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Censorship & Morality

by Joe Escobar – Friday, April 8, 2016, 11:34 AM

This thread is for discussions on the Censorship & Morality topic.
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IMPORTANT – SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post, something that describes which question(s) you are addressing . Do NOT simply leave it RE: Censorship & Morality

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Censorship makes hypocrites of Progressives

by Christopher Cockman – Monday, April 11, 2016, 6:44 PM

Progressives on the far left side of the spectrum, in my mind, are supposed to be discerning conservative ideals. Yet the "progressive" censors showed that they held true to conservative ideals in prosecuting Nethersole for her production of Sapho. In my understanding of conservative ideals on sexuality; there is one wife per life, and sex is meant for it's natural implication of reproduction not for pleasure.

In a side note of sorts, I remember hearing a fact that Atilla the Hun (an ancient Mongolian warlord) had so many affairs that almost .5% of modern day China's population has traces of his DNA. From that time to the era depicted now, when and why did sex have to become a resource and not an experience? I am positive that Atilla did not have sex thousands of times with that many times more woman purely to be the baby daddy to a million kids.

Back to Sapho, the reason I call the censors hypocrites in my title is because these progressive liberals were holding true to very conservative views of women and sexuality. But, I think there is more to their prosecution in the fact that the social status of all woman in the 1900's was primarily housewife, to supply for the man of the house. I do not think that the censors were more infuriated at the fact that the play contained a sexually "illicit" encounter, but by the fact that a woman, Olgo Nethersole, was inflicting these progressive ideals of woman's sexuality. If a man of the time were to create a play with this sort of content, I don't believe their would be the same repercussions. But frankly, I do not think a man of that time would come up with this concept in the first place. All across the spectrum, woman were secluded to the status of providing for the man, so Nethersole's portrayal of a radical woman was not something anyone had seen before.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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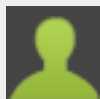
Re: Censorship & Morality/Sappho
by [Zoe Latham](#) - Monday, April 11, 2016, 7:52 PM

In the times that Sappho came out, it was becoming less taboo for women to work outside of the home. As they began to be identified as a gender that was able to care of itself, it was important to conservatives to shape this identity into nothing too sexually independent by censoring works including these themes. Since the woman in the play was not punished for her actions and not reflecting them to the audience as something obscene or morally “wrong” it was attacked I believe as to show the public that women should not be viewed as independent sexual beings with their own desires.

What I found compelling about this video was the public’s attitude towards the play. That a police officer testified on Nethersole’s account and that more tickets were sold after the ordeal. It seems to me that the world had already become to gravitate toward such theater and that Nethersole was simply making a statement about the public’s appetite as well as advocating for strong female sex symbols.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Censorship & Morality/Mann Act
by [Zoe Latham](#) - Monday, April 11, 2016, 8:22 PM

Hearing that laws are a product of their times helped me to allowed me to look at this law as a projection of what was going on during that time period. Also, considering that the law has been changed to something that doesn’t so tightly govern morality, shows me that it has now considered outdated. This law was also known as “The White Slave Traffic Act,”showing us exactly where priorities lay. It was not called “The Female Traffic Act,” or something along those lines. I believe that this act was put into law for two reasons. One, because of the fear of women becoming more independent and the need to portray them as naive and delicate, and two to hinder interracial relationships.

I find it interesting that in the NPR report it states that Johnson was arrested in 1913 and in the wikipedia article it says that he was arrested in October 1912.If he was arrested in 1912 he was in between two marriages, and the NPR report labeled the woman his mistress. In any case I am quite certain that he was in a relationship and was breaking the law in the case of “any other immoral purpose” which I believe includes adultery. However, I only believe that he was targeted because he was black and not only was his mistress white, but so had many of the other women he had been with and that they used the Mann Act to make an example of him. As he was first to be charged under the new law, that had been in effect either two or three years, it seems clear that it wasn’t being regulated. It seems that the consequences of this legislation did not affect anyone besides the people they wanted to affect, that they threw out the law as a last resort when trying to conform people to how they think they should behave. However, I do believe that the modified version of the Mann Act should be in place to help fight the battle of sex trafficking.

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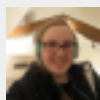


Re: Censorship & Morality/What we look for in a leader
by [Zoe Latham](#) - Monday, April 11, 2016, 8:37 PM

I do not believe that a governor’s early resignation signals that the morality of the United States today is not very different. I would choose to look at what we look for in a leader and though I do not believe that morality should be an issue here, I believe that decision making and what I personally look for in a leader should come into play during this discussion. However, perhaps if his left swinging politics (gay marriage, licenses for immigrants) didn’t raise some eyebrows then he wouldn’t have been outed in the first place. Prostitution is illegal, and spending ridiculous amounts of money on it is just stupid. I personally would not want someone in office that acted this way but not because I believe that sex or even in some cases prostitution is morally wrong.

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Our stance on Immorality then is still mimicked today.
by [Miranda Metzger](#) - Monday, April 11, 2016, 11:49 PM

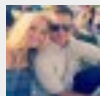
The compelling thing that I saw was that Olga was almost charged with immorality to set an example for the city and for the nation. She was used as the example of who not to be and was being charged in a way and prosecuted for even putting this idea into women's heads. But It turned out like prohibition in the sense that when the government said no the people kind of revolted and it made Sapho even more popular then ever. Its like when people tell you no which makes you want to do the thing even more.

Concerning the Mann Act I think the law was ness scary almost for the progressivist so to add to their case and build up their reputation as a movement in a way. I think it was a good start it started the thinking about solutions to a problem but the solution was only as open minded or just as the people were at the time. I think it is necessary for today I don't necessarily know what other paths or options their are to govern or help control this topic. The citizens revolt or rebel against regulation or it goes underground like prohibition and makes it more difficult to weed out it might make it a less wide spread problem but it's still there just harder to find.

The humiliation of Eliot Spitzer reminded me of The scarlet letter (which I know isn't historical) but it expressed that protestant mindset that we still have a lot of today even though we sometimes feel like we have progressed. I think we still like a good public humiliation because it puts all the focus on them and their problem. I think we've progressed and changed what offends us and how much but the underlying moral lines Are still embedded into our culture and I don't think that will change much if ever.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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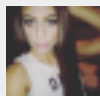
Re: Censorship & Morality
by Benjamin Glaeser – Thursday, April 14, 2016, 8:19 AM

Something that i found most compelling about Sapho was the extreme difference in opinion of the play. On one side there were people who were trying to get the writer of the play thrown in jail while like the video said the police officer did not find it offensive at all. It is actually very ironic that the the people trying to get the play shut down actually ended up having quite the opposite affect all the attention and "scandal" that they brought to the play ended up making it much more popular.

Something else that came to mind while listening to the video about sapho was how society adapts overtime and becomes more and more accepting to certain things. For example at the end of the video it talked about how the short film "The Kiss" was controversial for its time but now today we have nearly full sex scenes in movies and it has become the norm, It makes me wonder what in todays society we see as offensive will in future society become the new normal.

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Suppressing Sapho
by Courtney Giese – Thursday, April 14, 2016, 3:09 PM

The state of censorship present in the United States at the time "Sapho" was performed in 1900 shows the taboo nature of women's sexuality at that time. After Olga is found innocent in her trial is when women's right really began to be fought for. Sexuality began more accepted and "moral" as observed in the boom of viewers after Olga begins to preform Sapho again after trial. This eventually helps lead to the suffrage movement in the 1920's.

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Re: Parents, Censorship, and Government
by Ethan Borsak – Thursday, April 14, 2016, 8:18 PM

Now, I didn't live in 1910, and although I've heard of the Mann Act, I can't remember ever reading about mass waves of women being transported for the purpose of prostitution around the turn of the century. Frankly, I don't think it was a necessary law then or now, but it hardly surprises me. It seems in fitting with the behavior of

the Protestant Progressive reformers & Settlement House/Clubwomen. Jane Addams had problems with the oncoming sexual revolution, and the Young Protestant portion of the Progressives often had their religious conviction be a motivating factor in their social reforms.

As for the government attempting to regulate the behavior of its citizens? This Mann Act-era reform-style was echoed in the 1980s with the Parents Music Resource Center hearings, which ended with the Recording Industry Association of America putting Parental Advisory stickers on releases at their own discretion. In the view of the PMRC, they were protecting the public from offensive material, but I think almost all of us would rather they would have minded their own business, to put it mildly. It displayed a conflict with 1st Amendment rights, and arbitrary censorship in pursuit of the upholding of “family values”.

I included links to a Nightline interview with Frank Zappa, Kandy Stroud, and Donny Osmond, as well as a link to A Larry King interview with Frank Zappa. All these are regarding the PMRC hearings vs musicians.

Nightline pt 1

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FarkwYDir2Y>

Pt 2

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBskHjoQxxk>

Pt 3

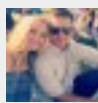
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6x-HRtTwuhY>

Larry King – Frank Zappa interview

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1ec82Tcq3o>

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Eliot Spitzer

by [Benjamin Glaeser](#) – Saturday, April 16, 2016, 9:06 PM

I think the fact that politicians or celebrities popularity can plummet after they have done something that is seen as morally wrong does give evidence to the idea that society today is not that different from the 20th century. However on the flip side of that there are also people who created fame and fortune for themselves by doing immoral things that got them popularity. I think the biggest example of this are celebrities who became famous simply because they released a sex tape. For example kim Kardashian. In my opinion in a lot of peoples eyes something seems more immoral when it comes from someone we wouldnt expect to do the act. Like Eliot Spitzer, what he did was wrong and he should loose his job but we wouldnt expect him to do it. I think todays society is not nearly as strict or conservative as the 20th century. And also morality is much different now than the 20th century.

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Prostitution: Then and Now

by [Christopher Cockman](#) – Saturday, April 16, 2016, 9:29 PM

From what I understand, the Mann Act of 1910 enacted explicit laws about the discontinuation of women being paid for sex, and primarily the discontinuation of underage sexual relations. In all cases of discussion, personally there are two things I see very wrong with marriage between a child and an adult. One being that there is such a great psychological gap between the two which affects maturity and major decision making. And secondly, the major physical difference.

I believe the law was very necessary then and now because of these reasons. A child forced into a marriage with an older spouse is basically up for utilization by their partner in all aspects. Unfortunately in the terms of history, this is meant mostly in the physical aspect. When a young girl started ovulating and therefore had the capability to reproduce, a man would take her and basically use her for children to further his legacy and status. This is disgusting to me and just because a girl of that age was essentially capable of reproducing, in a

developmental standpoint, she should not be able to take the act of reproduction from a grown man.

When the government is trying to regulate their citizens, it is normally for the greater good. When this notion is bypassed and legislators attempt to only satisfy one select group, the outline is most like that of children on a playground. If you give one child candy the other kids are going to throw a fit until they have some. The negative consequence implied is that you now have made an enemy of all the other groups (children) in affect.

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From Harding to Spitzer
by Christopher Cockman – Saturday, April 16, 2016, 9:51 PM

In this age of social media, it is impossible for anyone, especially politicians, to lead lives of privacy. This can be clearly seen in terms of Spitzer who was found to be having an affair with somebody other than his wife. Morally, I believe it is a terrible thing to cheat on the person you are explicitly committed to. This has held true throughout the century.

While doing a little research on businessinsider.com, I found that the 29th president Warren Harding had sexual encounters right before his presidency. Now this most likely does not add to my argument because his letters to his "call girl" were not found til long after his death, but during my research I found that many of our nations leaders have been involved in scandals.

For an average person, of course it would be a big deal to them if they were caught and it would most likely ruin their life, but for someone who has committed themselves to fame and is the position of politician or in charge of numerous people, this can be a huge deal for all affected. The morals have not changed between the times of Harding and Spitzer, but the means to uncover these scandal has. Which I believe is even more reason for politicians and famous people of today to just go ahead and either not cheat, or to just confess and not try and be sneaky about it. They will be caught.

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