ANIL AGGRAWAL'S
Internet Journal of
Forensic Medicine and Toxicology
The world's first online journal devoted entirely to forensic medicine and toxicology · Published 1 January and 1 July

VOL. 8, NO. 1
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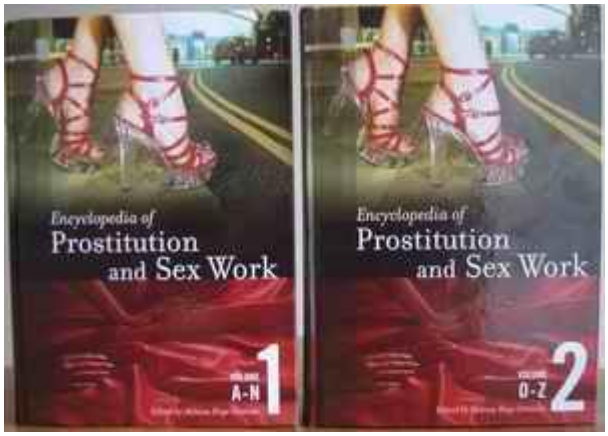
...A PATH BREAKING ENCYCLOPEDIA ...I found this encyclopedia very informative and the two volumes kept me engrossed and mesmerized for weeks together. Every page is so full of new information. Highly recommended for social scientists, social workers, social reformers, workers in the field of community medicine, several governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), gynecologists and obstetricians and even forensic pathologists. In addition, writers, authors, bibliophiles, teachers, professors and educators, and above all a general well-informed layman would enjoy this encyclopedia immensely. The non technical language used in the encyclopedia makes this encyclopedia accessible to everyone...

Encyclopedia of Prostitution and Sex Work [Two Volumes] edited by Melissa Hope Ditmore. Hard Bound, 7" x 10".
Greenwood Press, An imprint of Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., 88 Post Road West, Westport CT 06881, (203) 226-3571. Publication Date August 30, 2006. 848 pages, ISBN: 0-313-32968-0, ISBN-13: 978-0-313-32968-5, DOI: 10.1336/0313329680. LC Card Number: 2006010227. LCC Class: HQ115. Dewey Class: 306. Price $225.00 (UK Sterling Price: £125.00)

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Prostitution has been called the oldest profession in the world. Several social scientists and philosophers have commented on this. Bertrand Russell was not convinced that it were only the prostitutes who endured undesired sex, for he once commented, "Marriage is for women the commonest mode of livelihood, and the total amount of undesired sex endured by women is probably greater in marriage than in prostitution." George Carlin wondered why prostitution was illegal. Why - he said - should it be illegal to sell something that's perfectly legal to give away for free?

It is worth listening to the other side too. Manju, a Nepalese prostitute relocated to India, was once quoted in *Time* magazine (June 21, 1993, p. 51) as having remarked, "One can endure everything except hunger. If I were a man, maybe I would have committed murder to fill my stomach. But as a woman, I became a prostitute." It has always been a surprise to me, why a comprehensive encyclopedia did not exist on a subject as controversial and misunderstood as prostitution and sex work.

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That is why I was happily surprised to see this great encyclopedia when it came to the journal office for review. Edited by Melissa Hope Ditmore, this two-volume encyclopedia gives as many as 341 entries related to prostitution - each covering an average of two pages. Most entries are richly illustrated with pictures. Alphabetically arranged, the entries range from Abolition to Zola. Although each entry is alphabetically arranged, you can also search them by categories. This classification is given at the beginning of both volumes. The topics in which all these entries have been divided are (i) Arts and Culture [**examples**: Films, Geisha, Hip-Hop, Klute, *Midnight cowboy*, Rahab, *Sins of the Cities*, *To Beg I am ashamed*] (ii) Concepts [**examples**: Eugenics, Scapegoating, Stigma] (iii) Crime [**examples**: Jack the Ripper, Murder, Rape, Trafficking, Violence] (iv) Health and Medicine [**examples**: Crack, Harm Reduction, Nonoxynol-9, Tenofovir] (v)Institutions and organizations [**examples**: COYOTE, Rode Draad, Scarlet Alliance, Sonagachi Project, Touching Base] (vi) Legal issues and statutes [**examples**: Chamberlain-Kahn Bill of 1918, Contagious Diseases Acts of 1864, 1866, and 1869, Street Offences Act of 1959, Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (VTVPA)] (vii) People [**examples**: Colette, Ah Toy, Ginny Foat, Helen Jewett, Mary of Egypt, Pelagia, Phryne] (viii) Personnel and phenomena [**examples**: *Auletris*, Brothel Tokens, Desert Harlots, *Grandes Horizontales*, Holland's Leaguer, Pimpmobiles, Sisters of the Good Shepherd, Window prostitution] (ix) Places and eras [**examples**: Arab Mediterranean, Bangkok, "D" Street, Nazi Germany, Yoshiwara] and (x) Religion [**examples**: Magdalene Homes, Pelagia, Sacred Prostitution in the Ancient World].

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You can get to read entries on virtually any subject related - even remotely - to prostitution. Thus you get to read entries not only on usual and expected subjects such as male stripping and male prostitution, *Kama Sutra*, misogyny, sacred prostitution, child prostitution, clients, Internet, transgender sex workers and the like, but also on quite unusual, unexpected and sometimes surprising entries. Among others, we get to read entries on subjects such as poetry, retrogressive dynamic and speculum.

And what are these entries doing in an encyclopedia which is supposed to be devoted to issues related to prostitution and sex work? Well, consider these facts. One of the world's first recorded poems, the Epic of Gilgamesh (written down around 2000 BC), shows the crucial role of prostitutes in the process of civilization. Retrogressive dynamic is the name given to a unique - rather abnormal - pattern in jobs, where the longer you work in an industry, the less money you make. This is typical of call girls, prostitutes and porn stars; one's popularity lasts only till one has a young face and a young body. The 1864 Contagious Diseases Act, allowed a plainclothes law enforcement officer to detain and arrest a woman - mostly a prostitute - and subject her to a speculum examination. The use of speculum on prostitutes became such a political issue that it was often referred to as an "instrument of rape".

...A good thing about this encyclopedia is that it is not necessary to read the encyclopedia from beginning to end. It is so structured that each entry is independent of others, and can be read as a standalone entry. Of course there are lots of cross-references (indicated in the text as bold faced letters), which you may want to go through if you want to. So nicely is this encyclopedia interwoven, that if you chose to wade through the cross-references, one reference will lead you to another, till you end up reading the entire encyclopedia...

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In addition to the 341 entries that make the core of the book, an additional 21 rather detailed entries make their appearance in four appendices in the second volume. The appendices are devoted to subjects related to prostitution and sex work. Appendix A entitled "Historical accounts" gives four entries. There is a very interesting and informative historical account of prostitution in London (1862) by Bracebridge Hemyng (1841-1901), where he provides groupings of prostitutes from "Sailor's women" to "Clandestine's prostitutes" and "Cohabitant prostitutes". Then there is the famous report by William Stead, "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon" (1885), which was published in the Pall Mall Gazette on 6 July 1885. A total of four installments were published. By the time the fourth installment was published, riots had been incited. Readers may want to read this report to know what was in the report that started the riots. The famous essay by Emma Goldman, entitled "The Traffic in women" (1910), addressing the economic aspects of prostitution is also included in this appendix. Finally there is an account by J.E. de Becker entitled "Hikite-jaya" (introducing Tea-Houses) (1899), which gives a graphic account of prostitution prevalent in Japan from the 1600s until the late 1800s.

Appendix B is devoted to a rather off-beat theme related to prostitution - Poems and lyrics. Six entries make their appearance here. There are poems on or related to prostitution by well known authors, writers and poets such as Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867), Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882), Walt Whitman (1819-1892) and Thomas Hardy (1840-1928).

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Appendix C is devoted to yet another rather off-beat theme, that one does not ordinarily get to read in encyclopedias - documents by sex workers. Five such documents are presented here. These are (i) The World Charter for Prostitutes' Rights drafted in 1985 by sex workers from around the world at a meeting in Amsterdam (ii) Sex Workers' Manifesto - a product of the first National Conference of Sex Workers in India, which took place from November 14 till 16, 1997, in Kolkata (iii) Asia Pacific Network of Sex Workers Code of Practice for Working with Peer Educators - developed in December 2004 in Cambodia. This document is based on a similar document developed by Helping Individual Prostitutes Survive (HIPS), an organization in Washington, DC (iv) Documents from the European Conference on Sex Work, Human Rights, Labor and Migration, elaborated and endorsed by 120 sex workers from 26 countries at the European Conference on Sex Work, Human Rights, Labour and Migration, on October 15-17, 2005, in Brussels, Belgium and (v) Excerpts from "*A Guide to Best Practice: Occupational Health and Safety in the Australian Sex Industry*" (2000).

Finally appendix D gives several legal documents and commentaries including The Mann Act (1910), the 1949 Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, International Human Rights Standards and the Rights of Sex workers (2005) [http://www.sexworkersproject.org]

To sum up, this is a path breaking encyclopedia on a subject which very few authors have so far dared to touch, let alone write an encyclopedia. I found this encyclopedia very informative and the two volumes kept me engrossed and mesmerized for weeks together. Every page is so full of new information. Highly recommended for social scientists, social workers, social reformers, workers in the field of community medicine, several governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), gynecologists and obstetricians and even forensic pathologists. In addition, writers, authors, bibliophiles, teachers, professors and educators, and above all a general well-informed layman would enjoy this encyclopedia immensely. The non technical language used in the encyclopedia makes this encyclopedia accessible to everyone.

Excerpts from the book:

This is such a path breaking encyclopedia on such a rarely talked about subject, that the editorial board of this journal thought a true glimpse of this encyclopedia could only be given to the readers by rendering some excerpts from it. These excerpts are intended to give an idea to the readers of the remarkable variety of entries and the depth with which each entry is treated.

Here is an entry on Exploitation films, which touches on blaxploitation as well. As we all know, blaxploitation (a portmanteau of the words "black" and "exploitation") is a film genre that emerged in the United States in the early 1970s when many exploitation films were made that targeted the urban African American audience.

FILMS, EXPLOITATION (Vol 1, pages 165-6)

Pam Grier (as Foxy Brown) in Jack Hill's 1974 film Foxy Brown. [This picture appears in volume 1 at page 165]



Exploitation films are films that exaggerate sex, violence, drug use, and other perceived social evils. Many exploitation films are independent films or low-budget Hollywood films from unknown directors. One of the sociological effects of exploitation films is their ability to create and then naturalize certain stereotypes, particularly for those marginalized groups who have limited access to popular media outlets. Most exploitation films are set in areas, such as the deep South or the inner city, that are as exaggerated as the characters. In Sid Melton's 1965 *"Bad Girls Do Cry",* a young girl trying to be a model is forced into prostitution. Marvin Chomsky's 1977 *"Little Ladies of the Night"* is about a young prostitute who desperately wants to escape her pimp. And Joseph Mawra's 1964 *"Olga's Girls"* is an exaggerated comic escapade of a white slavery ring that pokes fun at bondage, sadomasochism, lesbians, and communism.

One of the most popular categories of exploitation film is the "blaxploitation" film of the 1970s . The phenomenon of blaxploitation films was a response to both the civil rights movement and an increasing demand by African Americans for films with black protagonists and black themes. The first blaxploitation films were produced by African Americans, such as Ossie Davis's 1970 *"Cotton Comes to Harlem"* and Melvin Van Peebles 1971 *"Sweet Sweetback's Baadassss Song",* but as their popularity grew, Hollywood entered the scene, which resulted in most blaxploitation films being written and directed by whites. Blaxploitation films generally presented black characters who were heavily exaggerated, and male blaxploitation heroes were presented as glamorized drug lords, flamboyant pimps, or drug-addicted, corrupt police officers. The women in blaxploitation films were generally portrayed as whores who were outlandishly dressed, crude, and for the most part, uneducated. Prostitutes and the sex industry have been easy subjects of exploitation and blaxploitation films. Gordon Parks's 1971 hit *"Shaft"* introduced the Hollywood version of black film and set the standard for the hypersexualized and hip urban black hero.

The encyclopedia gives virtually everything related to prostitution. Here is an entry on a popular radio and TV program.

GUNSMOKE (Vol 1, pages 191-2)

Amanda Blake (as Kitty) on the television series "Gunsmoke". [This picture appears in volume 1 at page 192]



Gunsmoke was a popular and long-lived radio (1952-61) and television (1955¬75) "adult Western' set in Dodge City, Kansas, of the legendary Old West, circa 1880. The four main characters were U.S. Marshal Matt Dillon, sidekick Deputy Chester (and later Deputy Festus), cantankerous Doc Adams, and kind-hearted Miss Kitty Russell. 'Me long-suffering girlfriend of Marshal Dillon, Miss Kitty was the first female character with a significant role in a television Western series. Kitty developed into a self-possessed businesswoman running her own saloon, far removed from the vulnerable prostitute of the radio series. The Miss Kitty of radio, voiced by Georgia Ellis, was obviously a saloon "girl" and prostitute, distinguished only by her friendship with Matt. In contrast, the Miss Kitty of television, portrayed by Amanda Blake, was more entrepreneur than whore, selling drinks instead of sex. On the radio, Kitty served as Matt's confidante and lover, not-so-subtly revealed by the squeak of bedsprings. Her position was clear, as seen in the episode "Kitty" from the first season: she accompanied Matt to a dance, but the "good" people of Dodge insisted that she leave. When Gunsmoke made the transition from radio to television, CBS wanted the character of Kitty toned down and cleaned up to avoid offending viewers.

And finally here is an entry on a prostitute that became a celebrity.

SPRINKLE, ANNIE (1954-) (Vol 2, pages 458-9)

Annie Sprinkle during one of her performances. [This picture appears in volume 2 at page 458]



Porn actress, pinup model and photographer, author, sex film director and producer, college lecturer, sex-oriented performance artist, and sex-worker activist, Sprinkle began her career as a prostitute in 1973. She worked in Manhattan massage parlors for 20 years and starred in close to 100 feature XXX porn films and 508-mm loops. She became the second best-selling video star in 1982 in the United States for the film Deep Inside Annie Sprinkle, which she wrote and directed. Frustrated by the industry's lack of response to her pro-condom campaigning in the time of the emerging AIDS crisis, she left the world of main¬stream pornography shortly thereafter.

Sprinkle was perhaps the first-known porn actress to advertise openly for prostitution. A member of the organization COYOTE and Prostitutes of New York (PONY) since 1975, she continued to be an active advocate of sex workers and their rights but phased out her own work in prostitution by 1993.

Sprinkle began to see her work as a porn star and prostitute as a foundation for her creative self and made the shift from prostitution to art, with innovative theater performances such as "Post-Porn Modernist" (1989-95) which featured her infamous "Public Cervix Announcement", in which she showed her cervix to her audiences, and "The Legend of the Sacred Prostitute", during which she performed a sexual-healing masturbation ritual and the theater piece. "Annie Sprinkle's Herstory of Porn" (1998-2004) centered around her life in porn. She toured internationally to great acclaim. Today her performance art is studied in colleges and universities. Her unique "postmodern sex films" include "Linda/Les & Annie: The First Female-to-Male Transsexual Love Story" (1989), "The Sluts and Goddesses Video Workshop" (1992), and "Annie Sprinkle's Amazing World of Orgasm" (2004).

In 2002, Sprinkle became the first porn star to earn a doctoral degree, making her a certified sexologist. She served on the board of the St. James Infirmary, a free clinic for sex workers in San Francisco, for five years. She is the author of several books, including "Hardcore from the Heart: The Pleasures", "Profits and Politics of Sex in Performance" (2001), "Post-Porn Modernist: My 25 Years as a Multi-media Whore" (1998), and "Dr. Sprinkle's Spectacular Sex-Make Over Your Love Life" (2005).

The book is full of entries like these related to prostitution and sex work. I am sure our readers would enjoy the book as much as we at the journal office did.

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Encyclopedia of Prostitution and Sex Work [Two Volumes] edited by Melissa Hope Ditmore

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