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Sex Work Politics: From Protest to Service Provision (American Governance: Politics, Policy, and Public Law)

Samantha Majic

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In San Francisco, the St. James Infirmary (SJI) and the California Prostitutes Education Project (CAL-PEP) provide free, nonjudgmental medical care, counseling, and other health and social services by and for sex workers—a radical political commitment at odds with government policies that criminalize prostitution. To maintain and expand these much-needed services and to qualify for funding from state, federal, and local authorities, such organizations must comply with federal and state regulations for nonprofits. In *Sex Work Politics*, Samantha Majic investigates the way nonprofit organizations negotiate their governmental obligations while maintaining their commitment to outreach and advocacy for sex workers' rights as well as broader sociopolitical change.

Drawing on multimethod qualitative research, Majic outlines the strategies that CAL-PEP and SJI employ to balance the conflicting demands of service and advocacy, which include treating sex work as labor with legitimate occupational health and safety concerns, empowering their clients with civic skills to advance their political commitments outside the nonprofit organization, and conducting and publishing research and analysis to inform the public and policymakers of their constituents' needs. Challenging the assumption that activists must "sell out" and abandon radical politics to manage formal organizations, Majic comes to the surprising conclusion that it is indeed possible to maintain effective advocacy and key social movement values, beliefs, and practices, even while partnering with government agencies. *Sex Work Politics* significantly contributes to studies of transformational politics with its nuanced portrait of nonprofits as centers capable of sustaining political and social change.

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