

## ON PROSTITUTION

While I acknowledge the right of women who view prostitution as work as their right. I view prostitution more as a violation of women's rights and integrity. For the body of a woman (or of a man for that matter) deserves respect, not to be used as a commodity, object nor thing that is compensated. Prostitution demeans, debases the sex act from its place as an expression of mutual affection, care and love between two caring and mature individuals. It violates the right of woman, any woman to her body to have control over access of anyone to her body. Furthermore, with too much focus on the physical aspect, other aspects of being human are overlooked—the precious psyche inside every human being, the spirituality deep within, the creativity and intuition, as well as intelligence that mark humans on the way to wholeness. Which is why, despite my qualified statement at the beginning of this short paragraph, I am deeply troubled about women who claim the right to be or continue to be, "sex workers." I feel it is a terrible indictment on society that cannot, does not offer or create opportunities for work that engages persons beyond the purely physical or sexual level.

*Anonymous  
Philippines*

## DEAR EDITOR,

I was able to read one of your magazines, *Women in Action*, and I was really impressed with it because I was able to gain a lot of information regarding women in our country and internationally. I am presently enrolled in my Graduate School and I was assigned to pass a term paper about "The Filipino Modern Women." Do you have any reading materials about my term paper?

*Jennifer Grace O. Fernandez  
Dagupan City, Philippines*

Your magazine *Women in Action* is educative, informative and

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interesting. I have been hearing much about your reliable magazine, that it always talks about the women's world affairs and global issues. Through your magazine I came to understand many things about women struggle.

In fact I am also interested in receiving it that I have decided to apply for it.

I will be very grateful if you can send me *Women in Action* regularly whenever you publish it and I would be grateful if you kindly place me on your subscription list.

Thanks for your special consideration, looking forward to your reply.

*Hamza A. Jay  
Centre for Energy, Research and  
Training,  
A.B.U. Zaria Kaduna, Nigeria*

I have just come across a copy of your *Women in Action* No. 3, 1996 and delighted with it! Would like to take up your offer on p.77 for taking out a subscription and purchasing some back copies. I am working in the area of feminist anthropology and am currently involved in some research work on women, religion and social change in the Philippines from an anthropological perspective. I am excited to know about your library and wonder if you have a web page through which it would be possible to access your Isis WEB and computer assisted data retrieval system. Or, if this is not possible at this stage, do you have available via E-mail a listing of the titles you hold in the subject area of culture, religion and spirituality and the names of the journal titles you have available?

*Mary T. Drum  
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## Woman Leader

Massoumeh Ebtekar is one of five newly appointed vice-presidents under President Muhammad Khatami. In 1995 *Women in Action* ran an interview with her. Ebtekar is 37 years old, holds a doctoral degree in immunology, led the Iranian delegation at the UN Beijing Conference, serves as head of the Central Committee of Iran's Women's NGO's, and is editor of *Farzaneh* a women's studies magazine. She is a mother to two boys and credits her husband as her main motivator.

We decided to run excerpts of the 1995 interview to reintroduce her again to you. Excerpts of "Muslim Women After the Iranian Revolution," WIA #2, 1995 by Luz Maria Martinez.

Q: You told me that things changed for you when you went to Nairobi in 1985.

....[By the early 1980s] we were faced on one side with a revolution that had changed many ideas and a whole new world opened up for us. On the other hand there was a global involvement on behalf of the women which we could not resist.

Q: ...How do you perceive the women's movement in Iran prior to the revolution and after?

[Under the Shah] Iran was actually very closed politically, opposing groups were severely oppressed, the Shah was an American stooge, and, naturally, news was not coming out on what was happening in the country at that time, but most importantly, the identity of the Iranian nation was in crisis. Who are we? What is our his-