* Requirements
  + 1-2 pages; typed; double spaced
  + Due: april 22 hard copy & turn it in (ilearn)
  + Essays: “objectification” & “should feminists oppose prostitution”
    - Compare & contrasts the arguments Martha Nussbaum & laurie shrage could give regarding the moral acceptability of prostitution as it exists in the United states today
    - Be sure to explain briefly what each of these two philosophers means by the crucial terms in her arguments: such as “objectification” and “oppression”
    - Which (if either) of these views do you find more plausible?
      * Why?
      * If you find neither of them plausible, explain why you reject their positions

# Objectification

* Treating someone as an object is treating someone as a means to an end, and not the end
* She believes in all sex there is a dimension of objectification inherent in the sexual act
* She divides her theory of objectification in seven forms
  + Instrumentality: your using them as a tool
  + Inertness: the object is stagnant;
  + Ownership: the belief that you can own a person
  + Fungibility: the object is interchangeable with other objects
  + Denial of autonomy: you are denying the fact that the person has a will of their own: i.e. denial of freewill
  + Denial of subjectivity: your denying the persons point of view
  + Viability: you can break it; you can hurt the person
* Rape is morally wrong because there is no mutual consent

# Oppression

* Because sexuality is a social construction, individuals as individuals are not free to experience Eros just as they choose
  + So too sexuality and the forms take by Eros must be seen as at some level open to change
* Prostitution raises difficult issues for feminists
  + Many feminists want to abolish discriminatory criminal statues that are mostly used to harass and penalize prostitutes, and rarely to punish johns and pimps
  + Many feminists find the prostitutes work morally and politically objectionable; in their view, women who provide sexual services for a fee submit to sexual domination by men, and suffer degradation by being rated as sexual commodities
* [author]
  + Reject accounts of commercial sex which posit cross cultural and trans-historical causal mechanisms to explain the existence of prostitution or which assume that the activites we designate as sex have a universal meaning and purpose
    - I try to show that the sex industry, like other institutions in our society, is structured by deeply ingrained atittudes and values which are oppressive to women
    - Does not want to advocate an egalitarian reformation of commercial sex, nor to advocate its abolition through state regulation
    - Instead, I focus on another political alternative; that which must be done to subvert widely held beliefs that legitimate this institution in our society
    - **Ultimately, I argue that nothing closely resembling prostitution, as we currently know it, will exist, once we have undermined these cultural convictions**
    - I am not interested in exploring the nature and extension of our moral concept to prostitute oneself; rather, I want to examine a specific activity we regard as prostitution in order to understand its social and political significance
  + Prostitute: provider of sexual services
  + Prostitution: commercial sex
  + Although the commercial availability of sexuality is not in every existing or conceivable society oppressive to women, in our society this practice depends upon the general acceptance of principles which serve to marginalize women socially and politically.
    - Because of the cultural context in which prostitution operates, it epitomizes and perpetuates pernicious patriarchal beliefs and values and, therefore, is both damaging to the women who sell sex and, as an organized social practice, to all women in our society
  + in fifteenth century France, prostitutes were eligible for marriage and not frowned up; in America, prostitutes are frowned upon; thus, is prostitution the same “thing” in different cultures? The author says no
  + making an occupation by the provision of sex may not have been oppressive to women in medieval France or ancient Babylon
    - in our society it can be extremely damaging to women
  + how actions are widely perceived and interpreted by others, even if wrongly or seemingly irrationally, is crucial to determining their moral status because, though such interpretations may not hold up against some objective reality, they are part of the social reality in which we live
  + what is wrong with prostitution is not that it violates deeply entrenched social conventions (ideals of feminine purity, and the non-commoditization of sex) but precisely that it epitomizes other cultural assumptions that serve to legitimate women’s social subordination
    - prostitution and the industry as a whole, serve to perpetuate this system of values (patriarchal ideology)
  + beliefs and values which structure the social meaning of the prostitutes business
    - people in our society generally believe that human beings possess, but socially repress powerful emotionally destabilizing sexual appetites
    - contact with male genitals in virtually all contexts Is damaging and polluting to women
    - men are naturally suited for dominant social roles
    - a person’s sexual practice renders her or him a particular “kind” of person (e.g. a whore, virgin, pervert, homosexual, etc.)
      * this four beliefs/principles/social constructs determine the social significance and impact of prostitution in our society
  + in sum: the woman who provides sex ona commercial basis and the man who patronizes her epitomize and reinforce the social principles I have identified (the four)
    - prostitutes cannot alter the political implications of their work by simply supplying her own rationale for the provision of her services
  + one can imagine a society in which individuals sought commercial sexual services from women in order to obtain high quality sexual experiences
    - a context in which the rationale for seeking a prostitutes services was to obtain sex from a professional, is probably not a context in which women are thought to be violated when the have sexual contact with men
  + my point is that not all nonconformist acts equally challenge conventional morality.
    - It is unlikely that person will subvert prevalent attitudes toward gender and sexuality by engaging in prostitution
  + To subvert the beliefs which currently structure commercial sex
    - The prostitute would need to assume the role not of a sexual subordinate, but of a sexual equal/superior
    - If she had the authority to determine what services the customer could get, under what conditions the customer could get them, and what they would cost; she would gain the status of a sexual professional
    - She would want to establish herself as a sexual therapist
    - She would need to represent herself as having some type of special technical knowledge for solving problems having to do with human sexuality
    - If the industry were reformed so that all these conditions were met,
  + If prostitution were sufficiently transformed to make it completely non-oppressive to women, though commercial transactions involving sex might still exist, prostitution as we now know it would not
  + Prostitution is not a social aberration or disorder, but rather, a consequence of well-established beliefs and values that form part of the foundation of all our social institutions and practices