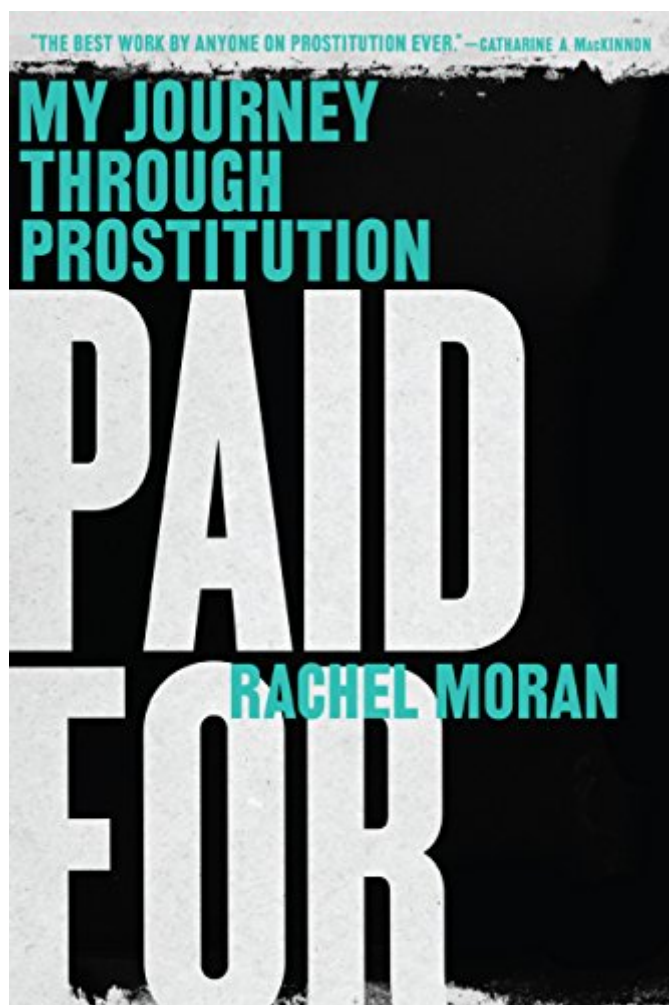


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Paid For: My Journey Through Prostitution



Synopsis

An astonishingly brave memoir of prostitution and its lingering influence on a woman's psyche and life. "The best work by anyone on prostitution ever, Rachel Moran's *Paid For* fuses the memoirist's lived poignancy with the philosopher's conceptual sophistication. The result is riveting, compelling, incontestable. Impossible to put down. This book provides all anyone needs to know about the reality of prostitution in moving, insightful prose that engages and disposes of every argument ever raised in its favor." • Catharine A. MacKinnon, law professor, University of Michigan and Harvard University

Born into a troubled family, Rachel Moran left home at the age of fourteen. Being homeless, she was driven into prostitution to survive. With intelligence and empathy, she describes the exploitation she and others endured on the streets and in the brothels. Moran also speaks to the psychological damage inherent to prostitution and the inevitable estrangement from one's body. At twenty-two, Moran escaped the sex trade. She has since become a writer and an abolitionist activist.

Book Information

File Size: 974 KB

Print Length: 313 pages

Publisher: W. W. Norton & Company; 1 edition (September 8, 2015)

Publication Date: August 20, 2015

Sold by: Amazon Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00TG24BDK

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #248,616 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #72

in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Ethnic & National > Irish #492 in Kindle Store >

Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Politics & Social Sciences > Women's Studies #1251 in Kindle

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Customer Reviews

Not only one of the best books of prostitution ever written, this is one of the best books I've ever read. Rachel Moran's work should be taught in colleges and universities, and read by elected officials everywhere. Heartbreaking and hopeful, tragic and triumphant, "Paid For" is an emotionally-draining book that details the sex industry in a way that more people need to understand,

This is an important look at prostitution. Moran shatters stereotypes and introduces new ways to think about this exploitation. She uses her own experience in prostitution, stories from other prostituted individuals, and extensive research to explain entering this industry, the effects of prostitution on the body and mind, interactions with others, the struggle to emerge from prostitution, and many other topics. The book is well organized and easy to follow. It is not an easy read emotionally and forces the reader to confront this topic and all of its ugliness, but it is a very important, unique work.

Punches the lights out of "victimless" crime to say why it is always a victim crime. First person story about how it happened to her and what it did to her

Plumbs the depths of the misunderstandings, lies, and ignorance about "sex" for sale (if you are selling or buying it, it is not sex) phenomena. Explanations of prostitution - good, bad, or indifferent- had left me with cognitive dissonance all my life until Moran's frank and illuminating exposure.

Clear-eyed where honesty is most rare, and with the hard-won courage it takes to think up-close, unflinchingly, about experiences the dominant culture does everything to cover up, the author tells us what prostitution is, what it is like, uncovering the specific realities that make up the enormous harm it does. She thinks, and thinks well, where usually we find the full spectrum of our ways of avoiding both understanding and responsibility.

Rachel Moran has written not just a moving memoir, but also a powerful critique of the sex industry, and the callous notion that prostituted persons consent to their abuse. She aptly demonstrates how those who benefit from prostitution (pimps and johns --- or prostituters, as she calls them) prey upon the least powerful and the most marginalized, profiting from their desperation, poverty, youth and prior experience of abuse to reap profits for, and satisfy the desires of, those who are in positions of power over the prostituted. Anyone who believes prostitution is a consensual act between equal

parties needs to read this book. Some truly horrible policies are being promoted right now that seek to legalize and normalize the abuse of prostitution (in the name of human rights, no less!) If you're interested in sound policies on prostitution, listen to survivors and read this book.

Rachel Moran's deeply personal story about her experience as a prostituted young woman is richly enhanced by her masterful use of words to describe her journey into and out of prostitution and to present a convincing argument against why society should never legitimize prostitution.

I remember attending a book talk at the public library some years back. The discussion was about Black slave women who had been sexually abused by their owners prior to Abolition in the United States. When I mentioned that Black women (and other women) can be found on many streets in this city today, that they often have owners (pimps) who beat or even kill them, and that anyone can pay to sexually abuse them, the Black woman leading the discussion cut me off and said that I was off-topic. Rachel Moran has, with great difficulty, managed to say something that this society doesn't want to talk about. I agree with Catherine MacKinnon that *Paid For* is the best book about prostitution ever written. Our culture doesn't allow animals to be abused like that, and should not allow human beings to be abused and exploited for the gratification of those with more money. About fifty years ago I knew a prostituted woman in New York. We became friends and she eventually told me that she did it because she needed the money for drugs. She needed the drugs because every time she turned a trick she would come home and vomit and then feel depressed. It was obvious that she wasn't enjoying what she was doing, so I suggested that she look for somebody she found attractive and try sleeping with him just for fun. She actually did it, and the next thing I knew she had stopped selling her body and opened a small fashion design studio. So I know from personal experience that what Rachel Moran says in this book is true. To be able to love in a society that has turned sex into a commodity is a rare and precious thing worth fighting for. I can only hope that everyone who reads this book goes on to join the fight.

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