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Censorship and Morality

by Joe Escobar - Friday, April 12, 2013, 5:07 PM

This forum thread is for Censorship and Morality posts and replies.

After studying the required materials, address the individual questions in SEPARATE posts.

To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post.

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IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

Since there are multiple questions, BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post. Don't simply leave it RE: Censorship and Morality

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Censorship and Morality

by Travis Jones - Monday, April 15, 2013, 11:05 PM

Regarding the Sapho episode I found it interesting that the idea of having such things as even a mouth to mouth kiss in public could draw such a stir, enough so to cause a criminal trial of immorality and indecency to take place. Luckily the acquittals were quick and clean for the sake of freedom of expression and just a required step towards the shape of the current industry of art expression. I think that the fact the certain groups found it wrong and immoral and were able to have it brought into the court room draws directly from the political influence the groups must have had on the New York political scene, and nothing more.

The Mann act law is utterly absurd, and as such in the case of Jack Johnson it pertains to allow those in power to blur the lines to meet what they feel and felt was socially acceptable. At the time in 1913 the idea of a black man and white woman together was outrageous and as such they cast the woman as a prostitute. The wording in the law of debauchery is a clear cut use of finding a means to outlaw a

form of change, the old guard vs. new guard way of thinking. This law as far as I am concerned was not needed then nor needed now, because of its loose applications and ability to go off the ideas of individuals as far as what would be morally wrong when it's not a rights violation. It was able to be passed based on yellow journalism of rumors, with no factual evidence.

I think that while the moralities of the turn of the 20th century and today are somewhat similar we still as the same of our leaders to be clean when in the end they are still merely human. The morality of 100 years ago is different in the sense that things we often do now in public back then were not only frowned upon but borderline illegal as per the Sapho indecency trial. Yet when a politician is caught in some sort scandal then they are crucified and forced to resign. It's the very in equalities we put on public figures. A lot of Americans commit acts they would publicly condemn for the sake not not being socially outcast.

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Re: Censorship and Morality; Mann Act

by Morgan Martinka - Friday, April 19, 2013, 11:23 AM

The Sapho video stated, "all laws are product of their time" which seems to me to be the case of the Mann Act which passed in 1910. In a time where woman were considered inferior to men, blacks inferior to whites, and seemingly everything was "immoral". I have heard no cases in which this act was necessary, only cases that were stemmed by racism or later acquitted. The fact alone that the Mann Act was passed mostly due to rumors of forced prostitution is enough for me to deem it unnecessary. The only point brought up for the Mann Act being necessary today is to prevent human trafficking which several other laws already cover. The Mann Act is a perfect example of what can happen when the government attempts to regulate behaviors of citizen you end up with outdated laws that contradict basic American rights and freedoms.

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Re: Censorship and Morality; Sapho

by Morgan Martinka - Saturday, April 20, 2013, 8:10 PM

It's hard growing up in this day in age to put yourself in the narrow mindset of the early 1900s. Today Sapho would probably be considered suitable for young audiences, yet back then it was considered so scandalous that Ulga was arrested for violating public decency. I find it interesting that after she was acquitted more people saw the show because of all the publicity it had received. It's ironic that the "guardians of public morality" actually brought more attention to this show by trying to ban it. History has shown that censorship can cause the public to gravitate to a situation, in turn causing even more problems than if it had been left alone. During

prohibition, for example, alcohol was banned only to become controlled by mobs who caused more problems than if the substance had remained legal. It's human nature to want to see, or have what others tell us that we can't- or shouldn't- have-it seems as evident then as much as now.

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