

HST 203: History of the United States Sp14 (Escobar Meta 41237 41238)

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Censorship and Morality

by Joe Escobar - Friday, April 11, 2014, 11:51 PM

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

After studying the required materials, address the questions in your posts.

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

To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post. Do NOT simply leave it

RE: Censorship and Morality

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Sapho and the Mann Act (Cencorship and Morality)

by Kellee Harbour - Monday, April 14, 2014, 8:45 PM

This was interesting to me to see what happened in the Sapho video. Today's standards are so different to those back in the times Sapho was made. To see the scandal create awareness about the play's content was interesting and the fact the popularity of the play increased because of it is incredible. Today the media is littered with scandalous imagery and content and to see the uproar this play caused was fascinating.

I believe the Mann act was necessary to pass. Some people believe that the government controlling them is wrong, but I think that certain things need to be not necessary controlled but regulated.

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Re: Sapho and the Mann Act (Censorship and Morality)

by Dakarai Hightower - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 9:56 PM

I like how you did a sort of compromise with the Mann Act. Yes the government controlling people is wrong, but it does need to be regulated. Because what some people may have an idea of a moral, may not be the same idea to others. Like with Jack Johnson, who knows what his reasoning was, but maybe he thought it was just another fast way to earn money. But that reasoning was clearly not the same to other people.

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Sapho and morality

by Emily Kiernan - Monday, April 14, 2014, 10:46 PM

Coming from today's standards I find it hard to believe that Sapho was as scandalous and controversial as it was at the time. I found it interesting that public interest and popularity spiked after the scandal. In today's media we see examples of this all the time; scandals peak people's interest and in turn gain popularity.

I don't think that the Mann act was ever necessary in our countries history and certainly isn't needed today. The government ultimately shouldn't have the power to legislate our countries morality. Although we as a nation have made tremendous progress since the turn of the century the United States is still a fairly conservatively moral country that looks down upon "promiscuity".

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Re: Sapho and morality

by Daniel Halverson - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 8:53 PM

I agree and feel that the Sapho issue that wasn't really an issue was blown out of the water. It may not be a big deal when we look at it now, but during those times it was unheard of for sexuality to be shown. I also found it interesting that after everything was cleared up and the shows resumed that it became more popular. It seems fitting though as in today's age when something brings negative press, it draws in a lot more people wanting to know what is going on.

I would have to say I disagree on the man act not being necessary. One issue it did bring was how would someone be able to decide if someone is transporting a prostitute, or actually with their wife or girlfriend? Besides that I do think that it made people less likely to risk transporting prostitutes between states with the fear of getting in trouble.

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Re: Sapho and morality

by Dakarai Hightower - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 11:42 PM

I'm not saying it is necessary but im also not saying that it isnt. Like someone had said in a post, it needs to be regulated. And I completely agree with that statement. The Mann Act can be really strict, and that is kind of the nature of what the act is designed to do. But there needs to be some type of limitations to the power of the Mann Act.

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Sapho and censorship

by Sarah Riebe - Monday, April 14, 2014, 11:07 PM

This video was very interesting. Like others were saying, in today's standards this wouldn't even be an issue at all. The way the public reacted is very similar as they would today. Drama and crisis interests people in different ways and that's still the same as it was back then.

I thought it was kinda funny she got arrested just because that just sounds crazy that someone could go to jail for showing a little bit of a sexual side.

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Morality, Now and Then

by Serena Williams - Tuesday, April 15, 2014, 1:28 AM

I was also surprised when I watched the Sapho video. I couldn't believe they arrested that woman for an act she did in a play and when I thought about it, I realized that something like that these days would barely even be a blip on a radar today.

The Mann Act was most likely necessary back then just as it is needed currently. But just because something is a law doesn't mean it always gets obeyed. There are always going to be those people who live to disobey the rule but that doesn't mean regulation of certain things should stop.

When Eliot Spitzer's sex scandal went public, he must have been humiliated and on top of that it caused major problems for him and his election. I don't think the fact that he resigned because of the incident means that we have kind of the same level of morality as seen in the early 20th century, it just shows how much something like that can affect your life depending on your role in society.

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Re: Censorship and Morality

by Shaun Tichenor - Tuesday, April 15, 2014, 10:54 AM

The Sapho video came as no surprise to me. When I think of the late 1800's and early 1900's I think of a male dominated world where women didn't have much say. At the turn of the century however women really started feeling a need for independency and the play "Sapho" is an example of that. It's pretty amazing to see they were making an arrest for a hypothetical scene in a play where no sexual activity was even preformed, yet today pornographic sites disease the internet with no punishment whatsoever.

In regards to the Mann Act I think this law is one that has necessity and I think that's why it's still a law and amended rather than revoked completely. I believe that today it is constitutional and helps regulate prostitution and the people affiliating themselves along with it.

In the Spitzer case it just shows in my opinion how people will always be making the same mistakes for years to come. A hundred years ago we had problems with prostitution and we still do today. You can also look at politicians like Bill Clinton who had a sex scandal which caused his approval rating to drop and he was the President!

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Sapho and Morality



by Dakarai Hightower - Tuesday, April 15, 2014, 11:14 AM

I do see what all of you are saying, and by todays standards yes it is a little outlandish for someone to be arrested for something they were instructed to do for a play. But looking in that time frame, there was a certain was women were supposed to behave. They were supposed to be the sweet little women that had dinner home for their husband by the time they got home from work.

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Re: Sapho and Morality



by Daniel Halverson - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 8:45 PM

I agree and the way women were and how they are perceived now in time is completely different. Like you said, women during those times were viewed as trophy wives that stayed home and raised the children while the men worked and provided for the family. Now in time women work, have their own family and do so much more. Sexuality is also a lot more acceptable in the world today as it is a way to gain attention from people rather than those times where it was frowned upon.

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Morality challenged



by Matthew Wunderlin - Tuesday, April 15, 2014, 11:47 AM

After watching the Sapho video is became more than clear that American's during that time period were very protective over their way of life and their morality. They didn't want to

subject themselves to things like sex and prostitution and they didn't want others to be exposed to it either because of the fear that it would corrupt the morals of society. People became upset over these people, specifically the actress in Sapho, challenging their views and the only thing they can do is try and censor these taboo subjects.

I believe that the Mann Act had a specific goal, which was to erase the people who were challenging these morals in the real world, and not just in a play. But ultimately the way the Mann Act is used today, it was a good thing to be passed. When they passed the Mann Act, they did it to make it difficult for these things that were viewed as immoral to occur, but now it helps eliminate a dangerous business venture that ultimately could help women in danger.

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Re: Morality challenged



by Dakarai Hightower - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 9:44 PM

I dont think they didnt want to subject themselves to these things or change their morals. But just because someone does one thing that is outside the norm of what everyone is used to doesnt mean your morals have to drastically change. I think they were more afraid of the contradicting views that the play was depicting. It was not how America saw the model wife should act and they were outraged that it was not how they envisioned women being.

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Sappho and the Mann Act



by Miranda Townsend - Wednesday, April 16, 2014, 10:02 PM

I found it absurd that a mere implication of a woman willingly going to bed with a man, with no explicit act, created such a huge scandal. Especially compared to times today where there is high levels of graphic violence, sexual content , and swearing on network television.

The fact that the actress of Sapho, Olga was arrested and put to trial on this play, facing a stiff fine and a jail sentence, seems like a huge over reaction to me. However, I found the most surprising thing the fact that the jury found her not guilty in only 15 minutes. I also thought it was ironic that the censors succeeded only in increasing audiences of the play far beyond what it would have been without the arrest.

While the Mann Act may have been originally racially motivated the fact that it has been held up as constitutional and amended to protect minors shows that it is still a prevalent law today. I think it served a important role historically. I also believe that it does provide some legal protection against human trafficking.

Even though times have changed in many ways, our country remains to be a fairly conservative nation when it comes to sexual misconduct on the part of political leaders.

We try to hold these public officials to a high standard of morality. The Spitzer scandal illustrates this.

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Censorship and Morality

by Britney Painter - Friday, April 18, 2014, 1:56 PM

Like everyone else is saying, I was surprised that the actress got arrested for just playing a part, and that she got arrested for willingly going upstairs with a man. It really wouldn't have been a problem if it happened today, in fact it probably wouldn't have gotten that much attention for it because its so normal these days. I don't agree with the government trying to tell me my morals but at the same time it does protect minors. I think the Mann act isnt always necessary for all cases but its nice to have it just in case.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Sex, alcohol and boxing

by Shane Lundberg - Friday, April 18, 2014, 11:38 PM

I think government censorship of public morality has been a losing battle ever since the Early 1910s. Progressivism and it's cultural conservative attitude towards sapho had a major impact on the entertainment industry, but did it unintentionally help sapho gain extra attention by doing so? Control of moral behavior has always been a priority of the government. Throughout the 1800s white-male protestantism played a dominating role in shaping the publics opinion on what was morally acceptable and what wasn't. The Irish, Chinese, Catholics, blacks and women were all subject to unfair and unreasonable federal persecution so this video came as no surprise to me.

The Mann act law was entirely too subjective and allowed law enforce to act on their own moral code. In the case of Jack Johnson, this law enabled cops to arrest the heavyweight boxer because of their resentment towards him for beating other white boxers and dating white women. The legal repercussions of this law disenfranchised black men from voting also.

When politicians like Eliot Spitzer get involved in morally questionable sex scandals it draws up the age old question of ethical leadership. Like sexuality, alcoholism is also looked down upon. Would you feel any different about Eliot Spitzer if he was caught drunk driving instead? Americas moral code is very similar to that of the early 1900s yet, we have found more socially acceptable ways in dealing with it.

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Mann Act in modern society

by Paige Nibley - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 3:54 PM

Progressive reformers during the turn of the century held an interesting set of seemingly contradictory ideals. Jane Addams, for example, was a lefty and a progressive activist who disagreed strongly with female sexuality and male alcoholism. Opposition to female sexuality is a culturally conservative view, thus stretching Addams' beliefs across the

political spectrum between her cultural and political beliefs. According to chapter 21 of the textbook, Addams “tended to equate female sexuality with prostitution” and “was troubled by the emerging sexual revolution.” It is those who tried to force the revolution and its supporters to a halt, in my opinion, that sparked the radical entertainment industry and “rebellious” behavior of women at the turn of the century. The video about *Sapho* and the controversial actress Olga Nethersole makes the claim that progressives’ attempt to make an example of Nethersole actually worked in the favor of the opposition. In the video we learn that *Sapho* ultimately lead to Nethersole’s arrest followed by advocates for the “suppression of vice” pushing her into a trial. The trial, contrary to the hopes of Jane Addams and her counterparts, was short lived in Nethersole’s favor and provided the publicity needed to raise *Sapho*’s viewing numbers higher than ever before.

The government’s attempt to disgrace individuals at the turn of the century with Nethersole and heavy weight boxer Jack Johnson is still seen today with public figures like Elliot Spitzer. It seems that after the failed trial of Nethersole the progressives would try a different approach at reform other than forcing people to act a certain way. However, with the passing of the Mann Act, progressives continued to discredit individuals based on their personal lives, such as Jack Johnson. The public humiliation of Elliot Spitzer seems far too familiar to the progressive method at the turn of the century. I do not think the Mann act was necessary but rather a progressive attempt to control society under an unrealistic set of rules. I think it is now a way of humiliating people in the public eye of scandalous acts. Discrediting people who are in the public eye guarantees their demise. I do not think that we can honestly say the Mann Act is used to protect people because it is abused as a means of political and social power.

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True Freedom Doesn't Have Moral Hang Ups



by Amanda Daniels - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 5:01 PM

This is a subject that I feel once again the government should have no say in. I think prostitution should be legal as long as all parties participating are consenting and willing adults. I think it is totally absurd to say that something can be legal in one state but then illegal in another. I think if that is the case, then that law is purely based on someone else's personal or moral standards that they are wanting to impose upon everyone else living there as well and that is something I am never willing to support. I think in order for something to be made illegal there needs to be a victim which results from the actions of another person and I am sorry prostitution is really a victimless crime that the government should not be allowed to prosecute, fine and even imprison people over. If I don't like what someone is doing, saying, being, or not being for that matter, then what I do is, I don't go where they go or I don't listen to what they are saying but I certainly don't feel any desire or that I even have the right to force my beliefs upon them to the point of making it the law of the land. I think it is pretty arrogant of anyone who does, now or at the turn of the century. If you believe in freedom then you have to believe that everyone has the right to make their own choices about how they want to live their lives, even if you don't like the choices that they make, they should still be respected as their decision and their choice to live their lives' the way they want.

As far as politicians go, I think they need to go all together, but if you want to specifically address one of them getting caught up in a sex scandal, well then this is how I feel about it, it's like this, if you choose to seek out a job that you know is going to require you to present yourself and/or your lifestyle in a certain manner or fashion in order to acquire and maintain that position/job and you don't really necessarily live up to those standards then you should think twice before going into that particular line of work, perhaps a career not so under the microscope would suit you and or your lifestyle better. Because once you accept these types of positions I feel it goes without saying that you are agreeing to live your life according to what the majority of society, as a whole would deem as acceptable, admirable, and respectable for the appropriate said time. Therefore, if you are that arrogant and believe that you are somehow the exception to these standards, then you at the very least deserve to lose your job when you get caught, and if you have done anything illegal while committing such acts, (as many of them do) then you deserve to go to jail as well just like any other criminal that breaks the law.

If one is going to be a drug and alcohol counselor, well it is assumed that they would need to be clean in order to work in this field. Therefore if the counselor goes out drinking after work and a co-worker sees them and reports it to their boss they would be fired from their job, and if let's say they drive home and get a D.U.I well now they have committed a crime as well, and they deserve to go to jail. Being in politics is no different, their job requires them to live by certain standards and if they can't fulfill those obligations they shouldn't be in politics.

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Censorship and Morality Today

by Daniel Halverson - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 8:27 PM

While watching the Sapho video, I found it very hard to believe that someone could get in trouble and almost spend time in jail for that. She wasn't showing any private parts or anything explicit yet she still almost served time in jail. I see more between a man and woman in cartoons in present day than came even close in Sapho.

In terms of the man act I think it was necessary then and still is to have in place. Prostitution has been around for a very long time and the man act helped in stopping some of the transportation of the prostitutes from state to state. present times prostitution is still a huge issue and this act puts the people who still want to promote prostitution in jail. When the government tries to regulate citizens sometimes it doesn't go to well because people then feel like some of their "freedom" is taken away. That's where the unintended consequences come to play in some people may not benefit from the new regulations, causing them to break other laws potentially.

With Spitzer having to resign in the way he did, I think that strongly shows the morality of the country is still the same or similar to how it was during those times. When something is not right, as this case with Spitzer getting caught for his second time, most the time as a country we do what we have to do.

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Re: Censorship and Morality Today

by Dakarai Hightower - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 9:08 PM

I do agree with you up until the last paragraph. I personally dont think you can compare what Spitzer did to those times. Sapho was just an actor and got in trouble for something completely stupid. While Spitzer was a high ranking official in our nations government, and is held to a higher standard of being than that of your everyday citizen.

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Re: Censorship and Morality Today

by Daniel Halverson - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 11:37 PM

I agree and I guess I wasn't clear enough in what I was trying to get across. I also agree that Sapho was just an actor and was in trouble for a dumb reason in which she should have never got in trouble in the first place. And yes, Spitzer should most definely be held at a higher standard as being a high ranking official in out government I completely agree with you on that. I still feel like no matter what your status is, if someone commits the same crime they should receive the same punishment still.

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