

NTFP NEWS



"Most of the problems associated with prostitution are really associated with prohibition."

National Decriminalization a Must as Hypocritical, Sexist Vigilante Groups Spring to Action Across the U.S.

by Priscilla Alexander

Groups of local citizens have taken to the streets in recent months to protest the existence of street prostitution in their neighborhoods. These modern-day vigilante groups are united in their concerns. Wherever illegal street prostitution is concentrated in this country, pimps and tricks solicit the young women of the neighborhood (tricks are unable to distinguish between prostitute and non-prostitute), other crimes are committed by people who are taken to districts where illegal prostitution takes place, and because landlords refuse to rent apartments and hotel rooms to prostitutes (for fear of being hit with "red light abatement" acts), sex occasionally takes place in alleys, doorways, and cars.

In some communities, these vigilante groups have focused on the customers who, after all, demand the services that prostitutes provide. They have written down the license numbers of cruising cars, or cars parked outside of massage parlors, and later contacted the families of the tricks. In some communities, they have found out where the tricks work, and have contacted their employers. And in some communities, groups have printed up leaflets giving the names of tricks, posting them on telephone poles in the tricks' neighborhoods, and have placed ads in local papers warning tricks to stay away.

Such activities, like the occasional and brief enforcement of prostitution laws against tricks by the police, may make a temporary dent in local prostitution. But unless such pressure is maintained without a lull, and unless it is applied everywhere, prostitution will not go away. It will merely move to another street, or across city or county lines, until the heat dies down. As soon as the harassment stops, the prostitution returns. The tricks forget the awful glare of publicity and resume their demand.

The problems that these groups of citizens are protesting, however, are all too real. And they are, ultimately, the result of the illegality of prostitution. In countries where prostitution has been less circumscribed by law, the particular abuses that so upset local residents — the recruitment and visibility — have been much less evident, with Switzerland having the most enlightened system and least problems.

Prostitution and Rape

When Australia made prostitution a crime in 1965, the rape rate went up 149 percent. When large cities in this country have closed all or most of the massage parlors, rape and other forms of sexual assault of women and children have skyrocketed. In Detroit, such assaults increased by over 200 percent. Conversely, when prostitution was decriminalized in Sweden in 1938, rape and sexual assault decreased drastically (although they have gone up again with the proliferation of pornography).

Prostitution, unlike pornography, clearly acts as some kind of "safety valve." The people who work as prostitutes (both male and female, adult and juvenile) seem to absorb the sexual animosity of some men in a way that is less violent, at least in the immediate sense, than rape and other forms of sexual assault. The emotional wear and tear on the providers of this service should not be ignored, although in some ways it is similar to the hardening process that takes place with other people who work directly with the public (sales people, social workers, restaurant servers, flight attendants, etc.).

At the present time, our society is clearly not prepared to eliminate prostitution because it is not willing to eliminate the demand. On the contrary, pornography (which increases the demand) is allowed to proliferate in ever more pernicious forms. The result is a vastly increased demand for prostitution, followed by a vastly increased persecution of the suppliers, with 86,000 people (95 percent of whom are women) being arrested on prostitution charges in 1977.

Hypocritical Enforcement of the Prostitution Laws

The few examples of male-run police departments (backed up by male-run district attorneys' offices) going after the customers is so ludicrous that it is almost not worth mentioning. The extreme sympathy that is expressed for any man so arrested, moreover, is in marked contrast to the condemnation that is heaped on prostitutes.

Out of 2,938 persons arrested on prostitution charges in San Francisco in 1977, 2,101 were female prostitutes (72 percent), 512 were male prostitutes (19 percent), and only 325 were male customers (11 percent). These were the female customers arrested. In 1977, the California Supreme Court handed down a decision in the Hartway case that said that such a discrepancy between male and female arrests was not a matter of discrimination on the basis of sex, rather the police were distinguishing between the profitter (prostitute) and the consumer (customer), a distinction that is not made in Section 647b of the penal code.

The hypocrisy does not end with the obvious—in spite of the Hartway decision—discrimination on the basis of sex. Most large cities have allowed massage parlors and other inside, "controlled" prostitution business to exist and, in fact, have granted licenses to the operators of such businesses (that keep up a police fiction). The existence of such tolerated inside businesses tends to keep down the number of street prostitutes. Conversely, when such businesses are closed, the number of street prostitutes tends to increase (along with the rape rate). Prostitution laws are enforced primarily against the most visible providers of the demanded service, the prostitutes who work the streets and who are mostly poor, third world, and without alternative resources.

Although street prostitutes make up only about 10 - 15 percent of America's prostitute population, they account for about 85 - 90 percent of the arrests in this country. Although only about 40 percent of street prostitutes are Black, about 60 percent of those arrested, and 83 percent of those jailed are Black. In San Francisco, about half of the street prostitutes are male although, as stated above, only about 11 percent of those arrested are male, and most of those are transvestites and transsexuals, while the majority of male prostitutes are not particularly distinguishable from other men.

Relationship Between Prohibition and Abuse

Most of the problems associated with prostitution are really associated with its prohibition. If it were legal to work in a massage parlor, bar, or hotel, or out of one's own apartment, and if it were legal to advertise openly in newspapers, the amount of street prostitution would decrease markedly, as it has in countries that regulate.

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Vigilantes protest vigilantes, Marquette Ball '76

Exploitation of Sex: Pornography is Not Prostitution

by Helen Buckingham

I read a copy of a monthly magazine, parts to cover "The Adult Business," called the "TAB Report." Presumably because it is thought that women on the game must be interested in joining forces with anyone who is cashing in on the exploitation of sex in a wholly puritanical society.

First of all, I do not regard the pornography which increasingly involves violence and brutality towards women as "adult"—it has, in fact, all the characteristics of the frustrated child—and I do not wish to associate myself with the latest batch of pimps that "liberalism" is releasing onto the market.

Secondly, violent pornography expresses the yearning of men in a sexless society for some impact on women whom they are deeply aware despise them. I am not in favor of prohibition, because it doesn't work, but I do think there is a danger that when business interests extract a mass fantasy and feed it back as sophisticated and acceptable sexual behavior, it gives the okay to all those who have always wanted to behave this way.

The newsletter also confused the issues of pornography and prostitution, and completely misunderstood the status of the prostitute in terms of criminal sanctions. In England, there are absolutely NO laws against the sexual acts involved in prostitution. The laws are only in the area of direct sale of sexual services, and are not concerned with keeping women away from sex, but in keeping them away from money.

Psychologists, priests, sociologists, feminists, and social workers, on behalf of the establishment, have all defined the prostitute woman as aberrant in being motivated to earn money. These same people do not consider it aberrant for men

to be motivated to earn money; on the contrary, it is expected of them. Women who are "prostitute" in jobs they do not like, and for which they are poorly paid but "respectable," have little more than their "respectability" left at the end of the week. Women are defined and employed by their sex, and none escape: the old hag on the assembly line, or staffing the canteen, is just as much defined by her sex (and employed accordingly) as the young girl whose "sex appeal" is marketed.

In going on the game, the prostitute refuses to accept low-paid women's work in preference for high-paid work. The assembly-line worker "respectability" by working; nothing outside the home, a solution nothing inside the home, includes being available for develops headaches after a fit this, then it is because she is so touch with her own body to know is not just indifferent to the; really dislikes it. This act, the mystical center of her marital supposed to be her reward for self to that marriage.

Sex versus Love

The frigid wife syndrome is that one wonders where the and love in marriage ever originated, one wonders where the from that sex and love ever could have anything to do with. Whilst wives claim to love their in the midst of telling hookers sex is disgusting, and feminists reverse sex but find it difficult to find men with whom a reasonable successful and caring sexual relationship can occur, both are

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Editorial

by Margo St. James

The continued prohibition of prostitution feeds into the stigmatizing of women for their sexual behavior, and punishes women who turn to prostitution as the only way they can survive the crippling inflation that is upon us. Young, poor, and minority women are the first victims of the worsening economy, and they are also the ones who are entrapped, arrested, and jailed on prostitution charges that are generally bogus or worse yet, rounded up behind loitering and obstructing ordinances that border on the unconstitutional if they don't sit squarely behind the line.

Adding fuel to the fire is the proliferation of pornography which incites the angry fantasies of men who have never received decent information about what sex is really all about. Pornography fills the painful vacuum left by a lack of comprehensive, positive, non-judgmental sex education in the schools from kindergarten on up, and women are the victims. 15 to 25 percent of juvenile prostitutes are victims of adult/child incest, with many more having been sexually victimized by other adults. 50 percent, or more, suffered battering and other forms of physical and emotional abuse. One pilot program in Seattle may help to end the cycle: it includes a class for second graders on how to report molestation and incest. The class uses psychodrama techniques to teach children how to recognize a sexual connection, how to stop it, how to report the abuse if they fail to stop it, what to do when their report is rejected, who to go to next,

what to say, all the while imparting the attitude that the child is not at fault.

But that doesn't help women on the street. Men are more disrespectful of women in public now than ever before in my memory of the past 20 years. Historically, this has happened before when women have become more independent. Men use sexual come-ons to intimidate women on the street, and in the jobs that are newly open to women, while they maintain the prohibition of prostitution that perpetuates the sexual double standard. Prostitution has always been tolerated and even praised when "good" women stayed at home. Every period in history in which "good" women have increased their autonomy from men has been marked by an increasing intolerance of prostitution. The contempt men express for prostitutes, and women who are less than monogamous, keeps women divided from each other and maintains their dependence on men. Meanwhile, the prohibition effectively stigmatizes all women and puts them at a disadvantage in a "man's" world.

The Numbers

In 1975, about 43,500 people were arrested on prostitution charges; in 1977, the figure was closer to 86,000. Local communities have been enacting ordinances that prohibit hanging out on the sidewalk, which have accounted for at least as many arrests in some cities as the prostitution laws. The wording of these laws may be "loitering with intent" or "obstructing the sidewalk," but in both cases the intent is clear: Get the women off the streets. By now, at least 150,000 to 200,000 people a year are being arrested because the cops think they are prostitutes, and 75 to 80 percent of those arrested are women (10 percent of the literal prostitution arrests are customers).

Before every war in this century—both World Wars, the Korean and Vietnam

Wars—arrests for prostitution have skyrocketed. It could be an indication of how bad the economy was, or how fascist our society had become, or both, but in any case, as soon as war broke out, the number of arrests dropped drastically. The mobilization of tremendous numbers of men into the military opens up large numbers of civilian jobs, many of which are taken by women, which decreases their dependence on prostitution to pay the rent. Then, too, the tolerance of the military brass for prostitution in the vicinity of military bases has always served to draw prostitutes away from the urban centers where they were arrested.

Men kill their sons, rape their daughters, and rape the land. It can't be worse if women are at the helm.

—Margo St. James

Against the background of the highest number of prostitution arrests in this century, the discussions of rewiring the draft are truly ominous. Congress is considering a number of bills that would reinstitute compulsory registration for military service, and some of them even include women. One bill talks of setting up a national service, which would include ecological and humanitarian work as well as war games. But it all adds up to preparations for war, for those of you who like to speculate on a Mid-East blow-up.

Meanwhile, fascist groups have sprung up around the country—from church groups and other outraged citizens protesting visible prostitution or homosexual openness, to the Ku Klux Klan and the Nazis demanding a place to vent their hatred of Blacks and Jews. Plus the status

of women has deteriorated seriously over the last two decades, according to Helvi Sipilä, Assistant Secretary-General, the only woman in the upper echelons of the United Nations. She reminds us that women will only achieve parity with men if there is "political, social and cultural change on a scale unprecedented in human history."

Barometer of Oppression

Prostitution is a piece of this enormous, complex picture, and is, indeed, a barometer of the oppression of women. While women fight on every front to end

their powerlessness, they must include prostitution in their agendas. The National Organization for Women must implement its 1973 resolution calling for decriminalization, which has been empty without a task force to work on it. The International Women's Year meeting in Denmark next summer must address the issue, and from the prostitutes' point of view. The United Nations is studying the issue, but their sources of data are Interpol and other police and governmental agencies in the 48 countries that have ratified the 1949 Convention Papers on prostitution.

It is time to stop the endless exploitation and punishment of women, which parallels the rape of the land that may threaten us all with extinction if we don't end it.

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Tumbledweed tumbling, Marquardt Ball '76

TED PUSHINSKY

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Convention Adopted in 1949 Calls for Decriminalization

by Priscilla Alexander

In the nineteenth century, two groups of reformers looked at the evils of prostitution, and proposed ways to eliminate them. One group took the approach favored by Josephine Butler (see *Coyote Hour*, V.2), that of abolishing all laws aimed at prohibiting or regulating prostitution. The group took the position that it was necessary to change the conditions that led to prostitution and not ban prostitution itself.

The second group chose to make prostitution a crime, thinking that if you arrest all of the prostitutes, pimps, and others who benefit financially from the industry, you will get rid of the evils. This is the approach used by the United States, with the result that more than 100,000 people were arrested on prostitution-related charges in 1977, and yet any casual tour of any city will show that the industry continues to thrive.

The United Nations Convention of 1949 took a midway course, one that has been adopted by many countries. Prostitution, per se, is not a crime, although pimping and renting a space for the purposes of prostitution remain crimes. In addition, most countries that have decriminalized the act itself have retained the laws against soliciting. This sets up a situation in which prostitutes are arrested for speaking about something that is perfectly legal. Essentially the offense punished is that of visibility. The subtle, higher-status women behind locked doors in fancy districts rarely get arrested. It is the poor, the women with no other choices, who are visibly involved in prostitution that go to jail.

In all countries where pimping is a crime, women continue to be pimped. The law has had no impact and, in fact, is rarely enforced. In San Francisco, one of the justifications offered by the Vice Squad for the practice of taking women who have been arrested on the street to a holding area in a downtown hotel before booking them in jail, rather than waiting for a Paddy Wagon to pick them up on the street, is to avoid problems from the pimps who are nearby. There is no attempt to arrest those nearby pimps.

The United Nations Convention calls on the various states to make it a crime to rent space to someone for the purposes of prostitution. This creates an intolerable double bind. Whenever groups of righteous citizens decide to sweep their city clean of prostitutes, they complain of sex going on in alleys, cars, parks, and other public places. A little investigation reveals the existence of "Red Light Abatement" laws, which forbid the use of a building for the purposes of prostitution. If the hotels won't allow the prostitutes to work inside, they will be forced to work outside. It is not a pleasant or a safe place to work, but the current laws make it difficult for some prostitutes to find safe places to work.

The enforcement of "Red Light Abatement" laws tends to focus on the hotels in the sleazier parts of town. The major hotels (the Hiltons, Hyatts, etc.), where prostitution takes place day after day, are not slapped with an abatement order. Once again, it has to do with subtlety. In a huge hotel, with a large staff and many guests, it is easy for a well-dressed cosmopolitan prostitute to go on about her business, especially if she sees no more than one trick in a shift.

But in the secdler hotels a few blocks away, where there may be one desk clerk and one elevator, the prostitute is more likely to be seen and remembered, and so the police charge the hotel with complicity. In fact, in the large hotels, bell captains refer tricks to prostitutes, and vice versa, for a "tip."

International Traffic

The Convention also concerns itself with the problem of traffic from one city or country to another, urging the various states to publicize the danger of such traffic, and to protect women and children who travel. In San Francisco, as in many other cities, off-duty police officers work security at the Greyhound Bus Terminal, looking in particular for juvenile run-aways, hoping to intervene before the lo-

cal pimps pick them up. But in San Francisco, the security personnel involved generally take the juveniles to the Youth Guidance Center, from which they are often sent back to their parents. Since the majority of these young people are incest victims, such action is questionable. These officers have made little attempt to find out what services are available in San Francisco for juveniles, and have never referred a runaway, for example, to Huckleberry House, a halfway house that serves exactly that population. Furthermore, beyond trying to keep the pimps outside of the Bus Terminal itself, little is done to control pimping of juveniles or adults.

Only one part of the Convention deals with the economic reality that forces many women to become involved in prostitution. If all women had equal access to high-paying, powerful jobs, many fewer would choose prostitution. If women's other skills were valued as highly as their sexual skills, prostitution would not be very appealing. While women earn \$3,50 to \$7,00 per hour for office work in San Francisco, prostitution pays \$20.00 to \$500.00 per transaction. The Convention suggests that there is a need for training and other services to help women find other ways to support themselves, but it does not deal with the class structure, and the double economic and sexual standards that create the supply and demand involved in prostitution.

Prostitution is often called a "victimless" crime, because the "criminal" has harmed neither the property or person of another. Many reformers have realized, however, that there is a victim, and the victim is the prostitute, who is raped, tortured, exploited by third parties, and sometimes killed. These reformers have said that their real goal is the elimination of such abuse. Their solutions, however, have only compounded the abuse, as anyone who has been arrested and jailed for prostitution can tell you.

Threat to Marriage

Underlying much of the resistance to decriminalizing prostitution is the perception of a threat that prostitution poses to marriage. Historically, "good" women have been threatened by it because they have been taught to be possessive of their husbands, and any extra-marital sex has been seen as a threat. For the husband, the threat has always been, as it continues to be, the fear that if all women discovered that they could be independent of individual men, and retain control of their own sexuality, most would choose non-marital relationships. The economic disparity that encourages women to choose prostitution, also forces non-prostitute women into dependent relationships, particularly if they have children.

Marriage serves two purposes, one of which is the protection of children until they are old enough to take care of themselves. That could be dealt with by providing 24-hour child care for all children, and by paying women what men are paid. The other seems to be the provision of services to the husband. The wife has neither power nor services, and little money, as is clear when you look at working mothers who do double-duty at half pay. It is not too surprising, then, that studies of married couples have shown that husbands tend to be much happier with their marriages than their wives are.

One function that marriage is supposed to serve for women is to protect them from rape by other men. In all but four states, however, rape is defined as a crime only when the victim is *not* the rapist's wife, leaving the woman subject to rape from the man that is supposed to protect her. Even in those states which have criminalized marital rape, convictions may not be possible, as was the case in the Rideout trial in Oregon.

On the other hand, since most women to not obtain orgasms from penetration, but from other forms of stimulation, they are clearly not dependent on men for sexual gratification. Proscribing prostitution and other non-standard sexual behavior, and labeling non-nomogamous women "promiscuous" or "whore," keeps married women afraid to go out on their own.

It also keeps them afraid to say what they want or need in a sexual relationship, and effectively denies them full sexual pleasure within their monogamous relationships.

Prostitution is a "crime" to keep most women chained to a monogamous purity. The fear of rape is used to keep them cautious, and the only reason rape is defined as a "crime" is that it undermines the victim's monogamous purity and lowers her value in the marriage market. It is time to reevaluate both of those suppositions, and to re-write the codes by which women's sexuality is defined. Rape must be defined as "corrected sex" and "sexual assault," and prostitution must be re-defined as "work," and regulated like any other work. It is time that the United Nations look a hard look at the failure of the provisions in the 1949 Convention to eliminate the abuses that exist in prostitution, and to come up with new solutions.

Consistency Important

In order to eliminate the international traffic that currently exists, which results in some women being moved from country to country, sometimes without their consent, the laws concerning prostitution must be consistent from country to country. Laws which seek to ban brothels merely result in forcing them underground. A much more sensible approach would be to set up regulations concerning working conditions within the brothels, so long as the brothel system is not the *only* legal form of prostitution. Brothels are, after all, mass-production sex, and legal brothels (in Nevada, Morocco, and pre-Ayatollah Iran) are little more than prisons for the women who work in them.

1949 United Nations Convention

Excerpt from the United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, Approved by the General Assembly December 2, 1949.

Preamble

Whereas prostitution and the accompanying evil of the traffic in persons for the purpose of prostitution are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person and endanger the welfare of the individual, the family and the community...

Now therefore, the Contracting Parties Hereto agree at hereinafter provided:

Article 1: The Parties to the present Convention agree to punish any person who, to gratify the passions of another: 1. Procures, entices or leads away, for purposes of prostitution, another person, even with the consent of that person; 2. Exploits the prostitution of another person, even with the consent of that person.

Article 2: The Parties to the present Convention further agree to punish any person who: 1. Keeps or manages, or knowingly finances or takes part in the financing of a brothel; 2. Knowingly lets or rents a building or other place or any part thereof for the purpose of the prostitution of others.

Article 6: Each Party to the present Convention agrees to take all the necessary measures to repeal or abolish any existing law, regulation or administrative provision by virtue of which persons who engage in or are suspected of engaging in prostitution are subject either to special registration or to the possession of a special document or to any exceptional requirements for supervision or notification.

Article 7: Previous convictions pronounced in foreign States for offences referred to in the present Convention shall, to the extent permitted by domestic law, be taken into account for the purpose of: 1. Establishing recidivism.

Article 14: Each Party to the present Convention shall establish or maintain a service charged with the coordination and centralization of the results of the investigation of offences referred to in the present Convention.

Such services should compile all information calculated to facilitate the prevention and punishment of the offences referred to in the present Convention and should be in close contact with the corresponding services in other States.

Article 15: To the extent permitted by domestic law and to the extent to which the authorities responsible for the services referred to in article 14 may judge desirable, they shall furnish to the authorities responsible for the corresponding services in other States the following information:

1. Particulars of any offence referred to in the present Convention or of any attempt to commit such offence; 2. Particulars of any search for and any prosecution, arrest, conviction, refusal of admission or expulsion or persons guilty

Regulations concerning working conditions could determine maximum work-shifts (in Nevada some houses have 14-hour shifts), with specified break times. Minimum wages could be established, along with profit-sharing plans, health insurance, and other fringe benefits.

To avoid international traffic, prostitutes who work for third-parties could be required to be residents of the city in which they work. To prevent the prison-ambiance of some brothels that now exist, they could be required to live some place other than their place of work. In addition, programs should be set up to help women who wish to retire from prostitution become trained in other kinds of work, with the cost being met from the additional tax revenues that will be realized from decriminalization.

Persons who employ prostitutes should be regulated by business codes, with a distinction being made between someone who is being supported by one prostitute and someone who employs a number of prostitutes. The manager of an escort service, who has little overhead beyond the price of advertising and a phone, should be allowed to take a smaller percentage of the fee than the manager of a brothel or massage parlor. The regulations covering such businesses as temporary employment agencies and beauty parlors could be used as a model.

If sex-related businesses are treated like other kinds of businesses, the laws governing the employment of aliens could be enforced, which would again help to control the international traffic in prostitution.

of any of the offences referred to in the present Convention, the movements of such persons and any other useful information with regard to them.

The information so furnished shall include description of the offenders, their fingerprints, photographs, methods of operation, police records and records of conviction.

Article 16: The Parties to the present Convention agree to take or to encourage, through their public and private educational, health, social, economic and other related services, measures for the prevention of prostitution and for the rehabilitation and social adjustment of the victims of prostitution and of the offences referred to in the present Convention.

Article 17: The Parties to the present Convention undertake, in connection with emigration, to adopt or maintain such measures as are required, in terms of their obligations under the present Convention, to check the traffic in persons of other sex for the purpose of prostitution.

In particular they undertake: 1. To make such regulations as are necessary for the protection of immigrants or emigrants, and in particular, women and children, both at the place of arrival and departure while en route; 2. To arrange for appropriate publicity warning the public of the dangers of the forced traffic; 3. To take appropriate measures to ensure supervision of railway stations, airports, seaports and en route, and of other public places, in order to prevent international traffic in persons for the purpose of prostitution; 4. To take appropriate measures in order that the appropriate authorities be informed of the arrival of persons who appear, prima facie, to be the principals and accomplices in or victims of such traffic.

Article 18: The Parties to the present Convention undertake, in accordance with the conditions laid down by domestic law, to have declarations taken from aliens who are prostitutes, in order to establish their identity and civil status and to discover who has caused them to leave their State. The information obtained shall be communicated to the authorities of the State of origin of the said persons with a view to their eventual repatriation.

Article 20: The Parties to the present Convention shall, if they have not already done so, take the necessary measures for the supervision of employment agencies in order to prevent persons seeking employment, in particular women and children, from being exposed to the danger of prostitution.

The remainder of the articles of the Convention, are concerned primarily with legal process and practices that will facilitate the enforcement of the provisions of the Convention.

By May 31, 1976, the following countries had ratified the Convention: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Congo, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Finland, France, German Democratic Republic, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, India, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Laos, Liberia, Libya, Luxembourg, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Republic of Korea, Rumania, Singapore, Spain, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Syria, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Upper Volta, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.



National News

by Galloping Horse

California

Vigilante groups have been springing up like roadstools all around the Bay Area to harass the streetwalkers in their neighborhoods. In some cases, local police have been cooperating with them as they violate the civil rights of women on the streets. The citizens do the cops' dirty work as they take pictures of the women without their permission, for example. These self-appointed enforcers of the public morality have even been physically restraining their victims, keeping them from hiding their faces from the cameras. Although the Supreme Court has said that police cannot arbitrarily stop people to look at their I.D., the San Jose police have in some cases demanded that women produce I.D., and handed it over to the vigilantes.

Robin Yeaman, a woman attorney in San Jose, formed an Equal Rights Committee to stop the harassment. She held a press conference, and joined forces with the local ACLU chapter, and at least the worst forms of harassment have stopped. Recently, the San Jose police have erected street barricades at some intersections to keep customers away from the area.

According to an article in the *San Francisco Examiner*, a major cause of the problem is that the exclusive zoning ordinance passed by the San Jose City Council to control the proliferation of pornography, has not been enforced. The unchecked proliferation of adult bookstores, followed by the conversion of ordinary movie theatres into porno houses, has drawn hordes of men to the area, which in turn has attracted the hookers.

Local citizens are aguing about the solution, with proposals ranging from legalization to the enactment of "loitering for the purposes of" ordinances. Meanwhile, the Oakland City Council has taken the first steps to enact such an ordinance, which would allow police to arrest women they *think* are loitering with the intent of committing prostitution. This law requires even less evidence than the standard prostitution laws.

San Francisco has just repealed a patently unconstitutional part of ordinances, 20a which forbids "obstructing the sidewalk," and 20b which forbids "obstructing a doorway." Instead, their august supervisors have seen fit to tighten up the language so that it is now a citable infraction to "willfully and substantially" obstruct the "free access" of persons on the sidewalk or in doorways. ACLU attorney, Amiel Schwartz, who worked with the City Attorney's Office to come up with the new language, thinks the change should reduce the number of arrests from about 4,000 per year to about 60, or five per month. We will see, and we'll also see if it continues to be mostly women who get busted (80 percent under the old law).

Back to San Jose: we suspect that a contributing factor in the increase in street prostitution in that city has been the zealous real estate renaissance in downtown San Francisco and Oakland. In order to clear the way to raze the old and cheap hotels, the cops enforced "red light abatement" acts against them. The Redevelopment Agency, guilty of many sins in this town, did the rest by condemning the buildings and tearing them down. To this day, Redevelopment is fighting about what to erect, and parking lots have

replaced the housing in this city with a terrible housing shortage, booming speculation, and astronomically rising rents.

The City of San Jose and Santa Clara County have three vice details: the police, the sheriff's department, and a special organized crime corps. The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), which has been decent enough to provide funding for some good projects including battered women's shelters, pretrial diversion projects, and victim witness programs, must also bear the responsibility for getting these suburban vice squads started. After the San Jose cops got their grant, the sheriff's department, not to be cheated out of *their* good times, formed their *own* vice squad!

Meanwhile, in San Francisco, juvenile prostitutes are about to lose what little help there is for them. Two out of the three agencies that have an outreach program for juvenile prostitutes may have their funds cut, as a result of a proposed cut of \$4.3 million from San Francisco's mental health budget. For the time being the two streetworkers hired by the Tenderloin's Hospitality House are safe, since they are not funded by the city. But those hired by the Center for Special Problems and the Mission Mental Health Center are in jeopardy.

The cuts, caused by Proposition 13, are also threatening what little help there is in San Francisco for victims of incest and other sexual assault, and adult prostitutes. It seems to us that the city may be cutting off its nose to spite its face since, if we provide no services to people in crisis, we will have to pay later for hospitalization and incarceration.

The vice squad in San Francisco, urged on by the District Attorney and others, recently spied on gay men's sex clubs, which were then slapped with "red light abatement" acts. After much community outrage, the D.A. decided that the sex clubs were private, after all. Since there were locks on the doors, it was decided that the sex acts that took place behind them were not in public, the offense charged. Press coverage revealed that the D.A.'s office thinks it is okay for the owner of a sex club, bath, or hotel to pimp off of sex so long as none of the participants get any money (the only thing illegal about prostitution in California, and twenty-one other states, is the money). Actually, pimping off of prostitution must be okay, too, since in a year in which 2,938 people were arrested on prostitution charges, there were only 66 arrests for pimping, and ten of those were women.

In San Jose, on the other hand, a gay men's club was busted for violating a little-used and even less-known ordinance that makes it a crime to *dance* after hours in any public place. Apparently, in San Jose, even a hotel room, bought and paid for, is considered public.

On the positive side, at the last state board meeting of California N.O.W. (the National Organization for Women), a state Prostitution Task Force was formed. California N.O.W. already had a Women in Prison Task Force, and the two committees will work together on the common problems of women in prison, most of whom are either there on prostitution charges, or have been some time in the past. Prostitution will be an issue at the up-

coming National N.O.W. Conference, in Los Angeles, October 5-7, at the Bonaventure Hotel. We hope to introduce a resolution from the floor to form a task force within National N.O.W. to implement the resolution calling for decriminalization that was passed at the 1973 national conference.

Los Angeles will also be the site of the Fourth National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, October 7-10, at the L.A. Hilton. A major focus of the conference will be on sexual abuse, including the role of the media in child abuse. For more information, contact: Foundation, Cal. State Univ. L.A., 5151 State University Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90032. Attn: Nat. Conf. on Child Abuse and Neglect.

Oregon

Portland will host the second national conference on "Changing Values: Teenage Women in the Juvenile Justice System," November 1-3, at the Portland-Sheraton Hotel. The topics to be examined include: women and the law, socialization of females, changing trends in education, young women and employment, minority women, and the disparate treatment accorded young women in the justice system. For more information, contact: Debby Rosenberg, New Directions for Young Women, 376 South Stone Ave., Tucson, AZ 85701, (602) 623-3677.

Minnesota

A Minneapolis Madam, Rebecca Rand, is backing a candidate for Mayor, and even hosted a party for him at her parlor. Rand is the one who won a lunch with the Governor last year, and came with her distressed, ake nine-year old daughter. Her candidate, gay activist Timothy Dusenberg Campbell, is running on a platform naming all the rights of women, major planks being freedom from fear of violence, freedom of choice, and fire child care. Using slogans like "Halt Hypocrisy," Campbell says he represents normal urban people. Focusing on police brutality and freedom as he zeros in on women's concerns, he points out that "Hypocrites cause rape by undermining the value of consenting sex. Prohibition politics never work," he continues: "Legalize marijuana and educate on drug abuse. Take it from a recovered alcoholic." Minneapolis, you will remember, is the Twin City of St. Paul, where a gay-rights ordinance was repealed last year.

New York

The Second National Conference on Feminist Perspectives on Pornography was held in New York City, September 15-16. Organized by Women Against Pornography, the conference attracted feminists from around the country, to discuss the impact of porn on our lives and what to do about it.

Women Against Pornography (WAP) has also put together an educational tour for women of Times Square's pornography shops and sex shows. The tour has received national publicity, all of which has made the feminist perspective of the tour clear. San Francisco's Women Against Violence in Pornography and Media is planning to



DAVID WILLS

start a similar tour in the Fall. For more information about the New York tour, call (212) 594-2801.

Prostitutes are on the front lines in terms of being asked to conform to pornography's latest fantasy (lie) of what women want, and are beginning to join with other feminists, on an international scale, to fight pornography as it now exists. We urge everyone in this country who can make it to New York on October 20, to join the March of Feminists Against Pornography. Although this will be a daylight march, it joins the many Take Back the Night and Reclaim the Night marches that have taken place around the world as women have demanded an end to the climate of fear that denies them access to the streets at night. Pornography is the advertising for the rape that keeps women powerless. The New York march will begin at noon, October 20, at Columbus Circle (59th & Broadway), go down Broadway to Times Square, and East on 42nd Street to Bryant Park, where an afternoon rally will take place. It is estimated that 20,000 people will be there. We'd like to see a million.

For more information, contact: Women Against Pornography, 579 Ninth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10036, (212) 594-2801.

West Virginia

The Hookers Union of Maryland (HUM) has retreated to West Virginia for the time being. They have been fighting a whole bunch of charges, stemming from an incident in which two thugs strong-armed them for money and then charged them with trying to bribe a government official. Seems they claimed to be representing the Mayor (see *Coyote Howls*, VI:1). This reminds us of the situation in France the year the Hookers occupied the cathedrals in Lyons. It seems the Lyons Police Chief was one of the biggest pimps in all of France, and one reason the French hookers were demanding decriminalization was that the police were taking too much of their money.

The undercover cops in Hagerstown, Maryland, were pretty surprised when the women said they had been paying the Mayor all along; they thought they were just doing a set-up. The working folks involved in this one are being punished, of course, while the Mayor goes on being the Mayor.

Florida

Florida Coyote has lost her most faithful supporter and friend in the criminal justice system. Attorney Bob McCain was charged with bribery in a case that had nothing, however, to do with prostitution. He and his wife, Michelle McCain, were convicted in a nine-day trial filled with innuendoes about his support of prostitutes' rights, but little evidence to support the charges that they had bribed, and conspired to bribe, a witness. The McCains were found guilty of conspiracy and sentenced to five years. The judge refused to release him prior to sentencing, although she is out on probation. Bob McCain was well-known in the community for doing "cause" cases, and was a member of the Bar for 15 years, but the uplights of the state that brought us Anita Bryant hung his ass.

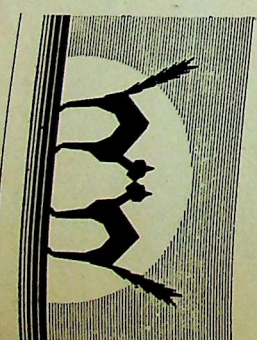
Noteworthy

The September issue of *San Francisco Magazine* has an article on prostitution by NFTP member, Marilyn Neckes.... Coming out this fall is "Female Sexual Slavery," the first feminist analysis of prostitution, by Kathleen Barry, from *Prentice-Hall*.... Sandra Butler, author of the trail blazing "Conspiracy of Silence: The Trauma of Incest," is working on a new project. This time she will be focusing on child prostitution.

Events

October 5-7: National N.O.W. Conference, Bonaventure Hotel, Los Angeles.
October 7-10: Fourth National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, Los Angeles Hilton.
October 9: Hookers Masquerade Ball, Century Plaza Hotel, Los Angeles.
October 14: National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, Washington, D.C.

October 16: Hookers Masquerade Ball, Roseland Dance City, New York.
October 20: March of Feminists Against Pornography, New York.
October 28: Hookers Masquerade Ball, Civic Auditorium, San Francisco.
November 1-3: Second National Conference on Changing Values: Teenage Women in the Juvenile Justice System, Portland-Sheraton Hotel, Portland, Oregon.



International News

by Shimmering Unicorn



West German entrepreneurs have been "importing" women from Thailand, offering them as "wives" to German men. Other options offered West German men are "sex tours" to Thailand, for the purpose of finding "wives." Once the women are in West Germany, cut off from the culture they grew up with and isolated within a culture they do not understand, many of them are forced into prostitution. Not that it is so different from what is happening at home in Thailand. In a society dislocated by foreign investors, war in neighboring countries, rapid industrialization, and corporate take-overs of farming, many Thai women are converging on the major cities of Thailand looking for work to take the place of the extinct cottage industries that supported their families for centuries. Most city factory jobs pay less than subsistence wages, and many women are forced to work as prostitutes in the evenings to survive.

And in case you thought prostitution had disappeared in Eastern Europe, a recent article in a Polish weekly, *Poblyka* described in some detail the cafe-system of prostitution that is flourishing in Warsaw. According to the article, there is a lively black market in foreign "hard" currencies, which can only be spent in certain state-run stores. These stores carry the kinds of consumer goods (blue jeans, perfume, pocket calculators, etc.) that are generally not available to Poland's citizens. Foreign currency can also be used to obtain a car or an apartment within 24 hours, a process that can take years with *zlotys*.

Reminds me of the reports that Cuban women have been reported to be engaging in prostitution with tourists in order to obtain consumer goods sold only in stores catering to tourists.

Meanwhile, Iran, which once confined prostitutes within a walled section of Tehran called the "New City," has been executing madams and prostitutes, presumably to rid Iran of the "sexual power"

of women that so terrifies Iranian men that they have cloaked their women in the *Chador*, and relegated them to separate and unequal schools. Iran has also lowered the age of consent to 13 so that the men can marry children, who are presumably less threatening. At the same time, back in the United States, Seattle police are concerned because a disproportionate number of the rapes being reported in that city are being committed by Iranian students.

French prostitutes and their friends have managed to block attempts by Joël LeFlac, a conservative member of Parliament, to brothelize them. It seems LeFlac was offended by the sight of women on the street, and thought it would be better to confine them to government-run brothels or Eros Centers (along the lines of the German model), or otherwise restrict them, regulate them, and stigmatize them for life. He was stopped, and now prostitutes are demanding that the French government implement the provisions of the U.N. Convention (see story elsewhere in this issue) calling for special programs to help prostitutes become reintegrated into mainstream society.

Prostitutes and their friends in England, and particularly Helen Buckingham of PLAN (Prostitutes Laws Are Non-sense), with the help of Maureen Colquhoun, a Member of the House of Commons who happens to be a lesbian, introduced and got passed on a first reading a bill that would require proper witnesses to solicitation arrests, and which would put solicitations by prostitutes on the same footing as those by Hare Krishnas, sales pitches, and kirtbcrawlers.

Feminists in England, however, have taken exception to Colquhoun's citing "eminent psychiatrists" who wax rhapsodic about the "therapeutic value" that prostitutes have as "sex therapists," pointing out that, once again, it is only men who are entitled to the "therapy." We think that everyone should be entitled

to sexual pleasure, and if we lived in a world in which that was true, and there was no abuse of that concept, and the service of sexual pleasure could be paid for much as food is paid for in a restaurant, and everyone, male and female, earned the same money, and life was a whole lot better, prostitution could be a perfectly healthy, non-oppressive institution. But at the present time it is a service provided by women and men for men, controlled by men, and made dangerous by men. Fight on!

The Danish government has opened an office staffed by a doctor, a lawyer, and a social worker, to provide services to prostitutes. Women in Denmark have formed a prostitutes union, one goal of which is to change legislation they find repressive. One such law is that requiring prostitutes to work at some other job. The law was enacted to help prostitutes become reintegrated into the mainstream of society, but the mandatory nature of the law makes it oppressive rather than helpful. Therefore, a better law would be one that would provide assistance to prostitutes trying to find other work.

The official Department of Prostitution in Sweden is focusing on research at present. They are studying prostitutes to better understand how women become involved in prostitution, and they are also looking into ways to help women get out of prostitution.

Japan is busy offering "sex tours" to Japanese businessmen who are so sorely deprived by the fact that the Japanese Women's Christian Temperance Union managed to outlaw prostitution some years ago. According to tidbits in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, there is a booming business in three- and four-day tours to neighboring countries where prostitution is allowed to flourish. Needless to say, few women avail themselves of these tours, which cost \$300 to \$400 (according to Dan Rather of 60 Minutes, Japanese women can only slightly more than half of what

men earn. Rather thought this was shocking, seeming to be unaware that American women earn 59 percent of what men earn, and California women earn only 49 percent). The Japanese Women's Christian Temperance Union wants something done to stop these junkets. While we understand their concern, we think they are wrong to demand prohibition, it only makes the tours more enticing. The only way to end prostitution is to end economic discrimination, end the sexual double standard, and end the sexual and physical abuse of children that figures so prominently in the life histories of prostitutes.

We're not sure prostitution will ever completely disappear, however. Scattered stories about China during the last year suggest that prostitution may be making a comeback in that country. First there were stories and pictures of women with newly cut and permanented hair, wearing flowing skirts. Our first reaction was that there must be an unemployment problem, but we figured that with a well-planned economy, the government could make sure everyone had a job. Then we heard that some women had been punished for "dancing" with foreign men in their apartments, sometimes all night. Then we read that an official Chinese publication had revealed that there was, indeed, an unemployment problem, with more than ten million people out of work. When women are unemployed, poor, and trying to support and feed their children, they can always turn the oldest trick in the world.

The information about what is happening in Thailand, West Germany, and Poland, comes from a collection of articles from the international press on the subject of women and work. The collection, entitled *Second Class, Working Class*, will be published in late November or early December, 1979, by the People's Translation Service. Copies can be obtained by sending a check in the amount of \$3.50 to: Newstrom International, PTS, 4228 Telegraph Avenue, Oakland, CA 94609, (415) 654-6725.

KATHLEEN O'NEIL

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Exploitation of Sex

Continued from page 1

making it very clear that marriage is one of the last places to look for sex.

Hence, the sex business: because women aren't getting what they want, men cannot be either. Men, however, have the money to experiment elsewhere. And women who do not have money, and who are prepared to sacrifice some or all of their respectability, move right in after that money.

According to how much respectability they lose and how much money they gain, they are categorized as prostitutes and punished as such. It is not by sex that a hooker is defined, isolated from the rest of womanhood, and held up for special attention. It is money. What makes the hooker different is that she, herself, capitalizes on her sex appeal—instead of giving it for free within marriage, or hiring it out to bigger capitalists such as the advertising and pornographic industry.

'Bad!' though strippers and blue movie actresses may be, they are not persecuted by the law. That would, of course, involve the prohibition of the sex industry and, as everyone connected with it knows, the sex industry is the biggest money spinner of all. The liberal attitude towards 'The Adult Business' does not mean that women have reclaimed their own bodies, or in any way changed their role in society vis a vis men. It means that capitalist interests have found a new commodity to exploit.

If more and more women are selling sex, rather than enjoying it as good clean fun, it is because the fundamental social structure has not changed. Women are still unpaid at home, and underpaid out of it.

At this point, capital is trying to join forces with the prostitutes organizations in calling for the decriminalization of prostitution. This is not because business interests have any respect for women, or even that they have begun to understand why we are fighting the prostitution laws. It is because they perceive that the exploitation of sex can be increased, and pimping not only stepped up but made positively respectable. I don't think there are any organizations of prostitute women who do not understand what this alliance is about. We will, therefore, not stop at abolishing prostitution laws, we shall put pimps out of business by taking the money for our

sexual services ourselves. This is precisely why we are considered dangerous and revolutionary.

When we can earn and keep the money we make by selling our sexual services directly to the customer, it is unlikely that we will bother to work for the advertising or pornographic industry. In addition, the more money hookers keep, the more money other women will demand for the work they do. This will enable hookers to leave the game, and do the kind of work they would prefer to do but can't afford to do at the present time because the money is not a living wage for a working mother.

This will, of course, hit the pornographic industry, a fact that pimps have not been slow to realize. This is why, in the name of liberalism and kindness to women, they are asking for the regulation

The liberal attitude towards "The Adult Business" does not mean that women have reclaimed their own bodies.

of prostitutes to harness their existence to the industry which deals in vicarious sex.

Women who are regulated and confined to special areas carry a special stigma which is both exciting and repellant to some men. The prurient man, finding himself in a red-light district, is titillated by the presence of women who have the sex tag round their necks, but is too puritanical to avail himself of the service. He is sufficiently aroused, however, to drift off in the direction of vicarious sexual gratification. From the point of view of profit, this is entirely satisfactory: sex gear, movies, toys, and substitutes in general, do not run home with the money in their pockets, hookers do.

Pornography is not Adult

As I said before, pornography of the type mentioned in the "TAB Report" is far from adult. Pornography is an expression of man's desire to have the effect on women that he knows he does not, in reality, have. As a prostitute, I know that pornography is the response to the sexlessness of our society, and I know how very few men are sexual. This is why they need

researchers say, supports theories that some agent in sperm, which is absent in vasectomized men, carries a -cancer-causing virus. The virus believed to cause cervical cancer, the doctors say, is Herpes Simplex 2, belonging to a family of viruses which cause genital lesions, cold sores, shingles and chicken pox.

—Her Say

Ed. Note: It would be interesting to find out whether homosexual men who engage in anal intercourse, as fickers, have a higher rate of cancer of the colon than the general male population.

Sexually Transmitted Cancer

The *New England Journal of Medicine* has published a report linking cervical cancer in women to a virus carried by the male sperm.

The *Journal* cites a study by Doctors Shanna Swan and Willard Brown, at the Kaiser-Permanente Medical Center in Walnut Creek, California. Swan and Brown studied 72 cases of cervical cancer and three matched control cases for each actual case of cancer. They found that the risk of cervical cancer for women whose partners had not had vasectomies was four times greater than for those women whose partners had been sterilized. This, the

Know Your Tampon

There has been quite a lot of interest during the past few years in the feminist-health community on the question of what is a tampon made of, and can it cause...? A move back to using natural sponges is a result of this concern. A network of women is currently researching information on the fibers and chemicals used in tampons. The FDA began monitoring tampons in 1974, but there is no information on fibers used in the past.

There is also a current move to require manufacturers to list the materials used in

U.N. Convention

The problem comes with enforcement, as always, and any legal system that is poised will only be as good as the society which creates it. If society wants to punish women for engaging in sexual activity, it will do so, regardless of what the law actually is. The current economic exploitation of

Pornography is the advertising for the rape that keeps women powerless.

to be told that their ejaculation has been 'fun' for me. It has not been fun for them, but they know that it is supposed to be fun for somebody, so it must have been me that enjoyed it. The hooker takes over the lie for the wife, as she tells unprepared men a day how much their wives are missing through their terrible headaches, which hookers are paid not to get.

You might well ask why women persist in these lies in these enlightened days when sex is the most fashionable topic of conversation, and marriages are contracted for love rather than convenience. However, marriages cannot truly be entered into for love while sex remains attached to economics. The family is still the foundation of society, and its economic structures which rest upon unpaid motherhood and housework.

The liberal attitude towards "The Adult Business" does not mean that women have reclaimed their own bodies.

Wives are still reticent in marriage about sexual matters because, quite frankly, they do not want to enjoy sex with someone they do not like. And most wives do not like their husbands any more than their husbands like them. It is a terrifying thing to realize, so it is better to cover it up with a headache and carry on in the role of wife, performing all those unpaid functions which cause incredible resentment towards the man upon whom the woman is wholly or partly dependent financially.

The hooker, for the most part, does not like her clients either, but she is better equipped to tolerate them because, first, she is not dependent on any one of them, and second, they present themselves as strangers who do not touch upon her private life. There is no emotional relationship to take to bed, so the sexual encounter is often unencumbered by "knowledge" of the man and of the woman and both parties are able to experience orgasm. This, of course, horrifies people. It is not so much the man's ability to detach sex from a relationship, but the woman's ability to do so which is disastrous. It

belies the myth of love, which is what dictates that women should do all that they do, for free or nearly free.

This concept is very deeply rooted in our consciousness, and not least in the consciousness of feminists who are fighting to change the status of women that keeps them vastly underpaid, yet refuse to deal with prostitution, the only occupation for which women are paid more than men.

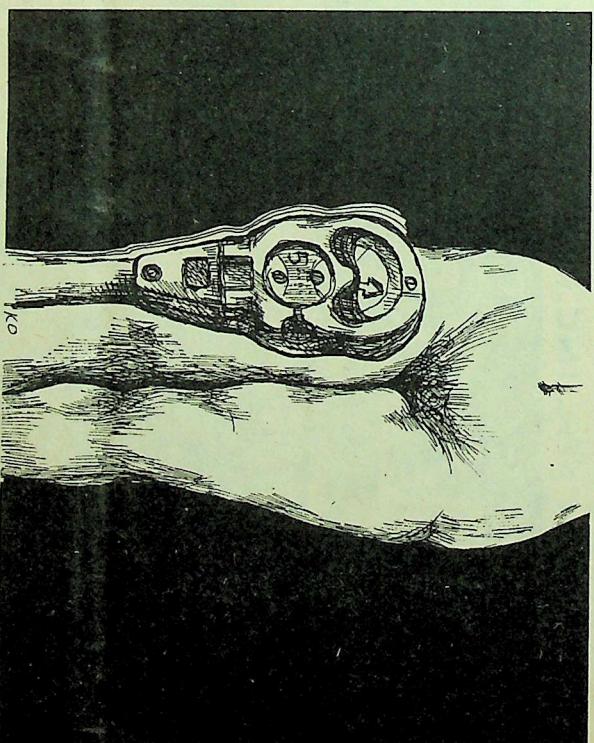
No one can love while they are being prostituted, and so long as we relate to society from the standpoint of economic deprivation, neither men nor women will ever know whether women really like men or not.

One thing is certain though: successful hookers have an air of confidence about them that women who are unused to earning and spending their own money do not have. Hookers, because they sell access to their genitals and attentiveness to men's genitals, are relieved of the tiresome need to sell an image, and successful ones are noted for their casual and un-made-up appearance, and the comfortable way they discuss money and the spending of it. This should be reassuring to feminists while it bodes ill for pimps, but it seems to bode ill for both.

In conclusion, I am not in favor of prohibition because it doesn't work. But that does not mean that I am in favor of prostitution or its close relative, pornography. While I am not for mobilizing more police to prevent them, I am for quietly putting them out of business by putting women in the economic position of being able to refuse whatever prostitutes them: marriage, the assembly line, coal mining, hooking.

Soon we shall see the day when hookers, wives, and feminists will stand together as a women's movement.

Helen Buckingham is the coordinator of PLAN (Prostitution Laws Are Nonsense), an organization that is fighting to get rid of all the laws that are used to persecute prostitutes in England, where soliciting (or speaking about prostitution) is the crime for which most prostitutes are arrested. This year, a bill is being proposed in Parliament which would treat soliciting for prostitution the same way as soliciting for money for charitable purposes.



KATHLEEN O'NEILL

Incest Project

Linda McDonnell and Toni McNaron, two lesbian/feminists, are soliciting manuscripts for a collection of women's poems and prose focusing on our experiences with incest. We are interested in all types of incest: overt, covert, same sex, different sex, physical, emotional. We don't want sociological or political tracts; or interviews. Aside from these limitations, we are open to all forms—letters, short stories, poetry, journal entries, prose-poems. As incest victims we have conceived this project out of our own and

other women's work.

We believe breaking silence around this taboo is both transformational and healing. We will be respectful of all work sent us. We have been co-editors of *So's Your Old Lady*, a lesbian/feminist journal, for the past three years.

Please send manuscripts to: Linda McDonnell, 2533 Lyndale Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55405. If you wish your copy returned, enclose a SASE. Because we want to print soon, our deadline is February 1, 1980.

Continued from page 2

prostitutes that results from prohibition is as much society's way of punishing non-monogamous women as is the process by which they are arrested, prosecuted and jailed.

Priscilla Alexander



DAVID WILLS

National Decriminalization

Continued from page 1

In the hypocritical system that now exists in the United States, most cities grant licenses to the owners of massage parlors, while maintaining the polite fiction that prostitution does not take place in such establishments. This polite fiction is belied by the fact that the workers in such establishments must obtain their massage licenses not from the department of health, but from the vice squad of the police department.

In Nevada, the only state in which legalized prostitution exists, the landlord system prevails as well. This system works to the benefit of the owners and the customers, but is severely repressive to the workers. In Nevada, in counties with population under 250,000, brothels can be operated (this leaves out Reno and Las Vegas). In these brothels, as in licensed brothels in other countries such as Morocco, and in Iran before the overthrow of the Shah, prostitutes must work long shifts (14 hours is not unusual), are confined to the brothel during the tour of duty (perhaps three weeks out of four), and are severely restricted when they leave the brothel. For example, they are not allowed to be in the company of a man in a restaurant or on the street, they are not allowed to be in a bar or a gambling casino at all, and they are often not allowed to have family living in the same town where they work. Essentially, the licensed-brothel (landlord) system allows prostitutes no other life outside of their work on a sexual assembly line.

In every country in which a licensed-brothel system exists or has been proposed, prostitutes are united in their opposition. The only reason that prostitutes in this country go to Nevada to work in the prison-like brothels is that there is no danger of arrest, and it is relatively easy to accumulate a fair amount of money in a month or so, if business is good. This is in spite of the fact that the "house" keeps 65 percent of the fee, and the women are often charged a "gate" fee of \$100 or more, in addition to \$400 or so a month to rent a room in a trailer. The women are also charged a "gate" fee for the weekly "examination" done by the "house" doctor, largely a charade which is necessitated by their being prohibited from using condoms.

Solutions

All of the criminal laws which currently are on the books to "control" prostitution should be repealed. This would include not only the laws prohibiting soliciting or engaging in an act of prostitution, *per se*, but the laws against pimping, procuring and pandering, the laws against renting a premises or maintaining a house of prostitution, or serving drinks to convicted prostitutes, and the laws against conspiracy to commit prostitution. The specific transaction between one prostitute and one customer should be totally ignored. Businesses involving more than one prostitute and/or third parties (pimps, landlords), should be governed by already-existing business codes. If necessary, minimal changes in these codes could be made to extend coverage to prostitution businesses, but no new, special laws should be written.

Licensing, or certification, could be offered as an option, with credentials being granted to people who have completed a course on the causes, symptoms, treatment and prevention of VD and other sexually transmitted diseases, for example, or courses in the kinds of therapeutic techniques being developed by Masters and Johnson.

Since some of the problems that accompany prostitution as it currently exists have to do with the concentration of the activity in small districts, the kinds of exclusive zoning laws that are now being experimented with (vis a vis pornography) could be used to prevent that concentration. Since prostitution businesses are a form of commercial activity, they would be confined as such to commercial, or mixed residential-commercial, areas. Similarly, prostitution businesses could be governed by the same ordinances that are now used to limit the proliferation of bars and other entertainment businesses. As a cottage industry, the independent, single-worker prostitution would be ignored.

Since limits on commercial language, such as advertising, are considered to be constitutional (for example, cigarettes may not be advertised on television), the size and format of street signs could be controlled to prevent the problems that accompany the kind of blatant pornography come-ons that are currently emblazoned

on buildings on San Francisco's Broadway, or New York's Times Square. Or advertising could be limited, as it is in Switzerland, to discreet ads in newspapers.

Juvenile Prostitution

Juvenile prostitution is, by definition, sexual abuse of children, and should not be tolerated. The decriminalization, and therefore legitimization, of adult prostitution should help to decrease the demand for younger prostitutes by allowing the older ones to accommodate the demand without penalty. In any case, the laws concerning juvenile prostitution should be aimed at controlling their victimization. The age of consent should remain at 18 in those states where it is currently at that level, and should be raised to 18 in other states. If legislation is needed to acknowledge and permit peer sexual relationships for persons under the age of 18, that can be done in a way that does not allow the sexual exploitation of young people by adults.

Prostitution, because it involves acts that are considered to be intimate in our society, is an extremely difficult profession. Most people who are involved in prostitution for any great length of time (more than a year or so), find that it affects their ability to relate sexually in their private lives (not unlike a professional chef who hates to cook at home). Therefore, the older the individual is before engaging in prostitution, the less emotional impact the work will have on their ability to enjoy close and intimate relationships with other people. Ideally, no individual would engage in prostitution before the age of 21.

However, this society does not provide paid employment to young people. A large percentage of juvenile prostitutes were victims of sexual abuse long before they became prostitutes (15-25 percent), and many of them are runaways, having run from incestuous or otherwise abusive families. Arresting juvenile prostitutes, even when the polite fiction of "status offenses" is maintained, does little to help them, especially when they are returned to the abusive homes from which they have run.

The elimination of juvenile prostitution will only come with vastly increased services to incest victims, and to families involved in any form of child abuse (neglect,

battering, and so on), an increase in the number of shelters, halfway houses, group homes, and foster homes for young people who are unable to live safely with their families, and increased employment opportunities for adolescents.

In addition, there is an urgent need for improvement in the public schools from which most of these young people come, so that no young person in this society leaves school only partially literate, and therefore unable to obtain work with a livable salary. A consistent, humanistic, non-sexist, and realistic sex education program, begun in kindergarten and continued all the way through high school, would also help a lot.

National Strategy

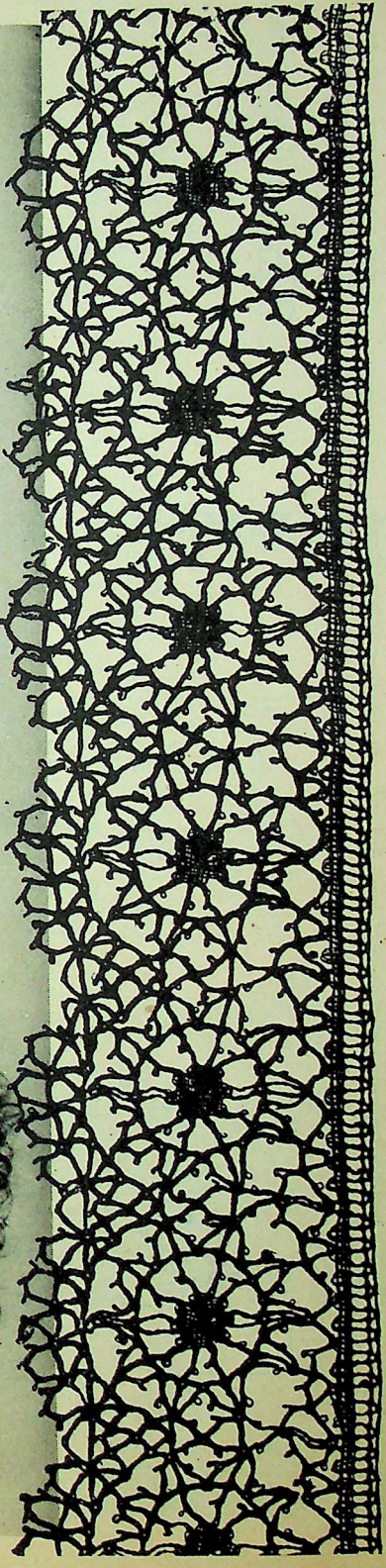
Since street prostitution exists in every large city in this country, it is time that the Mayors of these cities worked together to do something realistic about the problem. It is useless for one city, or even one state, to decriminalize prostitution because inconsistent laws increase the amount of traffic to the more lenient districts. Decriminalization must be done on a national, or at least a regional, level.

Therefore, the National Task Force on Prostitution is mounting a campaign to get the Mayors of the major cities of this country to put pressure on the President and on the legislature in Washington, D.C., to introduce a national decriminalization bill.

Further, the NTFP is calling on the National Organization for Women to implement its 1973 resolution calling for decriminalization by establishing a prostitution task force to put similar pressure on feminist organizations, the National Women's Political Caucus and the League of Women Voters, for example, to make this issue a priority alongside of the Equal Rights Amendment, abortion, domestic violence, rape, and lesbian and gay rights.

Only when women are treated equally in this society, both sexually and economically, will the tremendous abuse that women face be eliminated. As long as we live in a man's world, the label "whore," like the label "dyke," will be used to keep women intimidated and powerless, and all women will be at a disadvantage in a man's world.

Priscilla Alexander



PHOTOGRAPH BY ROGER RESSMEYER

Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics

Margo St. James, producer of San Francisco's infamous Hookers Ball, invites you to join the National Task Force on Prostitution, of which she is the Campaign Chairmadam. Memberships start at \$15, and are limited only by your imagination.

All proceeds from the membership fee, and the sale of **COYOTE HOWLS** T-shirts, go toward the national decriminalization of prostitution. For a sample copy of the campaign's newspaper, check the appropriate box.

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Ignorance is No Excuse for a Law! Join the National Task Force on Prostitution.

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