

ABUSED SEX WORKERS

After following the dialogue spurred by Megan Schmidt's Viewpoint (7/15) I felt compelled to add my own thoughts.

Almost all of the people who wrote in, mostly in opposition to Ms. Schmidt's assertion that advertisements for the sex industry in the *Weekly* add up to subjugation of women, focused on the disputed link between the consumption and the incidences of rape and sexual violence.

Ms. Schmidt made another point that I found extremely troubling. She reported that a large proportion of women working in the sex industry have suffered sexual, or other, abuse most likely during their childhood.

Whether or not this industry produces more sexual violence or not I don't know, but it seems obvious to me that it preys on women who have already been victimized in a terrible way.

Was I the only reader heartbroken by the reportedly large percentage of women working in the sex industry who have suffered childhood abuse? These are people who have suffered severe trauma and most likely are making life choices based on this deep-seated and all-consuming pain.

I agree with Victoria Austin and Sheryl York's point (8/5) that your "mind, body and conscience belong to one person — you." I also agree that "that conviction is very empowering."

I would like to think that all of the

women who work in the sex industry are empowered, happy women making a bold career choice, however, I think I know better.

*Mona Jones-Romansic
Corvallis*

NO DESTITUTE PUPPET

Ahhh ... frolicking in a Utopia devoid of racism, sexism, hatred, economic inequity and all the other poisons in our FUBAR society. What a warm 'n' fuzzy fantasy, Mr. Gogol (9/5).

That said, my reply to the original letter (7/15) was *not* a commentary on "authentic freedom" in our society. My statement that women's bodies and minds are their own was part of my rebuttal to that myopic, flimsy letter promoting the notion that women in the adult industry are all helpless, drugged-up, financially destitute puppets controlled and abused by the "Evil Male." Your letter echoes that original, saying that abuse and financial desperation propel women into the adult business. Can you say, "megabucks studio contract!"?

As a 10-year veteran of the adult entertainment industry, I know this: People in adult are as diverse as those in any other business. We are not all damaged, lost little girls to be pitied or vilified, nor are we all hapless victims wallowing in the poverty and low self-esteem you claim ensnares us in the Arachnosporn's web. I entered the



adult arena by choice — not out of financial desperation. I had all the advantages — and chose adult: Caring, educated, professional parents, no drugs, alcohol or cigarettes, university education, solid career, bank VP husband, owned two homes on my own, healthy asset portfolio (even healthier after 10 years in adult). And I am not alone in this profile!

Hang up and dial again, Mr. Gogol.

*Sheryl York
Eugene*

ART IS THE ENEMY?

Annie Kayner's letter about art (8/26) started out sounding like a clever piece of tongue-in-cheek humor, but I soon realized it was serious. If, as Annie claims, Amy Gaudia's notion that "art happens" is indeed "pathetic" and "shouldn't continue to be accepted as a reality" — and if "creativity is the enemy of the true artist" — then there is only one logical conclusion: Art is the enemy of creativity and life. If that's so, I think I know whose side I'm on.

By Annie's definition, a medieval cathedral *might* still qualify as art, since its creators — working anonymously, collectively and within certain agreed-upon traditions — may have succeeded, at least partially, in avoiding the "false ego of creativity." On the other hand, it was built by an awful lot of "common," even "average" people — and "the average person could no more succeed in making the artist's journey than he/she could win a gold medal at the Olympics." So how could it be art?

And by this same definition, anything that appeared at all "new," "different," or "inspired" at its time of creation should be considered self-indulgent non-art — including, yes, the work of Van Gogh, Picasso, and most prominent writers and musicians of the last few centuries. Yet my senses tell me that we are surrounded by art and beauty, which infuse the natural world (including us), and which are reflected in the creative expressions of all natural beings. A child's finger painting cannot help but manifest these qualities — often more effectively than the self-important "ego-transcending" work of a self-defined "true artist."

If art is as rare a commodity in this world as Annie seems to suggest, I would happily surrender that "art" to the people who like to stand inside museums. I'd take the finger-painting any day, or the ocean wave, the tree bending in the wind, the truth and beauty which flow generously from every part of creation.

*Chris Roth
Dexter*

WHAT'S BEST FOR U.S.

My daughter and I were fortunate to be able to participate in the demonstrations in NYC in August during the RNC. I appreciated last week's (9/2) article by Chris Ammons describing some of what she saw.

What was interesting and powerful to me was the diversity and strength of the people who were marching. Estimates ranged from 200,000-400,000 people! This is the

View from the County

By Peter Sorenson

I've been thinking about a local government priority list for 2005. I thought I'd share these with you, the people of our community. Some of these may be possible at the Eugene City Council level and I realize that most of them won't be possible at the Lane County Board of Commissioners level.

I'd like to get your feedback but these are the ideas I've been promoting:

- Stop the West Eugene Parkway. This is one of the most significant projects in the metro area; it's expensive; it's environmentally destructive and it's illegal. I think we should send a strong message to the state that it's over.
- Meth and prostitution abatement. The social and economic impacts of meth and prostitution are huge. We have, both city and county, big problems and they are usually treated by law enforcement as crimes. We can do more and we can do it better.
- Sustainable business initiative. We need to turn around our community's economic development efforts. For too long, the Lane Economic Committee and the Metro Partnership have been dominated by short-sighted interests. We must develop local, green, and sustainable businesses. We need more sustainable and family wage jobs.
- On the city front: The city should adopt the independent auditor and in-house attorney (reporting to the City Council). You can't have an independent auditor reporting to a city manager. It's just inconsistent. Same on the lawyer.
- Taxes as if people mattered: We need a local government to look at taxes: who pays them and who can afford to pay them.

I hope we can all work together to make this agenda a reality. We need leadership. I hope you will help in whatever way you can. Let's talk and work together for these goals.

Peter Sorenson is a Lane County Commissioner and former state senator.

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