

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

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Forum 1

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Censorship and Morality

by Joe Escobar - Friday, April 11, 2014, 11:50 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

Sum of ratings: -

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The Evolution of Mann

by Kira Iantorno - Saturday, April 12, 2014, 8:46 PM

The forum material that was most interesting to me was the Mann act. The Mann act at first was good way for the government to control people's personal lives and harass African American's/immigrants. This is because it was hard to define what the act meant like "any other immoral purpose", that was hard to define and easy to accuse people of. Yet in 1986 the act was amended to focus more on child pornography and changed many of the ambiguous words with more defining descriptions. Funniest part of the Mann act is that wife's took advantage of it too, if a woman's husband was with a mistress and crossed state lines with them, women could call the police and have their husbands arrested under the Mann act. While this is too much control for government to have, I found it amusing. This act now focuses on real issues like protecting innocent young children from pornography and sex trade and to stop illegal prostitution. The Mann act was at first a reformers way into peoples personal lives and has evolved for the better, not to say that it won't be used in the wrong way ever again but one can appreciate the changes made to stop its original

purpose.

I personally believe that the government has no right over the decisions two consenting adults do in their spare time. I will exclude one thing from this list though and that is illegal prostitution. This is for health concerns but beside that it is not our job as a country to decide how one should live their life that is up to the individual. We are getting better though, in 1910 you would have never heard of couples being polyamorous and now you watch TLCs Strange Sex and see a woman with two boyfriends and a girlfriend. It is a strange new world and America is slowly getting over it.

References: Wikipedia and PBS.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Harassment of African Americans/Immigrants



by Jesse Flannery - Monday, April 14, 2014, 11:07 PM

I totally agree with you that the Mann Act was originally used to harass African Americans. The radio broadcast mentions Jack Johnson, but leaves out a little bit of information I found important to show the depth of harassment. P. 710 in the text "the African American heavyweight boxing champion, who was arrested and convicted for "transporting" his white secretary, Lucy Cameron, across state lines." In the radio broadcast it only mentions that the woman he was transporting was a prostitute when in fact it was his secretary. The text also goes on to state, "That Johnson and Cameron's relationship was consensual and would culminate in marriage did not deter the authorities, who wanted to punish Johnson for his dominance of white boxers and his relationship with a white woman." I think these two statements solidify the point you made about the Mann act being a "good way for the government to control people's personal lives and harass African American's/immigrants." I concur with you that the government should have no say in what two consenting adults do in privacy, as long as it isn't imposing on the rights of others.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Harassment of African Americans/Immigrants



by Edwin Westlund - Friday, April 18, 2014, 11:28 AM

I took another class in which we spoke in depth about Jack Johnson and his career. And his and Lucy Cameron's relationship was without a doubt consensual and she was not a prostitute at the time (even though she was when he met her). The only reason that she testified against him when he was on trial is because he broke up with her for another woman years earlier. The government did not like the way he acted publicly so they used the Mann Act and her bitter feelings to bring him down and force him from the United States or face prison time.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Curiosity killed the cat.

by Katie Birrenkott - Thursday, April 17, 2014, 12:46 PM

Reading your reply I couldn't help but chuckle about the wives calling police bit. I agree there is no place for government in the personal life and find it comparable to a child calling the government over stolen candy. It's pretty obvious government should have a "bigger picture" than worrying about cheating husbands. Changing the act to be more defined was definitely a start to bettering how to get government out of every day lives.

And the way we can watch the strangest shows on TLC about people's personal lives shows that as America, we have really changed since this act because everyone wants to know anything they can about people's personal lives and people have no argument against telling them. Just a funny observation by the "change" that really makes people question what is better for America or not. Great observations.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Prostitution

by Mitchell West - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 8:45 PM

i want to say something about your prostitution bit. i myself believe its wrong but what i find interesting is that now Nevada has legal prostitution, it allows brothels and i believe they are making it safer for them to work on the streets, so what i wonder is as you say America is getting over being polyamorous will they get over prostitution and take measures to make it safer for those that choose to sell their bodies? (i know not everyone of them chooses to) and make it less of a scandal for those people who pay for them? i would honestly have to say that i would rather have safer measures for the prostitutes with less danger to them if they are going to be out there working the streets because regardless of the laws they will still be out there

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Sapho's not so bad

by Jesse Flannery - Sunday, April 13, 2014, 4:59 PM

I find it astonishing that they put Olga Nethersole on trial for acting in a play about a seductive woman. From my perspective living in the present I would find this laughable. With shows like "Sex and the city", and "Desperate Housewives". In the Sapho clip it mentions "In 1900 The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice proudly reported seizing 19,000 obscene photographs 7000 circulars, catalogs, songs, and poems". This sounds more like a violation of freedom of speech to me. While on the progressive side there was Jane Addams founder of the settlement house movement. On P.708-709 in the text, "She respected the cultural inheritance of the immigrants and admired their resourcefulness. Although she wanted them to become Americans, she encouraged them to integrate their "immigrant gifts" into their new identities. Those attitudes were more liberal than those of other reformers...". At the same time she was "troubled by the emerging

sexual revolution. Addams tended to equate female sexuality with prostitution...". I believe Censorship in United States in the 1900 seemed popular among progressives, and conservatives alike. While more liberal people like Jane Addams were helping to preserve immigrant cultures. She at the same time was fighting to suppress the expression of female sexuality, as was The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice. In 1900 everyone could agree that female sexuality was immoral, and a common enemy.

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Re: Sapho's not so bad



by Blake Taylor - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 3:21 PM

Obscenity and free speech have always been difficult to disentangle, though. Everyone loves Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart's quotation from *Jacobellis v. Ohio* (1964) wherein he found it difficult to define pornography, but "I know it when I see it." There's obviously some limit to what constitutes free speech (can't falsely yell "Fire!" in a crowded theater, for example, according to *Schenck v. U.S.* [1919]) and most of society wouldn't want to be subjected to obscenities while doing our daily business, but as Justice Stewart also said, "Censorship reflects a society's lack of confidence in itself." Certainly we have enough faith in ourselves and each other to not legislate the morality of others' actions.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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The War of Censorship and Morality in the U.S.



by Ren Rasmussen - Sunday, April 13, 2014, 9:39 PM

What I find most compelling about Sapho is that someone could simple be arrested and thrown in jail for acting out a part in a play. By todays standards this would be totally fine but back then women were not seen as complete equals to men when it came to this type of thing as well as roles both sexes play in society. What was also interesting was that since she wasn't punished for not "resisting" a man at the end of the play when going up to the bedroom she had to be punished in real life. By the thought of women having any pleasure in the act of intercourse was unheard of. This somehow gave women some leverage over men and in the 1900 that was unacceptable. What was amusing was that even a police investigator didn't find it at all offensive after seeing six times and even more so was that censors, in trying to get the play shut down, pushed the play further than it would ever had gone.

I personally don't believe the Mann Act was necessary then due to its aim at Jack Johnson with is dominance over white boxers of his day. Don't get me wrong I am strongly apposed to human trafficking for prostitution but back in 1910 when the Mann Act went into effect it didn't have the right intentions. It specifically says that you can't transport any women or girl across state lines for any "immoral" purpose. So if you transported your wife or girlfriend across state lines and have intercourse you can be arrested if caught. Also this law only goes in effect when crossing a state line and with the, intentions of our government, the word immoral could be used for many other things as well.

Today I believe that this law is very necessary to have today especially with human trafficking have a huge impact on the west coast. One of my consolors in high school told us his personally experience with human trafficking when studying it. When hearing about what happened to his twenty year old daughter was really eye opening that this is a huge problem worldwide.

When the government try's to regulate the behavior of U.S. citizens it just doesn't go well. We often see the government as oppressive every time the government passes something that in turn makes us do what ever they want us to do. So telling everyone to behave the same way presents a huge problem. The U.S. consists of so many different types of people and we all behave different in ways. There is an extent of what the government will influence people to behave but it will be a never-ending battle with the government to tell us what "correct" behavior is.

Eliot Spitzer and any other people of influence are going to get the most extreme of the law if broken. If Spitzer worked at some fast food restaurant and was charged with this crime nobody would have thought twice about it, but since he was the govern of New York and news crews had a field day coving this story he had to be made an example for everyone to see.

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Censorship then and now

by Michael Brown - Monday, April 14, 2014, 5:27 PM

The Sapho video shed some light on the conservative views that this country used to have. The video is interesting to me in the way that Olga was arrested for violating public decency and not charged. The unintended consequence of her arrest was more viewers and supporters of the film.

I think the Mann Act (page 709 in the textbook) in the era of Jack Johnson was a bit too broad in spectrum, as it was used illegitimately for racist purposes. In the case of the rapper, it seems legitimate. Despite the government trying to control the people, people will do what they want and take the risk of getting caught. I honestly think that the Mann Act is a joke versus the problem of sex trafficking that hardly ever makes the news, yet is a huge problem. The unintended consequence of government control is the underground criminal enterprise that thrives.

The case of morality with Spitzer is different that Sapho's film. I think the american people expect government officials to obey laws. Things are far different now with sexual morality than they were then.

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Spitzer is the Mann

by Derek Landon - Monday, April 14, 2014, 9:03 PM

Considering the play Sapho was about a seductive woman that had as many lovers that she wanted, I could see how (also considering the time frame) some people could view this

as wrong. If this were to happen in this day and age, the United States population would go berserk. I was happy to find out that Olga Nethersole was not given any jail time and that she was able to gain popularity for her play because of the ridiculousness of the trial. I found the most compelling part about this episode is that they tried to charge her with a crime that was never truly committed, only implied through a story. A play is someone's vision, which does not mean all of the events have to be true or even legal. Sure, given the time frame, this play was a lot to handle in some ways, it also helped show that women were just as much of a sexual being as men were.

The Mann Act at the time was used by the government to control people that they wanted to punish because of unfair events, like the Jack Johnson case; since Jack Johnson dominated most of the white boxers at the time, the government wanted him to be put to rest, but could not catch him for anything; so because he was dating his white secretary (Lucy Cameron) and they were traveling out of state, they were able to charge him with the Mann Act. The law was not necessary at the time. I think today it is used for the better good. The Mann act today stops pimps from sending his prostitutes around the US. The government is stopping human trafficking with this law and I am glad it is in use in a better way than it was. America likes to freak out when they are having their freedoms taken away. (Rightfully so) and depending on how much the government tries to regulate the citizen's behavior, the more severe the citizens get with their actions. Some consequences that experts run into when they try to pass legislation are people thinking that the government is trying to take away their freedom; so even if the government is just passing the law to help and protect people, some people may view it as the government trying to control everything.

For some reason, the US likes the people with a political position to be 100% faithful. If they are not they are instantly hated on. I think it is because we (as in American citizens) like to see someone with so much power be able to follow simple morals, like being faithful to your spouse. If they can't even be faithful, how will they be able to do things where people's lives are at risk? I, myself do not care if someone cheats on their spouse and they also carry an important government position; if they do their job well, I could care less about their private sexual matters and needs.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Spitzer is the Mann



by Robert Johnson - Friday, April 18, 2014, 2:11 PM

I think in this case, Spitzer was the Mann, already in the spotlight as a state governor, and got caught, like many other politicians, who have put the test to the moral values of voters, and perhaps moral hypocrisy too.

Bill Clinton for example, comes to mind here. Like all other's before, during, and after their presidency's, constantly in the public eye. Clinton knowingly under this constant spotlight, decided to put himself out there anyway, same as Spitzer.

All this being said, mostly I don't really care what these guy's do in their personal life,

long as they can keep it separate from their job, and if it has no effect on what we elect them to do, has no effect on me and life is all good, then live and let live.

According to our material, on Spitzer's job approval chart we can see a significant shift in his approval rating. I of course do wonder how many of those voters who shifted to disapproval, are guilty of the same. Also I notice that Spitzer did still hold 35% of his approval rating. Is this evidence of a moral shift in American culture? If so, does this feed that shift? I can only say, I think the answer could be yes to those questions, but I also think time will tell. Do I think the public humiliation put on these politicians and their family's is fair? I think not, though I do think in some cases, public awareness is very important.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Morality versus Law Abiding

by Elizabeth Atkerson - Monday, April 14, 2014, 10:04 PM

What stood out to me I this discussion is how Spitzer fits in to the morality debate. I agree that the residents of New York were outraged by his conduct. I would be as well if he represented me, my family and my home, Where I have a slight difference in opinion though is that they were maybe not so outraged by his immoral behavior but by the fact that he broke the law.

The reason that I feel compelled to make this distinction is that, another well know politician and leader of the free world, Bill Clinton, did not suffer the outrage and rating hit after his adulterous affair. However, his partner in adultery crime was not a lady of the night, but rather an educated intern. According to CNN during Clinton's impeachment trial his ratings actual went up. The public rallied behind him. Pointing out that he is only a man and sometimes we all fall short. They both committed adultery. They both violated the sanctity of their marriage in immoral ways. One did it legally by today's laws and the other did it in a way that broke the law.

It's examples like is that lead me to believe that we are not so much concerned with censoring morality as we are controlling radical behavior. Going upstairs to have sex is radical. Hiring a prostitute is radical. Stepping out on your wife, while immoral, unfortunately is not radical. What I see here is a way to show the public that being radical will ruin you, while being immoral only makes you human. We are far less concerned by the violation of morality than we are the violation of laws and social norms.

(<http://www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/stories/1998/12/20/impeachment.poll/>)

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Re: Morality versus Law Abiding

by Michael Brown - Tuesday, April 15, 2014, 11:25 PM

I agreed with the part of your post about Spitzer. I think that many people disagree with the morality of it, but are outraged that he broke the law while being a political figure that is in the spotlight. I was curious about what you mean by "going upstairs to have sex is radical". I think that cheating on a spouse is somewhat radical, but prevalent today. I wonder if cheating was as prevalent a century ago as it is today. I can say that it probably was not, as today we have the internet with websites that show up on advertisements like AshleyMadison.com. Some of the changes that we make to the left clearly set us back in other areas.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Morality versus Law Abiding

by Elizabeth Atkerson - Friday, April 18, 2014, 3:10 PM

Michael, I was referring to was the play and the outrage of her being willing to go upstairs with a man. When I say that cheating is not radical, I just mean that it is no longer outside societal norms. We see examples like Tiger Woods, Bill Clinton and even Julia Roberts on the nightly news. It's gone beyond TMZ and penetrated mainstream life styles. So in terms of social norms unfortunately, cheating is no longer radical.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Morality versus Law Abiding

by Michael Brown - Friday, April 18, 2014, 3:54 PM

Thanks for clarifying that. I agree with you that it cheating is not outside of social norms. I think that on a personal level, it is radical. Bill Clinton cheating on his wife does not seem too radical from an outside perspective, but to his wife, I imagine she thought of it as radical behavior. It is more socially accepted than it used to be that is for certain, however I think the vast majority of married persons find it radical on a personal level.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Cheating not so bad?

by Jesse Flannery - Friday, April 18, 2014, 10:58 AM

Spitzer definitely made the mistake of breaking the law and being with a prostitute. I agree that these actions are much more radical than cheating on your wife. I don't know why exactly, but the only conclusion I can draw is that we feel more betrayed, when someone in his position breaks the law, and our trust. Spitzer being politician we try to believe that he stands to uphold laws, and represent us. In chapter 23 of the text

it mentions how marriage was changing in the 1920's. P. 804 of the text states, "That husbands and wives were encouraged to pursue sexual satisfaction together was one sign of how prescriptions for married life had changed since the 19th century, when women were thought to lack sexual passion and men were tacitly expected to satisfy their drives through extramarital liaisons." I only mention this to bring up the fact that a century ago stepping out on your wife was even less radical than it is now. I don't think we have ever let go of that idea. Just as Michael Brown stated, with all the websites about cheating, and shows where we see people cheat we may have become much more numb to the idea. It's not all that shocking anymore. It doesn't play on our emotions like a law breaking, prostitute loving, politician does.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Cheating not so bad?

by Blake Taylor - Friday, April 18, 2014, 11:58 PM

Certainly Spitzer's media and political opponents used the anti-morality angle of the story to drum up opposition, but if you view the story from a less moralistic standpoint (one where prostitution is treated as a part of the service industry and is considered a basic transaction) the most amoral part of the story is that he used public money to support his hobby. Ideally, one day people will get as worked up about a politician using public money to frequent a prostitute as they will about a politician using public money to buy model trains.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Cheating not so bad?

by Jesse Flannery - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 6:59 PM

I didn't know that he had used public money to pay for his "extra curricular" activities. I thought I had read that he got cleared of using public money, or campaign funds. I'm not sure but I bet he knows a couple people in the government so maybe that wasn't the most legit trial. I just find it funny that articles like the photo shown by Mr. Escobar use yellow journalism to emphasize the SEX SCANDAL aspect. You're right it definitely would be nice if people cared more about the misuse of funds than just the solo fact that he was with a prostitute. I may be a little blind myself though I just went along with assuming he didn't use funds based on reading a CNN article once. There definitely should be a little more emphasis on that point in the media. I guess it just doesn't sell the papers to the masses as well.

<http://www.cnn.com/2008/CRIME/11/06/spitzer.no.charges/>

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Cheating not so bad?



by Blake Taylor - Friday, April 18, 2014, 11:59 PM

Certainly Spitzer's media and political opponents used the anti-morality angle of the story to drum up opposition, but if you view the story from a less moralistic standpoint (one where prostitution is treated as a part of the service industry and is considered a basic transaction) the most amoral part of the story is that he used public money to support his hobby. Ideally, one day people will get as worked up about a politician using public money to frequent a prostitute as they will about a politician using public money to buy model trains.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Censorship and Morality

by Alex Quadrini - Monday, April 14, 2014, 11:53 PM

The fact that back in the 1900's such a thing as a play could be censored into legal repercussions is merely a testament to the changes that the US has faced over the decades and with them evolving generations of Americans. To think a Woman could be legally hunted in such force for something as benevolent as eluding to the fact of sexual relations with a man outside of marriage was unthinkable. Public Morality was obviously more tense and conservative back in those days but this act was based off of a french play and just due to there being no punishment within the play upon the character, the actress herself had to be reprimanded in real life, to me is consciously beyond immoral, the irony is these actions were based off what progressives though public m,orality was fighting against.

Considering the Mann Act like said in the audio clip, it was a definitely a law of it's time. This was merely a form of control and enslavement against the free will of people of color. The Mann act in terms of prostitution could be morally applicable in todays world if not dating back to the late 50's -60's but in terms of how it was conceived and applied in the past was immoral beyond the boundaries of racial stereotyping and stripping the will of free love from any mixed racial relationship, I mean its otherwise know as the white slave traffic act? Jack Johnson is a perfect example of this act being utilized in a malicious manner but then When you apply this to Governor Spitzer it has a much more inconvenient but realistic approach. Its obscure, a little irrational but when your such a public figure, political leader and sent into the limelight on a daily basis you cant expect to be put into such a publicly humiliating predicament and not have your morality questioned, not sure if i agree that the morality of the US today is the same of Jack johnson's time.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Censorship and Morality

by James Price - Friday, April 18, 2014, 9:50 PM

I think that the type of morality that existed during Jack Johnson's time still exists

today, but it does so for a relative minority of the population. Even back then I don't think that a majority of the population held to progressive views of morality. For example, while the actress in the Sapho play was arrested and tried for violating public decency laws, she was acquitted by a jury in only fifteen minutes (Sapho video). Today progressive morality has evolved into conservative morality, but while the name has changed, the beliefs of the movement have not.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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For Sapho to now



by Kylie Stiglbauer - Tuesday, April 15, 2014, 11:44 AM

I found the video of the play Sapho the most interesting, especially when comparing it to plays of today. Sapho was extremely controversial to it's time period, especially on the fact that it portrayed women as sexual creatures. I find that very interesting to compare that to media of today. Today women are over sexualized and often seen as an almost object for sex. I find it fascinating when comparing the two because it shows just how much this society has changed. Olga was put on trial for her acting, while today women are displayed on tv and other forms of media in a very sexual manner. Whole tv and movies can be seen as having a big change, today we can also see sex used in plays. One Musical in particular that stood out for me was Avenue Q. This play has very sexual subject matter portrayed through puppets(one of their songs even talks about porn). This type of material would have been unacceptable in the past. It truly shows just how liberal we have come with our media as time has passed.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: For Sapho to now



by Michael Brown - Tuesday, April 15, 2014, 11:37 PM

I too think that women today are overly sexualized versus the days of Sapho. It is literally the exact opposite with women today than it was in that film. Today, women are used in a sexual manner in order to sell different things. Commercials on TV advertise how women can have sexier hair or legs or lips if they use certain products. Women in bikinis are often on billboards to advertise laser hair removal or lipo suction to name a few. I agree that we have become more liberal in this area.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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My perspective, with Sapho and Mann in mind.



by Zachary Ogborn - Wednesday, April 16, 2014, 4:22 PM

Honestly, I was utterly baffled at the *Sapho* case concerning actress Olga Nethersole's racy character portrayal. Part of me also understands the era that this occurred in and isn't really surprised (considering the Progressive movement to moderate American Morales at this time). But for the life

of me, I can't see how anyone ever thought this case would go in favor of the prosecution. This is a perfect example of how repressing a certain aspect of a complex society can 'blow-up' in someones face. The 'Guardians of Public Morality' (most likely religiously influenced/ Progressive in nature) definitely saw this action back-fire.

Concerning The Mann Act, or The White Slave Traffic Act, I think it **IS** necessary today **ONLY** because it has been re-vamped to combat Human Trafficking. At the time of its creation, (1910 according to the Audio file provided to us) I feel like this was used primarily as a tool against the growing 'city scene' with Bars, Rampant 'Parties', and music clubs that were viewed as immoral to the Progressive movement.

In terms of Mr.Spitzer's situation and the many other politicians who resign from office due to sexual indiscretions, I feel that the overall morality of the United States hasn't changed much since the early 20th century. I would like to think that we as a culture (American Culture that is) can look past the sexual deviants of individuals and focus more so on what they do for the public and how they do it. Look at Hollywood's turn over rate of Cheating Spouses, Racy Pictures, and Philanthropist Night-Club Party Animals. Most Americans still look to them and see a decent human being; why are the politicians who are getting caught for this sort of thing looked down upon?

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Censorship in America 1900?.... Big Time!



by Robert Johnson - Thursday, April 17, 2014, 8:35 PM

After watching the sapho video, even though Olga's act seemed to be a big hit, I think its obvious and safe to say that censorship and morality in America during this time was a world apart from America 2014.

By today's American moral standards it is hard to believe that anyone male or female could be degraded publicly, and arrested for acting like on stage, or in actual reality pursuing sexual relations the way Olga was.

What I found most compelling about Olga's story was the not guilty verdict by the jury. I also found it interesting but not very surprising, that after her release from jail, Olga's show like many other shows, it was " The Show Must Go On ", and in her case bigger than ever.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Censorship in America 1900?.... Big Time!



by Kylie Stiglbauer - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 5:31 PM

I am with you on your surprise with the guilty verdict. With the response from the public and authority I expected them to give her a harsher punishment due to their reactions. I foresaw them using this case as a possible teaching tool for the public, sort of a way to deter them even more from this scandalous lifestyle. I do believe her not guilty verdict helped her success tremendously. The public was given the go ahead to exploring this scandalous subject, something that people have seemed to always have a curiosity for.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Censorship, Morality...Reform and The Mann Act



by Robert Johnson - Thursday, April 17, 2014, 10:34 PM

In our book, the Mann Act (1910) p.709, the way I understand it, was at least partially born out of progressive reform.

In class last week we learned about progressivism. Progressive reform to adopt a more acceptable way of life, or as Escobar pointed out, forcing it. Our instructor also pointed out that progressives agreed, there was a need for an active government to correct the wrongs. In my opinion the Mann act (1910), is a perfect example of how closed minded these progressives on the far left really were. Or was it just plain selfishness? I would say it was more than likely both.

I would say it was a one sided Act. Reformers like Jane Addams with perhaps the best of intention's, may have actually felt like it was best thing to do for all, Perhaps some legislation was needed to protect women being forced into prostitution, but to me it clearly went farther than need be then (1910)

With it Amendments (1986), I kinda feel like its needed in our time an future. But we have also learned that when the government attempts to regulate the behavior of it's citizens that people can stand up against it in various ways.

Sometimes I think when legislation changes things like this, while benefiting some, it may have an adverse affect on many.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Censorship, Morality...Reform and The Mann Act



by Derek Landon - Friday, April 18, 2014, 2:38 PM

I agree that the Mann Act was a one-sided act directed towards women specifically in that time era. I also agree that America needs the act for today and the future.

The Mann Act today is putting kidnappers and sex traffickers behind bars and for the future, who knows what more it can be used for. I think eventually this act will no longer be used or it will be modified to fit a problem similar to the ones it watches over today.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

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Evolution



by Edwin Westlund - Friday, April 18, 2014, 11:50 AM

I agree wholeheartedly with everybody else in this thread about how ridiculous the actress in Sapho was treated because of her actions. A play of that nature in todays society wouldn't even get a second look from even the most extreme groups of people in favor of

censorship.

I also agree completely with the man speaking about the Mann Act from NPR. He says that, "All laws are products of their time." But I do feel like the law has been adjusted to match the evolution of our society. I do without a doubt feel like the Mann Act was aimed more at Jack Johnson to give the government a way to lawfully take him down. He was such a big name at the time that they could not use any sort of shady methods to knock him from his pedestal or there would have been an uprising from his supporters. I do believe that it had other applications as well, but for the most part the Mann Act was taylor made for Jack Johnson.

Censorship in 1900 was obviously a completely different ball game than what we are dealing with today. If anything I would say that we could use a little bit more censorship in some areas. The evolution of what is "moral" and what isn't over the last 100 years is pretty incredible though. I wonder what will happen in the next 100?

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Evolution



by James Price - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 2:33 PM

I also agree with the statement that "all laws are products of their time" (NPR Audio Clip). While the Mann Act began as an obviously discriminatory law, it has slowly evolved to be used for better purposes such as sex trafficking. I just find it ironic that today's reformers are having to reform laws that were put in place by reformers of the past.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Evolution



by Ren Rasmussen - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 8:13 PM

I would like to comment on "All laws are a product of their time." What I get from your message is that laws are evolving to match society as it progresses. Which I totally agree with but what I feel like your implying is that our society is making these changes for the "better." Those you have been elected by the people truly are the ones making these decisions. No one can truly predict what an elected official will do in their term of office. With there being a lack of voters those you are voting are the ones making the decisions with the elected officials they put in office. When laws "evolve" they are changing to how those select few see how society should act and work. So I can't stress the importance of voting. Although I am only one vote of the people that vote counts toward something I believe in and or someone I am trusting to act upon those beliefs.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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confusing labels keep us guessing



by Bart Golden - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 4:23 AM

After reading the materials and reviewing the posts it seems more and more that there is a lot of trouble defining conservative or liberal and democrat or republican. After long consideration, it is my conclusion that conservative doesn't have to mean republican or that liberal mean democrat. Though that is often the case it seems that a notable part of the time it's not for instance I think that religion has little to do with conservatism and much more to do with republicans in that not wanting a liberal amount of government involvement in my life some how makes me religious? That doesn't seem right to me (no pun intended) I would have to label myself as a conservative libertarian all of my conservative values have direct associations with my distrust of government in my personal life and nothing to do with what people want to spend their Sundays doing I also have a powerful desire to see the federal reserve audited and the held accountable for almost a hundred years of theft by inflation, not a very republican position but not very Obama either since he has to most wall street represented cabinet in history and to me that doesn't fit with democrat either. Very difficult to keep tabs these days on all these shiesters

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: confusing labels keep us guessing



by Ren Rasmussen - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 8:31 PM

I believe that most of us just associate with being a democrat or republican when asked what our political views are but in retro-spect all of us probably have a mixer of both parties. Throughout history both parties have gotten a bad image with high political officials doing something wrong. No one will probably have the exact same view of government as you that is why when politics come up in conversations they can turn the best of friends into enemies. This is why I would hate to be in the political field. Politicians mainly get bad images that are associated with their political views and not who they are in every day life. For me its hard to judge someone you have never met but in todays society as in yellow journalism people believe what they want to believe and what false lies they get from any source.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Not Surprised...



by Joseph Foley - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 2:01 PM

I was somewhat familiar with the Sapho story before reading about it more in-depth. I'm not at all surprised about the government arresting Olga, and I'm also not surprised by the Mann act. As we have spoken about in class, progressivism can result in conservative movements. Sapho, Jack Johnson, prohibition, and prostitution, are great examples of progressivism fueling conservative actions against rights and liberties.

When reading about this era, it more so made me think of America's protestant and anti-radical roots. Sapho's story of embracing women's sexuality, and Jack Johnson's inter-racial dating, were both ahead of their time in comparison to American Culture. Women's

right to vote took decades of up and down struggles to obtain, let alone their equality when it comes to sensuality, which was suggested in Sapho. Jack Johnson lived in a time when African American's had barely accessed freedom, let alone equality amongst whites.

From what I have learned about U.S. history, we eventually do see improvements in equality and civil liberties, but those improvements come gradually, not suddenly. Inter-racial dating and women's sexuality were radical subjects when considering our country's ever-present protestant value foundation. We still witness women and African American's struggle with stereotypes. Today, African American's battle subconscious racism, and women struggle with the double standard of their sexuality compared to men's. Both groups have gained a lot of ground, but there is a lot of room to grow.

Spitzer's case is a great example of these standards (progressivism creating conservative backlash) being held up in modern America. Although, I'm glad some students pointed out the fact that Jack Johnson's longtime girlfriend was not a prostitute. I believe he was targeted for racial reasons, with prostitution used as a smoke screen. Personally, I don't necessarily agree with Spitzer's politics, but I think he has a right to a private personal life. I don't think that the government should have a hand in anyone's sexual preferences or endeavors, as long as no one is harmed, and children are protected.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Not Surprised...

by Derek Landon - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 2:10 PM

I 100% agree with you and your thoughts that the government should have no hand in someone's sexual preferences or endeavors. I think that most American people do unfortunately and they let that sway their votes and thoughts, no matter how well the person is doing. I am surprised to see that people still view President Clinton as a good president, considering cheating on his wife with 22 year-old intern Monica Lewinsky. He ended up being impeached for obstruction of justice and perjury, but most U.S. citizens still think he was one of the best presidents the United States has ever had. I find it funny that there are small moral exceptions to every rule and the media nowadays control how much a story breaks out and effects the people.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lewinsky_scandal)

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Not Surprised...

by Ren Rasmussen - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 8:52 PM

I truly believe that if Jack Johnson had been with a black women the Mann Act movement might not have ever happened in his time. Although women did not have the some equality as white men they still had better treatment then African Americans. With Johnson being with a white women somehow he was gaining some equality that most people of the time didn't want to see that happen. Also how could a black pronounced boxer be leaving this image into other citizens that this could be ok or become a new standard in society. Although we have freedom and free speech in

America depending what we do and say can influence others to silences us.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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HERITAGE OF PRUDISM



by Bart Golden - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 4:30 PM

In my view the Sapho thing is simple enough to analyze. First off, the USA and Europe have always had social morals on opposite ends of the spectrum and this remains true today. The fact is, we are a nation of prudes. The pilgrim's left Europe because they couldn't stand all the freaky euro sex going on. So they sought out a new country were they could practice there prudish ways without persecution and little has changed since then. Now I'm sure that back in England nobody thought twice about Sapho or Olga's role in it but you have to look at the spectrum. Anyone that has been to Europe will tell you that over there sex is like a hand shake in relation to our strict moral standards. In my opinion they are a lot more mature when it comes to sex, where Americans are maybe too much like Beavus and Butt Head, for lack of a more perfect analogy. Where always so worried what someone else is doing. It's sad really that with societies abundant imperfections that the individuals within it feel it's necessary to look beyond themselves to better it, when striving to make ones self the best possible is the true way to better our nation as a whole. This fundamental flaw, in my opinion, has been imbedded in us by our holier than thou ancestors "The Prudes"

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: HERITAGE OF PRUDISM



by Kylie Stiglbauer - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 6:11 PM

I really liked your comparison to Europe and the United states. I have been to europe and have seen first hand just how different our moral standards and censorship are. Their television programming lacks the censorship that the US currently has. It was very interesting to witness, and also showed just how different we are. I do agree with you that this is partially a maturity thing. The fact that we have always tended to shy away from the extreme or anything that isn't "prude" . I think it is interesting that today we are string away from that as many more "sexual things" can be seen on television as well as books.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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