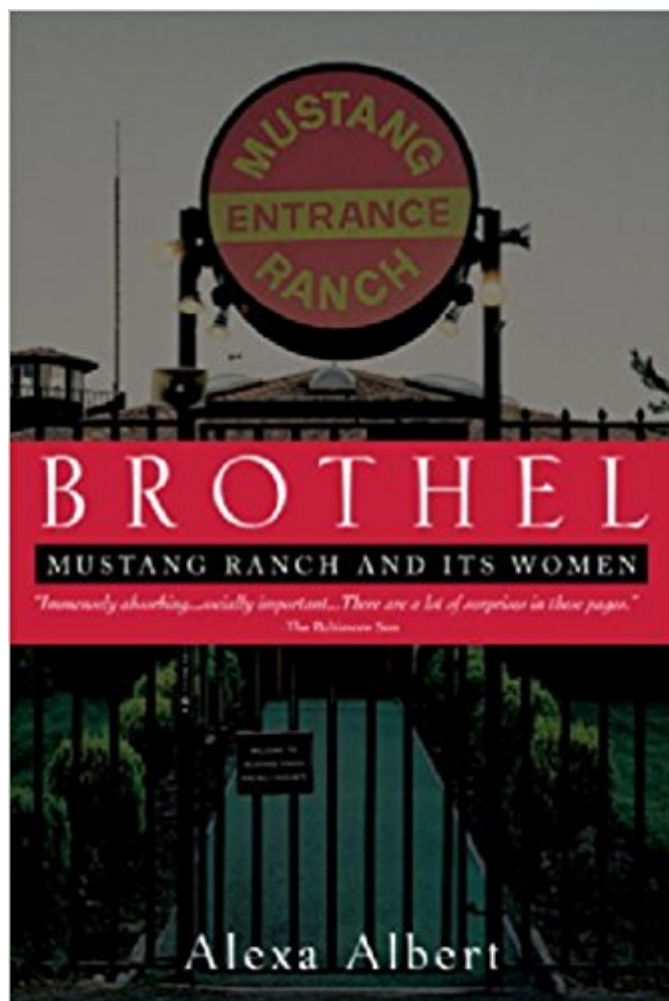


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Brothel: Mustang Ranch And Its Women



Synopsis

When Harvard medical student Alexa Albert conducted a public-health study at the Mustang Ranch brothel in Nevada, the only state in the union where prostitution is legal, neither she nor the brothel could have predicted the end result. Having worked with homeless prostitutes in Times Square, Albert was intimate with human devastation caused by the sex trade, and curious to see if Nevada's brothels offered a less harmful model for a business that will always be with us. The Mustang Ranch has never before given an outsider such access, but fear of AIDS was hurting the business, and the Ranch was eager to get publicity for its rigorous standards of sexual hygiene. Albert was drawn into the lives of the women of the Mustang Ranch, and what began as a public-health project evolved into something more intimate and ambitious, a six-year study of the brothel ecosystem, its lessons and significance. The women of the Mustang Ranch poured their stories out to Albert: how they came to be there, their surprisingly deep sense of craft and vocation, how they reconciled their profession with life on the outside. Dr. Albert went as far into this world as it is possible to go — some will say too far — including sitting in on sessions with customers, and the result is a book that puts an unforgettable face on America's maligned and caricatured subculture. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

A journey into a fascinating subculture, Alexa Albert's exploration of Nevada's infamous cathouses began as a public-health study into the safe-sex practices of these legal working girls and the effectiveness of condom requirements in preventing sexually transmitted diseases. It took her three

years to gain access to the brothels, and when her project was eventually approved by the head of the Nevada Brothel Association, she was surprised to be invited to stay at Mustang Ranch, among the women of the brothel, for the duration of her research. She learned that despite the legalization of prostitution in several counties of Nevada, the working girls still faced restrictive local ordinances and work regulations that kept them virtual prisoners inside the brothel compound. Outside, they encountered the same social stigma that has always haunted sex workers. In her compassionate, engaging first book, Albert answers all the questions you might ever have about prostitutes, providing a rich and nuanced depiction of a largely hidden world. --Regina Marler --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Perhaps the most prominent legal brothel in Nevada, Mustang Ranch held mythical status in contemporary Western culture until it was shut down on racketeering charges in 1999. As a medical student, Albert was granted rare access to this intensely private world in order to conduct a study on condom use, and lived periodically at Mustang Ranch from 1993 to 1999. Her routine study soon deepened in tandem with her curiosity about the politics of prostitution and about the prostitutes themselves. In this straightforward account, she details the brothel regimen (from the women's relative captivity to what happens during various "parties") and explores the private lives of the women who work there, as well as those of the "johns" and the workers who service the Ranch. Yet the heart of the book lies in Albert's exploration of the sense of family that thrives in the brothel with all the fractious infighting, competition and camaraderie inherent in any community. Her short history of the legalization of prostitution in Nevada revolves around Joe and Sally Conforte who officially owned Mustang Ranch until charges of tax evasion forced Joe into hiding in South America in 1990 while illuminating the confluence of public opinion and economic forces that spurred legalization. Acknowledging her own feelings (which range from disgust to profound respect), Albert convincingly dispels myths about this mysterious world and provides a strong defense for the legalization of prostitution. (May 15)Forecast: More current and sociological than last year's *The Last Madam* (which was set in New Orleans), this engrossing, plainly told account should attract considerable attention as Albert travels the country on her seven-city tour. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

the author spends the entire first chapter disclosing how judgmental she is of the women she's going to "study" and the rest of the book trying to convince they audience that those women are somehow psycho for noticing it and "getting better" by "learning to trust" (getting acclimated to) her

phony presence. not really sociology or even ethically responsible journalism or interactions, but I guess it was hard to figure out where else to shelve it.

The book is well written and researched. The author did a great job telling the story behind the ladies who work in the brothel. Reading this book convinced me there should be legal brothels in every country. I wasn't sure before, but I now have a more educated opinion. Thanks Alexa Albert.

I liked the writing style, easy to read. I found the entire book interesting, detailing lifestyles I was not knowledgeable about. I would recommend this book highly and hope that such books will help with the legalization of prostitution and brothels.

This book reveals many things about the lives of prostitutes that most of us probably never would have imagined (Nair in the shampoo to drive competing girls away, the taboo against working too hard to promote yourself in "the lineup" while greeting a customer, the necessity of tipping the staff to ensure loyalty. . .) It's a balanced view of the positives and negatives. Lower crime rates and rates of VD are weighed in the scale with the fact that some women are browbeaten and coerced into the business (one by a husband, one by a mother-in-law, one by her own mother) and, once in, pressured to earn more and more. Still stigmatized and isolated, the women rely on each other even as they bicker and compete. A particularly moving episode involves a baby shower at the brothel, extravagant and exuberant. This would be a good read for men who believe any emotion is sold along with the physical contact. It's clear that the motto is, as ever, "A trick is to be tricked." This book strips away much of the fantasy. It's a wonderful story.

I loved this book from start to finish. It is one of my all time favorites. In fact is the probably the fastest I can remember reading a book because I could not put it down. I will reread it sometime. It was like a great movie, worth the time more than once. The author does an outstanding job of writing about her experience in the brothel. She goes into good detail about how her time there opened her eyes to a lot of things. I really don't want to say anymore because I don't want to give anything away. It was just a great book. Sorry this review is not very detailed. I just can't seem to put into words how to express how much I loved reading this.

An academic and personal perspective on one of our nation's most illicit passtimes. This book will forever change your preconceived notions on why women choose a career in prostitution and how

their career motives are not that different than your own.

Well written narrative with great insights into the operation of Nevada brothels.

It's too bad this isn't required reading for "I've got my mind made up, don't confuse me with the facts," anti-prostitution people. Alexa Albert is a graduate from the Harvard school of medicine, and she brings a balanced, non-emotional, non-judgmental perspective to the topic of legal prostitution in Nevada (which is pretty rare for this topic). This book adds a candid, human dimension to the lives of sex workers. Highly recommended reading for anyone who wants the real story.

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