to ratify the 1949 UN Convention on the Suppression of the Trafficking in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others.

Why are we campaigning for the Nordic Model?

Prostitution is inherently violent

Prostitution is inherently violent because, by definition, it involves unwanted sex. When both parties actually want sex, no one needs paying because sex in those circumstances is its own reward. If one party is paid, it suggests she doesn't really want it and unwanted sex is a violation of the integrity and dignity of a human being.

Sex buyers also expect the prostituted woman or girl to show him that she is enjoying it. The pretence that she's enjoying it is partly what he is paying for and it is a pretence that must be so thorough that he can believe it's real. This is a form of psychological violence.

Researchers conducting a nine-country peer-reviewed study² interviewed 854 prostituted people, who reported experiencing a staggering amount of physical violence within prostitution. For example, 64% had been threatened with a weapon, 73% had been physically assaulted, and 57% had been raped (which, in this context, means unwanted sex for which they were not paid). Of the 57% (483 people) who had been raped in prostitution, 59% (286

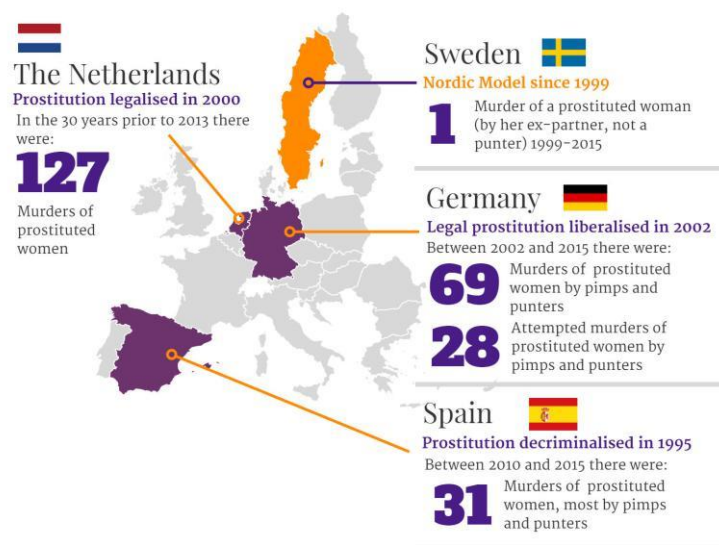
¹ <http://nordicmodelnow.org/2017/07/20/campaign-to-wipe-womens-prostitution-related-criminal-records/>

² www.prostitutionresearch.com/pdf/Prostitutionin9Countries.pdf

people) had been raped in prostitution 6 or more times. Other studies have found not dissimilar results and the testimony of survivors³ of prostitution tells the same story.

Some people argue that legalisation (or full decriminalisation of the sex trade) makes prostitution safer. But the truth is that nothing can make prostitution safe. Just as regulation doesn't make the woman safe⁴ from STIs and unwanted pregnancy, legalisation doesn't make the women safe from the punter's violence because violence is inherent to prostitution. We can see this in the murder statistics. Prostituted women have an enormously high rate of being murdered, mostly by punters and pimps^{5 6}.

The following figure shows the numbers, as at April 2016, of known murders of prostituted women in four European countries, three of which (Germany, Spain, The Netherlands) have some form of legalised prostitution and one, Sweden, has the Nordic Model.



While the Nordic Model does not make prostitution safe, because nothing can, it does reduce the amount of prostitution that takes place and therefore the number of new women being drawn into it. The Nordic Model also provides routes out for those embedded in it. The Swedish murder statistics provide proof that this approach works.

Nikki Holland, Assistant Chief Constable, National Police Chiefs' Council Lead for Prostitution and Sex Work gave oral evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee on Tuesday 1 March 2016 and said:

“[In the UK] we have had 153 murders of prostitutes since 1990, which is probably the highest group of murders in any one category, so that gives the police cause for concern.”⁷

³ <http://nordicmodelnow.org/testimonial/>

⁴ <http://nordicmodelnow.org/myths-about-prostitution/myth-regulation-makes-prostitution-safe/>

⁵ http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2013/05/cold_case_team_identities_poss/

⁶ <http://www.sexindustry-kills.de/doku.php?id=prostitutionmurders:start>

⁷ <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/home-affairs-committee/prostitution/oral/30023.html>

Women often struggle to leave prostitution

Women often struggle to exit prostitution and, many of the ones that do, find themselves returning after a temporary reprieve due to the difficulties in finding a stable home and income. Added to which, many are affected by mental health problems, including symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, low self-esteem and an anxiety with life outside of prostitution.

Well-funded support and exit services are vital for women trying to remain exited and the Nordic Model is the only legislation that prioritises this approach in assisting women to rebuild their lives.

Choice is complicated

When people talk about prostitution, the woman's choice is often used to justify her prostitution. For example, here are a few random comments from *The Guardian* website:

"If a woman chooses (freely chooses, without coercion) to sell sex then that's her right."

"So long as they are safe, secure, happy and independently making that decision it is entirely up to them what they do."

"I respect her right to choose. Don't you respect the rights of a women to choose?"

But choice is complicated.

Who gets to choose and who has the power to influence that choice? It's easy to forget how few options many people actually have and how, for many people, those options are constrained by the choices of those with power, such as the UK government that systematically deprives women of resources.

Mothers on a social media discussion group were requested to ask their daughters what they wanted to do when they grew up. Here's a small sample: an actor, a singer, a cat, a painter, a playwright, a pilot, a breast-feeding counsellor and a ninja-doctor. Not a single one said they want to go into prostitution when they grow up. So, who are the girls and young women who "choose" prostitution and what has happened to them?

Testimony from survivors⁸ and studies of women and girls in prostitution consistently show that many were in local authority care as children; many started in prostitution before they were 18 or when they were homeless; many were coerced into prostitution; and the majority had been abused as children^{9 10}.

So, to the man who asked on *The Guardian* website whether we respect her choice, the answer is yes, indeed we do but we don't think those are the options anyone should be facing because how is a 15, 16, 17, 18-year old girl to know how it will affect her over time? How is

⁸ <http://nordicmodelnow.org/testimonial/>

⁹ [news.bbc.co.uk/nol/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/16_07_04_paying.pdf](https://www.bbc.com/news/health-16-07-04-paying)

¹⁰ [i4.cmsfiles.com/eaves/2012/11/Breaking-down-the-barriers-a37d80.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/144804/Breaking-down-the-barriers-a37d80.pdf)

any woman or girl to know in advance about the violence that is inherent to prostitution and how it can never be safe?

A choice that is not free is not really a choice. Consent that is not informed is not consent. An absence of alternatives is not a choice. Acquiescence is not consent.

We do not use the argument of choice to justify any other systematic inequality. For example, campaigners against zero-hour employment contracts do not justify them by saying people choose those contracts. In the vast majority of cases, people accept them because of a lack of alternative options. It is those who profit from unfair contracts that justify them by the person's supposed choice.

Most women and girls are in prostitution because of a lack of options. We believe that women and girls should have other viable options. This is why we campaign for ring-fenced funding for high quality non-judgemental services to help them exit and for an end to women's systematic inequality and poverty.

To justify prostitution by her supposed choice is disingenuous. It is the language of the vested interest. It is men, the punters, who have choice. The choice to continue to abuse her vulnerability or the choice to say no to prostitution.

Prostitution is predicated on foregoing the right to refuse sex

The law in England and Wales recognises that each sexual encounter and activity requires separate consent and that a person has the right to withdraw or refuse consent at any time for any or no reason, and this applies equally to all persons and regardless of the relationship between them.

It was not always like this. As recently as 1991, the law of rape did not apply to married couples in England and Wales – because it was assumed that the wife gave lifelong consent to any and all sexual activity with her husband on her wedding day. This was a relic of the archaic patriarchal practice by which marriage was in effect the transfer of ownership of a woman from her father to her husband – a practice that has now thankfully been firmly set aside in England and Wales.

However, the idea that a man can have ownership of a woman lingers on in the prostitution relationship, where the punter (almost always a man) pays for sexual access to another person (typically a woman or girl). Even if the woman exercises some superficial level of “choice” to enter prostitution (for example, because of financial need), the prostitution encounter is predicated on her foregoing her right to refuse particular sexual activities or any sexual activity for any or no reason. Under certain (but not all) circumstances she may be able to refuse some more extreme sexual activities, but her practical ability to refuse all or any activity is limited by her need to be paid and the punter's demand and expectation of getting his “money's worth.”

It's as if the punter has temporary ownership of the woman in prostitution – paralleling the archaic patriarchal practice of marriage as indefinite male ownership. That some cultures sanction and justify prostitution by reframing it as temporary marriage supports this analysis.

Prostitution inherently contradicts the prostituted person's absolute legal right to reject sexual advances and activity for any or no reason. Any attempt to legalise or decriminalise

prostitution would inevitably involve the acceptance and institutionalisation of a legal exemption to this right for those in prostitution, just like the old patriarchal marriage law did for wives.

The Nordic Model is cost-effective

Within the space of a few weeks in late 2006, a punter called Steve Wright brutally murdered five women involved in street prostitution in Ipswich. In the shocked aftermath, there was a determination in the area to address the awful realities of prostitution. As a result, Suffolk police and local agencies implemented a Nordic Model style strategy to tackle prostitution.

They used the existing kerb crawling legislation to clamp down on punters. Instead of arresting the women, they directed them to local agencies who provided support and exiting assistance. This strategy corresponds to the three key planks of the Nordic Model (firstly decriminalisation of those who are prostituted, secondly providing them with support and exiting services, and finally targeting the punters.)

The University of East Anglia subsequently conducted an independent evaluation of the strategy¹¹ and concluded that it had been successful in eliminating kerb crawlers and street prostitution, helping women move on from prostitution, and preventing others from becoming involved in prostitution.

The economic analysis of the strategy found that every £1 spent as part of the strategy saved £2 of public money, because there were lower criminal justice and social support costs.

This shows what can be done within the constraints of the current English legislation. However, there are many anomalies within the current legislation¹², which means that it not effective in tackling indoor prostitution and many local police forces take the opposite approach. We therefore call for a full Nordic Model implementation.

What other models are there?

There are organisations and pressure groups who campaign for alternatives to the Nordic Model.

These include:

- Regulation of the sex-industry as a harm-reduction measure (by unionising prostituted people and using health and safety regulation, for example).
- Legalisation (whereby prostitution becomes a legal, legitimated business, such as in Germany and the Netherlands)
- Full decriminalisation (whereby prostituted people *and* sex-buyers and pimps are decriminalised, such as Spain and New Zealand).

¹¹ www.suffolk.police.uk/newsandevents/newsstories/2012/may/prostitutionstrategysuccess.aspx

¹² <http://thefeministahood.wordpress.com/2016/03/16/uk-puntering-pimping-trafficking-laws/>

Myth: Regulation makes prostitution safe

One of the common arguments for regulating prostitution is to make it come under Health and Safety legislation so that it is safer for the women. However, this approach fails to consider that the punters are themselves **the** source of harm.

In any other occupation where there is a risk of exposure to other people's body fluids, workers are required to wear masks, gloves, goggles, and protective clothing. Condoms do not come close to reducing risk for those in prostitution to a level comparable with those faced by workers in, say dentistry or nursing, because condoms slip and break, and punters refuse to wear them. Condoms don't protect the person in prostitution from the punter's saliva, sweat and other body fluids; or from damage to orifices and internal organs caused by friction and prolonged heavy pounding; or from his violence.

Health and safety standards require employers to rethink working practices to eliminate unreasonable risk. In prostitution, this would require participants to wear full protective clothing and the prohibition of any intimate contact. This would, of course, change the nature of prostitution itself.

When it is not possible to make work safe, industries are often closed down. For example, the asbestos industry was closed down because the risks were too great and alternatives were available.

We believe that prostitution can never be made safe and we therefore call for its abolition.

This is not to suggest that women in prostitution should not have every available assistance in reducing the harm and minimising the risks involved. The wish to reduce harm is a major argument for the complete decriminalization of the women involved, as advocated by the Nordic Model.

Myth: Legalisation makes prostitution safe^{13 14}

Germany legalised prostitution in 2002. Mega-brothels cater for up to 1000 men at any one time and about 1.2 million men buy sex every day. There are 3,500 registered brothels and a large number of smaller unregistered ones in neighbourhoods throughout the country, some are even next to McDonalds restaurants.

Police estimate there are half a million women in prostitution in Germany but only 44 are registered. The women are shipped from town to town as punters want "fresh meat" and they live and sleep in the same rooms they see punters in. The prostituted woman has to pay a house fee, often around 160 Euros, to rent the room and make a further payment for taxes of around 25 Euros, every day. At 30 Euros for full sex, this means she will need to see 6 men before she breaks even.

Practices are becoming more dangerous with less protection for women. There are menus where men can choose from a long list that includes: 'anal fist fucking', 'group sex', 'man

¹³ <http://www.feministcurrent.com/2016/05/09/legalization-has-turned-germany-into-the-bordello-of-europe-we-should-be-ashamed/>

¹⁴ <http://www.trauma-and-prostitution.eu/en/2016/11/02/the-german-model-is-producing-hell-on-earth/>

shits on woman' and flat-rate 'all you can eat' options. (The latter option has now been banned in Germany under rules introduced in summer 2017.¹⁵)

Between 2002 and 2015, 69 prostituted women were murdered by pimps and punters and there were a further 28 attempted murders.

Myth: Full decriminalisation makes prostitution safe¹⁶

Publicly available crime data for New Zealand shows a significant rise in reported rape, sexual assault and other male violence against women and girls *in the general population* since the Prostitution Reform Act decriminalised sex buying in the middle of 2003. Decriminalisation also makes it more difficult for a prostituted person to negotiate their prices as the brothel set the 'menu'. Prices in New Zealand fell, meaning a prostituted woman had to see more punters a day to make the same money. Those who campaigned for full decriminalisation wanted to give more power to the prostituted people but, in reality, more power has gone to pimps and punters.

In addition, while local authorities have some control over where larger brothels are situated, SOOBS (Small Owner operated Brothels) can open anywhere, including in suburban neighbourhoods and near schools.

Full decriminalisation has also failed to stop the prostitution of children. Mama Tere Strickland, a community worker, said: "At least the old law kept a lid on the numbers, but with no law on the streets, the pimps and gangs have moved in."

What other arguments are common?

Myth: Prostitution is the oldest profession

For millennia human communities were egalitarian and prostitution was unknown.

In her book, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, Gerda Lerner showed that prostitution was invented relatively recently in the long history of the human race, when men seized control and started the system of male supremacy known as patriarchy.

We see prostitution as a form of violence against the individual women and against all women. We do not believe that equality between women and men is possible while the buying and selling of women for sex is considered acceptable.

Prostitution is not the oldest profession, rather it is the oldest **oppression**.

Myth: Prostitution stops men raping women

Do we really accept that men can't control themselves? Do we believe that when a man sees a woman or a girl, he can't control himself and he has to rape her? Do we really accept that?

¹⁵ <http://nordicmodelnow.org/2017/10/17/francine-sporenda-interviews-huschke-mau/>

¹⁶ <http://nordicmodelnow.org/2016/08/11/meme-about-new-zealand-since-the-full-decriminalisation-of-the-sex-trade/>

No, of course we don't believe that. That is infantilising men. It is insulting their humanity. Like rape, prostitution is not only about sex. It is also about power and men using sex to gain personal power.

Myth: Prostitution is a victimless crime

A peer-reviewed study published in *The Journal of Trauma Practice 2003* interviewed 854 people in prostitution in nine countries. It found that prostitution “dehumanizes, commodifies and fetishizes women”. The vast majority of the people interviewed:

- Reported experiencing sexual, physical and verbal violence in prostitution.
- Reported a history of homelessness and childhood physical and sexual abuse.
- Met the clinical criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- Wanted to leave prostitution but couldn't see how.

The study concluded that prostitution is multi-traumatic regardless where it takes place. It includes the following account as an example:

“The account of a woman from the United States who prostituted primarily in strip clubs but also in massage, escort, and street prostitution is typical in that it encompasses the following types of violence: In strip club prostitution she was sexually harassed and assaulted. The job required her to tolerate verbal abuse (with a coerced smile), being grabbed and pinched on the legs, buttocks, breasts, and crotch. Sometimes this resulted in bruises and scratches on her thighs and arms and breasts. Her breasts were squeezed until she was in severe pain. She was humiliated by customers ejaculating on her face. She was physically brutalized, and her hair was pulled as a means of control and torture. She was severely bruised from beatings and frequently had black eyes. She was repeatedly beaten on the head with closed fists, sometimes causing concussions and unconsciousness. From these beatings, her jaw was dislocated and her eardrum was damaged. Many years later her jaw is still dislocated. She was cut with knives. She was burned with cigarettes by customers who smoked while raping her. She was gang raped. She was raped individually by at least 20 men at different times in her life. Rapes by johns and pimps resulted in internal bleeding.”

59% of those interviewed in Germany, where prostitution is legal, said that they did not think that legalisation had made them any safer from rape and physical assault.

For more about the brutal reality of prostitution, we recommend Joe Parker's essay, 'How Prostitution Works'.¹⁷ Here is his conclusion:

“People who have had luckier lives, as well as those who profit from the sex industry in some way, frequently refer to prostitution and pornography as “victim-less crimes”. They point to a tiny fraction of sex workers who

¹⁷ <http://www.prostitutionresearch.com/How%20prostitution%20works.pdf>

actually might be involved by choice. They selectively read history to find some tiny minority, somewhere, at some time, who gained something in the sex business.

The very selectiveness of their attention indicates that, on some level, they know that for almost everyone, involvement in the sex industry is a terrible misfortune.

As many an old cop will say, "Anyone who thinks prostitution is a victimless crime, hasn't seen it up close."

Myth: Punters are lonely single men

A poll on Punternet revealed that only 28% cannot find a sexual partner without paying. Of the other 72%, nearly half admit that they are in a sexual relationship and the rest could not be bothered to find one.

- 'Men go to prostitutes to cheat without getting caught.'
- 'I have a good sex life at home so I only punt for variety... sometimes I want something quick and sleazy in a parlour, getting a handjob or blowjob while the wife's shopping and you have a few minutes to spare before you meet up again and take her home.'
- '[My wife] does not get how important sex is for me, and puts her own desire not to have sex ahead of my need to... I think that if they... loved their husbands they would not torture them by denying them this fundamental need.'
- 'I am married to a lovely slim attractive wife who I adore, we have a very good and active sex life. I'm 47 and she is 31. But quite simply, I want more! My wife and I without the inhibitions of children enjoy sex nearly every night, often on Saturday and Sunday mornings... Neither of us could do any more to enhance our already active sex life... But once a month I treat myself to an hour with one of a variety of working girls, and have been for ten years, usually a different girl although a few I have visited on more than one occasion, and usually in the 19 to 23 age group. So there is an honest answer, happily married, to a very attractive wife 16 years younger than me, great sex most nights, BUT still wanting more young attractive company once a month. Call me greedy if you like, but my wife and I could not be happier, and before anyone asks if she knows, no she doesn't.'
- 'Because I'm old fat and ugly, and wouldn't want a permanent relationship with any woman who would want a permanent relationship with someone like me. The fact is, I prefer the occasional company of a relatively young and attractive, not to mention compliant, person of the female persuasion.'
- 'It is a "power trip" for the man, or a sense of him being in control and having the power to hurt/degrade/etc, if he wanted.'

Myth: Disabled men have the right to prostitutes

Jacqueline Gwynne¹⁸ worked as a receptionist in a high-end legal brothel in Victoria, Australia and sees this argument as discriminatory and offensive for a multitude of reasons:

- It is sexist because it only considers men's sexual needs and not women's.
- It is demeaning and ableist because it implies that disabled people are too grotesque to be sexually attractive and are not capable of sexual expression and forming partnerships with other disabled and able-bodied people.
- It is exploitative and classist because it requires a class of women to be prostituted. These women are generally socially disadvantaged and many are disabled themselves, often undiagnosed.

After Gwynne joined the sex trade survivor movement in April 2016, she became curious and started asking questions and researching disabled men using prostituted women. She put a call out via social media networks to gauge what demand there was from disabled men and also spoke to social workers in Australia. She got responses from 10 women who had worked in the sex industry, some for decades. They said only about 2-5% of their clients were physically or mentally disabled. Why is this tiny percentage used to justify the entire sex industry?

Carrie* worked as a prostitute for over a decade. She said:

"I saw very few disabled men but actually preferred them as clients because they did not physically threaten me like able bodied men. They were usually brought in by a female carer who, because of a duty of care, stayed to watch while I performed the service. The men were so profoundly physically and/or mentally disabled that I doubt they were capable of consenting to sex."

Barbara* from Queensland expressed disquiet that the men are not able to give consent but are forced to go to prostitutes:

"Disabled men's sexuality is considered sacrosanct and takes priority over the rights of a socially disadvantaged prostituted woman and the rights of female social workers. Disabled women, on the other hand are denied any sexuality at all and it is common practice for them to be sterilised. Disabled women are often given a hysterectomy and have their ovaries removed. This is equivalent to castration – cutting a man's testicles off. It's considered too cruel to perform on convicted paedophiles but families opt to do this to their own daughters."

Sex is not a human right and it is not a life or death matter. A disabled man will not die if he doesn't have an orgasm. Male sexual entitlement does not take precedence over women's

¹⁸ Jacqueline Gwynne's account of working as a receptionist in a high end legal brothel in Victoria, Australia, was published by Spinifex Press in *Prostitution Narratives*.

rights. Disabled men make up a tiny percentage of prostitution users and it is a myth that is used to justify the entire industry. Men's sexual needs are not more important than the dignity and safety of female social workers and carers, even if those men are disabled. Disability is never a reason to justify the sexual exploitation of a class of disadvantaged women. To suggest this, is misogynistic, ableist, elitist, classist and downright offensive.

* Names of women interviewed have been changed to protect privacy.

Myth: Punters respect the women they buy

Punternet.com is a British website where 'punters' (sex buyers) post reviews of 'escorts' (sex sellers); the site also hosts a discussion forum. The word 'escort' in this context refers to a woman who (according to Punternet) freely chose the job and works freelance, unforced, indoors (home, brothel, massage parlour, hotel). This is the type of prostitution that is often seen as benign.

The comments below were posted by punters. They expose as a lie the claims that punters respect the women they buy. If an escort fails to meet punters' ideal (young, thin, obedient and eager) she is insulted and called a 'whore' or a 'bitch' and referred to as 'it' or 'the thing'. Punters claim never to exploit those who appear to be unwilling, forced or drugged, and yet the quotes prove that this is untrue, and reveal that punters do not care a jot for the escort's comfort, welfare or health.

Disrespect relating to her age and size

The most desirable escorts are those of the youngest legal age, eighteen, and with the tiniest bodies. The further an escort deviates from that, the more she is despised. Even punters in their sixties considered an escort twenty years their junior 'too old' and deserving of insult.

- 'I travelled to see Sinead. Who wouldn't? Size 6, 18 years old!!!'
- 'Over [size 12] and I would feel like I was wrestling with a sumo.'
- 'Not fat ones...would feel cheated to pay for one.'
- 'The liars get away with it because the industry is unregulated. It is not like going into a shop where the consumer has rights.'
- 'I am an early 20s male and fancied trying an older lady...she was in her mid 50s but I was determined to have some older pussy... When I fuck, I fuck HARD! and within a minute she was asking me to take it easy on her old back. Began to pump away again as she told me I really knew how to fuck a girl (or in her case an old dog). Didn't want to embarrass the old whore by coming on her tits or face.'
- 'She looked nearer 60 than 50, but I made the most of her and called her a cock sucking bitch. I said get on your back and take some real cock you whore. I asked if I could call her names first as it would be the only way I could maintain a hard on with such a woman.'

Ignoring her obvious aversion

The site owners and users declare that they support, review, patronise and approve only those escorts who are working in prostitution of their own free will. However, when an escort's demeanour shows aversion, even repugnance, punters' only concern is that they are not getting what they paid for.

- 'Truly she hates her job and is taking it out on men. Why become a pro if you cannot perform your duties?'
- 'She was just distant, uninterested and quite cold, did not perform well and did not care at all about the paying client.'
- 'Little was on offer in terms of service, enthusiasm, responsiveness or conversation. If she had worked anywhere else she'd probably have been sacked.'
- 'I could have literally been shagging the pillow and got more response...I'm paying for this and expect a decent service ... I can only assume she hates what she does.'
- 'Her English is very limited and she makes it very clear through her body language that she would rather be doing something else.'
- 'She seemed nice enough but has been damaged by the industry and seems to be going through a robot-like routine without any attachment to her punter.'

Not caring that she was high on drugs

- 'Small, anorexic-looking drugged-up blonde... no tits at all, and a skinny, tall drugged-up brunette... both hideous and spaced out.' [He still used her.]
- 'As she exposed her arms the evidence of a BAD drugs habit was apparent with the marks on her arms impossible to disguise.' [He still used her.]
- 'This THING is a real health hazard. She was half asleep definitely on drugs saw a pipe on her table and smelt and looked dirty.' [He still used her.]

Disrespecting her wishes, boundaries and autonomy

- 'No oral and no anal. The previous review said that she never says "no", but I found that there were a lot of disturbing voices of "no" while I was trying to take the lead.'
- 'The website describes Alexis as 'a very friendly lady with an open personality who is game for practically all services'. Er, no! Everything she said was, No, I don't do that or I don't like that!'
- 'All she did was moan, moan, moan. Don't touch this, don't do that, don't put any weight on me.'
- 'When I asked for [oral without a condom], she took offence, saying I should show respect (I was paying for a service!).'
- 'When I asked about anal I was told not available on first meeting! Well I ain't starting a relationship with you, love. I just want to fuck you up the arse!'

The ‘girlfriend experience’ (GFE)

Some punters want a ‘girlfriend experience’ (GFE). The escort acts as though she is the punter’s girlfriend, which means doing anything without complaint and whilst pretending to enjoy it.

- ‘There were too many “don’t do this or that” for this to be an enjoyable GFE.’
- ‘Many prostitutes are just not capable of delivering a convincing GFE, hardly surprising when so many of them hate everything about the work.’
- ‘Common as fuck, gum-chewing Hungarian whore... Transpired that she had been fucked silly all afternoon and here was I... expecting some type of GFE. So I fucked her as hard as I could in doggy, got a few yelps out of her, but she was well used to it.’
- ‘I just wanted to spend some quality time with a nice lady. Instead I got a shameless whore.’

Disrespecting her wish not to be physically hurt

Despite the claims that punters are concerned with escorts’ welfare, women who show pain are treated as a nuisance and as failing to provide a service.

- ‘Young whore from Portugal... complained that I had a “thick dick” which was a problem for her! I thought well if you can’t take it go find a day job!’
- ‘Her pussy was swollen and sore... She told me that she was very tired, and that the agency make her work all the time.’
- ‘Boobs too sore to suck... tried to shag her but again legs used to prevent full penetration, tried to thrust harder, was told “not so hard”... If I pay for a shag I expect to get one.’
- ‘She started to bleed really badly and covered my towel, bedsheets, pillows etc with blood. Absolutely disgusting... she apologised and said she did not expect this to happen as her period is not due for ages. I gave her the toilet roll and she was using the roll to try and stem her bleeding. It was a sickening experience I would rather forget.’
- ‘This [Chinese] girl didn’t speak much English and seemed very distant and uninterested... blood on condom, blood on my pube region... I could not believe this... I will now have to take a trip to the GUM clinic... great! Overall very poor time had, money was wasted.’

Disgust she is doing it for the money

Although punters make it abundantly clear that they hire escorts only for sex, they are offended if they feel she is doing it only for money.

- ‘She appears to be in it purely for the money.’
- ‘Nice enough girl but she is not in the right line of work, she is just trying to make some money...’
- ‘Counted her money twice, that’s all that matters.’

- ‘With every thrust of your cock she is laying there thinking “£5, £10, £15, £20”... Once you reach what you’ve paid... she loses interest.’
- ‘She is too materialistic.’

Abusing trafficked and obviously forced women

Punternet urges punters to report to the police if they suspect a woman might be trafficked or coerced. A poll held on the forum in 2007 asked: Would you report it to the police if you thought the girl was trafficked? 84% said yes but 16% said no. It was clear from some reviews that punters had met trafficked, pimped or forced women, but had proceeded to use them, regardless.

- ‘Visited... a Japanese girl who was not quite right and during my visit showed me a piece of paper with “I have no choice” written several times on it. Question is, is she free or is she held, unable to get away by criminals who are using her?’ [He still used her.]
- ‘The first time I have felt bad about the whole punting experience. Very much the dark side of punting as it is sometimes described in the papers... Not recommended unless you want to ask some real hard questions about yourself afterwards.’
- ‘The entrance door to the flat was double locked, and the minder [i.e. pimp] kept the key. Definitely a fire hazard and a maid would be preferable.... I would only return for a different girl and preferably without the muscle. The door locks are dangerous (and illegal!)