

Dear Madam or Sir,

I have been a sex worker for 11 years and I oppose the criminalisation of my work. I am quite tired to try to explain that some people who pretend to have good intentions in fact never listen to what sex workers want, and what we want is not criminalisation. Is it really surprising? Do you really think that we want our clients arrested? How are we going to pay the rent if you stop us from working?

We are doing nothing wrong! If some people cant understand how we have sex with strangers for money because they wouldnt feel able to do the same then let them with their own lives doing what they want with their body. In this case, we are talking about our body, not theirs!

I dont see what is feminist in treating us like children who are supposedly in need to be protected by the police, as if the police was the last feminist organisation to protect women Have you ever tried to report rape or domestic violence to the police? How do you think the police is treating sex workers?

And now they are supposed to protect us against our clients? Are you kidding ? Nothing is done to arrest the men who steal, rape or attack sex workers, so why do you want to arrest those who respect our conditions? How do you think this is helping us?

I am not a child and I can say no to a client if I dont want to have sex with him. I dont need the state to intervene and stopping me from having sex with who i want! Even if you criminalise sex work, i will still do it anyway!

I will still need the money, and the law will only push us into more poverty. How can it be an improvement for sex workers? The only aim is to say that prostitution is bad. So nowadays, the parliament is making laws just because they dont like something. Is it really serious? You dont care about the consequences of criminalisation, do you?

You re talking about trafficking as if there was a lot of trafficking in Northern Ireland... Do you really think that criminalisation will help victims of trafficking? Do you think that wasting police resources in arresting the people who have nothing to do with trafficking is going to change something? Do you think that clients will report abuse when they will be at risk of arrest? Do you think I will report any abuse if I risk to be known by the police and take the risk that my clients are identified as a result?

What we want is labour rights! Sex work is work: this means we need the same rights as any other workers!

We are fed up with your bad laws. Leave us alone! We dont need your so called protection: we dont want to be rescued, we dont want your pity, we dont want your charity, we want rights!

Please read the reports from Agustin, Ostergren, Dodillet, Clausen, Levy, Jordan,
Please read the reports from UNAIDS, UNDP, WHO,
Please read the briefing papers from NSW
Please read the critics from Judge Himel about the false evidence from Farley&co
Then realise that all the scientific evidence is against criminalisation.

Yours,

Thierry Schaffauser