

## Women as Objects: Supermodels and Sex Workers

### GOVT 580.02

Instructor: Margaret Huang  
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Office hours: By appointment only  
Class schedule: Saturday, October 20, and Sunday, October 21, from 9am - 5pm

#### **Overview**

This course will look at a range of issues regarding women's roles in the sex industry from a human rights perspective. We will start by looking at the U.S. domestic arena, and the class discussion will address issues of pornography, legalization of prostitution, and first amendment rights. On the second day, we will turn to the international level, examining the global sex trafficking industry and international human rights law. Guest speakers will debate the question of whether pornography is a violation of women's rights and provide first-hand information on efforts of both governments and community groups to combat the trafficking of women.

#### **Required Readings**

Please note that readings are available online at cited locations or on reserve at the library.

Burleigh, N. (1997). "Censoring Pornography Would Benefit Women," in *Pornography: Opposing Viewpoints*, ed. D. Bender and B. Leone, Greenhaven Press, pp. 90-97.

Charlesworth, H. (1994). "What are 'Women's International Human Rights'?", in *Human Rights of Women: National and International Perspectives*, ed. R. J. Cook, University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 58-84.

*Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*, found at <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/e1cedaw.htm>

*Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others*, found at <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/33.htm>

Otchet, A. (1998). "Should prostitution be legal?," in *The UNESCO Courier*, found at [http://www.unesco.org/courier/1998\\_12/uk/ethique/txt1.htm](http://www.unesco.org/courier/1998_12/uk/ethique/txt1.htm)

Strossen, N. (1997). "Censoring Pornography Would Not Benefit Women," in *Pornography: Opposing Viewpoints*, ed. D. Bender and B. Leone, Greenhaven Press, pp. 98-103.

U.S. Supreme Court decision, *MILLER v. CALIFORNIA*, 413 U.S. 15 (1973), found at <http://laws.findlaw.com/us/413/15.html>

## Suggested Readings

Carol, A. (1997). "Anti- Pornography Feminists Harm the Women's Movement," in *Pornography: Opposing Viewpoints*, ed. D. Bender and B. Leone, Greenhaven Press, pp. 170-176.

Corry, J. (1997). "Internet Pornography Should Not Be Censored," in *Pornography: Opposing Viewpoints*, ed. D. Bender and B. Leone, Greenhaven Press, pp. 111-115.

Human Rights Watch. (2000). *Owed Justice: Thai Women Trafficked into Debt Bondage in Japan*, found at <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2000/japan/>

Human Rights Watch. (1993). *A Modern Form of Slavery: Trafficking of Burmese Women and Girls into Brothels in Thailand*, pp. 1-37; 75-119; 148-160.

Kaplan, D. (1997). "Internet Pornography Should Be Censored," in *Pornography: Opposing Viewpoints*, ed. D. Bender and B. Leone, Greenhaven Press, pp. 107-110.

Lim, L. L. (1998). "The economic and social bases of prostitution in Southeast Asia," in *The Sex Sector*, ed. L.L. Lim, International Labour Organization, pp. 1-28.

Simonton, A. (1997). "Anti- Pornography Feminists Do Not Harm the Women's Movement," in *Pornography: Opposing Viewpoints*, ed. D. Bender and B. Leone, Greenhaven Press, pp. 177-182.

U.S. Supreme Court decision, ROTH v. UNITED STATES, 354 U.S. 476 (1957), found at <http://laws.findlaw.com/us/354/476.html>

U.S. Supreme Court decision, MEMOIRS v. MASSACHUSETTS, 383 U.S. 413 (1966), found at <http://laws.findlaw.com/us/383/413.html>

## Course Requirements

1. Attendance at all sessions is mandatory. Class will start at 9:00am. A light breakfast with coffee and juice will be available at 8:45. Lunch will also be provided on both days.
2. Each student will complete a two-part paper. The first part will be a 5-7 page human rights analysis of one of the issues of women's roles in the sex industry covered in class. The topic should be either a domestic U.S. issue or an international issue that focuses on one country or region. The second part of the paper will be a 2 page memo to a policymaker of the relevant government(s) making recommendations for policy action. **The final paper is due to the instructor by Monday, November 19<sup>th</sup>.** You may submit the paper in hard copy form to the Women & Politics Institute or by email to the following address: [huang@rfkmemorial.org](mailto:huang@rfkmemorial.org).

## Grading

Your grade will be based on your paper and your participation in the class exercise.

## Course Outline

*Saturday, October  
20*

- 9:00 - 10:30 Lecture and discussion: Women's Human Rights and the Sex Industry  
*Margaret Huang*
- 10:30 - 11:00 Review and discussion of Supreme Court case on pornography  
*Read Miller v. California*
- 11:15 - 12:30 Debate on pornography: a right to free speech or a violation of women's rights?  
*Guest speakers: TBA*
- 1:30 - 2:30 Video on prostitution in the U.S.
- 2:45 - 5:00 Class exercise: A Town Debate on Legalizing Prostitution

*Sunday, October  
21*

- 9:00 - 9:30 Introduction to international human rights and sex trafficking  
*Margaret Huang*
- 9:30 - 10:30 Global Human Trafficking: An overview  
*Guest speaker: Ann Jordan, International Human Rights Law Group*
- 10:45 - 12:00 Sex trafficking in South Asia  
*Guest speaker: Molly Reilly, consultant to Women, Law and Development International*
- 1:00 - 2:30 Sex trafficking in Eastern Europe  
*Guest speaker: Margaret Vandenburg, Human Rights Watch*
- 2:45 - 3:45 A View from the Hill: Congressional action on trafficking  
*Guest speaker: Charlotte Oldham Moore, Office of Senator Paul Wellstone*
- 3:45 - 4:30 Wrap-up and discussion of papers
- 4:30 - 5:00 Evaluation