EC 184 Reader Response #5
Due 1 May 2009

I. Reading Source

I have placed two articles for you to read on the course website. They are an essay “Why Men Resist” by William Goode and a chapter from Ruth Rosen’s The Lost Sisterhood: Prostitution in America, 1900-1918 titled “The Subculture of Prostitution.”

II. Reading Content

Prostitution is the ultimate combination of gender and the economy. In no other way can the economy intrude so deeply into the personal sphere than when a woman sells her body. Rosen explores the hidden world of prostitution, illustrating prostitutes’ relationships with each other, with their madam, with their customers, and with their pimps.

In “Why Men Resist,” Goode explores the double standard men set up for distinguishing between the personal and public spheres. He argues that men seek laws to protect strangers from abusing their close female relatives while ignoring the threat that they themselves may pose to those same women.

III. Reading Response

The inherent hypocrisy of men’s relationships with women, as outlined by Goode, can be seen as a necessary feature of the industry of prostitution. Prostitution provides an outlet for men to treat strangers in ways that would be unacceptable to members of their own family. How does Goode’s theory support the subculture of prostitution? What evidence does Rosen cite of such behavior? In other words, how do men (and women) rationalize prostitution? Is there an economic underpinning for such rationalization? Using Goode’s theory, can you explain any ways through which prostitution may be eliminated? Do these methods make economic sense, given what we have learned in class? In explaining your reasoning, please utilize concepts we have discussed in class as much as possible. Please use any relevant portions of Hewlett and Ehrenreich that would support your argument (as well as theories from your textbook).

IV. Paper Details

While this paper could be completed without referring to additional sources, if you do use other books or journal articles, they must be referenced within the text (no separate bibliography). In addition to content, the paper will be graded on style, grammar, and clarity. You are encouraged to discuss the paper with your classmates (and me) prior to writing; however, all final papers must be based on your own work.

Please remember: Late papers will not be accepted.

CSUS Writing Center
www.csus.edu/writingcenter
writingcenter@csus.edu
278-6356