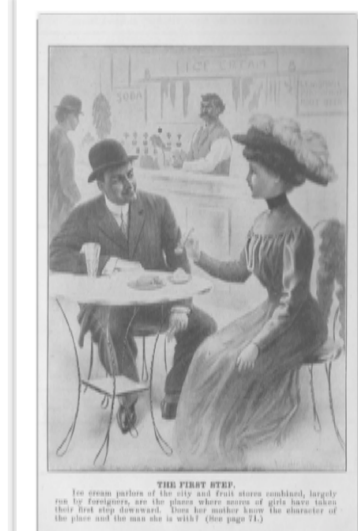


A century ago, moral crusader Ernest A. Bell, secretary of the Illinois Vigilance Association and Superintendent of Midnight Missions, began a crusade to ‘educate’ Americans about the “White Slave Trade” and the need to prevent young women from leaving the safety and protection of the rural home and go to the big cities. He was convinced that by allowing our ‘virtuous’ young women to set out on their own; to find jobs, to live alone, to become independent-meant that they would be kidnapped and forced into the ‘sex trade’ by unscrupulous madams and pimps, to live out their short lives as sex slaves.

In his 1910 self-published book, “*Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls- War on the White Slave Trade,*” he sternly lectured parents on the need to keep their daughters safe from the unknown. Then, as now, the public’s fear of ‘foreigners’ (immigrants) was used to provoke them to action and was the driving force behind the religious crusade. “*The First Step- Ice cream parlors of the city and fruit stores combined, largely run by foreigners, are the places where scores of girls have taken their first step downward. Does her mother know the character of the place and the man she is with?*” His was a fight based on the belief that a ‘good’ woman did not naturally possess sexuality and even if she did, it must be suppressed at all costs to ensure that she made *the right kind of wife*.

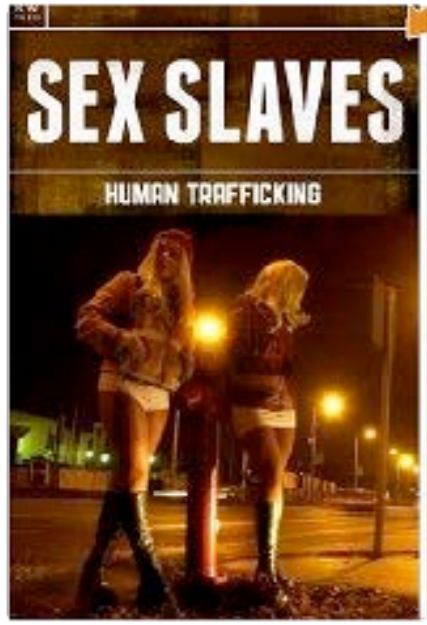
At the same time, but for entirely different reasons, the progressive movement also commenced its campaign against commercialized vice, in its abiding desire to impose its ‘superior’ social values on the poor folk who needed their benevolent guidance. Two groups entirely diametrically opposed in philosophy and purpose joined together to stop what they called ‘the social evil’ of prostitution. The former group professed concern for the souls of the sinners, while the latter group professed concern for the ‘emotional well being’ of those women it also saw as ‘sex slaves,’ young women under the control of powerful men who coerced innocent females into the sex trade for profit.

Never did it enter the minds of either group that grown women could make financial choices that included profiting from their sexuality in the same way that millions of women have done throughout history. Nor did they concern themselves with the ever reoccurring consequences that plague every prohibition of human vices since the beginning of civilization—the corruption of those entrusted with the enforcement of either moral laws or social taboos. Whether 100 years ago or 1,000 years ago, bad laws create bad law enforcers, destroying the trust of the public and harming society as a whole in far worse ways than permitting adults to engage in consensual activity either by themselves (*think masturbation*) or with others who share their alleged ‘perversions’ (*think homosexuality*). No matter how well intended, laws enacted ‘for one’s own good’ **are never good**. Rational people understand that, but seldom are rational people elected to public office.



In her work, “The Vice Trust: A Reinterpretation Of The White Slavery Scare In The United States, 1907-1917,” Mara L. Keire writes “In the narratives of the white slavery scare, which peaked in the United States between 1910 and 1913, *urban reformers intertwined the story of the sexually coerced maiden with a heated condemnation of the business of vice. Although the white slavery scare was an international panic, local reformers gave white slavery narratives local relevance by retelling the story in language particular to period and place. Unlike the French, American reformers did not counterbalance tales of violently raped virgins with a defense of regulated prostitution. Americans were trying to shut down, not keep open, tolerated brothels... Instead, Progressive-era reformers turned to the language of economics, particularly the corrupting power of trusts and their control of society, to frame their attack on urban vice.*”

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One hundred years later, the crusade continues, and unfortunately for sex workers, the conflation of sex work and sex slavery- or as it is now called, ‘sex trafficking’- prove that neither the religious right or the progressives/ radical feminists really care about the individual sex worker.. it is an agenda to be imposed on all women regardless of the cost to individual women (and men). In the recent Canadian sex worker fight for their rights, the issue of sex worker safety under the current laws was heard in court. **“Nobody cares about safety of sex workers, court hears”** headlined the June 16, 2011 ‘National Post.’

The court heard testimony from groups supporting and opposing a change in the law, to give sex workers the right to protect themselves and make their work safer. Prostitution itself is not illegal in Canada, however, it is illegal to communicate with anyone in such a way that could help protect a sex worker and give him/ her the ability to negotiate condom use with a potential client, or to work with other sex workers in a safe environment.

Writes journalist Adrian Humphreys, “A coalition of feminist and progressive groups, however, stood alongside the conservative Christian organizations in supporting the current laws, although for different reasons.

Janine Benedet, lawyer arguing on behalf of the **Women’s Coalition for the Abolition of Prostitution**, comprised of seven women’s groups, including the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres, argued the laws should be kept so men can be penalized for victimizing women.

“We feel comfortable referring to prostitution as the world’s oldest profession but not as the world’s oldest men’s pastime,” said Ms. Benedet. ***“Prostitution itself is harmful to women. The danger to women’s security is a function not of the laws constraining prostitution, but of the actions of men who demand the sale of women’s bodies.*** It would be illogical and contrary to principles of fundamental justice to decriminalize men’s prostitution of women in order to protect women from those same men,” court was told.

Addressing arguments that prostitutes would be safer if they were allowed to work in homes or brothels, she said: “It is not locations that kills women. They are not killed by apartment or houses, they are killed by johns and pimps.” ***[There is no solid evidence to support their theory, but it scares the public into accepting their irrational arguments against decriminalizing or legalizing adult prostitution, a move that would obviously improve the safety of both the sex workers and the clients. When anyone is a victim of a crime, it is much better for them if they can access the criminal justice system to report crimes against them, than it is for them to fear going to the authorities because they may get arrested rather than the perpetrator. And no, ‘ending the demand’ by criminalizing clients is NOT a valid solution to anything!]***

The attorney for the Catholic Rights League made it abundantly clear that the church does not care about the safety of prostitutes- it only cares that its moral values be imposed on EVERYONE, including prostitutes. And if they die, they die. No big loss. Just NHIs.

“Prostitution is immoral and should be eradicated through strict laws, **even if that leaves sex trade workers vulnerable to attack**, argued Ranjan Agarwal, a lawyer representing the Christian Legal Fellowship, Catholic Rights League and REAL Women of Canada.

“Parliament intended to eradicate prostitution” by enacting these laws because it is “an attack on the fundamental values of modern Canadian society,” he said.

But, asked Justice David Doherty, **what if that meant sex workers die as a result**, wouldn’t that be harm out of proportion from the intended good?

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No, Mr. Agarwal said, such an outcome is a **“sad side effect,”** and it was better for Parliament to “send a signal” to anyone thinking of entering the sex trade that there was great risk involved. His stance caused a ripple of derision from several sex workers observing the proceedings.”

What he is saying is that it is better for society if such immoral women were murdered - even by cops- rather than be permitted to remain at large where their ‘sinful lifestyle’ may attract/ lure other - *more virtuous*- women into the profession. Police corruption and abuse of those ‘victims’- regardless of how pervasive and damaging it is to everyone in society- is apparently entirely irrelevant to both factions opposed to the right of adult women to real autonomy and ‘choice.’ How can anyone dismiss the overwhelming evidence that law enforcement agents- including chiefs of police, FBI agents, Secret Service agents, judges, lawyers, prosecutors, prison staff, governors, law makers and politicians, as well as religious leaders, celebrities and others- cannot be trusted to use the laws which prohibit prostitution to ‘protect’ those whom these groups consider ‘victims’?

William Shakespeare, who captured so well the essence of human nature, nailed it in his work **“King Lear”**- *“Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand. Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own back. Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind For which thou whipp'st her.”* In plain english, **“You stupid cop, stop your violence! Why are you whipping that whore? You should be whipping yourself, since you lust after her and yearn to do the same thing for which you're punishing her.”** [act 4, scene 6, page 7]

Kirsten Powers, in the March 2, 2009 New York Post, proclaimed **“SEX SLAVERY: AMERICA IN DENIAL”** in which she opined *“SOCIETY calls them prostitutes, but it would be more accurate to call them slaves. Hollywood glamorizes the "happy hooker" and the media deceive by portraying the exception (the woman who is enjoying the "high life" as a prostitute) as the rule. The reality is much more gruesome. Just last week, the FBI rescued [arrested] 48 teenagers, some as young as 13, who were working in the illegal sex trade...*

*Consider...had that FBI sting last week come a few years later, many of those rescued girls would be over 18, and people would argue that as adults they "chose" to become prostitutes - and the girls would be treated as criminals. In fact, **they're still simply sex slaves.** And it is slavery, because they never see a dime of money from the pimps, and they have no freedom of movement. Advocates talk ominously of the initial "seasoning period" when the victim is repeatedly raped, beaten, starved, locked in a closet and generally forced into submission. The pimp then gives her a new name and tells her she's now a prostitute.”* **You mean like NYPD Detective Wayne Taylor said to the 13 year old girl he pimped and forced into prostitution?**

I have news for you, Ms. Powers, this may be true for some, but it is NOT true for most of us who have ever worked as a sex worker. And it is time to stop your fatuous rhetoric and realize the serious harm that is done to those whom you self- righteous prostitution abolitionist zealots consider ‘victims’ and ‘sex slaves,’ at the hands of those whom YOU entrust with our lives and our freedom. In this age of instant media information, you cannot claim to be unaware of these outcomes.

As I will prove in the following document, it is the unsubstantiated claims of ‘sex slavery’ and ‘human trafficking’ made by abolitionists like this woman who make possible the horrific and unacceptable consequences- *whether or not intended*- shown in case after case, using the government’s own statistics and reports.

Given those consequences and the fact that they occur in every country and throughout history wherever adult women are not permitted to speak for themselves or make their own choices, it is unconscionable for anyone of any political or religious persuasion to continue the vitriolic crusade against adult sex work, sex workers and their non violent, non abusive clients, employers or associates, and to persist with conflation of ‘sex work’ with ‘sex slavery.’ You may not approve of prostitution; you may believe we are being exploited or that we are immoral, but by giving so much power over the lives of adult *and* child prostitutes to law enforcement agencies and all the ancillary professions, groups, organizations and individuals who benefit from the infantilization of adult sex workers, **you are the cause of and not the solution to, the problem.**

Norma Jean Almodovar, July 2013