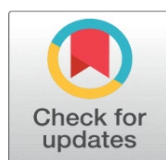
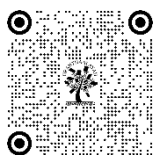


THE MORALITY AND LEGALITY OF BAR DANCING IN SONIA FALEIRO'S BEAUTIFUL THINGS

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DOI

[10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i5.2024.4539](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i5.2024.4539)

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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ABSTRACT

Sonia Faleiro's writings are non-fictional and quasi anthropological cum literary writings on bar dancers. She introduces bar dancer's world of profession by her writings. Intense involvement of love, sex, violence of customers and gangsters, of police, prostitutes and pimps are portrayed by Sonia Faleiro in her book Beautiful Things. These personalities are in one way or other involved in the profession and the difference is one spends money for pleasure and someone spends or earn money for their livelihood. what forces there adolescent girls to become bar dancers? Is it poverty or illiteracy or independence? Is the morality of bar dancing judged objectively, using the same criteria that are applied to other professions too? Or is it simply immoral and highly unethical. It is a big question to be asked and judged about. The paper concentrates on these issues in the light of legal enactment and literary writing on this issue.

Keywords: Dancing, Bar Dancers, Dancing as a Profession, Female Identity, Morality, Legality of Bar Dancing

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the oldest forms of expression is dancing. The term dance bars are used in India to refer to bars in which an adult entertainment in the form of dances by relatively well-covered women is performed for male. There are 2000 bars in Mumbai and thousand dances bare in which dancing girls entertain the customers. The female dancers are thousands and thousands, and 2000 bars are there and they expose their physical endowments either Casting away extra Clothes or sacrificing some from top or bottom or both.

The younger generations are allegedly corrupted due to bar dancing girls who take up the profession of bar dancing are accused of splitting the families, disturbing marital and personal lives of the people. Normally, bar girls are accused of certain allegations. They exploit men, trap them, and extract money from them. There are also many other issues other than this to be looked into. The bars under estimate the self-respect of women. Women are to be seen with respect not for lust. Another accusation on bar dancers are the prime factors that make the society corrupted are these women bar dancers. These dancers allure the youth towards a path that is immoral and ignorable.

Who are these girls? Where do they come from? Are the crucial questions that shook the readers of Faleiro's text. What kind of life style do they enjoy? Are they respectable? Why do girls adopt and accept this profession? Sonia Faleiro's book Beautiful Things answers these questions.

Sonia is an award winning writer of narrative and non-fiction. Bar Dancer's world is Constituted of girls and the book is a non-fictional quasi-anthropological - cum literary writing. The book portrays intense involvement in love, sex, violence, of customer and gangsters, of police, prostitutes, and pimps. The mindset of these people who looks down at such a profession humiliates the girls physically and mentally.

Beautiful Thing is a book that depicts the doors open on Mumbai's sex trade. It narrates the story of bar dancers and later on about the aftermath about the bar imposed on Bombay's dance bars. The life of dance bar girls is narrated through the Story of Leela a bar dancer, her family, her past, her friends, her customers, her dance bar owners, the underworld, the policemen, the pimps, and health hazards. Leela, the protagonist wife changes by unexpected tragic factors. The story has many characters the past lives the circumstances which force them to become a bar dancer. The upbringing of the protagonist and their life before adopting this profession is heart rending.

There are many stories of those people who are betrayed by the very people who are supposed to give protect to them. The factors poverty, illiteracy decides the destiny of dancers as Leela which in turn forces her to run to Bombay. The sad moving fate of Leela and others push the readers to think and question the morality of society.

Leela with her friend Priya are bar dancers in the story. The question readers get are raised through Leela and Priya and they become the voice of the author. The shocking facts of their lives are explored. Most of the bar dancers are raped and forced to opt for this job. Theirs is a curious kind of emancipation. The protagonists dream of marrying a decent man, of becoming good house wives, and mothers even though they know that no decent man can have them for their wife as they are not good girls. Despite all the horrors they have been subjected to in their lives, they still yearn for a happy Bollywood ending. They fantasize that one day bar a handsome man will walk into the bar to take their hand. He would fall in love and say, "Your Past is your Past!" (Faleiro 39). The innocent natures of these girls are revealed when they often fall in love with their customer or a married man. They feel and dream that one day they will live a happy and settled married life.

In her imaginary world, Leela marries her boss. She believes that one day he will marry her. By this marriage, she may be liberated from her demeaning work she is forced to do. But she knows deep down very well that this marriage with her boss is a Pipe dream. When she takes her out of town for a weekend to Lonavla, Leela is excited but she realizes later that it is not a promise, of deeper commitment but a farewell gift.

The worlds to which these girls are exposed are one of violence, exploitation and also gift, of dream, of longing. The two friends talk a finding a man who will give them respect. They spend money they earn. Some sends money to their family. They enjoy good food, clothes, alcohol. This kind of life style puts them in more trouble. When bars are closed these girls refuse to take some menial jobs or reconcile themselves in doing any other kind of work.

For instance, when Sajida a social worker tries to help Leela by asking her to join mehendi classes. Leela asks Sajida, "or does she presume that because I am a Barwali, I'll take anything thrown one my way?" No work, so mehendi? I am a dancer not a mehendiwali, not a bawarchi" (191).

Sonia Falerio met Leela in 2005. By then Leela was 19 and danced in Night lovers bar on Mira Road. Occasionally she use to share bed with her customer to draw a large sum of amount and Valuable gifts or dinners at restaurants where she couldn't pay her bill on her own. Faleiro draws a portrait of a woman who knows that the present world is full of evils, a cruel place. She believes strongly that her job is to fool every man. Leela has a sad story that her father molests her, forces her to undergo painful conjugal relationship with teachers, police officers and whoever comes on his way. She found herself being expatriate in classroom, ruthless street police station, playground, town, , everywhere. Every evening she is forced to visit police station. So she escaped from her home takes up the job of bar dancers at night lovers. That was the beginning of Leela as a bar dancer.

When her father beats her mother if she talks to another man who is someone not her relative, 'Get lost, Oye, And they do. And if I want a gift or feel like " non wedge', I just have to tell them and they give me what I want, no questions". They thank me. Every life has its benifits" (33).

Families who are economically strong are always enjoy a good, peaceful life. Beautiful Thing is a blend of these two Categories. Economically weak people are always marginalized doubly by the elite ones. The poor are always exploited

by the elites. If dancing is considered a profession why can't girls dance in bars? Girls who opted for this dance profession comes from a small background village or from a family who strives hard for survival..." (34). Leela is one such girl.

The hypocrisy and double standards of state is revealed in Beautiful Thing. The state banning dance performers on bars has allowed the same in three star or five star hotels, "Well as gymkhanas and Clubs to hold such performances to promote culture and boost tourism "(Agnes 1).

Finally what happened to these dancing girls on bare? these girls are unaware of diseases as HIV which results futile. By the end of the Novel, Leela loses her weight, becomes thinner appears too small and diminished . All these are indicators that she has got aids. Whatelse can happen to a girl who has not seen the world outside the bars? What worse thing can happen to a girl? Who is answerable to these questions? Who can take responsibility of taking or pushing these girls into these Jobs?

Is the morality of bar dancing judged objectively using same criteria that are applied to other professions too? This paper brought to light the issue faced by bar dancers and legal enchantments of these issues. One can get into the world of Leela the smell, sound and the feel of her world. One is left with the choice of deciding what one feels about it.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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