

*Making Sex Work* is a study of Victoria’s 20-year experience of legalised prostitution. Sullivan begins from the radical feminist position that, given our patriarchal society, there is no possibility of a woman freely choosing prostitution. According to this view, no males are exploited by the sex industry: the victims are all female. There is something very nineteenth-century about a statement like ‘As a prostituted woman sells her womanhood, she sells something that is integral to her identity and self.’ She is careful with her rhetoric: using ‘prostituted women’ instead of ‘prostitutes’, and enclosing ‘sex work’ in scare quotes. ‘Liberal’ is always a pejorative term, and assertions of men’s biological need for sex are treated with contumely. Despite her controlled vocabulary, however, the book is riddled with sloppy expressions and ill-defined and ambiguous statistics.

Nevertheless, Sullivan has significant points to make. It is clear that there can be no guarantee of occupational health and safety for sex workers, and under the Victorian legislation the industry it ostensibly aims to control has unexpectedly expanded in both its legal and illegal forms. Although imperfect both as report and rhetoric, *Making Sex Work* is ultimately a convincing exposition of an important, and rather shocking, topic.