

Sex Work Reading List  
Lorelei Lee

My writing:

- [Cash/Consent](#) in n+1 magazine
- [Once You Have Made Pornography](#) in The Establishment
- [An Open Letter to the NY Times, From a Porn Performer](#) in Bust Magazine
- [How I Earned My Porn Star Name](#), excerpted from the anthology [Coming Out Like a Porn Star](#)
- [Bernie Sanders and my Mom and the Attack on Sex Workers](#) in The Establishment (on FOSTA)
- [Hustling Verse](#)

My top pick, must-read books by people with lived experience include:

- [Heauxthots](#) by femi babylon (formerly known as suprihmbé)
- [Revoltng Prostitutes: The Fight For Sex Workers' Rights](#) by Juno Mac and Molly Smith
- [Playing the Whore: the Work of Sex Work](#) by Melissa Gira Grant
- [\\$pread](#) the \$pread Magazine anthology (sold out on Fem Press, but available elsewhere)

Here are some really excellent online essays and articles all written by, or very much centering the voices of, people with lived experience trading sex:

- I curated this [Sex Work Symposium](#) on Yale's Law and Political Economy last year, and the pieces [by femi babylon](#) (formerly suprihmbé a.k.a thotscholar)(on "sex positivity" and the consent/violence binary) and [Maya Morena](#) (formerly Gilda Merlot)(on sex work, trafficking, and criminalization of immigration) are so tremendously excellent
- Melissa Gira Grant is a journalist with SW experience who has been covering sex work issues for 20 years. Everything she writes is excellent. [Here](#) (on the New Orleans dancer movement) and [here](#) (on the 'walking while trans' law in NY) and here ("The Price of a Sex-Slave Rescue Fantasy") are just a few great pieces
- [Tits and Sass](#) is a long-running blog written and edited by and for sex workers. They are an incredibly vital resource with a wealth of pieces from sex workers of tremendously varied backgrounds, identities, and experiences. Do browse their archives and read everything you can, but don't miss [On Backpage](#) (the best analysis you'll ever read of the much-maligned website) by Caty Simon of [Whose Corner Is It Anyway](#) (link leads to their GFM which also contains all the orgs updates and info if you scroll down and read through); [The Right to Survive: the Case of Alisha Walker](#) by members of [Support Ho\(s\)e Collective](#); [Nothing Scarier Than A Black Trans Woman With a Degree: An Interview With Monica Jones](#) by Caty Simon
- Read everything ever written by [Adrie Rose](#), including [this piece on social media](#), [this open letter to Cardi B](#), and [this review of the movie Hustlers](#)
- While you're reading about Hustlers, read [this analysis of what the movie gets wrong about sex work](#) by members of [Red Canary Song](#)
- Definitely read a few pieces on the rarely-understood intersection of sex work and disability, including [As a Sex Worker with a Chronic Illness, FOSTA Means Losing my Medical Care](#) by Zia Moon, [Paying a Stripper Isn't About Buying Consent. It's a Feminist Act](#) by Reese Piper and [The "Bad Patient:" When Doctors Drive People With Mental Illness to Suicide](#) by sex worker and trafficking survivor Laura LeMoon
- In fact, read everything by Laura LeMoon, who is brilliant, including [this piece](#) on what trafficking survivors would rather have than FOSTA
- Read about sex work and parenting [here](#) and [here](#)

- Read Jenna Torres' first-person account of surviving Human Trafficking Intervention Court [here](#)
- Read about the complexities of being categorized as an employee vs as an independent contractor in [this Reese Piper piece](#) and about better labor laws for strippers in [this Susan Elizabeth piece](#)

These books are sex work classics (may contain some outdated language and info, but still full of rich analysis), primarily written by people with experience trading sex:

- [Rent Girl](#) by Michelle Tea
- [Cooking in Heels](#) by Ceyenne Doroshow
- [Trick and Treats: Sex Workers Write About Their Clients](#), anthology edited by Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore
- [Whores and Other Feminists](#), anthology edited by Jill Nagle (includes Carol Leigh's first-person account of coining the term "sex work")
- [Working Sex: Sex Workers Write About a Changing Industry](#), anthology edited by Annie Oakley
- [The Feminist Porn Book](#), anthology edited by Tristan Taormino, Constance Penly, and Mireille Miller-Young (I have an essay in this one that I would extremely like to edit and update)
- [Sex Work: Writings by Women in the Sex Industry](#), anthology edited by Priscilla Alexander and Frederique Delacoste

And a couple of stand-out books by writers who have not (to my knowledge) self-identified as having lived experience:

- [Sex at the Margins](#) by Laura Agustín
- [I've Got to Make My Livin': Black Women's Sex Work in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago](#) by Cynthia M. Blair
- [Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments](#) by Saidiya Hartman
- [Sex Workers, Psychics, and Numbers Runners](#) by LaShawn Harris
- [A Taste of Brown Sugar](#) by Mireille Miller-Young