



BROOKLYN_BORN

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“I thought they would be more attractive” said my cruise-mate.

Friday, March 08, 2013

We were on tour of the “Red Light District” in Amsterdam in December. Yes, this is a popular walking tour especially for Americans. I have no pictures to verify or negate that one man’s opinion because it’s illegal to take pictures of the women. Strictly enforced too!

I also must admit that I didn’t get a good look. The whole concept of women displayed in full length windows like a commodity was very unsettling to me although I do understand the reasoning behind it.

As we were told:
 There are no pimps abusing the women,
 There are health clinics and counseling services available to them
 They are considered “independent contractors” and pay taxes on their earnings.

Also, making prostitution illegal hasn’t stopped the activity in other countries, so the Netherlands has adopted a different approach to the “world’s oldest profession.”

I was reminded of this as I was catching up on SP after being MIA while sick. Pixielicious posted a blog about an article where the author was commenting on the fitness level of actresses.

[www.sparkpeople.com/mypublic_journal_individual.asp?blog_id=5266193](http://www.sparkpeople.com/mypublicjournal_individual.asp?blog_id=5266193)

I especially liked her last image because it included ALL differences

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While a large part of the problem is men judging women, women unfortunately are not immune to judging ourselves or each other either.

Now back to that male cruise mate on whose body I will not comment other than to say that he fit the stereotype of the average male senior citizen in the USA.

My response? "I imagine their clients aren't any prize either"

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CELIAMINER

Ha haaaaa! Needed the laugh, and the way you embedded the punch line with the education was great!

3017 days ago



CD10259955

The comments from fellow Sparkers are as interesting as the blog!

Legalization still doesn't make it meaningful employment, does it? Safer most definitely. We need to continue to work on our self images and those of the next generation.

Great comeback by the way!,,
3019 days ago



WONDERWOMAN

Interesting. Thanks for the great blog. Absolutely loved your reply.

3019 days ago



BOILHAM

There is something unsettling about the idea that this is a 'must do' tourist area. Tourist go there, ogle the prostitutes, and pity them. I tend to think those tourists share a great deal in common with the clients of these ladies.

3019 days ago



KELLIEBEAN

Great comeback line. Love the picture!

3019 days ago



CD13252816

What are the odds? Check my latest blog and you'll see the same poster on image distortion.





Guess it's everywhere.
3019 days ago



DESERTJULZ

Hahaha! We can be so judgmental of others, yet don't want others to return the same. Glad you had a good comeback for him.
3019 days ago



CD12689652

Great blog! Thanks for sharing, women really do judge each other and we need to stop!
3019 days ago



TEACHFIRST268

HA! Love it! Great blog! Just what I needed today. Thank you!
3020 days ago



DONNA5281



3020 days ago



MPLSKEN

Your response was awesome!



3020 days ago



DR1939

I used to teach Gender Issues in Psychology and had a mix of women and men in the classes. One assignment was to write a paper on their gender development. One suggested inclusion was body image. Women always had something wrong with their bodies, usually breasts or butts/thighs. Men almost never wrote about it--just wasn't an issue with them.

BTW, most of the women told me that their boyfriends were the major contributor to their body image and most wanted them to be skinnier, curvier, anything different from what they were.

I've been through the Amsterdam red light district. An uncomfortable experience. I've also had women who worked as strippers and as wait-persons. The last are frequently harassed and can't complain or they will be fired.

Da Vinci's Inquest is an old Canadian TV show that sometimes is on light-nights in the US. Many of their programs address the problems of prostitutes in Vancouver. It has a nonjudgmental POV.
3020 days ago



DRB13_1

yes, women can be more critical than the men!
I don't speak French, but "vive le difference"
3020 days ago



CD13099273

I did read the articles , both blogs very good. What frightens me is that I have two beautiful granddaughters and my fear is that although I know they will have some quirky feelings about their bodies during the growth period but its the star struck images that all children try to make themselves into opposed to loving and being themselves. I feel as grandma its important for me to build self worth in their minds at early stage of their lives . I think I would have uncomfortable seeing woman on display also.
3020 days ago



DEBBY4576

What an interesting blog. I did follow the link and my fav was the older person in the wheel chair, seeing themselves differently. How others see you is not important, how you see yourself means everything.
3020 days ago



TINAJANE76

I still haven't been to Amsterdam, but was in Hamburg two years ago, where there is also a Red Light District with legalized prostitution. Although I understand the good intentions behind legalization, I felt very uneasy and sad walking around this part of Hamburg. There were literally girls on display in windows like meat at a butcher shop for people to gawk at and tourists (including myself) walking around as if they were visiting Buckingham Palace. Part of rationale behind legalization is that it's supposed to ensure better treatment of the participating women and that it's all done willingly. The sketchy-looking men watching over the scene from the apartments above made me doubt that's actually true even in regulated areas. I know some people think it's funny or cool to visit these areas with a "wink-wink, nudge-nudge" attitude about the world's oldest profession, but apart from the fact that I've formed an opinion about the situation based on my first-



hand experience, I'm really sorry that I went. Surely there's a better way to empower women than regulating their commerce as sex objects.
3020 days ago



COCK-ROBIN
great!
3020 days ago



COCK-ROBIN
great!
3020 days ago



WOLFKITTY
Thanks for this blog and the links... I like that last picture, too, and found the author on FB and shared it on my page. So thanks for that, too! :)
3020 days ago



CAKEMAKERMOM
The lead up is always bigger in your mind than the actual thing, no matter what it is.
3020 days ago



CD13136117
Excellent response! Thanks for sharing the story!
3020 days ago



AUSFAM
I'm hoping and prying to help my young daughters see the beauty they hold and teach them to love and accept all shapes and sizes....including their own!
3020 days ago



GINIEMIE
I have not been to the redlight district in Amsterdam, but when I was 18 I found myself on a bus riding through one in Liege. Having been brought up to save myself for my future husband, and been close to a puritanical aunt, I was horrified by the concept. I really have trouble equating it with a career choice, but I try not to judge-it's hard here.
We are such strange beings, comparing ourselves to one another's shape, size, weight, etc-we really should be looking at our emotional, physical and spiritual well being and making of ourselves the best person we can be male or female.



3020 days ago



SLIMMERJESSE
I hope you went to the Anne Frank House and Van Gogh museum. WOW!
3020 days ago



SADWHITEWOLF
Well Said!
3020 days ago



WATERMELLEN
Hilarious! "Every guy thinks he's about 2 pushups away from dating Cindy Crawford!!" Not my opinion, of course: that would be biased and stereotyping and all that bad stuff. But a gf told me that once and: yeah!!
3020 days ago



WILSONWR
Sounds like an interesting trip! That was a great comeback... LOL
3020 days ago



DOUGDC
Maybe the ones I remember have grown up or moved out... :)
3020 days ago



PMRUNNER
Nice comeback!
3020 days ago





GINA180847

I have always thought of this in the terms "Would I want my daughter to think of that as a career option?" Not really then why would I think it okay for someone elses daughter.
3020 days ago



DMEYER4

I guess my body is my temple and I can not see giving it to someone that I don't even know but I guess this is only my opinion. As for different shapes and sizes I agree The world would be a boring place if everybody looked alike. Variety is the spice of life
3020 days ago



TIGGERJEAN

Good come back!

I have always wanted to visit Amsterdam!
3020 days ago



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