

HST 203: History of the United States Sp17 (Escobar Meta 41054 41053)

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Censorship & Morality

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Forum 1

Censorship & Morality

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Censorship & Morality

by Joe Escobar - Friday, April 14, 2017, 6:38 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Censorship & Morality topic.

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, something that describes which question(s) you are addressing . Do NOT simply leave it RE: Censorship & Morality

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Re: Censorship & Morality

by Eric Walston - Saturday, April 15, 2017, 2:38 PM

The issue of censorship is something that I have been very interested in since the late 1980's. I remember as a kid who was into heavy Metal music, listening to Dee Snyder speak on Capital Hill before the Senate. I remember how the PMRC was on an all out crusade to save Americas youth, even though we didn't want to be saved. I remember having conversations with my mother about her similar experience where local church groups were destroying Beatles albums because John Lennon said the Beatles were bigger than Jesus. I also recall my grandmother interrupting the conversation to tell us how it had always been this way, how Frank Sinatra was such a bad influence on the youth of America, how Elvis was censored on

television, shot from the waste up so that the impressionable teens of America would not be allowed to see his gyrating hips. However what struck me most about the whole PMRC movement is when the least likely of heroes came forth. A man whose music i considered lame and totally out of touch with people my age. I am of course talking about John Denver. Watching him in my teens stand up to the federal government and take the side of an unrestricted right to freedom of speech made me believe that perhaps the common man actually could have his voice heard. It also made me believe that we are only oppressed if we allow ourselves to be oppressed. This forum I believe will offer a great debate on the first amendment and look forward to debating it with you all.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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Dumb laws that get people arrested

by Hope Walston - Saturday, April 15, 2017, 5:29 PM

I don't believe that the Mann Law was necessary then and it's not necessary now. "Johnson was arrested on the grounds that his relationship with Lucille Cameron violated the Mann Act against 'transporting women across state lines for immoral purposes' due to her being an alleged prostitute and due to Johnson being black" (Wikipedia entry on Jack Johnson). I have always thought that people should be able to do whatever they want with their bodies, whether it be drugs or prostitution. The Mann law wasn't necessary then because it was created by people who wanted to change something they didn't like, when it really wasn't any of their business. "In practice, its ambiguous language about 'immorality' has resulted in its being used to criminalize even consensual sexual behavior between adults" (Wikipedia entry on The Mann Law). If two consenting adults decide to have sex that shouldn't be anybody else's business but theirs. In today's society this law isn't necessary either. People still get arrested for being a prostitute or hiring a prostitute and I personally think the law that mandates that is ridiculous. I think instead there should be laws regulating the health and hygiene of prostitutes with safe places to go, similar to a brothel.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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Re: Dumb laws that get people arrested

by Eric Walston - Saturday, April 22, 2017, 9:04 PM

To say that this law is no longer necessary is a bit out of touch with what the law in its current state does. The law has been used to great effect in the FDLS cases of Warren Jeffs. It was also used in the Tony Alamo case in which he was convicted on ten counts of transportation of minors for illegal sexual purposes., sexual assault and rape. Also the case of the Reverend Brian David Mitchell, a known pedophile who was convicted for his role in the Elizabeth Smart kidnapping. In law enforcement there is a tendency to stack charges. The reason this is done is so that people like these can not get off on every charge. They may not have the most serious charge stick, but something will keep them behind bars so they no longer are a menace to society. I am not one for massive governmental issue of laws, however I concede that sometimes a law is necessary to protect the weakest and most vulnerable of society.

(while I hate using wikipedia, I have to admit these article are spot on)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alamo_Christian_Foundation

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brian_David_Mitchell

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warren_Jeffs

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The Ineffectiveness of Legislation

by Caleb Pruitt - Monday, April 17, 2017, 8:43 PM

The questions concerning the Mann Act and how effective its implementation was definitely stuck out to me. Specifically concerning the play Sapho and its contents, I don't think that the Mann Act condemned the suggestive content in the play or really effectively condemned a great deal of things because of its use of the word immoral. Morality is such a subjective, personal word that makes distinguishing the "right" from the "wrong" impossible. Around 0:46 into the Sapho video the narrator revealed the climactic ending of her being carried up the stairs willingly in order to get frisky. So is it immoral to have an affair with someone you're not married to? Or is it okay as long as both parties are consenting, but immoral if forced? The questions can go on and on, but I think that it is pretty self explanatory that the Mann Act was far from effective.

However, the idea of a need to prevent crime and bad things from happening in 1900 versus today is interesting. I definitely think that prostitution has been an active problem since essentially man's existence, with numerous references throughout the Bible. Its prevention however is a whole different story. Much like the censorship and regulation of heavy metal music, like Frankie Banali of "Quiet Riot" says in the video, "that little parental discretion sticker almost guaranteed you that your record was going to be purchased by disgruntled kids." (7:08) Even though they were trying to prevent kids from exposure, instead they highlighted which albums had suggestive material making it easier for kids to find and get their hands on. Similarly, I feel that the same occurs with prostitution. Efforts are made by government officials to crack down on human trafficking, but those at fault will simply figure a way to avoid those rules, a theory criminologists call displacement. All this to say: Often when legislation is passed in order to assist or benefit a certain group, the wrongs committed against them get worse.

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Sex Scandals and Public Humiliation

by Bailey Koffler - Monday, April 17, 2017, 8:47 PM

There have been countless sex scandals where politicians or celebrities have faced not only public humiliation, but also have lost jobs, endorsement contracts and respect of supporters. Provided in the forum materials is Eliot Spitzer's approval ratings before and after his sex scandal. After the scandal is approval rating went down by 27% and his disapproval rating went up by 34% (Escobar-Forum 1 Materials). After the scandal, Spitzer resigned as the Governor of New York. Another well known sex scandal involved Tiger Woods in 2009. After word got out about Woods affairs with more than 12 women, he lost endorsement contracts with AT&T, Gatorade, Nike and General Motors, just to name a few (Sixth Paragraph on UC Davis). The consequences of these scandals signal to me that the morality of the US today is

not very different than when Jack Johnson was convicted for violating the Mann Act in 1913 (Escobar-Forum 1 Materials). When politicians and celebrities are caught in sex scandals there are major consequences, one of which includes losing fans/supporters. Even as people become more open minded about sexuality, as a society we don't feel it's morally correct to put someone involved in a scandal on a high pedestal due to the way supporters will view them. I think mostly we don't want the younger generations to see these people in scandalous situations as icons. For example, if Nike kept the contract with Tiger Woods after his sex scandal, they would have received a lot of backlash from their consumers. In order to avoid this, Woods was dropped and I'm sure Nike shoppers were happy about that.

<http://gsm.ucdavis.edu/news-release/tiger-woods-scandal-cost-shareholders-12-billion>

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3



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Re: Sex Scandals and Public Humiliation

by Kate Weiss - Wednesday, April 19, 2017, 10:24 PM

I agree with your statements about how the morality of the US is not much different than it was a hundred years ago, and involvement in a sex scandal is a one-way ticket to exile, especially if a loss in advertisers and money is involved. Another more current scandal surrounds Bill O'Reilly from Fox News, which was sparked by a New York Times article published in early April detailing the "allegations of sexual harassment brought by Fox employees over a 15-year period" (Washington Post Article). Similar to Tiger Woods' case, once the network saw an enormous loss in advertisers, leaving the show sponsorless for two weeks, they decided to finally take action. Now, this also kind of questions the morality of the America; when do "we" take action? Fox News was well aware of his comments and actions towards women when they re-signed him to a 3-year contract last month, this is still after Fox owners announced to "clean up the network's culture" following the chairman Roger Ailes' forced resignation last summer also due to sexual harassment allegations. It took a mighty group of women's rights activists and a loss of millions in support money from advertisers for Fox to finally pull the trigger. Who is moral in this sense? Our own president "Trump called O'Reilly 'a good person' and said he should not have settled the complaints made against him. 'I don't think Bill did anything wrong,' Trump said." (Washington Post Article).

https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/bill-oreilly-is-officially-out-at-fox-news/2017/04/19/74ebdc94-2476-11e7-a1b3-faff0034e2de_story.html

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2



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Re: Sex Scandals and Public Humiliation

by Eric Walston - Saturday, April 22, 2017, 11:05 AM

I would say there is a huge difference between what happened to Tiger Woods and what happened to Jack Johnson. Tiger had the luxury of growing up in an age without Jim Crow laws, he had full rights as a citizen. While Johnson had his celebrity he still had to contend with the racial issues of his day, such as when he married his white girlfriend Lucille

Cameron, no one batted an eye when Tiger married his Swedish born wife. So to compare losing endorsements to the threat of being lynched because of your actions is comparing apples to oranges. Also keep in mind there is a huge difference between losing endorsements and losing your freedom.

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Re: Sex Scandals and Public Humiliation

by Branden Long - Saturday, April 22, 2017, 7:22 PM

I do agree that America has lost its morality because of political, film, music, and sports industries with sex scandals and more. I personally think that if we are trying to set a better example for kids in America i feel that we are still failing. The actor Casey Affleck won an oscar this year for best actor and has also been charged with two counts of sexual harassment that has been settled by the actor (Littlejohn). There are several scandals involving Donald Trump, yet he has still become the President of the United States (Graham). I agree with you that there are people that want to have a good reputation either about the company or a person. When we do think about these thing we know that reputation is a huge thing and i think that we don't uphold that to the same degree, but in me saying this doesn't mean we can't move on and allow people who have committed these acts to learn their lesson and become better.

(<https://www.thesun.co.uk/tvandshowbiz/2954418/casey-affleck-sexual-harassment-scandal/>)

(<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/01/donald-trump-scandals/474726/>).

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Sappho, the metaphoric middle finger to 20th century progressives.

by Lacey Tolman - Monday, April 17, 2017, 10:39 PM

The fact that Sappho had even existed in a time of such rampant censorship is amazing. It's like that dandelion that manages to survive and push through that crack in the pavement. In the 1900s "progressives" sought to rid the "government of corruption" and "fought against prostitution, gambling, drinking, and other forms of vice"(771). Understandable to a point, a reform of government and society that looks to be on the decline seems like it would be for the greater good, but the greater good for who? At what point does censorship defending morality become a violation of the 1st amendment. First off, with the growing popularity of magazines, realism favored by muckrakers and middle class americans, it's interesting that a play that portrays a realistic image of women as sexual beings, caused such an upheaval. Realism is defined as " a way of thinking that prized detachment, objectivity, and skepticism" (774). So where was this detachment and objectivity when it came to judging Sappho? Or was Sappho too progressive? Even though women in the U.S. were slowly gaining more freedom, the start of women's activism and the creation of settlement houses, whose workers "played a critical role in fashioning the agenda and in drafting pieces of progressive legislation"(778) this was also the time of the suffragette movement. My question is was trying to shut down Sappho

really an issue of keeping morality in check, or the ever popular trend in society of silencing and oppressing women. Because God forbid a woman be seen as anything other than asexual. However I digress, I think censorship in the 1900s did more harm than good, and even today censorship nothing but showing what you want people to see and believe, and hiding the actual truth, nothing good has ever come from sugar coating things. And honestly much like the publicity Sapho got after the trial and it's attempted shut down which made it more popular, attempting to censor something will just make the whole issue a lot worse.

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Re: Sapho, the metaphoric middle finger to 20th century progressives.

by Hope Walston - Wednesday, April 19, 2017, 12:29 PM

Oh man, where do I even start here. I love where your going with this and your points are great. I agree in saying that it's amazing in the first place that Sappho even existed at this time is amazing. I also agree that censorship has never worked and/or has made the problem worse. I agree because it really has to do with human nature. Take something away and people are going to want it more. Prohibition for example, alcohol was banned and you have the opening of speakeasies and the illegal sale of alcohol. Just like when Olga was released and the play continued, more and more people wanted to see it because they wanted to see what all the fuss was about.

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Re: Sapho, the metaphoric middle finger to 20th century progressives.

by Eric Walston - Saturday, April 22, 2017, 11:25 AM

I really enjoy your take on this. The treatment of Olga Nethersole reminds me of what happened to the Marquis de Sade. However as much as I abhor societies desire to legislate morality, I understand that my disgust comes at the cost of looking at the past through the lens of presentism. The world of the early 20th century was not as open as we are today. To push the boundaries of what is considered appropriate behavior was dangerous. We can argue that by bucking the system, Olga helped pave the way for feminism and our modern perception of what is morally correct, but that is just perception. There are many who would argue that perhaps Olga and later people opened up a can of worms that has led to an over sexualization of society. In my opinion neither are correct, but again that is just personal bias. Ultimately I do have to agree with you, I too believe that the censorship of the 1900's has done more harm than good. However just like with the PRMC, that censorship brought more attention to Olgas (and other artists) work and ultimately sealed their place in history. I suppose it holds true that any publicity is good publicity.

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Mann Act

by Kate Weiss - Monday, April 17, 2017, 10:39 PM

The Mann Act, one of several acts of legislature of moral reform during the Progressive Era, was used to prosecute “the transportation of any woman or girl for the purpose of prostitution across state lines” (NPR), and abused in order to fulfill the progressives fear of foreigners. The “other immoral purposes” clause gave the government the decision and obligation to make arrests for interracial couples, like Jack Johnson, at a time of “virulent white racism” (579). Protestant reformers believed in the use of an active government to force people to do good, and correct social, political, and economic wrongs (Ch 21 lecture notes). In this case, protecting white-slave prostitution women meant creating a loophole for arresting and bringing to justice ANY immoral sexual acts of the times, which was how the law benefited the protestant reformers.

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Sapho

by Branden Long - Monday, April 17, 2017, 11:29 PM

Consider Sapho and comment on the state of censorship prevalent in the United States in 1900. What do you find most compelling about the entire episode. Do you see any connections to issues today?

When sapho came out it provoked guardians of public morality in the 1900. The play was scandalous because in the play the female lead had a sexual relationship with a man in the play and was not punished in the play (Sapho 0:54). The censorship in the United States was harsh in its censorship and what was shared in America. Just the fact that the government was trying to punish her and put her in jail for what happened in the play (Sapho 1:12). The fact that in the video after the her trial the play expanded in its audience and also made way for new idea of what should be allowed to be shown in the U.S.(Sapho 3:18) Today there are still things that limit what people wear today when they are younger called “School Dress Codes” and they are enforced by schools. Most school dress codes have more restrictions on what girls can wear unlike what guys can wear.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Sapho

by Caleb Pruitt - Thursday, April 20, 2017, 12:24 AM

Sapho really made me think of the modern rating system for movies that we have developed. In 1984 the rating "PG-13" was introduced in order to alert parents to potentially unwanted aspects of the movies (The Film Rating System (CARA)). Oddly enough this is the exact time that the Heavy Metal censorship is occurring. There is a theme, one that you pointed out, that once government draws a lot of attention to something and tries to repress it but ends up finding nothing wrong with it, the audience it draws is immensely larger than it would have been without any thought whatsoever. Overall, I think that the material being censored in the 1900's is a little more common place today and that nowadays censorship is much more lenient.

I like that you brought up school dress codes as a form of censorship. My high school had specific dress codes (girls in skirts that stayed below the knee when sitting, guys in slacks, collared shirts and dress shoes). I personally loved it, but I think it is safe to say that there comes a point when censorship becomes too rigid and that it becomes a concern.

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Re: Sapho

by Eric Walston - Saturday, April 22, 2017, 11:40 AM

For me what this reminds me of is the Comic Book Code. the government feared that comic books were causing juvenile delinquency. This all came about because of one psychiatrist conducted a study that "conclusively" showed that youth who read horror and monster comics were more prone to acts of theft and violence. His "findings" have long since been disproven. Because of this many comic book companies went out of business, it almost destroyed Marvel and DC. It all but ended the reign of the super hero in the golden age of comics. And yet here we live in an age where we are over inundated with super heroes in TV and film.

We as a society will always try to find a reason for our problems, but we never look inward. We as a society always look to someone else to be the problem. Perhaps the real reason Olega Nethersole was so villanized, is because the morality police knew that what she was doing was natural. That we all had the same desires. Perhaps they knew in the back of their minds that women should be treated as men's equals, and that can be very upsetting to one whose moral convictions are in battle with logic.

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Re: Sapho

by Bailey Koffler - Saturday, April 22, 2017, 10:09 PM

Caleb,

I think your comment on the rating system for movies was very interesting. Like you said, the government tries to repress and later realizes there is not much need for it. This brings up an interesting dilemma of when do we draw the line. As time goes on our boundaries seem to expand. For example, in Sapho there was much controversy and even legalities regarding the end scene where Sapho willingly gets carried up to the bedroom for sex (Sapho Video Clip 1:00), however, today porn and nude photos are easily accessible on the internet. Porn and nude photos expose far more than Sapho did, however there was more outrage regarding the play than there is regarding porn. This goes to show how censorship and social norms evolve overtime. I still think there is more censorship than necessary regarding sexuality, but it's interesting to me how over time opinions and norms change. Now, hearing about the scene in Sapho it seems almost like a joke. In the video clip it's said that she was "carried clearly to a bedroom" (Sapho Video Clip 0:55), but the bedroom wasn't shown and neither was the act of sex.

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Mann Act

by Branden Long - Monday, April 17, 2017, 11:29 PM

Concerning the Mann Act, was this law necessary then? Is it necessary today? What can happen when the government attempts to regulate the behavior of its citizens? What are the unintended consequences when experts pass legislation attempting to help or protect a specific group of people?

The Mann Act law was to prevent the transportation of prostitution of women across state lines. The audio states "All laws are product of their time and that is certainly true of the Mann Act or as it is official know the white slave trade act." In how this law is talked about you can tell it was written to target immigrants. The audio also states that "there were rumors taken as truth that women were being forced into prostitution and shuttled around the country by a vas network controlled by immigrants." i believe that this laws is a very important laws but they made it off rumors and blamed immigrants as the cause of it. The Mann Act law is a law that should be upheld today because Illegal prostitution has become so bad that people are kidnapped, drugged and then people sell/rent them out to people who pay to do whatever they want. In the link there are many thing about prostitution today (<http://sex-crimes.laws.com/prostitution/prostitution-statistics>). That include what happens to most girl and what age they are most likely going to become prostitutes. When the government try to control its citizens it ends up making people want less of a government and people believing that the government is infringing on the rights of the people so they make people Anti-government that want smaller governments and less restrictions(<http://governmentisgood.com/articles.php?aid=18&print=>).

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Heavy Metal

by Branden Long - Monday, April 17, 2017, 11:30 PM

Do you see any similarities or differences in this PMRC censorship example and that of Sapho, which span a period of 80 years? How are these both examples of conservatism? Is this a case of optimistic or pessimistic reformers, and does it involve another case of unintended consequences?

Yes there are vary similar in ending results that what was not that big only got bigger after the government or a small group of people toke them to court it only increased the popularity of it. After Sapho was in court the amount of shows with sexual content increased(Sapho 3:06). Just like in the the heavy metal "Heavy metal was the big winner"(Heavy metal 6:50). The fact is both of these are huge changes in the entertainment world sapho showed sexual content and at that time was not okay. Heavy metal changed how people grew up and what the songs were to be were misinterpreted and made them seem far worse than they were. I believe that this was a pessimistic reform do to the PMRC ideas about the music they only saw the outcome of what there were listing to so they wanted it to be censored as much as possible. (Heavy metal 2:32)

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Similarities of Sapho and PMRC

by Nick Lynch - Monday, April 17, 2017, 11:57 PM

I was very intrigued by the two videos which talked about censorship in the early 1900's and censorship in the 1980's. The videos spoke of a play, Sapho, and the PMRC's involvement in the censorship of explicit music, specifically Heavy Metal. After watching both videos, I found it interesting how both the play and music were being "censored" by the same group of people - conservatives. Both Sapho and Heavy Metal were criticized by conservatives for being sexually explicit. Heavy metal was also criticized for being a poison to our youth, by promoting violence, explicit language, suicide, and a "revolt" against authority. What I find interesting is that what happened in the 1900's with Sapho and what happened in the 1980's with heavy metal is also happening in our society today with rap music. Time doesn't seem to affect the conservative agenda and neither does history. These "issues" that were once relevant in society, or still are, might be rubbing conservatives the wrong way due its clash with their christian values. However, you could argue that these conservatives were pessimistic and sat upon a high horse judging others who didn't have the same beliefs they did. The conservatives in both of these examples actually relate to progressives more than you'd think. This thought goes back to the example of voluntarism and coercion. The conservatives were attempting to force people to be "good" instead of hoping they would filter themselves and do it on their own. They didn't seem to care HOW their actions affected others, as long as they affected others.

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Re: Similarities of Sapho and PMRC

by Hope Walston - Saturday, April 22, 2017, 8:25 PM

I would also like to point out that in the heavy metal video, Dee Snider from Twisted Sister says "The PMRC was put together by a couple of Senators wives that have too much time on their hands" (Heavy Metal 7:57). We have also heard that in a class discussion about the progressives who wanted to end child labor, "Wealthy women with too much time on their hands." I just found that interesting because you have two separate problems, both trying to limit something that a majority of people didn't want limited.

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morality's evolution in America

by Michael De Nitto - Tuesday, April 18, 2017, 3:05 PM

Censorship during the beginning of the 20th century was a huge deal to americans who had their ideas and opinions that weren't the conservative outlook of American life. Still at the time men were considered more important to society than women who still were considered to be the typical "American Housewife" with no other real goals. The tragedy of Clyde Fitch play *Sapho* was the main female character Sapho must leave her love, Gaussian, in order to raise a child she had given birth to in her more promiscuous days. At the time many progressive politicians were outraged by this idea of promiscuous women, this wasn't supposed to be how women were portrayed. Now the traditional ideas for women has changed immensely in America, now we have reality shows that follow women who have premarital sex and are pregnant as teenagers called Teen Mom. The morality vice squads at the time were finding and destroying promiscuous pictures and poems, at the same time being hypocrites themselves for having prostitutes to fulfill their own vices.

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Sapho and Heavy Metal

by Hope Walston - Friday, April 21, 2017, 5:00 PM

There are definitely similarities between the PMRC censorship example and Sapho. One being that after the fact both ended up being more successful because the whole censorship problem happened. Sapho, After Olga was released, the play made more money than it did before because everyone wanted to see what the uproar was about. Heavy Metal bands made better sales because they had to put the "Parental Guidance" or "Explicit Content" stickers on their albums and disgruntled kids and teens wanted to buy them. They both ended up making more money because of the censorship battle.

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Re: The failure of the Mann Act

by Eric Walston - Saturday, April 22, 2017, 10:55 AM

We as Americans tend to force a heavy hand upon our fellow citizens. We want everyone to be in line with our way of thought. As such we try and make us all adhere to the same morality through legislation. Yet every time we attempt to do so it ends in disaster. The "Red Shirt Policy", prohibition, Social Security, Universal Health Care, we have always tried to do what we feel is the "right thing to do", yet in hindsight we see the errors of our ways, (especially the Red Shirt issue) The Mann Act is a prime example of a disastrous bill. On the surface, who wouldn't want to support the Mann Act. It protected underage women from the sinful deeds of men, but in the ruling of *Caminetti v. United States* there came the idea of "illicit fornication", this meant that even consensual sex between two adults could be seen as an "immoral purpose." This comes into play heavily with the Jack Johnson case. It would seem that in the Johnson case it is more of a way to keep him in place, I mean how dare this man of color date and marry white women. This isn't to say that we should not protect the most vulnerable in society, but we must do so in a way that does not restrict consenting adults from actions they deem fit that do not harm others. If you minimize liberty for one, you are in danger of minimizing it for all.

Caminetti vs. United States

<https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/242/470/case.html>

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Conservatism and Censorship

by Caleb Pruitt - Saturday, April 22, 2017, 12:25 PM

I think the claim that the PMRC and Sapho outrages are both conservative thought processes is intriguing. Going back to the first week of class, we defined conservatives as reactionary and resorting to traditional thought and practices (Week 1 notes). I think it is fair to say that though separated by an expanse of 80+ years, both address behavior that was previously considered unacceptable and inappropriate: flaunting your sex life and sexuality, and hardcore, suggestive music with unedifying undertones. The PMRC and Sapho opposers preferred to

resort to the presumed "proper" life practices, clearly a conservative thought process. However, while this may be good and all, it does beg the question: should mimicking the status quo be the right thing to do? When is being unique and ground-breaking going too far? These seem to be the age-old conundrums of teenagers...

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Re: Censorship & Morality

by Tanner Bull - Saturday, April 22, 2017, 7:15 PM

Considering the material present and Sapho, the censorship prevalent in the United States is completely changed from the early 20th century till now. In the dawn of the 1900's to be obscure didn't take much. Illustrated in the 3 min video clip, with the new age of motion picture captured a risk aye "movie" that consisted of two adults kissing for a few seconds (Web Clip). Compared to today's standards having a large gap where you can't go 15 mins without seeing a commercial or TV show or movie that has something to do with sexual activity. I found it very interesting in the video clip how one's actions being an actress, simply portraying a character simply for entertainment, caused personal trauma and conflict by putting her trial to serve time in jail for in "moral actions". Relating to today's time, you can relate no matter where the current time of the spectrum there will always be things that seem too radical of obscure for censorship in the United States.

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Re: Censorship & Morality

by Hope Walston - Saturday, April 22, 2017, 8:54 PM

The 18 second long kiss scene was called "The Kiss" and it created an uproar. "The kissing scene was denounced as shocking and obscene to early moviegoers and caused the Roman Catholic Church to call for censorship and moral reform - because kissing in public at the time could lead to prosecution" (Wikipedia "The Kiss"). It was so bad that newspapers were calling for police action in places that the film was showed. Nowadays explicit/sexual content or commercials are shown even on TV channels meant for children. There are still people calling for action against this but not like in 1896. Now it's become more normalized and a lot of parents don't care. It really is our current perspective against their perspective in the 1900's.

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Re: Censorship & Morality

by Tanner Bull - Saturday, April 22, 2017, 7:56 PM

In any time throughout U.S. history, looking back has always brought up questions to what the government chose to do at that time in politics and what was socially acceptable. In this time of early 20th century there was a time where actions concerning the Mann Act were precedent and socially acceptable for domestic policy. Such as times where in the past excluding an entire race such as the U.S. government had decided to do in 1882 in the Chinese Exclusion Act passed by congress, was deemed acceptable and appropriate. This act "provided an

absolute 10-year moratorium on Chinese labor immigration”(Wiki) and continued till 1942 where it was broken up by Magnuson Act that repealed the initial Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 due to China's aid to the U.S. in World War II (Wiki). In all aspects of U.S. history there will always be things that in today's eyes unacceptable or cruel. In today's politics, the Mann Act is no longer needed as all prostitution is illegal in the United States except for Nevada where they allow it in 8 counties. Government has seen it repeatedly where when they have stepped their boundaries as providers for the American public, the public lets them know. In one of the biggest out lashes for regulation of citizen's behavior was the 18th amendment to the constitution (Wiki). As the people spoke their voice and many other cases prove what will happen when the government steps over the line. The unintended consequences when experts pass legislation attempting to help or protect specific groups of people can affect in most cases economic affect by trying to either be a liberal in adding a service or conservative to take away that such service. Allowing for both instances for either way to economically affect those members involved.

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Re: Censorship & Morality

by Tanner Bull - Saturday, April 22, 2017, 8:33 PM

Comparing any two-time periods, such as the early 20th century and now currently in the early 21st century, many things have changed. Considering the treatment of popular members of society changed as well when they did something not very flattering. In comparing times where Grover Cleveland the 22nd and 24th president of the United States was involved in a campaign scandal that revealed he fathered an illegitimate child and was paying the mother child support (Grover Cleveland's Campaign woes) and Bill Clinton the 42nd president of the United States where he was publicly criticized for extramarital relationships and sexual misconduct where later three women filed charges upon the president. Under investigation it was found he lied upon official oath, and would be impeached for his actions (Wiki Bill Clinton). Compared to social stigma and American censorship and morality allowed for Grover Cleveland to continue his campaign and become president due to his openness and acknowledgement of his actions. Signaling that under these two different circumstances that the morality of the United States is different than what it was in the turn of the 20th century.

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Re: Censorship & Morality

by Hope Walston - Saturday, April 22, 2017, 8:42 PM

It is very interesting that people were okay with Grover Cleveland continuing his campaign, and eventually becoming president, but not okay with Bill Clinton. The obvious reason being Cleveland admitting his mistakes and "owning" them, and the opposite, Clinton lying under oath and denying everything. Which sort of shows the morality of the U.S. or at least people's opinions on lying.

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Re: Censorship & Morality



by Eric Walston - Saturday, April 22, 2017, 9:16 PM

I believe the main difference between the Cleveland issue and Clintons is that during Cleveland's time people had a bit more trust in their politicians. After Nixon and Watergate people became more skeptical of political figures. Ironically however the stigma of Cleveland's improprieties followed him long after his term in office, which one would think would make him less credible as a politician, while Clinton seems to have been given a pass for his indiscretions, and is even seen to this day as a great hero of the Democrat party.

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Censorship and Women

by Bailey Koffler - Saturday, April 22, 2017, 9:26 PM

In the early 1900s Americans began "to experiment with more open expressions of sexuality" (page 677). One way this was done was through pop culture, including the play Sapho. Women began to demand rights to the same sexual freedom that men had. In Sapho, the lead female was carried upstairs to an assumed bedroom in order to have sex with a man, Sapho went willingly, which is why the play was so controversial. "Because the character wasn't punished in the play, Olga had to be punished in real life" (Sapho Video Clip 1:12). In this time period there were many issues regarding women and them having sexual desires like men. With this parents began to worry about their children and promiscuity (page 677). The video clip on Sapho was very compelling to me because Olga Nethersole was arrested due to the actions of a character she played. Today I could never imagine an actor/actress being punished for the decisions of a character they played. I think part of the reason Nethersole was arrested due to this situation was not only because of the scene in the play, but also her involvement with the show. Not only was she an actress, she was a producer and director, which would have been different from the social norms of that time period.

In regards to censorship today, in elementary/middle/high school there are very strict dress codes. Young ladies are not able to wear tank tops, low cut shirts, short shorts, leggings, etc. because young men may become "distracted" while in school. This is another form of censorship enforced in order to avoid sexuality. In college, people wear leggings, tank tops, etc. and everyone seems to function just fine. Women are not sexualized for displaying their shoulders or legs. I think that by censoring bodies and how we choose to clothe them we sexualize women more. If schools would treat body parts as if they weren't taboo and rather talked about their uses openly and honestly, young people wouldn't see them as parts used for sex. We would see breasts as a body part that women use to feed children, instead of a body part for others to look at for pleasure.

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