Prostitution and Social Control
Greggor Mattson
SOCI 338 Syllabus * Spring 210
King 341, MWF 1:30pm

Prostitution is a site of easy truths and inevitable conflict because of cultural ambiguities about sexuality, gender, ethnicity and citizenship. We probe these intersecting meanings by reviewing the wide range of empirical meanings attributed to prostitution and the ways modern forces have transformed them, especially the state. Taking cues from Michel Foucault, we analyze why recent legal solutions cannot fulfill expectations and discuss how the social control of prostitution might actually cause it.

The course is a core course in Law and Society (LAWS) and Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies (GSFS), is writing intensive (WR) and fulfills the cultural diversity requirement (CD).

Required Texts:

Contact info
greggor.mattson@oberlin.edu
Mailbox on my door, King 305c
Office hours: Mon 2:30-3:30pm; Wed 10am-11am; by appointment

Assessment
Participation in discussion: 20
Reading memos 40 (do 8, I will drop the lowest score)
Documentary review 10
Final Paper 30

Participation (in 6 easy steps)
• Read the texts before class and take notes on them
• Bring the texts and your notes to class
• Come to class on time every time
• Actively participate in discussions
• Open laptops only in the front rows
• Be respectful to others
Your on-time attendance is essential to your ability to participate. If you miss, get notes from a colleague and come to office hours with questions about the material you missed. Provide documentation at least two weeks before absences for approved College events.

**My goals for you** are to learn
- how cultural ambiguities make prostitution a ready site of truth and cultural conflict
- how processes of modernity transformed prostitution, especially via the state
- a wide range of meanings attributed to prostitution
- why none of the new policy solutions can fulfill their expectations

**Reading Memos**
Submit reading memos before the class. You are responsible for turning in reading 2-3 pages of reading memos each week for the first half of the course. Note: everyone must do a reading memo for week 2 of the course. Reading memos consist of two parts: a succinct summary of the argument and evidence in that week’s readings and your reactions to them. Reactions can take the form of evaluations of the arguments, methodological considerations, ties to other pieces we have read, personal reflections, or questions for discussion.

One way to think about them is to imagine you are a reviewer of a book containing only that week’s readings or that you’re explaining them to an interested friend. What are they about? Why are they important? What is missing in them?

Submit the readings electronically before the class period for which the readings were due. There are no late memos and no extensions.

**Reading Tips**
Read the lecture headings – they tell you the purpose of the reading. Skim each of the texts in 5 minutes. Notice section headings, bold words, or highlighted quotations to get the story the author is telling. When you read the whole thing, you’ll know where the argument is going.

**Movie Review**
OhioLink gives us access to a huge collection of documentaries about prostitution that you can watch for free. Since I can’t see everything, 10% of your grade will be to write a short (2-page) review of one documentary or two commercial release films, how they fit in to our readings, and what you learned from them. After you receive comments, upload your documentary to a site of reviews and send me the link.

**Final Paper**
Use your memos as the building blocks to synthesize the readings from the class as evidence for an argument about prostitution in the Dominican Republic. Your final paper is an 8-10 page scholarly review of the Brennan and Padilla books. A scholarly review takes a position on the texts, analyzing them from a point of view. You may choose any of the themes from the class to construct your thesis – gender, sexuality, power, money, cultural difference, citizenship, political economy, race, etc.

**Late Assignments**
Late assignments will lose one letter grade for each day late – this includes not turning in a hard copy at the beginning of class. Excused lateness must come from a Class Dean.

**Honor Code:** [http://www.oberlin.edu/students/links-life/honorcode.html](http://www.oberlin.edu/students/links-life/honorcode.html)
Sign the honor code on each assignment—it is your reminder to know the boundaries of cheating (not doing your own work) plagiarism (taking credit for someone else’s work) and fabrication (making up sources, quotations or observations). Refer to the honor code and/or talk to me if you have concerns or are feeling so pressed that cheating seems attractive.

**Disability Accommodations**
If you are a student with a disability, make sure you’ve registered with the Office of Disability Services (Peters G-27/28 x55588) to develop a plan to meet your academic needs. Bring their recommendations to me at least two weeks before any due date or exam.

**Grading rubric**
Papers will be graded as follows:

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<tr>
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<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thesis sentence:</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>(UNDERLINED, answers how or why question appropriate to essay length. Yes, you get points for underlining it.)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>(ideas grouped in paragraphs, evidence for main points)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sources</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>(synthesizes a variety of texts, in-text citations in APA format)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>On time</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>(printed copy hand-delivered by beginning of class, all or nothing)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Insight</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>(creativity, connections between texts, use of language, sparkle)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conventions</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>(stapled, grammar, 1” margins, spelling, punctuated, 12-pt. font)</td>
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**Sources & Citations (APA format)**
You need not make a works cited for course readings but you must cite them properly in the text in APA format. *Wikipedia is not an academic source, but may lead you to primary sources.*

Paraphrasing primary sources (preferred):

- Media in the 1950s catered to the rising middle class, giving a misleading impression of America’s families (Coontz 1990, p. 31).

Direct quotations (use sparingly) must be introduced:

- Stephanie Coontz cites the enduring power of the media for creating a new American tradition during the baby boom: “The happy, homogenous families that we ‘remember’ from the 1950s were... a result of the media’s denial of diversity” (1990, p. 31).
Syllabus
Readings are due to be read by the date on which they are listed. Only a small portion of the FILMS listed will be shown in class; I list them for you to get into the spirit of the class on your own time, if you like (by putting them on your Netflix queue or watching them for free in the Media Resource Center, for instance).

WEEK 1: THE LAY OF THE LAND: THE MEANINGS OF PROSTITUTION (Feb 8-12)
1: First Day: Terms, Terms and Turns

2: Read these three accounts of contemporary prostitution. Based on these very different experiences, what can we say about the category “prostitution”?


3: The media and migrant prostitution, then and now. Read these two journalistic accounts separated by a century. What is similar, what is different? In other words: has the situation for poor women stayed the same? The public appetite for stories of destitution? Both? And/or something else?

   Read from “The Violation of Virgins” in The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon: http://www.attackingthedevil.co.uk/pmg/tribute/mt1.php (Stead, 1885)

   MOVIE: Call + Response (2005), Taxi Driver (1976)

WEEK 2: FEMINIST DEBATES AND LEGAL STRATEGIES (Feb 15-19)
1: Prostitution debates fundamentally changed when prostitutes began organizing in the 1970s, speaking for themselves and This coincided with larger feminist debates about the meanings of gender, femininity, and sexuality that changed laws and public culture.
2: Compare these two very different analyses of the meanings of prostitution. What larger social forces do these theorists invoke to explain prostitution? Which do you find more convincing – why/why not?


3: What is the relationship between the legal regimes discussed by Weitzer and the feminist debates we have been reading?


WEEK 3: PROSTITUTION AND TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES (Feb 22-26)

1: What aspects of prostitution are culturally bound? What does sexual commerce look like in a country where the meanings of money, markets, legal regulation, and the state are very different from our own?

Wardlow Wayward Women: “Introduction” (pp. 1-4); “Tari is a Jelas Place,” and “Body and Agency Among Huli Women.”


MOVIE: Prisoners of a White God (2008), The Courtesans of Bombay (1983)

2: Women in traditional exchange, women as modern individuals
Wardlow, “I am Not the Daughter of a Pig,” “Becoming a Pasinja Meri,” and “Passenger Women and Sexuality.”

MOVIE: Prostitution Behind the Veil (2005)

3: In what ways do modern conceptions of prostitution reproduce deep-seated cultural dualities? How is this similar or different to the New Guinean society analyzed by Wardlow?

Wardlow, “Conclusion.”

MOVIE: At Stake (2008)

WEEK 4: MODERNITY AND THE STATE (Mar 1-5)

1: The rise of the social and the rise of the state: what are the implications for women, for the public sphere, and policing?

2: Foucault and governmentality

3: Paris, or How Prostitutes Are Like Sewers and Brothels Are Like Prisons
Corbin
Foucault
EXTRAS: Emile Zola’s Nana (1880), Theodore Dreiser’s Sister Carrie (1900)
MOVIE: Moulin Rouge (2001)

WEEK 5: MODERNITY AND THE STATE (Mar 8-12)

1: The extension of the state is one way to understand colonialism. In what ways is prostitution intrinsically racialized? What are the implications for these historical accounts for the women in Wardlow’s book?

2: This article completes our discussion of the relationship between prostitution and modernity: the rise of the state and legal authority, the separation of sexuality from gender, and the rise of a middle-class public culture.


3: Temporarily Yours
Bernstein, “Sexual Commerce in Postindustrial Culture,” and “Remapping the Boundaries of ‘Vice’”

WEEK 6: AMERICAN SOLUTIONS TO PROSTITUTION (Mar 15-19)
1: What does Luker mean when she says social reform is double-edged? In what ways does her analysis recall Emma Goldman’s critiques?


2: Nevada: Global Anomaly

WEEK 7: PROSTITUTION AND MODERN LIFE (Mar 22-26)
1: Prostitution and race
Bernstein, “Modern Prostitution and Its Remnants”

2: Bernstein, “The Privatization of Public Women,” “Desire, Demand and the Commerce of Sex”

3: “The State, Sexuality and the Market”
Bernstein, “Sexuality Debates and Pleasure Wars”

WEEK 8: WEEK EIGHT SPRING BREAK

WEEK 9: CASE STUDY: DOMINICAN REPUBLIC via PADILLA (Apr 8-12)

1: Global vs. Local Cultural Politics
Global Sexual Spaces and Their Hierarchies, “Looking for Life in the Dominican Pleasure Industry,” and “Shifting Cultural Politics of Sexual Identity in Santo Domingo”


2: Individuality & Agency vs. Tradition & Family: In what ways does Padilla’s story complicate the free/forced distinction in lay understandings of prostitution?

“Familial Discretions, Unveiling the Other Side of Sex Work” and “Love, Finance, and Authenticity in Gay Sex Tourism.”

3: How does Padilla’s political economy of risk contrast with a notion of risk grounded in individual choices and responsibility? What are the implications for AIDS interventions at the local level? The global?

“AIDS, the ‘Bisexual Bridge,’ and the Political Economy of Risk in the Dominical Republic.”

WEEK 10: CASE STUDY: DOMINICAN REPUBLIC via BRENNAN (Apr 15-19)

1: Global vs. Local Cultural Politics: In what ways is the situation in Sosúa similar or different than in Padilla’s book? In what ways does gender impact the power dynamics in transnational prostitution?

“Sosúa: A Transnational Town,” “Imagining and Experiencing Sosúa,” and “Performing Love.”

2: The Sex Trade

“Sosúa’s Sex Workers: Their Families and Working Life,” “Advancement Strategies in Sosúa’s Sex Trade.”

3: Plan Accomplished

“Transnational Disappointments,” and “Conclusion: Changes in Sex Workers’ Lives, Sosúa, and Its Sex Trade

WEEK 11: TROUBLE WITH TRAFFICKING Apr 22-26)

1: 1

Agustin Chapters 1, 3

MOVIE: Sex Slave$ (2005)

2: 2

Agustin Chapters 6-7
U.S State Department
3: 3

Mattson, “The Trouble With Trafficking.”

WEEK 12: THE U.S. WAR ON TRAFFICKING (May 1-5)

1: DeStefano Chapters 1-6
2: DeStefano Chapters 7-10
3: DeStefano Chapters 11-13

WEEK 13: LOOSE ENDS (May 15-19)

1: What about kids?

2: Ethics and ideology

3: 3 Last Thoughts