

voter une loi pénalisant tout achat de services sexuels, incluant toute forme de proxénétisme. Les femmes sont traitées comme des travailleuses indépendantes et paient même des impôts! Toutefois, à regarder cette décision de plus près, elle n'est pas sans faille.

L'auteure « favorise l'éducation du public et veut mettre tout en œuvre pour changer les mentalités à long terme tant chez les hommes que chez les femmes afin de cesser de banaliser la prostitution comme on le fait présentement ». Il faut miser sur la responsabilisation de tous les acteurs sociaux et agir de façon cohérente à plusieurs niveaux, sans compter uniquement sur les lois qui sont nécessaires mais non suffisantes pour modifier les comportements à long terme ».

Le livre de Yolande est le plus important et le plus complet sur la question à ce jour. Il expose sans fard et sans états d'âme la situation indécente qui est faite à des millions de femmes et d'enfants dans le monde qui ne pourront jamais sortir de ce ghetto sans l'aide concertée de l'État, des femmes et de la société en général. Il est plus que temps de s'y mettre.

## **PASSION LOST: PUBLIC SEX, PRIVATE DESIRE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**

Patricia Anderson.  
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BY STEPHANIE HART

*Passion Lost: Public Sex, Private Desire in the Twentieth Century* is Patricia Anderson's attempt to explicate what she deems as a widening chasm between the public representations of sexuality and what actually occurs

in the bedrooms of North America. Anderson argues that the main implication of this chasm is a sexual self that longs for something deeper and more fulfilling—and that something is, of course, passion. The text opens with a scene from the 1997 film *Titanic*, where she offers a flowery description of Jack Dawson's imminent death and his young lover Rose's steadfast refusal to abandon him. This scene effectively sets the tone for the entire text, as Anderson describes this moment as one that typifies "our highest ideal of love and devotion." While Anderson does state that this scene is an idealized myth, she validates it by the suggestion that this is something "we" strive for. Through the course of the text, it also becomes apparent that the same collective "we" secretly longs for a transcendental notion of love and passion, while erroneously seeking its fulfillment through a sexuality that is commercialized and expressed publicly.

Anderson's consistent application of "we" to a complex and discursively constructed topic is problematic, as it is readily evident that her demarcation of healthy and unhealthy sexuality is mitigated by a singular and decidedly essentialist stance. Moreover, it is also apparent that her target reader is explicitly heterosexual, middle to upper class, and North American. Class, ethnicity, and certainly orientation are given scant attention in this text, suggesting that Anderson does not explore the many factors which construct and maintain the public and the private as binaries.

This tendency is not limited to her vanilla descriptions of heterosexuality, as her historical information is at times superficial and carries little specificity beyond popular culture. While she offers a fairly broad overview of the last century's public performances of sexuality (starting with the Victorians and working up to a Huxleyesque chapter entitled "Brave New Love: 2000 and Beyond"), each period seems to begin with a won-

derful sense of sexual freedom, but ends with the people retreating to their bungalows to lament the lack of passion in their lives. Empowerment is followed by degradation and misery, and autonomy is reflected through rising hem lines. This refrain is consistent throughout the text, yet Anderson does not offer a deeper explication of her thesis, suggesting that this text is more a rhetorical device than academic study.

As with the mostly uncritical use of "we" (Anderson does in fairness refer to an age of sexual "plurality" in a sense that "it is here, so we have to learn to live together"), it seems to me that a text claiming to examine the gap between sexuality in the public and private sphere should examine how women's sexual identities are created and contained within these spaces. Anderson pays more attention to the décor of the urban home in the 1950s than she does to the implications of the pill, while similarly in her synopsis of the 1980s, she devotes a full page to the lycra outfits favoured by Jane Fonda while giving the devastation of the rising AIDS crisis a meager half page. Moreover, alternative sexualities are almost nonexistent in this text, suggesting that Anderson has a strict definition of identities and actions which injure the sexual self, and similarly, that there is a straight path to salvation.

The final chapter effectively illustrates this synopsis, as it reads more like a self-help book than a historical study of sexuality. In the closing paragraphs, Anderson states that "courage" and "imagination" will heal the sexual self, and offers us a "simple but essential truth... *In the human will to love, and in the courage to enact it with integrity, is where passion can be found.*" Anderson's text falls short of its promise because of her emphasis on a transcendental notion of love and passion, as the factors that mitigate sex and desire cannot be encapsulated into a singular discourse, much less in one sentence.