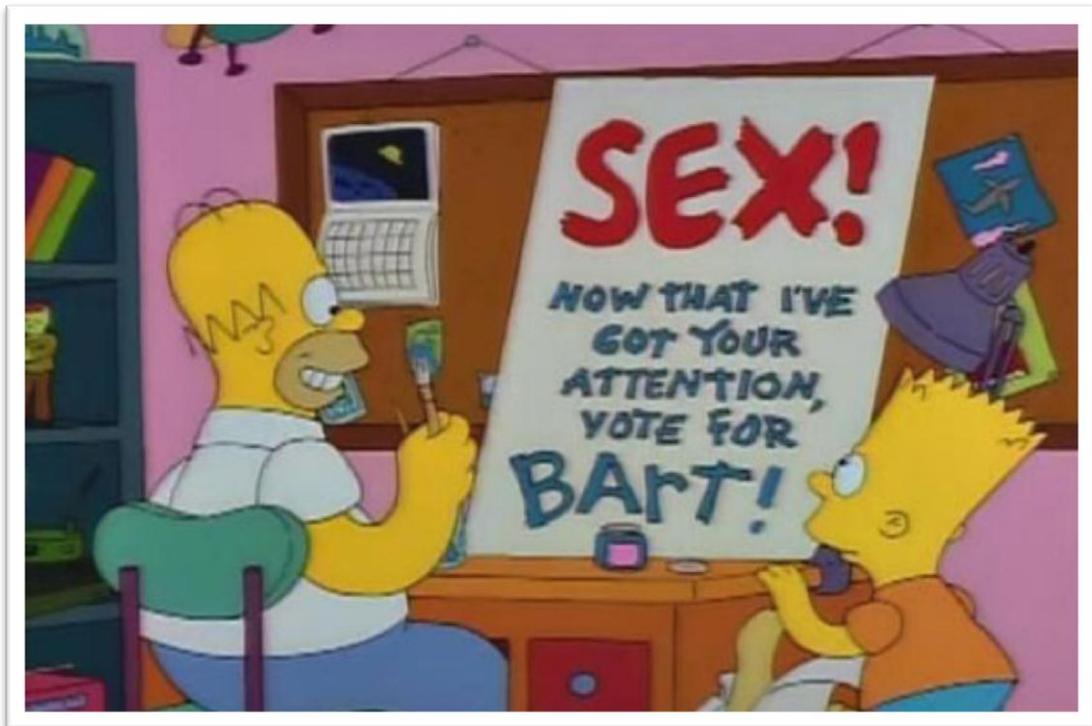


Understanding Prostitution



A political discourse analysis on prostitution in Sweden.

Abstract

Title:	Understanding Prostitution - <i>A political discourse analysis on prostitution in Sweden.</i>
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Discipline:	Media and Communication, Political Communication
Document:	Magisteruppsats, Master (One Year)
Research question:	What are the argumentative strengths and weaknesses of both anti- and pro-prostitution advocates today? What are the underlying political ideologies (values) which informs the debate?
Theory:	Critical theory, Hermeneutics
Method:	Political Discourse Analysis, Practical Reasoning
Conclusion:	<i>Safety</i> and <i>protection</i> are rarely, if ever, openly discussed as a primary concern of prostitution. Anti-prostitution advocates mainly deviate towards communitarianism values, while pro-prostitution advocates maintain autonomy as the primary reason for legalized prostitution. Furthermore, the <i>practical consequences</i> of anti-prostitution policies do not fully address the problems they themselves perceive, and seem more content on solving intellectual challenge of feminist theory instead of dealing with the immediate social reality. Example; it is arguable if reducing the male "demand on sex" will levitate poverty, which is cited as the primary reason for why socially, vulnerable women enter prostitution.
Keywords:	Prostitution, autonomy, communitarianism, feminism, queer theory, equality, politics, practical reasoning, values.

Index

1. Introduction	5
1.1 Liberal Sweden?	6
1.2 Previous research	9
1.2.1 A feminist case study: <i>Coffe, beer and women - same same but different</i>	11
1.3 Democracy and media	12
1.4 Defining prostitution and trafficking	14
1.4.1 Consensual Sex	15
1.5 Research question	15
1.6 Delineation	16
1.7 Disposition	16
2. Understanding prostitution: a matter of perspective	17
2.1 Autonomy vs. Community	17
2.2 Feminism vs. Queer Theory	18
2.3 Freedom vs. Equality (and gender neutrality)	20
2.4 Liberalism vs. Conservatism	22
2.5 Party Policies on Prostitution	23
2.5.1 The Centre Party	24
2.5.2 The Liberal Party of Sweden	25
2.5.3 The Left Party	25
2.5.4 The New Moderates	26
2.5.5 The Christian Democrats	27
2.5.6 The Swedish Green Party	28
2.5.7 The Swedish Social Democratic Party	29
2.5.8 The Sweden Democrats	29
2.5.9 The Classical Liberal Party	30
2.6 Conclusion	31
3. Theory	36
3.1 Political Discourse Analysis	36
3.2 Method and material	37
3.2.1 Selections	38
3.3 Model of analysis and argument reconstruction	38

4. Empirical material and analysis	43
4.1 Anti-Prostitution	43
4.1.1 <i>Prostitutes are Victims of Crime</i>	43
4.1.2 <i>Don't yield the Sex Purchase Act to anti-feminists</i>	45
4.1.3 <i>Malin Roux: Introduce the Swedish Sex Purchase Act in EU</i>	47
4.1.4 <i>Time to criminalize the Swedes sex purchases abroad</i>	50
4.1.5 Analysis and evaluation	52
4.2 Pro-Prostitution	55
4.2.1 <i>Why the trafficking policy is a failure</i>	55
4.2.2 <i>A myth that people are forced into prostitution</i>	57
4.2.5 Analysis and evaluation	59
4.3 Conclusions	62
Figure 1: political discursive map	34
Figure 2: argument schematic #1	39
Figure 3: argument schematic #2	41
Figure 4: anti-prostitution argument schematic	52
Figure 5: pro-prostitution argument schematic	60
References	66
Appendix	71

Why should it be illegal to sell something that is perfectly legal to give away!? [On prostitution]

- George Carlin¹

Chapter 1

1. Introduction

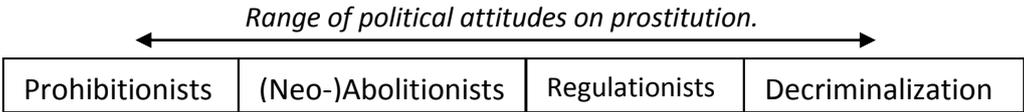
In 1920, the US government instituted a prohibition against alcohol, criminalizing the manufacture, sale and transportation of such beverages (though not the consumption). The result was a rampant escalation in organized crime, with criminal gangs gaining total monopoly control on the flow of alcohol within society (so called 'bootlegging', e.g. "trafficking"). It created a dangerous black market where criminals set the rules (if any), and forced otherwise civil individuals to interact with criminal figures for the acquisition of alcohol. Birthing a generation of gangsters of historical note - such as legendary crime figure Al Capone - the prohibition eventually developed into a social burden. It became clear, by the US State, that the prohibitionist stance created a far bigger social issue than legalized alcohol ever did. Stifling the social demand on alcohol could not be achieved through simple product embargo and the US instead, after 1933, adopted a regulated market. Obviously, few today buy alcohol from criminal sources - it is simply not lucrative enough for organized crime to engage in such activities - and without criminal influence, safety and civility has improved for everyone engaged in the consumption of alcohol, even if the practice is still disliked by teetotalers (alcohol-prohibitionists).

Can the American alcohol prohibition be said to be analogous to the discourse of prostitution in Sweden, as well as possibly other countries in the world where the practice is currently prohibited? Do the events of the alcohol-prohibition foreshadow a possible social development if prostitution is similarly outlawed? Does criminalizing prostitution create a dangerous black market, making it a target for organized crime, where illegal and subhuman conduct is all guaranteed to occur? Or are simply stringent anti-prostitution law and a zero-

¹ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1prYbbnDs7Q>

tolerance policy towards the profession necessary to combat human trafficking, slavery and gender inequality? The official stance of Sweden on the issue could be interpreted or described as neo-abolitionism; permitting the sales of sexual services but criminalizing the acquisition, or *the buyers*, of such services (effectively making selling sex a very redundant activity). Also included in the *neo-abolitionist* attitude (which is distinct from "normal" abolitionism) are strong feminist influences which further label prostitution a form of violence or discrimination against women, and the *Swedish Sex Purchase Act* today gets much credit for its ability to successfully categorize prostitutes as *victims* of crime, rather than culprits or instigators, but still hold the clients as criminally accountable (Matthews, 2008: 113).

Broadly speaking, one can identify four theoretical political attitudes, or legal paradigms, on the subject of prostitution today: (1) the *prohibitionists*, (2) *abolitionist* (3) the *regulationist*, and finally (4) the complete *decriminalization* of prostitution with no regulation of any kind (Matthews, 2008: 95, Westerstrand, 2008: 119-120). The *prohibitionists* argue for the complete criminalization of prostitution, both buying and selling, as well as including all related activities (such as trafficking). In the *abolitionist* stance, prostitution itself is legal but most (if not all) related activities are still criminalized, even procuring (buying). The already mentioned *neo-abolitionist* stance is practically abolitionism in terms of legality but with a feminist twist, and can be understood as a "subgroup" to the abolitionists. *Regulationists* argue for a legalization on prostitution, both selling and buying, but only certain controlled forms of prostitution (such as brothels or licensing), and they still criminalize forced prostitution and trafficking. Finally, as already mentioned, the *decriminalization* of prostitution entails a completely free market where no aspect, even related activities, are criminalized. This can also be viewed as a form of "anarchic" prostitution.



1.1 Liberal Sweden?

Is Sweden a liberal country? On the international world-wide arena of politics, *from a comparative perspective*, it could perhaps be argued or viewed as such. According to the

democracy index of 2010, Sweden scores an overall result of 9.50 (out of 10.0), inserting Sweden on 4th place (outperformed only by other Scandinavian countries), with a perfect 10.0 score on Civil Liberties.² However, quantifying liberty is perhaps a difficult ideological undertaking, and one should look very critically at these numbers and consider *what* they really measure, as well as *how*. But "personal freedom" is indeed a phrase frequently expressed within Swedish political discourse, as well are values such as *human rights* and *equality*, and there are many sensitive social and political subjects on which Sweden could be considered to have a "liberal attitude" towards; like gay marriage, abortion and female priests. However, there are also issues on which Sweden adopts a comparatively restrictive, or 'non-liberal', policy such as the sales of strong alcoholic beverages or gun policies.

But perhaps the most iconic "liberal image" of the Swedish culture is its general attitude and open-mindedness towards sex and sexuality - a national stereotype perhaps owed to the Swedish cinema. Nudity and sex in Swedish films was a frequent feature, and between the 50s - 60s became internationally known as a Swedish peculiarity - the "Swedish Sin" - painting Sweden very early on as a promiscuous and sexually liberated country (Marklund, 2009: 85). In 1963, Swedish director Ingmar Bergman produced "*The Silence*", which was made internationally famous for containing a few sex scenes (Braaten, 2008: 219). Sexuality was also a theme regularly employed by the Swedish director Vilgot Sjöman, whom with his production *I am Curious Yellow (Jag Är Nyfiken Gul)* made international headlines because of its sexually provocative material (Braaten, 2008: 223-224). Daring and challenging for its time, these movies (and many more) were considered borderline pornographic in several abroad countries.

Even outside the Swedish cinema, the 60s and 70s brought a "sexual revolution" to Swedish society, where the free exploration of sexuality was at the center, and many previous regulations and laws concerning pornography were either loosened or completely abolished (Erikson, 2011: 67). For many, sexual emancipation represented liberty and the ability to freely express themselves, resulting in an influx of sexually explicit material, such as pornographic movies and magazines, and the *aesthetic values of sex* became something *personal* and *private* (Svensson, 2012: 52). In addition to sex, subjects like abortion,

² http://graphics.eiu.com/PDF/Democracy_Index_2010_web.pdf (p. 3)

contraception, sex-education and prostitution were discussed. Student fraternities at Stockholm- and Lund University would organize "sex parties" or conferences in "sex and society". However, the enthusiasm of the sexual revolution would eventually fade, probably because of a variety of contributing reasons; the outbreak of AIDs in the 80s was a definitive reason, as well as was several opposing feminist groups throughout the 70s who claimed that pornography was an expression of the patriarchy (Svensson, 2012: 52-53). The sexual revolution, with values such as individualism and relativism, has been described as a response to social collectivism and a restraining morality - the new challenging the old. But what is the legacy of this revolution in Sweden today? It is a dualistic, cultural attitude; while most Swedes are expected to be somewhat critical of pornographic material, the esthetics of sex is a common theme in TV- and film production, as well as a commercial strategy employed by several local industries and businesses, like H&M (Svensson, 2012: 53). In short; Swedes surround themselves with images of sex, but are expected to regard them with a casual inattention.

What then about prostitution? Prostitution today seems to constitute a subject on which Sweden formally adopts a very restrictive policy, often augmented by a gender-framed rhetoric's about equality, female liberation and/or violence against women (Dodillet, 2009: 547-549). But noticeable, Sweden is a minority-country within the European Union for legislating against prostitution³ (2007). But what is the historical context of prostitution in Sweden? During the 1800s prostitution was legal, but by mid-century a system for regulating the prostitutes was introduced, and included procedures for handling venereal diseases, as well as other fairly strict regulations. Prostitution was held as a "necessary evil", and though street prostitution was legal, establishments such as brothels were not, which was very oppositional to the rest of Europe where brothels had a much more commonplace tradition (Erikson, 2011: 65). However, the problem was not prostitution itself, but *the unwanted consequences of unregulated prostitution*, as well as the spread of disease. But in the early 1900s, the system for regulating prostitutes was disposed of in favor of a new general law which also made trafficking illegal, though prostitution itself remained lawful. However, morally concerned citizens criticized the law for not being rigorous enough, contending that

³ http://www.svd.se/nyheter/utrikes/sverige-ensamt-om-att-forbjuda-prostitution_208495.svd

prostitution was itself a "sinful" lifestyle (Erikson 2011: 65-66). Up unto this point, regulations regarding prostitution were made for safety concerns, not by moral outcries.

But the sexual revolution of the 60s and 70s, which deregulated other aspects of the sex industry, also made prostitution reenter political discourse (Erikson, 2011: 13). The revolution challenged some previous perspectives on sex, and motions on decriminalizing prostitution were at first debated. State-owned brothels were discussed, but the idea did not win much support. The problem, again, was not prostitution itself but other activities connected to the profession. However, the proposal on decriminalizing prostitution was not well-received by several women's-groups, and was heavily criticized by feminists who contended that prostitution (as well as pornography) constituted the economical abuse and exploitation of women. Instead of reaching a decision, the debate continued and the idea that prostitution itself represented a *social problem* grew increasingly prevalent throughout the years (Erikson, 2011: 69). By the mid-90s, the criminalization of customers was perceived as the most attractive legal option (Erikson, 2011: 13), and was finally made into law in 1999.

1.2 Previous research

The main focus of the prostitution debate, and research, has been about understanding prostitution as a social construct - the various ideologies under which reproduction and gender can be understood (Westerstrand, 2008: 366-367). Each such understanding endorses one particular "solution" on prostitution, while excluding others as morally questionable. The debate has also mostly engaged women, and have subsequently been described as a "women's issue", and the main intellectual tools from which the debate has been analyzed is a gender-perspective (Erikson, 2011: 147).

The conflicts of prostitution and trafficking are an international affair and cannot be easily solved by local regulation (Strömqvist, 2004: 30), urging instead a supranational or intergovernmental (such as the EU or UN) consensus or plan of action. In relation to other EU member states, Sweden stands out as a minority state by currently criminalizing prostitution. This means that even if Sweden criminalizes prostitution locally, we will still suffer the social issues and burdens because it is still legalized elsewhere - in fact, Sweden might even become the ideal target for organized criminals because of it. The subsequent

question then becomes the following; *how does Sweden's policy on prostitution affect the associated harms of prostitution and trafficking in Sweden?*

As explained by academics like Susanne Dodillet, the discourse on prostitution is largely segregated by those viewing prostitution as a legitimate profession and those who deem it form of slavery violating human rights and/or gender equality. The former is currently the stance of the majority of EU member states, whom allow prostitution but regulate its practice. Those arguing for prostitution being an acceptable occupation denote it as a social contract based on consensuality and autonomy (Westerstrand, 2008: 112-113). While feminism, in Sweden at least, has traditionally been painted as being strongly opposed to prostitution, not all feminist conclusions necessarily entail such resolutions. Feminist ideas that support the *legalization* (or normalization) of prostitution can be identified as the (1) Sexual Liberal Position, (2) Sexworker Position, and (3) Sex-radical Position (Stigzelius, 2012: 14). A short explanation, highlighting the subtle differences within each position, is such; the *Sexual Liberal position* maintains that women have the autonomy and agency to dispose their body as they themselves consider appropriate. The *sexworker position* holds that prostitution is like any other line of work, and that the stigmatization of prostitution has made it seem worse than it really is. Finally, *the sex-radical position* says that prostitution breaks and/or challenges social gender conventions (Stigzelius, 2012: 11-12).

Having a tradition of socialist politics, Sweden's particular attitude towards prostitution, according to Dodillet, partly has its historical roots in its development into a social welfare state throughout the 1900s. Turning to prostitution as a method of finance became less necessarily for the low socio-economic segment of the population because of welfare options. Additionally, during this development period, 'individuality' was argued to be potentially egotistical in nature and antagonistic to ideas of solidarity and community, to which prostitution was also considered inconsistent (Dodillet, 2009:205). Furthermore, strong feminist influences in politics, as well as an overlapping discourse on gender equality, have also helped steer prostitution into its current social status as a profession of desperation and social vulnerability (Dodillet, 2009:201). Finally, within the traditions of Christianity, extramarital sex has conventionally been seen sinful and preferably avoided (depending perhaps somewhat on the particular denomination of Christianity). Although

Sweden today is largely secular, the Christian perspective was most likely a contributing factor in shaping the early discourse on prostitution as something inherently wrong.

1.2.1 A feminist case study: *Coffe, beer and women - same same but different*, by Anna Göransson, a Master thesis, Lund University.

Working from radical feminist theory, Göransson takes the stance of the neo-abolitionist, and explains why prostitution is incompatible with human rights, as well as being demeaning and violent against women. The sex industry is a lucrative market, grossing billions of USD worldwide, clearly demonstrating a demand or popularity for its services and products. Göransson takes these numbers as indicative for the amount of forced women and children currently entrapped in the industry. Her conclusionary remarks are that the EU, which is supportive of human rights, should include prostitution in its current paradigm and thus legislate against its practice. She argues against prostitution ever being a 'free choice', thus constituting a form of modern slavery, and includes in her definition of 'prostitution' not only sexual intercourse but also other form of sexual services for monetary exchange such as lap dances, pole dances, telephone sex or sex via web cameras, as well as mail-order brides.

Göransson's research on EU policy shows that prostitution is currently not covered by any legally binding document, or included as a violation against human rights, leaving every individual member state to regulate prostitution themselves. Her research demonstrates a distinction is being made, by the EU, between 'prostitution' and 'trafficking', where the latter is criminalized but the former is not.

Antagonistic to women equality is the "patriarch", where men's sexual control over the female body is a basic principle, or tool, of power. The patriarchy - *the idea that society is designed by men, to benefit men, at the expense of women* - must be combated, or else any form of equality cannot be achieved. The legalization of prostitution is seen here as the *cementation* of men's power over women. Prostitution promotes the image of women as a product to be bought and sold, existing only for the pleasure of men whom can do with her as they please. Furthermore, male buyers or clients often choose prostitutes based upon ethnic preferences, or "fetishes". This "ethno-objectification", Göransson explains, can be used to argue for the *objectification* of women.

Reasons provided for entering prostitution are *poverty and social desperation*, as well as a lack of higher education or learning. While this is not exclusive of women, the ratio between males and females turning to prostitution, as a method of finance, is disproportionately in favor of women. Many women also enter prostitution in their prepubescent years or early youth, traumatizing them in later adulthood. This, Göransson argues, provides good reason as to why prostitution should be criminalized.

1.3 Democracy and media

Essential for any democracy is the ability to participate in public discourse, but like Frank Esser also argues, *local* options are vital for initiating citizens into a larger *national* democratic evolution (Esser, 2004:151-152). This suggests that most municipalities, and even smaller communities, should provide or invest in accessible communication platforms for the public. Moreover, according to Ekström, political citizenship is really only *produced* during public discourse or debate (Ekström, 2006:199). While citizenship is guaranteed and protected by constitutional law, active involvement in public discourse is the true precursor of citizenship. In this regard, media have traditionally played a very important role for the advancement of democracy, having taken upon themselves the dual responsibility of communicating the opinions and statements of the politicians, as well as to critically examine their policies (Ekström, 2006:27, 71).

Press usually provides a channel of communication, or arena/platform for debate, between the politician and public - the public sphere. Politics and journalism have thus habitually enjoyed a very symbiotic relationship; a politician without media-coverage is virtually invisible and unknown to the broad public. Conversely, the media's involvement in public and political discourse is also what legitimizes their institutional authority, whom normatively should act on behalf of the citizens as an investigational entity and stimulate public debate, sometimes even by being provocative (Dahlgren & Ekström, 1999:143). Journalistic neutrality and objectivity is here of primary importance.

Most conventional newspapers have a section for various debate articles, or letters to the editor. However, there are some limitations to this platform. Only so many articles can fit into a single page, limiting the number of daily responses. Also, which articles get to be published is a decision made by the editorial staff (giving journalists great power over public

discourse), and it is possible some letters are never published (maybe because of lack of space or lack of relevant content, or maybe even because of an inappropriate topic). Finally, this form of debate-exchange is very slow. Rebuttals are given at most once a day and sometimes even less (rebuttals need to be authored, mailed to the editor, have its content read and decided upon by the editor(s) if to will be included in the next publication, or maybe even later publications). Although government policy isn't going to be instantaneously changed because of a few heated debates in a local newspaper, their function is democratically significant; it is opinion-building, about the free-flow of information, and to allow discourse - a platform for communication.

With the introduction of the internet since the mid-90s, the public sphere has drastically expanded beyond conventional media, and has made political participation much simpler for individual citizens. Blogs, social media, as well as other forms of forums are today fairly common, where public opinions are interchanged both easily and at a relatively fast pace. As an example; Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Carl Bildt, tweeted directly about the recent disastrous diplomatic relationship between Sweden and Belarus, where the Swedish embassy in Minsk had to close, and the embassy staff were sent home to Sweden⁴. Effectively bypassing any conventional press, Carl Bildt's twitter account had, for a brief moment, a following equal to any newspaper. While newspapers would actively write about the events for days later, most people had already gotten their news directly from Carl Bildt, not the press.

This *transparency* between government officials and the public is the hallmark of a e-government (Esser, 2004:173), or possibly an "e-society". Internet-based communication, or digital communication, is today becoming a dominant form of interaction within society. Similar technology also grant local press a potentially national scope and reach (newspapers can be read by anyone in Sweden, no matter distance), and allows readers to directly comment or make public remarks on many of their articles. In other words; digital communication is a highly effective method for producing channels/platforms of communication, both locally and nation-wide, and is a technology equally accessible to all citizens. Also, internet and digital communication becomes great sources for empirical

⁴ <http://www.dn.se/nyheter/sverige/vitryska-ambassaden-i-sverige-stanger>

material, and consequently also prostitution research. The ability to partake in the "common stories" of the public and analyze their experiences is very useful.

Consequently, internet becomes a great tool for promoting democracy - the free access to information and the ability to engage in public discourse via digital communication platforms - creating what Peter Dahlgren calls (loosely translated) "a citizenship culture" (Dahlgren & Ekström, 1999:136). This concept encourages the idea that citizens and journalism should work together, or at least have equal access to the symbolic arena created by the media, in which political discourse generally takes place. This idea is reconcilable with Ekström's conception of looking at citizenship and journalism as a joint endeavor.

With the above in mind, *how then is the discourse, or debate, on prostitution mediated in Sweden?* What are the arguments of both anti- and pro prostitution advocates in the tabloids?

1.4 Defining prostitution and trafficking

Simply put, prostitution is the monetary exchange for a sexual service. But this is not an entirely unproblematic definition, and there has been much debate and deliberation on the definition of "sexual service". Does it include or exclude forms of sexual gratification other than intercourse - like a lap dance? It is not always obvious or certain. Also, the "framing" of prostitution in political discourse is very important - it informs what the *problems* of prostitution supposedly are, and what the correct remedy or action is to combat those issues. This implies underlying values or concerns we ought to have on the subject (Erikson, 2011: 38). For example; is prostitution regarded as a *personal*, or a *societal* issue? Viewing prostitution as being either a *micro* (personal, individual) or *macro* (societal, institutional) issue will have bearing on its perceived problems and in formulating an acceptable solution (Erikson, 2011: 41), and in debates it becomes about establishing that 'framing' as the normalized understanding and even have it included in the legal framework (Erikson, 2011: 42). For the purpose of this thesis, prostitution is defined and understood as the consensual, monetary compensation for a sexual service, regardless of the nature of that service.

'Trafficking' is usually understood as the third-party involvement in any sexual transaction, such as an administrator procuring customers. However, this definition is also somewhat

limiting and doesn't consider consensuality in the context. I would therefore like to specify the definition to reference all *undesired or unwanted* third-party involvement. Under this definition, criminals and undesired pimps can still be said to engage in illegal trafficking, while legitimate brothels or cooperating prostitutes are not. As an additional benefit, this definition also excludes other more socially accepted forms of transactions where sex can be said to be included, such as dating sites, which under the original definition, in a strict sense, could be labeled as illegal trafficking. However, it should be noted that the Swedish Sex Purchase Acts currently does not make the above distinction, and the legal ramification makes it actually unlawful to "...operate a brothel, rent an apartment, room or hotel room, assist with finding clients, act as a security guard or allow advertising for sex workers" (Dodillet & Östergren, 2011: 4).

1.4.1 Consensual Sex

In feminist theory, or at least by some of its vocal advocates, consensuality has been mostly ignored or marginalized, even unto the point where they insist it does not exist within the context of prostitution (Matthew, 2008: 29). The thesis by Göransson above provides an example of this. Göransson does not discuss people's ability to form conscious decisions. While undoubtedly there are victims of illegal trafficking, where human freedom and democratic rights have indeed been violated, should there still be no effort to distinguish between those willingly operating as prostitutes and those truly entrapped in organized crime? Isn't the lack of such a division problematic, and can it potentially lead to faulty conclusions? The debate is ongoing. For the purpose of this thesis, consensuality is assumed to exist where there social contract of the situation can be said to be respected.

1.5 Research question

I endeavor to critically investigate the arguments currently presented by both anti- and pro-prostitution advocates, and analyze their argumentative strengths and weaknesses. I also venture to present the ideological backgrounds of the debate and suggest criticism (where it can rationally be made) to either conclusions or methods. Additionally, what are the *problems* of prostitution? What is the discursive background of prostitution in Sweden?

Produced by media and politicians, as well as certain academics (i.e. Göransson), is the image that prostitution is never voluntary, nor ever could be, and that anyone involved in its

unsavory business is either forced or mentally irrational, making the practice morally contemptible in nature. However, one should perhaps question if this image, or stereotype, is a product of the abolitionist rhetoric's and current legal praxis, and represents only the truly extreme cases of forced prostitution, i.e. trafficking.

Finally, I want to discuss the prospect of prostitution being considered a harmful profession incompatible with human rights or gender equality, and if not a legalization can equally well meet the social challenges.

1.6 Delineation

This thesis is a critical analysis on the discourse of prostitution in Sweden. My intent is not to make a juridical examination of current Swedish law, but to study the arguments and rationale of anti- and pro-prostitution advocates and investigate the ideological background of their reasoning. My thesis focuses primarily on the Swedish debate, and references foreign debaters only as points of comparison or when it relates to the Swedish political arena.

1.7 Disposition

Chapter 1 is an introduction and explanation on this subject's research question, as well as a layout on relevant previous research, definitions and some understanding on democracy and media.

Chapter 2 is further background and explanation possible on political and intellectual positions relevant to the debate on prostitution, and how these propositions related to the Swedish political climate.

Chapter 3 explains the theory and methodology employed for the purpose of this thesis.

Chapter 4 will be a presentation of the empirical material, as well as the conduction of the analysis, utilizing the methodology as explained in chapter 3. It will end with a conclusion based on the material and method.

Closing with Chapter 5, I will shortly and quickly ventilate my own personal opinion, and offer directives on further research.

Chapter 2

2. Understanding prostitution: a matter of perspective

Prostitution is not an easy or clear cut subject, but in fact borders on a fairly rich plethora of ideologies and concepts, not all of which blend harmoniously. Instead, prostitution can be rationalized in a variety of ways, and be considered under multiple intellectual and philosophical frameworks, all with very different ethical and moral standards. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a political and theoretical background on those frameworks, as well as to formally establish the position and rationale of the Swedish political parties.

2.1 Autonomy vs. Community

Autonomy, also expressed as the *Principle of Autonomy*, concerns itself with the idea of "self-ownership". This is a very liberal ideology which essentially promotes civil liberties to all citizens and people, and that individuals should be free (autonomous) to pursue their moral goals and happiness, if at all possible also without the interjection of governments or states, *even if such pursuits are considered irrational or strange by others* (Dodillet, 2009:191-194). Chief concepts included in this philosophical framework are ideas such as freedom of press, freedom of expression, artistic and scientific freedom, and the importance of objective education. Censorship, restrictions and state-control is principally not accepted or liked.

The principle of autonomy however is partly contested by the '*community principle*' (loosely translated from "kommunitära principen"), also called "communitarianism", which holds that the government or state should be a representation of the collective will or culture of the people, and promote whatever moral justice society at large deems desirable (Kymlicka, 1990: 209). Society here receives a distinct *normative function*, against which people then either match or contrast. Neutrality, objectivity and autonomy, while not necessarily excluded, are only of secondary concern and importance. Instead, a chief concept within this philosophy is communal identity; that the state and its citizens should engage in an "organic relationship", and uniformly share common moral values and goals (Dodillet, 2009:191-194). Communitarianism de-emphasizes individuality, and challenges the inherent value and importance of self-ownership (Kymlicka, 1990: 201). People who are divisive from the

socially accepted norms should be coerced which, obviously, conflicts with the principles of autonomy. Communitarianism can be said to be an opposing response to certain liberal ideas (Westerstrand, 2008: 110).

The general political ideology of Sweden can be said to be a combination of the above two principles, although Sweden has generally favored the principle of autonomy in its particular flavor of politics and democracy (Dodillet, 2009:201). But the balance between them has probably shifted towards one end of the spectrum more than once throughout history and needless to say, they don't always complement each other. In Sweden, the discourse of prostitution shows a tendency of deviating towards communitarianism, and its inherent values. Feminism, for example, in many regards considers itself representational for *all* women, promoting a shared, communitarian outlook on gender and womanhood, while being allowed to prostitute one's self could indeed be a case for autonomous freedom.

Autonomy has played a vital role in the *defense* of legalized prostitution, as a way of allowing women to dispose of their bodies at their own behest (Westerstrand, 2008: 146). However, with autonomy also emerge some problems of safety. Responsibility and accountability are thus embedded ideals in the principle of autonomy.

2.2 Feminism vs. Queer Theory

The early and mid-1900s were a time for social innovations and change, producing a variety of communities aiming to change social discourse (particularly in America) - the women's movement (promoting equality for women), the black movement (promoting equality for Africans, or blacks) and the queer movement (promoting equality for gays and lesbians). The majority of these movements relied on basic and very similar philosophical principles of freedom and emancipation - the political goal of personal liberty and equality, as well as many other ideological commonalities (Weed & Schor, 1997: vii). But some theoretical disputes can still be discerned, particularly between Feminist Theory and Queer Theory, and how they finally relate or inform the discourse on prostitution.

Feminist solutions on the "problems" of prostitution have ranged anywhere from legalization to the criminalization (Erikson, 2011: 12). But it is maybe no secret that radical feminists are conventionally strongly oppose to prostitution and have firm, very strong

understandings of the profession as debasing since it expresses the uneven balances between genders in society. They insist prostitution is a form of *male* violence against *women* (Matthews, 2008: 26, Westerstrand, 2008: 135), and represents the female subordination to men and their sexual desires. This conclusion, or perhaps *deduction*, is derived from a larger discourse on the *victimization of women* (Weed & Schor, 1997: 9).

An important, if not central, precept within feminism is the theory of *sexual hierarchy, or gender hierarchy*, which greatly informs the position of legalized- or criminalized prostitution (Westerstrand, 2008: 57). Gender hierarchy (*könsmaktsteorin/könsmaktsordningen*) entails that women have traditionally been subservient to men in society (Westerstrand, 2008: 47), and consequently women are easily abused or exploited by their male counterparts. This male-female relationship is supposedly mirrored in all of society. However, as Dodillet points out, the gender-hierarchy cannot be implicated in the preparatory work on the Swedish prostitution law (Dodillet, 2009: 413), which forms the justification for the law's existence.

But viewing prostitution as a 'women's issue', which systematically promotes male-instigated violence against women, becomes highly problematic from the perspective of queer theorists, who consider separating 'sex' and 'gender' in such a manner to be a categorical error and unreasonably makes 'gender' the "property of feminist inquiry" (Weed & Schor, 1997: viii). Feminism normatively presumes heterosexist circumstances - also called "heteronormativity" - which creates a "binary" analysis on many gender-social issues, and enforces a very narrow view on both men and women's relationships and sexuality (Weed & Schor, 1997: 2, 5). In the light of queer theory, could prostitution still be considered a "women's issue"? Are homosexual men and women, who acquire the services of same-sex prostitutes, also "violating" the gender-hierarchy of feminist theory and consequently endorses a profession that supposedly promotes the sexual submission of women to men? Or are gays and lesbian simply exempt from such "gender-crimes"? *If yes*: isn't that a needless artificial restriction imposed upon heterosexuality? *If no*: then how and why? Does feminist theory even account for this scenario? Perhaps, instead, it would be more rational, and easy, to presume that prostitution is a social issue pertaining *sex* rather than *gender*.

This also brings us back to the principles of autonomy vs. communitarianism, the latter of which feminism can be said to be an expression of (Westerstrand, 2008: 111-112).

Prostitution is here, by feminism, viewed as a threat towards *all* women (Dodillet, 2009:338), and similarly the solution should therefore be representative of all women. But this re-colors the discourse to be less about personal, autonomous freedom and more about fighting gender discrimination and protecting community values. However, the debate should be allocated for a larger ideological scope. The tendency of allowing gender-equality absorb and envelope larger and larger portions of political discourse risk obstruct the real issues at hand, and hinder social interventions or actions meant to combat those issues.

Limiting the sexual agency of individuals can here be seen as a departure from the principle of autonomy, and conversely an encouragement of the community principle instead. Feminism (or at least radical feminism), which normatively maintains and promotes the *equality and freedom of women*, seems on this particular issue exhibit an inherent conflict between its *intellectual framework* and *political goal*. To avoid this cognitive dissonance, feminism promotes a *communitarian form of equality and freedom*. Others however have concluded it would perhaps be more rational if the political goal of feminism was the promotion of *autonomy rather than equality* (Kymlicka, 1990: 245). But certainly, not every feminist agrees over prostitution on whether it represents submission and violence, or freedom and strength (Westerstrand, 2008: 139).

2.3 Freedom vs. Equality (and gender neutrality)

Political affiliation is traditionally illustrated as a scale; an axis going from the far left to the far right. Located to the furthest left are usually socialist policies, or communism, and on the opposite end of the spectrum is capitalism (Kymlicka, 1990: 10). Liberalism could be said to be a compromise of these two extremes, being located somewhere in the middle. However, this simplified image - the left-right axis - might, at times, be insufficient to explain once true political ideology, and functions perhaps best only as a broad generalization. Certain intellectual ideas, such as Feminism or Queer Theory, should perhaps be regarded as a "supplement" or "complement" to the political agenda, having substantial repercussions for any political philosophy on which they are applied, yet would themselves be inadequate to qualify for a political ideology. But this does make the traditional scale highly problematic, or at least unsatisfactory in its power to properly "position" once political standing.

A huge problem also arises when concepts such as freedom and equality are *dichotomously* pitched against each other, and ranked differently in terms of importance depending on your political position - like if equality was the political goal of the left (socialism), while freedom was the goal of the right (capitalism). This gives the impression that promoting capitalism (the right) would consequently be detrimental or adverse to the concepts of equality, as we further distance ourselves from socialist (the left) policies (Kymlicka, 1990: 10-11). But this is perhaps an unfair portrayal of political philosophy, since values such as equality and freedom should not exclude one other.

In regard to the political landscape, prostitution becomes an interesting subject of debate, but can be rationalized on very different principles. Is prostitution a question about freedom or equality? Does the traditional left-right axis adequately inform one's position on prostitution, making a legalization or criminalization a fairly obvious and non-problematic stand or outcome? Has the discourse on prostitution, and all its aspects, truly been given fair consideration and reflection?

As far as most Swedish political parties are concerned (as discussed later), prostitution seems antagonistic to the values of equality because it is held as a harmful practice. However, there are many implicational differences between a society of *gender equality*, and a society of *gender neutrality* - a distinction rarely discussed or considered. To exemplify; men and women having access to *the same* public bathroom and locker-rooms would be analogues to gender neutrality, while equality merely stipulates they have access to bathrooms of similar equipment and standards. While *political neutrality* (same salaries, benefits, employment options, healthcare, etc) has been a worthy societal goal (gender should not exclude you from any pivotal public functions), the cultural difference between genders are still fairly prevalent. Men, for example, are still conventionally considered the main provider within many families, while women receive a supportive role in terms of household economics (Kymlicka, 1990: 242-243). A discourse on masculinity vs. femininity could here also be very enlightening.

But this cultural identity is still deeply rooted in society, and one can discuss several professions with a disproportionate male to female ratio - pilots vs. flight attendants, doctors vs. nurses, top chefs vs. cooks, priests and even politicians (Sweden is yet to have, at

time of writing, its first female Prime Minister). Prostitution, it seems, falls into the category as a "female profession". But instead, unlike other professions in Sweden, where many companies/organizations/institutes are required to adopt gender quota policies, prostitution is simply regarded as inherently incompatible with societal norms. Despite the political efforts to rid professions of their gender-marked conventions, the same efforts have not been mounted towards prostitution. In fact, anti-prostitution advocates seem to *rely* on prostitution being stereotyped as "female labor" because without it being considered as such, the gender-hierarchy of feminist theory becomes more difficult to apply or infer. Removing gender from prostitution would have staggering implications for anti-prostitution rhetoric's because this would seriously challenge the conception that prostitution is a form of *male* violence against *women*. However, at the same time, it could be considered inconsistent not to apply the same ideological standards on prostitution, and redefine prostitution a gender-neutral profession.

But isn't equality also an intrinsic property of personal freedom, or *autonomy*? Perhaps 'equality' alone is an insufficient concept in the gender-debate, and perhaps freedom for women relies on *personal liberty* rather than gender neutral policies (Kymlicka, 1990: 245).

2.4 Liberalism vs. Conservatism

For any modern democracy, there are a few highly safeguarded constitutional civil liberties - the right to vote, being able to hold political office, equality before the law, freedom of expression and freedom of movement. Likewise, these basic civil rights are all also central for liberalism (Kymlicka, 1990: 61). Also considered "liberal", in a more informal sense of the word, is a general open-mindedness towards issues regarding individual freedom - like, for example, the freedom to partake or consume drugs and alcohol. In an "ultra-liberal" society, even dangerous drugs can be legal. This also, obviously, extends to prostitution. Being allowed to prostitute oneself can easily be said to constitute a case of individual freedom, as well is to be permitted to purchase those services where they can be legally found. In this sense, liberalism is closer to the principles of autonomy than communitarianism. The liberal agenda however can be criticized for its sometimes naive optimistic predisposition, thinking that cultural oppressions can be defeated by merely instituting more freedom or (Kymlicka, 1990: 257-258).

Somewhat opposing, though not necessarily contradicting is conservatism. The philosophy of conservatism is chiefly about the preservation of tradition or cultural customs. In this sense, conservatism becomes very comparable with communitarianism since they both promote the conservation of collective and common community values as a primary objective of political discourse. However, conservatism and liberalism can become conflicting political philosophies on many social and moral issues. This conflict is perhaps more easily illustrated in the case of religious conservatism, and the transaction into secularism. As an example, allowing female priests has been a very heated subject, with many churches resisting this "liberal", gender-neutral policy, urging instead for the preservation of religious and/or church traditions. Similarly, the legalization of gay marriage is a fairly recent social change, with the church originally (and many still do) opposing the proposition because of how homosexuality is usually viewed or treated within religious doctrine. However, the principles of equality, as well as personal freedom, demands that homosexuals have access to the same social services as any other individual, and that they should not be discriminated against due to sexual orientation (which can also be conflicting with the intellectual ideas of communitarianism - if equality and/or gender neutrality was a desirable community value).

From a religious conservative perspective, prostitution can also become a highly problematic subject due to some conventions on sex and sexuality. *Lust* is a deadly sin, and non-marital sex considered an expression of lust. How relevant this perception is in today's Swedish society can be debated and argued, although it most certainly has had historical influence.

2.5 Party Policies on Prostitution

The legalization of prostitution in Sweden currently holds no official political support (at best, very little, perhaps from individual party members). None of Sweden's major political parties, *present within parliament*, supports the decriminalization of prostitution. Instead, fairly unanimously, they all consider prostitution contradictory to the goals of gender equality, promoting violence and crime against women or somehow are detrimental to a healthy society.

2.5.1 The Centre Party (Centerpartiet)⁵

The *Centre Party* (Centerpartiet), on their website, describes prostitutes as an abused and weak social group within society, and that the legalization of prostitution elsewhere in Europe is a "betrayal":

"Centerpartiet värnar om den svenska sexköpslagen som gör det straffbart att köpa sexuella tjänster.

Det är en lag som syftar till att förhindra utnyttjandet av människor som ser prostitution som enda möjliga väg till försörjning. Det är också en normerande lag som stärker uppfattningen om att man inte ska kunna köpa en annan människas kropp.

I flera europeiska länder har prostitutionen legaliserats. Det ser vi som ett svek mot några av de svagaste i samhället."

The Centre Party cares for the Swedish Sex Purchase Act, which makes it punishable to buy sexual services.

It is a law with the purpose of preventing the exploitation of people who sees prostitution as the only means of finance. It is also a normalizing law, which strengthens the perception that you cannot buy another person's body.

Prostitution has been legalized in several European countries. This we see as a betrayal towards societies weakest.

Who has betrayed *who*? And *who* are the weak, and *why* are they weak? It becomes fairly apparent that the center party considers prostitution a *societal issue*, as opposed being a personal choice. But the *problem* they identify is that poor people are being *financially exploited* for sexual services, not that people are poor and in need of financial alternatives. They are also worried that the community might adopt a *normalized view* - that people can be bought and sold for money, unless there is a law which prohibits them from doing so.

⁵ <http://www.centerpartiet.se/Centerpolitik/Politikomraden/Sociala-fragor-var-d-och-omsorg/Politik-A---O/Prostitution/>

2.5.2 The Liberal Party of Sweden (Folkpartiet)⁶

Another party, the *Liberal Party of Sweden* (Folkpartiet) states on their website that prostitution can never be accepted, and that prostitutes themselves need help:

"Prostitution kan aldrig accepteras i vårt samhälle. Människor som prostituerar sig måste få hjälp till vård. Den som köper sex av en annan människa ska straffas.

Prostitutionen finns därför att den efterfrågas. Det är därför viktigt att nå också sexköparna med insatser. Metoder för att utveckla arbetet riktat mot sexköparna behöver tas fram.

Det måste finnas fler sätt att ta sig lagligt till Sverige för att till exempel söka jobb. Då minskar också risken att fattiga och desperata kvinnor som vill lämna sina hemländer utnyttjas av människohandlare för prostitution."

Prostitution can never be accepted in our society. People who prostitute themselves must get help with health care. Those who buy sex from another person shall be punished.

Prostitution exists because it is in demand. It is therefore important that we reach sex buyers with interventions. Methods for developing proceedings directed towards sex buyers are needed.

There needs to be more legal options on how to get to Sweden, and search for work. This will decrease the risk for poor and desperate women, who wants to leave their home country, is exploited by trafficking for the purpose of prostitution.

Prostitution is here seen as a desperate, involuntary act, and that all prostitutes are in need of medical help. Prostitution *itself* is the problem. Furthermore, the *culpability* is put on the clients and buyers of sexual services, and that "the demand" is the driving factor of prostitution. As a *means* to help migrating women avoid prostitution, more legal options for immigration needs to be considered.

2.5.3 The Left Party (Vänsterpartiet)⁷

Somewhat matching the ideology of the previous party, the *Left Party* (Vänsterpartiet) considers prostitution a form of violence against women and that the moral guilt is on men:

⁶ <http://www.folkpartiet.se/Var-politik/Snabba-fakta/Prostitution/>

⁷ <http://www.vansterpartiet.se/politik/prostitution/>

"Vänsterpartiet anser att sexköp är en del av det sexualiserade våldet mot kvinnor. Budskapet är att kvinnor är en handelsvara som män har rätt att köpa, förbruka och göra sig av med.

Det är män som upprätthåller och stimulerar efterfrågan på sexuella tjänster. Arbetet för att minska prostitutionen måste därför även vara inriktat på att minska mäns efterfrågan på sexuella tjänster."

The Left Party considers buying sex a part of the sexualized violence against women. The message is that women are a merchandize which men has the right to buy, use and discard.

It is men who uphold and stimulate the demand on sexual services. The efforts to reduce prostitution must therefore also focus on diminishing men's demand for sexual services.

The Left Party assumes *only women* are prostitutes and that buying sex constitutes a 'sexualized' violence against them, symbolizing perhaps a unfair gender hierarchy, and that it portrays women as mere goods. Prostitution, and the social implications of prostitution, is here seen as an insult towards *all* women - a *collective issue* - and not something private or personal. The *problem* however of prostitution, as they understand it, is *men's demand on sex* and that the market is maintained because of their needs. Nothing is mentioned about poverty as a cause for entering prostitution, only that the profession is demeaning towards women and the *sexuality of men* needs to be managed. Much like the previous party; prostitution *itself* is part of the problem.

2.5.4 The New Moderates (Moderaterna)⁸

The *New Moderates* (Moderaterna) argues that a ban on prostitution is a must if women are to have complete, unhindered right to their own body:

"För att kvinnor ska ha oinskränkt rätt till sin egen kropp vill vi använda EU-samarbetet för att bekämpa våld mot kvinnor, människohandel och prostitution. Sverige ska gå före och vara en tydlig röst för jämställdhet i världen och fortsätta kampen för kvinnors sexuella och reproduktiva hälsa och rättigheter."

⁸ <http://www.moderat.se/jamstallldhet/eu>

In order for women to have unrestricted right to their own body we want to use the UN-cooperation to prevent violence against women, trafficking and prostitution. Sweden must go a step ahead and be a clear voice for equality around the world and continue fight for women's sexual and reproductive health and right.

Prostitution is here put in the same category as trafficking and violence against women, and prostitution *itself* considered antagonistic for achieving equality. Prostitution is not a matter of personal rights, but a societal issue about human slavery. However, some contradictory confusion arises here because of some dualistic framing; while prostitution is a *societal issue (macro)* that is hurtful for equality, they also declare women must have *complete* bodily autonomy (micro) *except* the freedom to prostitute themselves.

2.5.5 The Christian Democrats (Kristdemokraterna)⁹

Supportive of the current prostitution laws, and want to export it abroad even, the Christian Democrats phrase themselves the following way:

"Kristdemokraterna är mycket positiva till sexköpslagen, som innebär att det är kriminellt att köpa sex, och vill sprida den inom exempelvis EU. 2011 höjdes maxstraffet för brottet i Sverige. De som säljer sex måste få hjälp att ta sig ur prostitutionen och i de fall de ligger människohandel bakom måste förövarna ställas till svars för sitt brott."

The Christian Democrats are very positive to the Sex Purchase Act, which entails it is a criminal offence to buy sex, and want to spread it within for example the EU. In 2011, the maximum punishment for this crime was raised. People who sell sex must get help to leave prostitution, and in those cases trafficking is involved, the perpetrators must answer for their crimes.

All prostitutes are in need of help, even when trafficking is *not involved*. While clearly they view prostitution and trafficking as two separate activates - prostitution is not necessarily indicative of trafficking - prostitution itself is seen as a *societal problem*. Prostitutes are victims, and the offenders are the sex buyers.

⁹ <http://www.kristdemokraterna.se/VarPolitik/Korta-Svar-AO/#P>

2.5.6 The Swedish Green Party (Miljöpartiet)¹⁰

Assembled under the category as "feminist politics", the Swedish Green Party's attitude towards prostitution is described under this heading the following way:

"Feminism är för oss en medvetenhet om patriarkala maktstrukturer och begränsande könsroller. Det är också en vilja att förändra den könsmaktsordning som i dag hindrar ekonomisk, social och politisk jämställdhet. [...]

Därför motsätter vi oss den ökande sexualiseringen av det offentliga rummet. Sexistisk reklam och annan objektifiering av kvinnor och män ska vara förbjuden. Vi vill ta krafttag mot kvinno- och mansförnedrande pornografi. Prostitution ska motverkas genom insatser till hjälp för de prostituerade och internationellt samarbete för att förhindra handel med kvinnor och barn. Vi är positiva till sexköpsförbudet."

Feminism is to us awareness about patriarchal power structures and the limitation of gender roles. It is also about a will to change the gender hierarchy which today obstructs economic, social and political equality.[...]

Therefore we oppose the increased sexualization of the public sphere. Sexist commercials and other objectification of women and men shall be prohibited. We want to take a forceful grip against pornography which demeans women and men. Prostitution shall be counteracted by initiatives that provide help for the prostitutes, and international cooperation to prevent the trafficking of women and children. We are very positive on the prohibition on the purchase of sex.

Prostitution is here understood as an expression of the patriarchal power structure, and thus is counter to social, political and economic equality. Furthermore, prostitution is linked with pornography and the Green Party adopts an overall all 'restrictive' policy on sex and pornography, wanting to prohibit demeaning sexual images. The *problem* of prostitution is how it symbolically subjugates women to men sexually, and needs to be illegal because of this gender-hierarchical "violation". Prostitution is a *social issue*, and needs to be combated with social initiatives and international collaboration.

¹⁰ <http://www.mp.se/om/partiprogram/kapitel-5>

2.5.7 The Swedish Social Democratic Party (Socialdemokraterna)¹¹

Part of the *Swedish Social Democratic Party's* platform is the "S-Women" group (S-kvinnor), or *Social Democratic Women*, who is an internal subgroup that labors almost exclusively with gender-related questions. They describe themselves as a feminist group, and consider prostitution a consequence or result of an unfair society.

"Grundläggande är varje människas rätt till sin egen kropp. Mäns våld mot kvinnor och barn, våldtäkt, prostitution och sexslavhandel är den yttersta konsekvensen av det ojämställda samhället. [...]"

Den svenska sexköpslagen har påtagligt minskat gatuprostitutionen och även påverkat allmänhetens inställning till prostitution. Lagen måste nu utvidgas till att gälla även sexköp i utlandet."

Fundamental is that every person has the right to their own body. Men's violence against women and children, rape, prostitution and slavery is the outmost consequence of an unequal society.

The Swedish sex-law has substantially decreased street-prostitution and also influenced the general attitude towards prostitution. But the law must now also be expanded to include the purchase of sex in foreign countries as well.

Prostitution is here a *social issue*, and constitutes a form of violence against women, together with rape or trafficking. The *problem* of prostitution is how it promotes inequality between genders. Also, prostitution violates the principles that every person has unrestricted access and dominion over his/her own body. However, a inherent conflict arise here because of (just like previously) the dualistic framing; everyone must have autonomy over their own body, but prostitution remains outside that personal, bodily freedom.

2.5.8 The Sweden Democrats (Sverigedemokraterna)¹²

Less explicit on their view on prostitution, the Sweden Democrats says nothing specifically on the subject of selling sexual services. Their policy on equality however states the following:

¹¹ <http://www.socialdemokraterna.se/Webben-for-alla/S-kvinnor/S-kvinnor-Goteborg1/Var-politik/>

¹² <https://sverigedemokraterna.se/vara-asikter/var-politik-a-till-o/#J>

Vår uppfattning är att det är helt upp till individen att välja sin egen väg i livet. Vi förespråkar en formell jämställdhet där varken kvinnor eller män skall särbehandlas på basis av sin könstillhörighet. Om detta sedan skulle visa sig leda till att män och kvinnor inte gör allting på samma sätt, i exakt samma utsträckning, så betraktar vi inte det som problematiskt.

It is our view that it is the individual rights of every person to choose his/her path in life. We promote a formal equality where neither women nor men shall be treated differently based upon gender. If this then would mean that men and women not always does things similarly, in the exact same regard, then we don't consider this problematic.

The general silence or avoidance of prostitution can imply some uncertainty on the subject. While their equality-policy is framed in such a way that highlights *personal freedom*, it is not sure if they consider prostitution a *personal* or *social issue*.

2.5.9 The Classical Liberal Party (Klassiska Liberala Partiet)¹³

As a point of contrast, the *Classical Liberal Party* is a minor Swedish political party, but who currently holds no seats in parliament. Greatly marginalized and overshadowed by Sweden's 8 other much larger political parties, the Classical Liberal Party is still a registered party whom Swedes may vote on during elections. Interestingly, their take on prostitution is almost oppositional to those of the other parties:

Sexarbetare har samma rätt till frihet och respekt som alla andra. Därför är det fel och i grunden missriktat att försöka hjälpa dem genom att förbjuda det de försörjer sig på. Liberala partiet kräver att sexköpsbrottet och koppleribrottet avskaffas. Däremot att med tvångsmedel utnyttja människor till att utföra sexuella tjänster ska givetvis vara förbjudet.

Sexworkers has the same right to freedom and respect as everybody else. It is therefore wrong and basically misguided to try and help them by prohibiting that by which they financially support themselves. The liberal party demands that the sex-law is abolished. On the other hand, the forced use of others for sexual services should obviously be illegal.

¹³ <http://www.liberalapartiet.se/content/liberala-partiet-a-till-o>

The Liberal Party is the only party to address prostitutes as "sex workers", as well as comment on how criminalizing the livelihood of prostitutes, their source of financial income, is contradictory to "helping". For the Classical Liberal Party, prostitution is a *personal issue*, not a social one.

2.6 Conclusion.

Feminist thought and rhetoric's seems fairly detectable amongst Swedish parties (even when it not concern prostitution specifically). 'Equality' is big, serious political issues, and is most often informed by a gender-driven discourse based on the imbalance of power between genders. However, other theoretical perspectives, such as Queer Theory, seems almost nonexistent (although, the Green Party do possess a specific "Queer-Policy", but the basic of which is about the non-discrimination of homosexuals rather as an alternative perspective on gender questions). While to a degree understandable - they are simply not common enough - it does entail certain "narrowness" in the reasoning outcome. Perhaps alternative theories *should* be more regularly consulted, allowing better understanding to arise out of an *argumentative* process? RFSU, short for "Swedish Association for Sexuality Education", a politically unbound, knowledge center for education on sex, sexuality, contraception and sexual policy, have criticized Swedish politics on prostitution for presuming heteronormativity - that prostitution is perceived as only being about *female* prostitutes selling sex to *heterosexual males*. Furthermore, they do not agree that a criminalization, but rather social initiatives, is the answer to the social ills of prostitution.¹⁴ Another organization, RFSL (The Swedish federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights), have made similar investigations into Swedish prostitution policies and their conclusions more or less mirror those of RFSU.¹⁵ Their deduction is that current legislation assumes heterosexual circumstances and, being based upon the gender-hierarchy of feminist theory, is regarded as male violence against women. Additionally, they don't consider anti-prostitution laws the correct method for combating the problems of prostitution, advocating instead other social initiatives. Moreover, the lack of a distinction between voluntary and involuntary prostitution is also heavy criticized, as well is the omission of male prostitutes. This

¹⁴ <http://www.rfsu.se/sv/Sex-och-politik/Remisser-och-yttranden/Yttrande-over-betankandet-Forbud-mot-kop-av-sexuell-tjanst-En-utvardering-1999-2008-SOU-201049/>

¹⁵ http://app.rfsl.se/apa/19/public_files/ry_101025_kop_av_sexuell_tjanst.pdf

perspective on prostitution, as employed by Swedish parties, could be considered one-sided and it would perhaps be socially responsible if they were to expand their current view.

Similarly, Swedish parties discuss "equality" (as it relates to prostitution and sexuality) preferably in terms of communitarianism rather than autonomy - it is *a social issue*, not *personal*. *Sexual autonomy as a form of equality* is not the goal, but rather a sexual "decency-standard" across society. Although, some parties do confuse their message by also framing themselves on the micro (personal) level, basically implying that "sexual freedom" does not include the freedom to sell sexual services. But could this 'restrictive' policy potentially foreshadow a comeback of the Swedish sexual revolution of the 60s and 70s, where many proudly and loudly screamed for sexual liberation and freedom? The message, *at that time*, was that every *individual* - man or woman - had a right to indulge in, *and express*, sexual pleasure. *An individualized perspective on sexuality was at the centre of the debate during that time* (Svensson, 2012:52). And while the debate was not *primarily* concerned with prostitution, but sex and sexual freedom in general, prostitution was indeed included in the overall message. Only the *Classic Liberal Party* discusses prostitution consistently on the private, individual level instead as a social issue. Other minor Swedish parties that have not been considered for this thesis, like *the Pirate Party*, may or may not hold similar attitude.

While poverty is commonly cited as a cause for prostitution it is interesting to note that the *problem of prostitution* is how it symbolically subjugates women to men, and the "blame" for prostitution is put *on clients and customers* of prostitution - not poverty - and the Swedish law receives much credit for specifically *fighting the "demand" on sex*. This is interesting because the portrayal of prostitution as "merely" being a response to sexual needs is a critique often alluded by anti-prostitution advocates *against* pro-prostitution - that it simplifies human sexuality - *sex is rather a culturally scripted activity rather than biological* (Matthews, 2008: 25). If true, it then seems a bit contradictory to endorse a law that specifically fights *the demand* because it implies the exact same "simplified" view. It comes across as somewhat contrived and inconsistent, and merely as the exchange of one social construct on sexuality for another.

It can also be questioned if anti-prostitution laws really are successful in "reducing the demand" on sex - and if this should really be the rational basis for the existence of such laws at all. Do the human *libido and instincts* conform to artificial policy? Do laws have the ability to overrule the biological and psychological dynamics of sexuality? Regardless, the commodification of sex, even if sometimes subtle, has been ongoing in our culture for decades and is fairly common practice. The *lure and promise* of sexual gratification are all strategies used on the open market today. As a vivid example, "Old Spice" is an American product; a deodorant for men but marketed towards women, and with 'sex' being a clear underlying message employed throughout its series of commercials. Surely, you want your men to be sexy, ripped, buffed and - most importantly - *smell* like beautiful bodybuilders, like the Old Spice-Man - which he himself even state outright.¹⁶ Combine this with the other thousands of commercials worldwide utilizing the same underlying message, exploiting the same allure of sex. By contrast, does criminalizing prostitution alone have any real impact on the "demand" on sex? Then of course there is a more direct approach; what about pornography? How does the incredible access to sexually explicit material on all media platforms, especially internet, influence the "demand" on sex in our society and culture?

The view that it is the *prostitute* who is being exploited is also not an entirely unproblematic interpretation of the dynamics. In a perhaps cynical way, couldn't it be said that it is instead the prostitutes who financially exploit the "needs" of men? As far as the word "exploitation" can be understood - as a "*use or utilization, especially for profit*"¹⁷ - it could be argued that the only people who qualify for the definition are pimps and criminal employers who *force* people into prostitution. Why such much effort is put on controlling clients seems a bit misdirected. *However, this does support the perception that the strategy of Swedish politics is focused on reducing or ending prostitution all together, rather than managing it* (Matthews: 2008: 113). But is such an ideological goal practically achievable?

As a comparative analysis; all parties (except the Classical Liberal Party) consider prostitution a *societal issue*, but express their concerns a bit differently. 2 parties expressively say prostitution is violence against women, while 1 says it is financial exploitation. 2 parties expressively say the fault with prostitution lies with the demand, and clients, and measures

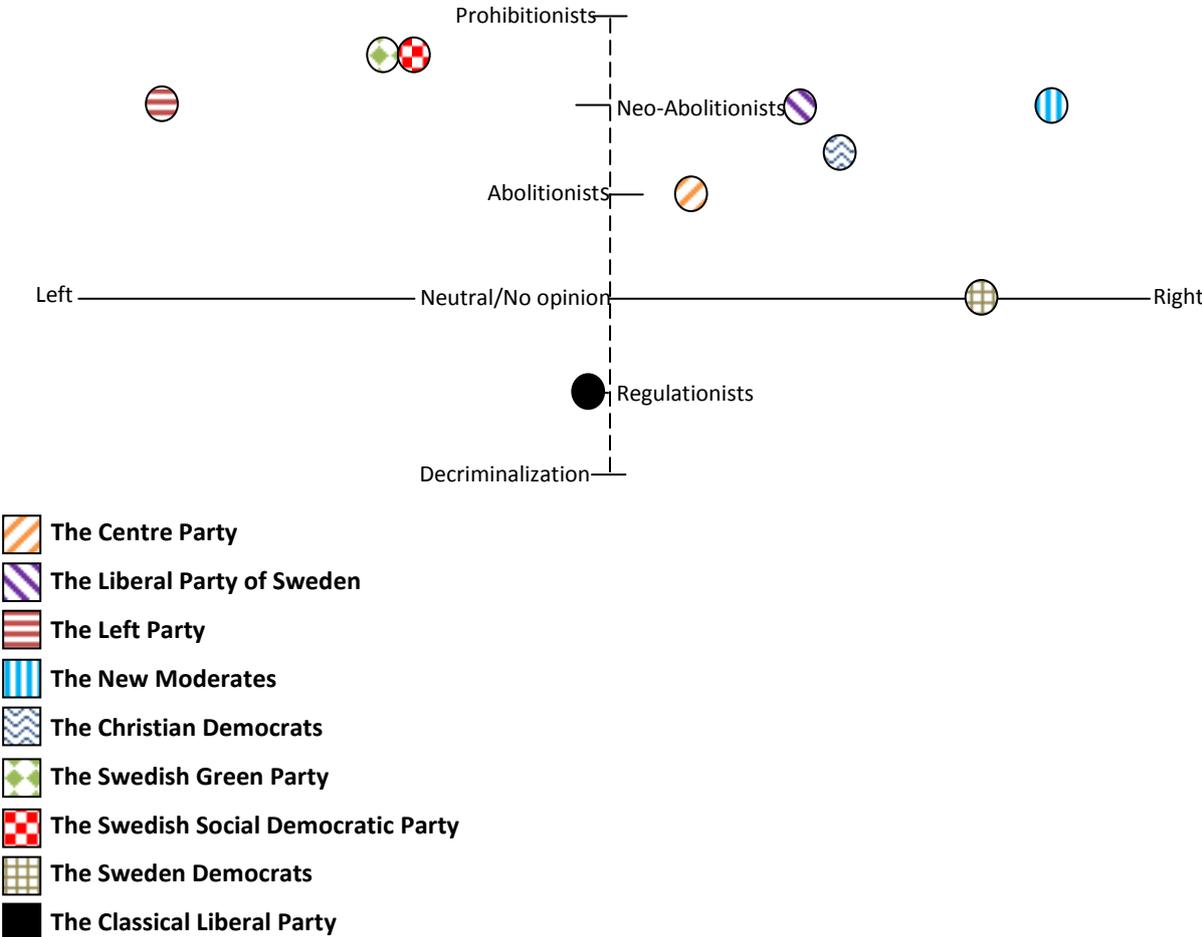
¹⁶ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PJKAr1r5zIA>

¹⁷ <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/exploitation>

to prevent prostitution should be focused on controlling the demand. 1 party states that prostitution objectifies women, while 2 similarly say prostitution promotes the image of women as merchandize. 3 parties say prostitution is a symptom of inequality - social, economic, or otherwise. 5 parties associate prostitution with slavery or trafficking, and 2 parties hold that prostitution is incompatible with women's freedom over their own bodies. Only 3 parties specifically express that prostitutes are in need of help however, while 1 view them as a weak social group but omit they need any assistance.

A discursive map on the ideology of Sweden's political parties and their stand on prostitution, if envisioned, could possibly look something like this:

Figure 1: political discursive map



The above is a rough estimate, not an exact truth, but should be enough to represent the stand of Sweden's political parties on prostitution, in relation to their general "left-right"-orientation. Inference for assigning the political parties left-right dimension is based upon an

available statistical report made by "statistiska centralbyrån", or Central Bureau of Statistics, from the general elections in 2006.¹⁸

¹⁸ http://www.scb.se/statistik/_publikationer/ME0106_2006A01_BR_00_ME04BR0801.pdf (p. 252)

Chapter 3

3. Theory

Applying Critical Theory, this thesis is a critical analysis of the arguments utilized by anti- and pro-prostitution advocates. Critical research aims to clarify social reality by posing problems and intellectual challenges on a specific issue (Alvesson, A. Stanely, D. 2000: 1).

A subset of hermeneutics, critical theory can strive to reinterpret the conclusions of others by contextualizing their findings/research with other, perhaps previously ignored, settings such as economic, cultural or political factors. In other words, *it is about asking critical questions!*

3.1 Political Discourse Analysis

What is the normative purpose of politics? Well, ancient philosopher Aristotle said the following:

*Politics is action in pursuit of the highest good,
based upon decision, which arise out of deliberation.*

(Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012: 21)

Both Isabella and Norman Fairclough agree that politics is basically a '*deliberative*' and '*argumentative*' process which informs, ideally, good action (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012: 22). They subsequently define politics as "*making choices and decisions about what to do*" and if there is no choice involved, or something that warrants no discussion or deliberation, then there are also no politics (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012: 26). Another understanding is that politics is about finding a consensus-solution on shared problems in society. However, both the *problems* and *solutions* are rarely objective but highly dependent on context (Erikson, 2011: 10). But coincidentally, the riches of adversarial opinions in today's society make politics a guaranteed reality.

But what is then political discourse analysis? Political discourse analysis (PDA) adopts a critical perspective on politics, aiming to detect where societal executive power (the power of 'decision-making') currently rests. This includes both *people* as well as *institutions*, since both needs to be considered in context of one other (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012: 18-19).

The relationship between politics and man can be framed, or understood, as either a struggle for authority or as a collaboration meant to resolve conflicting matters of interests (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012: 20).

My approach on political discourse analysis focuses on *argument reconstruction*. An argument is a verbal and social action meant to either support or disclaim a certain view or perspective, the purpose of which is to later endow agents (i.e. people) with justified reasons to act upon in order to bring desirable change or stability into society, or even the world (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012: 23-24). Argument reconstruction is the process of capturing the abstract ideas or intellectual message of an argument and rephrasing them into a short and perhaps more manageable text, but without distorting the original meaning. The argument can then much easier be contrasted and evaluated against the normative (how things 'ought' to work) purposes of politics.

3.2 Method and material

A argumentative analysis of the *practical reasoning* provides good insight into societal communication. It is about looking at the *structure* of the argument employed by the rhetorical actor. Subsequently, it also looks at the effectiveness of the text; does it achieve its persuasive goal? From this perspective, argumentative analysis is critical and normative - normative to the extent that how a text fits into societal norms and conventions. However, there are other modes of analysis, such as *rhetorical* analysis, which can be used similarly for comparable purposes, and the results may vary thereof. But such an analysis could provide an excellent supplement to studies such as this one. 'Informal logic' is yet another possible method of evaluating arguments (Kock, 2011: 105), which can easily be combined with a similar model as the one utilized in this thesis.

In any communication meant to be persuasive, intent and purpose can be discerned (Ekström, 2007: 152). Purpose and intent can be identified by looking at how a text limits the options of interpretation in its receiver/reader. By contrast, argument analysis looks on the subject from a much broader context, engaging not only reason but also recognizes other emotions and needs (Ekström, 2007: 153-154).

My empirical material consists of number of debating articles, originating from Swedish national newspapers.

3.2.1 Selections

The research-inquiry aims to investigate the contemporary arguments of the prostitution debate, and thus only articles whose authorship is fairly recent have been considered (oldest article being authored in 2007). Additionally, this investigation focuses on digital media, such as newspapers online, and only tabloids of national coverage has been considered, such as Aftonbladet, Svenska Dagbladet (SvD), Expressen, Dagens Nyheter (DN), as well as Newsmill (because of its large selection of debate articles by professionals). It is also about capturing the arguments of the "big players" - the influential and significant debaters in the field, be they politicians or academics - and to summarize the fundamentals, the core, of the arguments they employ. Concerning itself with the Swedish discourse on prostitution, only articles pertaining Sweden has been selected. The articles have been categorized as having either a pro- or anti-prostitution message.

The employed strategy of material-selection is a "strategical choice-method". The strategical choice entails an intentional and deliberate selection of material, perhaps in order to ensure relevance and some variation of domains/forums (Aspers, 2007: 92).

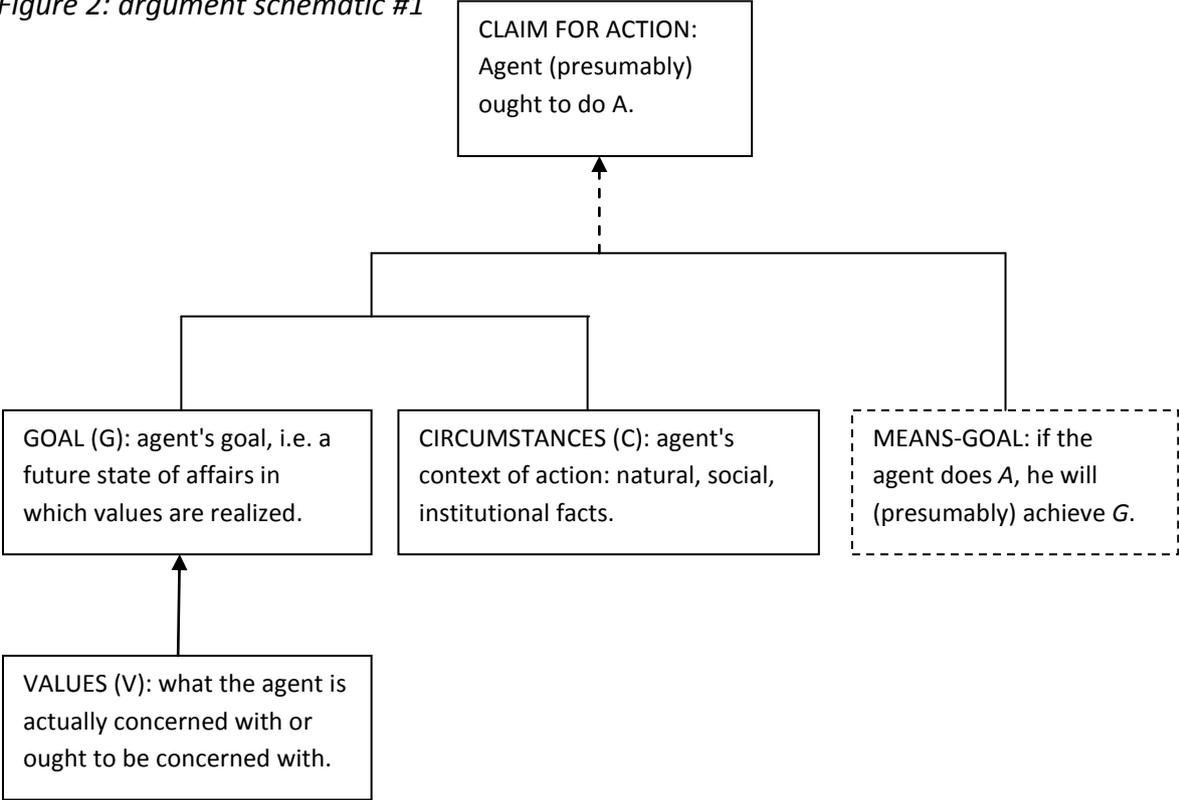
3.3 Model of analysis and argument reconstruction

Practical reasoning concerns itself with *action*, and the *reasons/values* provided to motivate or inform those actions during any particular situation (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012: 35). A distinction is here made, however, between '*theoretical knowledge*' and '*practical reasoning*', with theoretical knowledge being the pursuit of wisdom while practical reasoning is the desire for *appropriate* action. Practical reasoning involves imagining alternative options for actions, contemplating their strengths and weaknesses, before finally deciding on a specific course. Theoretical knowledge of course influence this internal deliberation but is still separate because they are guided by different purposes, and can often even necessitate different conclusions or actions, such in case of the alcohol-prohibitionists in the example provided in the introduction of this thesis - teetotalers don't like people drinking, but it is still preferable to have them drink legally and responsibly rather than labeling them all criminals, and have criminals dominate the alcohol-market.

An argument consists of a varying number of statements, ending finally with a conclusion supported by one or several premises. The purpose of an argument is to create a 'theory of action' - a plan of action grounded in rational thinking. This can be done both *deductively* and *inductively*. In a sound deductive argument, the conclusion *necessarily* and *inescapably* follows the premises (if they are true) - it is a matter of *certainty*. In an inductive argument, the conclusions are matters of *probability* rather than certainty, provided the premises are still true (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012: 37)

Argument reconstruction will be done by identifying the following propositions within the statement: (1) *Claim*, (2) *Circumstances*, (3) *Goals*, (4) *Means-Goal* and (5) *Values*, and then enter them into a schematic. A model/schematic for analyzing practical reasoning may look as following (next page):

Figure 2: argument schematic #1



(Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012: 45)

The *claim* is a statement made by the agent that refers to what the agent, or others, *ought* to do - *the practical response*. The *claim* is then underlined by "[...] an assessment of the context of action (the real world) and a goal they want to achieve (or think they ought to

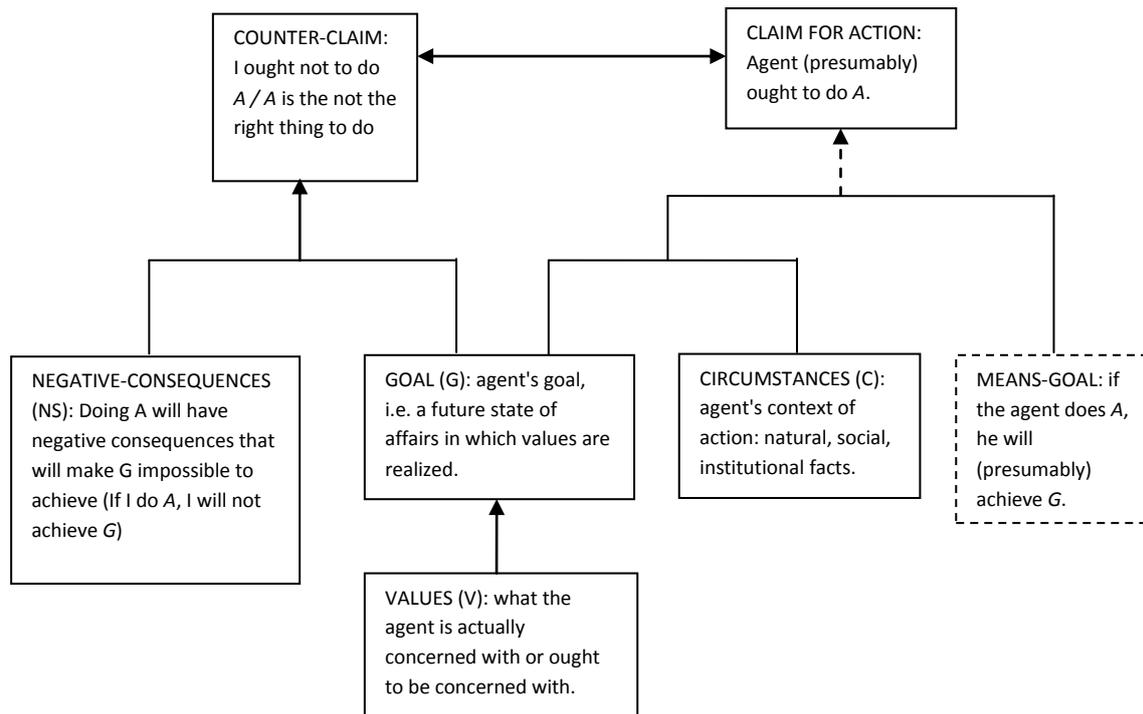
achieve), as a future possible situation, and with some tentative idea about what means (action) might take them from the current circumstances their goal" (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012: 47).

Circumstances and *goals* are basically premises supporting the *claim*. The *goal* is a possible state of future affair, i.e. how the agent wants the future to be like. Circumstances arise partly out *values* because situation as sometimes produced or defined by a person's values and ideals. Furthermore, values *restrict action* (the *means-goal*) by defining certain measures as suitable or desirable for the purpose of realizing the goal, thus eliminating other alternatives routes of action. However, *circumstances* are the conditions, or *the problem*, that needs to be surmounted for the *goal* to be achievable. As such, circumstances are a *negative* factor, or situation, which the *claim* needs to resolve (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012: 46-47). The *means-goal* is the method by which the *goal* is to be achieved. Means-goal represents a suitable action that would be *sufficient* to attain the goal (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012: 144).

Values are supportive of the *goal*, and inform the intended future of the *goal*. *Values* are the internal concern of an individual or agent, and can be either what the agent *actually values* or what he *ought to value*. It can also be what *others ought to value* (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012: 48). But values are not always stated outright, but can be implied or inferred.

Implicit within this model of *argumentative* analysis, if we are to advance our understanding, is the concept of criticism, since "*criticism, not justification, is the way in which rational argument can advance our search for both scientific truth and rational decision-making*" (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012: 49). Politics arise out of deliberation, and criticism for any particular statement needs to be accounted for. Thus, the above model can med adjusted to represent such reflection (next page):

Figure 3: argument schematic #2



(Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012: 51).

Negative consequences represent a *counter-argument* that would hinder or make it impossible to achieve the goal. It is thus another *premise of the goal*, and if the negative-consequences outweigh all other argumentation, then it necessitates another set of rational action, the *counter-claim* (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012: 50). Finally, critical evaluation will be done by examining if the premises are truly supportive of the claim, and if the premises themselves, particularly how they related to *values*, are rationally and logically sound. Some questions might include:

- 1) *Is the situation described in a rationally acceptable way? (Are the described circumstances really a problem at all?)*
- 2) *Are the values that underline the action rationally acceptable? (Do the means-goals conform to the values?)*
- 3) *Should other values be considered?*
- 4) *Do some values conflict with other values?*

I will also attempt to pose intellectual problems and questions. The best proposed ways to criticize a claim is by examining the *consequences* of the intended actions (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012: 67).

Chapter 4

4. Empirical material and analysis.

What follows is a presentation of the empirical material (debate articles), as well as the analysis of said material. The articles have been classified and categorically assigned as being either “anti-prostitution” or “pro-prostitution”. Due to size, only partial citations of the original articles will be provided. However, link to the full, original articles will be available in the footnotes, in the references as well as an English translation in the *Appendix*.

4.1 Anti-Prostitution.

Beginning with the arguments presented by anti-prostitution advocates, the following are debate articles authored by people who are against prostitution being legal.

4.1.1 *Prostitutes are Victims of Crime*, Svenska Dagbladet (Swedish Daily Paper), Opinion/Brännpunkten, 9th of April, 2011.¹⁹

Authored by several writers, the most prominent of which is probably Gudrun Schyman - Swedish politician, feminist activist and anti-prostitution advocate. This article opens with the fairly strong statement;

Buying sex is a crime against humanity, equality and violates the dignity of the prostitute. The preparatory research done on the current Swedish anti-prostitution law consistently shows that prostitution, both in Sweden as well as other equality well-developed countries, is usually the result of forced circumstances [...]

Regardless of other factors, prostitution causes posttraumatic stress similar to those found in war-veterans, victims of torture, as well as victims of rape. [...]

But the government should further also acknowledge that all prostitutes are a victim of sexual crime, making the victims eligible for compensational damage. In addition of making buyers of sex and procurers of prostitutes legally liable, it would also financially help the prostitutes leave the profession. [...]

The government's latest investigation showed that Sweden does not make a distinction between voluntary and involuntary prostitution, and drew the conclusion that the plaintiff should be

¹⁹ http://www.svd.se/opinion/brannpunkt/prostituerade-ar-brottsoffer_6077511.svd

allowed to try for compensational damage. If this is the case, then all prostitutes suffers damage by being bought for sex.

To view all who has been bought for sex as suffering from damage is more consequential and principally acceptable, as well as more practically achievable, then to demand that damage has to be proven case by case, even if the level of damage will vary from each person's circumstances.

Claim (what needs to be done)

But the government should further also acknowledge that all prostitutes are a victim of sexual crime, making the victims eligible for compensational damage.

Interpretation: Understand prostitutes are victims of sexual crimes, and should therefore be compensated.

Circumstances

The preparatory research done on the current Swedish anti-prostitution law consistently show that prostitution [...] is usually the result of forced circumstances [...] // Regardless of other factors, prostitution causes posttraumatic stress similar to those found in war-veterans, victims of torture, as well as victims of rape.

Interpretation: Prostitution is the result of forced circumstances. Prostitution causes psychological stress.

Goals

To view all who has been bought for sex as suffering from damage is more consequential and principally acceptable, as well as more practically achievable, then to demand that damage has to be proven case by case, even if the level of damage will vary from each person's circumstances.

Interpretation: [Prostitution is illegal] Legal procedures are streamline by assuming all prostitutes are suffers of damage, because it is practical.

Means-Goal

In addition of making buyers of sex and procurers of prostitutes legally liable, it would also financially help the prostitutes leave the profession.

Interpretation: [Means through legislation]. Legally make prostitutes viable for compensational damage from clients and pimps.

Values

Buying sex is a crime against humanity, equality and violates the dignity of the prostitute.

Interpretation: Avoid unfair human treatment. Protect equality.

4.1.2 Don't yield the Sex Purchase Act to anti-feminists. Newsmill, 24th of April, 2011²⁰

Responding to the above article by Gudrun Schyman, and others, is Jenny Westerstrand. Although she herself is an anti-prostitution advocate, she does not share the particular arguments provided by Schyman, basically criticizing Schyman rhetoric's for being easy target for pro-prostitution advocates by misrepresenting history on the foundation of the Sex Purchase Act. Due to the length of Westerstrands article, I have chosen to emphasize only the most important and relevant sections. She writes:

Schyman and others have recently argued that the act of prostitution is a form of violence against the female prostitutes, who is regarded as victims entitled to compensation by her male clients.[...]

In the argument for laws important for feminists, we see a more and more American-inspired rhetoric's in which individual interests are of central importance, and where the individual perspective overshadows a understandings that take a more coherent grasp on the meanings of sex and prostitution. [...]

It is about depicting the ban to be based upon a conception of prostitution being a form of violence against female prostitutes, thereby driving the perception that women in prostitution are considered victims entitled to compensation from their male buyers. [...]

As political scientist Josefina Eriksson's upcoming thesis will tell, the issue of prostitution being a form of male violence against women was not discussed in debate. Such a perspective can be found in an American contemporary context. [...]

Against this background, I argue that it is misleading to claim that the Swedish ban on the purchase of sexual services has been established on the basis of an analysis of prostitution being a form of violence against female prostitutes. [...]

²⁰ <http://www.newsmill.se/node/35341>

Recently, the ban on the purchase of sexual services has been subjected to criticism from elsewhere, who believe that the law is anti-feminist. Essentially these arguments surmount to how counterproductive it is for feminism by preventing women from freely dispose of their bodies, as well as being an abuse of almost paternalistic spirit by invalidating the voices of women who hold that their involvement in prostitution is an outflow of one's free choice. Throughout, these critics push the claim that the Sex Purchase Act is a "radical feminist" law based on the notion that all women are victims, especially those in prostitution, and that a fundamental right that all women should be bestowed is the freedom to dispose of their bodies. [...]

The reactions have not been shortcoming. The amount of men and women, who wish to side with the "strong sexworker" is great.

Add to this the vulgar image that's being spread about feminist violence-research and it shows that the sex-purchase act, under Schyman and Borgström's argument, loses supporters already at the debates first breath. [...]

Do not act in the cases of the critics by pointing towards the individual arena as the laws raison d'être ["reason to be"], for it is not true. [...]

Due to this article being a response on the previous article, only the counter-claim and negative consequences will be identified.

Counter-Claim:

Recently, the ban on the purchase of sexual services has been subjected to criticism from elsewhere, who believe that the law is anti-feminist. Essentially these arguments surmount to how counterproductive it is for feminism by preventing women from freely dispose of their bodies. // Throughout, these critics push the claim that the Sex Purchase Act is a "radical feminist" law [...]

Interpretation: Allow women dispose their bodies freely, or be seen as anti-feminist or even a "radical feminist"-law.

Negative-Consequences:

In the argument for laws important for feminists, we see a more and more American-inspired rhetoric's in which individual interests are of central importance, and where the individual perspective overshadows a understandings that take a more coherent grasp on the meanings of sex and prostitution. // The reactions have not been shortcoming. The amount of men and

women, who wish to side with the "strong sexworker" is great. // Add to this the vulgar image that's being spread about feminist violence-research and it shows that the sex-purchase act, under Schyman and Borgström's argument, loses supporters already at the debates first breath.

Interpretation: Moving the discourse from a larger, societal perspective to an individualized one, making it not about social issues but personal rights, the law can be seen as anti-feminist because it limits the autonomy of women. If seen as a "radical feminist"-law, the Swedish Purchase Act can lose supporters because of how feminism sometimes is negatively portrayed. By misrepresenting the historical foundation of the Swedish Sex Purchase Act by claiming it was based on prostitution being considered violence against women, the law can lose public support. More people can become inclined to view prostitution as a "work", not as victims.

4.1.3 Malin Roux: Introduce the Swedish Sex Purchase Act in EU - the connection between legal prostitution and slavery is clear. Aftonbladet, Startsidan/Debatt. 19th of December, 2012.²¹

Authored by Malin Roux, founder of RealStar (a blog), she explains why she thinks prostitution should remain illegal and why we should both export the law abroad as well as criminalize Swedes who go abroad to purchase sex, even if prostitution is currently legal in the abroad-country.

Human trafficking is today bigger than ever and the number of sex slaves, who stands for the majority share of the slave market, is increasing dramatically every year. [...]

Prostitution and human trafficking takes place across the borders and Sweden must take responsibility and engage in the international debate to deal with this serious crime.[...]

But the big difference Sweden can do is to influence other European countries to adopt a similar law. [...]

The best action we can do to put a stop to human trafficking is to reduce the demand for prostitution at a European level. [...] That would be a vigorous action to combat contemporary slavery.

²¹ <http://www.aftonbladet.se/debatt/article15895217.ab>

For as long as there is a demand for buying sexual services, there will be a market. The connection between legal prostitution and the slave trade is clear - the greater the demand on sex slaves, the more intense trafficking becomes. [...]

Almost all prostitution is forced, often because of a vulnerable situation that often emanate from serious problems in childhood. A common scenario is that women, very often minors, from Eastern Europe are lured by a better future in the West. Through an "agent" they offered "visa", travel, housing and jobs such as waitresses or model. Once in place, they become aware that they are in debt, is deprived of their passports, are locked away and that the only way to pay the debt is to sell their bodies. [...]

We are therefore strongly critical of the "voluntary" prostitution available in many parts of Europe, and are worried that the development moves towards a normalized sex trade. There is nothing normal about the slave trade going on in Europe today.

According to the police and authorities, Sweden's sex-purchase law is a sharp tool in the fight against trafficking. [...] The Sex Purchase Act has proven to be very effective in reducing the demand for sexual services, and thus also the slave trade.

RealStars encourages Swedish politicians not to be paralyzed and simply stand by while human trafficking is increasing dramatically in our vicinity. [...] We dared to take the first step towards the eradication of trafficking in the nineties - let us show that we are ready to go further!

Claim (what needs to be done)

But the big difference Sweden can do is to influence other European countries to adopt a similar law. // The best action we can do to put a stop to human trafficking is to reduce the demand for prostitution at a European level.

Interpretation: Reduce the demand on prostitution and influence other EU nations to adopt similar anti-prostitution laws.

Circumstances

Human trafficking is today bigger than ever and the number of sex slaves, who stands for the majority share of the slave market, is increasing dramatically every year. // A common scenario is that women, very often minors, from Eastern Europe are lured by a better future in the West. [...] Once in place, they become aware that they are in debt, [...] and that the

only way to pay the debt is to sell their bodies. // For as long as there is a demand for buying sexual services, there will be a market.

Interpretation: Trafficking is widespread. Foreign women are lured into prostitution in Sweden under false pretense. The demand on sex creates a market.

Goals

[...] we have a unique opportunity to make the most of the momentum we are seeing now, with France, Britain and several other countries, whom are considering introducing similar prostitution laws.

Interpretation: [Prostitution is illegal - abroad and domestically]. Other countries have similar prostitution laws as Sweden.

Means-Goal

[...] Sweden must take responsibility and engage in the international debate to deal with this serious crime. // But the big difference Sweden can do is to influence other European countries to adopt a similar law. // The best action we can do to put a stop to human trafficking is to reduce the demand for prostitution at a European level.

Interpretation: [Means through legislation]. Engage in international politics/diplomacy and have other countries adopt similar laws. Reduce trafficking by reducing demand on prostitution.

Values

We are therefore strongly critical of the "voluntary" prostitution available in many parts of Europe, and are worried that the development moves towards a normalized sex trade. There is nothing normal about the slave trade going on in Europe today. // That would be a vigorous action to combat contemporary slavery.

Interpretation: Prostitution is wrong (forced or voluntary). Avoid a normalized sex trade.

4.1.4 Time to criminalize the Swedes sex purchases abroad. Dagens Nyheter (Daily News), Debatt, 24th of November, 2012.²²

An article co-authored by Maria Fälth (Christian Democrat Women Group), Gunilla Hjelm (Centre-women) and Anna Steele (Liberal Women), the authors demands that Swedes who go abroad and procure sexual services needs to be criminalized, even if prostitution is legal in the abroad country. They write:

Reduce demand. The Sex Purchase Act has led to significant progress in the fight against prostitution and human trafficking in Sweden. Now it's time for Sweden to protect women from prostitution and trafficking worldwide. [...]

It is high time that Swedish citizens are no longer able to legally contribute to global trafficking [...]. It is also time to stop accepting the widespread violence that occurs against women in so-called voluntary prostitution. The only way to reduce the exploitation of women in prostitution, human trafficking and sex slavery is to work against the demand - that is to criminalize the buyers who create the supply.

[...] Both women that are sold into human trafficking as well as those who sell themselves "voluntary" in prostitution is almost always marginalized and poor women, with no alternatives methods of finance.

[...] To export the purchase of sex to abroad, where women are even more vulnerable, is not acceptable. Here, Sweden must make a definite stand.

The most common argument against the criminalization of buying sex abroad is the so-called dual criminality, that is, the requirement that an act committed in another country must be criminal both there and in Sweden in order for someone to be able to face criminal charges. [...]

Women Center, Christian Democratic Women's Group and the Liberal Women emphasizes that Sweden can no longer hide behind the argument of double criminality. [...]

The next step for Sweden is to abolish the requirement of double criminality, so that Swedes can be sentenced in Sweden for sexual purchases abroad. Exploiting women's imbalance of power, vulnerability and poverty are equally reprehensible wherever it occurs, and sex crimes and prostitution cannot be separated from human trafficking. [...]

Claim (what needs to be done)

The only way to reduce the exploitation of women in prostitution, human trafficking and sex slavery is to work against the demand - that is to criminalize the buyers who create the supply. // Now it's time for Sweden to protect women from prostitution and trafficking

²² <http://www.dn.se/debatt/dags-att-kriminalisera-svenskars-sexkop-utomlands>

worldwide. // The next step for Sweden is to abolish the requirement of double criminality, so that Swedes can be sentenced in Sweden for sexual purchases abroad.

Interpretation: Reduce the demand on prostitution. Protect women worldwide. Abolish double criminality.

Circumstances

Both women that are sold into human trafficking as well as those who sell themselves "voluntary" in prostitution is almost always marginalized and poor women, with no alternatives methods of finance. // The most common argument against the criminalization of buying sex abroad is the so-called dual criminality, that is, the requirement that an act committed in another country must be criminal both there and in Sweden.

Interpretation: Prostitutes are bankrupt women with no other method of finance. Double Criminality prevents criminalizing Swedes who buy sex abroad.

Goals

It is Sweden's responsibility to comply with Norway in a progressive legislation that paves the way for more countries. Only then can the unimaginably cruel trafficking decrease, and only then can we put an end to the violence that occurs daily against female prostitutes all over the world, even in legal brothels - with legal sanction.

Interpretation: [Prostitution is illegal - abroad and domestically]. There is no worldwide prostitution, and thus no violence against women.

Means-Goal

The only way to reduce the exploitation of women in prostitution, human trafficking and sex slavery is to work against the demand - that is to criminalize the buyers who create the supply. // The next step for Sweden is to abolish the requirement of double criminality, so that Swedes can be sentenced in Sweden for sexual purchases abroad.

Interpretation: [Means through legislation and zero-tolerance policies]. Reduce the demand on sex by criminalizing the purchase of sexual services. Abolish double criminality.

Values

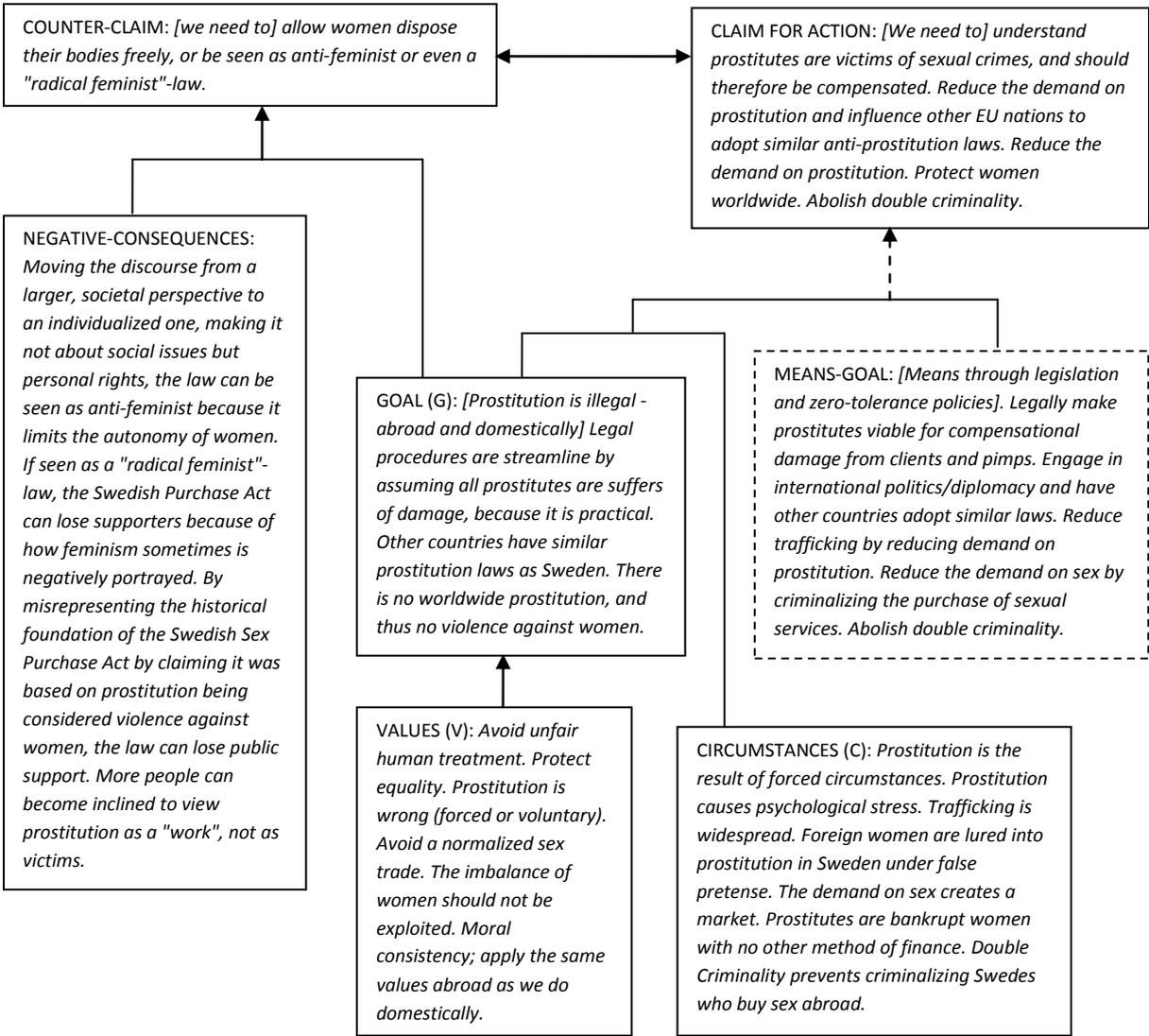
On one hand to have a law that criminalizes prostitution nationally, but then look the other way when Swedish citizens instead travels abroad to buy sex from even more vulnerable women, is hypocrisy and a double standards. // Exploiting women's imbalance of power, vulnerability and poverty are equally reprehensible wherever it occurs, and sex crimes and prostitution cannot be separated from human trafficking.

Interpretation: The imbalance of women should not be exploited. Moral consistency; apply the same values abroad as we do domestically.

4.1.5 Analysis and evaluation.

A potential breakdown and argument reconstruction of *all articles* could look as following:

Figure 4: anti-prostitution argument schematic



Now, do the premises support the claim? And are the premises themselves rationally and/or logically sound? But firstly, the claim.

The claim is that *women are victims of sexual crimes*, but is that social reality or a social construct? It also implies something negative about the *intent* of the male clients, as if they didn't care if it was violence or the goal for contacting a prostitute was to gratify violence rather than sexuality. In a *communitarianism approach*, this feminist notion on female victimization is being systematically applied.

Also, the claim is that *prostitutes should be eligible for compensational damage*. But what are the exact consequences of this proposition? Its success as a *preventative* measure to help women avoid prostitution is uncertain, because the compensation hinges on a sexual crime first being committed - this doesn't help the prostitute *avoid* prostituting. On the other hand, one might imagine how this can dissuade potential clients - they would be less inclined to buy sex because of the possibility of "additional" costs. But doesn't this negatively impact the prostitute? It makes it more difficult for her to financially support herself and find clients (and thus also prevent her from receiving the compensation, the purpose of which was to financially help her *leave* the profession), and once again, this proposition *doesn't seem to help the prostitute*. The proposition appears to be more about punishing (male) clients than it is about helping prostitutes.

Implied within the discourse of victimization on women is the villainization of men (as the 'victimizers'), and this becomes partly visible in the above argumentation. We are reminded several times that sex purchasers are *men*, and it is the *client* who stands as the criminal culprit in the transaction of sexual services.

The *goal of streamlining juridical procedures by assuming all prostitutes are suffers of damage, because it is practical, rather than making a case-by-case evaluation*, expresses an unusual rationale and can also be argued to possibly conflict with certain democratic principles. For further evaluation, the exact quote from the article above (*s. 44, Prostitutes are Victims of Crime*) is needed for demonstration:

To view all who has been bought for sex as suffering from damage is more consequential and principally acceptable, as well as more

practically achievable, then to demand that damage has to be proven case by case [...]

Firstly; this proposition could be regarded as undemocratic because it ignores prostitutes who *voluntarily* engage in prostitution by assuming they are victims. Their opinion and personal freedom is systematically undermined in favor of a broad generalization. However, this criticism assumes democratic values are a concern of the author, and if not, then perhaps democratic values *should* be reflected upon. Second; what if this logic, of practical achievability, was applied in, for example, murder-cases - *it is difficult and time-consuming to demand that innocence or guilt has to be proven on a case-by-case basis. It is therefore more consequential and practically achievable to assume all are guilty.* Is this a fair enough comparison? Thirdly; if the goal is practical achievability, then a legalization (meaning no courts at all) should be even more desirable. But as a means to achieve the goal - does it succeed? Possibly, but it is questionable if the underlying values align with the Swedish democratic context, which should consequently disqualify it as a "suitable" action.

There is a communitarian quality within the anti-prostitution community - that society must come together in a consensus on the subject of equality, and jointly solve what they consider a *societal issue*. Feminist theory has been highly successful within this camp of debaters as a useful model for decoding gender-questions, and most will identify themselves as either being feminists or part of a feminist group. The "problem" is on how socially vulnerable women are, but all practical measures and *means* is on preventing (male) clients from accessing sexual services. On one *problem* they identify - *that prostitutes are poor and desperate women with no other means of finance* - they introduce really no *solution* to this perceived dilemma. They do not discuss providing prostitutes an alternative method of finance, and instead seem satisfied in limiting her current options one step further.

Much of the above argumentation comes from a desire, or value/concern, to avoid a normalized sex trade. Prostitution makes women look like a "sexual servants or butlers" working at the behest of men, which offsets the status-equality of men and women (Westerstrand, 2008: 175-176). However, this assumes that only women are prostitutes and that only men are clients of the sex trade. Question is: *is this a reasonable assumption?*

On the whole, while the circumstances they recognize are issues worthy of careful attention and consideration, there is a lack in actual practical means to *solve* those problem, and the agenda seems defocused because of how the *means-goal* are designed to address *values* rather than the issues, or circumstances, as described.

4.2 Pro-Prostitution

The following are articles authored by people who are *for* the legalization of prostitution, or consider the continual criminalization of prostitution as problematic.

4.2.1 *Why the trafficking policy is a failure.* Expressen. 23rd of July, 2008.²³

In this article, Susanne Dodillet debates why the Swedish policy on prostitution is a failure, or at least fails its intended mission. She is highly critical of current policies:

Over Loaded refugee boats in the Mediterranean are not indicative of sex-buyers 'demand' but of the poverty in the home countries of the immigrants as well as the West's restrictive immigration policy. Nevertheless, the government continues to simplify the picture of trafficked victims. [...] We must recognize the desperation that makes people fall into a corrupt form of migration in which they are used.

[...] The government continues namely to assume that the victims of trafficking are women and children who are lured or kidnapped from their poor homelands, transported to Sweden, incarcerated, raped and forced into prostitution.

[...] But the picture of the girl who falls in love with a pimp and promised a job as a waitress in the West, are increasingly challenged by researchers of migration around the world. These migration researchers argue that human trafficking should rather be described as a corrupt form of migration.

[...] The lack of legal migration opportunities, as well as the Western world's increasingly stringent border control, forces migrating people so seek out criminal alternatives. How are they to otherwise get into Europe? A repressive policy therefore does not reduce the slave trade, but rather contributes to a greater desperation and vulnerability, and to a more advanced criminal activity.

By ignoring the links between migration and human trafficking, the government expresses an outdated attitude towards women. [...]

²³ <http://www.expressen.se/debatt/darfor-misslyckas-trafficking-politiken/>

Most foreign women, present in the sex industry in Europe, have had good reason to migrate. [...] The attempts made to discourage women from leaving their homes have been questioned by immigration researchers, who point out that not even the knowledge of the dangers associated with illegal immigration deter desperate people from going to Europe.

Not only aid organizations, but also the police are fighting on losing ground if they are based on a simplified picture of trafficking. That it is difficult to identify cases of trafficking if we assume the wrong template is well known to the justice system. [...]

Migrants and victims of trafficking are subjected to abuse and exploitation, but this exploitation does not necessarily appear like the one the government envisions. With its simplistic description of the problem, the government unfortunately risk being unable to help anyone.

Claim (what needs to be done)

These migration researchers argue that human trafficking should rather be described as a corrupt form of migration. // We must recognize the desperation that makes people fall into a corrupt form of migration in which they are used.

Interpretation: Understand why desperate immigrants turn to illegal forms of immigration, where they are later exploited.

Circumstances

The government continues namely to assume that the victims of trafficking are women and children who are lured or kidnapped from their poor homelands, transported to Sweden, incarcerated, raped and forced into prostitution. // The lack of legal migration opportunities, as well as the Western world's increasingly stringent border control, forces migrating people so seek out criminal alternatives. // A repressive policy therefore does not reduce the slave trade, but rather contributes to a greater desperation and vulnerability, and to a more advanced criminal activity.

Interpretation: The government assumes victims of trafficking are abused women and children lured here under false pretense. The lack of legal immigration options forces people to use illegal options. Strict laws increase the vulnerability of people, and advance criminal activity.

Goals

That it is difficult to identify cases of trafficking if we assume the wrong template is well known to the justice system.

Interpretation: [Prostitution is legal]. Better understanding of trafficking and legal templates.

Means-Goal

These migration researchers argue that human trafficking should rather be described as a corrupt form of migration. // The lack of legal migration opportunities, as well as the Western world's increasingly stringent border control, forces migrating people so seek out criminal alternatives.

Interpretation: [Decriminalization] Understand "trafficking" as corrupt migration rather than an expression of prostitution. More legal options of migration.

Values

We must recognize the desperation that makes people fall into a corrupt form of migration in which they are used. // The government's plan ignores the fact that prostitution is one of a few options for people in very desperate situations to actively change their situation.

Interpretation: Sympathize with the social reality of desperate people. Don't limit people's methods of finance if they are dependent on prostitution.

4.2.2 A myth that people are forced into prostitution. Expressen, 10th of May, 2007.²⁴

In an article published in "Expressen", Leo Pierini, former member of the Centre-party Youth Union (though member at the time of authorship), or shortened into *CUF* in Swedish, writes the following:

Prostitution is a profession like any other - but with unusually high salaries. They should now have the chance to sign collective agreements with their pimps. [...]

No, moral lectures should be kept out of politics and law books. We must accept that adults are capable of making decisions that concerns themselves. If an adult makes the career choice to

²⁴ <http://www.expressen.se/nyheter/en-myt-att-folk-tvingas-till-prostitution/>

work as a prostitute, I see nothing wrong with that. That "people are forced into it" is a myth. In Sweden we have unemployment insurance, welfare and other contributions that makes sure you insured, even if you don't have a job. [...]

In the current situation, it is illegal to buy sex. This means that prostitution is not classed as a profession. But it exists nonetheless! This means that prostitutes are not entitled to the same rights that other workers have. This creates a market in which crime flourishes. A free market would create a transparency that is currently lacking. It would be easier to eradicate trafficking and other problems. If prostitutes received unemployment benefits, unions, collective wage agreements and the like, their situation would undoubtedly become better and they would be able to write legal contracts with pimps.

[...] Legalized prostitution would probably lead to higher demand, which would lead to higher prices, which would lead to more money and a more tolerable situation for the prostitutes.

Claim (what needs to be done)

Prostitution is a profession like any other [...]

Interpretation: Treat prostitution as we do with any other profession.

Circumstances

In the current situation, it is illegal to buy sex. // This means that prostitution is not classed as a profession. This creates a market in which crime flourishes.

Interpretation: Criminalizing prostitution creates a criminal market.

Goals

Prostitution is a profession like any other [...] // If an adult makes the career choice to work as a prostitute, I see nothing wrong with that.

Interpretation: [Prostitution is legal] Prostitution is a legitimate profession. People are free to choose their profession.

Means-Goal

A free market would create a transparency that is currently lacking. It would be easier to eradicate trafficking and other problems. If prostitutes received unemployment benefits, unions, collective wage agreements and the like, their situation would undoubtedly become

better and they would be able to write legal contracts with pimps. // Legalized prostitution would probably lead to higher demand, which would lead to higher prices, which would lead to more money and a more tolerable situation for the prostitutes.

Interpretation: [Decriminalization]. A legal market would make it easier to combat illegal trafficking. Allow prostitutes to sign legal work contracts with their employers, and give them social benefits (pension, collective wages, etc). Legalized prostitution would increase the demand, and thus also the prices/salaries for the prostitutes.

Values

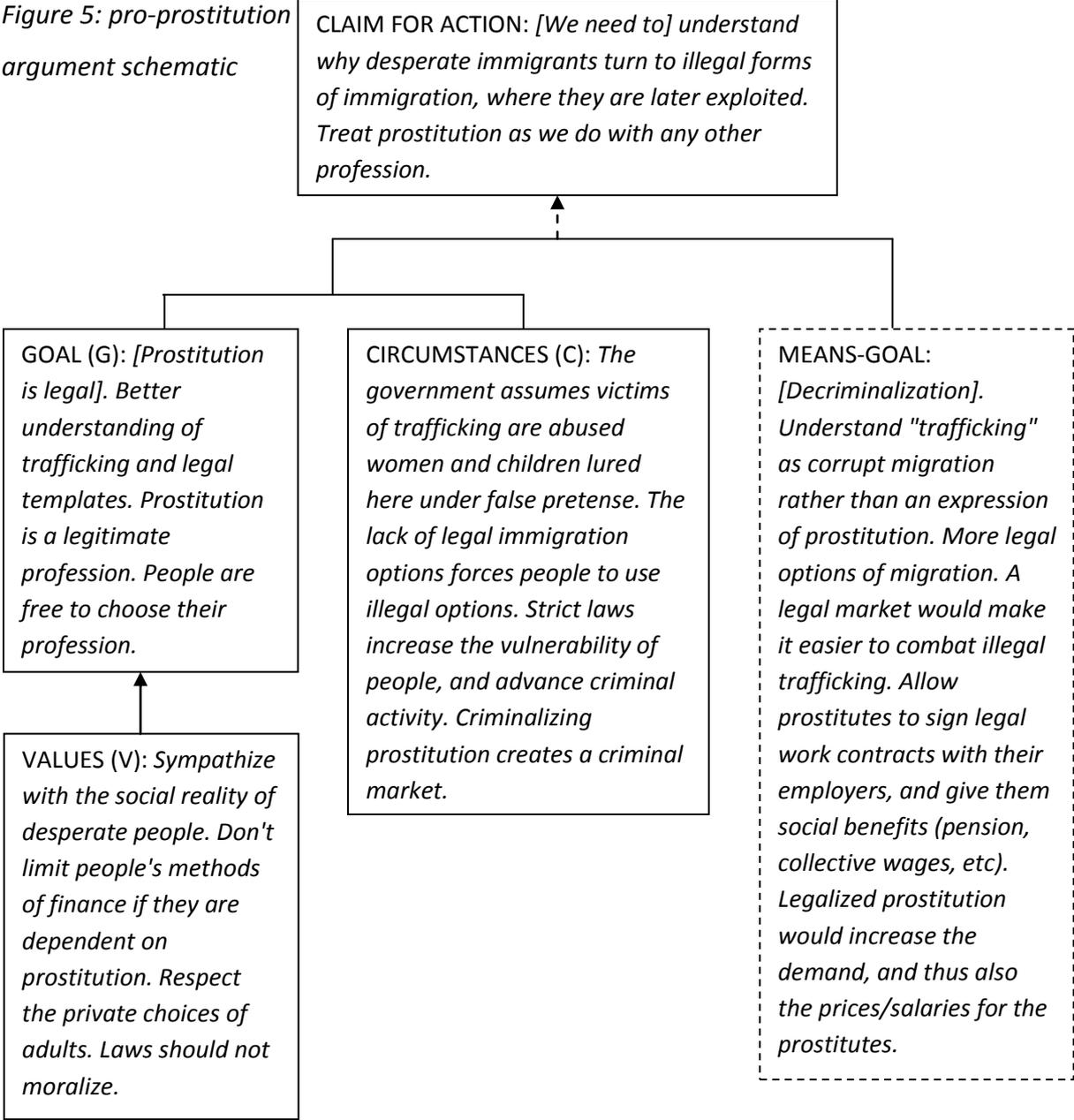
No, moral lectures should be kept out of politics and law books. // We must accept that adults are capable of making decisions that concerns themselves. If an adult makes the career choice to work as a prostitute, I see nothing wrong with that.

Interpretation: Respect the private choices of adults. Laws should not moralize.

4.2.5 Analysis and evaluation.

As already done in the previous analysis, with anti-prostitution, the arguments of pro-prostitution advocates is entered into a similar schematic (next page):

Figure 5: pro-prostitution argument schematic



The goal seems to be to make prostitution a legitimate profession, and have prostitutes enjoy all the legal benefits that come with it (social security, salary agreements, pension, etc). There is notion here that prostitution is a sexual service no different from other occupations, and it is "merely" the exchange of skills - be it physical, intellectual, or otherwise - it is still only another form of labor power, and her connection with the customer is just a "contractual relationship". But can prostitution really be considered as such? The intimacy of prostitution is one of its defining qualities, and can impact that person's sense of self (Matthews, 2008: 25). The critique here is that these intimate "contractual meetings"

can have disadvantageous consequences on that person individual life. In short; can she separate her professional live from her personal?

Another common critique is that the client isn't buying just her service, but actually "mastery" over her body (Matthews, 2008: 25). However, the strategy of legalized prostitution is to "empower" the prostitutes, granting them greater command over their social and economic circumstances. Consequently, this challenges the conception about who actually commands the "mastery" in a sexual transaction; the prostitute or the client - she has the *sexual capital* (erotic rank), but the client the currency (Martin & George, 2006: 5). But is it a fair trade? Perhaps only the involved themselves can judge this.

There is also the claim that legalized prostitution would *increase the demand*, and thus also raise prices (more money for prostitutes), however this is perhaps uncertain. Certainly, it would be *easier* to procure prostitutes if it was legal, but would that entail an "increase in demand"? The "demand" is here used very unspecific.

While the overall *means* to achieve the goal is increased market freedom, this is perhaps a staple of liberal thinking which is easily criticized, because it optimistically assumes oppressions will dissipate on its own only because more freedom is granted (Kymlicka, 1990: 257-258). But would problems, like trafficking, really subsided on their own? Most probably, criminal organization won't disappear, although their influence would perhaps decrease. As Dodillet expresses it, the *claim* is to have a deeper understanding of why immigrants turn to illegal forms of migration, and the *means-goal* is that trafficking should be understood as a corrupt form of migration rather as some manifestation of prostitution. While prostitution itself could be legal, laws pertaining trafficking would not. Also, the *criminalization* of prostitution is identified as the problem, and an increased market freedom would be a consistent and sound premise to combat criminal influence, which thrives on prostitution being illegal.

Prostitution is also expressed as a *personal issue*, rather than societal, and this perhaps forms the biggest distinguishing factor that separates pro-prostitution advocates from anti-prostitution advocates. This distinction greatly informs both what the *circumstances* (problems) are, as well as the *means-goal* to achieve them. Prostitution is not held as

morally wrong - it is a private decision - and concerns about how prostitution is possibly violence or demeaning towards women is *not* expressed. Also not mentioned is how prostitution is an articulation of social inequality between genders. In this sense, pro-prostitution advocates promote individualized accountability. This is separate from anti-prostitution advocates who hold accountability is on all of society.

4.3 Conclusions.

Few, if none, *on either side of the debate*, talks about prostitution reliably and consistently in terms of safety and security - concepts that should perhaps really be factored in more frequently. Most seems to rely on higher, loftier, intellectual arguments about equality, freedom, dignity, etc, and how to perceive prostitution as a social construct and/or institution. But is feminism a good basis for making prostitution laws? Not if safety and security are ignored, because without it, it becomes more about the symbolic, bruised pride of a few vocal feminists rather than dealing with social reality - namely that people of low socio-economic situations, i.e. *desperation*, turn to prostitution as a financial method. There is a lot of heavy intellectual theorizing, but few actual practical solutions. If we are to export the Swedish Purchase Act abroad, it will not be well-received if its only justification is it insults socially privileged Swedish women.

Both anti- *and* pro-advocates of prostitution (as well some of the Swedish parties) prominently talk about *the demand on sex or prostitution*. But what exactly do they mean by "the demand"? Or perhaps, maybe it is more accurate to ask what they mean when they say they want to *reduce* the demand? Most probably, this is a reference to 'market logic' - if no one wants to buy sex, there will be no prostitutes. However, is legislation really the rational means to achieve this goal? Because if one considers what controlling sexuality actually entails, what they are really asking for is a complete cultural (and biological?) change in attitude towards sex in general. It has been argued that male sexuality is 'aggressive', and potentially dangerous or threatening for the woman. Controlling male sexuality thus becomes a tool for women to excessive power (Östergren, 2006: 300-301)

Another way to understand the "demand" on sex, other than using a market logic, is the concept of *sexual/erotic capital*, which can be defined as the "*quality and quantity of attributes that an individual possesses, which elicit an erotic response in another*" (Green,

2008: 29). Under this definition, it is not the (male) consumer/client who is solely responsible for upholding a "demand" on sex, but rather it is a sexual dynamic constructed between people of attraction and reducing the demand is unlikely achieved by merely focusing on male sexuality, but suggests instead policies much more creative and innovative than simple customer-criminalization on prostitution. Treating human (and specifically male) sexuality as if entirely derived (or invented even) and controllable by "market forces" ignores other psychological and biological factors. Also, by equating male sexuality with the buying sex, they are overstating their case (Onsberg, 2011: 88). Sexual capital also challenges some assumptions made in feminist theory regarding the imbalance of gender, or gender-hierarchy.

Both sides identifies very different circumstances, that is to say, *they see two different sets of problems*. But what pro-prostitution identifies as problems are what anti-prostituting advocates consider solutions or even *values*. Some conclusions derived from feminist theory (ex. the victimization of women) are placed as an obstacle to solving the problems of prostitution in the pro-prostitution camp. However, in the opposite camp, patriarchy theory is a central theoretical perspective for formalizing argumentation. But, as stated previously, *practical reasoning* and *theoretical knowledge* are two different precepts because they can necessitate two different set of actions. *It would thus seem reasonable to conclude that anti-prostitution advocates seem to argue for resolutions on theoretical challenges and issues purposed by feminist theory rather than dealing with actual social reality. This means to say; the debate is being ideologically driven.* But this current kind of "symbolic politics", as Östergren calls it, risk marginalizing the victims even further (Östergren, 2006: 303). *A deliberation on prostitution is instead perhaps best derived on what is practically reasonable, not what is ideologically pleasing.*

The critics of legalized prostitution offers really no creative or innovative solutions to the problems they recognize; prostitution, trafficking, poverty, inequality, etc. The problem of women being lured to Sweden under false pretense, for example, is not satisfactory addressed. Instead of managing "the problems" of prostitution, they employ a strategy where the issues are simply ignored - a status quo model - and permits its further exploitation by criminal groups. As a result, the downward spiral of this social group

(prostitutes) continues on, possibly even in increased velocity. *Because here is the consequence of the anti-prostitution argumentation:* even if they are to receive *everything* they ask for, the prostitute themselves will still be poor and *desperate* (and still possibly even prostitutes), however, now also with even *one less alternative* of finance. None of the anti-prostitution advocates, and really only one political party, discusses solving prostitution through social initiatives (such as welfare). The rest seems highly content that the problems of prostitution can be solved by legislations. While legalized prostitution holds no official political support in Sweden, anti-prostitution advocates are in a general disagreement with certain health- and sexual education organizations such as RFSU or RFSL, and it is a disparity that should perhaps be explored and subsequently resolved.

In the anti-prostitution camp, communitarianism is preferable to autonomy, while in the pro-prostitution camp, the values are reversed. Pro-prostitution advocates argues for prostitution being "personal freedom", and autonomy thus seems to be the strongest case for legalized prostitution, and that prostitution should remain a "free choice". However, "safety" is still a fairly absent concept in such considerations.

As a note of interest, the number of women debating the issue is fascinating. Or perhaps, a more accurate description would be that the absence of men is really noticeable. This is a bit strange considering it is men who are 'supposedly' (according to anti-prostitution advocates) the true criminal culprits and exploiters and whose "sexual demand" apparently needs to be reduced or controlled. However, there is a problem here that the logic of men, who are pro-prostitution advocates, can seem self-serving (they only want it legalized because they want to buy sex!), which questions their intentions as debaters (Westerstrand, 2008: 373). But this outlook could be the subject of future research; why are men either less inclined to debate prostitution, or are men being discriminated against within the discourse of prostitution as questionable debaters? Is it considered taboo for a man to hold a pro-prostitution position, or at least argue from such a view? Are male debaters somehow being censured?

Louis Sebastian Theroux is a British documentary filmmaker, and he visited the legally existing brothel "The Wild Horse" in Reno, America, documenting his experience with

customers, owners and prostitutes (worth a watch!).²⁵ A suggestion for analyzing the debate on prostitution is to use media platforms other than debate articles in tabloids, like documentary films and movies. One can also move outside the media discourse and perhaps use "unofficial" discussion forums on the internet (like flashback.se). Such informal, anonymous venues would constitute an interesting empirical source for an analysis similar to the one conducted in this thesis, and subsequently perhaps even a comparison of the same-side arguments.

²⁵ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-XDKi86j0A>

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Sverigedemokraterna

<https://sverigedemokraterna.se/vara-asikter/var-politik-a-till-o/#J>

Klassiska Liberala Partiet

<http://www.liberalapartiet.se/content/liberala-partiet-a-till-o>

External Link, Youtube:**George Carlin:**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1prYbbnDs7Q>

Louis Theroux - The Brothel

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-XDKi86j0A>

Old Spice - Scent Vacation

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PJKAr1r5zIA>

Appendix

Prostitutes are Victims of Crime, Svenska Dagbladet (Swedish Daily Paper), Opinion/Brännpunkten, 9th of April, 2011.

Buying sex is a crime against humanity, equality and violates the dignity of the prostitute. The preparatory research done on the current Swedish anti-prostitution law consistently show that prostitution, both in Sweden as well as other equality well-developed countries, is usually the result of forced circumstances, which typically includes sexualized violence, poverty, homelessness, racism and gender discrimination.

Regardless of other factors, prostitution causes posttraumatic stress similar to those found in war-veterans, victims of torture, as well as victims of rape. [...] But even if Sweden is currently world leading by acknowledging buyers of sexual services as criminals and exploiters, Sweden lacks proper competence and professional staff to help those still entrapped in prostitution. Sex workers report they experience cold treatments by officials whom are supposed to help them.

But the government should further also acknowledge that all prostitutes are a victim of sexual crime, making the victims eligible for compensational damage. In addition of making buyers of sex and procurers of prostitutes legally liable, it would also financially help the prostitutes leave the profession. It would also strengthen the obligations of the municipals that, under the Law of Social Services, are required to provide help and support in such circumstances. A national center of knowledge should also provide additional documentation of their needs and expertise on the approach towards them.

The government's latest investigation showed that Sweden does not make a distinction between voluntary and involuntary prostitution, and drew the conclusion that the plaintiff should be allowed to try for compensational damage. If this is the case, then all prostitutes suffer damage by being bought for sex.

To view all who has been bought for sex as suffering from damage is more consequential and principally acceptable, as well as more practically achievable, then to demand that damage has to be proven case by case, even if the level of damage will vary from each person's circumstances.

Don't yield the Sex Purchase Act to anti-feminists. Newsmill, 24th of April, 2011

Schyman and others have recently argued that the act of prostitution is a form of violence against the female prostitutes, who is regarded as victims entitled to compensation by her male clients. As a feminist, I think the suffering of women in prostitution are worthy of society's compensation, but the Sex Purchase Act and its foundation must be nurtured. The law is being systematically undermined by the argumentation supplied by Schyman, as well as others.

Swedish women's movement is losing one of its most useful tools: an analysis of society in terms of a context larger than individuals, but where women's rights are also central. In the argument for laws important for

feminists, we see a more and more American-inspired rhetoric's in which individual interests are of central importance, and where the individual perspective overshadows a understandings that take a more coherent grasp on the meanings of sex and prostitution. [...]

It is about depicting the ban to be based upon a conception of prostitution being a form of violence against female prostitutes, thereby driving the perception that women in prostitution are considered victims entitled to compensation from their male buyers. I believe that this approach, though commendable, is misguided and based upon typical misconceptions of recent history. [...]

As political scientist Josefina Eriksson's upcoming thesis will tell, the issue of prostitution being a form of male violence against women was not discussed in debate. Such a perspective can be found in an American contemporary context. [...]

According to the social policy perspective, prostitution was a social problem, and the women in prostitution individuals who lived under difficult conditions. This approach was based on the research in the social work carried out in Sweden, and Prostitution Act was not discussed in terms of violence. [...]

Against this background, I argue that it is misleading to claim that the Swedish ban on the purchase of sexual services has been established on the basis of an analysis of prostitution being a form of violence against female prostitutes. The Act's creation should instead be seen as a response to a societal desire to curb the ideological, but irritatingly presented, grounds of undesirable activities. [...]

So why is this important? Do I not think that, as a feminist that women who suffers due to prostitution are worth society's compensation? [...]

Recently, the ban on the purchase of sexual services has been subjected to criticism from elsewhere, who believe that the law is anti-feminist. Essentially these arguments surmount to how counterproductive it is for feminism by preventing women from freely dispose of their bodies, as well as being an abuse of almost paternalistic spirit by invalidating the voices of women who hold that their involvement in prostitution is an outflow of one's free choice. Throughout, these critics pushes the claim that the Sex Purchase Act is a "radical feminist" law based on the notion that all women are victims, especially those in prostitution, and that a fundamental right that all women should be bestowed is the freedom to dispose of their bodies. [...]

The reactions have not been shortcoming. The amount of men and women, who wish to side with the "strong sexworker" is great.

There is indeed a strategic danger here: The individual perspective, or the discussion about the individual agent, will probably always be easier to grasp for most people than a more complex reasoning about gender cultural significances, or structural dimensions of an issue, if highlighted. [...] The tangible, rather than the abstract, appears easier for people to both grasp and to explain.

When this individual-centered perspective is launched in our Swedish context, votes to ban the Sex Purchase Act can easily get entwined with another, national, peculiarity: The Swedish contextual programmatic siding with "weaker party". It is an automatic advantage for the one being interpreted as "vulnerable". This posture fits like a glove for those who want to make sex workers appear squeezed between strong feminists and an expanding state.

Add to this the vulgar image that's being spread about feminist violence-research and it shows that the sex-purchase act, under Schyman and Borgström's argument, loses supporters already at the debates first breath. Without a basis in the laws preparatory work, they are trudging right into a prepared trap. [...]

Do not act in the cases of the critics by pointing towards the individual arena as the laws raison d'être ["reason to be"], for it is not true. [...]

Malin Roux: Introduce the Swedish Sex Purchase Act in EU - the connection between legal prostitution and slavery is clear. Aftonbladet, Startsidan/Debatt. 19th of December, 2012.

Human trafficking is today bigger than ever and the number of sex slaves, who stands for the majority share of the slave market, is increasing dramatically every year. In Europe alone, the estimated number of sex slaves is almost 700 000.

In the 1990s, Sweden took a big step forward with the introduction of the Sex Purchase Act. It was an effective measure against the problem at home, but is today not enough. Prostitution and human trafficking takes place across the borders and Sweden must take responsibility and engage in the international debate to deal with this serious crime.

During late autumn, many voices have been raised in the debate on the next step of the successful Swedish Sex Purchase Act. The discussion is whether Sweden should criminalize Swedes who buy sex abroad. It is important. But the big difference Sweden can do is to influence other European countries to adopt a similar law. Cecilia Malmström, Sweden's EU commissioner, responsible for trafficking issues, should stand up for Sweden's successful model. She, if anyone, has a real opportunity and responsibility to introduce a sex-purchase law at EU level.

The best action we can do to put a stop to human trafficking is to reduce the demand for prostitution at a European level. By criminalizing buyers of sex, it becomes illegal to buy sex for both Germans, Dutch and French, as for sightseeing Swedes. That would be a vigorous action to combat contemporary slavery.

For as long as there is a demand for buying sexual services, there will be a market. The connection between legal prostitution and the slave trade is clear - the greater the demand on sex slaves, the more intense trafficking becomes. We also know that it is not true that legal prostitution would remove the problem of exploitation of vulnerable people.

Almost all prostitution is forced, often because of a vulnerable situation that often emanate from serious problems in childhood. A common scenario is that women, very often minors, from Eastern Europe are lured by a better future in the West. Through an "agent" they offered "visa", travel, housing and jobs such as waitresses or model. Once in place, they become aware that they are in debt, is deprived of their passports, are locked away and that the only way to pay the debt is to sell their bodies. That threats, coercion and violence is normal under these circumstances is obvious.

We are therefore strongly critical of the "voluntary" prostitution available in many parts of Europe, and are worried that the development moves towards a normalized sex trade. There is nothing normal about the slave trade going on in Europe today.

According to the police and authorities, Sweden's sex-purchase law is a sharp tool in the fight against trafficking. The law clarifies that it is the sex-buyer whom performs a criminal act, not the prostitute, whom is almost exclusively a vulnerable person who had been forced into prostitution. The Sex Purchase Act has proven to be very effective in reducing the demand for sexual services, and thus also the slave trade.

RealStars encourages Swedish politicians not to be paralyzed and simply stand by while human trafficking is increasing dramatically in our vicinity. Through Cecilia Malmström in Brussels, we have a unique opportunity to make the most of the momentum we are seeing now, with France, Britain and several other countries, whom are considering introducing similar prostitution laws. We dared to take the first step towards the eradication of trafficking in the nineties - let us show that we are ready to go further!

Time to criminalize the Swedes sex purchases abroad. Dagens Nyheter (Daily News), Debatt, 24th of November, 2012.

Reduce demand. The Sex Purchase Act has led to significant progress in the fight against prostitution and human trafficking in Sweden. Now it's time for Sweden to protect women from prostitution and trafficking worldwide. [...]

Of the government parties, only the Christian Democrats have advances the notion of the criminalization of buying sex abroad (since 2009). The Left Party, the Social Democrats and the Green Party have also advanced the issue. But now stands Center Women, Christian Democratic Women's Group and the Liberal Women behind the demand for criminalization of sex purchases by Swedish citizens abroad.

It is high time that Swedish citizens is no longer able to legally contribute to global trafficking, which is behind that 1.2 million women and children are bought and sold every year. It is also time to stop accepting the widespread violence that occurs against women in so-called voluntary prostitution. The only way to reduce the exploitation of women in prostitution, human trafficking and sex slavery is to work against the demand - that is to criminalize the buyers who create the supply.

On one hand to have a law that criminalizes prostitution nationally, but then look the other way when Swedish citizens instead travels abroad to buy sex from even more vulnerable women, is hypocrisy and a double

standards. Both women that are sold into human trafficking as well as those who sell themselves "voluntary" in prostitution is almost always marginalized and poor women, with no alternatives methods of finance.

Increased globalization and tourism meets new challenges when the sex trade increasingly transgresses national boundaries. With globalization also comes an increased demand on citizen behavior beyond borders. To export the purchase of sex to abroad, where women are even more vulnerable, is not acceptable. Here, Sweden must make a definite stand.

The most common argument against the criminalization of buying sex abroad is the so-called dual criminality, that is, the requirement that an act committed in another country must be criminal both there and in Sweden in order for someone to be able to face criminal charges. However, since 2005, Swedes can be convicted of sexual offenses against children abroad, but not those who buy sexual services of adult prostitutes. One can also be convicted of serious violent crimes and economic crimes across borders. Apparently, Sweden sees economic crimes as more serious than the use of a power imbalance and the purchase of poor women's bodies.

Women Center, Christian Democratic Women's Group and the Liberal Women emphasizes that Sweden can no longer hide behind the argument of double criminality. It's a matter of priorities and political will.

Obviously, children should be protected from sex, but why can Sweden see the critical need to protect a 17 ½ year old with international collaborations while a 18 ½-year-old should have no rights? Buying her then is suddenly not a violent assault, even if she is a victim of human trafficking, in which case she not only victim of abused, but also repetitively raped without the ability to change their situation. Isn't that a form of human rights violations?

It is Sweden's responsibility to comply with Norway in a progressive legislation that paves the way for more countries. Only then can the unimaginably cruel trafficking decrease, and only then can we put an end to the violence that occurs daily against female prostitutes all over the world, even in legal brothels - with legal sanction.

We now urge the government to follow the example of Norway, and endorse Christian Democratic Women's Group, Center Women and the Liberal Party Liberal Women demand to the criminalization of Swedish citizen's sexual purchases - even abroad.

The next step for Sweden is to abolish the requirement of double criminality, so that Swedes can be sentenced in Sweden for sexual purchases abroad. Exploiting women's imbalance of power, vulnerability and poverty are equally reprehensible wherever it occurs, and sex crimes and prostitution cannot be separated from human trafficking. It is time that the government takes this issue seriously. Sweden can be better.

Why the trafficking policy is a failure. Expressen. 23rd of July, 2008.

Over Loaded refugee boats in the Mediterranean are not indicative of sex-buyers 'demand' but of the poverty in the home countries of the immigrants as well as the West's restrictive immigration policy. Nevertheless, the government continues to simplify the picture of trafficked victims. But many trafficking victims do not identify

themselves with Lilja, in the movie "Lilja 4-ever". We must recognize the desperation that makes people fall into a corrupt form of migration in which they are used.

The government recently announced a new plan of action to combat trafficking. Under the proposal, the law against prostitution and human trafficking are tightened considerably. It talks about secretive eavesdropping and that the police can get permission to entrapment. The risk is, however, that this repressive policy becomes an empty gesture. The government continues namely to assume that the victims of trafficking are women and children who are lured or kidnapped from their poor homelands, transported to Sweden, incarcerated, raped and forced into prostitution.

Sweden has since the beginning of the 21-century spread this idea, both at home as well as abroad, such as by allowing Lukas Moodysson's film "Lilja 4-ever" be part of their anti-trafficking campaign. But the picture of the girl who falls in love with a pimp and promised a job as a waitress in the West, are increasingly challenged by researchers of migration around the world. These migration researchers argue that human trafficking should rather be described as a corrupt form of migration. While there are traffickers that attract poor women with false promises, this is not the whole truth.

The government's plan ignores the fact that prostitution is one of a few options for people in very desperate situations to actively change their situation. Most often, "trafficking victim" or "migrant sex worker" do not differentiate from other migrants in the sense that they leave their home countries with the hope of being able to save up money for a better future, to support the family or to finance their children's education. The lack of legal migration opportunities, as well as the Western world's increasingly stringent border control, forces migrating people so seek out criminal alternatives. How are they to otherwise get into Europe? A repressive policy therefore does not reduce the slave trade, but rather contributes to a greater desperation and vulnerability, and to a more advanced criminal activity.

By ignoring the links between migration and human trafficking, the government expresses an outdated attitude towards women. Just like previously, the planned policy on trafficking focuses on foreign women in the Swedish sex industry. Poor men trying to go to Sweden to improve their situation are therefore instead considered illegal immigrants. Women are sold and men migrate, that's the perception. This distinction, between "sold" women and "migrating" men, obfuscates on one hand women's ability to act, and on the other hand, the violence that also men can be exposed to when they, in the absence of legal migration opportunities, are forced to contact smugglers.

Most foreign women, present in the sex industry in Europe, have had good reason to migrate. Migration researcher Rutvica Andrijasevic has investigated anti-trafficking information distributed by aid projects in Eastern Europe. Andrijasevic believe that many of these awareness campaigns miss their purposes, since women who are trying to make conscious decisions do not recognize themselves in the campaigns as naive girls looking for a job as a waitress in the West, but ends up with a pimp. The attempts made to discourage women

from leaving their homes have been questioned by immigration researchers, who point out that not even the knowledge of the dangers associated with illegal immigration deter desperate people from going to Europe.

Each overloaded refuge boat in the Mediterranean is a sign that it is not sex-buyers 'demand' who is the main reason for trafficking, but rather poverty in the migrants' home country and the West's restrictive immigration policy.

Not only aid organizations, but also the police are fighting on losing ground if they are based on a simplified picture of trafficking. That it is difficult to identify cases of trafficking if we assume the wrong template is well known to the justice system. The Human Trafficking Investigation, submitted in April, have examined why the law against human trafficking, which came into force in July 2002, led to fewer convictions than expected. Until March 2008 fifteen judgments became final. Based on interviews with prosecutors the investigating committee concluded that the unrealistic description of trafficking in the preparatory work of the legislation in many cases prevented an application of the rules.

Migrants and victims of trafficking are subjected to abuse and exploitation, but this exploitation does not necessarily appear like the one the government envisions. With its simplistic description of the problem, the government unfortunately risk being unable to help anyone.

A myth that people are forced into prostitution. Expressen, 10th of May, 2007.

Prostitution is a profession like any other - but with unusually high salaries. They should now have the chance to sign collective agreements with their pimps. So writes CUF secretary Leo Pierini in an opinion piece in Jönköping Now.

What exactly is the law on prostitution? Sex Purchase Act is a law that criminalizes a specific profession. Because some people do not like a particular profession, it should be annulled. What if the public opinion suddenly begins to consider it is immoral to be car dealers, should car sales then be banned?

No, moral lectures should be kept out of politics and law books. We must accept that adults are capable of making decisions that concerns themselves. If an adult makes the career choice to work as a prostitute, I see nothing wrong with that. That "people are forced into it" is a myth. In Sweden we have unemployment insurance, welfare and other contributions that makes sure you insured, even if you don't have a job. Therefore I do not understand how people can feel forced into prostitution. It is rather that prostitution is a lucrative profession with high salaries.

In the current situation, it is illegal to buy sex. This mean that prostitution is not classed as a profession. But it exists nonetheless! This means that prostitutes are not entitled to the same rights that other workers have. This creates a market in which crime flourishes. A free market would create a transparency that is currently lacking. It would be easier to eradicate trafficking and other problems. If prostitutes received unemployment benefits,

unions, collective wage agreements and the like, their situation would undoubtedly become better and they would be able to write legal contracts with pimps.

In most cases, you reduce supply by reducing demand but this apparently has not worked in this case. Legalized prostitution would probably lead to higher demand, which would lead to higher prices, which would lead to more money and a more tolerable situation for the prostitutes.