

Motion to UCL Union Council: NUS Women's Conference

This Union notes:

- That the deadline for motions to NUS Women's Conference 2009 is in December 2008;
- That motions to NUS Women's Conference must be sent by Constituent Members of the NUS and therefore must be agreed by the CM's governing body;
- That Council will not meet again before this deadline;
- That Union Executive agreed to submit the motion "Miss University London Competition" to NUS National Conference 2009.

This Union believes:

- That women are objectified on a daily basis, both on and off campus;
- That UCL Union have taken a stand against misogyny this year;
- That, despite protests, Miss University London is going ahead.

This Union resolves:

- To take a stand in the national women's movement by submitting the following motion (appendix 1) to NUS Women's Conference 2009;
- To also submit the motion "Miss University London Competition" (appendix 2), passed at Council on Tuesday 18th November 2008, amended to be nationally relevant.

Proposer:

Mary Williamson 60069131 Mathematics, 3 *Mary Williamson*

Seconders:

Kate Rowley	40668255	Archaeology, affil.	<i>Kate Rowley</i>
Ed Steward	40185263	History, affil.	<i>Ed Steward</i>
Billy Street	5220900	SSEES, affil.	<i>Billy Street</i>
Charlie Clinton	50082506	Laws, affil.	<i>Charlie Clinton</i>
Kathryn Jackson	50024735	Mathematics, 3	<i>Kathryn Jackson</i>
Lyon Saha	60303257	Mathematics, 3	<i>Lyon Saha</i>
Rhiannon Byers	60462141	mathematics, 3	<i>Rhiannon Byers</i>
Sophie Constantinou	703011	neuroscience, 2	<i>Sophie Constantinou</i>
Yumna Ahmed	704652	Bio med, 2	<i>Yumna Ahmed</i>
Giovanne Amorosi	60225133	Maths MATHS 3	<i>Giovanne Amorosi</i>

Appendix 1

Motion to NUS Women's Conference: Women, Not Sex Objects

Conference believes:

- We are bombarded with sexist images that represent women as sexual objects rather than as real people
- This objectification process dehumanises women
- The first step of any oppression is the dehumanisation of the group which is oppressed
- The more it becomes acceptable to portray and to view women as a sum of body parts, the easier it becomes to mistreat, to disrespect and to act out violence towards women as a group
- We live in a society in which sexual and physical violence against women is endemic
- Organisations which work on the issue of VAW link the objectification of women and the mainstreaming of the sex industries with attitudes that underpin violence against women.

Conference further believes:

- That the licensing of lap dancing clubs in the same category as cafes has acted like a green light to the industry
- That this has encouraged the mainstreaming of the sex industry, with pole dancing kits including pink garters and toy money being sold by leading retailers
- That lap dancing clubs are part of the sex industry, not the leisure industry
- That lap dancing clubs promote the idea of women as sexual objects, not real people.
- That lap dancing clubs are linked to sexual exploitation; women have to pay to work and are fined for being late or not wearing club merchandise; the only way to earn a wage is through private dances; the high ratio of dancers to customers makes competition rife; this leads to pressure to offer extra sexual services to attract clients.
- That research shows that lap dancing clubs create 'no-go' areas for women who feel unsafe walking past clubs at night
- That lap dancing clubs are linked to sexism in the workplace with a survey in *The Economist* giving the corporate use of strip clubs as the primary reason for so few high level women in business
- That the growing sexualisation of girls is an issue of concern
- That the glamorisation of lap dancing clubs is linked to 63% of girls surveyed saying they would rather be glamour models than doctors or teachers
- That this reinforces male domination of positions of power and influence in society
- That challenging sex-object culture doesn't mean that you are anti-sex, it means you are anti-sexism

Conference resolves:

- To support the Stripping the Illusion Campaign to lobby for a change in the licensing of lap dancing clubs so that they are recognised as part of the sex industry
- To help strip the illusion that lap dancing clubs are harmless fun
- To support Object in challenging the objectification of women in the media and popular culture through things like lads mags, the mainstreaming of lap dancing clubs, music videos and Page 3.
- To raise awareness about the fact that opposing the sexist portrayal of women is not censorship, it is taking a political stance against sexism.

Appendix 2

"Miss University" Beauty Pageants

Conference believes:

1. That women have been admitted to university to study on equal terms with men since 1878;
2. That "Miss University" contests have been taking place throughout London and will culminate in the "Miss University London" final in early 2009;
3. That similar contests are run throughout the UK including 'Miss Student Body' in Edinburgh;
4. That the website for Miss University claims that they send "scouts and representatives" to Campus.

Conference further believes:

1. That the Miss University contests contravene the NUS Equal Opportunities Statement;
2. That the contests undermine the academic achievements of female students and the universities that they represent;
3. That no university name should be associated with misogynistic events;
4. Whilst we respect the rights of individuals to enter, student unions should not support or endorse the pageant.

Conference resolves:

1. Not to allow beauty pageants to take place on campus, and to fight the use of any Constituent Member's name by the organisers of these events;
2. To not allow beauty pageant representatives on campus;
3. To mandate the Women's Committee to support national campaigns against these pageants.