

OPINION: The Problem With Prostitution

This is not an article bashing prostitutes. This is merely a personal concern I have with the practice of prostitution given my personal experiences living in New Bedford for 22 years. We are all entitled to our own opinions, and I certainly welcome differing points of view. After all, that is how we are able to learn and grow as a productive society.

Perhaps it isn't popular opinion, but I believe prostitution should be legalized and regulated to remove it from public view. Not because of personal taste; I've never seriously considered paying for sex myself. Instead, I believe it should be legal because people will partake regardless, and regulating it will help solve other nuisances caused by it. Public nuisances, specifically.

I've been solicited by a prostitute within a few car lengths from my driveway several times in the past couple of months. One time I recall stopping to turn onto County street, just seconds away from my home, to head to work on a Saturday morning. A familiar face approached my car, with my windows rolled up, the second she saw my head turn in her direction to check for oncoming traffic.

Some would tell me to just ignore them, but in that moment I chose to engage for the sake of treating her like a human being. I've ignored them so many times and they still show up again, so why not try something else? My thought was to look her in the eyes and say "no" to simply save her time and mine, because I knew the shtick was coming. And as soon as I roll down my window to reject her sales pitch, she leans on the glass window of my driver's side door and proceeds to give me..."the eyes". She didn't even give me a chance to speak. She was right to the point, "wanna go on a date?"

And that really pissed me off even more.

I begrudgingly let out a cold “no” and turned onto County, but not before she walked in front of my car to get to the sidewalk. I didn’t want to get into a shouting contest with some random prostitute outside of my house, especially since I knew she’d be at the next block in a minute or two anyway.

My point is this: I don’t care that others make money having sex with people. It’s hard to get ahead (no pun intended) in 2017, and if consenting adults wish to do this (without harming anybody) then they will find a way whether or not others want them to. The part that is concerning is that these types of disrespectful, uncomfortable encounters happen on our streets DAILY.

The same woman that I mentioned had asked me on a date did the same thing a few years ago. But this time it was on a Friday night and I had my girlfriend with me. It was funnier then-one of the first times it had happened to me. But now? It’s a frustrating, regular occurrence.

I know I am not the only person in New Bedford who deals with these kind of encounters. And that is why in a way I feel that the problem is not being addressed. Because we are desensitized to them happening. Prostitution as a whole is one of the oldest practices in human history. New Bedford has undoubtedly had an issue with prostitutes polluting the streets, but prosecuting these people has proved ineffective.

I don’t believe it should be the city’s responsibility to fund sites for prostitution to take place, but I do believe people should be able to engage in intercourse for money.

I believe our police force should not have to spend time busting prostitutes on Purchase Street every night, and that our citizens don’t deserve to be solicited in such a way.

So the question remains; what should New Bedford do about

prostitution? How does the city get it off the streets while knowing that odds are it will still exist regardless?