

HST 203: U.S. History Sp18 (Escobar Meta 41002 43590)

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Forum 1 Censorship & Morality

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Censorship & Morality

by [Joe Escobar](#) - Thursday, April 12, 2018, 9:05 AM

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 one of the questions you are addressing. Do NOT simply leave it RE: Censorship & Morality

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Re: Censorship & Morality



by [Cameron Noriega](#) - Saturday, April 14, 2018, 1:39 AM

What's compelling about Sapho is that it seemed like the people of the show knew what they were putting out for the public. They wanted to put something new out there, and for sure the audience responded very critical. They seemed shocked to see an attractive woman "being seductive with any amount of lovers 0.34-0.36" In today's society, there is a connection with this. For example Miley Cyrus. She was once a famous Disney actress. Especially on a pre-teen to teenager kid's show Hannah Montana, and later over the years changed dramatically to better describe as a "party animal." people today and the people that saw Sapho have a similar reactions to one another. The Mann Act was definitely necessary back then to stop transportation of women or girls from being turned to prostitutes. It's necessary to this day because even though prostitution is illegal, it's still happening all over the world right now. A well known professional golfer Tiger Woods was in a cheating scandal in 2009. Tiger Woods cheated on his wife where it stated on Wikipedia, "more than a dozen women claimed in various media outlets to have had affairs with Woods." After these rumors spread out to the public. Woods lost some big sponsors like "Gatorade and AT&T."

Citation:

Sapho video 0.34-0.36 "Being seductive with any amount of lovers."

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

Infidelity scandal and fallout

"Over the next few days, more than a dozen women claimed in various media outlets to have had affairs with Woods."

"several companies re-evaluated their relationships with him. [Accenture](#), [AT&T](#), [Gatorade](#) "and [General Motors](#) completely ended their sponsorship deals"

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Sapho and Today

by [Landon Stevens](#) - Saturday, April 14, 2018, 6:01 PM

Upon first view of the 5 minute clip regarding Sapho, my thought was simply "Goodness, how the times have changed". But by the end of the video, although that thought still lingered in my mind, my viewpoint definitely changed slightly. Part of the

clip really struck a chord with me when I think about the similarities of then and now, and that was the part when the narrator talked about how Olga's indecency trial lasted only 15 minutes, and the sympathetic jury found her not guilty, and then the part about how, because of the trial and scandal-like attention that came along with it, the crowds for the play grew larger and larger. That part reminds me a lot of how things are today. Sure, women are one hell of a lot more womanized and sexually gazed upon today than they were at the turn of the 20th century, but "incidents" similar to the Sapho one are the cause of the advancement of censorship, or lack thereof, throughout the past 100 years up to today. I can't help but wonder what censorship will look like another 100 years in the future. Will there be none? Or will there be more than there is now? Certainly the direction we have been heading indicates less censorship.

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Re: Sapho and Today

by [Cameron Noriega](#) - Wednesday, April 18, 2018, 11:38 AM

I couldn't agree more. I believe today's society is more accepting and less censorship than it was in the past. Everybody should be able to express themselves how they want. Especially in this topic about women. I'm still uncertain if today censorship is fine as it is or if we still need less? As long it doesn't affect me, what's the big deal?

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Censorship and morality concerning Sapho

by [Peyton Tooze](#) - Sunday, April 15, 2018, 12:35 PM

What I found in the film about Sapho being so controversial in 1900 was that the "guardians of public morality"(Sapho film, 22 seconds) were having trouble censoring things and keeping people from producing plays, seductive photos, novels, ect... because these things were easily accessible and cheap. The effort was somewhat successful to stop the spread of these scandalous things. Olga Nethersole was arrested and charged with violating public indecency. The most interesting thing to me about the whole film was the irony of the fact that The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice's attempt completely backfired because of all the attention it brought to the Sapho play being scandalous. Once Olga Nethersole's court case was over, tons of more people went to see it as well as other plays and "views" of the same nature. The connection I see to today's issues is in places like North Korea and China, their internet and news sources are very censored but some things can fall through the

their internet and news sources are very censored but some things can fall through the cracks only making these things more desirable to see or hear about. It is sort of like when I was young and I heard or saw something like a rated R movie, it would interest me more than something like a PG movie I already could watch.

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Censorship, Morality, & Sapho

by [Shane McClintock](#) - Sunday, April 15, 2018, 7:25 PM

In 1890 Wyoming became the first state to give women the right to vote. Colorado became the second in 1893, and in 1896 Idaho and Utah become the third and fourth states to grant women the right to vote. This was a pivotal time in United States history regarding equal rights. Our textbook had an interesting perspective pertaining to these states granting women the right to vote. On page 697 it reads, "The main reason for success in these sparsely populated western states was not egalitarianism but rather the conviction that women's supposedly gentler and more nurturing nature would tame and civilize men who had populated the frontier." (2nd paragraph, 697) The definition of egalitarianism is that all people are equal and deserve equal rights and opportunities. Egalitarianism does not seem to be an extremely prevalent characteristic of the early 1900's. Policies as well as criminal cases often seemed to be enforced with the intent of promoting a way of living that benefited people in power and discriminated against people of color, different religious beliefs, and women. Censorship seemed to be used often as an attempt to preserve an idea of morality that was largely only agreed upon amongst white men. Sapho demonstrates an attempt to censor material that threatened the morality of more conservative citizens. In Sapho, Olga Nethersole's character seduces a man and ultimately ascends a spiral staircase with him, presumably to a bedroom. Olga Nethersole ended up having criminal charges filed against her. The video suggested that because Olga's character was not punished in the play, that Olga had to be punished. (1:10) According to the video, "Guardians of morality were working overtime to stop peep shows, dirty novels, picture post cards. There was just too much of it and it was too cheap, it was too available." (1:40) The most compelling part of the video clip for me was that not only was Olga Nethersole acquitted of the charges filed against her, the case against her ultimately benefitted her. "The censorship succeeded only in expanding the audience far beyond what it would have been without the arrest." (3:00) This seems to be a trend that replicates itself throughout history. Often it seems that people only begin to become particularly interested in an event when there is an uproar from society.

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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?

by [Kyle Shrope](#) - Sunday, April 15, 2018, 7:30 PM

The state of censorship in the U.S. in the 1900 was way different then than it is today. People's views and ideas were a lot more closed minded in the 1900. The lead actress, Olga Nethersoles, was put on trial for public decency, because her character in the play would sleep around with men voluntarily. I found this part of the video most compelling to me, because in today's world women in movies, plays, and shows sleep around voluntarily. Through shows and movies censorship of women sexuality has changed and become more lenient in todays world.

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Re: 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?

by [Shane McClintock](#) - Monday, April 16, 2018, 12:43 PM

I agree that the material that we censor today in society is vastly different than that of the early 1900s. One particular example that comes to mind occurred in 1961. The Supreme Court case of Mapp v. Ohio was a landmark case regarding amendments such as the 1st, 4th, and 14th. The case ultimately decided that evidence acquired by the police while searching Mapp's house was illegally obtained and therefore could not be used against her in a criminal prosecution. The part that I find interesting pertaining to this case and the topic of censorship is that some of the evidence confiscated by the police was pornography. Mapp was being prosecuted for violating an Ohio state law that prohibited, "lewd, lascivious, or obscene material." She was convicted and sentenced to one to seven years in prison. I think its fascinating that some of the material that is currently allowed to

present. I think the fascinating part about the material that is currently allowed to be viewed and or possessed by the public, had the potential to get you arrested in the not so distant past.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

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Re: Censorship & Morality

by [Marissa Luther](#) - Friday, April 20, 2018, 10:10 PM

Although I agree censorship has changed greatly since the 1900s, I think the way women are policed are the same, and haven't changed as drastically. According to the MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America), a woman orgasming can not be rated less than an "R" rating, while a film containing a man orgasming can receive as low as a "PG 13" rating. This polices female sexuality in a similar way that the public attempted to police Sappho. A woman in 1900 was not supposed to enjoy having sex, and women enjoying sex today are also seen as more obscene than men.

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Re: Censorship & Morality (Considering Sappho)

by [James Croxton](#) - Sunday, April 15, 2018, 8:14 PM

For me, a former film major, it certainly isn't surprising to learn that a film has caused so much controversy that it has led to someone being jailed. One of my favorite horror films, the Italian *Cannibal Holocaust*, saw the film's director imprisoned for six-months until he could prove the actors weren't in-fact murdered by cannibals (it was written into their contracts that they were to go into hiding for a length of time to do just that - give off the impression that they were murdered) and the film being banned in over ten countries.

That being said, the thing I found to be the most compelling about the story of *Sappho* is that Olga Nethersole was acquitted based on the testimony of several of the film's viewers. Knowing what I do about film controversies, I find it truly extraordinary that in 1900, a scandalous film would come out unscathed and in-fact even more successful than they ever could've imagined before its trial. This film would've been "canned" had it been released fifty-years later with the introduction of the PCA "stamp of approval" and the director's reputation and career (sometimes fatally) scarred.

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Re: Censorship & Morality (Scandal)

by [James Croxton](#) - Sunday, April 15, 2018, 8:14 PM

Whether its Anthony Weiner, Bill Cosby, the POTUS, or Harvey Weinstein, the one thing they all have in common is that they were all convicted by the Court of Public Opinion first and foremost. With that in mind, I don't believe we have come too far from the the turn of the 20th Century.

I say this because if we look at the story of *Sapho*, it's the Court of Public Opinion that actually decides and gets Olga Nethersole off the hook - not the official Court of Law in which the case was tried.

Here, in the 21st Century, we see the Court of Opinion as being just as influential on the Court of Law as it was then.

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Re: Censorship & Morality (Scandal)

by [Miya Pomeroy](#) - Thursday, April 19, 2018, 3:25 PM

Though I agree with your points that the public can and have had a tremendous effect on certain outcomes of those scandalous cases, but I do not agree that there hasn't been a lot of change since the early 20th century. I think the biggest difference I see between Olga Nethersole's case and the list of men provided is the type of scandal. Nethersole was in a situation where she was merely portraying a character and her sexuality. In the case for a lot of the more recent sex scandals, many of them are situations involving unwanted sexual advances/assault/abuse, etc. I think that just by comparing the situations alone can really show how much America has changed. I feel like today these situations are more focused on fixing the safety and wellbeing of people as opposed to punishing those who are more openly sexual. Depending on your opinion of morality will determine will differ from person to person, so one person may view openly sexual person just as bad as abuse and harassment. But while living in America, a country with the freedom of speech, people have the right to say what's on their mind and how they feel, so Nethersole being punished for being a part of a play was essentially a waste time, especially by today's standards. Now they are attempting to make the country safer by punishing those who bring harm on to others.

Now, I do understand that the original statement was for the role of the public in the situations and I do agree with that. I just felt that there has been a lot more change

situations and I do agree with that. I just felt that there has been a lot more change in America than was mentioned, mainly in what is considered taboo and immoral to the public and the citizens.

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Sapho in current times

by [Meri Pedelini](#) - Sunday, April 15, 2018, 8:25 PM

With so many popular shows on TV like FRIENDS or Sex in the City that display women expressing their sexuality to me, it is crazy think something like the 1900s play Sapho was such a scandal. But if you consider the time period (before women even had an ability to vote) it makes more sense as to why it was so controversial. As ancient as this idea may seem and how far we have come in accepting women and encouraging equality, I do see connections to current events. Its like the whole "scandal" in 2008 when under the Obama administration Michelle was constantly criticized as being "disrespectful" and "inappropriate" for showing off her arms in her dresses. So maybe the public morale standards have not wavered too far?

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Re: Sapho in current times

by [Landon Stevens](#) - Tuesday, April 17, 2018, 11:44 AM

Meri, you made some excellent points in tying Sapho to 2018. I completely agree that the types things that "upset" people and the media change all the time, whether it be too scandalous or not scandalous enough. There seem to be times when women are urged to embrace their bodies, and be comfortable showing off what they are comfortable with, and other times when society is quick to strike down a figure, such as Michelle Obama, for seemingly petty reasons. My final thoughts on the issue are basically that people are always always always going to find something to criticize, and there is simply no fix for it. I guess it's unfortunate that mankind's natural instinct is to be quick to find flaw in others, but that's the pattern that's been displayed throughout history, continuing on to present time.

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Re: Censorship & Morality

by [James Croxton](#) - Sunday, April 15, 2018, 8:36 PM

Concerning the Berkeley article on conservatism, I find that the list of “common psychological factors linked to political conservatism: fear and aggression; dogmatism and intolerance of ambiguity; uncertainty avoidance; the need for cognitive closure; and terror management” to be accurate considering my personal perspective.

However, although I agreed with a sizable amount of the article and its list of factors, I found that the statement that “concerns with fear and threat, likewise, can be linked to a second key dimension of conservatism - an endorsement of inequality, a view reflected in the Indian caste system...” (page 3) to be false. I, personally, don’t see the connection to the Indian caste system but, I may be missing something.

It certainly doesn’t help the believability in that the article doesn’t even seem to try to consider the conservative perspective. And while the article clearly addresses conservatives, I don’t believe that they should be the only ones to respond. After all, we need checks and balances. This way we, the reader, can learn to appreciate other perspectives.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

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Re: Censorship & Morality (PMRC vs. Saphro)

by [James Croxton](#) - Sunday, April 15, 2018, 8:54 PM

Do I see similarities between the PMRC censorship controversies of the 1980’s and *Saphro* from a much earlier 1910? Sure I do.

For one, in both cases, the subject was brought forth by a group of activists with conservative ideologies - the Parents’ Music Resource Center (PMRC) in the 1980’s and the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice in 1900.

Saphro was “brought down” (but not for long) because of its undeniably suggestable end scene. The “morally-just” didn’t want this to be seen in the public eye. Similarly, the very Christian and “morally-just” PMRC didn’t want heavy metal music widely available - however, they were different in that they didn’t ask for complete annihilation of anything deemed morally-unfit. They just asked for a label to be put on the product - which ended up doing the artists more good than bad.

The PMRC, in my opinion, is a case of optimistic reform in that they didn’t force the public into an action (or inaction), but instead gave a choice. In contrast, in the case of *Saphro*, this is clearly pessimistic reform in that they clearly forced the public to not watch the film.

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[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Mann Act**by [Marissa Luther](#) - Sunday, April 15, 2018, 9:03 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?”

I can see why the Mann act would be necessary when it came out in 1910. Growing up in a time where human trafficking is a very real problem in society, I have no personal doubt women were being sexually trafficked. However, the fact that the law was named “The White Slave Traffic Act” shows that people were buying into a stereotype that white women are usually victims from immigrants. When trying to protect American women from forced prostitution, it is possible that the government put blame unjustly. To summarize, I think it is great that the government is trying to protect women from trafficking, but worry about unintended consequences for innocent parties.

I do believe that some form of this law is necessary today, although I would hope it would include men and boys in its protection as well. It is also unfortunate that Charlie Chaplin’s career suffered for a charge under the Mann act that he was acquitted of. (NPR, 1:30)

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[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Sapho Compared to Today's Entertainment**by [Miya Pomeroy](#) - Sunday, April 15, 2018, 9:37 PM

While learning about Olga Nethersole and what happened to her with *Sapho*, I think the most shocking thing that happened was that the actress, herself, was arrested for simply portraying a fictional character. Though I do believe that arresting her was extreme considering the content of the play, I also thought it was very strange that the playwright, Clyde Fitch, didn’t receive nearly as much backlash as Nethersole. Of course, she was the face of the show, but he was the *creator*. I think in today’s world there is still backlash of some movies that are too sexual, such as *Fifty Shades of Grey*. It is an extremely sexual movie and that can turn conservative and religious people away. It also received a large amount of backlash for the “abusive” sexual content

(<http://time.com/3696254/50-shades-of-grey-boycott/>). Despite the controversy, the leading actress was never arrested. Overall, I feel that sex is much more open and accepted in today's world of media and entertainment, but there are still instances where it can cause outrage.

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Sydney Plaza The Mann Act

by [Sydney Plaza](#) - Sunday, April 15, 2018, 9:41 PM

I think that the Mann Act passed in 1910 was passed due to an increase of women participating in what conservative society would deem lewd behavior for women I think conservatives were afraid that woman's sexual autonomy would "transform American cities into dens of iniquity." (page 680) To give context to what was current at the time was the notion of feminism as giving women the equal rights as men. There were also racial undertones to the passing of the Mann Act. The influx of immigrants and their morals differed from those of Protestant Americans. The idea that white women would be prostituted around the country and that this prostitution ring was run by immigrants became a growing anxiety in American culture. (NPR) However, the Act has served in a way to protect women legally from prostitution. Therefore, considering the time, I think this act was necessary for protecting women's rights. Although Wilson believed that government should not control it's citizens and that liberty was ideal, here is an example of government meandering in personal affairs for the sake of the greater good. I think that when government attempts to regulate it's citizens it becomes very exclusive to ways or people that differ from it's established morale. When an Act is passed with the intent to protect a group of people, it sometimes doesn't look at the full picture. For many people prostitution was a way of supporting one's self and family. Perhaps this Act could be used to wrongfully perpetrate sexual acts that Protestant society deems immoral.

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Inclusive vs. Exclusive?

by [Sam Reposa](#) - Sunday, April 15, 2018, 11:51 PM

What I found the most compelling about the Olga Nethersole and Sapho episode, is from around the 3:06 mark in the clip and it's that the censors only succeeded in making the production even more popular and successful, rather than shutting it down. I believe there's somewhat of a connection to this and perhaps abstinence being taught in public schools and high teen pregnancy rates, or historically, the 18th amendment prohibiting alcohol and the opening of speakeasies.

What boggles my mind concerning the Mann Act is that it was passed based on RUMORS that women were being trafficked vs. evidence (:45 into NPR audio report). What if our government today passed laws based on rumors all the time? I feel like it would be a disaster. It's hard to determine whether this law was necessary or not, given the fact that it was based on rumor; however, I would agree that the transportation of white women across state lines for the purpose of prostitution should be illegal today. There are consequences of writing legislature in attempt to help or protect a specific group of people. By targeting a specific group of people, there's a lot of people you aren't helping or protecting. I believe in general that it is better to be inclusive, rather than exclusive. Although it's great the Mann Act protects white women who are perhaps being trafficked, but what women of color, or men?

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Re: Censorship & Morality

by [Marissa Luther](#) - Friday, April 20, 2018, 10:18 PM

I agree that laws passing based on rumors seems ridiculous; but if you look into politicians/voters that believe very obvious fake news, it makes a lot of sense. I know many people who will believe any Facebook share, despite it being obviously false. I think a lot of fear of immigrants and people of color today are also based on rumors, which have very real consequences as well.

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Censorship & Morality concerning The Mann Act

by [Peyton Tooze](#) - Monday, April 16, 2018, 5:03 PM

The Mann Act seemed to be put in place by the reformers who used rumors of a sex slavery network ran by immigrants and this act would save white women from these horrors. There was a strange, open to interpretation way of enforcing this when the Mann Act was put into action because it was illegal to bring a woman across state lines for any "immoral purpose." This seemingly good Act signed by Taft in 1910 was substantially amended by congress in 1986, to change "any immoral purpose" to "any sexual activity for which anyone could be charged with a criminal offense." When the government tries to regulate something like what immoral behavior is, it leads to wrongful accusations and persecutions because what is immoral to someone might not be immoral to another. This reminds me of the Alcohol prohibition of 1920, when a group of people decided that alcohol was bad they forced everyone to stop drinking. In actuality, many cultures found alcohol to be embedded in their way of life. Such as

Italian immigrants, most of which were catholic, used wine in religious practices. Not to mention the effect it had on the working class. "The prohibition movement ignored the larger role that saloons played in ethnic, working class communities." (Textbook pg.690 p.3) Overall, when creating legislation to "help" one group of people it will appear like a good thing initially but its effect on the rest of the population may turn out to ultimately be negative.

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Sydney Plaza; Conservatism and Liberalism (Part II)

by [Sydney Plaza](#) - Monday, April 16, 2018, 5:23 PM

I agree with the argument that there are 4 distinguishable traits to political conservatism. The article lists:

Fear and aggression

Dogmatism and intolerance of ambiguity

Uncertainty avoidance

Need for cognitive closure

Terror management

I like how they took the study from 12 different countries. They didn't focus on American conservatism. Rather, they focused on psychological effects that are causal in their relationship to conservatism. I could argue that the Mann Act was a conservative-driven one. The fear that immigrants brought that would change Americans' Protestant view of sexuality and gender was strong enough to create a law denouncing prostitution. If the ideal is to go back to a 'tradition' then that typically indicates conservative thoughts and motives within the political and legal system.

Naturally as a liberal myself I think that can discern that these traits are true. We have multiple historical examples that represent a conservative stereotype because conservative views, beliefs and ways are real. For example, Donald Trump was popular among voters who wanted to go back to old and traditional ways. Trump and his administration (conservative) have turned back progression such as environmental laws, environmental deals, women's rights, DACA, all of these items can be drawn back to conservative tradition ideology. I liken both the Sappho incident and the passing of The Mann Act with internet censorship today with the passing of the [HR 1865, "FOSTA"](#) (shown in class via Craigslist personals) The attempted repeal of

protected DACA as early 20th century fears of immigrants.

I think that conservative people should critically look at the work the same as any person who identifies themselves as belonging somewhere on the political spectrum. If you were to limit who could respond to an article to claim it's accuracy, then you wouldn't be participating in a democracy. Both conservatives and liberals operate within a democracy and therefore both ought to critically consider the text.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

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Censorship 1900 connection with today

by [Reed Battaglia](#) - Monday, April 16, 2018, 8:17 PM

After listening and watching the videos, I feel that in 1900 there was a large amount of censorship. I was pretty compelled with the fact that they had arrested Olga Nethersole on a total bogus charge. They were using very dichotomous thinking in this case. If you think about it, it is very similar to what is happening today. If you watch the news, you know how:

"YouTube will ban videos that promote or link to websites selling firearms and accessories, including bump stocks, which allow a semi-automatic rifle to fire faster. Additionally, YouTube said it will prohibit videos with instructions on how to assemble firearms. The video site, owned by [Alphabet Inc.](#)'s Google, has faced intense criticism for hosting videos about guns, bombs and other deadly weapons." (2nd Paragraph Bloomberg Tech). This connects to the 1900's because if you think about how the police basically tried to make an example out Olga and prosecuted her and lost. This made the film bigger than it would have ever been, even though the police thought they were doing it for the better. They utterly failed.

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Re: Censorship 1900 connection with today

by [Shane McClintock](#) - Tuesday, April 17, 2018, 3:19 PM

I found it kind of funny that the police trying to censor Sapho ultimately made the play more popular. In regards to censorship, the material that is being censored has definitely changed since the early 1900s. However, material is definitely still being censored. I like how you tied YouTube to the content for this week's forum. I think

that numerous social media websites are guilty of censorship. Personally, I feel like I can relate to the patrons that went to see Sappho after the case against Olga had been dropped. When material is being censored, it makes you wanna see what the fuss is all about.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Censorship and morality: Differences in morality regarding sex scandals from the turn of the 20th century to today

by [Peyton Tooze](#) - Tuesday, April 17, 2018, 4:47 PM

Charlie Chaplin was involved in a sex scandal in the 20th century and his professional career never recovered.(NPR audio 1:27) When I look at more recent sex scandals like Bill Clinton's relations with Monica Lewinsky when president in 1998, I notice it is handled as a serious matter. Clinton was ultimately impeached because of lying about what perspired. Looking to current events and our current president, Donald Trump had an affair with an adult actress named Stormi Daniels and she was paid \$130,000 to not say anything about it. Even though this story has made it to all major news stations, it doesn't seem like it is ruining president Trump's reputation or career. Regarding the morality of the United states today and at the turn of the 20th century, I believe it is evident that our morality as a nation has gone through changes. Our nation has a new sex scandal in our news and T.V. shows every week. Maybe, as a country, we have become numb to scandals and learned to look past them like the Tiger Woods scandal. Woods was all over the news and ESPN yet here we are less than 10 years later and he is still doing good in his career and his scandal is looked past. The explosion of social media usage, text messages and having a video camera in our pockets make sex scandals more easily detectable unlike the 20th century. It seems so common nowadays which leads me to believe that our country's interest in these things has declined. Overall, our country's morality has made a big change but very recently.

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Sydney Plaza Sappho and Censorship early 1900

by [Sydney Plaza](#) - Wednesday, April 18, 2018, 6:04 PM

I think that at the time that this play came out America was a largely conservative and protestant country that upheld certain values that this play shook. The arrest of the lead actress who played Fanny Le Grand (which itself points towards and makes fun of anatomy) was arrested for portraying an autonomous woman who seduces men whom

she is not married to. At the time this play was exhibited to the public women did not have the right to vote. (class notes) The distribution of birth control was not yet available and women had yet to enter the workforce while men were at war. (p760 of textbook) I think that this conservative social and political climate made it possible for the seed of fear of women's liberation especially their sexual liberation to grow. The influx of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe (in class notes) further heightened the paranoia of loose morale. The inability to separate Nethersole from her character Fanny shows that not only was the work itself criticized but the woman involved with the play must also suffer for this what was considered lewd act. I think that early America didn't want a government to control everything, but yet it is clear that they believed that the government should force their ideas on it's citizens which was a very progressive thing for the government to do. I think that the fact that they arrested an actress for representing a culture that Protestant America disapproved of is an extreme example of censorship in American history. I think that today we are so exposed to sexual and graphic content on a day to day basis that we may not arrest an actress for displaying that type of character but we would pass an act that prevented personal ads from being put onto craigslist. Of course censorship still occurs today, but it does not operate at the same level it did in the early 1900's.

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Concerning the Mann Act, was this law necessary then? Is it necessary today? and the rest of the second question

by [Kyle Shrope](#) - Wednesday, April 18, 2018, 8:13 PM

The Mann Act was not a necessary law before they changed the wording and meaning of the law. When the law was passed in 1910 it was meant to stop sec trafficking, but quickly was viewed by many as a legislation for morality across the country, which is never necessary. But in 1986 they changed the wording and the meaning of the law to and illegal sexual activity instead of any unmoral acts, "That allowed the government to get out of the business of legislating morals, while retaining the essence of the Mann Act as a weapon in the fight against human trafficking"(NPR Audio 2:11) . This makes it a necessary law today, because it fights against human sex trafficking, but doesn't bring in to question morality. The unintended consequences from the passing of the Mann Act is innocent people get accused and punished for crimes they didn't commit. Heavyweight boxer Jack Johnson was one of the first to be charged with the Mann Act for transporting a white woman from Pittsburgh to Chicago. Many believe that his case was racially motivated as he was a black male with a white woman.

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**Concerning the Mann Act.....**by [Meri Pedelini](#) - Wednesday, April 18, 2018, 8:42 PM

“all laws are product of their time” (0:22 in the audio file) the MANN act was a law passed to protect women against forced prostitution and transporting them across state lines. I think the law was necessary back then and now, because sex trafficking is such a huge issue even in modern times. During the early 1900s which is when this law was put into play, there was a lot of racism and oppression still going on. the white clubhouse women who were making headway in this movement wanted to the right to vote and to have a voice, however the majority of them still believed that other women from groups of color lacked “moral strength” and did not believe they should have the same right to vote as they did (textbook pg 697) which is contradictory!

An example of the government trying regulating the behavior of its citizens and going sour, is prohibition. Alcohol was outlawed in 1919 from the help of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union. (textbook pg 690) but even though the government thought that this law would help improve the lives of the American people for the better they overlooked the role that saloons and the sales of alcohol played in ethnic and working-class communities which unintentionally hurt them in the end. Or how the child labor laws were effecting lower class families because they weren’t able to send their kids to work and collect money. Absolutely kids should not be expected to work in factories helping their families make ends meet, but you did see the side and sympathize with the poor families. So this issue shined light on a bigger problem (raising wages so that families didn’t have to send their kids to work) And even though alcohol was illegal, there were still speakeasies and other ways to get alcohol under the table. Like Joe mentioned in the lecture, it’s like texting and driving its illegal but people are still going to find ways to do it and not get caught.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) [Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Recent celebrity/public humiliation**by [Meri Pedelini](#) - Wednesday, April 18, 2018, 9:11 PM

I think our society has evolved in what is considered “scandalous” as far as tv, movies, etc. however, when it comes to people who are on a pedestal, and someone who is admired and respected or someone of power, the ice they stand on for “scandal” becomes very thin. The first thing that comes to my mind when answering this question is Bill Clinton. The president of the United States who after a sex scandal in the white house, the press coverage was inescapable and his approval rating plummeted until he was eventually impeached in 1998 (Wikipedia) Bill Clinton wasn’t a terrible president but because of his scandal the public would never trust him or think of him in the same

way that they did before. Another person who faced public humiliation and judgement after a scandal was Tiger Woods, after the public found out about his countless affairs, several of his sponsors pulled the plug on him and his career took a serious fall. As much as I'd like to think society is forgiving for these sort of immoral scandals, we have not changed much than of the days of Sappho. Even though those things are happening in our lives all around us, maybe we are even the ones committing the immoral acts, but if it's a person who is wildly popular or respected we lay the hammer of judgement down on them quickly and harshly and we all become angels in our view.

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Re: Recent celebrity/public humiliation

by [Sydney Plaza](#) - Friday, April 20, 2018, 8:02 AM

I like your use of examples, ranging from president elects to idolized athletes. However, I would argue that things are quite different than they were in the early 1900's. In the United States today we would never arrest an actress for portraying a role displaying lascivious or typically Christian indecency. Also, by comparing the sex scandals of Bill Clinton to Olga denies that there are differences in expectations of gender. Although there are consequences for these male public figures they would not be arrested for these acts even if our society continues to disapprove of adultery. I argue that there is a great difference between the early 1900's and now because women then were not given any grounds on which to display or even to act out on behalf of their own autonomy or sexuality because by doing so was seen as grossly immoral.

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Re: Recent celebrity/public humiliation

by [James Croxton](#) - Friday, April 20, 2018, 1:18 PM

Sydney,

You "hit the nail right on the head" with your comment about "comparing the sex scandals of Bill Clinton to Olga" - and for that, I wanted to thank you.

I am currently taking a Woman Film Studies class and this would certainly be a case I would bring up in class. The fact that Olga is literally arrested, tried, and fortunately acquitted, the men most certainly would've gotten away unscathed.

If I may be honest, I found this whole situation to be not unlike the predictable plot of a 1940's film-noir: a seductive woman gets the man to do something and

then punished in the end for that very deed.

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Concerning the Mann Act..

by [Reed Battaglia](#) - Thursday, April 19, 2018, 6:57 PM

The Mann act was in the 20th century was necessary but is it still needed now? I would have to say yes. Due to the fact of all the sex trafficking that is going on, I believe that this act should still be enforced. Trafficking women and kids is just wrong. Any trafficking in general is wrong because it goes against our rights as human beings. I believe when the government tries to regulate our behavior, it can get ugly very fast. If the government becomes too involved with laws we slowly start to lose more of our freedom. When the government passes laws, there will always be unintended consequences. For example, when the government passes laws to make places safer like gun free zones. It truly seems like a good idea, but, ultimately, criminals will break the law no matter what. The reason they are criminals is because they don't care about the law or the consequences that come forth from breaking those laws. With having said that, I realize a lot of people will say, "Well guns are bad, they hurt people", but, in reality, the people that use these guns are irresponsible and unstable people. As you can see, laws that make a specific group of society safer will always have hidden consequences.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

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what makes a political conservative

by [Meri Pedelini](#) - Thursday, April 19, 2018, 8:43 PM

In the Berkely article I am interested in how they used research from 12 different countries to display a wide range of conservative views instead of just focusing on what it means to be conservative in America. The character traits they listed that they found prevalent in conservatism - Fear and aggression, intolerance of ambiguity, Uncertainty avoidance, Need for cognitive closure, and Terror management – seemed spot on for me. Being born and raised in a small, conservative town in Oregon (Grants Pass) I see this type of behavior all the time. The population in this town is very traditional and if anyone or anything made waves, it wasn't taken lightly. I had never actually assessed my political stance until I moved out of Grants Pass to Eugene and realized that I am much more comfortable with the more accepting, liberal city.

You can see almost all of those characteristics being displayed in the 2016 election. Republic Donald Trump's slogan was "Make America Great Again" Implying America

has forgotten how to be 'great'. Americans were thrown back to the good ol days when the economy was thriving and MTV had not been invented yet. This message had a profound effect on voters and got people who valued traditional beliefs (defunding planned parenthood, tougher immigration laws, etc) to vote for him. Donald Trump also quite often encouraged aggression and used fear in his campaign speeches along the election. For example in 2016 at a speech in Iowa Donald Trump says to the crowd "If you see anyone getting ready to throw a tomato, knock the crap out of him would you?" telling the crowd that he will "pay for the legal fees" And the crowd went wild for this! (video from the New York Times)

As for the article it is from the college of Berkely which is a famous liberal college so I can't help feeling some bias to it, it would be interesting to see how a conservative college like Hillsdale, would go about presenting the same data and information.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

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PMRC and Sapho

by [Meri Pedelini](#) - Thursday, April 19, 2018, 8:53 PM

Yes I definitely see similarities between the two. Both are having a group of "guardians of morality" concerned about what the general public is able to see or hear. Both the play and metal music were recreational activities. No one was being forced to listen to this music or see this inappropriate play, but still, people felt as though there should be some censoring of it. "Morally just" people felt like they were doing the country a favor by removing the play and putting labels on cds. They probably had hopes that by putting these warning labels on that people would, in their eyes, "do the right moral thing" and go buy a KidsBop CD instead, but as we find many times throughout history, people do not always "Do the right thing" therefore, making metal music and Sapho an even BIGGER hit than it was before all the controversy.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

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With the political and celebrity scandals today, do these events signal that the morality of the United States today is not very different than it was at the turn of the 20th Century?

by [Kyle Shrope](#) - Thursday, April 19, 2018, 11:10 PM

I don't that these events signal that there is no difference in morality today than at the

start of the 20th century. I think just like the turn of the century people prefer to keep their personal sexual exploits to themselves or known by people they trust. Each individuals idea of morality differs depending on their own experiences. What someone finds immoral, you may be ok with. I also think that we hold our elected leaders and celebrities with high regard and expect them to always make what we think our the right moral choices.

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Part 2- Relating Sapho and the case of Heavy Metal vs the PRMC

by [Shane McClintock](#) - Friday, April 20, 2018, 1:17 PM

I noticed a profound similarity between the attempted censorship of Sapho and that of heavy metal. The censorship ultimately made the material more popular. The outcome of a court case between heavy metal and the PRMC resulted in the requirement of a parental advisory sticker on albums that contained explicit content. Frankie Banali a member of Quiet Riot stated, "That little parental discretion sticker almost guaranteed you that your record was going to be purchased." (7:09, Heavy Metal vs the PRMC). I find it interesting to see the attempt at censorship so miserably in both Sapho and the case brought forth by the PRMC.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Public Humiliation Of any Politician or Celebrity In Recent years

by [Reed Battaglia](#) - Friday, April 20, 2018, 5:32 PM

Right after reading this question, I immediately thought of the sex scandal involving Tristan Thompson and Khloe Kardashian. Tristan Thompson was recently caught having various sexual relations with different women. This has caused fans to criticize and humiliate him publicly, especially on social media. The only reason I know about this event is because of social media. When I use snapchat and go to the explore page, the media has just blasted him out of the water. I think morality isn't very different than it was during the 20th century. If a sex scandal happened back then, people would react the same way and trash talk whoever was in the wrong. Before this scandal, everyone loved Tristan and thought him and Khloe were perfect for each other. After the scandal, Khloe's fans have voiced their disappointment towards Tristan and now he has a bad reputation. For example, fans on twitter have bashed his reputation: "No no no, goodnight Tristan! He can go to bed & never show his face again!"(jaclyn hill twitter). This woman is a well known makeup artist from YouTube and, as you can infer, did not hesitate to voice her opinion. Comments like this on social media have started a trend for every fan to voice their opinion about the scandal. After this scandal,

Tristan's approval ratings have definitely plummeted and it is unlikely that he will be accepted by Khloe Kardashian's fans after what he did to her while she was pregnant with his child.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

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Conservative reading

by [Reed Battaglia](#) - Friday, April 20, 2018, 7:04 PM

After reading this article on how they define "conservatism", I can't help but feel as if it was written with bias because it came from Berkeley which is predominantly liberal. Since I am a conservative, I don't think that the response to the article should be limited just to the right-wing. I felt like this article had mostly inaccurate claims towards conservatives. Reading this made me feel like my political position is wrong or annoying to liberals. I believe that every person deserves the right to hold their own beliefs and opinions without being criticized by opposers. One particular statement made in the article that I thought was false was the claim that conservatives view things black and white and don't really want change. This is not always true, there are many conservatives who hold different views than each other, so it is hard to make the claim that conservatives think black and white. Respectfully speaking, it seems like this article is against conservatives and with my knowledge of how liberals think, everyone should be equal and there should be no criticising of beliefs. From this article, I got the feeling that conservatives just upset liberals with their beliefs, and this is not exactly fair. Also, I did not like how they compared Hitler and Mussolini to the conservatives beliefs today. Overall, I feel like this article was supportive of liberal views only and mostly looked down upon the views and beliefs of conservatives.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

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PMRC vs Heavy Metal

by [Reed Battaglia](#) - Friday, April 20, 2018, 7:05 PM

The PMRC made a huge mistake in trying to attack heavy metal. As stated in the video, the PMRC completely underestimated heavy metal. With having said that, I see a lot of similarities with PMRC and Sapho. The police tried to make an example of Sapho they failed and made the play very popular. The same could be said for heavy metal. Just think for a second, if the PMRC didn't try to go at heavy metal, it would have never been as big as it was and still remains to be. These are examples of conservatism by not wanting to stray away from tradition and morality. I think the reformers were being

very pessimistic about this. I think if they actually succeeded in banning heavy metal, it would have been worse. Teens who know rock n roll and are passionate about it will say that rock will never die and for them this is true. You cannot force something to be banned when there are so many people who are passionate about it for so many different reasons.

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Part 2: Considering your own position on the spectrum, discuss the finer points of the article. On which point(s) do you agree (or disagree) with the accuracy of the researchers? and the rest of the question

by [Kyle Shrope](#) - Friday, April 20, 2018, 8:05 PM

I agree with the second to last paragraph of the article. "They are more comfortable seeing and stating things in black and white in ways that would make liberals squirm," Glaser said" (UC Berkley Article). I think this has been evident to this day. As the current President in office says many things that concern liberals and their views. I think that the reaserch needs to be extended to all students. The spectrum varies and not everyone lies on the same place. Many identify in the middle or maybe slightly to the right or left.

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Part 2: PMRC video

by [Kyle Shrope](#) - Friday, April 20, 2018, 8:28 PM

One connection I can make is that after the trial both subjects became more popular. More people would go to the theaters to see movies like this and more people would buy albums if it has a sticker saying warning explicit language. These are examples of conservatism because both cases were seeked out to stop the distribution of what conservatives thought were immoral things. It is another case of unintended consequences, because they were trying to get rid of heavy metal when in fact all they did was increase its popularity. "That parental record sticker almost meant guaranteed view that your record was going to be purchased by disgruntled kids"(PMRC Video 7:10-7:18).

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