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A Review of the Prostitution of Sexuality: The Global Exploitation of Women

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BOOK REVIEW

THE PROSTITUTION OF SEXUALITY: THE GLOBAL EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN. By Kathleen Barry. New York University Press, 1995. Pp. 367. \$21.00.

*Reviewed by Mary Ann Becker**

This is the key scene in *Pretty Woman*¹ in my opinion We gals want a heroine we can identify with, not a hooker sneaking drugs.²

Many fans of the film *Pretty Woman* echoed this viewer's review; they found the movie so enchanting for the reason that Julia Roberts represented your average girl that hit a few rough bumps in life, until she found her prince charming, her John. Similarly, a man that uses prostitutes expects a woman to escape the reality of her life—drugs, pimps, alcohol, sexual abuse, degradation, and dehumanization—to become his fantasy woman. Just as fans of the film separated the heroine from the prostitute, the good girl from the bad, so that they could identify with her, men utilize the same technique when procuring the services of a prostitute, and, often, as this Book Review exposes, these women are coerced, forced, and tricked into the field of prostitution.

The depiction of prostitutes as an “other,” different from “good” girls who choose not to enter this field of work, is at the heart of Kathleen Barry's analysis. Barry attacks the notion that only bad women become prostitutes and that these bad women willingly choose a degrading, demoralizing and dehumanizing existence in which their only purpose is to satisfy a man's on-demand sexual needs. In her exami-

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1. *PRETTY WOMAN* (Touchstone 1990).

2. Movie Forum, *Pretty Woman*, at <http://www.movieforum.com/movies/titles/prettywoman/index.html> (last visited Jan. 30, 2003). As originally written, the film *Pretty Woman* sought to give a cynical, and more realistic, view of modern day prostitution. Jim Emerson, *Editorial Reviews for amazon.com*, at http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/stores/detail/-/1558908366/reviews/ref=cm_rev_editorial_dp/103-0652122-5893458 (last visited Jan. 20, 2003). Instead, the version that played in movie theaters across the country depicted a young, hard on her luck prostitute (played by Julia Roberts) who agrees to act as a girlfriend to a dashing, wealthy client (played by Richard Gere). Within the week, they fall in love with one another, culminating in her leaving the street and him finding his “true heart.”

nation of female sexual slavery and prostitution, Barry focuses part of her book on international sexual trafficking,³ a practice in which young women and girls from all around the world are forced, lured, or trapped into becoming prostitutes in foreign lands.

International sexual trafficking, in many ways, defines the Symposium, *Beyond Belonging: Challenging the Boundaries of Nationality*. The traffickers destroy all concepts of borders by bringing in victims under false pretenses and, for the most part, without recourse, international sexual trafficking forces us to look beyond the borders of nationality. In essence, international trafficking is not even a border issue, but a human issue that transgresses any notion of a borderline.

Barry approaches the substance of her book through the theories of radical feminism.⁴ She views prostitution as a symptom of a patriarchal and male-dominated society. Barry chose to focus on prostitution because in her study of pimps, prostitutes, and trafficking, she “fully grasp[s] how utterly without value female life is under male domination. Women as expendables. Women as throwaways.”⁵ Barry believes that prostitution is the cornerstone of sexual exploitation as it so fully illustrates the denigration and dehumanization of women.

In the fullness of human experience, when women are reduced to their bodies, and in the case of sexual exploitation to sexed bodies, they are treated as lesser, as other, and thereby subordinated. This is sexual exploitation and it violates women’s human rights to dignity and equality. Therefore, while pornographic media are the means of sexually saturating society, while rape is paradigmatic of sexual exploitation, prostitution, with or without a woman’s con-

3. Barry also reviews her previous analysis from *Female Sexual Slavery*, as well as discussing the roles of Josephine Butler, Patty Hearst, and radical feminism in prostitution.

4. Radical feminists believe that a woman’s subordinated place in society results from male patriarchy. One of the movement’s most prominent leaders, Catharine MacKinnon, defines male domination and female subordination in terms of sexuality:

As work is to marxism, sexuality to feminism is socially constructed yet constructing, universal as activity yet historically specific, jointly comprised of matter and mind. As the organised expropriation of the work of some for the benefit of others defines a class, workers, the organised expropriation of the sexuality of some for the use of others defines the sex-women.

CATHARINE A. MACKINNON, TOWARD A FEMINIST THEORY OF THE STATE 3 (1989).

MacKinnon’s theory resonates most clearly in the areas of sexual trafficking, because that which is most a young woman’s—the right to possess and control her own sexuality and identity—is brutally taken away from her for use by men who choose only to see her for what they want her to be while using her (lover, girlfriend, seductress) and by what society expects them to be when he is not with her (whore).

5. KATHLEEN BARRY, THE PROSTITUTION OF SEXUALITY 9 (1995).

sent, is the institutional, economic, and sexual model for women's oppression.⁶

Barry emphasizes the dehumanization of women through prostitution continually throughout her study. Prostitution, so often discussed as an economic or social problem, receives human treatment from Barry. She views prostitution as a violation of basic human rights, not merely as a legal issue to be resolved or a theoretical discussion on women's rights.

Notably, prostitutes suffer from severe dehumanization because they completely disassociate from their true identities. Barry refers to the inner/outer world dichotomy experienced by prostitutes.⁷ Susan Képès,⁸ a French physician, defines "human" as a person living in this world with two elements: a physical body, which is a source of energy, and the mind that not only lives off the body's energy, but also reacts to the events occurring to the body.⁹ In order for a person to be healthy, these two elements must be balanced through self-awareness and self-acceptance.¹⁰ According to Dr. Képès, the outer world, the one of everyday tasks and emotions, occupies a completely different realm from the inner world, "a permanent fabric of sensations, emotions, ideas, images, imagined or imaginary actions" that eventually becomes the "self."¹¹ Whenever a violation occurs on the physical body, it violates an individual's human rights by offsetting the delicate balance of the outer/inner world, thereby separating human beings from their bodies. "*If our experience is destroyed, our behavior will be destructive. If our experience is destroyed, we have lost our own selves.*"¹² The delicate negotiation of identity no longer functions.

Barry divides this dehumanization into the following four separate stages: (1) distancing; (2) disengagement; (3) dissociation; and (4) disembodiment.¹³ In the first stage of dehumanization, usually the beginning, or first, encounter in prostitution, or "prostitution sex" as Barry calls it, women employ distancing strategies to separate their human identity, their sense of selves, from the physical acts of prosti-

6. *Id.* at 24.

7. *See id.* at 20-35.

8. Susan Képès is a French gynecologist, psychotherapist, and Directeur d'Enseignement au Diplôme Inter-Universitaire de Sexologie at the University of Paris-XIII. She has written several books, including *Relaxation et Sexualité, Du Corps à L'âme*, and *Femmes à 50 Ans*, which have been translated into English.

9. BARRY, *supra* note 5, at 27.

10. *Id.*

11. *Id.*

12. *Id.* at 28 (quoting R.D. LAING, *THE POLITICS OF EXPERIENCE* 24 (1967)) (emphasis in original).

13. *Id.* at 29.

tution.¹⁴ In its most literal sense, a woman isolates herself from her family, friends, and other worlds of “social legitimacy.”¹⁵ In actuality, distancing is a form of survival for prostitutes: “It causes women to become estranged from themselves in order to save themselves.”¹⁶

In contrast to distancing, which is an emotional separation, disengagement, the second stage, represents the bodily, or physical, separation from prostitution sex. A woman disengages herself by being “not there.”¹⁷ In other words, a woman gets high or switches off her feelings and separates her identity from the physical act of prostitution sex that is happening to her. Women must dissociate themselves from the commodity exchange of their bodies.¹⁸ Several prostitutes in Norway described their detachment in the sex for money exchange:

Pia says, “I have to be a little stoned before I go through with it. I have to shove my emotions completely to the side. I get talkative and don’t give a shit.” Elisabeth reports, “You switch off your feelings, you have to do it.” And Jane reports, “I’ve taught myself to switch off, to shove my feelings away. I don’t give a damn, as long as there’s money. It doesn’t have anything to do with feelings.”¹⁹

Women who are prostitutes often create boundaries in prostitution sex to protect themselves and further disengage themselves from the act, such as refusing to kiss or requiring the use of condoms. These acts disconnect their bodies, so that some parts of their bodies are left for themselves, for their personal identity and relationships.²⁰ However, as noted above,²¹ a woman cannot separate parts of herself or survive as a human being because it disturbs the delicate balance of the inner/outer world.

In the third stage, dissociation, Barry highlights that men who pay for sex also pay for prostitute women to act a certain way—submissive, aggressive, affectionate, cold; these men require women to act out a fantasy and not be the person she is.²² These men do not desire a human being, but a body that performs and conforms to his will.

14. *Id.* at 30.

15. BARRY, *supra* note 5, at 30.

16. *Id.*

17. *Id.* at 31.

18. *Id.*

19. *Id.* at 31-32 (citing CECILIE HOIGARD & LIV FINSTAD, *BACKSTREETS: PROSTITUTION, MONEY, AND LOVE* 65 (Katherine Hanson et al. trans., 1992)).

20. *Id.* at 32. A study conducted by the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women found that 92% of American women involved in the sex industry used drugs or alcohol to cope. “Half of the women began using drugs and alcohol after they entered the sex industry to numb themselves to the trauma of unwanted sex.” *Sex Trafficking of Women in the United States: International and Domestic Trends*, COALITION AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN, Mar. 2001, at 8.

21. See *supra* notes 7-12 and accompanying text.

22. BARRY, *supra* note 5, at 34.

One Swedish researcher characterizes stage three as “male masturbation in a female body.”²³ Essentially, in dissociation, a man procures his ideal woman—he chooses race, ethnicity, personality, and the level of exhibited attachment (submissive versus affectionate).

In the final stage, disembodiment and dissembling, the action of prostitution sex occurs. It is the point where a woman disembodies herself from the experience while at the same time giving a semblance of being emotionally involved in the act.²⁴ Men expect a “semblance that they can treat as if it is real in the moment of the commodity exchange. In this sense, they want prostitutes to behave like non-prostitutes—wives, lovers, and girlfriends.”²⁵

Barry’s four stages illustrate the commodification of women in prostitution from the beginning, when a woman distances herself from socially acceptable activity, to the final act, when a man pays a prostitute to “be” a woman she is not. These steps may seem superfluous to the issue of trafficking, but this dehumanization also occurs to the girls and women who are victims of traffickers. Traffickers brutally destroy a woman’s inner/outer world.

Segmentation of the self is distortion and produces dehumanization. Sex is an integral dimension of the human being, of the self. When it is treated as a thing to be taken, the human being is rendered into a thing, an objectification that not only violates human rights but also destroys human dignity.²⁶

Traffickers take a personal, private choice, sex, and commodify it.

Moreover, a trafficker employs the same weapons against a trafficked woman as a pimp, and he is often the only person that speaks her language in a foreign land. He lures her into prostitution with threats against her family, fraudulent marriage, or false promises of better employment. Traffickers also “season” women, a term usually used when preparing meat and poultry dishes, which has the same effect as the four above-mentioned steps. Seasoning “is meant to break its victim’s will, reduce her ego, and separate her from her previous life Seasoning inculcates dependency and indebtedness in the victim. The meals, new clothes, and a place to stay all must be paid for.”²⁷

23. *Id.* (citing HANNA OLSSON, *PROSTITUTION: BESKRIVNING ANALYS FORSLOGTILL ATGÅRDER* (1981)).

24. *Id.* at 35.

25. *Id.*

26. *Id.* at 33.

27. *Id.* at 174. Barry tells the story of Sanu, a fourteen-year-old girl who was tricked by one of her co-workers in a carpet factory. Sanu’s friend told her that higher paying jobs in carpet factories existed across the Indian border:

Prostitution and the dehumanization of women are not new phenomena,²⁸ and in order to understand the industrialization of sex through Barry's eyes, the larger picture of female subordination through pornography and prostitution is fundamental. The industrialization, or mass production of women, comprises a multi-billion dollar industry based on the commodification of women.

At one time, people considered prostitution to be an aberrant and amoral practice, "but through the prostitution of sexuality it is losing its deviant label because it is increasingly the normalized experience of sex."²⁹ For Barry, prostitution and its detrimental effects are the real life version of pornography. Pornography, according to Andrea Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon, is graphic and sexually explicit pictures or words that result in the subordination of women.³⁰ "Prostitution is the *enacted* version of pornography, where the graphic representation of the subordination of women comes to life."³¹ Literally, prostitution allows the pictures to come to life for a man and, as in his fantasy, the prostitute woman does as he desires, yet is not a mere prostitute, but also the semblance of the woman he desires. At its core, pornography violates a woman because "women are presented as dehumanized sexual objects, things or commodities."³²

After three days of traveling by bus and train, the girls arrived in "Raxaul," a large city where they immediately went to the building Sanu's friend said was a carpet factory. As soon as they met the proprietor, Sanu was told to take a bath; when she had finished washing herself, her "friend" had disappeared. She was given a loose-fitting nightgown to wear and the clean dress she had brought with her was taken away.

BARRY, *supra* note 5, at 174.

The traffickers told Suna that she had been sold by her parents and she could not leave until she repaid the sum given to her parents (they were not involved). Because of her young age, she only had to see two or three men a day, in comparison to the twenty to thirty men typical Bombay prostitutes see. After a week, Suna stopped resisting the men sent to her and her seasoning had been completed. *Id.* at 174. *See also id.* at 210-11 (discussing seasoning).

28. Prostitution and its ramifications existed long before society recognized its degradation to women:

Gilfoyle, in his study of prostitution in New York City, summarized the situation through a remark of a police captain: "'Startling as is the assertion,' remarked Police Captain Thomas Byrnes in 1886, 'it is nevertheless true, that the traffic in female virtue is as much a regular business, systematically carried on for gain, in the City of New York, as is the trade of boots and shoes, dry goods and groceries.'"

Id. at 97-98 (citing TIMOTHY GILFOYLE, CITY OF EROS: NEW YORK CITY, PROSTITUTION, AND THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF SEX 248 (1992)).

29. *Id.* at 72.

30. *Id.* at 57.

31. BARRY, *supra* note 5, at 57 (emphasis in original).

32. *Id.* (quoting ANDREA DWORKIN & CATHARINE MACKINNON, PORNOGRAPHY AND CIVIL RIGHTS: A NEW DAY FOR WOMEN'S EQUALITY 33 (1998)). Several studies indicate that abusive behavior in men results from cultural factors, such as pornography and violence against women in videos, which "teach young boys that females are there for their sexual use. They are often very dehumanizing." Nancy Traver, *Sniper Suspect a Textbook Case*, CHI. TRIB., Nov. 6,

Barry goes through this analysis and explanation to further illustrate her approach, the feminist human rights perspective. She believes that a feminist examination of sexual exploitation must be done with reference to actual experience, not theoretical occurrences.³³ “Developing a feminist human-rights perspective refocuses the question back to the act, to lived experience, to the conditions under which sex takes place, and asks whether or not that constitutes violation.”³⁴ If the act, in our case prostitution sex, exploits, it “is in itself destructive of human life, well-being, integrity, and dignity,” and is a violation.³⁵ The prostitution of sexuality is the dehumanization of sexual relations.

Women who are victims of sexual trafficking often suffer a double victimization: they are victims at home because they are unable to rise above their poverty or their lower status as a result of their gender, and they are victims abroad because they are often lured from their homes or sold by their parents into a country that does not speak their language and where no support system exists. Trafficking in women will continue to rise because it is a profitable business for the traffickers. Trafficking in women falls only second to the profits made in the drug trade;³⁶ but, it will soon surpass the drug trade because, unlike drugs, women can be used over and over again, they are a commodity without an end.

Traffickers sell and buy over two million women each year³⁷ and reap over seven billion dollars in profits every year.³⁸ Over fifty thousand women enter the United States each year and are forced to perform non-consensual sex work.³⁹ The numbers of women and

2002, § 8C, at 2 (quoting LUNDAY BANCROFT, *WHY DOES HE DO THAT? INSIDE THE MINDS OF ANGRY AND CONTROLLING MEN*). In 1983, two University of Minnesota faculty members, Andrea Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon drafted a model anti-pornography law to attempt to better combat these cultural factors that dehumanized woman and that boys and girls experienced on a daily basis. The statute defined prostitution as a civil rights violation and awarded damages and injunctive relief. See generally DWORKIN & MACKINNON, *supra*.

33. BARRY, *supra* note 5, at 70.

34. *Id.*

35. *Id.*

36. Susan W. Tiefenbrun, *Sex Sells But Drugs Don't Talk: Trafficking of Women Sex Workers*, 23 T. JEFFERSON L. REV. 199, 199 (2001). Some estimate that the number is greater than four million. See Michelle O.P. Dunbar, Comment, *The Past, Present, and Future of International Trafficking in Women for Prostitution*, 8 BUFF. WOMEN'S L.J. 103, 103 (2000).

37. Tiefenbrun, *supra* note 36, at 199.

38. Charity Crouse, *Slaves of Chicago, International Sex Trafficking is Becoming Big Business*, IN THESE TIMES, Jan. 8, 2001, at 7.

39. Tiefenbrun, *supra* note 36, at 199.

children trafficked for prostitution come close to the African slave trade of the 1700s.⁴⁰

Trafficked women are coerced or tricked into leaving their homeland, forced to work in the violent world of male gratification, in subservient living conditions, and physically transported from one area to another.⁴¹ When these women enter another country, their legal documents are confiscated, and they no longer have a legal identity, becoming illegal immigrants; they are hence the prisoners of their traffickers.⁴² Moreover, traffickers, often part of a larger crime network, employ threats against a woman's family if she should try to leave or warn the authorities.⁴³

Women are usually tricked into trafficking by the promise of gainful employment in a more prosperous land, or their parents sell them into trafficking at a young age. Despite the magnitude of this problem, very few convictions exist against the traffickers.⁴⁴ Alexander Mishulovich, one of the first traffickers to be prosecuted in two decades, lured Latvian women by promising them employment in the United States.⁴⁵ He promised the women entrance into the United States and sixty thousand dollars a year if they would accept jobs dancing fully clothed in upscale night clubs, knowing that the average Latvian makes approximately two hundred to three hundred dollars a month.⁴⁶ In return, the women would give Mishulovich half their earnings until they paid off their transportation debt.⁴⁷ When the women arrived in Chicago, in November 1997, Mishulovich took their identification papers, informed them that they would be dancing topless and that each woman could only keep twenty dollars of the two hundred to six hundred dollars they made nightly.⁴⁸ Further,

40. *Id.* at 209. The International Human Rights Law Institute published regional and national statistical estimates on the number of women trafficked internationally. The estimates included the following statistics: 10,000 children between the ages of 6 and 14 are enslaved in brothels in Sri Lanka; 5,000 children between the ages of 10 and 16 are sold into slavery in Cambodia every year; in the last ten years, over 300,000 women were trafficked into the West European sex trade; 10,000 Albanian women were trafficked into Italy in the last five years and forced to work as prostitutes; in Pakistan, Afghani women are sold in prostitution based on their weight, 600 rupees per kilogram. THE INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW INSTITUTE DEPAUL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW, INVESTIGATING INTERNATIONAL TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN FOR COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION 1 (2001).

41. Dunbar, *supra* note 36, at 105.

42. *Id.* at 106.

43. Frank Main, *Team Battles Modern Slavery*, CHI. SUN-TIMES, Feb. 25, 2002, at 8.

44. Crouse, *supra* note 38.

45. *Id.*

46. *Id.*

47. *Id.*

48. *Id.*

Mishulovich savagely beat and sexually abused the women in the one bedroom apartment he rented in Mount Prospect, a suburb of Chicago, where the women remained trapped.⁴⁹

Sadly, Mishulovich's story is atypical, as most traffickers escape police and public notice.⁵⁰ If traffickers are caught, they usually suffer little or no punishment.⁵¹ Mishulovich was sentenced to a mere nine years in prison for visa fraud.⁵² Previously, only anti-peonage laws existed with a statutory maximum of ten years in prison for the sale of a human into involuntary servitude.⁵³ United States prosecutors now count the newly enacted T-visa as part of their arsenal to counteract sexual trafficking. The T-visa, created by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, is a specially designed visa granted to victims of trafficking who cooperate with police and prosecutors against their enslavers.⁵⁴ If the victims remain on a T-visa for three years, they may then apply for United States citizenship.⁵⁵

49. *Id.*

50. Crouse, *supra* note 38. Mishulovich and his associates were indicted for conspiracy to commit peonage, fraud, and obstruction of justice. Mishulovich fled the country and his victims were deported to Latvia. *Id.* Many other countries grapple with trafficking in women. For the past ten years, thousands of women have been lured out of the former Soviet Union to work in Turkey as prostitutes. Will Englund, *Investor in sex trade pays price; Prostitution: A Turkish governor's prohibitions squelch a hotelier's hopes of riches from his "Natasha's,"* BALTIMORE SUN, July 2, at 2A. In India, at least 7,000 Nepalese women are trafficked each year to work in red-light districts. Harry Levins, *St. Louisan in Nepal describes a nation shattered by killings; "I have never seen such widespread heartache," Micah Rose says in e-mail,* ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH, June 14, 2001, at A11.

51. Many international laws have been enacted to curb sexual trafficking; however, most of these laws have little or no enforcement capabilities, because countries must also enact their own penal code statutes. Tiefenbrun, *supra* note 36, at 213-15. In addition, countries vary in the harshness of their penalties. In France, procuring a woman for lewd purposes warrants five years of prison and a fine of one million francs; if coercion is used, the punishment is increased to ten years and ten million francs. In contrast, Russia only punishes procurement if there is an element of coercion, and the maximum time spent in prison is four years. *Id.* at 215. In the United States, a trafficker's punishment may be the statutory maximum of ten years for involuntary servitude; whereas, the statutory maximum for dealing a kilo of heroin or ten grams of LSD is a life sentence. *Id.* at 216.

52. Main, *supra* note 43, at 8.

53. Crouse, *supra* note 38.

54. U.S. Dep't of State, *U.S. Launches New Visa for Victims of Human Trafficking*, Jan. 24, 2002, available at <http://www.usinfo.state.gov/topical/global/traffic/02012401.htm> (last visited Jan. 20, 2003) [hereinafter U.S. Dep't of State]. "America will not stand idly by as those who seek to profit from modern-day slavery ignore the humanity of their prisoners and show their disdain for the rule of law. We will defend the rule of law, and we will protect victims of human trafficking." *Prepared statement of Attorney General John Ashcroft at Tvisa/Human Trafficking Press Conference*, Jan. 24, 2002, available at <http://www.usinfo.state.gov/topical/global/traffic/02012401.htm> (last visited Jan. 20, 2003).

55. See U.S. Dep't of State, *supra* note 54.

Barry blames economic and industrial change for the increase in sexual trafficking. She finds that trafficking in women prevails in predominantly agricultural societies, in which women play a minor role,⁵⁶ and areas experiencing recent urbanization, in which women are unable to secure jobs that pay adequately.⁵⁷ Barry also faults military occupation during war as a precursor to the economic necessity of prostitution and profit-driven success of trafficking.⁵⁸ For example, during World War II, when Korea was a Japanese colony, the Japanese military forced 100,000 to 200,000 Korean women to sexually service Japanese military men as "comfort girls." In turn, the Japanese government offered these Korean women to the United Occupation Forces. This chain of events led to a viable sex tourism industry for the modern Japanese man in Korea.⁵⁹

In addition, women in war-ravaged countries often possess no other means of income, no financial or employment opportunities, and are forced into prostitution for their mere survival, sold by their parents for their family's survival, or more apt to be lured by promises of a better life and more money in another country. Finally, military men sometimes enact massive raping campaigns on women during war to break down the society, because, in many cultures, a raped woman is unable to return to her family or be married, which forces more women into prostitution.⁶⁰

Barry's theory illustrates itself best with respect to the international trafficking of women. Traffickers use economic depravity to further

56. BARRY, *supra* note 5, at 51 ("Women's reduction to sex is a fact of their status as the property of their husbands.").

57. *Id.* at 97.

58. Barry argues that military or state-forced prostitution, wartime rapes, and displaced female refugees lead to sex tourism and mail order brides. *Id.* at 122-64.

59. *Id.* at 126-29. It is important to note the difference between industrialization of sex, as described here, and sexual trafficking. In sex industrialization, women are prostituted in their own countries: whereas, in sex trafficking, women are taken from one country to another and then sold. *Id.* at 166.

60. Barry notes that an Asian woman from a traditional society remains unable to marry or return to her family; in essence, raping humiliates the women and destroys the culture. *Id.* at 130. Barry examines many Asian countries after war to illustrate the cause and effect of military occupation to sex tourism and mail order brides. BARRY, *supra* note 5, at 138-64. She describes the Thai sex industry, in which 450,000 Thai men visit prostitutes daily, the 5.4 million tourists who come to Thailand on "sex tours," and the image of women presented in cages to the customers. *Id.* at 136-48. In addition, she calls the men who purchase mail order brides "pathetic," because the "[mail order bride industry] sustains men who are incapable of egalitarian relationships with women, or of relationships with independent women." *Id.* at 154. The *Wall Street Journal* cited one man who paid a scant \$6,000 for a Filipino bride: "I want a wife who isn't career oriented, who participates very little in the world outside, who doesn't have high aspirations, who is useful, whose life revolves around me." *Id.* (quoting WALL ST. J., Jan. 25, 1984).

their interests and trade women, thereby creating the commodification of women.

Traffickers are traders in human beings who either buy women from husbands, buy children from parents, fraudulently promise them well-paying jobs or lucrative marriages at the other end, or they abduct them. Traffickers take their acquisitions to market via overland routes or, through the more sophisticated crime gangs such as Yakuza in Japan, they transfer women and girls by air to their destination, usually a brothel where acquired women and children are sold as merchandise.⁶¹

Despite the lack of international recognition, the lighter penalties, and the expertly concealed workings of trafficking, in its rawest form, traffickers abduct, trick, and buy a woman to resell her to the market, to make a profit off her body, and to dehumanize her. Trafficking is a human rights violation.

As discussed previously, trafficked women suffer a double victimization: first by the acts of the trafficker, second from the laws of the receiving country. For example, Bangladesh, one of the least developed countries on the Asian subcontinent, lies on the Eastern border of India with ninety percent of its country below the poverty level and eighty-five percent of its women illiterate.⁶² Since Bangladesh's independence in 1971, trafficking from Bangladesh across India and into Pakistan has increased; between two hundred to four hundred girls are trafficked each month.⁶³ Police and border guards aid traffickers by allowing them to pass through for money or use of the women.⁶⁴ After a trafficker and his associates finish victimizing the women, which occurs when she is caught, the law completes the process. During a brothel raid in Pakistan, police arrested trafficked women for being in Pakistan illegally, for violating the Zina ordinance, which authorizes whipping or imprisonment for a woman who has sexual relations without marriage, and for violating the Hudood Ordinance of 1979, which states that no evidence of a woman at trial is permissible when the case involves maximum sentences, such as theft, adultery, rape, or murder.⁶⁵ "In the case of prostitution, even though they are trafficked, these ordinances make women legally responsible for their victimization."⁶⁶ These women are lost, lost because they are unable to return to their families for fear of death because they engaged in

61. *Id.* at 165.

62. *Id.* at 167. Barry concentrates on Asian countries in her book because trafficking is well documented in these countries. BARRY, *supra* note 5, at 167.

63. *Id.*

64. *Id.* at 168.

65. *Id.* at 170-71.

66. *Id.* at 171.

prostitution, and lost because they are unable to remain in Pakistan after arrest and acquittal.⁶⁷

According to Barry, women in feudal or economically deprived societies remain prime targets for traffickers.⁶⁸

The social and economic relations of power that make women and children vulnerable to traffickers are (1) economic disparity between the richest states or regions and the poorest, and (2) marriage and the family, which in pre-industrial and feudal society make women property of their husbands as well as wealthy landowners or aristocracy who own the labor of the peasants who work their land.⁶⁹

Under feudal society regimes, in which a woman's definition and security come from her marriage, traffickers often procure women through fraudulent marriages or false employment, preying in particular on divorced, widowed, abandoned and unmarried women because no place exists for them in society.⁷⁰ One Nepalese doctor discovered some villages in which girls no longer existed because they were all sold into prostitution.⁷¹

Likewise, in societies of economic disparity, traffickers target women who cross borders for survival, particularly indigenous and aboriginal women who come from tribal communities that traditionally regard young girls merely for their sexual services or marriageability and, hence, facilitate the selling and trading of young girls to traffickers.⁷² Barry expands trafficking to include women who migrate to other cities and turn to prostitution because of economic pressures.

With the development of an urban economy, some women continue to be victims of traffickers, but other women migrating to cities simply find no other economic means of existence than prostitution. They are not trafficked in the traditional sense, nor are they forced through brute coercion. They are simply vulnerable to the only means of economic existence available to them because they are

67. *Id.*

68. While it appears as if Barry attacks only rural, poor sectors of the world in this analysis, she clarifies that:

It is not ignorance, backwardness, or any other negative characteristic ascribed to rural people that leads them to accept particular belief systems that support trafficking of women and girls from their villages. Rather it is the power relations of marital feudalism that governs the family and of the feudal aristocracy that controls the land that produce the conditions that lead to devaluing girls and selling daughters. It is precisely because the husbands and land-owning aristocracy gain economic advantage from trafficking that they participate in it.

BARRY, *supra* note 5, at 184.

69. *Id.* at 175.

70. *Id.* at 179.

71. *Id.* at 183.

72. *Id.* at 178.

women, and because they are women they are homeless, and poor. Sex industrialization builds its economic base off that human need. Sex industries rely on the industrial sector not providing the means for women in the process of migrating to meet their material needs. With the industrialization of sex, eventually neither traditional customs nor overt coercion is necessary to prostitute large populations of women.⁷³

So, where does Barry's analysis leave us? A multitude of women currently are trapped in international sex rings, petrified for their lives, permanently scarred, and completely dehumanized. She paints a dismal and horrifying picture of pimps searching for young, insecure girls; traffickers preying on abandoned, abused, forgotten and naïve women; a society that quietly accepts pornography and female subordination. What could possibly remedy the worldwide problem, a problem that ignores race, class, and borders? Surprisingly, Barry's answer—hope. Hope that stems from groups all over the world⁷⁴ that help women to heal and find their self again, the self that the pimps, johns, and traffickers destroyed. Groups and individuals that remind a woman that she is more than a prostitute, more than a commodity to be traded, more than woman: She is human. These groups assist in therapy, training, and support on a woman-by-woman basis. Barry charges Western feminists to make these changes and to find a common ground for collective action.

International feminism gives voice and presence to that which has been unspoken in the global oppression of women. Where women are actively silenced from speaking the unspeakable, particularly in areas of the world where women may be at great risk in claiming their human right to be free of sexual exploitation, global feminism gives international presence to issues that otherwise would be buried by political repression.

Barry examines different state regulations, such as prohibition, regulation, and abolition of prostitution for an enforceable legal remedy;⁷⁵ however, she finds these remedies flawed and inadequate. Alternatively, using her human rights and global feminist approach, Barry counsels group “consciousness raising” of the subordination of women and deep care for those women who are being sexually exploited. Barry convinces that feminism is the sound choice because “[f]eminism is a persistent movement of women toward liberation that insists on alternatives, ways out, escapes for women from violence and

73. *Id.* at 196-97.

74. Such as, the Prostitution Group in Sweden, the Council for Prostitution Alternatives in the United States, and Buklod in the Philippines. BARRY, *supra* note 5, at 289-90.

75. *See generally id.* at 220-39.

abuse, from exploitation and oppression.”⁷⁶ Barry brings feminism back to its roots, refocusing the movement from single-issue politics, such as abortion, to a movement intended to better a woman’s place in the world. Barry realizes that her hopes and plans may be too idealistic, but emphasizes that proposals to criminalize *customers* need to be developed along with programs that provide social services, training, and health care to victims.⁷⁷ She offers that, “[w]here states would be closing down brothels if customers were criminalized, the economic resources poured into the former prostitution areas could be turned toward producing gainful employment for women.”⁷⁸

Barry manages an impressive feat in her book; she rises above the current politics of feminism and actually examines the status of women and the role that modern feminism is not playing in our world right now. Rather than towing a party line, or fighting for a single-issue principle, she fights for the young girls and women who have lost their youth, their innocence, and their chance to be totally free because of feminism’s failings. For example, Barry discusses the newly enacted sexual abstinence programs taught to children and the critics who find them “repressive” and “moralistic.” She sees beyond the political fight over which political party enacted them and the consequences envisioned by a white, middle class that may have never confronted these issues or chooses not to confront them. She argues that “programs focused on sexual and personal autonomy through controlling sexual activity until developmentally mature hold the potential of challenging sexual power relations that frequently undermine teenage female development.”⁷⁹ At an unbelievably young age, girls become sexually active as a result of coercion, not choice.⁸⁰ “These are the conditions under which coerced sex becomes chosen sex,”⁸¹ at which point a young girl’s ability to choose what to do with her body is derailed, and oppression becomes the norm.

Upon hearing the term “feminism,” much less “radical feminism,” most readers, male and female alike, cringe. However, Barry explains the thoughts and ideas of radical feminism and radical reform using a much more heartfelt manner. Women who may have felt defensive upon reading Catharine MacKinnon, as well as men who claim that feminism is merely male-bashing, will respond to Barry’s notions of

76. *Id.* at 291.

77. *Id.* at 299.

78. *Id.*

79. *Id.* at 62.

80. BARRY, *supra* note 5, at 63.

81. *Id.* at 75.

radical feminism because she appeals to the heart, conscience, and soul of a person. Her ideals and logic are quite basic: women are human beings and should be treated as such. Barry states quite simply: "The conviction that prostitution is not inevitable, that sexual exploitation does not have to be tolerated and should not be sustained, is the foundation of radical reform."⁸²

Barry's book, despite an individual's political beliefs or understandings of radical feminism, creates an awareness of the world beyond our existence. She makes real the reality of thousands of women, through facts, stories, theory, and her concern for the millions of women who do not receive basic human treatment everyday because "[h]uman rights are the legal expression of human life."⁸³

The Prostitution of Sexuality opens a reader's eyes to the sheer number of women who lose their lives, their humanity, and their dignity as a result of traffickers. A reader cannot step away from this book without being horrified and incensed at the lack of respect and concern for the millions of young girls and women who are treated with less care than the average American uses to pick out a loaf of fresh bread. Upon hearing of the atrocities forced upon these young girls as long ago as the nineteenth century, atrocities similar to those described in Barry's book, Victor Hugo wrote: "I am with you to the fullest extent of my power. In reading your eloquent letter, I have felt a burning sympathy rise in me for the feeble, and a corresponding indignation against the oppressor."⁸⁴

82. *Id.* at 298.

83. *Id.* at 302 (quoting Hector Gros Espiell, *Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law*, 91 BULL. OF HUM. RTS. 16 (1992)).

84. *Id.* at 95 (quoting GLEN PETRIE, *A SINGULAR INIQUITY: THE CAMPAIGN OF JOSEPHINE BUTLER* 16-17 (1971)).

