

presentent peu d'intérêt pour l'auteur et sont à toutes fins pratiques disqualifiées. Bref, le paradigme interactionniste n'est que très superficiellement couvert et sévèrement critiqué tout en étant confondu avec le "radicalisme" qui, pour sa part, se voit littéralement démoli!

Il faut mentionner qu'il s'agit de courants d'origine américaine qui, très critique du modèle positiviste, vont à l'encontre des préférences marquées de l'auteur pour les méthodes quantitatives issues de ce modèle ainsi que pour les thèses néo-classiques de la prévention générale et spéciale du crime. Cela ne saurait toutefois en excuser un traitement si sommaire.

En résumé, le "Précis de criminologie" de Martin Killias constitue un travail pertinent quant aux méthodologies quantitatives et aux approches traditionnelles et néo-classiques en sociologie criminelle. Par contre, il est nettement insuffisant en ce qui concerne la présentation de la criminologie interactionniste et des méthodes qualitatives, de même que pour les thèses des criminologies dites "nouvelle", "radicale" ou "critique". La préférence de l'auteur pour les approches traditionnelles et néo-classiques nuit à l'objectivité et surtout à la couverture complète du domaine théorique. Enfin, un "Précis de criminologie" peut-il porter ce nom tout en ne couvrant pas le domaine de la criminologie clinique? Également, les grandes dimensions du droit pénal n'apparaissent ici que de manière accessoire alors qu'elles constituent, avec la sociologie juridique, un élément essentiel à la compréhension du phénomène criminel.

Pour les raisons qui précèdent, cet ouvrage ne répond malheureusement pas à l'ensemble des préoccupations des criminologues, particulièrement dans les contextes québécois, canadien et états-uniens; il y a lieu d'en combler les manques par la lecture de travaux nord-américains ou autres sur les perspectives interactionnistes (constructivistes) et critiques (abolitionnistes entre autres).

GUY THERRIAULT

*École de criminologie
Université de Montréal*

Working Girls, Prostitutes, Their Lives and Social Control by Roberta Perkins.
Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology. 1991.

"This treatise is another addition to a very much overburdened literature on the subject of prostitution". This is the observation that Roberta Perkins makes about her book. She, however, hopes that it would constitute an important

addition reversing misconceived attitudes on prostitutes and prostitution and attempting to solve an age old debate. The problem with prostitutes, as she sees it, is that they represent a group of women who have chosen to defy society and not conform to the “social expectations of ... submission to men in public and private lives as compliant, obedient, sexually passive beings”, not so much as an act of defiance but for economic survival. For this, they have been not only subjected to “repressive and punitive laws” but also called upon to pay a price of being stigmatized and ostracized. In this book, Roberta Perkins attempts to demonstrate that prostitutes are ordinary women in a specific occupation.

In the first chapter, an extensive review of the literature reveals that prostitution has always been looked upon as an immoral and basically antisocial pastime, never as legitimate work or activity. It also reveals that whether the subject is viewed from the historical, the religious, the academic or the legal perspective, artificial devices have been constructed to stigmatize the prostitute and mask an essential truth.

Her main hypothesis was really derived from her earlier contact with prostitutes. As a member of a crisis team of volunteer welfare workers at Rings Cross Wayside Chapel, she encountered prostitutes who were streetwalkers with a heroin addiction and brothel workers with a criminal connection. A second set of prostitutes, she encountered five years later, worked either in bordellos or as call girls. None of the prostitutes in either set fitted the stereotypic picture of prostitutes as “women with high sexual motivations and criminal minds” ... “loudmouths, untrustworthy, over-painted tarts”. The first set of prostitutes, she found, were not, as was then generally believed, women who came from broken homes or with a background of juvenile delinquency. They did not pursue promiscuous lifestyles outside of prostitution. They were mothers caring for their children. In the second set of prostitutes, she found most had worked or were working “as office secretaries, as nurses, as air stewardesses and in public relations”. Some were students working to pay their way through college or university, some of them worked in factories or as waitresses, barmaids or shop assistants. Most of them were single mothers with bourgeois backgrounds. They too did not fit the stereotypic picture of the prostitute.

The results of the empirical study are presented in the third and fourth chapters. The third chapter deals with the social life of the prostitutes and the fourth with their working lives. The methodology of the study is described in an appendix as participant observation and documented empiricism. By participant observation, Perkins refers to her involvement with prostitutes as a

welfare worker which, she claims, provided her "with an insight into the commercial sex industry rare for those not directly involved in the daily production of sex work". She neither participated in nor observed the activity of the prostitutes. The documentary evidence was acquired through the "classic symbolic interactionary in-depth interviewing technique" and "the more objective method of surveying a random distribution sample of human subjects". The study is a comparison of the characteristics of three groups of women - 128 prostitutes, 115 health workers and 120 students. The health workers and students were those who completed and returned a questionnaire while the prostitutes were selected as representative of the prostitutes in general.

Her data led her to the conclusion that "prostitutes are not all working class women, are not the products of broken homes, nor loveless, friendless people adrift on the sea of social isolation. Neither were they more sexually active as children, nor significantly more often sexually assaulted in childhood, and their earliest love affairs were not considerably different from those of other women". They did, however, have "slightly higher libidos and sensuality" and "enjoyed their first coital experience a year of two earlier than other women". With regards to their working lives, the data revealed that, while prostitution was "a superficial reflection of everyday sex relations with its dominant males gaining access to female bodies through economic power", it offered prostitute women an opportunity of "setting limits, gaining economic strength, and acquiring knowledge of true male sexuality".

One finding of significance revealed by the data was that prostitutes did not comprise a homogenous group - Aetiologically, there were at least three groups - those entering prostitution (a) in early adolescence motivated by negative home lives, (b) in mid-adolescence driven by identities as "bad girls" through involvement with juvenile authorities and/or the need to support a drug habit, and (c) in adulthood as a consequence of economic crises. Not pursued is the question of whether these groups displayed other differences as well and the relevance of the taxonomy to the conception of prostitution as a form of economic activity.

In the second chapter, the legislative attempts to control prostitution in Australia, from the very earliest times to the present moment when the three strategies of criminalization, legalization, and decriminalization are being tried in different jurisdictions, are discussed. Discussed also in this chapter are the various social pressures that have resulted in the legislative changes that have occurred. What appears obnoxious and given consideration in the determination of the direction of change in the method of social control adopted appears, ostensibly, not to be the real objection of the assumed immorality of

prostitution, but criminal activity connected with it and the health hazards associated with it.

In the final chapter, there is an account of the work of the Prostitutes' Movement and of prostitution advocacy groups for the decriminalization of prostitution. Incorporated in this discussion is the feminist focus on the sexual aspects of prostitution, which has promoted their desire to keep it illegal because they do not want men to be able to control women's bodies vis-a-vis the prostitutes' focus on the work aspect which calls for the decriminalization of prostitution, presenting it as a sure way of removing from men the control they might have over women's bodies. Finally, the question is asked "will prostitution survive with the increasing sexual liberation in society or will it change direction in a major reconstruction of the industry?", "is saleable sex really necessary?".

One of her objectives in writing this book, Roberta Perkins claims in the introduction, is to "demonstrate empirically that prostitutes are basically ordinary women with only their occupation distinguishing them from others".

This demonstration is supposed to bring to the general public "a balanced, well informed view of prostitution, shed of its tawdry reputation" - listed as another objective. A third objective she has listed is convincing legislators to "adopt a more practical method of dealing with prostitution". Whether she would achieve these objectives is questionable. There are methodological shortcomings that could preclude the acceptance of the findings. Nevertheless, Roberta Perkins has produced a book which should prove itself to be an invaluable source of information when society is ready to take a good look at what is believed to be the oldest profession in the world.

C.H.S. JAYWARDENE

Department of Criminology
University of Ottawa

Vigilantism and the State in Modern Latin America: Essays on Extralegal Violence by Martha K. Huggins. New York: Praeger. 1991.

When the demand for authority was not satisfied by officially constituted mechanisms, James L. Petigru observed in 1858, extralegal forms arise, justified by the claim that they provide a remedy not obtainable by law. He was making reference to the early American vigilante groups such as the Regulators of South Carolina and the Shaysites of Massachusetts. These vigilante groups