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Autonomy and the Consequences of Criminalizing Prostitution

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Autonomy and the Consequences of Criminalizing Prostitution

Sex sells, but in America the sex itself can not be sold. The women and men of the sex trade are being denied the right to reign sovereign over him/herself, and over his/her own body and mind. John Stuart Mill declared that the right to this kind of self governance is fundamental in any free society. In America today we are allowing the despotism of collective opinion to oppress the oldest profession is existence—prostitution. This system not only undermines the individual freedom of the prostitute to govern his/her own choices and action, but also permits legal moralism to replace concrete rights with tenuous moral biases. The current United States policy banning prostitution is inconsistency with other policies, harmful to the individuals currently practicing prostitution, and ultimately harmful to society as a whole.

Jennie Ziverk Carr received a B.A. in Art History from Missouri State University in December of 2007. Prior to graduating, Jennie accepted an internship at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, Texas and helped curate an exhibition of modern mexican prints. She began taking undergraduate courses at Missouri University of Science and Technology in the Fall of 2007 and has placed special emphasis on the study of philosophy. Jennie will begin her two year commitment with the non-profit organization Teach for America in June of 2008. She looks forward to teaching underprivileged children in low-income schools in Houston, Texas.