

THE HUFFINGTON POST

CANADA 

Why I'm against legalizing prostitution

By Andrea Mrozek

Published December 21, 2013

On December 20, 2013, the Supreme Court of Canada struck down Canada's prostitution laws. There's a stay of 12 months before brothels could be up and running. That's the silver lining on an otherwise bad ruling.

It's not that the old laws were perfect. They weren't. The buying and selling of sex has always been legal and it shouldn't be because this amounts to the buying and selling of human bodies, a non-commercial item if there ever was one. It was communicating for the purposes of buying and selling sex and living off the avails of prostitution that was illegal.

Those provisions are gone now and we await to see how the federal government will combat this Supreme Court ruling.

They absolutely must.

Why?

In short, not for the reasons so many who agree with the legalization of prostitution think.

So often those of us who are against the legalization of prostitution are portrayed as prudish. Scared of sex. Moralistic.

We think more highly of ourselves than the rest of those other folks who are dirty and disgusting, be it johns or the women who prostitute themselves. So the storyline goes.

But the legalization of prostitution is not wrong because it is an "us versus them" battle. It is wrong because the legalization of prostitution will affect every household, every family and every person in similar ways. This is because human nature is the same. We face the same temptations in our hearts.

The only difference between me and a woman who prostitutes herself is that the seeds that would have launched me onto a path of prostitution were not watered. In short, "the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being," as the Russian writer Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn wrote.

The difference between women and a woman who prostitutes herself, between men and johns, lies in how various choices were watered--or not. (Yes, I understand some men are prostitutes, but we all know how it goes for the vast majority.)

The legalization of the buying of bodies, waters the very worst kind of seeds.

I happen to have been raised by loving and committed parents who protected me as best as they could from the bad choices of this world. Not so for those who are homeless, who are abused, who are addicted; they are all more vulnerable. And yet, they are not substantively different from me.

For men, the difference between "good men" and "johns" very often is a totally meaningless distinction.

And how often have I heard men argue for legalized prostitution on freedom grounds? The right to do "as one pleases"? They quickly add, "not that I would ever go to one."

It's not that I don't believe them--maybe they wouldn't. Yet I've seen the very best kind of man become ensnared in the buying and selling of sex. It's not terribly hard in this world today to fall prey to a very toxic combination.

Our poisonous drink includes the reality that there is little stigma around sex of any and all kinds--whether purchased or not. Our culture today believes that saving sex for the safer confines of marriage is laughable--as ridiculous as it is quaint. Add to this the pernicious and pervasive presence of pornography, lurking literally one click away in your living room.

Add a lack of commitment and community. And further add in individualistic notions on what makes us happy. Happiness--we define it in a hopelessly short-term way.

Even with the old laws, I'm sure the simple presence of porn pulled many good men into the arms of women prostituting themselves.

Take away any legal sanction at all, and we as a society are simply giving up. The law is yet a teacher, and it would teach every man, woman and child that the buying and selling of sex is sanctioned in Canada.

It is true, as Chesterton says, that "every man who knocks on the door of a brothel is looking for God." I might say "many men" instead of "every" but the point is the same. Yet Chesterton made this pithy point without overtly commenting on what those men might actually find.

Not enterprising entrepreneurs, that's for sure. Not whole and happy women. The women who prostitute themselves, as all but the most ideological know, are more likely to have been abused, sexually and physically. They are more likely to be addicted to drugs and alcohol.

If you think those who are against legalized prostitution are prudes, churchy-pants people who worry about their world being tarnished by the "other," think again.

We are people who know that there is no difference whatsoever between "us" and "them" and wish to make it harder for unsuspecting and seeking people to play with fire. For far too many, by the time they realize where precisely they are, it's too late to turn around in the middle of the blaze and come back.

1912 – 130 rue Albert Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1P 5G4

T 613.565.3832 f/t 613.565.3803 1.866.373.4632

www.imfcanada.org